

Orthography and the Internet

(Bear in mind that writing on this subject becomes out of date very quickly.)

D. Crystal: *Language and the Internet*, CUP 2001. (A general guide to Netspeak; specifically on orthography, see pp. 21, 34–39, 84–92, 164, 214, 229–230)

S. Dent: *Larpers and Shroomers*, OUP 2004. (Yes, this is Susie Dent of *Countdown* fame, who produces an annual series of Language Reports, which mainly focus on new expressions or recent changes of meaning. IT/orthography issues are dealt with on pp. 59–60, 62, 64, 66, 87, 89)

C. Thurlow: *Generation Txt? The sociolinguistics of young people's text-messaging*, *Discourse Analysis Online* 1 (2002). <<http://www.shu.ac.uk/daol/articles/v1/n1/a3/thurlow2002003-paper.html>>

Previously recommended: Cook 193–203.

Special orthographic characteristics of email and text messaging include:

- reduced punctuation, including apostrophes (e.g. *isnt*)
- acronyms/initialisms: *imho*, *fyi*, *wuwh*
- other abbreviations: *pls*, *prob*, *gon*, *tryin*, *txt*
- other non-standard spellings: *tunez*, *phreak*, *wivout*
- rebus use of numbers and letters, as in *c u l8r*, *stop 4 sthg 2 eat*, *4go10*
- upper case letters to be read as letter name, e.g. *nEd*, *thN*
- ways of showing emphasis, e.g. upper case, asterisks, underscore
- smileys or emoticons, such as :-) and ;-)
- HTML-style tags: *<moan>I've got an interview tomorrow</moan>*
- leet, involving transliterations such as *4* for *A* or *oh* for *O*. Other examples include *hax0r* 'hacker', *pwnt* for 'pawnd', *h4xx0r3d* 'hacked'.

Note that these categories are not all mutually exclusive.

rebus principle: 'Representing a word by means of the logogram of another which is phonetically similar or homophonous' (Coulmas: *Blackwell Encyclopedia*, p. 433)