

The limitations of language on knowledge essay sample



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Man's comparatively adept ability to communicate as a means of obtaining knowledge is considered to be one of his defining characteristics, distinguishing him from any other species. Language is a communicative tool used to convey information, command, interrogate, entertain, and express ideas or emotions. Since all of these applications of language can result in the obtainment of knowledge it is evident that language serves as a major part of Man's ability to communicate.

This leaves us with a syllogistic correlation between language and knowledge because language is our best means of communication, and communication is our best means of obtaining knowledge. Thus, Man's ability to gain knowledge is in direct limitation of his language prowess. These limits are evident in the imparting of cultural, historical, and specialized knowledge. The diffusion of ideas through different cultures is antagonized by the language barriers between them. It is extremely rare for two isolated cultures to develop similar languages, technocracies, and concepts.

Since language is the main device for communicating these advancements it is apparent that it would be difficult for two separate cultures to quickly understand and accept each other. This is a cause for many of the cultural abominations that are still evident today. The constraint of language on the spread of cultural knowledge can also be seen in the present day association of civilizations in comparison to their dialect derivations. Many European and American countries are in pronounced association, while many of the Asian and Middle Eastern countries share a similar closeness.

Many of the European and American cultures use romantic dialects to convey knowledge, leaving them isolated from the Eastern world and vice versa. Man's natural tendency to investigate the history of his surroundings can be limited by language, especially in the area of anthropology. The study of past civilizations can be seriously complicated by the dissimilar means of communicating between societies of different time periods. Philologists and others studying the history of Man's means of communication play an important role in aiding anthropologists in discovery.