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Rhetorical Analysis Essay 2

“How Immigration Changes Language” is an article written by American Linguist John McWhorter and explores the relation between immigration and language. McWhorther claims that “multiethonolects are the most fertile source of linguistic innovation,” deviating from the original standard of languages and create a new language that is common in the younger generation. The first half of the article is focused on Germany and how immigration has caused the emergence of a new dialect, “Kiezdeutsch”, and its influence on Standard German. He broadens his perspective and discusses immigration in countries such as Germany, United States, Senegal, and more, drawing analogies between countries across the globe that has seen an increase in immigration and describes the effects it has on the language of the region. Finally, he ends the article on a positive note by highlighting the benefits of this worldwide phenomenon. McWhorter’s article is intended for individuals native to the country who are witnessing this cultural change, and for immigrants around the world who find a way to combine their double-faceted world.

McWhorter employs logos and ethos throughout his article. He uses factual data and real-life events that are happening currently, and his profession as an American linguist and a professor of English and literature strengthen his credibility. Rather than stating his thesis in the beginning of the article, McWhorter delays and places it towards the end. By then, the reader has already been exposed to the data and analogies he presents and has grounds for reasoning, making persuasion easier. The first evidence of his thesis is Germany and the emergence of the new dialect “Kiezdeutsch” and its influence on the German language. The author includes statistics, such as the “1.5 million asylum applications from Syria” (McWhorter, 2015), and gives examples that highlight the differences between Kiezdeutsch and German. He then broadens his perspective, connecting the occurrence of Kiezdeutsch to the Black English in the U.S. He takes it a step further and talks about the transformation of other languages in countries in Europe and outside. Doing this allows the reader to understand that this change isn’t specific to one country, but rather happening on a global scale. He is presenting inarguable facts that will sway the reader to his side.

Throughout the essay, McWhorter analyzes and compares the grammatical structure of various languages and uses terms related to the text like “lingua franca” and “multiethnolect”. He is displaying his knowledge of linguistics and showing his readers that he is knowledgeable in the subject, boosting his argument. When discussing the topic in the beginning, he uses words such as “alarm”, “consequences”, and “demise”, words that have negative connotations, to allude the possible negative feedback this cultural change has been receiving. However, he concludes the article on a positive note, describing the multiethnolects as “as a story of birth.” This is an attempt to make the reader view this change as something positive, opposed the negative pushback.

John McWhorter carefully crafted this essay and in an effective way in order to convey his argument. The use of technical terms, statistics, and real-world examples strengthens builds his credibility and strengthens his argument.