

THE USAGE OF SLANG IN NETWORK COMMUNICATION

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The Network culture is considered by many scientists as a major historical type of culture, which can be compared only with the Traditional and Creative types of culture. It has the tendency to become global as the mass culture. The internet is one of those conveniences that people just can not imagine their life without now. The Internet has always been a source of technology inspired slang. Even back in the early 1980s, Internet users had their own particular argot and abbreviations. The slang that is used on the internet is almost exclusively used in written communication and used infrequently in oral communication. The internet slang is basically removing vowels and “extra” letters to make words and phrases as short as

possible. An average conversation could go something like this, “*hey, how r u? o im ntb, u? im gr8! well i g2g, ttyl! l8er*”. In that short conversation, it can be seen that there is only one word, in the entire conversation, that spelling and grammar are correct.

It is not easy to decode all of the time, though. In fact, it can be quite confused at times. However, there are many internet web pages that have the equivalent of a translator that can take Standard English and translate it into chat lingo. A web site that I found was called transl8it.com. I typed in the phrase, “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog”. Transl8it.com then changes that into, “th qix brown fox jumps ovr th lazy dg”. Even though words are sometimes dramatically shortened, for the most part, they are spelled phonetically.

Moreover, the interlocutors’ desire to accelerate typing speed closer to the speed of speech leads to the usage in the process of networking all kinds of abbreviations and acronyms, such as “pls” (please), “IM-HO” (In My Humble Opinion), “rly” (really), “np” (no problem), “EOD” (End of Discussion), etc. Acronyms, the art of creating a neology through the association of letters and initials between them, exist on the Internet since the late 1980s [2]. Starting with [LOL](#), from laughing out loud and used to convey great hilarity, hundreds of others have been made since then. Among them can be found: [OMG](#), [BRB](#), BTW. However, this is not a new trend. People have been using acronyms in speech for a long time, such as NASA, scuba, or DNA. Once again, the new slang on the internet has taken this aspect to a different level.

One more very important step in showing emotions was the beginning of the usage of emoticons. They’re called emoticons because they are “icons” which convey “emotion”. For example, a generic smile emoticon [:)] can represent more than feelings of happiness, just as an actual smile can.

(02:20:53) 1: you're online ^_^

(02:20:57) 2: yep

(02:21:11) 2: but you got mewhen I'm all tired and shizz ☹ [1]

Using a [☹] emoticon the speaker shows a sense of genuine regret that he can’t devote his full attention to the conversation.

Since the creation and spread of wide-use of emoticons, instant messenger programs (Yahoo) have made it so when the user types in the keys to make an emoticon, the program will show an animated and sometimes even moving emoticon. Something similar to this is also true with more recent editions of Microsoft Word. When the user types in : -), without any spaces, Word will automatically change it into ☺ .

More than a slang, letter repetition symbolizes a type of language, often pointed as being used by teenagers, consisting of the same letter in a word repeated several times for emphasis. Other spelling phenomena has been derived from it such as *FUUUUUU* to express great frustration, and coming directly from [Rageguy](#) (The name [Rageguy](#) refers to the main character of a series of crudely-drawn comics typically consisting of four panes, portraying situations which can bring rage and exasperation, with the main character screaming with anger as a result. Due to its simplicity and exploitability, [Rageguy](#) has been proven popular thus being evolved into a comic series now known as [Rage Comics](#)) [4].

-want 2 go 2 the park?

-oooooh!yeah!but don't invite Larry.

-oh I wonttttt [3].

In the above conversation you will see two uses of repeated letters, both consonants and vowels. It happens often nowadays. As a rule, its primary purpose is to provide an emotional inflection and convey the tone of the statement. The main tones to be inferred by letter repetition are: enthusiasm (“Oooh!” , for example, because that mimics natural speech, where a cry of excitement would expel more air via a longer vowel.), lack of enthusiasm (drawing out the last letter in a word (often a consonant) can express what in real conversation would be a promotion of the word’s stress in the sentence. For example, “Oh I wonttttt”. (3)). Remember: adding an extra letter (or letters) marks a word, letting the other person know that the speaker (or typer) has an unexpected relationship to the word in the context of the sentence.

The Internet is also the cradle of many expressions whose complete meanings can only be acknowledged and understood because of or in relation to the Internet. While some of them are used as synonymous of another word, the way “Over 9000” can be viewed as a replacement in expressing “lots or buckload” the same way “win and fail” are respectively meaning “success and failure”, others have their own meaning, such as [DERP](#) as a way to signify stupidity, interjection in response to an unintelligent comment.

So, it becomes evident that internet users have developed many slang terms over the years. Most of these are not actually acronyms as they cannot be pronounced, but that is what they are called nonetheless. While it is hard to definitely say whether or not the effect of internet slang is mostly beneficial or detrimental, there are very important positives and negatives. While it has lessened the use of correct grammar, it has made writing more popular among the younger generations. Internet has definitely made its mark in popular culture and will most likely be prominent for quite some time, maybe for as long as the internet exists. Internet slang will continue to evolve and meet the communication needs of its users, despite any criticism it may receive.

References

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