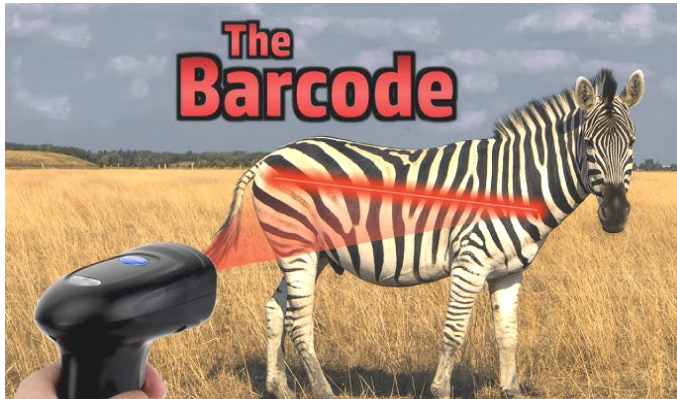


CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter December, 2024



Human ingenuity and drive for innovation is something that truly separates us from other species. Sometimes we come up with innovations that nobody has ever asked for and ones we never even knew we needed until it gets created. These tend to be so ahead of their times, that they get rejected by society almost instantly or it takes decades to finally get an approval by the wider public.

One such invention is a barcode. First expressed as a bunch of lines in the sand drawn by Joe Woodland, back in 1949, it got proper attention once the engineer joined a team at IBM which, in the early 70's, further developed the barcode into what we recognize and use today.

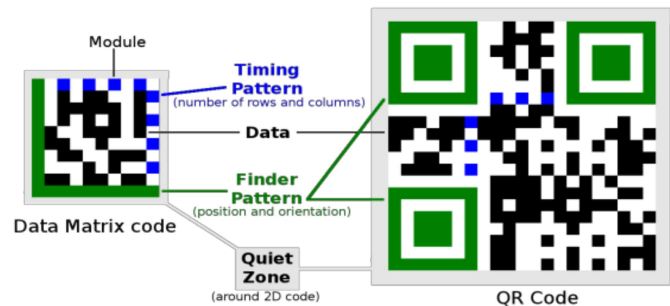


The initial reaction from customers and retailers was rather cold and even met with defiance. Shoppers and shop owners lamented that the barcode would take away jobs and the laser scanners might accidentally cause people to go blind, while Orthodox Christians were quick to brand the mysterious striped pattern as a “mark of the beast”. Remarkably, religious people in northern Russia to this day, still avoid any contact with barcodes!

Fortunately, common sense prevailed in the rest of the world and now the humble barcode is a permanent fixture in our lives, and people pay absolutely no attention to its existence.

So! Where do we go from here?

The answer is QR code and Data Matrix code. With an ever increasing need to store various data in a compact form, these two new types of code contain additional information such as instructions for a product's use, expiry date, website links or place of origin.



This new technology is vastly superior to a striped barcode and is set to largely replace it in 2027, although a barcode will still be used for encoding basic information.

A traditional barcode has been around for over 50 years and has not kept up with the changing times very well. Nowadays factories, institutions and individual business entities move towards further digitization, and stepping away from manually logging their data. This ensures that we become more efficient, we spend less time searching for essential information about a product or service.

In the near future, our relationship with QR codes and Data Matrix codes, unlike barcode, will evolve to be much more interactive. Once this technology develops more, we will have worked out a habit to actively search for these codes on products to quickly get all the necessary and up-to-date information.

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

For more info about QR and Matrix code, head over here:

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com/blog/data-matrix-vs-qr-codes/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Has anyone ever told you to “stop asking silly questions”? Did it hurt your feelings, make you feel foolish? Well, consider this idea: there is no such thing as a silly question! Every question has a purpose, a meaning; every question is a step on the pathway to knowledge, even when there is no obvious answer!! My advice is to keep asking questions no matter how “silly” they may seem to others. You may not get the answers, but you will always gain some knowledge!

Junko Says: Next year will be the Year of the Snake according to the Japanese zodiac. The snake is usually associated with “wisdom and mystery”. Also, shedding its old skin symbolizes “New Beginnings and Growth”. During the turn of the year holidays, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to think about what language skills you most need to improve on and plan to work on them when the new year begins. What do you think?



Marek Says: New Year holidays are upon us, and we will be closed for 8 days for a deserved rest. I plan on a couple of photography excursions into mountains. How will you spend your holiday? Please let us know in the “news” segment of our lessons. You might inspire or get inspired by your fellow students, if you haven’t yet decided what to do. Enjoy your holidays, everyone!

Mandcy dit: Dans quelques jours, c’est Noël. Je vous souhaite un bon réveillon. Allez-vous collectionner des cadeaux ou des kilos ? En effet, selon les chercheurs, à cause des repas de fêtes, on grossit. Entre 400 g et 1,5 kilos. Il est vrai qu’il est difficile de résister à la buche de Noël, aux coquilles Saint-Jacques et aux bouchées à la reine. Et surtout le foie gras, c’est vraiment délicieux. Saviez-vous qu’en en Provence, la coutume est différente de la France, on doit manger manger 7 plats et 13 desserts tels que la fougasse, le nougat au miel et pistaches et les fruits secs. Joyeux Noël à tous et regalez-vous bien.



ACROSS

- 2 at the beginning
- 5 having their own distinct existence
- 6 closely united
- 8 absolutely necessary
- 9 not accepted
- 14 completely
- 17 starting something for the first time
- 19 appropriate, suitable
- 20 inclined to be or do

DOWN

- 1 proved stronger, superior
- 3 without hesitation or delay
- 4 meek or modest
- 7 by hand
- 10 sellers of goods to the public
- 11 the power of creative imagination
- 12 resistant, fight against challenge
- 13 many different kinds
- 15 express grief, sorrow
- 16 makes certain
- 18 to a great extent

[\(print version here\)](#)

Words change and lose their original meaning over time. Can you guess what these common English words originally meant before they took on their present meaning?

1. **Nice** means something good or pleasant. It originally meant:



- a) Smart, intelligent, knowledgeable person
- b) Silly, foolish, ignorant, simple-minded
- c) Slow to respond, casual, easy-going attitude

2. **Silly** means foolish. It originally meant:



- a) Feeling lonely and rejected
- b) Cursed with bad luck
- c) Happy or blessed with good fortune

3. **Cute** means attractive, pretty, etc. It originally meant:



- a) Clever, cunning or sharp-witted
- b) Good at giving presentations and public speaking
- c) Not very intelligent or perceptive

4. **Flirt** means acting without serious intentions. It originally meant:



- a) A strong desire to travel and explore new worlds
- b) Very argumentative, always disagreeing
- c) Make a sudden and quick movement

5. **Hussy** means a disrespectful or immoral woman. It originally meant:



- a) Mistress of the household, a housewife
- b) A woman who never married
- c) The female proprietor of an inn or tavern

6. **Clue** means something to help you find an answer. It originally meant:



- a) A sudden winter squall
- b) A ball of thread or yarn
- c) A bookshelf full of books

7. **Fathom** means to understand after a lot of thought. It originally meant:



- a) Meaningless activity giving no result
- b) Embrace with outstretched arms
- c) To measure the weight of a heavy object

Try to guess the answers first before you use the answer key.

- 1b
- 2c
- 3a
- 4c
- 5a
- 6b
- 7b



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 4 especially, in particular
- 5 people who use their brains creatively
- 8 normally, usually
- 10 looked similar to
- 12 a gentler way of saying something
- 14 sincerely, honestly
- 16 lived in
- 17 food remaining after a meal
- 18 follow the course of something to its beginning
- 19 unexplainable, unexpected

DOWN

- 1 gives off, discharges
- 2 vague, lengthy and uninteresting talk
- 3 moving about aimlessly
- 4 a descriptive name for a person or thing
- 6 dishonest, deceptive
- 7 unclear, more than one possible meaning
- 9 came into existence
- 11 to a certain extent
- 13 exact, accurate
- 15 from a past geological age



Don't forget...Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

Ask Junko in our office, for the details.