

# Pragmatics of the Keyboard:

## An Analysis of Orthographic Conventions on Tumblr

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**Abstract:** Internet users have filled pragmatic gaps left by the lack of intonation and paralinguistic cues of Computer-Mediated Communication by repurposing and expanding the meanings and connotations of orthographic and typographical conventions. This study documents common orthographical conventions found on the website Tumblr.com. As a longtime user of the website, the author claims native understanding of these conventions as they are presently used.

# 1. Introduction

While to the outsider, English on the Internet appears lawless, fluent users of InternetSpeak know that the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation rules of written English have changed over time to convey new meanings. Spoken English encodes many pragmatic features non-lexically, such as intonation, which conveys emotions from excitement to confusion using volume, tone, and body language. Computer-Mediated Communication, which is language exchanged through technology and the Internet, has been seen as limited because of its inability to exchange the same pragmatic information non-lexically (Crystal, 2006; Vandergriff, 2010). Due to this limiting aspect of text-based communication, however, users have taken to encoding these pragmatic features through “micro-linguistic and structural features,” i.e. orthographic means (Bieswanger, 2011). Over time, users have negotiated the meanings associated with different formatting choices, such as capitalization and punctuation, and exploited them to express more efficiently non-lexical information through text. Especially at a time when 78% of people on Tumblr are using their smartphones (Cummings, 2015), features such as capitalization and misspelling actually become more time-consuming on auto-correcting keyboards. Nevertheless, these are still prominent features of Tumblr, so it is obvious that it is not merely the ease of typing, but also the pragmatic effects of style that dictate how users type to convey their thoughts and emotions through CMC. While InternetSpeak and CMC has long been a topic of study, there is a lack of literature that exists dedicated to the documentation of pragmatic features encoded through orthographic conventions, especially by native users (Bieswanger, 2011; Vandergriff, 2013). To fill this gap in the literature, this study provides an account of the orthographic conventions used to convey pragmatic features on Tumblr.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. CMC

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is the written communication between humans using technology as the medium. Communication through technology has gone global in its reach as the Internet has created a means for people across the world to communicate through websites (Fouser, Inoue, & Lee, 2000). With the rising popularity of the Internet, CMC has become increasingly important for people to become familiar with proper Netiquette—orthographic conventions commonly used in communication on the web—in order to be understood. These conventions, such as the use of all capital letters (“all caps”) to mean yelling (Bourlai & Herring, 2014; Danet, 2013; Lawson, Ferrer, Wang, & Murray, 2015; McKee, 2002;

Werry, 1996), or the use of many punctuation marks to show emphasis (Bourlai & Herring, 2014; Hancock, 2004; Hirankan, Suchato, & Punyabukkana, 2013; Urabnik, 2013; Werry, 1996), fill in the gaps left by this new form of communication, i.e. the limitations imposed by platforms that rely primarily on text-input.

It is interesting to note that Internet conventions must have been repeatedly negotiated over time since the creation and popularization of the World Wide Web (Fouser et al., 2000). Much like spoken language, this required an ebb and flow between linguistic accommodation, which dictates that speakers minimize differences in their speech to increase understanding between interlocutors, and linguistic innovation, in which speakers differentiate themselves from other speakers by creating new means of representing their thoughts and ideas linguistically (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Lefler, 2011). While some conventions surely were not immediately comprehensible to all users upon initial contact, continual contact over time in different contexts could help users begin to understand these conventions and, with time, replicate them themselves.

In reviewing the literature on CMC, however, there are inconsistencies and inaccuracies that mischaracterize InternetSpeak, especially how it is used today. While some authors have criticized others for overstating the limitations of the medium for aspects of communication, the same authors misrepresent the meanings of the features they describe, while also promoting an anachronistic perspective of their use on the Internet (Bieswanger, 2011; Danet, 2013; Schandorf, 2012; Worth, 2008). Because of their status as Digital Immigrants, many researchers in CMC lack the native understanding of InternetSpeak necessary to understand its nuances and properly document it (Prensky, 2001). Because of this, there is a need for documentation of InternetSpeak by in-group members who fluently understand the conventions they describe.

## 2.2. Orthographic Conventions and Fluency on the Internet

There are environments that prompt a change in register (Biber & Finegan, 1994). We do not speak with our parents at home the way we speak with potential employers in an interview, which differs yet more from the way we speak with our close friends at a bar. Unconsciously, we navigate these environments with relative ease, as humans are adept at fitting in socially through our speech. The particular medium of communication is not exempt from such consideration, and so it too affects our register. The norms of written English are decidedly different from spoken English. English on the Internet, sometimes referred to as InternetSpeak, is electronically-written speech that requires manual-ocular, rather than the usual oral-aural, aptitude (Crystal, 2006).

Because language is fundamentally an oral-aural exercise, InternetSpeak is considered “constrained” by its lack of intonation and Face-to-Face interaction (Bieswanger, 2011). When comparing oral speech to typed communication, InternetSpeak both limits communication in some ways and increases the capacity for the creation of new means of communicating. While on the one hand it is generally agreed that Face-to-Face conversations, because of their ability to include intonation, are less likely to result in misunderstandings than CMC, there are also situations in which CMC has advantages. Because of the ability to include pictures, videos, and .gifs (Graphics Interchange Format), users can share conventionalized, iconic reactions and scenes that would be impossible in Face-to-Face conversation. Due to the burden it takes to add media to posts and text messages, it is obvious that their communicative value is worth the trouble (Bourlai & Herring, 2014; Grant, 2015). The added burden is similar in written text, in which some formatting styles (italics, capitalization, adjacent character repetition, etc.), while more laborious, convey enough semantic or pragmatic information that the added effort is worthwhile (Soffer, 2012). Thus, CMC compensates for the lack of intonation and paralinguistic cues by encoding their pragmatic functions through orthographic means (Gunraj et al., 2016; Vandergriff, 2013). The added pragmatic information may be conveyed non-lexically, and therefore lack a spoken Standard English equivalent. For example, the user below desires the ability to convey same pragmatic function as multiple question marks (detached from lexical items) in “real life” (spoken communication).



**urbanoutfucks**

i wish i could say “???????????” in real life it would be very useful

Formal orthographic conventions do not allow for creativity in formatting. Because of this rigidity, many choose to reject prescriptive, formal stylistic conventions, instead opting for greater customization and expression (Soffer, 2012). Because the existing conventions for Written English do not encode pragmatic features such as intonation and paralinguistic actions except through explicit, lexical descriptions, computer users have taken to representing their speech orthographically (McCulloch, 2015). Furthermore, because communication through technology is rapidly becoming increasingly common, the need for the ability to express nuanced pragmatic features efficiently is becoming increasingly necessary (Soffer, 2012; Werry, 1996). By rejecting InternetSpeak as a “valid” form of communication, users predispose themselves to misunderstanding others (as well as being misunderstood) when they encounter these conventions on the Internet (Prensky, 2001). Much in the same way that speaking with a certain phonological

grammar serves as an identity marker, writing with a certain typological grammar can mark one's identity ideologically, generationally, and geographically (Sebba, 2007). For example, one can mark their dialect textually by choosing lexical items especially common in their dialect and by marking "eye dialect"—nonstandard orthography which serves to represent the phonological realization of speech sounds intended by the user (Lefler, 2011; Soffer, 2012). With the younger generations spending more time on the Internet, they have become especially aware of these typological "accents" (Prensky, 2001). A lack of fluency marks oneself as an outsider (LeBlanc, 2005).

While regional dialects, with varying pronunciations, lexical choices, and syntactic features, are clear to the average speaker and can be defined somewhat discreetly into regional groups, "dialects" on the Internet can not be so clearly delineated. To put it plainly, membership on a website does not preclude membership on other websites, so linguistic features can be much more fluid on the Internet. Furthermore, membership on a website does not predetermine a certain identity or familiarity with a Community of Practice, as websites are generally divided into subcultures who do not necessarily interact. Because the development of practices is based on frequent interactions (Bucholtz, 1999), we cannot say there is a holistic identity on any website, as not all members of a website interact and would not necessarily be familiar with all conventions.

### 2.3. Tumblr as a Case Study

Tumblr is a social media (Net 2.0) and micro-blogging platform founded by David Karp in 2007 and sold to Yahoo! in 2013. According to the website's own Press page, there are 289.5 million blogs hosted on Tumblr, with 50.8 million new posts every day, totaling 132.4 billion posts in the website's lifespan. Tumblr's homepage (called the 'Dashboard') is populated by all recent posts, chronologically posted by any blogs the user follows. Posts can be 'reblogged' (which places the post on their own blog and, therefore, on the Dashboards of anyone who follows them) or 'liked' (which saves them in a user's 'liked' section of the website), both of which add to the post's number of 'notes.' When reblogging a post, the user can choose to add their own text/photos. These additions remain on the post if a follower reblogs it. If a user chooses to add anything, a notification is sent to the original poster (the OP). Because of this, a convention has arisen on Tumblr to write any commentary the user doesn't wish to contribute to the post itself, but rather to share with their followers only, 'in the tags.' The tags section, which is short for *hashtags*, can be used to list an original post (not subsequent reblogs) with other posts with the same tags through the search feature of Tumblr. On reblogged posts, however, the tags are mostly used by users to organize their own blogs (for example, #ref as a reference to be found on their blog later), list any

trigger warnings (which can be blacklisted so that users don't have to see posts with their specified warnings), and add commentary. Tags are automatically separated by commas, so users must become acquainted with not using commas in their commentaries in order to keep them in single tags. Some users have theorized that this practice has led to the lack of punctuation use in Tumblr posts (Grant, 2015). While this is certainly possible, it appears that punctuation serves different functions on Tumblr, discussed in detail below.

Tumblr is an interesting site to observe orthographic conventions partially because of the communal nature of the layout of the website. Because reblogs of posts with commentary are attached to the post without any form of splintering, there is a more cohesive communication

top 200 comments show 500  
sorted by: **best**

[+] veevoir 981 points 8 hours ago\* (429 children)

[-] LazzzyButtons 559 points 10 hours ago  
 In total 47 academics from British universities, including Oxford and the London School of Economics, have signed the letter which argues that tax evasion weakens both developed and developing economies, as well as driving inequality.  
 How much do you wanna bet that nothing will be done about this? How much do you wanna bet that things will continue as they are? I'll even give you 10 to 1 odds.  
 permalink

[-] Themosthumble 128 points 10 hours ago  
 \$100, just for giggles. May as well give it to you before they steal it.  
 permalink parent

[-] XxRAINBOWxUNICORNxx 69 points 5 hours ago  
 If reddit can pay 400+ gold for some random dude to literally eat a dick, why can't people get shit done in real life? It's just not fair  
 permalink parent

[-] \_thenational 188 points 4 hours ago  
 400 people can spend \$4 each as a joke, why can't we make real changes in international law?  
 permalink parent

[-] DJ\_Velveteen 33 points 3 hours ago  
 Also see: two and a half million people throwing ~\$27 apiece at the problem, a whole mess of tax haven customers going "nope"  
 permalink parent  
 load more comments (3 replies)

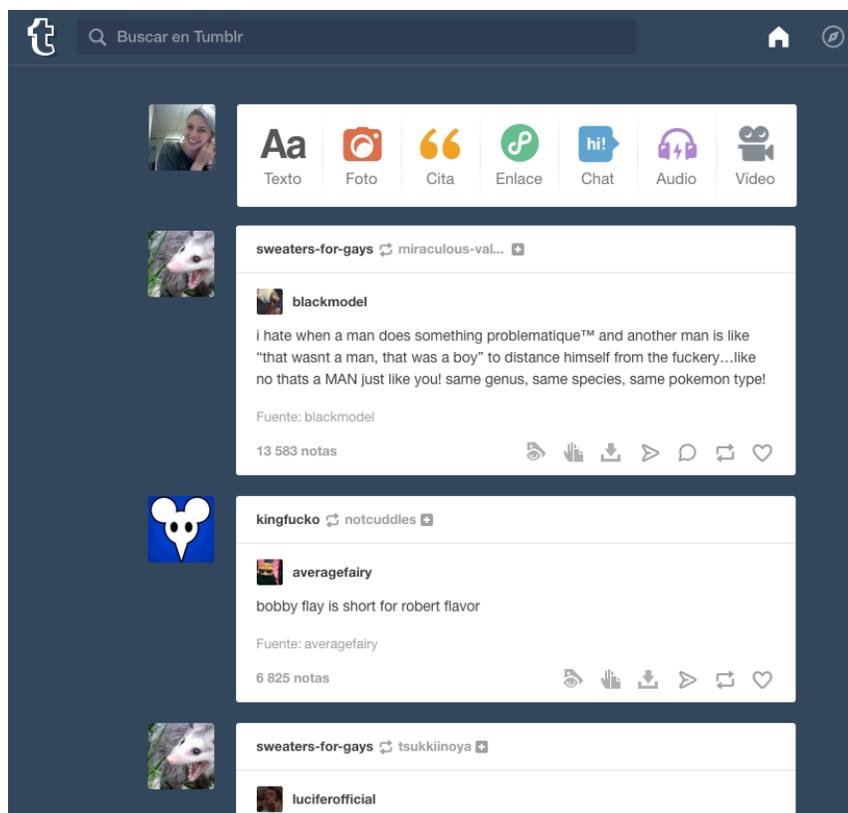
[-] rycology 8 points 5 hours ago  
 That was a rollercoaster ride of emotions.  
 permalink parent  
 load more comments (5 replies)

[-] JammieDodgers 4 points 3 hours ago  
 Holy shit, how did I miss this?  
 permalink parent  
 load more comments (4 replies)

between posters. Compare this to Reddit (left), Facebook, and Twitter, where posts receive comments as threads in which people often branch out and communicate with one another rather than with the Original Poster (OP). This form of communication is simply not possible within Tumblr's layout. Furthermore, because posts are shared by reblogging them onto one's own blog, the same post can be spread across the website for years to be seen by many users. Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit,

however, do not recycle posts (except when people repost others' posts: a faux pas in Netiquette), so any conventions negotiated by users are not revisited, except in new conversations. By maintaining the same conversations across time and across subcultures of the website, Tumblr posts can have a larger impact on users' perceptions of orthographic conventions.

Tumblr is also interesting for orthographic conventions because its format for posts is more flexible (no character limit, allows use of HTML styles in text, can include photos, .gifs, videos, and audio recordings), while also creating structure for a wider array of posts. When creating a new post, a user has 7 options for different kinds of posts: Text, Photo, Quote, Link, Chat, Audio, and Video (below). Each type of post has a pre-programmed format designed for



the needs of the medium being shared, while still allowing for creative freedom.

While some users on Tumblr have argued that the speech on the website is a pidgin of English, the syntax used on Tumblr is not reduced from Standard English, which is a requirement in classifying a pidgin (Grant, 2015; Lefler, 2011). Furthermore, it does not differ from Standard English enough phonologically, lexically, or syntactically to be

considered a distinct dialect of English, much less of InternetSpeak. For these reasons, I refer to the language used on Tumblr as a register of English, as it has a specialized vocabulary and population of in-group speakers and is restricted in usage contexts (Lefler, 2011).

### 3. Methodology

The data for this project were collected over the course of 4 months. As a longtime user of Tumblr, I have fluent understanding of the conventions used on Tumblr in a multitude of settings (different kinds of posts from different subcommunities). Furthermore, as a Digital Native (Prensky, 2001), I have a native understanding of InternetSpeak and its evolution over the years. Due to the way Tumblr works, one cannot simply search the site for types of posts except through the tag system (Bourlai & Herring, 2014). Because of this, I was limited to my personal feed of the 194 blogs I follow. I created a tag to store any posts that exemplify the pragmatic features I analyze in this study, so that I could easily access them later.<sup>1</sup> As such, this method is highly qualitative. This study describes the primary orthographic conventions of InternetSpeak currently found on Tumblr.

<sup>1</sup> The corpus of posts reviewed in this study can be found at [amollyakatrina.tumblr.com/tagged/linguistic-example](https://amollyakatrina.tumblr.com/tagged/linguistic-example)

## 4. Analysis

In the following sections, I delineate the pragmatic functions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in CMC found on Tumblr. Each section contains illustrative examples of these features and describes the overall patterns of their use. To see multiple posts that contain these patterns, please refer to the Appendix, which contains posts organized by the same numerical sections as the Analysis.

### 4.1. Intonation

#### 4.1.1. Punctuation

Because of the lack of audio cues that are integral to spoken language, users of CMC have developed methods of demonstrating the intended equivalent of some intonations through text. A common source of prosodic information through text is the punctuation that accompanies lexical items. The most common punctuation marks, the period, question mark, and exclamation point, have the following connotations (Table 1). Note that these are not solely prosodic

Table 1.

Period (.)	Pause Falling tone Serious
Question Mark (?)	Confusion Rising tone Uncertainty
Exclamation Point (!)	Excitement Loud

information, but also pragmatic information.

They are formally used only when attached to text, which lends the proceeding text the meaning encoded by the punctuation mark (such as falling tone, seriousness, and a pause, in the case of periods). In CMC, however, they can also be used on their own to convey the first attribute (i.e. *pause* for periods, *confusion* for question marks, etc) non-lexically (Vandergriff, 2013). Furthermore, the information encoded by a punctuation mark is emphasized through

its reduplication (Bieswanger, 2011; Bourlai & Herring, 2014; Hancock, 2004; Hirankan et al. 2013; Urabnik, 2013; Werry, 1996).

#### Example 1



**prisonsentience**

just heard my roommate yell 'you USED me!!!' from the living room n im sitting here like ??? 2 seconds later my rat comes running into my room holding a french fry in his lil baby mouth

Fuente: talksick

Example 1 shows both the lexical use of punctuation (*me!!!*) and the non-lexical (*???*)

The lexical use is of exclamation points, which demonstrate the lexical items are intended to be interpreted as a loud and excited *yell*. The non-lexical use, however, is of question marks. The meaning of these unattached question marks is a state of confusion. In this example, the narrator expresses that their reaction to hearing their roommate yell was to sit in quiet confusion. Note that these question marks do not imply any interrogative statements were made.

While exclamation points and question marks portray excitement and confusion, periods serve as a conversational move in CMC to indicate a marked pause in speech (Maness, 2007;

Example 2

 **bombing**  
 doctor: you have to run more you're incredibly out of shape  
 me: but doc i definitely run.....a blog haha  
 doctor: nice  
 me: nice  
 doctor: you're going to die  
 me: nice  
 Fuente: bombing

Ong, 2011; Werry, 1996). In Example 2 on the left, the periods show a pause in speaking between “but doc i definitely run” and the predicate, “a blog.” This is an orthographic means of portraying the telling of a joke with a delayed punchline. Repeated periods can also be used in CMC conversation to show that one is thinking, continued typing (“more is coming, wait”), or to show turn-initial

delay, which signals pre-disagreement (Ong, 2011).

Separated from lexical items, however, repeated periods indicate a pause in overall action.

Example 3 on the right is a description of an event in which one sees something that makes them pause, but then is disturbing enough for the person to choose to ignore it and attempt to redirect their attention

Example 3

 **fruitcrops**  
 u ever see something and just .....anyway  
 Fuente: fruitcrops

somewhere else (“anyway” signals a topic change (Riou, 2015)). In this scenario, the viewer is thinking, not speaking, and so the repeated periods must not mark a pause in speech. Because of this, we can ascertain the user is attempting to convey a pause in something other than speech. Furthermore, the repeated periods are not attached to the lexical item that precedes them, which is an indication to the reader that the periods are not modifying the lexical item, but rather stand on their own as a paralinguistic action.

4.1.2. Chat Posts

An alternative method of showing the same pragmatic function of non-lexical repeated periods is unique to Chat posts (a format meant to replicate old Instant Messaging systems). Much as the ellipses (...) signifies an omission of something and has come to be used to



## 4.2. Formality and Gravity

### 4.2.1. Formality

Formal, standard typing conventions demand word-initial capitalization on proper nouns and the first words of sentences and punctuation to mark the end of sentences. On the Internet, these inefficient conventions do not suit the needs of the users, so they have been largely abandoned in informal settings (Soffer, 2012). For many, the more formalized style of typing is reserved for formal settings, such as typing with strangers or elders. Example 6 below references this sentiment by demonstrating that the orthographic conventions they use with their friends differ greatly from the formal conventions they use with new people. This represents a change in register (Biber & Finegan, 1994).

#### Example 6

**private messaging friends:** lma0 so anryrywya im fuckngn  
crygn

**private messaging someone for the first time:** Hello, nice to finally talk to you! It's wonderful that we have the chance to communicate through this messaging service - anyway, enough of me blathering on like a fool, how are you?

### 4.2.2. Gravity

Formal orthographic conventions carry prestige (Sebba, 2007). Because of this, text posts written using these conventions convey a sense of gravity and formality. These conventions are often used in posts in which the subject matter is serious and scholarly, such as in Example 7 to the right. The topic of Example 7 is mathematics, and the users are contributing their knowledge on the subject to the post to educate others about the possibilities of mathematical base systems. By writing their comments in a formal orthographic style, they create a sense of gravity and weight to their contributions. Had they written their post in informal InternetSpeak, they would risk not being taken seriously or their content not being respected. In a way, this is a



afloweroutofstone

#### Example 7

Do you ever think about how different your view of everything would be if you thought in a numerical system that wasn't base 10



blue-author

"Wow, 823543. What a nice, round number!"



nentuaby

This is an interesting knob to twist in speculative fiction, because like, we think it's perfectly obvious that "10 digits (fingers) = 10 digits (numerals)" but that doesn't need to be true. Like it could be as trivial as if we had just picked up the habit of counting a finger by touching it to our thumb instead of sticking it out. That'd mean we'd work in base 8. (Which would have been an unexpected blessing when we invented computers.) Or if we came up with the notion of place values "and then assigned them to our fingers" we'd be counting to 255 on our hands, in base 2. (This is a neat trick to learn, by the way.)

Plus there are actual historical peoples who count in bases that have nothing to do with their total inventory of fingers, like the Mayan (5)20 system. (Their system is based on grouping things into fives, and it transitions from counting into multiplication at 20.) Or 60, which the Babylonians used because it has lots of whole divisors, and they hadn't really worked out fractions very nicely. (This survives as our weird base 60 time system, which is BTW another thing specficcers often forget civilizations do: Inconsistency and legacy systems!)

form of adding emphasis to one's writing, as it marks it as serious and, therefore, important.

Users use this form of marking emphasis to show very serious or important content matter, even if the overall context of the text is not serious. Using word-initial caps, as would usually be used in proper nouns, creates a sense of propriety. This is a pragmatic way of emphasizing certain aspects, if not entire posts, as significant. In Example 8 below, the user explicitly describes their text as *very serious* and then further encodes it as such by using word-initial caps.

Example 8

**me, very serious and making intense eye contact with my  
pet: I Will Lay Down My Life For You, I Would Kill A Man  
For You, Do You Understand?  
pet: :/**

Source: territorialcreep

Example 9

 **dopadee**  
my post: [gets a note]  
me: there it is, The Validation™

Compare this to Example 9 to the right, in which only two words (*the validation*) receive the word-initial capitalization as well as the Trademark symbol (™). The use of these formatting choices emphasizes *The Validation*, creating a sense of importance and legitimacy.

The use of other formal orthographic conventions, such as sentence-final periods or a singular question mark, also create a sense of gravity or importance to the preceding text. The use of periods in this way can sometimes be restricted to the formal register, as periods (as mentioned in the previous section) encode falling tone and seriousness. When this form of reaction is unwarranted, especially in an informal conversation, miscommunication can arise. Such an example can be seen in Gunraj et al.'s study, which found that readers interpreted text messages ending with a period as "insincere" (2016). The text messages were informal in content, so this formal register use took on a role of distancing, rather than the alignment sought from informal registers. This finding, however, did not hold true for handwritten notes, demonstrating this is a register of CMC and not written communication in general.

### 4.3. Informality and Irony

#### 4.3.1. Informality

When typing informally, many Tumblr users prefer to disregard formal orthographic conventions and instead opt for the non-standard convention of all lowercase.<sup>2</sup> When posting to Tumblr was primarily done on the computer, this may have become conventionalized because of the ease of this style of typing. Now that 78% percent of users access Tumblr through their smartphones (Cummings, 2015), however, the ease of typing in all lowercase letters becomes less relevant. It is common for smartphone keyboards to automatically correct capitalization. Typing

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 4.3

in all lowercase, then, becomes more cumbersome than typing with traditional capitalization rules. Nevertheless it is still common, which demonstrates that because it is serving a function that users desire, it is worth the added effort. While word-initial caps, even in their normal positions at the beginning of sentences, portray emphasis, a complete lack of caps conveys, as McCulloch describes it, a “flat, laconic intonation of voice” or stream of consciousness (2015b). While the content of the words themselves can be wildly absurd, the intended reading of a post in all lowercase is not emotionally inflected (Bieswanger, 2011).

Example 10.  **bpd--ghostie**

**me:** \*excitedly tells friend something\*

**friend:** ahh nice

**me:** Enthusiasm deficiency of 8.7376% detected. If you hate me so much just say so

Example 10 above shows a user’s understanding of all lowercase as conveying a lack of enthusiasm, as it is uninflected and unexcited. We can tell this is purposeful by the contexts in which the capitalization appears: The user chose to pragmatically capitalize their response, “Enthusiasm deficiency of 8.7376% detected.” but leave their friend’s commentary, “ahh nice” lowercase. The first line, “me: \*excitedly tells friend something\*” uses asterisks to denote an action being done rather than speech (Schandorf, 2012). Their friend’s lack of enthusiasm is therefore transcribed by the user in all lowercase with zero punctuation.

#### 4.3.2. Irony

In their research on the presence of irony on the Internet, Hancock and Bourlai & Herring have shown that there is an increase in irony use in CMC, especially in the form of sarcasm, despite postulations by earlier researchers that the lack of intonation and gesture in CMC would make irony more difficult to convey and, consequently, the frequency of irony use less than in Face-to-Face interactions (2004; 2014). Bourlai and Herring postulated that the increase in sarcasm in CMC (specifically on Tumblr) was due to the customizability of text and the wealth of social cues that text carries (2014). It is through this customization of text, they argue, that users have been able to mark their sarcasm so prevalently on Tumblr. Flouting at least one of Grice’s Maxims (quantity, quality, relevance, and manner) shows to the listener that something is amiss and they should “reject the literal meaning” of the communication and look for a more ironic interpretation (Hancock, 2004; Vandergriff & Fuchs, 2009). Essentially, deviating from the expected norm signals to the speaker that more meaning is intended than the

literal interpretation. Communication over the Internet is no exception to this. A common sarcasm marker in spoken language is intonation. Because of the lack of intonation in CMC, however, flouting conventions of how to type “normally” serves to fill the same purpose (Baym, 1995). By deviating from an expectation of how one “should” type, users can signal to readers that their post is “pragmatically insincere,” i.e. not to be interpreted literally (Hancock, 2004).

### 4.3.3. Informal Capitalization and Punctuation as Sarcasm

In conjunction with a lack of punctuation, all lowercase letters can become an irony marker. In the absurdist form of humor so common on Tumblr<sup>3</sup>, sarcastic jokes that end with questions rarely end in question marks. These are examples of ironic questions, as they are not literal questions that require an answer. Rather, they are often the punchline of jokes themselves and stand alone without a response. Single punctuation (the conventionalized norm for print media) on Tumblr generally marks a sincere use of the punctuation mark (such as real questions being marked with a sententially-final *?*). The lack of punctuation (especially on a syntactically-formed interrogative) however, marks pragmatic insincerity, which calls for non-literal interpretations of text (Hancock, 2004). In Example 11, for example, the customer-shopkeeper interaction is, except for the phrase *no homo*,<sup>4</sup> entirely ordinary (and, therefore, entirely encoded in lowercase letters). The irony of the customer’s response, *can you check in the back*, is encoded through an omission of a question mark at the end of their question. By omitting the question mark, the user who

added this comment to the original post was demonstrating their sarcastic addition did not expect an actual response. While the

content of the speech is absurd, the delivery of the interaction is meant to be ordinary.

Example 12 also does not function as a serious question from the user; they are not asking

**Example 12**  
 **one-after-nineonline**  
 i did a push up why am i still fat

their Tumblr followers why doing one push-up has not changed the their body. Rather, this post is entirely sarcastic, calling into question our tendencies to expect immediate results. Again, we can deduce this from the

**Example 11**  
 **snakelet**  
 no homo. we're fresh out. we should get a new shipment in on monday

---

 **lordscrubbington**  
 can you check in the back

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4.3.3

<sup>4</sup> a play on the phrase “no homo,” which is a heteronormative identity construction move to distance oneself from the LGBT community

post based off its orthography. Had the post read, “I did a push-up. Why am I still fat?” it would not convey the same sarcastic message in InternetSpeak as it reads with all lowercase, no punctuation, and no pauses. Utilizing all these features, the user is able to portray a pithy, sarcastic jibe at instant gratification in a curt and efficient way.

Rhetorical questions, which are different from sarcastic questions, are questions that do not desire answers, but rather serve to encourage one to consider alternatives to our reality. These, because they are not sincere questions in that they do not warrant an answer, likewise do not receive question marks in their Tumblr instantiations. Even in Example 13, in which a user has actually sent a message asking another user a rhetorical question, they neither mark their rhetorical question as sincere by employing a question mark, nor does the recipient user answer the question. Rather, the recipient user poses a rhetorical question *in response*, expounding on the previous rhetorical question rather than acknowledging it as a sincere question.

#### Example 13

spooky-faith ha preguntado:

what if apples screamed when we bit them



happyquinncurtis ha contestado:

what if the crunch we hear when we bite them is the apple's scream



#### 4.3.4. Spelling as Sarcastic (Shitposting)

Because there is a standardized orthography for English, any deviation from this standardization is marked (Bieswanger, 2011). Typing in a way that obviously deviates from a norm is the definition of irony marking in CMC, so it is logical to include purposeful misspelling as a marker for irony. While it may appear difficult to discern between purposeful and accidental misspellings, the pattern for using misspellings has become conventionalized on Tumblr as “shitposts.” In Example 14 below, Tumblr user thebootydiaries, a common shitposter, writes a post about spelling things incorrectly on purpose. Her explicit labeling of her practice to spell things wrong as purposeful is very illuminating, as it implies that there is a pragmatic function to spelling incorrectly. A shitpost is a type of post which, at least on Tumblr, is entirely sarcastic and generally absurd in content. It can be considered a form of trolling, as it can arouse (often vitriolic) reactions from those who do not understand the posts as insincere, as they are not privy enough to the orthographic conventions to cite pragmatic insincerity. One way people show this

lack of fluency is by attempting to correct others' misspellings, which they perceive as accidental or due to a lack of education. One way people correct others on the internet is by writing what they assume is the intended word and including an asterisk before or after it (Worth, 2008). We can see in Example 14, in which a user has reblogged a post about spelling wrong on purpose and the aggravation from a friend not being familiar with CMC conventions to know it was

**Example 14**



**thebootydiaries**

**me:** \*spells things wrong on purpose\*

**friend:** um u spelled that wrong

**me:** im smyling :) but insid im dying :(



**tooninetiesforthis**

Smiling\*

Jesus



**thebootydiaries**

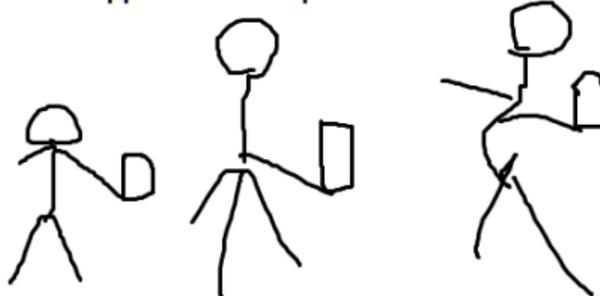
dam... thas tru :(

purposeful, with a correction of her spelling of the word “smyling.” While this user could very well be a fluent user of CMC on Tumblr and know that the post is about shitposting, their response, which itself could be ironic, is interpreted as serious because of the way it is written. Because other users understand sarcasm marking on Tumblr, these comments are perceived as serious intentions to correct other users’ spelling, which can be seen in the way they respond. In short, it does not matter, to some extent, if the correcting user is serious, as the way they have written their comment marks it as serious and is, therefore, perceived by other users as serious.

Example 15 makes fun of people who complain about the saturation of smartphones in today’s society with drawings of stick figure people holding smartphones. By writing the criticisms with spelling mistakes, the creator of the image is demonstrating that they do not take these comments seriously and do not intend the reader to understand the image as semantically sincere (i.e. the creator of the image does not truly wish to indicate that they believe people are on their phones too much). The last

**Example 15**

**all these ppl are o theiur phones too much and this is bad**



**why they not talk and play oputside?**

**haha i'm so deep and anti-metialeristic**

Source: cramulus

comment, *haha i'm so deep and anti-metialeristic*, is an overt identity construction move. The user, by including this comment, is demonstrating that the use of distancing oneself from a group of people, such as millennials, is ultimately an attempt to construct an identity that is that opposite of whatever it is they are criticizing (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). Thus, the creator of this image is making fun of people who construct their identities based on their criticisms of the younger generations.

#### 4.3.5. Outdated Internet Speak

During the early days of the Internet, some practices became conventionalized in CMC. Some of these conventions, such as “Disemvowellment” and “textese” conventions (such as the implementation of rebus forms like “2” for “to”) were borne to fill a specific need, such as evading automated censorship filters on the early Bulletin Board system (BBS) and forums of the internet, or speed of typing and texting, respectively. In accordance with Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT), typing and texting in synchronous media (such as chatrooms or SMS conversations) is inherently slower than face-to-face communication, and must compensate in order to avoid a disruption in conversation (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2011; Soffer, 2012; Werry, 1996). Reducing the letters in words reduces the number of keystrokes necessary and, therefore, can help reduce time spent typing. Furthermore, the need for increased speed left for the acceptability of leaving common typos as-is (such as *teh*), which became so conventionalized that they were both accepted by the community and, eventually, picked up their own connotations (LeBlanc, 2005; Lefler, 2011).

Table 2: Markedly Dated Internet Slang:

Name	Example use
Disemvowellment	wht r u dng?, sh*t
Studly Caps	sTudLyCApS
Additional Punctuation for Style	“*~Sparkly Unicorn~*’’, ☪ Follow for more Soft Grunge †☪
“textese”	gr8 (rebus), y r u...?, lol
Out-of-date emoticons	:-) , ;-*

Name	Example use
incorrect spelling (common typos)	teh (the), pwned (owned)
Leetspeak, or Leet (also 1337) (from 'elite')	1337, W1-14† 4 23 7 -13 1-1 4 >5?

While previously marking in-group identity (Lefler, 2011; LeBlanc, 2005), or serving a pragmatic function, such as circumventing character limits in text messages and automated censorship filters on online forums, these now markedly dated internet conventions (also called “Netspeak” have evolved to demonstrate a lack of sincerity (Crystal, 2006). By using Netspeak today, users both mark their familiarity with these Internet conventions, thereby citing their identities as Internet users, and mark their speech as insincere through using marked orthographic forms (Hancock, 2004). Many of the original environments which necessitated these conventions no longer apply, especially not on a site like Tumblr. For example, disemvowellment and textese were borne from the necessity for increased speed in typing in chatrooms and texting on phones. These activities were synchronous, and so any delay in response, much as in traditional, spoken conversation, marked the speaker as disinterested or allowed for miscommunication (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2011). Tumblr posts, however, are asynchronous, and therefore do not require speedy replies. A user can take their time in crafting a response, so typos and shortened words are no longer a necessary sacrifice for speed. Likewise, there is no character limit on Tumblr, so shortening words is also no longer necessary. Other



Example 16

when you accidentally type 'teh' instead of 'the'



markedly dated features were common because they were considered cool. As Tumblr user trickortrans points out in Example 16, using them evokes the connotations and subcultures that they accumulated over time (in this case, the “omg so random” teen girl subculture). Anymore, they are so outdated that they are the antithesis of cool, but they are still used occasionally. If they no

longer serve the purpose of marking oneself as an in-group member, they must mark something else.

Hancock (2004) describes *pragmatic insincerity* as an ironic statement in which the listener should interpret the meaning of the statement as nonliteral. He goes on to describe this

insincerity as pragmatic, as the “speaker’s insincerity does not apply to the semantic properties of an utterance, but instead applies to how the language is used (i.e., the pragmatic level).” These posts, therefore, are not to be entirely ignored. They serve to perform some other, less literal,

function, which often takes the form of negative evaluation.

Example 17 has many markers of pragmatic insincerity throughout it. The original post, which includes pictures of clothes associated with “bro culture”, uses rebus twice (“2” for *to* and “b4” for *before*) to mark insincerity. The second user to reblog the post, however, does not recognize these markers, and therefore takes the post literally, thinking the OP (original poster) was being truthful about their recommendation. Because of this, they reblog the post with the correction *How to look like a douche bag\*\*\*\*\**, with the repeated asterisks showing emphatic correction of the previous post (Urabnik, 2013; Worth, 2008). In response to this attempted correction, the OP responds with a reblog riddled with insincerity markers, including misspelling, rebus, and insincere emphasis (putting emphasis on *going to*, which is not traditionally stressed in English, appears to be insincere because it doesn’t follow the form of emphasizing the verb). Because of the adjacent character repetition and use of all caps, their comment appears emphatically offended. This, in conjunction with the irony markers, show that the OP was not actually offended, but is instead responding to the other user’s lack of understanding of orthographic conventions.

### Example 17

4chanofficial  
hOW 2 LOOK COOL B4 SCHOOL

nOW GO GET URSELF SOME BITCHES

---

dontmindme-idontevenknow  
How to look like a douche bag\*\*\*\*\*

---

4chanofficial  
wow...I cant beleieve!!! that ur insultingme & my friends im GOUING 2 spit monster energy™ into ur Gosh darn fase back the HECK off 420

## 5. Discussion

In order to understand the pragmatic aspects of Computer-Mediated Communication, we must look at how users are using text to convey pragmatics and how these uses become codified over time. Primarily, because of the nature of CMC as a manual-ocular practice of communication, users are limited to what they can convey through text. This can create the opportunity for miscommunication, as speed of response mandates efficient responses and reducing keystrokes. While there are prescriptive rules for how print media ought to be stylized, these rules do not suit the time-sensitive and pragmatic needs of users. Because these rules do not fit the needs of speakers of CMC, Internet users have rejected these rules and chosen to use written English in a more adept manner, so as to convey the pragmatic information normally encoded non-lexically in spoken English. While this initially allowed for a “postmodern rebellion” from the shackles of prescriptive style (Soffer, 2012), these rebellions have now picked up structure and conventionalized meaning, which has allowed users to generate content more acutely geared towards their intended meanings. As a well-versed Tumblr-user referencing Tumblr as a case study to analyze these conventions, this research demonstrates that capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are used in ways that differ from formal writing styles to the extent that— to the non-fluent reader— the pragmatic features encoded in them would be unnoticed. Punctuation, which conveys intonation in both InternetSpeak and formal, written English, is exploited in CMC. By extending the base connotations of a punctuation mark, users are able to convey the imbedded intonation patterns and semantic connotations cited by the mark. Reduplication of punctuation (adjacent character repetition) multiplies these connotations, even when devoid of lexical items. A lack of punctuation, however, has become the norm and has, therefore, taken up its own intonational connotation of being inflectionless, or “normal.”

Because of the prestige associated with formal orthographic conventions, text posts written using these conventions are interpreted as conveying information genuinely and formally. Word-initial capitalization and sentence-final punctuation marks demonstrate to the reader that the content is significant, scholarly, or grave. Even within the context of a larger joke, the connotation of word-initial caps and “standard” punctuation convey serious formality. The contrast, of course, is what has become the norm in CMC: no (or few) capitalizations and sparing punctuation. This style of formatting has, because of its saturation in CMC and because of the lack of marked (content-full) capitalization and punctuation, come to convey uninflected normalcy, even to the point of “deadpan” sarcasm (McCulloch, 2015). These two forms of writing (formal writing conventions and informal Internet conventions) also carry the tu/vous distinction in their register use. For many, the more formalized style of typing is reserved for formal settings, such as typing with strangers or elders. The latter informal style, however, is used

in informal settings, such as with friends and peers. Using these registers outside of their proper settings can lead to confusion and misinterpretation, as well as social chastisement.

Finally, because of these nuanced meanings of simple orthographic conventions, there are speakers who are fluent in this register, and those who are not. Misinterpreting these conventions marks one as an outsider to InternetSpeak. Furthermore, willingly refusing to accept these conventions prevent users from understanding the wealth of pragmatics conveyed through simple orthographic means and the realm of possibility embedded in these creative uses of language, creating a wall between themselves and other Internet users in their ability to understand and be understood in CMC.

## 6. Conclusion

As Labov writes in his 1972 article on linguistic methodology, when we encounter someone in only one context, “we must assume that we are observing only a limited part of [their] entire linguistic repertoire.” When we read English on the Internet, we cannot assume that users, who are using English in an entirely different register, are poor speakers of English. Furthermore, when we encounter structures in CMC that we are not familiar with, we cannot assume they do not have some ulterior function that we are simply ignorant to. Rather, especially as linguists interested in language as it is used, it is much more enlightening to search for the embedded meanings of users’ choices. In an asynchronous medium such as Tumblr, where typing mistakes can be corrected before and after creating a post, any formatting choices can be entirely purposeful and conscious. Especially in a time in which the majority of people on Tumblr are primarily interacting with the site through their smartphones, which do not, by default, allow spelling mistakes or lack of capitalization, we can observe that these users’ choices are meaningful. By using the limitations and the advantages of the keyboard to convey intonation, stance, and formality, Internet users have created novel orthographic conventions for communicating through a medium that has been considered incapable of showing such things. By yelling with all caps and cracking jokes with misspellings, Tumblr users are reinforcing the pragmatic functions these formatting choices convey in a text-based communication system. In order to document these conventions, however, there is a need for more documentation on the part of those who are familiar with speech communities utilizing these conventions contemporaneously. The literature on CMC is saturated with research which is outdated despite its recent publication date or mischaracterizes the connotations of orthographic conventions. Because of these inaccuracies that exist in the CMC literature, more representation of InternetSpeak as described by Digital Natives is essential in accurately describing language on the web.

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4.1.2 Chat Post

<p> <b>memeufacturing</b></p> <p><b>friend:</b> how did the interview go  <b>me:</b> it was okay at least it wasn't as bad as The Interview  <b>friend:</b> what  <b>me:</b> you know. like th movie  <b>friend:</b> oh  <b>me:</b> yeah i said it with the capital letters but you couldnt see that  <b>me:</b>  <b>me:</b> because we are talking  <b>me:</b>  <b>me:</b>  <b>me:</b> thats why</p>	<p><b>me, texting a friend late at night:</b> haha okay but i really should sleep, night dude</p> <p><b>me:</b> _____</p> <p><b>me:</b> look at this meme real quick</p>
<p> <b>Mr. Peel</b>          @Ripihl <span style="float: right;">⚙️ <a href="#">Follow</a></span></p> <p>*3 months into Expedition  <b>Clark:</b>  <b>Lewis:</b>  <b>Clark:</b>  <b>Lewis:</b> is this a date? It feels like a date</p> <p>Fuente: stevebucky</p>	<p> <b>memeufacturing</b></p> <p><b>job interview</b></p> <p><b>interviewer:</b> so you said you're good at sweeping?  <b>me:</b> yes... sweeping you off your feet  <b>interviewer:</b> What  <b>me:</b>  <b>interviewer:</b>  <b>me:</b> 'leans in for a kiss'</p>
<p><b>me:</b> *puts earphones in*</p> <p><b>me:</b> _____</p> <p><b>me:</b> oh right</p> <p><b>me:</b> *plays music*</p> <p>Source: bellafrench</p>	<p><b>drops-of-grace</b> <a href="#">Seguir</a></p> <p><b>Me:</b> okay brain, I'm gonna sleep</p> <p><b>Brain:</b> okay</p> <p><b>Me:</b> so you have to be quiet</p> <p><b>Brain:</b> okay</p> <p><b>Me:</b></p> <p><b>Brain:</b></p> <p><b>Me:</b></p> <p><b>Brain:</b></p> <p><b>Me:</b> -half asleep-</p> <p><b>Brain:</b> the snack that smiles back</p>

<p>ihavenotyetfiguredoutanything <a href="#">Seguir</a></p> <p>Me: I want to do this thing!</p> <p>Brain: 🤖🤖 ERROR 🤖🤖</p> <p>Me: what? Why can't I do it?</p> <p>Brain: 🤖🤖 ERROR 🤖🤖</p> <p>Me:</p> <p>Me:</p> <p>Me: but, I just-</p> <p>Brain: 🤖🤖 ERROR 🤖🤖</p>	<p>me: *buys something online*</p> <p>me:</p> <p>me: where is it</p> <p>Fuente: theilnan</p>
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## 4.2 Formality

### 4.2.1 Word-initial Caps and Punctuation

<p> <b>dopadee</b></p> <p>my post: [gets a note]</p> <p>me: there it is, The Validation™</p>	<p>me, very serious and making intense eye contact with my  <b>pet:</b> I Will Lay Down My Life For You, I Would Kill A Man For You, Do You Understand?</p> <p><b>pet:</b> :/</p> <p>Source: territorialcreep</p>
---	---

<p>"Enough is enough Stephanie. I need to know who's a good boy. My patience is worn thin."</p> 	<p> <b>afloweroutofstone</b> Do you ever think about how different your view of everything would be if you thought in a numerical system that wasn't base 10</p> <hr/> <p> <b>blue-author</b> "Wow, 823543. What a nice, round number!"</p> <hr/> <p> <b>nentuaby</b> This is an interesting knob to twist in speculative fiction, because like, we think it's perfectly obvious that "10 digits (fingers) = 10 digits (numerals)" but that doesn't need to be true. Like it could be as trivial as if we had just picked up the habit of counting a finger by touching it to our thumb instead of sticking it out. That'd mean we'd work in base 8. (Which would have been an unexpected blessing when we invented computers.) Or if we came up with the notion of place values "and then assigned them to our fingers" we'd be counting to 255 on our hands, in base 2. (This is a neat trick to learn, by the way.)  Plus there are actual historical peoples who count in bases that have nothing to do with their total inventory of fingers, like the Mayan (5)20 system. (Their system is based on grouping things into fives, and it transitions from counting into multiplication at 20.) Or 60, which the Babylonians used because it has lots of whole divisors, and they hadn't really worked out fractions very nicely. (This survives as our weird base 60 time system, which is BTW another thing specficcers often forget civilizations do: Inconsistency and legacy systems!)</p>
<p> <b>talonkingterokk</b> my latest typing quirk: adding ™ for emphasis</p>	<p> <b>surprisebitch</b> when u intentionally make a grammar/spelling mistake &amp; someone corrects u</p> <hr/> <p> <b>Mariam</b> 2 months ago What is THIS SCHOOL OR ONLINE Reply · 1 👍 🙋</p>



 **godotal**  
broken body

 **hkirkh**  
"I was born with glass bones and paper skin. Every morning I break my legs, and every afternoon I break my arms. At night, I lie awake in agony until my heart attacks put me to sleep."

 **foreignpussy**  
YOU DID NOT QUOTE SPONGEBOB AND MAKE IT SOUND POETIC AND BEAUTIFUL

 **memeufacturing**

**friend:** how did the interview go  
**me:** it was okay at least it wasn't as bad as The Interview  
**friend:** what  
**me:** you know. like th movie  
**friend:** oh  
**me:** yeah i said it with the capital letters but you couldnt see that  
**me:**  
**me:** because we are talking  
**me:**  
**me:** thats why

### 4.3 Informality

#### 4.3.1 All lowercase for normal, uninflected intonation



<p><b>Me:</b> you have to give me the toy if you want me to throw it</p> <p><b>Dog:</b> source??</p> <p>Source: bowserfucker</p>	<p> <b>queenriver</b></p> <p>fun fact: if you text a landline, it'll call the landline in a robot voice and read the text</p> <p>less fun: our intern was locked out this morning and didn't realize the number she had for the other assistant was a landline so she texted it because she was locked out so at 9:30 this morning our phone rang with a robot voice loudly saying PLEASE LET ME IN before hanging up</p>
--	--

### 4.3.2 All Lowercase for Deadpan Sarcasm

<p> <b>snakelet</b></p> <p>no homo. we're fresh out. we should get a new shipment in on monday</p> <hr/> <p> <b>lordscrubbington</b></p> <p>can you check in the back</p>	<p><b>Someone:</b> You're so dramatic!</p> <p><b>Me, with a rose between my lips, throwing glitter around, dressed in evening wear during the day, draping myself across a piano:</b> I have no idea what you're talking about</p> <p>Source: bpddesmoullins</p>
<p> <b>darecrow</b></p> <p>Imagine going to a party and the white suburban stay at home mom with two overachiever kids and white dad who barbeques but doesn't know how to barbeque and yet is always surrounded by other white Dads who compliment his barbequing even though they're just store bought preshaped frozen patties from Ralph's or Food 4 Less and while he's cooking those the white mom comes out and says "okay kids, here's some pizza!" And she pulls this out and starts telling the kids why its a "fun pizza" and then cries in her master bedroom when no one likes it or finishes it and the white dad is then consoling her why she sobs that she's a terrible mother and ruined her fourth grade straight B+ sons birthday and thinks her kids hate her but they don't care but she continues crying softly into her pillow while the children eat poorly cooked burgers with unmelted kraft singles and too much mayonnaise and the only other condiments are two pickles and pepper because the dad calls it his special burger with a secret spice but the spice was just pepper and the kids just keep playing E rated games on their Nintendo Wii while the 17 year old older sister starts cleaning the tragedy up and throwing away uneaten "fun pizza" and whole burgers dejected from the start while she dials Pizza Hut to get these kids an actual birthday lunch and the mother then throws a fit because the daughter did something the kids liked and she didn't and was the only one making a huge deal out of it and the daughter was then grounded from her TV in her room for only two days and the son went to blow out the candles in his standard birthday cake from food 4 less the mom added strawberries to so she could feel she did something but was still slightly teary and sad because her day was ruined by no one wanting to eat her "fun pizza"</p>	<p> <b>ceramicsun</b></p> <p>I, a cold and callous millennial, have no interest in face to face conversations, because i am constantl jacked into the information supersoupway, i ride the pale lightning, my body is a conduit for an unending stream of html</p>

<p> <b>lochnessmonster</b> Is the person running thebootydiaries ok</p> <hr/> <p> <b>thebootydiaries</b> sometimes i get the overwhelming desire to eat two thirds of a brick</p> <hr/> <p> <b>mallotovcocktail</b> what do you do with the other third</p> <hr/> <p> <b>thebootydiaries</b> feed it to my pet brother</p>	<p> <b>bombing</b> doctor: you have to run more you're incredibly out of shape  me: but doc i definitely run.....a blog haha  doctor: nice  me: nice  doctor: you're going to die  me: nice  Fuente: bombing</p>
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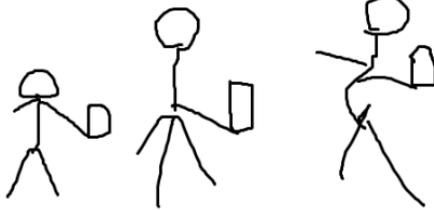
### 4.3.3 Rhetorical Questions

<p> <b>one-after-nineonine</b>  i did a push up why am i still fat</p>	<p> <b>musterni-illustrates</b> is anything as pure as a mango. is anything as humble and good and forthright as a mango, i ask you.</p>
<p>spoopy-faith ha preguntado:  what if apples screamed when we bit them</p> <p>happyquinncurtis ha contestado:  what if the crunch we hear when we bite them is the apple's scream</p>	<p> Prickly pear cactus fruit    <b>tuna</b> <i>f.</i>    <b>опунция</b> <i>f.</i></p> <p><small>*Note: Sometimes the English word will be an Anglicized version of the Spanish word. *Note: As with many words in Spanish, they may vary in different Latin American countries.</small></p> <p> <b>tupaya-devushka</b> What an interesting chart</p> <p> <b>lalinguistica</b> NEVER in my english-speaking LIFE have I ever heard someone refer to a papaya as a "pawpaw" wtf who are you people</p>

<p> coolxatu</p> <p><b>the sjws have taken everything from me. my dignity. my happiness. and they blog about leafs</b></p> <hr/> <p> bai-marionette</p> <p>"leaves</p> <hr/> <p> coolxatu</p> <p>where are you going</p>	<p> unknownquotient</p> <p>apps that shut off your music when you open them just how fucking important do you think you are</p>
<p> octupac</p> <p>u hate me?? wow so much in common already</p>	

#### 4.3.4 Outdated/Misspellings for Irony

<p> ceramicsun</p> <p>I, a cold and callous millennial, have no interest in face to face conversations, because i am constantl jacked into the information supersoupway, i ride the pale lightning, my body is a conduit for an unending stream of html</p>	<p><b>People:</b> "0mg... muzik is horrible these dayz... wut would Kert Kobane think if he came bak and saw dis horrible rap musick..."</p> <p><b>Kurt Cobain:</b> "I think rap music is the only vital form of music that has been introduced to music in a long time since punk rock. I would never attempt rap music. There's no sense in it, the people that do rap music do it just fine. I'm usually offended by people like Vanilla Ice and stuff like that. People who really didn't come from the streets. The white man ripped off the black man long enough. They should leave rap music to the African Americans 'cause they do it so well and it is so vital to them. [...] I like the comfort in knowing that the Afro-American has once again been the only race that has brought a new form of original music to this decade. 'It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back' is one of my favorite rap albums ever." (M.E.A.T. Magazine, September 1991)</p> <p>Source: americanhighw...</p>
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<p> <b>modestdemidov</b> you know you're really fucked in a scary movie when the crucifix falls over like there goes jesus jesus out even jesus is done with this shit "2 spooky 4 me" *parkours off the mantelpiece*</p> <hr/> <p> <b>ink-the-human</b> ((Except parkour is not a verb. It comes the original French Le Parcours "the course." It is a noun. Stop.))</p> <hr/> <p> <b>mekakucityday</b> *parkours into your room and knocks your shit over* no one cares</p>	<p><b>all these ppl are o their phones too much and this is bad</b></p>  <p><b>why they not talk and play ooutside?</b></p> <p><b>haha i'm so deep and anti-metialeristic</b></p> <p>Source: cramulus</p>
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<p> <b>thebootydiaries</b></p> <p><b>me:</b> *spells things wrong on purpose*</p> <p><b>friend:</b> um u spelled that wrong</p> <p><b>me:</b> im smyling :) but insid im dying :(</p> <hr/> <p> <b>tooninetiesforthis</b></p> <p>Smiling*</p> <p>Jesus</p> <hr/> <p> <b>thebootydiaries</b></p> <p>dam... thas tru :(</p>	<p> <b>4chanofficial</b></p> <p>hOW 2 LOOK COOL B4 SCHOOL</p>     <p>nOW GO GET URSELF SOME BITCHES</p> <hr/> <p> <b>dontmindme-idontevenknow</b></p> <p>How to look like a douche bag****</p> <hr/> <p> <b>4chanofficial</b></p> <p>wow...j cant beleieve!!! that ur insultingme &amp; my friends im GOUING 2 spit monster energy™ into ur Gosh darn fase back the HECK off 420</p>
<p><b>2012 me:</b> Is it really that hard to spell correctly? You're*</p> <p><b>me now:</b> oh m GOD ur so stup go back 2 skÜLE</p> <p>Fuente: lonelystiles</p>	<p> <b>communistbakery</b></p> <p>welcome to my twisted mind</p> <p>we have bananis.... and arvocadis.....</p>

Fluency

<p>anónimo ha preguntado:</p> <p>Are you against straight people? Or will you just avoid this question with a immature remark as well? Probably no point asking you, the mental capacity of a 5 year old doesn't go far regarding intellectual conversations.</p> <p>thebootydiaries ha contestado:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid purple; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>straight boy problem #175</b></p> <p>when ur homie breathe thru his mouth and u gotta stop breathing because u don't wanna inhale guy air bc ur straight and also ur muscles are huge</p> <p>148,738 notes</p> </div> <p>"intellectual conversations" u type as u take an obvious joke seriously, shaking and sobbing violently. "dang tumblr done it again..." u whisper. "they done offended me, an oppressed Straight™ in america and i can't tolerate this no more... not no more..." the home of sexuals have hurt u for far too long.</p> <p>as u type u accidentally knock over ur bowl of mac and cheese, and u begin to cry harder.</p> <p>"look what the gays have done..." u whisper. finally, u look at ur computer screen once more.</p> <p>surely thebootydiaries will cry herself to sleep tonight. but u click "anonymous" just to be safe. with a deep breath, u hit send and sit back in ur seat euphorically, ur cheese stained cheeks wrinkling as u grin. u have done it.</p> <p>u have won.</p>	<p> <b>cozysheeps</b> Follow</p> <p>every thebootydiaries post</p> <p>tumblr user thebootydiaries: hary potter came out today 50 years ago amazing :) !</p> <p>some other tumblr user who hasnt been on tumblr for long enough to understand the context of this type of post and takes the post on the nose: I don't think thats true...also *Harry</p> <p>thebootydiaries, responding patronisingly without taking into account that sarcasm is often difficult to read online for a lot of people: how dare you doubt me hari pOter is 80 years old god bless also i spel perfectly sweaty :))))))</p>
<p><b>english is not their first language:</b> Hello! I'm sorry if my English isn't very good.</p> <p><b>english is their first language:</b> hte fuckign</p> <p>Source: fraternityboy</p>	<p> <b>memeufacturing</b></p> <p>what adults and parents think teens are texting at night: hey 😏 u up bb? 🍷🍷🍷 on fleek. My parents r not home lol. 🙈🙈</p> <p>what teens are actually texting at night: remember Numa Numa ? that was wild. why did that become a thing ? i miss it tho. i miss Numa Numa</p>
<p> <b>kentmcfuller</b></p> <p>do not fix your dark circles let the world know youre tired of its shit and ready to kill a man</p> <hr/> <p> <b>blankslate-chalkoutline</b></p> <p>you're* it's*</p> <p>Btw.</p> <p>I am a man.</p> <hr/> <p> <b>kentmcfuller</b></p> <p>oooooooooooooh my goooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo ooooooooooh my god. oh my god. ooooooooooh. my god oh my god</p>	<p> <b>surprisebitch</b></p> <p>when u intentionally make a grammar/spelling mistake &amp; someone corrects u</p> <hr/> <p> <b>Mariam</b> 2 months ago</p> <p>What is THIS SCHOOL OR ONLINE</p> <p>Reply · 1 🍌 🍌</p>