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POLL RESULTS

Is Chatspeak Destroying English?

Poll results and comments suggest that most feel chatspeak is not destroying English

No More Than Rock 'N' Roll

The fact that modern digital communicants utilize chatspeak is no more destroying English than rock 'n' roll destroyed music (though rap may yet—LOL). Savvy humans nuance their language style according to its effectiveness, and I'd wager that formal English will always have its place (Probs).

*Scott Merrick
University School of Nashville and
Vanderbilt Center for Science Outreach
Nashville, Tennessee*

Chatspeak Enriches the Language

The English language, like any other, is subject to evolution caused by movements of people and now communications technology. There are about 540 million words in the English language, about five times the number that Shakespeare had to work with. Semantic compression has been a useful tool for Latin (et al.), modern English (etc.), Morse code (SOS), and cell phones (c u l8r). Does this destroy language? No, it enriches it, allowing it to adapt to the spirit of the times.

*Graham Brown-Martin
Handheld Learning
London, England*

Language Is Always Evolving

No, chatspeak is part of the evolution of the English language. It is facilitating better communication through a more succinct use of words. A new tool, Twitter.com, is a form of chatspeak where a message is delivered in 140 characters. Consider also the international perspective of what correct

English is. Already, different forms of English are accepted throughout the world; therefore, chatspeak can be considered an alternative way of communicating that identifies the user with their friendship and peer group.

*Julie Lindsay
Qatar Academy
Doha, State of Qatar*

Makes Me LOL

OMG, evry genRASHun goes thru dis cuz da oldies don get it—hipEEz, valEE girLz, hIp HoP n ebonics, n now chatspk. All deez thangs R reking english but iTz StILL hErE cuz U hafta no it fer skool n jobz

*Scott Laleman
Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD
Schertz, Texas*

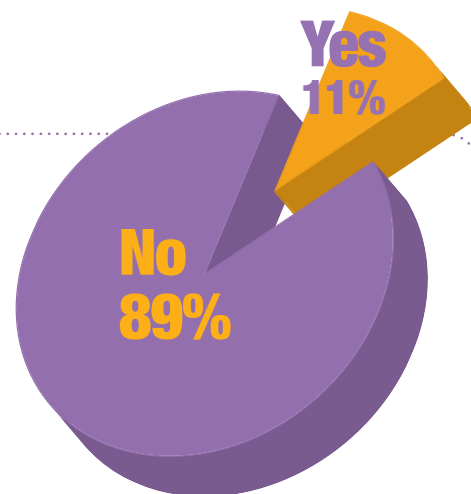
It Can Be Used Inappropriately

The problem with chatspeak is that students do NOT know when to code switch as Mr. Monfils talked about (Point/Counterpoint, Nov. 2007, pp. 8–9). Students have a hard enough time getting focused on writing—chatspeak only adds to the detritus that has to be shaken out of the rough drafts, which students are loathe to do unless under extreme duress.

*Bonnie Maye
El Segundo Middle School
El Segundo, California*

Consider Chatspeak a Useful Tool

I believe that text-messaging has proven itself a powerful tool in unifying many factions in a diverse population. The use or nonuse of social networking tools does not pose a degradation



of English skills, and does in fact increase student interest in written communication.

*Karon Tarver
Fort Worth ISD
Fort Worth, Texas*

Chatspeak May Be Counterproductive

When e-mailing friends, chatspeak, aka netspeak, helps to write more quickly. But I started with good writing and grammar skills. I believe that chatspeak undermines the kinds of writing we are teaching in schools that is being tested on high-stakes tests.

*Esther Bobowick
Cooperative Educational Services
Trumbull, Connecticut*

Formal Language Will Survive

Chatspeak is not destroying the English language. Younger generations may use it for simple e-mails, instant messaging, or texting, but that's about it. When it comes to the real world, businesses are not going to allow chatspeak in formal writings and documents. Chatspeak is also derived from Leetspeak, which originated in the mid '90s on IRC (Internet Relay Chat) servers. This has been around for 20 years and it will remain commonplace for small messaging.

*Jason Roussin
Windsor C-1 School District
Imperial, Montana*