

Linguistic Mode

Introduction

In regards to media and rhetoric, the communication involved to convey information through this medium can be divided into 5 basic modes: Linguistic, Visual, Aural, Gestural, and Spatial. All of these basic modes have their place in media and rhetoric and all of them come with their own unique advantages and disadvantages. For this paper, I want to analyze the arguments laid out in two papers. One written by DeVoss et al. on Kairos and "Postscript" by Patricia Sullivan to summarize their positions on multimodal communication in order to describe the overall affordances and limitations inherent to the Linguistic Mode in particular.

Explaining Linguistic Mode

Before getting into the strengths and weaknesses of using Linguistic Mode it is important to first ask, what do we mean when we say "Linguistic Mode?" According to LumenLearning.com, the Linguistic Mode of communication refers to any form of communication pertaining to "[written or spoken words. The mode includes word choice, the delivery of written or spoken text, the organization of words into sentences and paragraphs, and the development and coherence of words and ideas.](#)" This article is essentially saying, the Linguistic Mode of communication is the reliance on words ultimately for communication.

Citing Textual References

In beginning to understand the advantages and disadvantages of written and/or spoken words, I will summarize the major points made in two articles have commentated on the evolution of multimodal communication and how it is now being applied in the modern day. One article being the collaboration of multiple different composers describing their work experience in producing media and the other being a paper written by an academic advocating for the divergence from traditional means of producing media in order to broaden artistic expression. In the technorhetoric.net article, "Kairos", authors DeVoss et al. emphasizes the fact that all forms of composing require different mediums, tools and interfaces before showing a list of examples showing different composers and how they use the different multimedia modes. The analysis section of the article then shows a number of different workers composing using different media modes. In terms of the linguistic mode usage in these examples, I mainly took note of three major ones. The first of which being Michelle, who sits on the floor typing on her laptop with notebooks on either side of her. The second is Michael, who is writing in his notebook presumably in his room at home. And the third showed a very particular advantage that is involved in linguistic mode that has come about thanks to the use of computers in linguistic communication. That element being the shared document which allows multiple people to write and edit on one document at the same time. The first example demonstrates the physical limits of linguistic mode. Meanwhile the second example is meant to show that linguistic mode can be timely if one carries with them the tool to write wherever they go. This broader conversation of technology and its integration into multimodal communication does bring an interesting point regarding the earlier point of the use of space and how it plays into the art of composing. As noted in the introduction earlier, in a section citing the writings of Wysocki and Arola, the use of technology and its continual advancement in ergonomics

and overall size has significantly lessened the visibility of space when it comes to multimodal usage, including linguistically.

In her paper, "POSTSCRIPT: TOWARD A MULTIMODAL COMPOSITION," author Patricia Suzanne Sullivan mainly discusses the avant-garde and the breaking from normalcy. She argues, first and foremost, that the expansion of different modes of multimedia has allowed for the ability to broaden discourse by allowing more people to share their individual experiences and shed light on social realities not often discussed in the mainstream. She goes on to discuss how this has impacted the use of linguistic mode in the academic setting, citing Cynthia Selfe and her commentary on the topic. Selfe says that the rise of other forms of media modes beyond the linguistic demonstrate that many individuals or even whole cultures could see the single use of alphabetic literacy to be limiting in terms of expression, most notably in terms of expressing oneself audibly (148). Just like the DeVoss article, Sullivan also talks about at-length the importance of technology in the further advancement of multimodal communication. She goes on to cite Andreas Huyssen's book, which says art itself had been transformed due to the introduction of mass culture, or popular culture, which Huyssen argues could not have existed without technology (154). This, Sullivan argues, is what has helped to expand opportunities for artistic expression, notably in the writing department, due in large part to the wider access of information to a much larger group of people (156). What could be gathered from these articles is that the main advantages of Linguistic Mode communication, as well as the many other modes, have been thanks to the greater accessibility to a much broader range of people, and thus potential writers, because technology has helped in aiding such multimodal composers in being able to express themselves, collaborate on projects, and making the use of multimodal communication more accessible now that the devices that can be used in production are smaller and easier to use.

Summarizing previous points/describing affordances & limitations

To summarize, while linguistic communication is among the oldest forms, the advantages that come with the use of linguistic mode, in regards to the DeVoss and Sullivan articles, are, in a modern sense, due in large part to the advancement of technology, making it more accessible to more people. The first major advantage afforded by technology is enhancing collaborative efforts with shared documents, conveying written information using online documents everyone can write on. One of the major drawbacks in linguistic communication, as we saw with Michelle in the DeVoss article, is that using a computer or notebook to write with takes up physical space. However, it should be noted this limitation has grown to be less and less relevant with technological advancement. This aspect extends even further to Michael's example as to how multimodal communication can be timely, as the devices used to compose with are now much smaller and easier to carry and easier to use on the fly, allowing them to be used just about anywhere.

Conclusion

Overall, Linguistic communication can be very useful in terms of timeliness and the ability to more fully articulate one's thoughts and has only become better in this regard as technology has advanced. Linguistic mode has largely been advanced with the wider accessibility of new technology, allowing for new ways in which to engage linguistically using online programs, such as the shared online document, and the overall lessening of the size of new devices has diminished the space disadvantage that may be inherent to linguistic communication.

References

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