THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE COMMUNICATION ON THE ENGLISH

LANGUAGE IN REAL LIFE

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Abstract

Online communication is how people communicate, connect, transact to send, retrieve or receive information of any kind via the internet using digital media. The past two decades have seen a massive development in the methods and means of online communication. From texting a friendon social media to attending an online video conference for work to shopping online from the comfort of your home, online communication has revolutionized our lives in innumerable ways. The coronavirus pandemic of the year 2020 has brought online communication to the foreground. Online communication has undoubtedly become an indispensable part of our lifestyle today. The knowledge of the English language being a prerequisite for online communication, has inevitably led to the increase in outreach of the English language as a by- product of the progress of online communication. Although several modes of online communication are available in multiple languages today, this is not true for all and despite that,a basic knowledge of the English language remains compulsory. The pandemic transformed online communication from a choice to an unignorable necessity since it was the only means of communication in the time of crisis, hence forcing increasing number of individuals to learn the English language to successfully communicate online. Even though online communication has been a boosting factor for the English language, one can also not ignore its ill effects on the language. Social media has changed the way we speak and write English including the advent ofan alphabet soup of acronyms, abbreviations and neologisms which has grown up around technologically mediated communication. This paper explains how online communication has aided the spread of the English language besides exploring the many ways in which the English language has been adversely affected by online communication.

Keywords:

1. Introduction

The English language is a continually changing language that has been impacted by a variety of cultures and languages, including Latin, French, Dutch, and Afrikaans. It evolved from the dialects and vocabulary of Germanic peoples—Angles, Saxons, and Jutes—who landed in Britain in the 5th century CE. English, which originated in England, is the prevalent language in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and a number of Caribbean and Pacific island nations. India, the Philippines, Singapore, and several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, notably South Africa, speak it as their official language. English is the most popular foreign language in most other nations, and it is because of this that it has earned the title of global lingua franca (Fig. 1). English is presently spoken by around a third of the world's population [1].
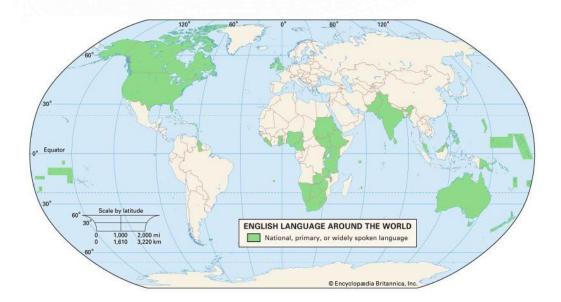

Fig. 1: Map showing the use of the English language as a national, primary, or widely spoken language in countries around the world. [1]

Since its introduction in the early 1990s, the internet has become a critical component of globalization and the expansion of the English language. Technology, or the internet, is the newest, broadest, and fastest means of transferring information throughout the globe today and

since the English language is the most common language of online communication, it has become an important tool of transferring information between various populations.

The COVID-19 Pandemic of the year 2020, has definitely brought online communication to the forefront, especially in India. As a result, the English language has also gained significant popularity because knowledge of the English language is quintessential in order to successfully communicate online. Online communication which had earlier been a choice, now became a compulsion as it was the only feasible mode of communication during the pandemic when people were prohibited from leaving their homes unless absolutely necessary. This forced systemof online communication compelled more and more people to learn the English language because of its requirement in online communication, thus contributing to the spread of the English Language.

This paper also sheds light on recent changes in the use of the English language that have resulted from the impact of online communication. As a result, the English language has evolvedin tandem with the ever-changing world of technology. While some believe that online communication, especially through social media, has 'dumbed down' the language, others maintain that a language that does not evolve is a dying language.

People speak English in a similar manner today as they did before the dawn of the internet, albeit with a larger vocabulary. The way individuals write English today, on the other hand, is vastly different. Online communication has had the greatest impact in this area. Hence, this paper aims to highlight those changes occurred in the written English and to show if these changes such as abbreviations, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, and grammar used by native and foreign speakers, when communicating with each other through the various means of media, become common in formal English language. For example, email transformed the structure of the letter as a communicating medium. In this regard, new standards and abbreviations such as IMO (in my

opinion), FWIW (for what it's worth), IIRC (if my memory serves me right), and FYI (for your information) have emerged [2].

2. Impact of Online Communication on the Spread of the English Language

English has evolved into a worldwide communication language. It is the fastest-spreading language in human history. Around 4 to 6 billion individuals speak English at a usable level around the world. It is a global language that is spoken and understood in practically every country on the planet. It has evolved into a crucial tool for globalization. It is widely utilized for international trade transactions and has become increasingly important for the growth of knowledge.

Apart from that, the spread of the English language is the result of its integration into every aspect of life, including education, politics, economics, society, and the media. In the twenty-firstcentury, various modes of online communication have undoubtedly played the most significant role in the global spread of the English language.

2.1. The Advent of Online Communication

Communication in the old days was mostly through physical means, through letters followed by the use of telephone communication systems and cellphones. The advent of the internet brought forth a new era of communication systems referred to as 'online communication' which used the internet to transfer signals and messages. Social media has emerged as the most prevalent and revolutionary form of online communication over the past two decades. In the 21st century, socialmedia is seen as the fourth pillar of the state, serving as society's eyes and ears. It is the most essential technology by which people may connect, express thoughts, share their knowledge, ponder any subject, and exhibit unity or care for society's welfare. "New online media are helping to transform language and literature and it has important

consequences on language teaching" (Mark Warchauer: AMID EAST, Cairo Egypt),

(millennialism and media language, literacy and technology in 21st century).

People were able to explore various cultures and groups online using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, as well as share their own opinions in local dialects of English. Networking sites began to develop around the world in the year 2005, and have since been immensely popular in the dissemination of English through the 'democratization of knowledge.'

2.2. Initial Users of Online Communication Media

Initially, online communication was more prevalent among the youth. This was because as per the prevailing trends in education and learning, the English language and to a great extent even technology had become an integral part of the academic curriculum, knowledge of both of which is extremely essential for online communication. These were not a part of the old system of education and people from older generations weren't as well acquainted with the English language or technology as individuals of the current generation. Only those who wanted to learn about upcoming technologies became a part of the online communication bandwagon. The others which constituted the majority of people, decided to stay away from the online communication system. Thus only students of the current generation, teachers, people working in the corporate sector and others who had to compulsorily update their skills to suit the needs of the developing technologies for their respective professions, were exposed to online communication media. The rest decided to live in ignorance, aloof from the world of technology. In the initial years, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter emerged as the most commonly used forms of Online Communication, which were again popular mostly among the younger generations due to the aforementioned reasons.

2.3.The Most Pertinent Challenge to Online Communication – Language Barrier

People and passages via which people can communicate are essential for the spread of any language. Online communication provided that passage for the spread of the English language, which was the first-ever platform with such a large global outreach. No other language in the world has had the privilege to globalize its approach the way English has and that is essentially because of the fact that it was chosen as the primary language for technological revolution. One of the major challenges to online communication is the language barrier. Although some applications and websites today allow translation and are available in various languages, these facilities were not available during the initial years following the advent of online communication and even now, such translation features do not apply to all websites. Translation software in spite of having improved over the years, are not always absolutely accurate or reliable and the true meaning is often lost in translation. Thus a basic knowledge of the English language remains necessary as it is the most commonly used language for online communicationand majority of the websites or applications use it as their primary language. This language barrier has favoured the global spread of the English language in conjunction with the development of online communication media because having a basic knowledge of English is theonly way to overcome this barrier.

2.4. Significance and Usage of the English Language in Social Media

The English language is widely used and has a strong appeal as a scientific and technological language. The importance of the English language may be gauged by the fact that it is the only language that is not only accepted by social media but also has driven individuals all over the world to speak in English when using and engaging in social networking. The majority of the content created on the internet is clearly in English, implying that even a basic understanding of the English language will enable one to access a vast amount of information on the internet that

may be used in a variety of ways.

Websites and applications that allow users to produce and share content or participate in social networking are referred to as social media. In today's world, social media has played a critical role in not only replacing traditional modes of communication, but also adopting an avant-garde approach in a variety of fields such as education, politics, medical, economic, and social activities, and, most importantly, in the advancement and development of technology. This clearly shows that knowing English has become a requirement for reaching the pinnacle of success.

Clearly, the English language is widely used on social media for communication purposes. Essentially, social media serves as a rebound in that it not only encourages the use of English, but it also helps to enhance English skills. People are increasingly communicating through a variety of social networking sites because they are convenient and time-saving instruments that allow discussion and deliberation to take place at any time and in any location throughout the world.

The following are the most prominent social networking services that need communication in English: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Google+, Forums and Message Boards [3] (Fig. 2).

Apart from the aforementioned social networking sites, the internet contains an infinite number of websites, some of which may be in other languages, but because English has achieved international status, a pop-up window appears for websites in otherlanguages to be translated into English.

Fig. 2: Various social media platforms that require communication in English [45].

2.5. English has become a Vast Spreading Language due to Advancement in OnlineCommunication

Furthermore, the world was hit by the dot com boom at the turn of the twenty-first century, which prominently chose English as the language of technical transformation. The extensive usage of social media can be used to measure the spread of English. It essentially "pulls" people toward studying English because English is seen as a status symbol in today's society, motivating individuals to become acquainted with this "lofty" language [4].

In recent years, social media has made significant attempts to promote the English language, and these efforts are to be commended. The current civilization – the globe of the twenty-first century – has become so intertwined that the term "global village" is now often used to characterize contemporary culture. People and locations from all civilizations are now linked by digital technology, and national economies are becoming increasingly interdependent. The advancement of human activity would be impossible without the development of science, technology, and, of course, social media, whether it be trade or media, manufacturing or agriculture. It's worth noting that the English language has had a significant part in this growth. Itis extensively used to facilitate communication between people of different nationalities. The English language is not only widely used in communication, but it also has a wide range of applications.

A progressive nation's backbone is education. Education must be integrated at the grassroots level for a country to reach its pinnacle of achievement. It is the solution for all problems, including political unrest, a faltering economy, and widespread social disorders. English is the most common medium used by schools, colleges, and institutions to disseminate information. The majority of people in this period have access to the internet and social media. Students are immensely aided by social media when undertaking research for their courses. They may, for example, use Google to assist them in undertaking research on a specific issue. Because Englishis the fundamental language of social media, such activities appear to indirectly strengthen and broaden the horizon of the English language.

Many people, mostly from the South Asian region, have expressed an interest in learning English but have been unable to do so due to a lack of access to institutions or personal concerns. However, as social media has advanced and progressed, virtual learning has become more practical and possible, giving this language the upper hand and allowing it to expand.

Furthermore, individuals all over the world use social media to conduct everyday activities suchas online banking/transactions, online shopping, travel, online gaming, medical, and other services, further developing this language. It basically demonstrates that knowing English has become essential for living a healthy and prosperous life in today's world.

2.6.Influence of Online Communication on the Corporate Sector

Online communication has definitely played an important role corporate sector in the past few years. It has helped in simplifying the process of business meetings because there are several international meetings which were earlier conducted physically, for participating in which one had to travel from one country to the other, are now held online (Fig. 3). This undoubtedly usefulas it saves time and energy. However, delegates from countries where English isn't a popular mode of

communication like Germany or China, have had to learn the language in order to participate in these meetings since as mentioned earlier, a basic knowledge of English is essential for online communication. This has enhanced the spread of the language because in the recent years increasing number of corporate companies are shifting to the online mode for conducting business meetings, requiring their employees to be well equipped with the knowledge of the English language

Fig. 3: Online video conferencing [46].

2.7. Cheaper Availability of the Internet and Electronic Devices has favoured Online Communication

The manufacture of portable laptops followed by smartphones contributed majorly to the increase in accessibility of online communication media. Earlier, internet and hence online communication media were only available on desktop computers which were bulky and costly. Only a limited number of people could afford to have their own personal computers and only few institutions could

offer this privilege to their students. Later less bulky and cheaper alternatives were available in the market. The advent of portable computers in the form of laptops gained much popularity, even

though they were not in the affordable price range. Finally, the development of smartphones, that is, portable phones which offered the facility to use the internet as well as make calls like the older version of mobile phones, proved to be a game changer which largely increased the use of online communication media. Initially, smartphones were also considered a luxury due to their high costs. However, within the last 5 years, cheaper alternatives have flooded the market. Several brands in the industry coming up with 'budget- range' smartphones which are affordable and durable. The development of smartphones was accompanied by the introduction of new social media applications, the most popular among thembeing WhatsApp, which have made the use of online modes of communication viable for all.

Another major development that has significantly increased online communication, especially in India, was the availability of internet at a cheaper, more affordable price. Earlier having access 2G and 3G internet was considered as luxury, but the availability of 4G internet having higher speed at a lower price, largely increased internet accessibility. In the year 2016, a new network service provider, Jio, was launched in India. It became the first company to introduce an affordable plan for 4G internet which offered greater speed and more data access. It also launched several several schemes for free internet and smartphone availability, following which several existing companies came up with similar plans. As a result, not only all people in the urban areas but people living in rural areas also started to have access to the internet and online modes of communication.
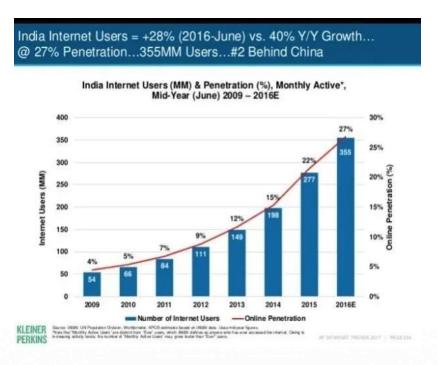
Fig. 4: Graph showing sharp increase in number of internet users from 2015-2016 after the

launch of Jio 4G internet in India [47].

Cheaper internet facilities being readily available on the mobile phones have thus increased the

usage of online communication media. Hence, increasing number of individuals who are being

attracted towards the online communication media, are also gaining knowledge of the English

language paving the path for increasing the outreach of the language.

3. Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Online Communication and the

English Language

In the year 2020, the world experienced a global disease outbreak caused by SARS-CoV-2, also

known as COVID-19, a coronavirus. To combat the COVID-19 pandemic, governments and public

health organizations around the world implemented social distancing and stay-at-home policies

(World Health Organization, 2020) [5]. While particular restrictions varied by country, government

plans to deal with the coronavirus pandemic frequently included the closure of schools, non-

essential physical shops and enterprises, as well as the restriction of public transit

and places, as well as social gatherings. Public interactions plummeted as a result of these situations. With fewer opportunities to spend time together in person, being socially connected had become more difficult.

Industry estimates showed that digital media usage skyrocketed during the first months of the epidemic, as people spent more time at home owing to coronavirus lockdowns (Kemp, 2020) [6]. Such increases were noticeable for social networking and messaging apps, but the exceptional acceptance of video conferencing apps and applications was particularly noteworthy. Under such stay-at-home circumstances, people's reliance on information and communications technology (ICTs) for social connection was palpable [7].

The crisis brought about by the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 has unmistakably brought online communication to the forefront, making it the primary mode of communication among individuals. The English language, knowledge of which is of absolute importance in online communication, has therefore also gained significant popularity as a result.

The use of online communication has undergone a notable bloom in the past year as it was the only feasible mode of communication in the time of crisis. Online communication had earlier been a choice and people could choose whether to be a part of it or stay away from it. However, it isn't a choice anymore. It has rather become a compulsion for people of all age groups and from all strata of society.

The crisis forced people to shift to online modes of communication. This forced system of online communication compelled more and more people to learn the English language because of its significance in online communication. All employees in the corporate sector started "working from home" and teachers began imparting education remotely to the students who were sitting in their own respective homes, through online modes of communication. The entire education

system all over the world drastically shifted completely to the online mode of learning, almost

overnight, making use of online communication platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom Meeting,

Google Classroom, etc. (Fig. 5)

Fig. 5: Popular Online Communication Platforms for Education and Conferences [48].

Advancement in the online mode of communication has also obviously helped in this process to a

great extent. Communication over a voice call doesn't allow a 100 students to be able to be

connected over a single call but a Zoom call meeting can allow over 500 students to be connected

to their teacher in a single meeting. Online communication also allows face-to-face interactions

with the help of video calls. Hence, online mode of communication is preferred overthe other

modes of communication which makes it indispensable in the situation of crisis.
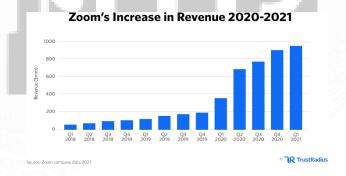

Fig. 6: Graph showing increase in the revenue of Zoom during the pandemic indicates the

dependency of people on Online modes of Communication [49].

In order to successfully communicate online one must have at least a basic knowledge of the

English language. People especially from rural areas initially found it difficult to cope up with the

online mode of communication due to the lack of knowledge of the English language. The

people who weren't well acquainted with English could not cope with the existing situation and were bound to be left behind unless they made efforts to learn the language in order to communicate online during this pandemic. Once people realized the indispensability of online communication, more and more people started learning or at least grabbing a basic idea of the English language in order to get their job done. Even teachers of vernacular languages who were so far not so well versed with the English language, or both students and teachers of schools where English is not the mode of communication (such as Hindi-medium, Bengali-medium, Urdu-medium schools), have had to gain a basic knowledge of the English language in order to communicate online. This has ultimately resulted in increased spread of the English language with increasing number of people getting acquainted with it.

Online shopping (Fig. 7) also experienced a massive surge during the pandemic. Items that initially weren't so commonly bought online, such as medicines and groceries, also started being purchased through online shopping websites. Online transactions through net-banking also increased considerably during the outbreak of the coronavirus, when people preferred to stay at home and get their errands done online in order to avoid the risk of infection.

Fig. 7: Popular online shopping applications and websites [50].

Online business meetings and academic conferences increased during the pandemic and people realized the ease and convenience of online mode of communication. Once they learnt how

beneficial online communication can be in bringing together people from various parts of the world living in different time zones, online communication platforms gained more popularity than ever before. People have been so fascinated with the advantages of online communication that even in future, when the world is free from the clutches of the deadly virus, online international business and academic conferences will continue to occur. This will result in greater number of people from different parts of the world learning the English language in orderto participate in such online gatherings.
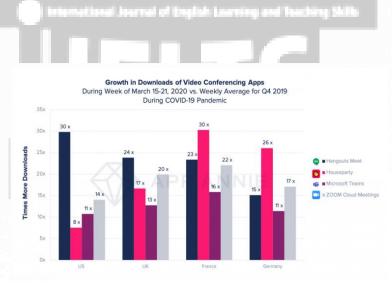

Fig. 8: Graph showing increase in downloads of Online Video Conferencing Apps during the COVID-19 pandemic [51].

4. The Impact of Online Communication on changing the structure of the English Language

The process of writing and speaking in English has been changed by online communication, particularly through social media. Communication technology encompasses a wide range of electronic communication methods. Such forms are commonly connected with the internet, which can now be accessed via computers as well as mobile phones. E-mail, chat rooms, forums,instant

messaging devices, social networking sites, gaming networks, and Web-logs (blogs) are just a few examples. According to Omar and Miah (2012) [8], nearly half of all teenagers (45%) own a computer and a cell phone. These devices let users to make and receive phone calls and text messages. The impact of this process may be seen in the behaviour of young people on a daily basis, as well as in their educational system.

The impact of technology and the internet on the modern English language can be seen and felt in a variety of ways. For starters, it includes a large amount of "jargon vocabulary". Second, it gives existing words and terminology new meanings, such as the definitions of 'mouse' and 'keyboard,' and so on. Furthermore, it generates phrases that unify the utterances of people all over the world who encounter one other via social media, despite the fact that they are from different parts of the world. Furthermore, technology can create unique linguistic "memes" far faster and farther than ever before. For example, the term "cloud" refers to a nebulous group of people who are all working on computers at the same time.

According to David Crystal (2015) [9], new technologies serve to facilitate new interests by fostering new English language styles. As a result, the impact of a particular technical medium is thought to be particularly intriguing. It is a somewhat transient phenomena for Crystal, and it takes a long time for it to be noticed as a significant alteration. Using social media, such as Twitter, can influence what people write by influencing how they write. The English language is almost identical to what it was 20 years ago.

It is thought that technology progress tends to trigger linguistic and cultural change to some extent. As a result, dictionaries are always ready to incorporate new, often highly current words. Dewey (2015) [10] and Al-Kadi (2017) [11] argue that old words with new meanings are more

fascinating than new ones in this regard. The words "cloud," "tablet," and "catfish," for example, are all instances of old words having new meanings.

4.1.Debate views about the Effect of Online Communication on the English language

Almost every native English speaker and foreign learner uses the internet for online communication, and there are some who do tend to use it several times throughout the day. All living languages evolve over time, and the internet has provided a new medium for these changes to occur. English spelling, vocabularies, pronunciation, and grammar have all altered as the internet has evolved into a public gadget and a means of communication available to everyone.

Debating researchers have held opposing viewpoints on the changes brought about by the influence of online communication. The new alterations in English variations brought about by the online communication, according to Ali (2012) and Kern (2006), constitute a threat to the standard varieties of English. These reasons are ascribed to the fact that today's social media English frequently deviates from the mainstream forms. There was an endeavour in the late eighteenth century to establish order, identity, and stability for the English language style (McCrum et al. 1992) [12]. Other academics argued that the language should be protected from modification. According to Considine (2014) [13], the English language is distinct from other languages in that there is no language academy tasked with controlling an official version. Goring (2005) [14] goes on to say that English should be fixed, that all posterity should be regarded the founder, and that the English dictionary should be the cornerstone. As the desire fora standard grammar developed, some academics (Considine, 2014; Goring, 2005; Jackson, 2013 [15]) sought to find a single book of grammar.

Other researchers, such as David Crystal (2001, 2005, 2011) [16,17,18] argue that technological

advancements have ushered in a linguistic revolution. These changes in English form and usage,according to Crystal and other linguists like Herring (2011) [19], have ushered in a new branch of linguistics known as Internet Linguistics. Internet Linguistics is widely discussed in some academic institutions as part of the discipline of digital communication or as computer-mediateddiscourse analysis (CMDA). This style of discourse is similar to other forms of communication and interaction. The conversation takes place here by exchanging spoken and written communications through a network of connected computers. Social and economic variables influence online or email style while using this branch of discourse. According to Cho (2010) [20], email English is more informal than other forms of written communication. Yates (1996)[21], on the other hand, thinks that "in terms of language variety, CMC is more analogous to writing than speech." Shortenings, acronyms, initialisms, homophones, accent stylization, non-conventional spellings, and chippings are among the linguistic elements employed in text messages, according to Kadir, Maros, and Hamid (2012) [22].

4.2.The Reason behind the change in structure of the English language

Life is full of change and evolution. Everything takes place in its own world. Languages, like everything else, change with time. The structure of the English language evolves dramatically over time. When one compares the English language employed in Shakespeare's plays to that of today, one is completely astounded. It demonstrates how rapidly languages change. This fundamental shift is, in essence, the result of contemporary civilization. The advent of social media has changed the English language's structure and dialect.

Would Shakespeare be able to read and grasp the contemporary Internet-circulating shortened English content? Is it even a reasonable question to ask who will be the greatest English writer for years to come? Due to the limited length of online information, the English he understood

and championed is rapidly fading. These constraints, together with the prevalence of fast social contacts, have sparked a new era of English language changes. As a result, a new short-hand English dialect known as Text-speak has emerged. The digital natives, or net-generation who regularly use online communication media, are particularly fond of text-speak (Rosen et al., 2010) [23].

It all began with the release of the first, now-obsolete messaging applications such as MSN Messenger, hi5, and others. People tend to utilize abbreviations and acronyms when conversing through text messages, especially when they are in a hurry. With the passage of time, these acronyms cemented their place in the English language, forcing dictionaries to include them in their word lists. People can utilize acronyms and emoticons in current social networking and messaging apps like Twitter, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and others. The character limit on Twitter is 140 characters. As a result, acronyms like as LOL (for "laughing out loud") and OMG (for "oh my God") are commonly used in tweets.

Without a doubt, social media has had a significant impact on the ever-changing English language. Nobody would have heard the words "unfriend" and "selfie" just a few years ago. The introduction of new terms, new meanings for existing words, and changes in communication indicate the importance of social media and the imprint it is leaving on the English language. The evolution of language has been greatly aided by social media. The Oxford Dictionary is often updated with new words, with the majority of them coming from social media platforms [24].

4.3. Ways in which Online Communication has changed the structure of the English language

The language that is unique to the internet is one of the most noticeable and conspicuous qualities. The terms used in computer science and other related fields are not included in this

vocabulary. Other than technical phrases like cable, disc, and bit binary, a slew of new wordshave emerged to describe specific circumstances, procedures, and activities. Combining two separate words to produce a new word is a common approach of developing internet terminology, for example, mousepad, one-click, and double-click.

In the process of researching internet users' language, it was discovered that words like atcomman, atsign, @-party, and @-address have increasingly prefixed functions: atcomman, atsign, @-party, and @-address. This usage has gained traction in non-internet environments.

i)   Text messaging and Internet acronyms:

The abbreviated language and slang terms often used with mobile phone text messaging, email, and instant messaging are known as SMS lingo or internet acronyms (online chat application, such as Messenger from Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). The examination of text messaging revealed that the messages do not employ formal English and contain a large number of acronyms. Because texts are designed to be instantaneous, abbreviations are thought to be easier and faster than complete forms. As a result, one of the most distinguishing elements has been the many sorts of abbreviations prevalent in chat rooms, text messages, and blogs. Acronyms are so popular that they frequently stand for new full forms of words, such as BBS (bulletin board system), BCC (blind carbon copy), CID (consider it done), CIO (check it out), and FAQ (frequently asked questions). One of the most noticeable elements of the internet has been the numerous types of abbreviations present in users' writings. Acronyms are used so frequently that they attract a lot of feedback and responses. Acronyms are no longer only a collection of letters in the internet's language. They denote entire meaning and are pronounced like words. A list of common acronyms is provided below [42].

Acronyms	Meaning
2F4U	Too fast for you
2MORO	Tomorrow
2NTE	Tonight
AAMOF	As a matter of fact
AFAIK	As far as I know
AKA	Also known as
BFF	Best friends forever
BTW	By the way
CU	See you
DIY	Do it yourself
F2F	Face to face
IDK	I don't know
DKDC	Don't know, don't care
TBH	To be honest
TBC	To be continued
TTYL	Talk to you later
GR8	Great
TQ	Thank you

ii) **Punctuation and Spelling:**

Net-speak, or the online language, has an own graphology as well. The status of capitalization, for example, is utilized in a unique way and varies widely. The majority of instances of capitalization in Net-speak are not case-sensitive, and instead follow a random use of capital letters or no capital letters at all. Sentences that start with little letters in a different location are usually acceptable. For instance:

-Henry, will you be traveling to guatemala next month

In the example above, a message written entirely in capital letters is deemed "shouting" and should be avoided at all costs. Full capitalization, on the other hand, adds an added layer of recognition.

-She is VERY gorgeous.

-This is an EXTREMELY important point.

The electronic English language has its own unique spelling. New spelling standards have emerged, such as the replacement of plural –s with –z in nouns like downloadz, serialz, gamez, and filez. In electronic writing, these spelling mistakes are common. They are not, however, a sign of illiteracy. Instead, these are just typical samples of email language.

iii) Grammar:

it has been mentioned before the most general elements of the internet language distinctiveness are mostly located in graphology and lexicon- the levels of language where it can readily produce innovation and departure. Grammatical variation or distinction is less common in related words. The use of Net-speak has been counted in a few occasions. In some chat communities, there are isolated instances of verb reduplication, although they are not common or universal. For example, a verb is employed twice in a row to refer to a set of functions, such as expressing sorrow, happiness, or pleasure, and so on.

-We didn't get anything out of it. Lose, lose [implies that the task was unfruitful]

-That's incredible! Win, win [implies that the task has been a successful one]

4.4.Pros and Cons of the Effect of Social Media on the English language

The following are the pros and cons of the effect of social media on the English language [4]:

Pros

- Social media increases awareness of errors and aids in their prevention. When someone posts on social media, it is obvious that if there are any spelling or grammatical issues, people will correct them. Similarly, if one is unsure about the authenticity of a sentence or its application, one can always use search engines to double-check. In this approach,

social media serves as a double-edged sword.

- Twitter and other social networking sites encourage accurate and succinct writing. It improves and polishes one's English skills by allowing them to express themselves in a few words.

- It is undeniable that language is in a constant state of change. Change seeps into society, conventions, and traditions with the passage of time. Traditional methods are being phased out in favour of newer, more modern approaches. Similarly, people have recently been able to coin new terms or assign new meanings to existing words that are also regarded by Oxford dictionaries thanks to the influence of social media.

- The spread of English around the world has accelerated because to social media.

Cons

Social media has a harmful impact on linguistic structure. People create acronyms in order to communicate quickly, thereby destroying the nature of language. In order to grow their clientele, marketers must learn about the latest trend. In fact, everyone must learn the new "fashion" if they are to "survive" in this century. With the rapid progress of social networking and technology, generation divides between parents and children are widening. It is critical to become familiar with the changes in the English language in order to bridge this gap. To stay up to date with the modern society, the wise thing to do now is to master the rising acronyms.

5. Impact of 'Text-speak' used in Online Communication on Students and Education

The constant barrage of information in the form of tweets, emails, blogs, and comments can be draining mentally. Students, unsurprisingly, have less time to perfect their assignments as a resultof

the information overload. As a result, text-speak appears frequently in students' assignments,

negatively affecting their academic achievement. As a result, teachers are raising awareness about

the drawbacks of Text-speak and emphasizing the importance of Standard English in academic

and professional success in English-speaking countries [25].

Text speak is based on Standard English language, but it mimics the spoken language of ordinary

people (French, 2018) [26]. Text-speak makes use of acronyms and simple spellings to make

typing on mobile devices more efficient. To participate in brief interactions and demonstrate their

online presence, the net generation has modified standard English words (i.e., word adaptation) by

using abbreviations (e.g., brb for be right back), omitting non-essential alphabets (e.g., wud for

would), substituting homo-phones (gr8 for great), and de-emphasizing proper punctuation and

capitalization, resulting in structural adaptations to the English language (Cingel, & Sundar,

2012) [27]. Teens may use text-speak to codify (youth code; French, 2018) their conversations in

order to protect them from unintended recipients (parents; Akbarov & Tankosić, 2016) [28]. Text-

speak could also be seen as a form of defiance against linguistic conventions.

The word modifications found in Text-speak cross over into everyday English language. Using

textual adaptations on a regular basis gives the feeling of normalcy and approval, which makes

learning standard English harder (Cingel & Sundar, 2012). The right use of vocabulary and

grammar in communications is referred to as standard English (Baker, 2014) [29]. It is also the

recognized form of language in government offices, academia, and other official settings (Birner,

1991). Text-speak violates Standard English standards, posing a problem for academics and

parents. Educators are concerned that students' assignments are becoming increasingly shortened,

with misspelt words and grammatically wrong sentences, blurring the line between official and

informal writing (Strain-Moritz, 2016) [30]. According to the findings of a study, texting and

professionally written communication have an unfavourable association with reading accuracy in a

group of college students (Drouin, 2011) [31]. Grammar and language are crumbling in today's

world (Sonn, 2006) [32], and users are progressively turning away from reading and writing in

Standard English. Essentially, traditional writing, which once required the appropriate application

of Standard grammatical norms, appears to have descended into oblivion.

The disadvantages of Text-speak are well-known among students and parents. There has been a

lot of research done on the drawbacks of using Text-speak. For example, students who engaged

in informal online interactions reported avoiding a higher level of vocabulary (Adams, 2007)

[33], while more than half of students in another study reported trouble retaining Standard

English as a result of regular texting (Drouin & Davis, 2009) [34]. Another research

investigation backed up these findings. According to the findings, 64% of students engaged in

informal writing in academic settings, 50% used poor mechanics (grammar, punctuation), 38%

used text shortcuts, and 25% used emoticons (Lenhart et al., 2008) [35]. Based on these figures,

it's not surprising that kids are increasingly forgetting how to spell things correctly or use good

syntax and punctuation.

Effective writing is a crucial aspect in achieving academic and professional success, according to

teachers, parents, and students alike. Despite efforts in schools to teach Standard English language

principles, students fail to apply those rules outside of the classroom or even in exams. For

example, researchers examined 858 samples submitted as part of an English Language examination

to see if there has been a shift in the amount of formality in sixteen-year-old students' writing

between 2004 and 2016. (Constantinou et al., 2019) [36]. The findings revealed that students'

writing got more casual between the two years, with the informal writing tendency being stronger

among low-achieving students. It's worth noting that today's children write more than they did

twenty years ago. However, it appears that their capacity to recall Standard English language rules

is hampered (Merritt, 2013) [37]. However, research has found that primary school students who

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made fewer punctuation errors when texting were more likely to have a better

understanding of Standard English orthography and were better able to comprehend English

writing fast (Smith, 2015).

Some common modified Text-speak terms are shown in the table below [43]:

Standard English	Text-speak
cause	cuz
oh my God	OMG
never mind	nvm
forgive	4give
people	ppl
your	ur

the	da
seriously	srsly
dance to popular music	twerk
too long, didn't read	TLDR
great delight	squee
photograph taken by oneself	selfie
long distance relationship	LDR
congratulations	congo / grats
time spent relaxing	me time
laugh out loud	LOL

Regardless of disagreements, we can all agree that technology is here to stay, and texting is the primary means of communication for the internet age. Text-speak must be accepted and recognized as a skilled dialect by parents and teachers, or it must be rejected as an unorthodox alien language. It's critical to recognize that humans are hardwired to pick up on the language and dialect spoken around them. As a result, the internet generation cannot be blamed for gainingthe ability to process, analyse, and evaluate Text-speak messages, as well as proficiently construct a response to express thoughts, ideas, personal experiences, and narratives (Moyle, 2010) [38]. If Standard English is considered a dialect of English, the new language pushed by the technologically savvy generation could be termed a dialect of English. Researchers discovered that frequent text messaging, reading fluency, and spelling accuracy all have a beneficial association (Drouin, 2011). Another study found that the use of Text-speak was unrelated to poor grammar in text messages or children's understanding of written or spoken grammar (Merritt, 2013). These pupils were able to form arguments, compose thesis statements, and properly order their views, which may provide confidence to parents concerned that their children's understanding of Standard English is being harmed by Text speak (Merritt, 2013).

The tide is turning; some sociolinguists have realized how critical it is to accept Text-speak as a new genre (French, 2018). Standard English dictionaries have begun to include several Text- speak words and phrases in their online forms. As a result, rather than dismissing Text-speak as abad language, educators should recognize it as a new subset, genre, or branch of cultural and social language (Douglas, 2009) [39]. Birner (1991) claims that no dialect can be described as "sloppy" or "lazy," because every dialect of every language is bound by some standards, albeit not schoolroom rules. Instead of telling us what language should be like, those laws tell us what language is like (Birner, 1991). Some say that critical literacy should include all forms of communication, regardless of whether we think they're beneficial or not, because each form of

communication entails social engagement (Kaplan, 1995) [40].

Children as early as eight years old in the United Kingdom are deemed bilingual if they can communicate in both Standard English and Text-speak (Merritt, 2013). Giving text speak recognition as a dialect of the English language might assist students realize when it is permissible to utilize Text-speak. After all, in order to adapt to the digital environment, online content requires us to reprogram our receptive powers and thinking processes (Bromley, 2010) [41]. Furthermore, English vocabulary is rapidly expanding as a result of the constant inclusion of new technology-enhanced words, many of which boost clarity, inventiveness, and ease of communication (Purcell, Buchanan, & Friedrich, 2013). With the ubiquity of the Google search engine, for example, the phrase google it has the same meaning as search it. As a result, encouraging children to use new terminology in Text-speak might be beneficial to both students and parents.

We can all agree that technology is here to stay, and texting is the primary form of communication among the internet generation. Parents and teachers must choose between accepting and recognizing Text-speak as a skilled dialect and dismissing it as an unorthodox foreign language. In this scenario, teachers and parents must perceive text talk as a sophisticated vernacular that necessitates advanced analytical and decoding skills. Educators and parents are obliged to explore the uncharted terrain of Text-speak to acclimate linguistically in order to comprehend the written communications of the net-generation. Thankfully, Text-speak translators and instructions exist to assist parents in deciphering online messages (Akbarov & Tankosić, 2016). Given current trends, adopting Text-speak as a skilled language appears to be the only viable option.

6. Conclusion

The internet has brought the entire world together, regardless of time or space. After such a thorough investigation, it is clear that online communication plays a significant role in the spread of the English language. Social media, especially, is not just expanding the outreach of English but also changing it. English has long been regarded as a worldwide language. It has always served as a lingua franca, and it has now evolved into a social networking language. Because of social media, English is spreading to every corner of the globe; it is spoken in some form or another in practically every country on the planet. If social media is properly utilized for the benefit of English, English teaching, and English learning, the importance of English for each individual will increase.The COVID-19 pandemic of the year 2020 has lead to an increased number of online interactions and hence resulted in the promotion of the English language to various parts of the world. One can say that the spread of English and the rise of social media are directly proportional to each other.

The fact that technology has changed the way we write, think, and communicate with others cannot be ignored. The prevalence of short social interactions on social media has changed our communication habits and spawned Text-speak, which has become the primary way of communication for the internet age. The teenagers can't be criticized for writing in shorthand because they've altered their writing style to fit within the restrictions of the word count. Text-speak is currently recognized an English dialect, and children who can communicate in both Standard English and text-speak are deemed bilingual. When Text-speak infiltrates academic writing and has an impact on students' performance, the issue of abbreviated handwriting arises. As internet communication media evolves, we should expect to see more languages and genres

emerge as a result of need. These new forms help to modernize the English language, but it is important to remember that they should not alter the essence of the language.

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