

Open Communication: Having Your Voice Heard

Angela Brown

Gaming Lab Assistant

College of Southern Nevada

702-651-4579

E-mail: Angela.Brown@csn.edu

Abstract

Communication is language used to exchange information to one another. African slaves had a means of communication by means of using common symbols and speech, telling stories, singing spirituals, writing poems. As time revolved, blacks valued an education. Education, reading, writing and speaking effectively, would give them the skill or trade they needed to overcome obstacles, to be competitive with society and to become successful. The nature of communication would evolve productively towards social and economic freedom.

Keywords: Communication, language, ideology, dialog

The origin of African American language originated to the Dominican Islands. Slaves were brought to the islands before being slaves in America. In the islands, American slaves were able to communicate because of the tribes from Africa spoke the same language. The dialect was easy to conduct everyday communication through common phrases. The language spoken was broken English. Phrases like, where are you going, I already been there were used in daily conversation. Some of the language from Africa is used in American dialect. Words like banana and voodoo are a part of the English language. It is wonderful that some of the spirituality in language was shared amongst African traditions implementing culture passed upon generations of slaves. Communication is a valued source of maintaining universal relationships.

African folk tales is a form of storytelling used by slaves as a form of entertainment. African folk tales were heroic tales used by slaves. The folk tales had a hero like the road runner and the coyote reflected the Loony Toon cartoons. The stories used animals as characters. The hero of the tales, were weak animals who fought over stronger animals like the lion or the bear. The format of the stories was to tell a story of how slaves were to overcome slavery or to tell how the weak could triumph over evil. African slaves believed that someday they would be free. The folk tales were an inspiration that there was hope of obtaining their freedom from slavery.

The songs that slave sung were about the sorrow and pain of slavery. Gospel music in songs was written about a spiritual journey to reach salvation. Gospel songs speak of hope and disparity of the black race. Gospel music can be sad to listen to because of the mourning rituals it express in its music. Music has transformed from work songs, field hollers, and spirituals, to that would leave a powerful imprint on later forms of American music, gospel, ragtime, jazz, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, and rap. How the genre changed the message remains the same of hope and content. In order to understand the songs you must identify with the content and anger of black suffering.

The important theme, "Go down Moses" and "Swing Low Chariot" is asking God to grant their freedom from slavery. The words, "Let my people go and Carry me home sweet Charlotte," speak of the words of slaves. The timeline in which the poems were written were taken from the Bible. The poem, "Go down Moses," refers to Moses asking the heroes to release the slaves from bondage. The final miracles from God, Moses was to kill his son. The song, "Swing Low, Sweet Charlotte," refers to releasing the slaves from Israel. Each poem speaks of justice and freedom that going to heaven is the answer to becoming free from slavery.

Trickster Tales are abstract stories speaking of free oppression. The tales are clever stories of hope. The tales speak of the black race as a strong heroic race. The tales give insight to overcome oppression from slavery. The tales uses strong characters to build hope for the black slave. The tales reveal the struggle of how race dictate inequality.

African American Toast to Tradition is a collection of poems from Louisiana that reflect on black tradition. The poems are heroic stories about overcoming racism. "Shine and the Titanic" is a poem used to reflect the cleverness of blacks. The story explains how the weak overcome obstacles of oppression.

There came a time where expansion would change the course of history. The abolitionist movement was an important motivation time of change. It results where blacks were educated and the first black newspaper to have the first voice to speak against slavery, the mentally ill and prisons.

The reconstruction of America came after the Civil War. It predicated more violence, racism and discrimination. It was a time where manual labor was needed. It was a time of reformation. It elected the first black politicians to seek office. It was a time where blacks became principles of universities. It implemented the 14th, 15th and 16th amendment to the constitution. After the Civil War there was hope.

The construction of the two World Wars allowed blacks in the military. The union of black nurses improved equality. The war motivated the Civil Rights Movement. The march in Selma was the turning point of the movement. It was televised as the most deadly marches in the movement. It leads to President Johnson signing the Civil Rights Vote into law. The movement changed the law for blacks allowed to eat at public counters, blacks to sit anywhere on buses, blacks allowed access to public parks and facilities, blacks to have unequal education. It became a movement of inspiration.

We must learn to speak up for the injustices in society. We must learn to question the system when action appears inappropriate. We must learn to pray to God for guidance in our journey to fight for equality. We must learn for our past so history will not repeat itself. We must learn to act by faith and through education, speaking wisely, to determine results, to get a response.

I watch time wondering, phasing in and out contemplating thought. Doubt is empty of holding reason; but still remains confused. With movement to walk, to run, to crawl is a struggle bending, stretching, fainting, pushing for discovery, dancing for life. Growing weak, failing, alluding strength, rested on mediation, as time sleeps. In deep sleep, time rests from reality aware of non-existence. Time's anger demonstrates pride. As if life so complacent with time, mediating space feels love has become obedient to nature. Is the ordinance of time a means of human error? Is life so consumed with certainty of pain that desire, a need, a want, a hope, a prayer is insolvent of any imposition? Is our purpose in life chasing dreams of uncertainty, misguided in direction an incongruent matter? We live in the disparity of doubt that has taught us to be indifferent to opinion, insubordinate to change, and defiant to World order, incognizant of reason, we fight, we plead, we challenge our fate, valuing the life that has taught us all to pray.

Sacrifice Poem Description

I watch the news every day. Every day there is something about war. The war is on Muslims. The Muslims are called terrorist. Not all Muslims are terrorists. Some Muslims are good citizens who care about human life. Muslims fight for the same beliefs as we do. The Muslims are ashamed of how they are portrayed in the media. I wrote this poem to remember those who died fighting for what they believed in. These people have faith and share our same values. The people who we have lost sight of. I pray for the injustices that challenge us in war, in fate, in everyday life's struggle. I pray for a solution that will change the cycle of hate to become the reasons for who we used to be from who we have become.

Personal Reflection

Feeling hopeless and isolated with depression, I began to question and contemplate on my faith in religion and to establish reason for my belief in God.

"I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant." – Martin Luther King Jr.

Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, December 10, 1964

Discussion

Do you know the value of an education? An education plays a big role in determining your level of success. Today, everyone needs a college education to get a good paying job. Slaves knew the importance of communication. If you identify with the importance of having an education, it will create opportunities for you. Everyone knows that knowledge is power. Just by, developing a skill or trade, you will become more successful.

Conclusion

Throughout history, slaves expressed in the writing and communication they wanted freedom of expression and freedom from oppression. The protest used in telling stories, songs, hymns, pastor calls, literature and poetry spoke for equality. The old spiritual song is a call for justice that "change will come someday."

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