500-word reflection

* What do the reading(s) suggest about the theme?
* What have others said about it that may agree or disagree with the authors of our texts? (You will need to bring in your references to answer this question)
* What new ideas about the topic came to mind as you read the materials? In other words, what did you learn that you did not know before?

After reading *From Papyrus to Hypertext* there is a lot to be learned about tabularity, hypertextuality, and the transition from language to textual cultures. Vandendorpe indicates a clear divide between language and text, as well as some of the drawbacks of both. Although language dominated a large portion of the way people communicate there were some major drawbacks. Based on what Vandendorpe wrote the key points are a listener’s inability to determine when the communication took place, the rate of delivery which is chosen by the storyteller and being unable to play back or review the content of the communication. (Vandendorpe, pg 5). These same obstacles created a need for innovation that would remedy the drawbacks of speech, this came much later in the form of text. Apart from the obstacles there was another that pertains to both text and speech which is personality, that comes with a voice and the lack thereof that accompanies text. As writing began to replace speech the need for style and uniqueness would change what started as a neutral medium and transformed into one of equal or relevant individuality. Continuing forward, as text has transcended from purely physical and has went on into the digital realm so too has the level of personality that accompanies it, to the point of limited distinction between speech and text.

Regarding personality, within the digital realm of text it’s clear who the author of an article is because it’s clearly indicated. Furthermore, one can learn about this author through an inquiry, or clicking on their biography and or about me rather than with speech where it’s a feeling-based process. Text and speech are often one in the same as Richard Nordquist mentions in *Text in Language Studies* stating, “Text is understood to be a piece of written or spoken material and refers to content rather than form.” (Nordquist, What Is a Text) Nordquist then goes on to address the fact that the concept of text isn’t a stable one, it’s ever changing, especially with modern technology and like Vandendorpe, Nordquist noted that technology seems to bridge the divide between text and speech.

As Anne Merritt of the Telegraph learned digital text carries with it, its own obstacles that must be addressed. According to a study conducted by schools “89% of all parents, said that this growing prevalence of text speak has created a veritable language barrier.” (Merritt, Text-Speak) Going forward, in the 21st century there are bound to be further problems as text and speech intertwine like never before, with things like emojis and icons taking the place of what previously had to be spoken, written, or read now being expressed in it’s own form. Like text before it, this new method has expanded access for users to interact and make it their own, and simultaneously the decline in distinguishability becomes minimalized.

A few bits of knowledge that were expanded upon were how complex text and speech are, as well as how integrated and at odds they can be with culture. As Claire Kramsch writes in *Language and Culture* “words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas or events that are communicable. Words also reflect their authors’ attitudes and beliefs.” What these two have in common is described as cultural reality, this is an unspoken understanding between the author and the audience. While cultural reality bridges text and speech, things like text-speak are creating a divide between what was acceptable and what has yet to be accepted by culture.

**Works Cited**

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