

## WRT1101: Language and Writing

*Emails and text-messaging: shaping English of the future*

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The English language is changing to a shifting language utilised throughout the world in communication of all types. It is the medium of expression for many people sharing ideas across continents and cultures. With the introduction of instant messaging via email and text the language has been adapted and changed by modern society to allow for easy communication. In a rapidly developing society English cannot remain the same and like technology it has grown and changed. This new form of English comprises words and expressions never before seen that will in the future become part of everyday communication. Utilised by the younger generations text messaging forms a vital link between young adults and children alike allowing them to express themselves easily to each other. In business work colleagues communicate via email using jargon and slang familiar to each other. This report shows how English has developed alongside email and text messaging culture referring to articles and definitions from the Internet and web publications.

The Dictionary meaning (Oxford Online Dictionary, retrieved Wednesday, 3 March 2004) for SMS is a short message service; (occasionally also) short messaging service or short message system.

An Internet article (AskOxford.com, retrieved Wednesday, 3 March 2004) states that the revised edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary is the first to include text message abbreviations and emoticons. Sms is shorthand utilised by mobile phone users to communicate quickly using only the keypad of the mobile phone. Emoticons are the use of symbols and letters to describe emotions and words and form part of the abbreviation necessary to allow users to easily pass information in short messages.

This strange language allows users to express themselves and develop a form of

communication only readable by those using it, this form of communication is very popular and the terms are becoming familiar to all users of this new English language. Several sites on the Internet are available providing online dictionaries to translate English into sms language.

An article (TechTv, retrieved Wednesday 3 March, 2004) shows how in France it has become apparent that users are now utilising a French version allowing for similar quick communication in French to each other. This has developed due to the need for an sms to be only 160 characters in length with each mobile key only having 3 characters.

The Dictionary meaning for email (Oxford Online Dictionary, retrieved Wednesday, 3 March 2004) states that the noun email is the sending of messages by electronic means from one computer user to one or more recipients via a network, and the verb mail is to send using email. Derivatives include the noun emailer, the origin being an abbreviation of electronic mail.

Email is part of everyday life in the modern office and household, its effects on the written English language are noticeable and dramatic. An Internet article based on print source (Literacy Trust.org, retrieved Wednesday, 3 March 2004) states that British marketing consultancy firm The Fourth Room conducted a survey to gauge the extent of the nation's literacy on the web and found that the use of email has had a devastating impact on the standard of written English. Use of emails has become a lazy form of communication with writers not using correct grammar, punctuation and capitals where necessary. Many office or home users simply type emails, address them and send off the email, simply because of the ease of communication email

allows. Laziness has crept into the writing styles due to email representing verbal communication, writers simply putting into text what they would have said verbally. Online chat is a prime example of how email communication can be utilised for fast communicating between users. As conversation has to flow much like the spoken word, online users prefer to be able to talk in short phrases, while passing on as much information as possible. The use of symbols, much like sms, allows the person to chat to several users quickly and share emotion through symbolic representation using characters. Utilised mainly by the younger generation this form of instant communication, known as “Weblish”, allows them to share ideas and knowledge in a code only recognised by users of the chat groups. As people become more and more adept at this form of communication they bring it into formal written pieces, with teachers seeing more and more children utilising the chat language in written communication to each other (TechTv.com, retrieved Wednesday 3 March 2004).

This development of English is a natural progression as it is a living language and as such must adapt to the changing needs of a modern society. With such rapid development of communication technology English has changed to accommodate the communication across all these new platforms. This global language allows for multi-cultural communication between different nationalities due to its symbolic nature of representing emotions as icons or characters, the lack of a need to understand English grammar and ability of users to quickly learn and adapt this innovative language.

With the rapid change in the way we communicate across the globe and the introduction of a global culture, we have changed many facets of modern life.

Electronic communication has become a tool that many people use to share feelings

and ideas, make friends and form relationships. English has been adapted to allow for these ideas and emotions to be shared by online communities, chat groups and sms text buddies.

The notion that English will remain the same is a fallacy, it has changed all through history and now it is evolving to become a universally accepted form of communication, regardless of geographical location or spoken home language.

English has and always will be the language of the world and as such evolves to meet the needs of the world. In conclusion it is apparent that sms and email are firmly part of society, so too do the expressions and terminology utilised become part of the English language, shaping the way we communicate into the future.

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