

# The effect of technology on english



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Can this question be answered in one sentence or Is It necessary to explore this more In depth? The famous linguist David Crystal has tried to deal with this question In the book The English language. He investigates the effect of the Internet more In detail In Language and the Internet, where he explores a variety of ‘ Internet situations’. In other words even Crystal can’t give a short and clear answer and has to analyses deferent situations on this and rather new invention. In this paper I would like to have a look at the effect of technology on English in general and I am going to focus on the Internet and mobile hones. . Why do languages change? There are many theories about why languages change. With the following theory It’s social bonding by the American linguist William Labor I would like to illustrate how a language change could take place. According to Labor, first of all some people of a population pronounce particular words with the same vowels differently. Ata later stage, this different pronunciation becomes an Indicator for social Identity of a group. Use this difference in pronunciation, and finally they apply it to all other words with the same vowel.

Consequently, this becomes a permanent linguistic sound change. A similar process could affect the grammar and the vocabulary of a language. These days many Internet and computer related terms are invented, which were originally only used by a small group of computer scientists, but due to the importance of this technology everybody wants to use these words and by and by they become widely used and a language change has taken place.

( 3. Technology and English History of Technology Affecting English A new technological invention has always had a great influence on a language.

In the fifteenth century William Cotton introduced printing into England, which helped to evolve a standard form of English spelling, word-spacing, hyphenation, line-breaking, capitalization and punctuation. Furthermore, the new technology gave the people more opportunities to write, and in the following 150 years almost 20, 000 English books arrived. (Crystal 207-208) The invention of printing allowed new graphic expressions and contrasts (for example italic and boldface). Apart from this, it promoted the expansion of typography with a large number of typefaces.

Soon standards of graphical conventions were introduced, and they can be found today in books, periodicals, newspapers, advertising, brochures, catalogues, instruction annuals, contracts and tickets. Since the nineteenth century new inventions such as the telegraph, the typewriter and the word-processor have expanded the range. The spoken language has also been affected by the arrival of new technologies. The invention of the telephone required new conventions to handle the new type of conversation, which was not face-to-face. For instance, you had to say ‘hello’ and introduce yourself.

In the asses radio broadcasting increased considerably due to the following reasons. A certain accent and dialect (RPR and Standard English) was privileged and new forms of spoken expression (for instance: the commentary, the sews broadcast, the weather forecast and the commercial) appeared. The arrival of television added a new dimension to the language because the spoken language was accompanied by visual effects. Unlike in a radio program, a weather forecaster might say: ‘It is obvious that clouds are arriving from the North! Since the introduction of satellite TV, presenters on international channels such as CNN have had to use time- references like

this evening carefully, because the audience could get confused due to the different time-zones of the world. According to David Crystal, new technologies will expand the linguistic resources of English and the results will be more dramatic than anything we have seen so far. Examples for the new technologies are interactive television and personal digital assistants.

Last but not least the impact of the Internet on English and other languages is profound. Eventually, it will enlarge the language and the scope of varieties in the language to an extent, which has not been accomplished by either printing or broadcasting. (Crystal 127-128) Some Facts about the Use of Technology published on July 27, 2005. This survey gives an insight into the use of technology. 7% of U. S. Teens aged 12 to 17 use the Internet. By contrast, 66% of adults use the Internet. Email is still a fixture in teens' lives, but IM (Instant Messaging) is preferred.

An overwhelming majority of all teenagers, 84%, report owning at least one personal media device: a desktop or laptop computer, a cell phone or a Personal Digital Assistant. 45% of teens have cell phones and 33% are testing. Face-to-face time still beats phone and screen time for teens. The results of the survey show that most teens and two thirds of the adults are Internet and technology literate these days. What also can be observed is that teenagers spend most of their online time sending and reading emails and instant messages and they play online games.

Only about half of them search the Internet for information about a college, university, or other school they are thinking about attending. In my opinion these facts give an indication of how technology could have an effect on

English. On the other hand it is good to know that the face-to-face time still exceeds the phone and screen time for teenagers. (Within, Element and Madden 1-6) The Internet ' The Internet is a genuine new medium of linguistic communication. (Crystal 129) It uses some of the features of traditional speech and writing and adds new characteristics.

Crystal has chosen the term ' Netscape to describe the various forms of language visible on the Internet and defines five communicative situations on the Internet. 1 . E-mail: Computers are used to send electronic messages from a sender to a receiver. 2. The World Wide Web consists of all computers connected to the Internet. 3. In synchronous cutthroats people talk simultaneously to each other. The participants may be from all over the world and take part by signing up for a virtual mom. 4. In asynchronous cutthroats people can write messages which remain in an electronic location.

They can be read and answered by other participants later on and they remain in this location without a time limit. 5. Virtual worlds are very popular among entities (users of the Internet are called ' entities'. ) and especially among young users. They can be used to create imaginary worlds and people can send text messages to each other. Other activities include simulating real-life situations, competitive games and chatting. (Crystal 129) Linguistics Conventions on the Internet The above mentioned communicative situations have all got their own linguistic conventions.

Nevertheless, they show some similarities. What they all have got in common are differences to traditional writing and spoken language. Of course, they some major differences as well. Instead of talking to each other,

most interactions are carried out by writing dialogues. In E-mails a predominant use of dialogues can also be observed. Although the Web is not as dialog as cutthroats, virtual worlds and e-mails, for instance, it is interactive and offers the use of e-mail, cutthroats, FAQ frequently asked questions') and other opportunities, such as guest books.

The frequent use of dialogues in Internet communication has been described as 'Written speech' by some commentators. Web pages look very similar to conventional writing with electronic versions of traditional newspaper pages, for instance. There are also copies of scientific, religious, legal and many other versions of printed English, which are only restricted by the size of the screen. On the other hand, the electronic versions can be entirely different to their physical counterparts.

You will find animated texts and images, which may change their size and format, while you are browsing a page. Once you close a page, it could never be the same again, because it has been renewed. These features are not characteristic of traditional writing, though. If Netscape is unlike traditional writing, is it similar to traditional spoken language? For David Crystal Netscape is limited in its functions and it is in actual fact not capable of providing properties of spoken language, such as intonation, stress, speed, rhythm and tone of voice of speech.

The same applies to facial expressions and gestures, which deliver important signs in natural dialogues. Nevertheless, Crystal has discovered attempts to express the non-verbal features of communication in Netscape. He mentions exaggerated punctuation marks, repeated letters, altering capitalization,

spacing, adding other symbols (see Table 1) and the use of emoticons or smiley. Emoticons and smiley are combinations of keyboard characters created to present emotions. Studies state that only 10-15 percent of messages contain smiley. I am really surprised about this result.

I use smiley a lot and also the e- mails that I receive show a frequent use of them. Unlike David Crystal, I think that the keyboard allows you to express at least some properties of face-to-face conversations and these properties are strong enough to convey stress, intonation, tone of voice, rhythm and emotions, for instance, which I have tried to show in the following table.

(crystal 130-132) Table 1 Example Method Effect hell 0000000000 repeating letters intonation I am RIGHT capitalization stress, emphasis What do you mean???????? Petting punctuation marks stress, tone of voice use of symbols intonation, stress and as you know combination of punctuation marks rhythm, pause random use of punctuation emphasis, attitude Examples of Basic and Joke Smiley Basic Smiley Meaning pleasure, humor sadness, dissatisfaction crying sarcastic Joke Smiley user is wearing a Walkway ????

user is wearing sunglasses user is drunk user holds a Christian religious office (crystal 132-138) However, I agree with David Crystal in terms of some other limitations that Netscape has got.

For example, when you send a message to somebody, you don't know how successful this message will be since decisive features of face-to-face conversations, such as instant replies (nods, 'uh-uh'), are missing. It could be compared to a loophole conversation in which the listener doesn't respond to you at all. (Crystal 133) The Dynamic Character of E-texts 1. E-mails We can change a received message while we are replying to it. For <https://assignbuster.com/the-effect-of-technology-on-english/>

instance, we can divide a paragraph into two and write our reply between the two parts.

By cutting to, before we send our reply back to the sender. This ' quoting or framing procedure may also be carried out by the sender, who could even send a modified response to a third party. As a result, e-mails often become very complex and show features which can not be found in traditional writing. 2. Cutthroats In cutthroats we can communicate with an unknown number of people and deal with a number of messages simultaneously, which is not possible in a traditional setting. There you can't communicate to more than one person at once. 3.

Messages are persistent In other words it is possible to Join a cutthroat conversation after it started and you can still read the messages from the very beginning and react to them. (Crystal 133-134) Netscape features The Internet is a relatively new invention. Nevertheless, a great number of words and phrases have already come into existence which are necessary to talk about Internet related activities. As a result, the Internet is one of the most creative lexical domains in contemporary English'. (Crystal 134) Many terms are used in connection with the software.

User options and commands: file, edit, insert, paste, format, tools, window, help, search, refresh, address, history, stop. When something goes wrong, you will be confronted with error messages: forbidden, illegal operation, error, not found, 404 error. Some terms are used in connection with computer hardware: freeze, lock, down, hang, crash, bomb, client. Population of Internet users: entities, netters, nettles, Netherlands,



cybercafés, nerds, bozos, newbie's, surfers, gaiter. Most of these words are very common in our everyday language, but they have been given a new meaning related to the Internet.

Newly coined words are often produced by uniting two separate words. ' mousse moonstruck, mousetrap, mouser; phrasal verbs: mouse across, mouse over. ' click: click-and-buy, one-click, cost-per-click, double-click. Ware': firmware, freeware, groupware, shareware, shoveled, wetware. Web': WebMD, webmaster, website, hyperbolically, webmaster, wobbliness, Webster. ' net': nettle, entered, netters, Hotbox, Hothead. ' bug (software error): bug fix, backtracker, Budget. Cyber-' and ' hyper-' as prefixes: cyberspace, subcultures, cybercafé, cyberspace, supersaturate, Siberian, cyber rights; hypertext, hyperlink, hypertension, hyperfine. To' (an artificial intelligence program, from robot) as a suffix: anybody, chatterbox, knob, cancelled, soft, mailbox, spot. @ (at) as a prefix: Tacoma, tasting, @- party, @-address, @Home. Combinations of parts of a word with another: netiquette, nineteen, infinite, datagram, Informal, Internal, Bugling. Replacement of a word element by a similar sounding unit: e-crusting (electronic recruiting), e-tailing (electronic retailing). Use of ' infixes': net. Legend, net. Abuse, net. Police, net. Citizen. On the Internet a remarkable use of different types of abbreviations is obvious.

Examples: BCC (blind carbon copy), DNS (domain name system), FAQ (frequently asked question), HTML (hypertext markup language). Letter-plus-letter combinations: WAC (World Wide Web Consortium), POP (Platform for Privacy Preferences), Genet. Electronic devices with small screens, such as mobile phones, have also led to new abbreviated forms, but I am going to <https://assignbuster.com/the-effect-of-technology-on-english/>

discuss them in the chapter 'Testing. (Crystal 134-136) The Graphology of Netscape It is important to mention that Netscape has got characteristic graphology and all orthographic properties have been influenced.

The use of lower case and the absence or random use of punctuation are very common in e-mails, cutthroats and virtual worlds (Susan I am worried about Sunday). Words in capitals show a special importance. In some cases, such as in business names; capital letters have to be used, though. The way two capitals are used is a characteristic feature of Internet graphology. This is called 'visualization'. Examples: AltaVista, Powerboat, Sportsmen. A variation is an initial lower case: eBay and mimic. As far as spelling is concerned, there is a tendency towards the US spelling.

Apart from historical reasons, this is due to the fact that the US words are shorter (humor vs. humor, flavor vs. flavor). Moreover, the traditional plural 's' has been replaced by 'z' in illegal versions of software (wares, tune, game, porno, downloads). Unlike in traditional writing, there is a tendency to accept non-standard spelling and spelling mistakes. Cutthroats and virtual worlds apply non-traditional spellings which correspond with the pronunciation (yep, yup, way, nope, noon for yes and no). The dollar sign is sometimes used instead of 's' and the pound sign instead of 'L' to make implications about costs (Microsoft and AWE).

Especially teenage entities have invented new spellings, such as cool (cool), bone (phone), doze (dudes), losers (losers) and c%l (cool). However, teenagers know the distinction between Netscape and more formal writing. (Crystal 136-137) Language Change In conventional conversations, terms

from the computer technology are applied to express coolness. Thereby, the words get new meanings. (Crystal 138) Examples: I'll ping you later (I. E. Get in touch to see if you're around). He's 404 (I. E. He's not around). He's living in hypertext (I. E. Ex.'s got a lot to hide). (Crystal, Language and the Internet Particular vocabulary, such as ' at', ' dot', forward', ' slash' and ' dot' is necessary these days to cope with the punctuation in electronic addresses. In the meantime, the common phrase dot com has become an adjective, as in dotcom organizations and dotcom crisis. Furthermore, many companies have substituted the letter ' a' or ' at' by an @, which was selected by the computer engineer Ray Tomlinson to send the first outwork e-mail in 1972. Examples: @good, @traction, @cafe, @home.

The prefix ' e-' is a fundamental letter to form Netscape expressions and The Oxford Dictionary of New Words already recorded e-text, e-zone, e-cash and e-money in 1997. More examples are: e-therapists, e-management, e-government, e-books, e-voting, e-newsletter. Some of these words will probably achieve recognition in Standard English very quickly, unlike language processes of the past. (Crystal 138-140) The Language of the Web In the book Language and the Internet David Crystal describes the language on the World Wide Web, which is ' graphically more eclectic than any domain of written language in the real world. (Crystal 2001: 197) It offers both restrictions and opportunities and Crystal suggests that this is because the language of the Web is under no central control and does not know boundaries. Nevertheless, it creates new communicative genres. The Web has got two major functions. People can receive and find texts and on the other hand they can produce texts and so they have got the ability to affect

the language of the WWW more than in any other medium. (Crystal 2001 : 195-208) Traditionally, it would take a considerable time until a linguistic change would become a permanent characteristic of a language.

In the case of the Internet, a language changes very quickly and new words, grammatical constructions, patterns of discourse, spellings and punctuation can be widely recognized within a short period of time. New language conventions may reach a great number of people at a high speed and this process is likely to be accelerated in the future. In addition to this, as new words are exposed to an enormous number of people, the amount of neologisms is likely to rise. Nevertheless, not all innovations will permanently enter Standard English. (Crystal 140) 4. Testing Testing is a new term for the mobile phone short messaging service (SMS).

After its introduction it took only three years until a new testing' language was set up and it was growing and changing fast. This new language variety shows how a new technical invention can result in immediate linguistic effects. Why did this language cope with a small display, the number of characters is limited and the keypad is small. As a result the language has to be used effectively and this has led to an abbreviated language. Some abbreviations are predictable (day, BE and C U err) or the mobile generation has a knowledge of Netscape and the characters (e. G. smiley) used there (Ms = message, BRB = be right back).

Examples: letters with syllabic values: than (then), Ned (need). New forms: c %l (cool). Direct-address items: FAT (free to talk), Mob (mobile), PC (please call me). Multi-word sentences with initial letters: STUDY (so what do you

think? ). Vowel-less items: TXT (text), XSLT (excellent). These abbreviations are less time consuming and save a lot of energy. In 'recurrence' (Are you two seeing me later? , the number of characters is reduced to less than half. It is not possible to foresee whether the language variety testing is a current development or a permanent feature of the English language.

What can be foreseen is that it will develop as well as the technology.

(Crystal 141-142) 5. Conclusion Internet situations and the use of new technologies are no longer optional communicative modalities, because they are part of our everyday lives. Communication at work, in school and in other settings is Internet, mobile phones, personal digital assistants and hand held units mediated and as a result people have to adapt to the new inventions and at the same time to the new language varieties to meet new needs, new situations and modalities.

As new technical inventions become available, even more varieties of language will develop. However, the extent and persistence of new genres of communication is difficult to foresee or even to imagine. In my opinion, it is important for a language student to be aware of the complex varieties of English associated with the new technologies in order to be able to judge the language of 'electronic discourse' and its appropriateness in other linguistic settings.

I have learned a lot from this paper and I am now able to understand and apply these new genres and I hope that I have become a competent modern communicator.