

1. READING

What is Sociology of Technologies?

- a. How are sociology and technology connected? Write down as many ideas as possible.
- b. Read the article about the sociology of technology.

The sociology of technology is the study of the connections between technological innovations and human societies. It can encompass the historical development of technologies as well as present issues relating to global interconnectedness. One of the major areas of discussion in the sociology of technology research is whether societies drive technological advances or new technologies reshape them.

The study of some aspects of history is closely related to the sociology of technology. Prehistoric inventions like the wheel revolutionized transportation, and the printing press changed the spread of information. The invention of the printing press, for instance, made learning to read an attainable goal for more layers of society.



Most research, however, focuses on more contemporary technologies. For example, the invention of the nuclear bomb in the 20th century changed the face of modern warfare, and therefore of international relations and the politics of society. On a more down-to-earth level, the popularity of cell phones in nations has changed the way people communicate with each other.

Sociologists often debate whether society drives technological change or technological change drives society. For example, one might argue that the printing press was invented contemporary because of changing social circumstances that led more people to read. Also, some people studying the sociology of technology would argue that most or all inventions come about due to a particular need in society. In other words, technological advances do not occur in a vacuum, but in response to a particular sociological situation.

The sociology of technology finds practical application as a result of this principle. Companies that produce technological devices may hire sociologists to investigate how their products are used by people in various demographics. The sociologists may advise the companies on how their products could be adopted to the technological needs of their target market.

KEY WORDS

encompass - охватывать

interconnectedness - взаимосвязанность

attainable - достижимый

contemporary - современный

warfare - война

down-to-earth - практичный

circumstances - условия

occur - происходить

target market - целевая аудитория

SKILLS

Think of 5 positive and 5 negative effects of technology on society. Create an infographic and present it in class. Add some real examples, if possible.

DISCUSSION

c) Discuss in pairs:

How has technology changed sociology?

Do you think society drives technological change or technological change drives society?

Why is technological change the key to the social one?