Language, Technology, and Society

Richard Sproat

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This book traces the history of language technology from writing - the first technology specifically designed for language - to digital speech and other contemporary language systems. The book describes the social impact of technological developments over five millennia, and addresses topics such as the ways in which literacy has influenced cognitive and scientific development; the social impact of modern speech technology; the influence of various printing technologies; the uses and limitations of machine translation; how far mass information access is a means for exploitation or enlightenment; the deciphering of ancient scripts; and technical aids for people with language disabilities.

Richard Sproat writes in a clear, readable style, introducing linguistic and other scientific concepts as they are needed. His book offers fascinating reading for everyone interested in how language and technology have shaped and continue to shape our day-to-day lives.

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