

**Linguistic Features of Netspeak:
Abbreviations, Acronyms and Punctuation
Marks**

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Abstract

The study in this paper is a quantitative descriptive linguistic study of an informal online English in netspeak. This study concentrates on one situation of netspeak which is "chatgroups" in their both synchronous and asynchronous situations. It focuses on three linguistic features which are (abbreviations, acronyms and punctuation marks). Abbreviations and acronyms are dealt with morphologically as word-formation processes and semantically as vocabularies by giving their meanings, whereas punctuation marks are dealt with syntactically as appropriate to sentence order.

The models which are adopted in the analyses of the data of this study are eclectic. First, Crystal (2001: 81–93) highlights the linguistic features of Netspeak which are: (lexicon, neologisms, blending, abbreviations, acronyms and punctuation marks). He gives a description of seven situations of Netspeak which are: (e-mails, chatgroups, virtual worlds (MUD and MOO), the web, blogging and instant messaging). He (2001:239) mentions that the studies of Netspeak are still in the earliest stages and it is difficult to find samples of data which relate to various situations on the net in which people communicate. Second, Werry (1996) sheds light on the features of one situation of Netspeak which is Internet Relay Chat in terms of addressivity, abbreviation, prosody and gesture. Third, Baron (2008) mentions in her experimental study on her students many features of one situation of Netspeak which is instant messaging in terms of: "emoticons, lexical shortening like abbreviations, acronyms, contractions and punctuation". Fourth, Quirk et al. (1985: 1580– 84) classify abbreviations into clippings, acronyms and bends, and describe punctuation marks, will be another model adopted in this study (ibid: 1611– 633).

Keywords: language of the internet, speech vs writing, netspeak, chatgroups, abbreviations, acronyms, punctuation marks.

1. Introduction

Crystal (2001: 93) argues that Netspeak is a complex and mixed message that can only be understood in details of the individual internet situation (ibid). Moreover, he tells that the phenomenon of netspeak will change the way people think about language in a fundamental way because it is a linguistic singularity, a genuine new medium. Linguists, editors, stylists and other observers have grouped to express what they find in the internet language, but they fail because the language of the internet in its various situations is fundamentally different, though it displays some similarities with other forms of communication (ibid:238). Crystal also mentions that studies of netspeak are still in their earliest stages and there is a difficulty in finding samples of usable data that relate to every internet situation. Every situation often has problems arise out of the transitional nature of the medium. Thus, netspeak is still in the early stages of its evolution and generalizations are difficult to make (ibid:239).

Most of the general features of Netspeak are distinctive in graphology and lexicon, so that the levels of language may be easy to introduce innovation and deviation from the norms of standard English because Netspeak is everyday language or written speech that shares features of both spoken and written language. Internet is one of many factors influencing the way language is changing and the linguistic forms of the internet language are also influenced

a lot by the constraints of technology itself. This means that language bases on creative typology and many of the norms of the standard language are sometimes broken.

The main research questions that this study will answer are:

- 1- What are Netspeak's abbreviations and the most frequent ones?
- 2- What are Netspeak's acronyms and the most frequent ones?
- 3- What are the punctuation marks used in Netspeak and the most frequent ones?
- 4- What are the reasons beyond the popular use of these three linguistic features ' abbreviations, acronyms and punctuation marks' in Netspeak?
- 5- Are these three linguistic features deviated from the norms of standard language in the internet language or not?
- 6- Do abbreviations, acronyms have lexical meanings?

2. Language of the Internet

Language of the internet is also called computer-mediated communication (CMC) which includes: emails, chats and instant messaging. This language is used when people talk to each other using electronic devices(Crystal, 2008b: 178). In addition, Crystal (2001: 6-7) mentions that the language of the internet is also called "language variety" which is a system of linguistic expression whose use is

governed by situational factors and this language includes speech and writing.

Danet and Herring (2007:12) mention that the internet language tends to display both spoken and written language features as well as distinctively digital ones. These features and their use vary according to CMC mode. Synchronous modes tend to be more speechlike than asynchronous ones. However, many features are shared across mode such as the emoticon (smiley face), abbreviations such as lol (laughing out loud), rebus writing *cu* for "see you" and a tendency toward speech informality.

Crystal argues that the internet language is a 'fourth medium' after writing, speaking and signing and how the rate of change has been tremendous. Experts of CMC are always interested in the difference of language in cyberspace because it deserves to be seen as a new variety of language (Thurlow et al.,2004:123–124). Moreover, internet language is a written speech that involves writing and talking, it also comprises listening and reading (Para, 2016: 193).

3. Speech vs Writing

Crystal (2001: 48) points, on the one hand that Netspeak is something genuinely different in kind of speech, writing and electronically mediated properties. It is more than just a hybrid of speech and writing. On the other hand, he mentions (2011: 21) that internet language is better seen as writing that has been pulled some way in the direction of

speech rather than as speech that has been written down. He also argues that internet language is identical to neither speech nor writing but it displays properties of both. It is more than an aggregate of spoken and written features but it does things that neither of other mediums does.

One of the characteristics of netspeak is it can be viewed as a written speech and Crystal describes which characteristics it shares with speech and which with writing (Hewings & Hewings, 2005: 139). So, Crystal (2001:26–28) mentions some characteristics of speech and writing, in that speech is time bound, transient and dynamic. It is a part of interaction in which participants are present and the speaker has a specific addressee in mind. With speech, there is no time shift between production and reception unless one is intentionally introduced by recipient. Speech participants can rely on extralinguistic features such as gestures and facial expressions to aid meaning because they are face to face. Speech has common features such as contracted form, lengthy coordinate sentences, nonsense vocabulary, obscenities and slang. The unique features of speech are pitch, intonation, tone, loudness, tempo and rhythm.

Besides, writing is space bound, static and permanent. The writer is far off from the reader and the reader is often unknown. There is always time shift between production that permits for repeated reading and analysis and promotes the development of careful organization and compact expression. In writing, lack of visual contact means that

participants cannot depend on context to make their meaning clear. The common features of writing are multiple instances of subordination in the same sentence, balanced syntactic patterns and long sentences(ibid).

4. Netspeak

Crystal (2001:18) uses the term netspeak to refer to a type of language which displays features that are unique to the internet arising out of its character as a medium which is global, electronic, worldwide and interactive. He also adds that Netspeak can be viewed as a novel medium combining written, spoken and electronic properties(ibid: 48). Netspeak is "a term used by some commentators, devised on analogy with such words as doublespeak and airspeak, to describe the kind of distinctive language found on the Internet". (Crystal, 2004a: 78). Netspeak refers "to speaking in ways used to converse text on the internet, it is the special language, abbreviations and expressions used by users when communicating using the internet (Para, 2016: 193).

According to Crystal (2001: 17) and Para (2016: 189) the term netspeak serves as an alternative to ' Weblish, Netlish, Cyperspace, Internet language, Electronic language, Electronic discourse, Interactive written discourse, CMC, etc.'. These idioms are used before Netspeak existed. Each idiom has a different collaboration for example , Netlish and Weblish are derived from English to make the internet more multilingual.

Crystal cited in Baron (2008: 48) uses the term Netspeak to refer to the language that is used in CMC as a whole and he also mentions that Netspeak has more features link it to writing than to speech. So, Crystal (2001:17–18) and Baron (2008:11) argue that Netspeak is an alternative to interactive written discourse and it is functional and succinct as long as it is borne in mind that speak involves speaking and writing as well as the receptive skills listening and reading.

Crystal (2001:238–9) says that Netspeak is a development of millennial importance. It's a modern medium of linguistic communication which does not arrive regularly in the history of the race. The interest of Netspeak comes from its salient features which are taken from one of its situational manifestations. These manifestations are begun to use outside of the situation of CMC even though the medium has become available to most people. He comments that the influence of Netspeak has mainly affected on vocabulary with graphology in some written varieties and in everyday conversation, forms from the underlying computer technology are given a new application between people who want their talk to have a cool cutting–edge (ibid: 19). Crystal (ibid: 28) adds that Netspeak is so interesting form of communication because it depends on characteristics belonging to both sides of the speech and writing, it displays the properties of both.

5. Chatgroups

Chatgroup is "a group of people who meet regularly at a particular internet site (a chat room) to discuss topics of common interest"(Crystal, 2004a: 26). Chatgroups are continuous discussions on a particular topic at particular internet sites in which participants interest in the topic can participate (Crystal, 2006:11). The Internet permits users to engage in a multiparty online conversation either synchronously 'in a real time' or asynchronously 'in postponed time'. So, Crystal uses chatgroups as a generic term for worldwide multi-users electronic discourse whether real time or not(ibid, 2006:134).

6. Abbreviations

According to Mattiello (2013:64) abbreviation or shortening means new words are formed by shortening existing lexemes. This term refers to three correlated phenomena clippings, acronyms and initialisms. Trask (1997:85) defines abbreviation as a short way of writing a word or phrase that may also be written out in full. Crystal (2008b:50–51) argues that abbreviation or shortening means a word is shortened by omitting one of its meaningful elements usually at the end such as 'exam' but sometimes at the beginning such as 'phone'. Abbreviation is a "term has been refined in linguistics as part of the study of *word-formation*, distinguishing several ways in which words can be shortened" (Crystal, 2008a: 1). Quirk et al. (1985:1580) mention that abbreviations are processes that create words

by shortening them to a form which is linguistically convenient but need not to reflect the morphological make-up of the full form for example, 'bus' from 'omnibus'.

6.1. Types of Abbreviations

According to Akmajian et al. (2010:27–28) and Booij (2005:20) abbreviations are four types: acronyms, alphabetic abbreviations (initialisms), clippings and blends. Quirk et al. (1985: 1580) mention three types of abbreviations: acronyms, clippings and blends. Mattiello (2013: 64) argues that abbreviations are considered as extra-grammatical phenomenon and he mentions three types of abbreviations: acronyms, initialisms and clippings. Bauer (1983:232) mentions three types of abbreviations: acronyms, clippings and blends and puts them under the title of 'unpredictable formations'.

1. Initialisms

Initialisms are words that are formed from the first letter of a series of words that are pronounced letter by letter but are not separated by dots (Arabi, 2008:xii). Denning et al. (2007:59) claim that the difference between abbreviation and initialisms is that abbreviations like 'Dr.' is intended to be pronounced in full when read out loud "doctor" whereas initialisms are pronounced by its own (new word) such as "NATO "North Atlantic Treaty Organization".

2. Clippings

According to Mattiello (2013:64) , Kreidler (2000:956) and Booij (2005:20), a clipping is created by shortening a lexeme to one, two or three syllables as in 'photo' from 'photograph' or a process that abbreviates a word to one of its parts with a consequent loss of phonetic material such as 'plane' from 'airplane/aeroplane' (Mattiello, 2013:70) . Clipping is a process of shortening words to a single syllable such as 'ad' from 'advertisement' in AmE and 'advert' from 'advertisement' in BrE (Quirk et al., 1985:1580).

3. Blends

Blends are words that formed from the first syllables of two or three words and combined and pronounced as an ordinary word such as 'modem' from 'modulator-demodulator' (Arabi, 2008: xii). Bauer (1983:234) defines blends as words that are formed from parts of two or more words. Quirk et al. (1985:1583) define blends as words that are created by blending one word with another.

7. Acronyms

Acronyms are becoming increasingly common to describe companies or organizations by the initial letters of the name of the group(Field, 2009:73). Acronyms are often thought to be a modern habit but they can be traced back to over 150 years. Nowadays, the use of acronyms has a great increase in several fields(Crystal, 2004b:120).

Some linguists like Quirk et al. (1985:1581), Niederst (2006:151), and Mattiello (2013:83) consider acronyms as a kind of abbreviations while others like Crystal (2008a:1), Kurdi (2016:95), and Stageberg (1971:123) consider acronyms as a type of initialisms. On the other hand, Ljung (2003:157) mentions that *initialisms* can be treated as either *abbreviations* or *acronyms* such as RAF 'the Royal Air Force'. Mattiello (2013:1) considers acronyms as extra-grammatical phenomenon because they are unpredictable.

According to Quirk et al. (1985:1581), Malmkjaer (2010:372), Field (2009:73), Crystal (2008b:176), Crystal (2006:86), Lieber (2009:53), Burridge (2004:54), Kurdi (2016:95), Yule (2010:58), Akmajian et al. (2010:27), Danesi (2009:7), and Niederst (2006:151) acronyms are words that are created by the initial letters or letters of a phrase, name and title and the new word is pronounced as a word rather than sequences of letters. On the other hand, Quirk et al. (1985:1582), Crystal (2008b:176) and Mattiello (2013:64) mention that acronyms that are pronounced as separated letters are called alphabetisms such as 'BBC'.

According to Quirk et al. (1985:1581–1582) acronyms can be divided into two main types:

1– Acronyms which are pronounced as separated letters are called 'alphabetisms' such as C.O.D. 'Cash On Delivery'..

There are two types of alphabetisms:

a- Letters represent full words such as 'VIP' 'very important person'.

b- Letters represent constituents in a compound or just parts of a word such as 'ID' 'Identification'.

2- Acronyms which are pronounced as words such as NATO 'North Atlantic Treaty Organization' are often used without knowing what the letters stand for (ibid: 1582).

8. Netspeak Abbreviations

Crystal (2001: 85–86) and (2011: 5) refers to some types of abbreviations that are used in netspeak interactions especially in "chatgroups". One of these types is the reduced words to two or three letters by *omitting* some letters usually vowels such as 'pls' for 'please'. The other type is called "*rebuses*" "in that the sound value of the letter or numeral acts as a syllable of a word" such as 'b4' for 'before' or combinations of rebus and initial letter such as 'L8R' for 'later'. These rebuses or colloquial elisions of abbreviations can give sentences unfamiliar look such as 'r u' for 'are you' (ibid, 2001: 164). Another way of creating abbreviations in netspeak is by using "*contractions*" or contracted forms such as 'gonna' for 'going to' (Crystal, 2001: 185). Arabi (2008: xiv) defines contractions as words that are formed from the first and last letter of a word such as 'dr' for 'doctor'.

9. Punctuation Marks

Punctuation "is an elaborate cuing system by which writers signal to their readers how move smoothly through

the prose. It helps writers to achieve clarity and emphasis" (Garner, 2016: 345). Punctuation is the use of certain marks or signs in a written language. It shows how words in a sentence or a paragraph can be grouped together so that their meaning may be easily understood by the reader. In spoken English, the meaning is usually shown by different pauses of the voice but in written English these pauses are shown by punctuation marks (Pelanduk, 2002:38).

9.1. Types of Punctuation Marks

1. Period or Full Stop (.)

Period is used at the end of declarative or imperative sentences but if the last word in the statement ends with a period, we cannot follow it with another period (Straus, 2008:52–53), (Kirkman, 2006: 62), (Pelanduk, 2002:33), (King, 2004:8), (Butterworth, 1999:6), (Stilman, 1997:106), (Colman, 2010:40), (Hegarty, 2000:58), (Field, 2009:33) and (Turabian, 1996:50). It is also used after a parenthetical statement that forms a complete sentence between other sentences (Kirkman, 2006:62). Straus (2008:53) mentions that a period may be used after an indirect question.

Full stops are used between letters in lower case abbreviation, for example 'r.f. output' (radio–frequency output). They are also used after abbreviations formed by truncation (cutting off the end of the word) such as (Fig., Sun., Mon., Feb.). A full stop is used after abbreviation of a personal title or a place name except the abbreviations that

contain the first and last letters of the abbreviated word like 'prof.' (professor), 'pl.' (place) (Kirkman, 2006:63).

2. Ellipsis Marks/Points (...)

Ellipsis points are used to show the omission of a word, phrase, sentence (line) or a paragraph from a quoted passage. Three ellipsis points, three dots, full stops or periods are used to show these types of ellipsis. Three ellipsis points are also used when the omission occurs at the beginning, middle, end of the sentence or between two complete sentences. When one or more paragraphs are omitted within a long quotation, ellipsis points are used after the last punctuation mark that ends the preceding paragraph (Straus, 2008:53) and (Krikman, 2006:58). If the omission at the end of a question or an exclamation, the question mark or exclamation mark should be after the ellipsis points (ibid.).

3. Comma (,)

A comma is used to separate words or word groups with a series of three or more words (Pelanduk, 2002:35), (Krikman, 2006:44), (Straus, 2008:54). Commas are used before or surrounding the title or the name of a person directly addressed. A comma is used to separate the day of the month from the year and after the year. It is also used to separate the city from the state. Moreover, a comma follows phrases of more than three words that a sentence begins with, but if the phrase has fewer than three words, the

comma is optional. It can be used to separate two clauses joined by a coordinating conjunctions such as 'and, or, but, for, nor', omitted if the clauses are short. Commas are used to introduce or interrupt direct quotation less than three lines. A comma is used to separate a statement from a question (question tag) and to separate contrasting parts of a sentence. If the sentence begins with introductory words like 'yes, now, well', they should be followed by a comma. Commas are surrounded words such as 'however, therefore' when they are used as interrupters. The introductory words like 'e.g., for example, i.e., that is, namely, for instance' must be followed by a comma or a semicolon when these words are followed by a series of items (Straus, 2008:54-57), (Quirk et al, 1985:1615), (Turabian, 1996:52-56) and (Soles, 2005:111).

4. Semicolon (;)

A semicolon marks a longer break than a comma and it is used to separate or divide sentence parts (Pelanduk, 2002:36), (Soles, 2005:114), (Turabian, 1996:56) and (Quirk et al., 1985:1622). A Semicolon is used instead of a period to separate two sentences where the conjunction has been left out. It is preferable to use a semicolon before introductory words (for instance, for example, e.g., i.e., that is, namely, however, therefore) when they introduce a complete sentence and it is also preferable to use a comma after these words. A semicolon is used to separate units of a series when most of the units include commas. It is also used between

two sentences that are joined by a conjunction but already have one or more commas within the first sentence (Straus, 2008:57–58).

5. Colon (:)

A colon introduces a longer pause than comma and semicolon. It is also used to introduce a list of items that will follow an enumeration. It follows a summary, a list or a quotation, but if the items in the following material consist of several words, they can be separated by semicolons (Kirkman, 2006:27), (Quirk et al., 1985: 1620), (Pelanduk, 2002: 38) and (Straus, 2008:58).

6. Question Mark (?)

A question mark is used at the end of a direct question. It is also used when a sentence is half statement and half question such as 'you do care, don't you?'. It may be used to express doubt or in a polite request when it seems like a question (Straus, 2008:60–61), (Pelanduk, 2002:38) and (Kirkman, 2006:89).

All interrogative sentences or questions should end with a question mark. These sentences are used to request for information and according to Nelson & Greenbaum (2016: 124–26), there are six types of questions: 1–Yes–no questions 2– Wh–questions 3– Declarative questions 4– Alternative questions 5–Tag questions 6– Rhetorical questions.

7. Exclamation Mark (!)

Exclamation mark is used in place of the period to express surprise, emphasis or astonishment. It also expresses strong feeling or emotion like pain and anger (Pelanduk, 2002:39), (Straus, 2008:61), (Kirkman, 2006:61), (Stilman, 1997:120) and (King, 2004:8). "An exclamation mark appears at the end of an interjection or exclamation to signal its character" (Garner, 2016: 387). It marks an emphatic or ironical comment (Turabian, 1996:52). An exclamation mark is also used after an exclamation beginning with *what* or *how* (Trask, 1997:10).

8. Quotation Marks or Inverted Commas Single (‘ ’) Double (“ ”)

Quotation marks are used to set off a direct quotation. Commas and periods are always gone inside quotation marks, but if a question is inside quotation, the question mark should be inside the quotation marks. Single quotation marks are used for quotation within quotation (Straus, 2008:61), (Pelanduk, 2002:42), (Quirk et al., 1985: 1630–31) and (Kirkman, 2006:79). Single quotation marks are used to mark out a word or phrase from the rest of the sentence. Inverted commas are used to introduce the exact words of the speaker or to indicate new words or special sense or to focus attention (Pelanduk, 2002:41–42).

9. Apostrophe (')

Apostrophe is used with contractions and its place should be in the place of the removed letter. It is used to indicate possession and its place may be before (s) to show singular possession, but after plural nouns to show plural possession. It sometimes indicates association or belonging ((Pelanduk, 2002:40), (Straus, 2008:63), (Quirk et al., 1985: 1636), (Kirkman, 2006:21–23) and (Butterworth, 1999:20–12)). Apostrophe is also used in the plural of a numeral or a single letter such as " O's or 1's" (Stilman, 1997:198).

10. Hyphen (–)

There are several uses of a hyphen: when the word at the end of a line is divided into syllables, it may be hyphenated. A hyphen is used to separate compound words ((Pelanduk, 2002:42), (Quirk et al., 1985: 1613), (Straus, 2008:65), (Kirkman, 2006:66) and (Stilman, 1997:125–128)). Hyphens may be used to avoid ambiguity when compounds are formed by adding a prefix to a full word because if there is any likelihood, readers will misread compound because of its unfamiliarity such as 're–enter' (Kirkman, 2006: 66).

11. Dash (—)

The dash is used to emphasize a special word or to mark a sudden break in a sentence. It is sometimes used instead of brackets to mark a sentence within another sentence. Sometimes, dash summarizes several subjects belong to the same verb(Pelanduk, 2002:43) and (Quirk et al., 1085: 1629).

12. Parenthesis ()

The function of parentheses is to set off an element that interrupts a flow of thought importantly. In the text, parenthesis may be used to enclose either digression within a sentence or digression of one or more stand-alone sentences. In long writing, parentheses are added in certain places to mark the main points easily to follow. Parenthesis is also used to set off a variety of small details in the sentence (Stilman, 1997:144-149).

Parentheses can be used to mark the boundaries within a statement or to enclose parenthetical remarks (Kirkman, 2006:85). According to Hegarty (2000:96) and Kirkman (2006:87) parentheses may also be used around letters or numbers to refer to tables and figures. Another use of parenthesis which is to enclose explanation of acronyms formed from groups of words.

13. Brackets []

There are two functions of brackets. The first is identifying changes to quoted material, and sometimes brackets may be applied to quotes derived from oral sources such as press conferences, interviews or from printed sources. The second function is to enclose digressions with parentheses (Stilman, 1997:166,170). Brackets may be used to enclose the phonetic transcription of a word (Turabian, 1996:60). The main use of brackets is to mark interpolations

in a quotation to emphasize that those words are not a part of the original text (Kirkman, 2006:84).

14. Slash (/)

A slash is a rather vague mark. It is sometimes called oblique, slant, virgule, solidus or shilling (Kirkman, 2006:93), (Trask, 1997:124), and (Stilman, 1997:139). There are three main functions of slash: the first is indication ('and' or 'or') which means there are options, alternatives and dual roles. The second function is indicating other relationships such as 'separating elements that are being compared, separating origins and destinations, separating the numerals making up a date, indicating a period spanning two calendar years and indicating division or fractions. The third function is to separate lines of a song or poem that are run in with a prose sentence (Stilman, 1997:139–142).

10. Data Collection and Description

The data used in this study are collected randomly from the internet by screenshots. The source of the data is online English chatgroups. There are two types of chatgroups synchronous "in real time" and asynchronous "in postponed time". Chatgroups "chatrooms" are open access and there are many different public rooms with different topics. Chatgroups have participants with different ages, sexes, cultures, education, backgrounds and regions. This means the data will be a variety of formal and informal languages. So, the data are easy to be collected and available in a large number of public chatgroups which do not require any

permission because they are 'open access' in many internet sites.

The data are of two sources: the first source is the public online chatgroups "synchronous" in which participants exchange messages about different topics in real time. synchronous data tend to be short because all members are online and messages are sent and received from the same server. So, the sender does not need to wait for a long time for response because messages are not stored, messages are arranged according to the time of occurrence from the newer to the older. This means messages are posted and transmitted simultaneously. The norm that is used in this type of exchange is informal as in the everyday speech in face-to-face communication because participants are of different ages, education, regions and backgrounds.

The second type of data is "asynchronous" English texts "in postponed time". The data of this kind are collected from "bulletin boards messages" by entering one of the bulletin boards programmes. The data of this type tend to be more formal than synchronous ones. Asynchronous texts tend to be long because users are not exchanged in real time. So, bulletin boards chats happen in postponed time in which people converse and interact by using this situation to conduct meeting, hold classes, organize discussions and stage conferences. The number of screenshots is 200 with (2568) texts, (156) screenshots of synchronous and (44) screenshots of asynchronous ones. The high number of screenshots is synchronous because it is full of netspeak

abbreviations and it tends to be more informal than asynchronous ones.

11. The analyses

The data will be categorized and analyzed to identify the occurrence of certain linguistic features included by online texts. A quantitative–qualitative analyses will be carried out by categorizing the findings of netspeak "chatgroups" produced by online participants into three linguistic features: abbreviations, acronyms and punctuation marks. The meanings of abbreviations and acronyms of netspeak are taken from Crystal (2004a: 141–175) and Leclair (2018: 6–120) along the study. While the meanings of standard abbreviations and acronyms are taken from Mattia (2003: 1–721). The examples that are used in the analyses are written as they appear in the data and they include some spellings and grammatical mistakes because most conversations are informal "written speech".

11.1. Abbreviations

In synchronous data, participants have to respond quickly to keep up with the flow of conversation. This quick response helps participants to write short messages. So, most users tend to use many conventions of oral and written discourse to achieve their communicative needs. While in asynchronous data, participants have more time to respond, therefore, the conversations tend to long and contain less abbreviations than synchronous ones.

All the synchronous data that are collected contain short messages and texts of three or four lines are rarely found. Different types of abbreviations are found in the data, this is because participants come from different backgrounds and write in different styles. So, this makes participants have a tendency to use standard and non-standard abbreviations. The examples below show abbreviations of netspeak:

1-Ali: is Dre any girl wanna chat personally. [is there any girl wants to....] [Appendix(11) txt(87)]

2-Porkchops-on-my-face: but they get banned really fast and so you gotta buy online and you may not get them. [sic] [Appendix (50) txt (661)]

3-Freddie: im gonna go. [Appendix (72) txt (991)]

Morphologically, abbreviations are formed by shortening existing lexemes, but in netspeak some abbreviations appear either because of the rebus in that the sound value of the letter or numeral acts as a syllable of a word such as "2" for "to" or "too" or combinations of rebus and initial letter of the word such as "m8" for "mate", "str8" for "straight", "b4" for "before" or because participants are familiar with netspeak shorthand in its other situations. Several types of abbreviations are found in synchronous chatgroups which are truncated particularly those that resemble the sound of a single letter when they are pronounced such as "r" for "are", "u" for "you", "ur" for "your", "y" for "why", "icq" "I seek you" "1n or 1" for "one", "F1" for "formula one" "hru" for "how are

you" or "ruh" for "are you horny", "xp" for "experience" as in the following examples:

4-qt9: Die if u are trying to be an intellectual person I must tell u that u are failing at it. [Appendix(5) txt(56)]

5-barmy: ilu xx. [sic][I love you (kisses)] [Appendix (32)txt (315)]

6-Guest-Olaf: I said ilu2 [I love you too]mate. [Aappendix (35) txt (383)]

7-N0RMALISH: quick b [back]they ban wet wipes.[sic] [Appendix (32) txt (333)]

8-N0RMALISH: b4 [before] [Appendix (32) txt (334)]

9-ObsidianMeridian: c u [see you]leave [Appendix (60) txt (815)]

10-Ali: Guest talking 2 u. [Appendix (13) txt (101)]

11-loyalty2016: Elvis-4-Gemini: if we had a beer we would have a good chat m8[mate]. [Aappendix (42) txt (525)]

12-Porkchops-on-my-face: l8r [later][Appendix (48) txt (628)]

13-Fact: cb4 [see before]... I know she has, my ass like u lol. [Appendix (17) txt (142)]

14-Stanlake: Die hey hru[how are you]. [Appendix (6) txt (55)]

15-barmy: lol n Port ruh [laughing out loud no Port are you horny][taboo] [Appendix (27) txt (220)]

- 16- Brandon-ShellysToy: people actually thought it'd make your trip xp. [appendix (121) txt (1135)]
- 17- The-Lizard: 1st sign of madness. [appendix (131) txt (1340)]
- 18- bwfclee: the 1 who has loads of hidey names or the other Maria shak. [appendix (168) txt (2013)]
- 19- Von-Drackmire: same as F1, money rules. That how it is. [appendix (176) txt (2147)]
- 20- That-1Guy: on icq [sic][appendix (184) txt (2283)]
- 21- That-1guy: we have 5 senses. u pretty. Much. Are offensive. To them all. Even. The. One. Don't count. You are 6th sense. [sic][appendix (189) txt (2382)]
- 22- That-1guy:- 13th name [appendix (178) txt (2169)]
- 23- purpleybatgirl: my 2nd tried to kill. [appendix (196) txt (2493)]

Some words are abbreviated by omitting letters usually vowels such as "thx" for "thanks", "thts" for "that's", "msg" for "message", "ppl" for "people", "fml" for "female", "m" for "man or male", "k" for "ok", "n" for "no", "bck" for "back", "hr" "hour", "tmw" "tomorrow", "wld" for "would", "shud" for "should", "thn" for "than", "yr" for "year", "coz" for "because", "ims" for "I'm sorry" . Participants seem to be aware of the information value of consonants as opposed to vowels so that they omit vowels of the word to give an economic value. So, these abbreviations are deviated from the

standard language norms by not following the morphology of abbreviations as in the following examples:

24–metalskateboarder: Halle*: good for you thts cool
[Appendix (2) txt (22)]

25–Ali: msg [message]me on my id. [Appendix (12) txt (93)]

26–Texasraised24: some ppl [people]get out in the sun for 30 mins [minutes] and they're red like a tomato. [Appendix (64) txt (882)]

27–FollowTheSpiders: thx [thanks] [Appendix (24) txt (202)]

28–barmy: cheeky cunt [account] [Appendix (27) txt (223)]

29–i–love–u: wow barmy lov you was quick then bless x [sic] [Appendix (32) txt (320)]

30–Swiper: don't block me pls [please]. [Appendix (55) txt (729)]

31–Dr Reggs: oh k [ok][Appendix (68) txt (930)]

32–Golden Tides: fml [female] [Appendix (69) txt (948)]

33–The EwokQueen: yes dr [dear] [Appendix (70) txt (962)]

34–Elvis–4–Gemini: Loyalty yes we wld[would]!!!!
[Appendix (42) txt (533)]

35–Guest–30findiaLost: I did 10 days of water fast it was awesome u shud [should] try it complete body detox.
[Appendix (38) txt (441)]

36–TwistedDilemma: find out thn [than]you!&%&
[Appendix (64) txt (878)]

37- Phoenix-Rising: No at least half the holiday is getting set up for the next yr. [appendix (124) txt (1190)]

38- The-Lizard: I tell them to get in, sit down, and sht up. [appendix (146) txt (1619)]

39- woowearpanties7: baby come bck [back]. [appendix (153) txt (1736)]

40- Phoenix-Rising: the job everyone aspires to do when they leave school coz [because] its just so damn cool. [appendix (125) txt (1217)]

41- Guest-Doolally: who invented the tv? [appendix (157) txt (1809)]

42- hollybush869: I'll try and be a cowgirl tmw [appendix (161) txt (1877)]

43- Dr Reggs: f**k the 4 hrs shit! [appendix (162) txt (1888)]

44- raccadoodle: I have lots of money and I never get. Ims [I'm sorry]from women looking to get that money from me. [appendix (192) txt (2421)]

45- Spekky: that's too pretty to need to be clever m [man]. [appendix (146) txt (1614)]

Some words are abbreviated by clipping a part of a word usually the final part such as "pic" for "picture", "mins" for "minutes", "Sun" for "Sunday", "fav" for "favourite", "tho" for "though", "app" for "application", "lap" for "laptop", "wh" for "what", "m" 'male or man', "ads" for "advertisements", "mob"

for "mobile", "photo" "photograph" "ass" for " asshole"[taboo] as in the following examples:

46- wait for 3 mins[minutes]. I'm typing question. [Appendix (26) txt (214)]

47-Guest-30findiaLost: my fav[favourite] is cottage cheese freshly made. [Appendix (30) txt (279)]

48-Guest-Olaf: lol I saw the pic [picture]you put up. [Appendix (32) txt (327)]

49-Guest-30findiaLost: my intention was detox tho [though]. [Appendix (39) txt (470)]

50- Norm Garden: I'd like to find a good app that connects eBay/Amazon to my supplier. [appendix (102) txt (1079)]

51- Lilahly Rhaine: about us, Screaming colors, focus on site and less ads. [appendix (101) txt (1076)]

52- That-1guy: up on my lap. [appendix (186) txt (2331)]

53- gentilewoman: wh the hell is Woowear talking to [appendix (156) txt (1795)]

54- jfpsepultura: ha, nah [no] I'm not joining this mob I'm your side Holly. [appendix (160) txt (1866)].

55- Duplicate: TBF[To be fair or to be frank] the photo wasn't that bib. [appendix (165) txt (1941)]

Some abbreviated words are written according to their pronunciation such as "da" for " the", "dre" for "there" and "buh" for "bye" as in the following examples:

56–billi: I learnt it from da internet there. [Appendix (26) txt (215)]

57–Ali: is Dre [there]any girl wanna chat personally. [Appendix(11) txt(87)]

58–qt9: Die u suck lol n I don't have time to waste on u buh [bye]. [Appendix (8) txt (68)]

Semantically, some abbreviation are used by participants to indicate special meanings such "zzzz", "xxxx", "oxox" or "xd" when they are used in their exchange as in the examples below:

59– Sarahbest: zzzz [sleeping or bored] [Appendix (17) txt (141)]

In the previous example, the abbreviated form "zzzz" is used to express the adjectives "tired, sleepy, bored". It could be pronounced as single letters.

60– Ma–sauce: Hi Phoenix xxxx [appendix (125) txt (1224)]

The previous conversation include the abbreviated form "xxxx" which stands for the noun "kisses" and It could be pronounced as single letters. It is used at the end of lovely conversations or to introduce greetings.

61–Jenie: Getupkid: ty ty xoxo [thank you thank you hugs & kisses]. [Appendix (3) txt (30)]

The previous conversation include the abbreviated form "xoxo" which stands for the nouns "hugs & kisses" and it

could be pronounced as single letters. It is used at the end of lovely conversations or to introduce greetings.

62–Laila: oh my xd [Appendix (17–18) txt (137), (145)] The previous conversation include the abbreviated form "xd" which stands for the adverbial phrase "really hard laugh or laughing out loud" and it could be pronounced as separated letters. It is used to express irony or a laugh sign towards some responses.

63– Careless C Connolly: haha [appendix (121) txt (1139)]

64– Tumtetumtetum: hehe [appendix (180) txt (2221)]

The previous conversations include the abbreviated form "Haha and hehe" which stands for the adjective "laughing" and it could be pronounced as a single word.

Standard abbreviations are also used by participants either in their nicks or in their exchange such "Mr", "Ms" and "Dr" which stand for the nouns "mister", miss and doctor". These abbreviations pronounce as full words when they are pronounced and they are mentioned in the previous examples.

Table (1) abbreviations of netspeak

Abbreviations	Their Meanings	Abbreviation Type	Number of Occurrences
Ads	Advertisements	Clipping	6
App	Application	Clipping	6

B	Back or be	Rebus	1
Bck	Back	Omitting letters	1
Buh	Bye	Written as is pronounced	1
B4	Before	Rebus	1
Cb4	See before	Rebus	3
Coz	Because	Rebus	5
Cu	See you	Rebus	1
Cunt	Account	Omitting letters	2
Da	The	Written as is pronounced	2
Dr	Dear or doctor	Contraction	5
Dre	There	Written as is pronounced	1
F1	Formula one	Rebus and initial letter	2
Fav	Favourite	Clipping	1
Fk	F**k	Omitting letters	9
Fking	F***ing	Omitting letters	5
F/Fml	Female	Omitting letters	4
Fu	F**k you	Rebus and initial letter	1

Gonna	Going to	Contraction	16
Gotta	Got to	Contraction	4
Gym	Gymnastics or gymnasium	Clipping	2
Haha or hehe	Laughing	Written as is pronounced	7
Hr	Hour	Contraction	2
Hru	How are you	Rebus	2
ICQ	I seek you	Rebus	1
Ilu	I love you	Rebus and initial letters	4
Ilu2	I love you too	Rebus and initial letters	2
Ims	I'm sorry	Contractions	1
K	Ok or kilo	Rebus/Omitting letters	4
L8r	Later	Rebus and initial letter	1
Lap	Laptop	Clipping	2
Lov	Love	Omitting letter	1
M	Male or man	Omitting letters/ clipping	4

Mins	Minutes	Clipping	2
Mob	Mobile	Clipping	2
Mr	Mister	Contraction	4
Mrs	Misses	Contraction	3
Ms	Miss	Contraction	6
Msg	Message	Omitting letters	3
M8	Mate	Rebus	2
N	No	Omitting letter	15
Photo	Photograph	Clipping	4
Pic	Picture	Clipping	17
Pls	Please	Omitting letters	3
Ppl	Pay-per-lead or People	Omitting letters	4
R	Are	Rebus	4
Ruh	Are you horny	Rebuses	1
Shhh	Quiet	Written as it pronounced	5
Sht	Shut or shit	Omitting letter	5
Shud	Should	Omitting letters	1
Str8	Straight	Rebus	1
Sun	Sunday	Clipping	4

Sx	Sex	Omitting letter	1
Thn	Than	Omitting letter	2
Tho	Though	Clipping	7
Thro	Through	Clipping	1
Thts	That's	Omitting letter	1
Thx	Thanks	Omitting letters	3
Tmw	Tomorrow	Omitting letters	2
Tv	Television	Omitting letters	7
U	You	Rebus	75
Ur	Your or you're	Rebus	28
Wanna	Want to	Contraction	10
Wh	What	Clipping	1
Wud/wld	Would	Omitting letters	2
Xd	Really hard laugh or laughing out loud	Indicate special meaning	8
Xoxo	Hugs & kisses	Indicate special meaning	2
Xxxx	Kisses	Written as is pronounced	54
Xp	Experience	Omitting letters	1

Y	Why	Rebus	5
Yr	Year	Omitting letters	3
Zzzz	Sleeping (or bored)	Indicate special meaning	1
1n, 1	One	Rebus	3
1 st	First	Rebus	1
2 nd	Second	Rebus	1
6 th	Sixth	Rebus	1
7 th	Seventh	Rebus	1
13 th	Thirteenth	Rebus	1
2	To/too/two	Rebus	8
2 me 2	To me too	Rebus	1
2 u	To you	Rebus	1
Total	82	Total	422

The table above shows the abbreviations of netspeak with their meanings and occurrences. In most chat systems, the number of characters and the size of the screen are limited to a single message and this will affect the message size that tends to be short, and the language of this message is structurally abbreviated. There are some constraints influence the form, length, shape and size of the message of online written discourse such as the number of online participants. Some factors such as screen size, minimal

response, typing speed, economy, competition for attention, and the number of participants and the pace of channel conversations all these contribute to the emergence of certain properties. These properties involve a tendency toward brevity and the use of short length and different forms of abbreviations.

11.2. Acronyms

Most acronyms that are used by participants are not formed from the initial letters or phrases that belong to organizations or the scientific jargons, and the acronyms that are found are not pronounced as new words. Acronyms are also used in participants' nicks such as "asl" or "tbf". These acronyms are written either in lower or upper case. This indicates that participants begin to form new types of acronyms without following any rule and they belong to online communities because participants try to write what they speak. On the other hand, in asynchronous data, acronyms are rarely found and even if they are used, they are used in a formal way such as "IP, URL, ROI, NZD, GTM" and participants conversations with their responses are longer than synchronous chats. The examples below show some acronyms that appear in the data while other example are excluded because they contain taboo words:

65–Carly: danny2012: lol yea [yes] doesn't sound pretty to me. [Appendix (2) txt (13)]

66–Danny2012: haha yeah not to me either lol. Be scary flat faces with Chinese eyes. [Appendix (2) txt (15)]

67-qt9: douexplorer: he doesn't know but he's a fun thing for this chat room lol. [Appendix (9) txt (75)]

68--Mad-wonky: im ok but skit all the time Bettybooty lol. [Appendix (44) txt (553)]

69-danny2012: make your own account lol. [Appendix (4) txt (43)]

The previous conversations include the acronym "lol" which denotes the adjective phrase "laughing out loud" or "lots of love". It could be pronounced as a single word. It is the most frequent acronym and has more than one meaning in netspeak exchange. According to (Baron, 2008: 59-60) "lol" is used to indicate "heehee or haha" which are sometimes used as phatic fillers, the equivalent of "really, ok, cool or yeah". "lol" is used to express happiness or desire to share happy feelings with someone. It is also used to indicate fake or lack of laughter when there is nothing valuable to contribute to conversation or it can be indicated as a mockery towards some responses in online exchange.

70- PreachersDau: Juhi: pmsl [sic] [appendix (120) txt (1118)]

71- hollybush869: I'm going back to bed. Ty for the advice. [appendix (166) txt (1962)]

72-st0rmie: Tbh I put out lol. [Appendix (60) txt (818)]

73-halzbells: OMG kill me if I had 4 kids.[surprise] [Appendix (61) txt (835)]

- 74-Lullabysonfire: Yw [Appendix (53) txt (705)]
- 75-danny2012: ha Halle idk about that. [Appendix (3) txt (28)]
- 76-DarkEye: anyway I need food brb. [Appendix (9) txt (78-9)]
- 77-SeanPaul420: anybody wanna regular chat pm me. [Appendix (25) txt (203)]
- 78- hollybush869: I kept that pg I think. [appendix (159) txt (1843)]
- 79-Pandahumboldt707: get em. [Appendix (70) txt (959)]
- 80- Dan...: gt the devil in my palm [sic][appendix (198) txt (2534)]
- 81-Guest-Olaf: Asl leave it out. [Appendix (33) txt (340)]
- 82-tani-shahh: metalskateboarder: gimme ya account key and id ☺.[give me your account key and id] [Appendix (4) txt (41)]
- 83-Burak25: Laila wb. [Appendix (16) txt (125)]
- 84- TalkCity: I love my GF Lilly so much more than anything. [appendix (163) txt (1905)]
- 85- gangsta: Baron, Erica is my wire-club gf. [sic][appendix (193) txt (2448)]
- 86- captaincaveman01: Hb pg tits [hurry back, pretty good tits] [appendix (197) txt (2514)]
- 87- sleepinboy: gl [appendix (181) txt (2238)]

- 88-Nettie-az: ta Mask. [Appendix (16) txt (132)]
- 89- cntrygirly90- umm I am hot TYVM. [sic][appendix (129) txt (1286)]
- 90-TBF: Bye tc. [sic][Appendix (16) txt (128)]
- 91-Dreammaker44only: Smh passive-aggressive behavior gotta love that shit lmao. [sic][Appendix (27) txt (230)]
- 92-bhgxusa12: eat chocolate the sugar will sustain you lmao. [Appendix (40) txt (493)]
- 93- Guest-WheatfieldWithCrows: wow! Where to start with that lmfao. [appendix (135) txt (1402)]
- 94- unicorpoop: games on here are bs. [appendix (139) txt (1472)]
- 95-EllaThePrinces: life1792 IKR. [Appendix (24) txt (197)]
- 96- mad-serb3030- ik Paris. [appendix (167) txt (1978)]
- 97- MrHamster: I'm going to find keyboard afk. [appendix (154) txt (1750)]
- 98-tas31naj: anybody near c t? [Appendix (57) txt (773)]
- 99-Von-Drackmire: fs, another flagging. [Appendix (57) txt (770)]
- 100-Master-DD: jk [sic][appendix (166) txt (1965)]
- 101-TwistedDilemma: I'm convinced Stomrie id built from a life of pre cum js. [Appendix (61) txt (832)]

102-NORMALISH: has your fingure got thrush RL?
[sic][Appendix (28) txt (241)]

103-Markopolo006: I see the conversation has reverted back
"girls are better than boys" "np boys are better than
girls"...thrilling. [Appendix (69) txt (947)]

104- The-Lizard: 5 days a week from 9a.m to 3:30 p.m.
[appendix (124) txt (1185-6)]

105- gangsta crooner: when "mail order brides" start flowing
out of the US into Asia and eastern Europe, then we can
have a discussion about how the US sucks until then stfu.
[appendix (190) txt (2388)]

Some standard acronyms also appear in the data, but they are less frequent than nonstandard ones. These acronyms are popular in offline writing and other formal situations such as "US 'United States', UK 'United Kingdom', NZ 'New Zealand', NZD 'New Zealand Dollar', IP 'Internet Protocol', ROI 'Rate of Interest', GTM 'Google Tag Manager', PPC 'pay-per-click', ISP 'internet service provider', MMA 'mixed martial arts', BBC 'British Broadcasting Corporation', FB 'facebook', DVD 'digital video disc', FFP 'financial fair play', HIV 'human immunodeficiency virus', IQ 'intelligence Quotient', GDP 'Government Development Platform', HD 'High Definition', API 'Accountants for the public interest or Air-Position Indicator', EU 'European Union' and NK 'Nagorno-Karabakh a region in Azerbaijan'.

Table (2) acronyms of netspeak

Acronyms	Their Meanings	Acronym Type	Number of Occurrences
Abc	Already been chewed	Alphabetisms	1
Afk	Away from keyboard or a free kill	Alphabetisms	1
a.m	Ante meridiem	Alphabetisms	1
API	Accountants for the public interest or Air-Position Indicator	Alphabetisms	1
Asl	Age/ sex/ location	Alphabetisms	6
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	Alphabetisms	1
Bbl	Be back later	Alphabetisms	2
Bob	Back off buddy	Alphabetisms	3
Brb	Be right back	Alphabetisms	14
Bs	Bull sh**	Alphabetisms	1
Btfo	Back the f*** off or bend the f***	Alphabetisms	1

	over		
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	Alphabetisms	1
COGS	Cost Of Goods Sold	Alphabetisms	1
Cpc	Cost-per-click	Alphabetisms	1
Ct	Can't talk	Alphabetisms	2
Dk	Don't know	Alphabetisms	1
DVD	Digital Video Disc	Alphabetisms	2
Em	Excuse me or e-mail	Alphabetisms	5
EU	European Union	Alphabetisms	1
FFP	Financial Fair Play	Alphabetisms	3
Fb	Facebook	Alphabetisms	2
Ffs	For f***ing sakes	Alphabetisms	6
Fs	For sale	Alphabetisms	1
GA	Google Analytic	Alphabetisms	1
GDP	Government Development Platform	Alphabetisms	1

Gf	Girlfriend	Alphabetisms	1
Gl	Good luck or get lost	Alphabetisms	1
Gn	Good night	Alphabetisms	1
Gt	Good try	Alphabetisms	2
Gtfo	Get the f*** out or get the f*** off	Alphabetisms	2
GTM	Google Tag Manager	Alphabetisms	1
Hb	Hurry back or hug back or happy birthday	Alphabetisms	3
HD	High Definition	Alphabetisms	1
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	Alphabetisms	2
Id	Identification	Alphabetisms	9
Idk	I don't know	Alphabetisms	3
IG	Instagram	Alphabetisms	2
IIRC	If I Remember Correctly	Alphabetisms	1
Ik	I know	Alphabetisms	1
Ikr	I know, right?	Alphabetisms	1

IP	Internet Protocol	Alphabetisms	13
IQ	Intelligence Quotient	Alphabetisms	6
ISIS	Islamic state of Iraq and Syria	Alphabetisms	2
ISP	Internet Service Provider	Alphabetisms	6
Iud	Intrauterine Device	Alphabetisms	2
Jk	Just kidding	Alphabetisms	1
Js	Just saying	Alphabetisms	1
Lmao	Laughing my ass off	Alphabetisms	16
Lmfao	Laughing my f***ing ass off	Alphabetisms	5
Lol/ lul/lolol	Laughing out loud or lots of love	Alphabetisms Pronounced as a word	188
MMA	Mixed Martial Arts	Alphabetisms	1
NBA	National bankers/banking association	Alphabetisms	1

NK	Nagorno- Karabakh	Alphabetisms	1
Np	No problem or neopets	Alphabetisms	1
NZ	New Zealand	Alphabetisms	3
Nzd	Non-zero digit or New Zealand Dollar	Alphabetisms	1
Omg	Oh my god	Alphabetisms	9
Omfg	Oh my f***ing god	Alphabetisms	1
Pfp	Pin-feed Printer or people's first party	Alphabetisms	1
Pg	Pretty good	Alphabetisms	3
Pm	Private message	Alphabetisms	6
p.m	Post meridiem	Alphabetisms	1
Pmsl	Pee myself laughing	Alphabetisms	4
Ppc	Pay-per-click	Alphabetisms	1
PSG	Paris Saint- German	Alphabetisms	2
Rl	Real life	Alphabetisms	1



Rofl	Rolling on floor laughing or rolling over f**ing laughing	Alphabetisms	1
Roi	Rate of interest or return on investment	Alphabetisms	1
SEO	Search Engine Optimization	Alphabetisms	1
SERP	Search Engine Results Page	Alphabetisms	1
Smh	Scratching my head or shaking my head	Alphabetisms	1
Stfu	Shut the f*** up	Alphabetisms	4
Ta	Thanks a lot or thanks again	Alphabetisms	1
Tbd	To be determined or to be decided	Alphabetisms	1
Tbf	To be fair or to be frank	Alphabetisms	1
Tbh	To be honest	Alphabetisms	9
Tc	Take care or	Alphabetisms	1

	that's cool		
Tf	Too f**ing	Alphabetisms	3
TNG	The next generation	Alphabetisms	1
Ty	Thank you	Alphabetisms	12
Tyvm	Thank you very much	Alphabetisms	1
Uk	United kingdom	Alphabetisms	3
URL	Uniform Resource Locator	Alphabetisms	2
US	United States of America	Alphabetisms	7
Wb	Write back or welcome back or way bored	Alphabetisms	2
Wbu	What about you?	Alphabetisms	1
Wtf	What the f**?	Alphabetisms	6
Wth	What the heck or what the hell	Alphabetisms	1
Wtg	Way to go	Alphabetisms	1
Ya	Yet another	Alphabetisms	2
Y w	You're welcome	Alphabetisms	2

Total	91	T o t a l	434
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The table above shows acronyms of netspeak with their functional meanings and occurrences. Morphologically, acronyms are words that are formed from the initial letters of other words or phrases but in Netspeak can be sentence length such as "IKR" "I know, right?". The use of such acronyms is considered as a strong case for the emergence of a new kind of English language. Synchronous data shows that participants tend to use few standard acronyms such as "UK" "United Kingdom" and deviant acronyms are the highest ones such as "ty" "thank you". Some of these acronyms are restricted to netspeak only and they are not used in formal writing such as "ty" for "thank you" while others are used in several situations or in formal writing and these are standard acronyms such as "ID" "Identification", "US" and "UK". Participants use different strategies to reduce time and effort for communication.e

11.3. Punctuation Marks

Chatgroups' participants have a tendency not to use punctuation marks in their exchange, and even if punctuation marks are used, they are not used in their correct place. Synchronous chatgroups are considered as informal exchange so that punctuation tends to be minimalist and participants do not care about punctuation

marks because of the response speed or they think that punctuation is not obligatory so that they try to reduce time by not using punctuation marks. Moreover, Crystal (2001:87) argues that "the save of a keystroke principle is widely found in chatgroups where whole sentences can be pronounced without punctuation".

Thus, asynchronous chatgroups are more formal than synchronous ones and most punctuation marks are used in their correct position except some cases. This is because either participants have different educational backgrounds or because they have enough time to write and think in postponed time. The analyses of the examples below show the texts of chatgroups with or without punctuation marks, with some functions of these punctuation marks, in addition to their new conventions:

1. Period or Full Stop

Period is rarely used in its correct position especially in the synchronous data and many declarative sentences do not end with full stop, they stay open except in some cases it is used in its correct position. While in asynchronous data, period is used more in its correct position at the end of declarative and imperative sentences as in the following examples:

106-Die: your name is Baby Girl. [Appendix (5) txt (50)]

107-Die: you are not human beings. You are peasants of your own genitals. [Appendix (6) txt (54)]

108–FllowTheSpiders: I thought he was older. [Appendix (23) txt (189)]

109–Von–Drackmire: Von is always right. [Appendix (53) txt (711)]

110–MoonKnight: you are going to use a brillo pad NORMALISH? [Appendix (31) txt (299)]

111–EmElle: Guest–Olaf: I think someone said he had a ban? [Appendix (31) txt (313)]

Participants in some cases use another punctuation mark instead of period. So, they use a question mark instead of a period, these examples may be declarative questions, in form they are declaratives, but they have interrogative force by ending them with question marks.

112–19631178: I assume very carefully. I've never had nails like that for exactly that reason but there's soft/blunt acrylic nails that don't get, you know, scratchy. Still, I'd rather keep well trimmed just to be sure. [Appendix (76) txt (1013)]

113– the Lorax: you don't need Google. You don't need a stupid Blog. You don't need Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. [appendix (102) txt (1078)] The examples above are taken from asynchronous data which tend to be more formal and full stop is widely used in its correct position at the end of statements or command.

114– lifegoeson: That doesn't make sense [appendix (39) txt (461)]

115- barmy: Barman go and find joker [appendix (39) txt (460)]

2. Ellipsis Points

Ellipsis points are widely used in chatgroups either to indicate emphasis or pauses or the omission of some words or phrases as in the following examples:

116-Halle*: Metalskateboarder: yes that's why I moved ... pinoy president is killing his own people like Hitler did. [Appendix (3) txt (35)]

117-Die: what a statement from a dark-skinned, future prostitute... [Appendix (5) txt (47)]

118-i-love-u: and that lovely barmy soon saw me log in..which is nice, not many see me log in [Appendix (35) txt (379)]

119-Ujt910: sorry.. [Appendix (15) txt (121)]

3. Comma

Comma is widely used but in random way especially in synchronous chatgroups. It is sometimes used in its correct place to separate words or group of words in a series or to follow phrases or to separate clauses joined by conjunctions. Short answers that begin with "yes" or "no" are sometimes not followed by a comma as in the following examples:

120-Nettie: yes the queen that's who call maam [Appendix (17) txt (134)]

121- Visca el Barca: not a salary cap but, rules in place regarding clubs' finances [appendix (170) txt (2039)]

122- Guest-Charles: Yes, IP ban. [appendix (143) txt (1568)]

123-i-love-u: oh yes, my bed can fit 2 people, it's a big bed [Appendix (36) txt (409)]

124-wait for about 3 mins, I'm typing question [Appendix (26) txt (214)]

125-RoyalLeathering: lol that's a bonus, Guest-30findiaLost xx [Appendix (31) txt (302)]

126-asl: be quick, you don't want to die a stiff, so to speak [Appendix (33) txt (343)]

127-self1: Obsidian: that only happens for some people, and IIRC it's called seasonal affective disorder. [Appendix (53) txt (708)]

4. Colon

A colon in chatgroups is usually used after participants' nicks when they introduce conversation. This use is a result of chat systems not of participants' conventions . It is rarely used by participants in their conversations except some cases in asynchronous data. In the example below a colon is used to introduce a list of items:

128- Stephen: I would go with:

-PageSpeed Guru

-Minifier

-Coupon Pop

-Hull Social Login

-Signifyd [appendix (106) txt (1086)]

5. Semicolon

A semicolon is rare in chatgroups conversations except in these random cases:

129-AugustusWaters: ;-; its so empty here. [Appendix (10) txt (86)]

130-DarEye: where did everyone go;n; [sic.] [Appendix (25) txt (208)]

So, in the examples above, participants use semicolons randomly. This is either because of the keyboard stroke or according to the participants' attitude.

6. Question Mark

A question mark is widely used in chatgroups, but it is sometimes used correctly such as at the end of questions and sometimes participants use combination of question marks for emphasis or sometimes it is not used in its correct position and this depends on the participants' attitude. As in the following examples:

131- Guest-WheatfieldwithCrows: Ben, can I pm you a minute? [appendix (128) txt (1268)]

132- niko1zagreb: who wants to live forever? [appendix (147) txt (1640)]

- 133–Marisa: Anyone depressed? [Appendix (18) txt (153)]
- 134– Paolo: Unicom you're native right? [appendix (138) txt (1459)]
- 135–EmElle: Guest–Olaf: I think someone said he had a ban? [Appendix (31) txt (313)]
- 136–i–love–u: downloading a film is bad? [Appendix (36) txt (395)]
- 137–minstrel312: Even like the coast and the Sierras? [Appendix (55) txt (733)]
- 138–the poof isn't nearly as much??? [Appendix (78) txt (1025)]

7. Exclamation Mark

Exclamation mark is also widely used in chatgroups. Participants use single or combination of exclamation marks to express astonishment, emphasis or surprise or to reflect feelings and emotions in a way that reflects speech in writing as in the following examples:

- 139–asl: don't go again please! [Appendix (27) txt (221)]
- 140–EmElle: RoyalLeathering: I've been around dear! [Appendix (31) txt (311)]
- 141–Bhgxusa12: of course I'd ask you Tony! [Appendix (38) txt (452)]
- 142–Getupkid: Jenie happy mothers day!!!! (emphasis)[Appendix (3) txt (25)]

143–Elvis–4–Gemini: loyalty yes we wld[would]!!!!
(emphasis) [Appendix (42) txt (533)]

8. Quotation Marks

Participants use quotation marks in their exchange to introduce exact words for others or to indicate that these words are new, to give special sense, to focus attention, or to give unusual words and expressions as in the following examples:

144–Metalskateboarder: Tani–shahh: log in to your account back on the plantside2 homepage then once you are logged in click on "Already have a Daybreak Account? Download the Game". [Appendix (4) txt (37)]

145–Crumax: But I use my 'ego' alongside Christ... [Appendix (57) txt (775)]

146–Augie Kennady: Supremely awesome guru article--and I'll just add that "free shipping" will really help with reducing cart abandonment! [Appendix (92) txt (1059)]

147– Andre: by "they" you mean "we", right? It seems you are part of the company yourself? [appendix (110) txt (1094)]

9. Apostrophe

The synchronous data show that little attention is paid to apostrophe. It is usually missing in most contractions as in the following examples:

148–Getupkid: Jenie happy mothers_ [sic]day!!!! [Appendix (3) txt (25)]

149-Nettie: yes the queen that _s [sic] who call maam
[Appendix (17) txt (134)]

150-Guest-Olaf: Then I won t [sic] [Appendix (30) txt (290)]

10. Hyphen

The hyphen is widely used especially in the synchronous data. It is used either with participants' names or between compounds or to indicate (from-to) as in the following examples:

151-tani-shahh (nick name) [Appendix (4) txt (41)]

152-Guet-Olaf (nick name)[Appendix (27) txt (219)]

153-RoyalLeathering: My love-life agrees with you xx
[Appendix (27) txt (236)]

154-Die: what a statement from a dark-skinned, future
prostitute... [Appendix (5) txt (47)]

155- Matthew: in the past 3-4 weeks I have implemented
many of suggestions. [appendix (109) txt (1092)]

11. Dash

There are rare examples which include a dash. Just in the example below, a dash is used at the end of the phrase to express more emphasis to the following phrase:

156-Aweek later__ [Appendix (76) txt (1012)]

12. Parenthesis

In chatgroups, participants use parentheses to enclose some important words, some new details or to set off a

variety of small details in their conversation especially in asynchronous chatgroups as in the following examples:

157–RoyalLeathering: (Not sure I can go ten minutes without food) [Appendix (40) txt (491)]

158–I love the smell of second hand brand and refuse to wash it for one or two wears (unless there are stains, of course). [Appendix (77) txt (1023)]

159–Nicolas: The logo is in a low resolution and it could be better if you give a more detailed description to the products like material (what kind of wood?), sizes.. [Appendix (87) txt (1050)]

13. Slash

In few cases, participants use a slash between words to mean "and" or "or" or to mean "either...or" as in the following examples:

160–Rodolfo: I need to exclude/filter my IP from the Shopify stats...how do I do that? [Appendix (97) txt (1069)]

161– Stephen: I try use/add as many of these as possible for each store I create. [appendix (106) txt (1086)]

14. Smileys Instead of Punctuation Marks

162–daRealYvette: I have flat ass☺ [(appendix (2) txt (19)]

163–Life17842: go girl stay em☺ [appendix (22) txt (184)]

164–Wonder woman: xd I knew u were a female☺ [appendix (22) txt (183)]

In the examples above, participants use smileys instead of punctuation marks at the end of their conversations. They are used as markers to express emotions that the sender adopts to be conveyed to the reader by the use of written language to compensate the lack of paralinguistic features that are used in f2f conversations. So, these smileys are considered as a part of the interaction in chatgroups.

15. New Conventions of Punctuation Marks

Some participants use new combinations of punctuation marks in their conversations to reflect their tempo or attitude. The random or exaggerated use of these new conventions can result from emphasis or attitude because the new punctuation marks or symbols do not belong to the traditional punctuation, they are borrowed from programming language that appear in chatgroups interaction as in the examples below:

165–Baconator: Halz how big is yours man&~~&\$
[Appendix (62) txt (852)]

166–Halzbells: you're*_ [Appendix (62) txt (845)]

167–TwistedDilemma: find out thn you!&%& [Appendix (64) txt (878)]

168–JeanetteCula: Mark../ [Appendix (67) txt (921)]

169–N0RMALISH: I get blame for everything:@ [Appendix (31) txt (310)]

12. Conclusions

Through the analysis of the data, it is important to show that the development of the technology affects the language use in online communication and many linguistic properties have emerged from this development. One of these properties is abbreviations, the number of abbreviations that appeared in the data is (82) abbreviations of both standard and netspeak abbreviations. Participants have creativity and freedom in their online conversations in the formation of these new conventions in a way that reflects speech in writing without following the morphological rules of abbreviations. Through the occurrence of each abbreviated form, the most frequent abbreviations are: "u" stands for "you" with (75) occurrences, "xxxx" stands for "kisses" with (54) occurrences, "ur" stands for "your or you're" with (28) occurrences, "pic" stands for "picture" with (17) occurrences, "gonna" stands for "going to" with (16) occurrences and "n" for "no" with (15) occurrences. netspeak abbreviations are widely and most frequently used in synchronous "chatgroups".

Furthermore, acronyms are also considered as one of the distinctive features of netspeak. The analysis of the data shows that acronyms are also popular in netspeak. The total number of acronyms in the data are (91) acronyms of both standard and non-standard 'netspeak acronyms'. The high percentage is netspeak acronyms which are mostly formed from sentence length without following the morphological

rules in formation of these acronyms. These non-standard acronyms belong only to online communities and they are never used in offline writing or other formal situations. According the occurrence of each acronym, the most frequent acronyms are: "lol" stands for "Laughing out loud or lots of love" with (188) occurrences, "Lmao" stands for "Laughing my ass off" [taboo]with (16) occurrences, "brb" stands for "be right back" with (14) occurrences, "IP" stands for "Internet Protocol" with (13) occurrences and "ty" stands for "thank you" with (12) occurrences.

On the other hand, the data of this study show that little attention is paid to punctuation marks, and they are often absent in most synchronous chatgroups. Internal punctuation such as the use of apostrophe with contractions and final punctuation such as the use of period at the end of declarative or imperative sentences are usually missing. Some punctuation marks are not used in their correct place such as the use of a question mark instead of a period or the use of combination of punctuation marks at the end of the sentences for emphasis and attitude such as "happy mother's day!!!!". So, by using exaggerated punctuation marks at the end of the sentence such as "!!!!" or "????", participants try to reflect spoken language by means of written one and this may lead to deviation from the standard language norms. Some sentences end with emoticons instead of punctuation marks because participants try to compensate the lack of paralinguistic cues that are found in face-to-face

communication. The most frequent punctuation marks are full stop, comma and apostrophe. Some punctuation marks are rarely used in netspeak such as semicolon, brackets, dash and slash.

The formation of deviant or 'netspeak' abbreviations and acronyms such as "m8" for "mate", "str8" for "straight" and "ty" for "thank you" could be an element of language play. Moreover, these abbreviations and acronyms are common in netspeak culture and considered as a strong case for the emergence of a new kind of language that differs from both speech and writing. Most deviant or 'netspeak' abbreviation, acronyms and punctuation marks are found in synchronous data because this type of netpeak tends to be informal, all participants are online in the same time. So, participants do not have time to write full words or use punctuation marks in their correct position. This means participants have tendency to use abbreviations, acronyms, exaggerated punctuation marks and even smileys and symbols in their responses to make their conversations like F2F communication.

The functions of the abbreviations and acronyms used in netspeak are represented in participants use of short responses and abbreviated forms for speed, economy, save time, energy and effort, and to hurry their typing to flow the exchange of online conversations and to make them like face-to-face communication because they try to write what they speak. Some netspeak abbreviations and acronyms

have more than one meaning or represent special meanings such as "zzzz" indicate either 'sleeping, bored or tired', 'lol' can be used to express 'hehe, haha' or as irony or for happiness and 'omg' can express 'surprise, excitement, embarrassment or disgust'.

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