



A STUDY ON THE DESIGN FEATURES OF THE KLINGON LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Language is generally understood as a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, and written symbols. Various definitions tend to explain the nature of language. Sapir (1921) has identified language as a human and non-instinctive method of communication. Constructed languages are different from natural languages precisely due to their origin. A constructed language is defined as a complete language system written by one person who wants his/her language to be used by others for specific purposes. The Klingon language is the constructed language created for the movie *Star Trek*, spoken by the fictional Klingons in the *Star Trek* universe. Upon request of the director of *Star Trek*, the linguist Okrand deliberately designed the Klingon language for the warrior clan in the movie. Many linguists pay less attention or completely disregard constructed languages. However, the researcher is under the impression that conducting a study of this novel area is essential due to the apparent research gap in the available literature. Hence, the main objective of this study is to focus on the highly advanced alien language and identify its design features. This study is descriptive in design and mainly centres on the Klingon as its primary research data. Hockett's (1960) list of design features of language is employed for this purpose which enabled the researcher to develop a thorough content analysis of the Klingon language. It allowed the researcher to identify that several design features, such as productivity, displacement, and traditional transmission, cannot be identified in the Klingon language. Therefore, it is evident that as a constructed language, Klingon does not achieve all the criteria identified by Hockett. Yet, it does possess certain salient features that enable Klingon to function as a language in the real world.

Keywords: *Klingon language, Constructed languages, Natural languages, Design features, Arbitrary, Salient features*