

TYPING THE FUTURE: HOW THE INTERNET IS REWRITING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This article considers the way that new digital communication technology is transforming English. The writer's view is that the Internet is ushering in the fastest and most democratised changes to the structure of English since The Printing Press. This paper goes beyond just a list of new words such as slang and acronyms but considers systemic changes in several areas including the ability to create: New Words (Neologisms), Changes to Existing Words' Meanings (Semantic Shift), and the use of NEW Ways to Form Sentences / Sentences (Grammatical Construction) to show informality as if spoken; New Systems of Punctuation; New Types of "Text"; e.g., Emoticons/Emoji/Symbols/Stylistic Texts. While the changes to English Emerging from The Internet are being defined as evolving verbally (descriptively) rather than written (prescriptively) and experiencing COLLAPSE OF CONTEXT (loss of distinction between various forms of Communication) within English, the writer concludes that English is undergoing massive RE-WRITTEN CHANGES by the use of ACTIVE/LIVING, CONTEXT RELATIVE VARIATIONS of Language to facilitate Identity, Community Development, and Global Economic Integration in the 21st Century.

KEYWORDS: *Internet, Slangs, Social Media, Grammar, Blog, Digital Age*

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