

# New Trends in 'Shortened' Written Business Communication

**BESIG Conference 2012, Stuttgart**

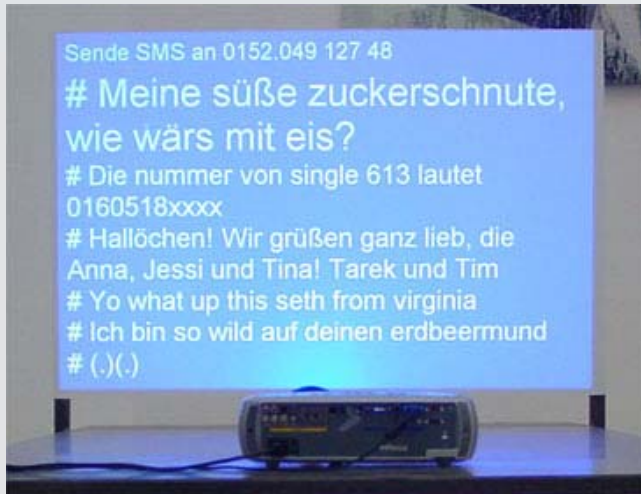
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# Agenda

- Text messengers - Mobile e-mailers
- Textese
- Linguistic and stylistic properties
- Female versus male use of txtng
- ‘Shortened’ written business communication
- The application environment

# The Messenger



# Text Messenger - Mobile E-Mailers

- Definition & development
- Necessary brevity
- The ‚Thumb Tribe‘
- Generation txt
- Txtng in different languages

## Textese: Txtese, Txt

- Technological, sociological, psychological, commercial & linguistic point of view
- Fewest number of letters to produce concise words to convey comprehensible message & to deal with space, time and cost constraints
- Elliptical style of writing
- Punctuation, grammar, capitalization are largely ignored
- No standard rules for textese
- Ludic language?

## Linguistic & Stylistic Properties

- Initialisation: Acronyms & abbreviations, e.g. lol = laugh out loud, Oxford English Dictionary (2011)
- Reduction/Contraction: Remove vowels from a word, e.g. txtng
- Shortening: Omission of words, mainly function words, e.g. articles
- Pragmatics & context in interpretation: Co-textual reference and context are crucial when interpreting textese

## Linguistic & Stylistic Properties

- Pictogram: Symbol used in picture-writing, e.g. emoticons
- Logogram: Written symbol that represents a word or a meaningful part of a word
- Rebus abbreviation: Words or sentences made out of a combination of letters, pictures, logograms, e.g. cul8r = See you later.

## Paralinguistic & Prosodic Features

- Capitalisation: Missing or only the first word
- Emoticons: ☐
- Punctuation: Frequent occurrence of apostrophes
- Variation in spelling to reflect illocutionary force:  
haha versus muahaha



## Female and Male Use of SMS Language

- Lingo of the group – group identity
- **Women** are more adroit and more literary texters
- **Women** use more complex structure and grammar
- **Women** use more greeting and parting words
- **Women** observe conventional rules such as correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization
- **Men** tend to send one-sentence or one-thought constructions
- **Men** use less shortened forms and emoticons

## Texting, Txtng, Txt, ...

- Meets a new communicative need in society
- Is more immediate, direct and personal
- Responds to increased pressure on time & short attention spans
- Opens another dimension of being multi-tasking
- Is another variety of language arisen as a result of a particular technology
- Cannot be decoded
- Might show effect on verbal use and literacy

# Common English Text Abbreviations

- afaik = As far as I know.
- aisb = As I said before.
- cid = Consider it done.
- Rgds = Regards
- tmb = Text me back.



## 'Shortened' Written Business Communication

*I like text messages. They fill an ever-narrowing gap in modern communication tools, combining the immediacy of a phone call with the convenience of an answering machine message and the premeditation of e-mail. And if they happen to be from a crush and pop up late at night, they have the giddy re-readability of a note left on a pillow.*

New York Times, 2005

## ‘Shortened’ Written Business Communication

- Informational function
- Frees sender & recipient from the constraints of immediate environment
- Immediate scheduling and re-scheduling
- Messages often provide responses with specific points of information
- Text-based multi-party interaction

## Text Messaging Etiquette

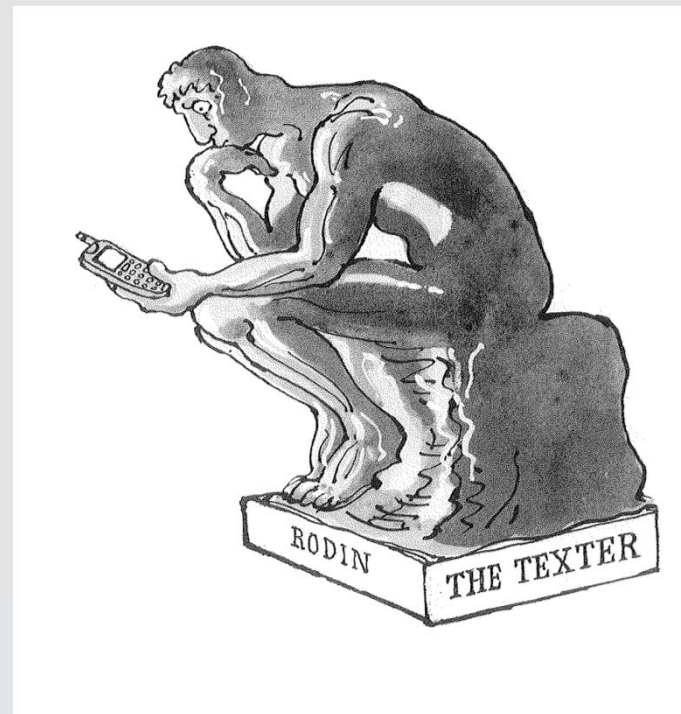
- Forms part of company culture
- No set standards though
- Primarily used for professional business
- Brief communication without detail(s)
- Need to respond
- Do not overuse lingo
- Give recipient time to answer msgs
- Txtng in meetings is inappropriate

# The Application Environment

- Sub-groups of the 'Thumb Tribe'
- T9 or predictive texting, speed dialling
- A 'shortened' lingua franca
- Txtng as a linguistic phenomenon with its effects on the business world
- Business 'gangs': Blackberry / Android, iPhone
- Text message injury (TMI) generation

I h8 txt msgs ...

Wots yr opn?  
swdyt?





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**Tuvm f yr @tention!**