# VARIETY EXPLORED: THE USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY THE PEOPLE AT SOCIAL MEDIA FACEBOOK

### _Mubarak Ali lashari*_          _Wafa Mansoor Buriro**_

## Abstract

_It is talk of the day to work and explore the vistas of English language used by people in social media, especially facebook. Its individual opinion that its deterioration of English language or improvement. In both cases it very significant aspect to explore. For that purpose researchers chose facebook as target to choose around 25 words/ expressions to analyze. Along with that researchers have provided a brief introduction of the work accompanied by literature review about the same issue. The researchers used internet, Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary and some research articles for assistance in this task. The categories mentioned in the analysis have been taken from the research paper of Vernhagen, Pugh & Kwong (2009) Lol: new language and spelling in instant messaging. Some other categories not mentioned in the study have been coined by the researchers. The bibliography and references are provided in the end of this assignment._

## Introduction

We are living in an age where life has become nearly impossible without the blessings of science. Science has very strongly influenced our ways and trends of life. Its effects are deep-rooted in all fields of our life including language. With the advent of personal computers and internet respectively, the means of communication have enormously increased and world has entered into a trance of using scientific inventions for communication like cell-phones, texting, emails, social media etc. The world has become too much 'fast' as the people like it to call.

These communication appliances have had a profound effect on how the language is used. That effect is multifaceted and it has its traces on many components of language such as spelling (orthography), grammar, syntax, pronunciation, vocabulary etc. We come across words like "LOL" and "lmao" when we use social media such as Facebook or Twitter. These words possess no place in the dictionaries but are very much common in daily chatting. What strikes us is the fact that these words are accepted generally. Some abbreviations have become very common too such as _c u_ (see you), _y_ (why) and so on. These clichés, abbreviations and have got popularity among young generation. But with that, it is causing serious troubles for people who are studying language and for those who have prescriptive approach towards language.

_*PhD Scholar in English Dept. of Eng. Lang., International Islamic Univ., Islamabad._
_Currently, teaching at Inst. of Eng. Lang. and Lit., University of Sindh, Jamshoro_
_**Student of BS Honours at Institute of Eng. Lan. and Lit., University of Sindh, Jamshoro_

There are many reasons behind such 'distortion' of language rules and that too on such high scale. One of the reasons behind alteration, shortening and cutting down of words into fewer letters is due to lack of time. When chatting, commenting or texting, people have to tell things very fast and they usuallydon't have much time to type the words fully as they may be doing some other things such as walking on the road, talking with somebody, doing their study etc. In such a situation, they avoid writing full words and they prefer using shortest possible words so as to save time. They usually have this aim in mind that other person gets to understand what they are they are trying to say, that is enough for them. They don't care about mistakes because every other person is making such mistakes instead these alterations of words have ceased to be understood as mistakes even.

Another reason behind such deviations in English language is the showing emotions and emphasize on the words. Words like 'cuuuutttteeee', 'sweeeet' and 'sooooo' are our common observations. These words are used in order to put stress on those words and to express your strong emotions. Well, these and some other reasons will be explained further once we get to analyze the wordsI have chosen for this purpose.

## Literature Review

The language used in texting, chatting, emailing can be termed as the result of short-cut also. These short cuts include abbreviations, acronyms, and unique spellings. There have been many studies on this very issue ever since it has started to emerge in the language with the advent of cell-phone, social media and emails. Typographical and spelling mistakes have become most common ever since then. We can surely say that these changes have occurred in language due to instant texting as Lenhart, Madden & Hitlin (2005) suggest, *"the vast majority of adolescents…..engage in various forms of electronic communication on a daily basis, and instant messaging is one of the most popular forms of electronic communication."*

For communicating on instant messages they have different sources like Yahoo Messenger, MSN, Facebook, Twitter, Cell-Phones, and even chat rooms in gaming zones. So, instant texting has literally spread everywhere and with that has spread the distorted-from-original use of language.

While we speak, we do it very fast, and we communicate our ideas at a much high speed. But when it comes to writing, we are very slow in communicating our ideas, no much how fast we are at typing. That sense of compensating the time for writing messages gives birth to seeking short-cuts. *"Typing is much slower and more error prone than is speaking* (Herring, 1999, 2003*); possiblyto compensate for these issues, people communicating though instant messaging have developed short cuts to typing full words, such as **l8r** for later, or acronyms for common phrases, such as **brb** for **be right back*** (Werry, 1996).

Where many people are taking it as a distortion of language, there are somepeople who are taking such phenomenon as a natural step towards development and evolution of English language. *"While the media and some researchers, teachers, and parents (e.g.,* http://www.oxfordlearning.com/letstalk/texting-vswriting- the-problem-with-instant-messag/ ;

Lee, 2002) *may interpret the technically incorrect language and spelling"errors" in instant messaging conversations as detrimental and incorrect, some researchers (e.g.,* Lewis & Fabos, 2005; Merchant, 2001; Spatafora, 2008; Tagliamonte & Denis, 2006) *suggested that this phenomenon simply represents contemporary slang, a process in the evolution of the English language."*

This phenomenon in language has very widely spread, looking at those ongoing, mushrooming and ever-increasing changes in language some, *"others (e.g.,* Crystal, 2006; Davis & Brewer, 1997) *go further to suggest the new linguistic structures developed for online communication may represent thecreation of a "new media language, 'distinct from but complementary to conventional written English. As well, this new language may benefit students in terms of encouraging creativity in written expression and increasing literacy"* (Sternberg, Kaplan, & Borck, 2007)

Whether one accepts or rejects those changes in language due to instant texting and computer-based conversations are increasing day by day so many linguists have declined towards forming a particular theories and taxonomies to understand and formulate these changes in language as Vernhagen, Pugh & Kwong (2009) suggest, *"developing a taxonomy of "new language" use in instant messaging is important for understanding this different communication medium, observing its evolution over time, and comparing instant messaging with other forms of computer-mediated communication."*

My concise and brief research is also a short but sincere step towards understanding and formulating the abovementioned issue.

**Analysis**

**1. nice**

Category: Lower Case.

Rule: adjective /naɪs/ - giving pleasure or satisfaction; pleasant or attractive: *we had a very  nice time*

Reason of Deviation: People write the words in the beginning of the sentence without capital letter because of (a) they feel it difficult to type the word like **shift+n** that is why they do it like that, (b) in some cell phones the word is not capitalized automatically as in Nokia phones.

**2. Please Give Me Lyrics Of This Song**

Category: Each word capitalized.

<u>Rule:</u> The syntactical rule implies that after starting off with the capital letter all the other letters have to be in lower case until and unless there isn't a propernoun.

<u>Reason of Deviation:</u> People write this to make their sentence look more beautiful. Some cell phones come with this facility to make the beginning of every letter in upper case.

**3. AweSome**

<u>Category:</u> Upper case in the middle

<u>Rule:</u> Once started with capital letter no word can contain a capital letter in the middle or end except some names like McDonald or McArthur. /ÈTÐs(Y)m/ - adjective extremely impressive or daunting; inspiring awe: *the awesome power of the atomic bomb* informal extremely good; excellent: *the band is truly awesome!*

<u>Reason of Deviation:</u> The reason behind writing words that way is to make your words look stylish, funky and impressive. This is mostly done by young boys and girls who are themselves funky and "burger" in their style.

**4. heyyyyyyy (Hey)**

<u>Category:</u> Emotion Words

<u>Rule:</u> /heI/ exclamation — used to attract attention, to express surprise, interest, or annoyance, or to elicit agreement: *hey, what's going on here?*

<u>Reason of Deviation:</u> People write these kinds of words in their chatting or texting to express their emotions and as they emphasize on and prolong the words in their speech they want the same in writing too. So instead of using exclamation mark as per rule they choose this way out.

**5. awwwww**

<u>Category:</u> Emotion Words

<u>Rule:</u> This word is not present in dictionary.

<u>Reason of Deviation:</u> People write these kinds of words in their  chatting or texting to express their emotions and as they emphasize on and prolong the words in their speech they want the same in writing too. So instead of using exclamation mark as per rule they choose this way out.

## 6. u (You)

Category: Alphabet/letter

Rule: /ju:/ — pronoun [Second person singular or plural] used to refer to the person or people that the speaker is addressing: *are you listening?*

Reason of Deviation: Pronunciation and alphabetic alternatives (which are short)are the root cause of these kinds of deviation. When people have same pronunciation for a word and an alphabet, former being longer than later, they choose the later because it saves their time and they proceed to next word.

## 7. V (We)

Category: Alphabet/letter

Rule: /wi:/ — pronoun [first person plural] used by a speaker to refer to himself or herself and one or more other people considered together: *shall we have a drink?*

Reason of Deviation: Pronunciation and alphabetic alternatives (which are short) are the root cause of these kinds of deviation. When people have same pronunciation for a word and an alphabet, former being longer than later, they choose the later because it saves their time and they proceed to next word.

## 8. cho qt (so cute)

Category: Motherese/Phonetic

Rule: You cannot change the spelling of words according to your own will and only to suffice your need of pronouncing words in a particular deviated way.

Reason of Deviation: This happens when somepeople start speaking to children, babies or kids. This particular way of speaking and pronouncing the words has been named in linguistics as 'motherese'. But that was limited to speech only but due to wide-spread use of texting they haveincluded this in their writing as well.

## 9. Nd (And)

Category: Phonetic

Rule: /Ynd, (Y)n, and/ —- conjunction - used to connect words of the same part of speech, clauses, or sentences, that are to be taken jointly: *bread and butter -they can read and writea hundred and fifty*

Reason of Deviation: The reason behind this deviation is the phonetic easinessto people. When they pronounced this word, the initial two letters of word 'and' i.e. an sound like pronouncing the letter N that's why they write nd.

**10. itz (It is)**

Category: Contraction

Rule: It is a pronoun and is an auxiliary verb. They are either written separately or together with an apostrophe between it and s.

Reason of Deviation: The reason behind this kind of deviation is same as the above. People write such contracted forms of words for saving time and to sound like real speech.

Shahram Azhar Soon.
7 hours ago · Like · 👍 3

Muneeb Ur Rehman Wow! Looks great. Can't wait to see the movie and hearing your song too. Good to see you back. 😊
6 hours ago via mobile · Like

Mahsoun N R Choudhury Trailer looks awesome, release kab hain?
6 hours ago via mobile · Like

**11. Cuteeeeee (Cute)**

Asjad Bukhari after long time we'll listen to your sweet voice Shahram Azhar
3 hours ago · Like

Category: Emotion Word

Fatash Ul Haq Mirza Trailr is kool n waiting for ur revoulationry VoiCe:-)
3 hours ago via mobile · Like

Rule: /kju:t/ — adjective-attractive in a pretty or endearing way: *she had a cute little nose*

Waqas Ahmed welcome after a long time. today i am very happy
3 hours ago · Like

Reason of Deviation: People write these kindsof words in their chatting or texting to express their emotions and as they emphasize on and prolong the words in their speech they want the same in writing too. So instead of using exclamation mark as per rule they choose thisway out.

Fahad Rizwan laal salaama
2 hours ago · Like

Ahmed Hossein Rizvi Wah ustaad! Are you in Pakistan?
about an hour ago via mobile · Like

**12. Frm (From)**

Nosheen Malik excellent work sherry....may u have success on every step of ur life 😊
about an hour ago · Like

Category: Shortening/Contraction

Rizwan K Qalandar Greatt. Waiting for more from you Bhai.
22 minutes ago · Like

Rule: /frRm, frYm/ — preposition—indicating the point in space at which a journey, motion, or action starts: *she began to walk away from him-I leapt from my bed*

Reason of Deviation: This rarely happens in facebook chatting or commenting, with this case being exceptional but this frequently happens in cell-phone texting. The reason is, in cell phones

which don't have qwerty keypads, the m and o are written on the same button, and one has to hit three strokes to write o and then one stroke of m (four strikes combined) so they prefer to hit one stroke and write m leaving o. and the receiver gets the message.

## 13. Swt (Sweet)

Category: Contraction

Rule: /swi:t/ — (of a person or action) pleasant and kind or thoughtful: *a very sweet nurse came along- it was sweet of you to come*

Reason of Deviation: People write these kinds of words to save their time in instant texting and commenting. Instead of including vowels they just write consonants to write the word. This word is very short and without vowels but people get the intended meaning through context. Pragmatic element is the help in such words.

## 14. Trailr (Trailer)

Category: Contraction:

Rule: /Ètrejl Ỳ/ — a series of extracts from a film or broadcast, used for advance
publicity: *terrific trailers for mediocre movies*

Reason of Deviation: People write these kinds of words to save their time ininstant texting and commenting. Instead of including vowels they just write consonants to write the word. This word is very short and without vowels but people get the intended meaning through context. Pragmatic element is the help in such words.

## 15. Kool (Cool)

Category: Misspelling

Rule: /ku:l/ — [informal] fashionably attractive or impressive: *youngsters are turning to smoking because they think it makes them appear cool*

Reason of Deviation: The pronunciation of letters c and k are very similar in most of the cases. This creates confusion for the people sometimes but that confusion is negligible, but when they are texting they neglect the difference between c and k and they just concentrate on the sound that is /k/ and interchange these two very frequently.

## 16. N (And)

Category: Alphabet/letter

Rule: /Ynd, (Y)n, and/ —- conjunction - used to connect words of the same
part of speech, clauses, or sentences, that are to be taken jointly: *bread and butter -they can read and write-a hundred and fifty*

Reason of Deviation: Pronunciation and alphabetic alternatives (which are short) are the root cause of these kinds of deviation. When people have same pronunciation for a word and an alphabet, former being longer than later, they choose the later because it saves their time and they proceed to next word.

## 17. ur (You're)

Category: Contraction

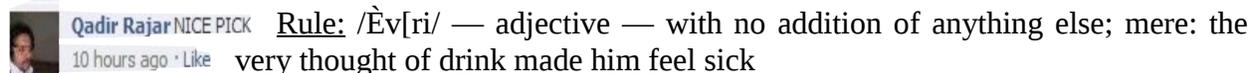Rule: /jTÐ, jY, jŠY/ — contraction: you are: *you're an angel, Deb!*

Reason of Deviation: The reason behind this kind of deviation is same as the above. People write such contracted forms of words for saving time and to sound like real speech.

## 18. VoiCe

Category: Upper case in the middle

Rule: Once started with capital letter no word can contain a capital letter in the middle or end except some names like McDonald or McArthur.

Reason of Deviation: The reason behind writing words that way is to make your words look stylish, funky and impressive. This is mostly done by young boys and girls who are themselves funky and "burger" in their style.


Nasrullah Khan Gadhi vvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvv nic pic suhna safa aj ta mann tho lage
13 hours ago · Like

Waseem Aheer o ho,, VIP
12 hours ago · Like

Qadir Rajar NICE PICK
10 hours ago · Like

## 19. vvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvv (Very!)

Category: Emotion Word

Rule: /Èv[ri/ — adjective — with no addition of anything else; mere: the very thought of drink made him feel sick

Reason of Deviation: People write these kinds of words in their chatting or texting to express their emotions and as they emphasize on and prolong the words in their speech they want the same in writing too. So instead of using exclamation mark as per rule they choose this way out.

## 20. Pic (Picture)

Category: Abbreviation

Rule: /ÈpjktƒY/ — noun — a portrait: *she had her picture painted*

Reason of Deviation: Instead of writing full words, people have made some commonly accepted abbreviation of words. This is again due to saving their time in instant texting and commenting.

**Total : 20**

| Category | Lower Case | Each Word Capitalized | Upper Case in the Middle | Emotion Words | Alphabet/Letter | Contraction | Phonetic | Misspelling | Abbreviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Number** **of Words** | 01 5% | 01 5% | 02 10% | 04 20% | 03 15% | 05 25% | 02 10% | 01 5% | 01 5% |

## Conclusion:

After analyzing all the words, it is concluded that most of the deviation in this research context are in the shortening or contraction of the words. People do not care much about the correct spelling and letters of the words while texting or commenting. And there is a frequent use of emotion words/emoticons also. On the third, many frequently occurring pronouns in the language have been changed into mere alphabets or single letters. The prime reason, as analyzed in the research, behind all deviation is making the written conversation look like real speech.

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