

**The non-ecological cataclysm of total semantic annihilation: can humanity survive  
without socially verifiable language?**

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*When words lie or disappear, the world as  
we know it also disappears.*

## **1. Introduction**

What is cataclysm? According to a definition provided by *The Britannica Dictionary*, *cataclysm* is a sudden and violent event that causes great destruction or a sudden and violent change. It may be natural, political, military, or social. It may also be of a linguistic nature, that is, it may refer directly to language as the uniquely human system of communication thus causing noticeable perturbations in its functioning. In what follows, an attempt is made to briefly consider a phenomenon (or process) of a ‘total semantic annihilation’, whereby changes introduced in the particular area of language meanings (i.e. semantics), more or less abruptly (though definitely not in a matter of weeks, days, or hours and minutes) and entirely leads to significant changes in language design and its communicative potential. In other words, is it possible to envision a situation in which the founding level of semantics is annihilated entirely such that predictable semantic programming, as part of the linguistic programming of an utterance by a particular communicator, becomes programmatically deviant and language thus becomes a totally unreliable means of communication. What is far more important, one may ask a dramatic question whether it still exists? If semantics is a fundamental component of language structure (which it is!) and if its smooth functioning within the countless many individual communicator semantic competencies is contaminated, then its increasingly deviant nature makes language cataclysmically ‘venomized’.

The questions formulated above are indeed the major questions that may be posed today in the face of present-day linguistic-communicative practices in which massive lying, frequent distortions and various other destructive semantic ‘gimmicks’ so widely used as of late eclipse (or contaminate) the true nature of language and linguistic messages generated in the linguistic milieu. We may, in fact, postulate the arrival of the cataclysm of ‘language venomization’.

## **2. Language ‘venomization’**

If the phenomenon of maintaining the deviant nature of natural language keeps mounting, one may quite convincingly start talking about the cataclysmic change of language geared (individually and collectively) towards anchoring programmed (and permanent) semantic deviances. The latter, if raised to uncontrolled proportions, will, obviously, change the very nature of language in its fundamental communicative functioning. More precisely, natural language will demonstrate what may be referred to as ‘language venomization’. No doubt, the apparently on-coming emergence of fully ‘venomized language’ will abruptly stop language from being fit for reliable communication and for being an advanced communication system preserved and transmitted to sustain the fundamental function of maintaining daily exchanges of messages with a relying amount of fairness for (and among) the human transcommunicators.

This fairness has to do with there being a socially verifiable reliance between the object and the name. If this foundation is taken away in some way or another, all so-called ‘linguistic messages’ will automatically be rendered in the destructive ‘venom’ of lies and various semantic distortions. Linguistic communication will cease to have any sense and the cataclysm of total semantic annihilation and the removal of the phenomenon of

communicator linguistic identity will thus be completed. One may imagine that this process, once activated, will simply turn into a river with no return, as it were, and it will flow steadily to the awaiting generic pool of ‘human non-existence’. If it is ever accomplished, the cataclysm will introduce the following obvious impediments:

- loss (or at least weakening) of the human mind as a faithful device evolved in the service of reliable inter- and transpersonal communication,
- loss (or at least weakening) of symbolism,
- loss (or at least weakening) of object-name causality,
- loss (or at least weakening) of the power of the word as a memetic and mnemonic device,
- increased reliance on non-verbal elements (such as gestures, paralanguage, odours, colours, silence, etc.),
- loss (or at least weakening) of the sense of belonging and cultural heritage,
- loss (or at least weakening) of the need to meet, negotiate and use language for its own sake,
- increase of inter- and transpersonal collisions, conflicts and, generally, deep distrust,
- escape from empathic behavior.
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### **3. Epilogue**

Directly confronted by the menace of total semantic annihilation, the human species is not only doomed to attend to the word (i.e. properly semanticized lexical milieu) but also to exercise its unquestionable power in sustaining the socially verifiable bond between the object and the name in a causally straightforward denominational relationship. In this way, the world as we know it, is saved.