Universal language essay

Universal language may refer to a hypothetical or historical language spoken and understood by all or most of the world's population. In some contexts, it refers to a means of communication said to be understood by all living things, beings, and objects alike. It may be the idea of an international auxiliary language for communication between groups speaking different primary languages. In other conceptions, it may be the primary language of all speakers, or the only existing language.

Some mythological or religious traditions state that there was once a single universal language among all people, or shared by humans and supernatural beings, however, this is not supported by historical evidence. In other traditions, there is less interest in or a general deflection of the question. For example in Islam the Arabic language is the language of the Qur'an, and so universal for Muslims.

The written Classical Chinese language was and is still read widely but pronounced somewhat differently by readers in different areas of China, Vietnam, Korea and Japan for centuries; it was a de facto universal literary language for a broad-based culture. In something of the same way Sanskrit in India and Nepal, and Pali in Sri Lanka and in Theravada countries of South-East Asia (Burma, Thailand, Cambodia), were literary languages for many for whom they were not their mother tongue.

Comparably, the Latin language (qua Medieval Latin) was in effect a universal language of literati in the Middle Ages, and the language of the Vulgate Bible in the area of Catholicism, which covered most of Western Europe and parts of Northern and Central Europe also. In a more practical

fashion, trade languages, as ancient Koine Greek, may be seen as a kind of real universal language, that was used for commerce. In historical linguistics, monogenesis refers to the idea that all spoken human languages are descended from a single ancestral language spoken many thousands of years ago

Mythological universal languages Main article: Mythical origins of language Various religious texts, myths and legends describe a state of humanity in which originally only one language was spoken. In Judeo-Christian beliefs, the " confusion of tongues" described in the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel tells of the creation of numerous languages from an original Adamic language. Similar myths exist in other cultures describing the creation of multiple languages as an act of a god, such as the destruction of a ' knowledge tree' by Brahma in Indic tradition, or as a gift from the God Hermes in Greek myth.

Other myths describe the creation of different languages as concurrent with the creation of different tribes of people, or due to supernatural events. Chinese characters are universal because they are picture or picture-symbol based. They are not phonetic or specifically sound based such as Mandarin specifically, but almost equally to over 36 languages in China alone as well as Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese & other languages.

Each graphic / character language has phonetic symbols as well as all characters & their radicals (parts) have names & may be expressed in each phonetic language. Each language speaks its own sound but the pictures are universal. As such Chinese & other eastern languages of this system have

been able to anchor themselves without so much syllabic variation. Hence Chinese for example is about 10% more compact than phonetic languages such as English. English keeps on adding syllables not aware of meanings within existing symbols.

Picture-symbol graphics or character languages maintain word history better than just phonetic languages. The universal language of Babylon was the graphic pictorial Hieroglyphic language of Egypt used in various forms across the middle east & parts of Europe. When hieroglyphics were oppressed by the colonialism of that time & each empire's (Assyrian, Semitic, Greek, Roman, French, English etc) dominant phonetic language became dominant, they could only keep communication through dominance.

Graphic pictorial languages also use ' Hand-talk' or sign language parallel to the graphic symbols used on paper so as to be able to communicate across large territories. North America used American Indian Hand Talk across great regions. The Graphic symbols of Mexico, the MIssissippi Mound Cities, west & east coast were not understood by Europeans who in about 1720 – 50 began burning the great libraries of Mexico & the String Shell records such as Wampum across North America.

The church led book & quipu burning in South & Central America as well. Seventeenth century Recognizable strands in the contemporary ideas on universal languages took form only in Early Modern Europe. A lingua franca or trade language was nothing very new; but an international auxiliary language was a natural wish in light of the gradual decline of Latin. Literature in vernacular languages became more prominent with the

Renaissance. Over the course of the 18th century, learned works largely ceased to be written in Latin.

According to Colton Booth (Origin and Authority in Seventeenth-Century England (1994) p. 174) " The Renaissance had no single view of Adamic language and its relation to human understanding. " The question was more exactly posed in the work of Francis Bacon. In the vast writings of Gottfried Leibniz can be found many elements relating to a possible universal language, specifically a constructed language, a concept that gradually came to replace that of a rationalized Latin as the natural basis for a projected universal language.

Leibniz conceived of a characteristica universalis (also see mathesis universalis), an " algebra" capable of expressing all conceptual thought. This algebra would include rules for symbolic manipulation, what he called a calculus ratiocinator . His goal was to put reasoning on a firmer basis by reducing much of it to a matter of calculation that many could grasp. The characteristica would build on an alphabet of human thought. Leibniz's work is bracketed by some earlier mathematical ideas of Rene Descartes, and the satirical attack of Voltaire on Panglossianism.

Descartes's ambitions were far more modest than Leibniz's, and also far more successful, as shown by his wedding of algebra and geometry to yield what we now know as analytic geometry. Decades of research on symbolic artificial intelligence have not brought Leibniz's dream of a characteristica any closer to fruition. Other 17th-century proposals for a ' philosophical' (i. e. universal) language include those by Francis Lodwick, Thomas Urquhart

(possibly parodic), George Dalgarno (Ars signorum, 1661), and John Wilkins

(An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language, 1668).