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„Nonstandard spellings in Lolcats and Textspeak"

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1. Introduction

This thesis is a study of nonstandard spellings in Textspeak and Lolspeak. Terms such as Textspeak (Pathan 2012: 1), textese (De Jonge & Kemp 2012: 49), texting and text messaging (Crystal 2004: 97) refer to the "Short Messaging Service (SMS)" (ibid) language, whereas the term Lolspeak is used for the language in humorous photos captions primarily of animals posted on the Internet (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). Lolspeak is popular primarily because of Lolcats (ibid). Thus, in the thesis, only Lolcats, "images of cats with funny captions in [nonstandard] English" (ibid), will be looked at.

Throughout the thesis, Lolspeak and Textspeak are referred to as outputs, a term proposed by Crystal (2011: 10). Theoretically neutral from the linguistic point of view, this term is used to refer to a variety of entities in Internet discourse (Crystal 2011: 9, 10). Crystal (2011: 9) discourages the use of terms such as register, dialect, genre or variety, because they "suggest a homogeneity [of Internet language] which has not yet been established" (ibid).

The reason for selecting these two outputs in the thesis is the fact that they are often perceived to be the same types of language (Lefler 2011: 58). According to Urban Dictionary, for instance, Lolspeak is "[a]n extremely complicated language that is often mistaken for Textspeak" (Urban Dictionary "Lolspeak"). Another definition of Lolspeak says that it is "similar to texting" (ibid). Thus, an attempt is made in the thesis to prove that these two outputs, despite the common belief that they are the same, are totally different.

In addition, very little linguistic analysis of private text messages and Lolspeak messages has been conducted (Frehner 2008: 11). Thus, the language analysis of collected private text messages and Lolcats makes this research interesting and might be useful for other linguists. The nonstandard spellings that occur in texting are innovatively compared to the nonstandard spellings in Lolspeak, a comparison that has not been conducted in any previous linguistic research. This analysis of nonstandard spellings in the two outputs will be conducted through an investigation of the following research questions:

> In what ways and to what extent do Textspeak and Lolspeak differ from or resemble each other in their use of nonstandard spellings?

How does the difference in purpose between Lolspeak and Textspeak influence the types of nonstandard spellings that they use?

It is also significant to note that Textspeak is often referred to by the more general term Netspeak (Crystal 2001:18 cited in Bieswanger 2008: 2). Netspeak (also commonly known as cyberspeak, Weblish or Netlish) is "the kind of distinctive language found on the Internet" (Crystal 2004: 78). This term is usually used for Internet English (ibid).

Most importantly, Netspeak is not a "single variety of language" (Crystal 2001: 9). Specifically, it is used in different text-based forms of computer-mediated communication (henceforth CMC), for instance, chatrooms, discussion groups and emails (Herring 2001: 612). Textspeak is also a form of CMC (Thurlow 2003 in Bieswanger 2008: 2). Although texting is not " 'computer-mediated' " (ibid), it is "a form of technologically-mediated and text-based communication" (ibid).

Lolspeak, on the other hand, is classified by Herring (Herring 2012 cited in Fiorentini 2013: 91) as a "Special Internet Language Variety" (SILV) defined as a

> highly playful, nonstandard variant of a standard language which has arisen in a sub-cultural online context that involves frequent ingroup interaction, and which is characterized by a desire on the part of the participants to make their writing humorous, decorative, and/or obscure (ibid).

As already mentioned, throughout this thesis paper Lolcats and text messages will be referred to as outputs, the linguistically neutral term suggested by Crystal (2011: 10). The above-mentioned term variety, proposed by Herring (Herring 2012 cited in Fiorentini 2013: 91), or online dialect, proposed by Lefler (2011: 1) in reference to Lolspeak, seems to suggest established language norms (Haugen 1966: 923). However, as the thesis data results will show, some language features (spelling in this context) are not fully conventionalised. Thus, it seems, the term output appears to be most appropriate to refer to textese and Lolcats.

Finally, as far as thesis structure is concerned, the thesis consists of two interrelated parts: a previous-research part and an empirical part. The empirical part complements the previous research part. In the previous-research part descriptive work of other authors is described, refraining from any theoretical claims. In the empirical part, on the other hand, the actual data are analysed and discussed, using the descriptive approach.

2. Methodology

2.1. Data collection

First, it is important to refer to the process of data collection for the empirical part in this thesis. Two corpora were collected for data analysis, one containing three hundred authentic Lolcat messages and the other including three hundred authentic private SMS messages. The SMS and Lolcats data were collected between February and July 2014. The Lolcats were retrieved from the popular "I Can Has Cheezburger" (ICHC) website (www.cheezburger.com). Every fourth Lolcat was selected, excluding videos and animated images. The SMS data were collected using an online survey. The primary purpose of the survey was to collect a corpus of private SMS messages along with some sociolinguistic information regarding each participant (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N, see Appendix A).

In section I of this survey, the participants were asked to provide one or more of the actual text messages they had recently texted, copying them in the original form without editing. To prevent participants from editing their messages, it was emphasized that breaking the language rules in SMS language is not a sign of illiteracy, but rather shows an extensive knowledge of language and the ability to play with it in a creative way. Participants were asked to provide only single text messages restricted to 160 characters with plain text, without videos, animations, or melodies. Twenty blank spaces for twenty text messages were included in each questionnaire (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N, see Apendix A).

In section II, sociolinguistic information regarding participants was gathered. Participants were asked about their gender, age, education level, subjects studied, country of origin, country of residence, native language and reason for texting. Anonymity was assured for all the participants who took part in the survey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N).

2.2. Categorization of the data

First, the manner in which data were collected for this thesis is described, and then, how the data were identified and categorized is discussed. Specifically, a list of categories (also referred to as spelling changes) was prepared to be identified in the data. Importantly, during the data analysis, a whole nonstandard word was not treated as the unit of analysis.

Instead of a nonstandard word, a single spelling change within a nonstandard word was treated as the unit of analysis. To illustrate, for instance, in the texting data example *2zday* (Tuesday in TM 146, 147), two nonstandard spelling changes can be identified, namely, a number homophone *2* and a z-spelling (<s> phonetically spelt as <z>) within one nonstandard word.

In addition, single spelling changes treated as the unit of analysis are in turn grouped into larger categories such as morphological, phonological, symbolic and undetermined. Morphological spelling changes involve the morphology of the nonstandard words they appear in. Specifically, they involve word-formation processes, e.g. initialisms and clippings (Brinton 2000: 98, 99). Clippings, for instance, change the style of a word from formal to informal (ibid) as in, e.g., *info* (information, TM 27) or *Steph* (Stephanie, TM 197). Phonological spelling changes involve the phonology of a word and are additionally grouped as phonological changes involving the segmental level (i.e., homophones and phonetic spellings) (Cutler 1986: 201) and phonological spelling changes involving the suprasegmental level (i.e., emulated prosody) (Bergs 2003: 60). Symbolic spelling changes, on the other hand, involve typographic symbols along with emoticons (Thurlow 2003). And undetermined spelling changes (distinctive for Lolcats only) do not belong to the morphological, symbolic and phonological spelling changes and it is unclear why they are spelt the way they are.

It is also important to note that this categorisation of morphological, phonological, symbolic and undetermined spelling changes indicates that one cannot really analyse orthographic features such as spellings without relating them to other areas of linguistics, such as morphology or phonology (Assink & Dominiek 2003: 1-4). This will be taken into account in the thesis.

In Tables 1-6 below, all the thirty three spelling changes selected for the analysis in the thesis are presented [1]:

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[1] Spelling changes that are present in textese only are marked in shaded orange cells in Tables 1-6, whereas the ones distinctive for Lolcats only are highlighted in grey shaded cells. All of the remaining spelling changes in unhighlighted cells are present in the two outputs.

Table 1 Morphological spelling change

Omitted letters:	Examples
initialism single	b (be, TM 35) v (very, TM 16, 249) w/ (with, TM 110)
initialism multiple	omg (oh my God, TM 213) btw (by the way, TM 48) brb (be right back, LC 119)
contraction	sry (sorry, LC 283) hapnd (happened, LC 154)
G-clipping	goin (going, TM 78) feelin (feeling, TM 78) thinkin' (thinking, LC 184)
t-clipping	Jus (just, LC 262)
d-clipping	An (and, LC 15)
clipping	info (information, TM 27) tech (technical, LC 9) Wed (Wednesday, TM 57)

Table 2 Symbolic spelling change

Symbol:	Examples
emoticon	:) (TM 130) :((TM 156)
typographic symbol	xx (kisses, TM 54) @ (at, TM 82)

Table 3 Phonological suprasegmental spelling change: emulated prosody

Emulated prosody:	Examples
letter reduplication	goooo (TM 179) yeaaaaaaah (TM 230) Purrrrchase (LC 32)
word reduplication	grumble grumble (TM 195) wobbly wobbly (TM 176) Tuna, Tuna, Tuna (LC 50)
word written in asterisks	*crash* (TM 76) *sigh* (LC 24) *baaaaang* (TM 232)

Table 4 Phonological segmental spelling change: homophone

	Examples
Single letter homophone	u (you, TM 173) r (are, LC 63)
Single number homophone	2 (to, LC 160) 2 (too, TM 78)
Combined letter/number homophone	2zday (Tuesday, TM 146)

Table 5 Phonological segmental spelling change: phonetic spelling

	Examples
<th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE) → <d>	da (the, LC 54) dis (this, LC 107) dat (that, LC 20)
<th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <f>	mouf (mouth, LC 91) fink (think, LC 283)
<th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <t>	tree (three, LC 43) tundurstarms (thunderstorms, LC 231)

<th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE) → <v>	bruv (brother, TM 180)
z-spelling	cheezburger (cheeseburger, LC 76) photoz (photos, LC 125) iz (is, LC 125)
/ʌ/→ <u>	cuzzin'z (cousin's, LC 279) udder (other, LC 207) fwum (from, LC 115)
/ə/→ <u>	enuff (enough, LC 97) purreber (forever, LC 245) dinurz (dinner, TM 71)
/ɜː/→ <u> **/ɝ/→ <u>**	furst (first, LC 216) purrfectly (perfectly, LC 44) wurld (world, LC 163)
diphthong phonetically spelt	hai (hi, LC 149) Ai (LC 259) drai (dry, LC 242)
G-clipping as a phonetic spelling	goin (going, TM 78) feelin (feeling, TM 78) thinkin' (thinking, LC 184)
T-clipping as a phonetic spelling	Jus (just, LC 262)
D-clipping as a phonetic spelling	An (and, LC 15)
<ee> → /iː/	deez (these, LC 118) teecher (teacher, LC 249) leeb (leave, LC 192)
<oo> → /uː/	hooman (human, LC 238) toona (tuna, LC 287) stoopy (stupid, LC 20)

Table 6 Undetermined spelling change (distinctive for Lolcats exlusively)

	Examples
Undetermined letter reduplication	forebber (forever, LC 76) ennymoar (anymore, LC 71) mebbe (maybe, LC 279)
undetermined diphthong (not phonetically spelt)	nyow (now, LC 125) nao (now, LC 125) noe (no, LC 242)
eh/ah-spellings	kitteh (kitty, LC 98) meh (me, LC 231) teh (the, LC 94)
undetermined u-spelling (not phonetically spelt)	purty (party, LC 260) wuntz (want, LC 236) fur (for, LC 283)

In the rest of this thesis, each category from Tables 1-6 will be explained and described with the help of data examples. The data examples are referred to as TM (text message) and LC (Lolcat message) throughout the thesis. For instance, TM 50, refers to the text message nr 50.

It is also important to stress that the majority of the spelling changes listed in Tables 1-6 were already mentioned in and taken from previous linguistic studies on texting and Lolspeak. More specifically, the morphological spelling changes were taken from Plester's study (Plester et al. 2009: 151) about the texting of British children and how it affects their literacy (Plester et al. 2009: 145) and from Crystal's study (Crystal 2008: 42). Interestingly, a few studies on texting and its influence on literacy by Drouin & Driver (2012: 8,11), by

Lyddy et.al (2014: 550) and by De Jonge & Kemp (2012: 59) also used the categories proposed by Plester (Drouin & Driver 2012:7; Lyddy et.al 2014: 550).

Phonological spelling changes emulating prosody, on the other hand, were taken from Frehner's (2008: 103) study on SMS language (ibid), while symbolic spelling changes and phonological spelling changes (homophones) were adopted from Thurlow and Brown's (2003:6-20) study on the linguistics of texting. Concerning phonetic spellings, they were adopted from Frehner's (2008: 104, 108), Mrázová 's (2013: 26,27) and Gunsing's (2009: 15, 22) studies on texting and Lolcats.

As far as undetermined spelling changes are concerned, undetermined letter reduplications has not been mentioned in any previous linguistic study on Lolspeak. Categories such as undetermined diphthong spellings, eh/ah-spellings and all undetermined u-spellings have also not been analysed thoroughly in any previous linguistic studies on Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 31).

3. Demographics in the data

3.1. Demographics in the Textspeak corpus

After all the data were collected, identified and categorized, their demographics and how it differs or is similar between the outputs was examined (see section II in Appendix A).

As far as SMS study is concerned, the text messages were collected from native speakers of English through the designed questionnaire. The reason for selecting text messages written exclusively by native speakers of English was the reasonable assumption that they are more likely to know how to use nonstandard English to produce a desired effect and that they are more sensitive to the nuances of the language style characteristics of Textspeak. In contrast, non-native speakers of English tend instead to use Standard English (MA research proposal). Forty-nine participants took part in this online survey. As has been already mentioned, the SMS data were collected using a designed online survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N. The link to it was posted primarily in various linguistics and language communities on Twitter and Facebook. However, it is important to stress that the fact that people involved in linguistics or languages provided their text messages might skew the data results a bit, as most of them are well acquainted with language issues. Nevertheless, it was emphasized in the survey to copy the messages

in the original form without editing and without using predictive texting software (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N). Predictive texting was excluded, because it would not allow proper investigation of nonstandard spellings in messages.

In addition, it is noteworthy that before obtaining the SMS data from these social media sites, attempts were made to obtain it through other online forums, not specifically language related, aimed at helping students to conduct a survey. However, only linguistic communities in social media (Facebook and Twitter) responded.

All of the participants come from English-speaking countries, with those from the USA (65 %) being the most numerous, followed by the UK (19 %), Canada (10 %), Australia (2 %), New Zealand (2 %) and South Africa (2 %).

Considering the gender of the respondents in the SMS study, all of the respondents (forty-nine) reported their gender. However, more females (75.51 %) sent in text messages than males (24.49 %).

As far as age is concerned, in the SMS study a considerable portion of the participants (thirty-five out of forty-nine) were young people with ages ranging from 20 to 30, accounting for 72 %. In second place were the people with ages below 20 (5 out of 49), accounting for 10 %. The remaining 18 % of participants were in their forties and fifties. Only one respondent was older than 60, at 63 years old.

Regarding education, all of the informants already hold a university degree (MA, BA or Ph.D) or are currently pursuing a study. Little more than half (53 %) of the participants currently study or already hold a degree in linguistics, and 47 % of them study or hold a degree in different types of language-related subjects (French, Hispanic Studies, English, speech pathology, and the like).

3.2. Demographics in the Lolcats' corpus

While looking at the demographics in the Lolspeak's corpus, it is interesting to pay attention to the native language of Lolspeakers. It seems that Fiorentini (2013: 95) is right in her statement that it may be problematic to determine the native language of the author of a Lolcat message (ibid). In particular, it is not entirely clear whether the author of each Lolcat is a native speaker of English or not (ibid). Interestingly, Fiorentini (2013: 95, 96) and Gawne and Vaughan (http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/cats-meow-of-online-laughter-so-to-speak-20111209-1uuzx.html cited in Fiorentini 2013: 95, 96) came

to the same conclusion that Lolspeakers have "excellent English skills" (ibid) and "know how to manipulate [the language]" (ibid). Concerning the Lolcats data examined in this thesis, some helpful information regarding its users is provided in the form of user-chosen nicknames (http://icanhas.cheezburger.com/lolcats). Clicking the nickname displays the user's profile. This includes personal information such as gender, place of residence, and date of birth. Unfortunately, not all users provide this information, and it is often incomplete (ibid).

Only 137 out of 300 (46 %) users provided information regarding their place of residence. Among those who declared their place of residence, the majority come from English-speaking countries such as the United States (USA) (68 %), followed by Canada (6 %), United Kingdom (UK) (4 %), South Africa (4 %), Ireland (4 %) and Australia (1 %). These results resemble the previously described Textspeak users' countries of origin, where the USA, UK and Canada were the most common. Seventeen profiles (12 %) were written by people who come from countries in which English is not the mother tongue (Malaysia, France, Finland and the Netherlands). Similar results were found by Fiorentini (2013: 95) in her linguistic research on Lolspeak, in which most of the users declared that they came from English-speaking countries, with the United States being the most numerous (ibid). However, the fact that some information in the profiles could be inaccurate might skew the results (Fiorentini 2013: 95). In addition, it might be assumed, as suggested above, that most of the users are native speakers of English. However, a user's place of residence and country of origin are not always the same.

Concerning the gender of Lolspeak users, 46 % (137 out of 300) provided their gender. Similarly, of the users of Textspeak (75.51 % females and 24.49 % males) more females (78 %) wrote messages than males in Lolcats (22 %).

Only 12 % of users (34 out of 300) provided their age. The results were very different from the results in the Textspeak study, in which a considerable portion of the participants who gave their age (72 %) were from 20 to 30. Interestingly, in the Lolspeak study in 47 % of cases (16 out of 34) those who provided their age were over sixty, in 23 % of cases (8 out of 34) in their thirties, and in 15 % of cases each, in their forties (5 out of 34) and fifties (5 out of 34)). Thus, the data show that the age of the users ranges from 30 to above 60. It is interesting to observe on the basis of these data that none of the users were younger than thirty. In addition, among those users who did not include their age in the profile,

many of them provided the information that they are either retired or have grandchildren or a husband or wife. Thus, it may be assumed that their ages must surely be above thirty.

Regarding educational background, as has been already mentioned, in Textspeak all of the participants currently study or already hold a degree in language-related subjects. In Lolspeak, on the other hand, only 10 % of users reported their educational level. Among them were primarily artists, poets, writers (e.g., of novels or poems) and teachers. However, despite not reporting specific educational information, in many of the profiles the users made some other useful information available. For instance, they wrote that they like writing poems or reading books (poetry, literature). This information, along with the educational information provided, indicates that Lolspeak users are well-educated people who love literature, poetry, reading and writing and who know their language. Additionally, many of them are Christians who love animals, including of course, cats.

4. Introduction to Textspeak

4.1. Definition and origin

Before the analysis of selected nonstandard spelling changes in both outputs is presented, sections 4 and 5 will provide brief introductions to Textspeak and Lolspeak.

Beginning with the SMS language, it is worth defining what an SMS message is. SMS is "[a] Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) service that enables a user to send short text messages to other mobile users" (Crystal 2004: 97). The concept of SMS was introduced in 1980s (Crystal 2008: 3, 4). However, its development for commercial purposes began in 1990s (Crystal 2008: 4). It is also worth mentioning that in 1992 Finland was the place where SMS messages were first sent (Crystal 2008: 4).

4.2. Textspeak properties

Regarding texting properties, it is important to consider the type of mode of CMC Textspeak belongs to. There are two types of modes in CMC, namely, synchronous and asynchronous (Herring 2001: 615). In asynchronous modes of CMC, simultaneous user logins are not required for receiving and sending messages, because these messages can be stored before being read (Herring 2001: 614). Hence, Textspeak is an "asynchronous, text-based, technologically mediated discourse" (Thurlow 2003). Textspeak's

asynchronicity seems to have advantages, as illustrated by some of the comments regarding the reasons behind the texting of the participants in the online survey:

"(...)You don't have to answer immediately" (questionnaire nr 46)

"I have more time to consider my response in a text message than I do in a phone call" (questionnaire nr 22)

(https://www.surveymonkey.com/analyze/i6tGpxLOJiymKQJimetWpHorzgEov6tPU_2Fo AE7_2BGBlA_3D).

For the synchronous form of CMC, on the other hand, both addressee and sender are required to "be logged on simultaneously" (Herring 2001:615), as occurs in chatrooms for instance (ibid). Furthermore, although texting tends to be usually associated with asynchronicity (Farina & Lyddy 2011: 145), it might also be perceived as near-synchronous (ibid). Near-synchronous means that even though the texts need not be responded to in real time, they can be responded to immediately to enable a dialogue to take place between the texters (Farina & Lyddy 2011: 145). Thus, it is believed that instead of there being a strict division between asynchrony and synchrony, they might be perceived as being on a continuum (Rettie 2009 cited in Farina & Lyddy 2011: 145).

Apart from classifying what mode of CMC Textspeak is, it is also important to mention other properties, such as its purpose and the restriction of its message length. The primary purpose of texting is to communicate through exchanging information in text messages (Frehner 2008: 90). This communication is supposed to be efficient (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23) and this was given by 81.63 % of participants (40 out of 49) as a primary reason behind texting in the online survey, as illustrated in the graph:
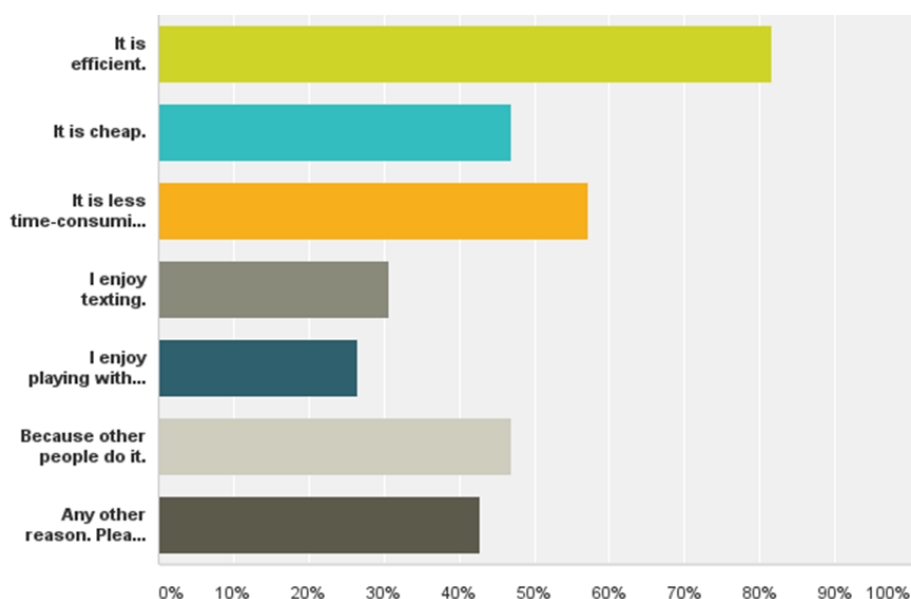
Figure 1 Reasons for texting

(https://www.surveymonkey.net/analyse/i6tGpxLOJiymKQJimetWpHorzgEov6tPU_2FoAE7_2BGBlA_3D).

In second to fourth place were the fact that it is less time-consuming than phoning (57.14%), it is cheap (46.94 %) and "[b]ecause other people do it" (46.94%) respectively. While discussing the above-mentioned reasons for texting, it is also significant to understand the difference in meaning between the terms time-consuming and efficient. It seems that in the context of SMS communication the term time-consuming refers only to the amount of time required to compose a text message. The term efficient, on the other hand, denotes more than just the amount of time required to write a message. More specifically, it involves getting most of the meaning of the text message across with the least amount of time and effort (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23). This appears to be why the most prevalent reason for texting selected by the users is that it is efficient.

Concerning the message length of texting, the single text message contains a maximum of 160 characters (Latin alphabet), including spaces (Bieswanger 2008:1). This calls to mind one of Thurlow's sociolinguistic maxims about brevity (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22), due to "a limited space for (…) communication, 'texters' need to omit any elements that are not strictly necessary for understanding" (ibid).

Another important property of SMS messaging that makes it resemble speech is the fact that it is time governed requiring a prompt response (Crystal 2011: 20). In addition, it is characterised by some urgency of in-person conversation (ibid). These properties are

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captured in another of Thurlow's sociolinguistic maxims regarding speed to the effect that "[texters] have to speed up their pace of communication, so need to take short cuts" (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22).

Apart from the linguistic strategies dealing with brevity and speed included in Thurlow's first two maxims, it is also worth mentioning some other factors that contribute to raising the efficiency of SMS communication. These are captured in the third and fourth of Thurlow's maxims. More precisely, the third maxim, regarding paralinguistic restitution, says that "[texters] need to find ways to replace the aspects of physical communication (such as body language) that are present" (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22,23), while the fourth maxim, regarding phonological approximation, says that " [they] want to build in ways for their readers to 'hear' their voice, so try to change the written language to represent this" (ibid).

5. Introduction to Lolspeak

5.1. Definition and origin

Lolspeak's primary purpose is to entertain and play with language to create humour (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). This is achieved by manipulating Standard English (ibid). Lolspeak's popularity has increased primarily as a result of the famous Internet meme, Lolcats (Gawne & Vughan 2011: 98). A meme "is a concept that spreads via the Internet [that] can take the form of a sentence, a picture, a link, a video or even a word or phrase" (Abrahao de los Santos 2012: 63).

Gawne and Vaughan (2011: 98) define Lolcats as images of cats, often labelled "as image macros" (ibid) to which humorous captions are written in nonstandard English (ibid). The terms Lolcats and Lolspeak contain the initialism *lol* (laughing out loud) (Gunsing 2009: 1), which indicates their humorous content (Lefler 2011: 1).

It is believed that Lolcats originated on 4chan (Fiorentini 2013: 91), a bulletin board with images on which users can provide comments and exchange images. (https://www.4chan.org/). It is the bulletin board where the first pictures "of cats on Saturday" (Fiorentini 2013: 91) were posted in 2005. For this reason Saturday was referred to as Caturday (ibid). Interestingly, there is some debate among 4chan users regarding Lolcats' origin (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 99). Specifically, there is a discussion

regarding whether the 4chan or perhaps another Internet board was the place of origin of Lolcats (ibid).

One of the supposedly first Lolcats posted on Caturday was a food ad depicting a cat, written in English, but of Russian origin (Lefler 2011: 2). The caption says, "I CAN HAS CHEEZBURGER" (Lefler 2011: 2). It was probably written in nonstandard English unintentionally by a Russian non-native speaker of English (ibid). The caption is an example of nonstandard English "foreigner talk" (Ferguson 1968:5 in Lefler 2011: 2,3), breaking grammatical rules (ibid). It has a different word order than that of Standard English (Lefler 2011:3). Interestingly, it is believed that this nonstandard Lolcat began the fashion of writing Lolcats by the Lolcat community in nonstandard English (ibid). Additionally, this caption has become the inspiration for the name of the ICHC website, the most popular Lolspeak site (Lefler 2011: 3), created by Eric Nakagawa in January 2007 (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 99).The ad was the first Lolcat posted there (Lefler 2011: 3).

5.2. Lolspeak properties

As has been mentioned previously, Textspeak is classified as an asynchronous (Thurlow 2003) or even near-synchronous mode of CMC (Rettie 2009: 1131 in Farina & Lyddy 2011: 146). Similarly to Textspeak, Lolspeak is also an asynchronous medium used "in the local discourse context of LOL-based Internet sites" (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 101). However, in comparison to text messages, which tend to be dialogic and conversation-like (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22), Lolcat captions are written in non-dyadic style (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 101), lacking any dialogue (ibid).

This lack of dialogue, it seems, can be explained by considering the purpose each output serves. The fact that the principal objective of texting is to communicate, to convey some information between the interlocutors (Frehner 2008: 90), influences its language. Specifically, to maintain the communication the messages must be of a dialogic nature (Frehner 2008: 112), whereas in Lolspeak, which is also a form of communication, the principal focus is on playing with language for mere fun and entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). This in turn, it seems, does not require back and forth dialogic messages.

It is also important to understand the term language play, which encompasses various ways of creatively manipulating language for entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103). The language play in Lolspeak is characterized by metalinguistic awareness

(Fiorentini 2013: 106). More specifically, Cheezpeeps (people who post Lolcats) (Lefler 2011: 46), well acquainted with Standard English, deliberately use nonstandard English to manipulate the language consciously for fun (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103).

What is also interesting to mention is the fact that Lolspeak seems to be inspired by many sources (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 102). It appears to be an amalgam of leetspeak, textspeak (ibid), pidgin (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103) and baby talk (Rosen 2010: 2).

Leetspeak is the Internet language variety that originated in online video gaming (Rosen 2010: 2). It is also referred to as Leet, 1337 or Eleet, with its name deriving from its origin in a word elite (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leet cited in Fiorentini 2013: 91). It is characterised by the use of symbols and numbers substituting for letters (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 102), e.g., L337 (leet), L0Lsp33k (LOLspeak) (ibid) and w3ll (well) (Fiorentini 2013: 97).

Concerning comparison of Lolspeak to pidgin (often referred to as "kitty pidgin") (see Dash 2007), it was originally suggested that Lolspeak can be classified as a pidgin(Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103). The reason for this comparison is the fact that some language characteristics of Lolspeak, such as word reduplications, resemble properties of pidgin (Fiorentini 2013: 92). English would then be a "superstrate lexifying language" (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103). Nevertheless, "there is clearly no 'cat substrate' ", (ibid) because Lolspeak is an output that results purely from playing with the English language (ibid). In addition, language properties of Lolspeak do not entirely match the typical features of pidgin languages (Rosen 2010: 2). Actually, it is rather more likely that they match the features of Leetspeak and baby talk – the variety used by adults while talking to toddlers and infants (ibid). It appears that the cats are intended to sound like a small child, contributing to the humourous effect of Lolspeak.

Nevertheless, it is important to stress that, although Lolspeak has particular language features in common with baby talk, leetspeak (Rosen 2010:2), texting (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 102) and pidgin (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 103), "none of them quite explain the LOLspeak phenomenon or account for all discernable stylistic choices" (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 102).

As far as message length in Lolspeak is concerned, the character length of a single Lolcat message is not specifically mentioned in the literature. Lolcat builder must be used to create an image macro with a caption on ICHC, where the users post a picture and create

a caption for it (http://builder.cheezburger.com/builder). The maximum character length in the builder is approximately 60 characters (including spaces), with most captions tending to be shorter. It is also important to stress that posting a Lolcat on ICHC is free, in contrast to text messages, which typically are private (Faulkner & Culwin 2004: 169) and must be paid for (Grinter & Eldridge 2001: 220).

6. Analysis of selected categories

Methodology, demographics and some basic properties of both outputs having been introduced, the remaining sections of this paper will focus on the main topic, nonstandard spellings. More specifically, all of the spelling changes listed in subsection 2.2 will be now analysed in texting and Lolcats. The categories are grouped as morphological, phonological, symbolic and undetermined. The morphological categories will be analysed first, followed by the symbolic, phonological and undetermined.

While analysing the categories, it is important to stress that the Lolspeak and Textspeak corpora, despite being comprised of three hundred messages each, differ in length as far as their total numbers of words are concerned. More specifically, the texting corpus includes 3,595 words, whereas the Lolspeak corpus contains 4,381 words. Since the two corpora contain different total numbers of words, relative frequencies (i.e., number of occurrences of selected spelling changes per 1,000 words) will be used as normalized values during the data analysis, while comparing nonstandard spellings in Lolspeak and Textspeak.

In Tables 7-12 and 18, the relative frequencies per 1,000 words are provided. Each number is followed by the symbol ‰ - per mille, referring to the frequency per 1,000 words. Below the relative frequencies, the raw data (absolute numbers referring to the total number of examples of selected spelling changes found in each corpus) are provided in parentheses.

6.1. Categories involving morphological characteristics

In this section, the categories involving morphological characteristics will be described. An overview of these categories, including the respective numbers of occurrence in the actual data are given in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Morphological categories and number of their occurrences

	SMS	Lolcat
Omitted letters: initialism single	1.9471 ‰ (7)	0 ‰ (0)
Omitted letters: initialism multiple	9.4576 ‰ (34)	0.6848 ‰ (3)
Omitted letters: contraction	3.3379 ‰ (12)	1.1413 ‰ (5)
Omitted letters: clipping	5.8414 ‰ (21)	0 ‰ (0)
Omitted letters: G-clipping	2.2253 ‰ (8)	3.4239 ‰ (15)
Omitted letters: t-clipping	0 ‰ (0)	2.0543 ‰ (9)
Omitted letters: d-clipping	0 ‰ (0)	0.9130 ‰ (4)
Total number of occurrences	22.8095 ‰ (82)	8.2173 ‰ (36)

The categories listed in the above table are coded as morphological, because they involve the morphology of a word. Specifically, they involve word formation processes in which a new word is formed while at the same time preserving the meaning of the original word (Katamba 2005: 180). In the data, more than one letter is omitted in initialisms,

contractions and clippings. However, in case of g-clippings, d-clippings and t-clippings, only the final letter of a word is dropped (Thurlow 2009: 8). These clippings, it seems, are also word-formation proccesses in which a formal word is transformed into a casual, informal word in the proccess of dropping a final letter (cf. Frehner 2008: 99).

On the whole, texting contains nearly three times more spelling changes (8.2173 instances per 1,000 words) involving the morphology of a word than Lolcats (22.8095 instances per 1,000 words). Textspeak obviously uses them to reduce the number of characters in a word, shortening communication (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22). Lolspeak, on the other hand, uses these spelling changes only for humour (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98), not specifically to reduce the number of characters in a word to shorten communication.

Interestingly, the number of specific spelling changes involving morphological characteristics varies across both outputs. More precisely, the data in Table 7 show that the categories omitted letters: initialism single, initialism multiple, omitted letters: clipping and omitted letters: contraction are more popular in SMS data than in Lolcats (categories omitted letters: initialism single and omitted letters: clipping do not occur in Lolcats at all). Whereas in Lolspeak category omitted letters: G-clipping is more prevalent than in textese and categories omitted letters: t-clipping and d-clipping do not appear in textese at all. In the following sections each of the categories listed in Table 7 will be discussed in depth.

6.1.1. Omitted letters: initialism single and initialism multiple

An initialism is "[…] a word where all the letters are omitted except the first" (Crystal 2008: 45). It is important to note that very often the term initialism is used synonymously with the term acronym (ibid). However, initialisms are distinguished from acronyms. Every letter of initialisms (also referred to as alphabetisms) is pronounced individually (e.g., BBC), whereas acronyms "are pronounced as single words, such as NATO" (Crystal 2008: 42).

Some of Textspeak's initialisms include *btw* (by the way) (De Jonge& Kemp 2012: 57), *gf* (girlfriend) and *tb* (text back) (Lyddy et al. 2012: 551). Lolcat messages might also occasionally contain initialisms such as, for instance, *brb* ("be right back"), *wtf* ("what the fuck") or *omg* ("oh my god") (Gunsing 2009: 11, 12). However, as the data results show, initialisms such as *omg* (TM 3, TM 213, TM 266), *wtf* (TM 235, 268) and *btw* (TM 48, TM

137, TM 214, TM 299) appear only in the texting corpus. While the initialism *brb* (LC 119) occurs only two times in Lolspeak and it does not occur in texting data at all.

Two categories of initialisms are selected for analysis (following Crystal's classification of initialisms): omitted letters: initialism single and omitted letters: initialism multiple (Crystal 2008: 42). The first category omitted letters: initialism single refers to an initialism representing one word (Crystal 2008: 42) while the category omitted letters: initialism multiple refers to multiple initialisms standing for two or three words representing "words in phrases" (ibid) or "elliptical or whole sentences" (ibid).

As far as the category omitted letters: initialism single is concerned, there were 1.9471 instances of this category per 1,000 words found in the texting data set, while no examples of it were detected in Lolspeak.

All of the texting examples belonging to this category are illustrated below:

(1) b (be) (TM 35)

(2) w/ (with) (TM 110)

(3), (4), (5) E (probably the first letter of the texter's name) (TM 6, 54, 218)

(6), (7) v (very) (TM 16, 249)

These initialisms are likely to occur in texting, it seems, owing to the fact they represent everyday words, common in real-life communication. This data result confirms Crystal's (2008: 42) statement on types of initialisms in texting (ibid). The initialisms in texting are "everyday words, rather than proper names" (ibid). For instance, the initialisms *b* (be) and *v* (very) are casual words, easily understandable in the context of text messages between texters. Specifically, these initialisms do not cause any difficulties during communication, but make it easier by reducing the number of characters, saving time and space. Lolcats, on the other hand, do not include any such spelling changes. The reason for this, it appears, is the fact that they are aimed at inventing more sophisticated creative spellings. It seems that mere initialisms are not sufficiently funny and creative enough to be frequently used in Lolcats aimed purely at fun and language play (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). In addition, they are deliberately used to decrease the number of characters as much as possible, which is a very much what texting is about (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22).

As far as the category omitted letters: initialism multiple is concerned, 9.4576 occurrences of this category per 1,000 words were detected in Textspeak, while only 0.6848 occurrences per 1,000 words were found in Lolcats.

Concerning the texting corpus, thirty-four occurrences of initialism multiple were found in it. Among all the examples belonging to the category initialism multiple in texting data, fifteen initialisms multiple were representing words comprising a phrase, e.g., *btw* (four instances)(TM 48, 137, 214, 299) , *omg* (three instances) (TM 3, 213, 266), *wtf* (two instances) (TM 235, 268). Most of these initialisms are the so-called "three-letter" (Wikipedia "Three-letter acronym") initialisms used for three words (ibid). Furthermore, seventeen examples of initialisms multiple represent elliptical sentences, such as: *lol* (fourteen occurrences, e.g., LC 141, 164, 167), *lvl* (laugh very loud) (TM 244), *smh* (shaking my head) (TM 89) and *syl* (see you later) (TM 82) (Urban Dictionary "lvl", "smh", "syl"). Two initialisms multiple are used for full sentences: *idk* (I don't know, TM 139) and *[i]kr* (I know, right, TM 43) (Urban Dictionary "idk", "ikr").

In Lolspeak, on the other hand, all the examples that belong to initialism multiple are, [b]rb, [b]rb and lol as illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3 below:

Brb Going to Narnia   If Basement Cat Finds Out About This
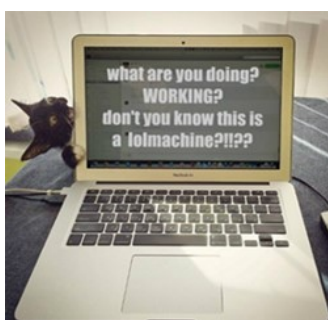
Figure 2 (LC 119) and Figure 3 (LC 265) Omitted letters: initialism multiple in Lolcats

These two examples in the Lolspeak data include the initialism *brb* and *lol*. The initialism [b]rb in Figure 2 is a well-known initialism. However, in the context of this Lolcat macro it is used for a humorous effect. Specifically, the cat sitting in a drawer says it will 'be right back' because it is going to travel to Narnia- "a fantasy world created by [the fantasy novel writer] C.S/Lewis" (Wikipedia 2015 "Narnia (world)").

Similarly, the initialism *lol* is used for a funny purpose in the context of Lolcat in Fig. 3 where it appears in a word *lolmachine.* The cat finds a laptop not an object to work with but as a machine for producing Lolcats.

6.1.2. Omitted letters: contraction and clipping

Apart from initialisms, another morphological category is contraction, in which letters are omitted in the middle of a word (Crystal 2008b: 45), e.g., *plz* (please), *wknd* (weekend) (Lyddy et al. 2012: 551), *tmrw* (tomorrow) and *sry* (sorry) (Drouin & Driver 2012: 8). Usually the omitted letters are vowels (Drouin & Driver 2012: 8). In addition, the double consonants in the middle of the word are often reduced to a single consonant (Crystal 2008: 46), e.g., *difclt* (difficult) (Crystal 2008b: 47) or *getn* (getting) (Crystal 2008b: 46). As the examples above show, usually more than one letter is omitted in contractions. Thus, a spelling change is classified as a contraction in the data when more than one letter is omitted from the middle of a word.

Similarly to the case of initialisms, more contractions are observed in texting (12 examples) than in Lolcats (5 examples). In terms of occurrences per 1,000 words, they occur 3.3379 times in Textspeak, but only 1.1413 times in Lolspeak.

In most data examples, it is indeed vowels that are omitted. These are more frequently omitted than consonants owing to the fact that "consonants carry much more information than vowels" (Crystal 2008: 26) and without vowels the text is still intelligible (ibid). Specifically, deliberate dropping of some vowels in the middle of a word should normally not be any obstacle in understanding the meaning of a word (Frehner 2008: 100). If, for instance, instead of vowels, a few consonants would be dropped in the question *howz things?* (TM 9) resulting in *ho thi?*, the meaning of this question would probably not be grasped instantly during communication. However, if only vowels would be omitted resulting in *hwz thngs* , the meaning of the message would be easily understood.

Interestingly, in a few data examples, as well as vowels, consonants are also omitted. More precisely, double consonants are written as single consonants, as seen in two texting and in one Lolspeak examples *sry* (sorry) (TM 66, TM178, LC 283) and in Lolcats examples, such as *hapnd* (happened) (LC 154) and *s'posed* (supposed) (LC 145). In the example *s'posed,* the letter <p> is omitted, but at the same time the extra apostrophe is added before the other letter <p>. The reason for using this extra apostrophe is unclear. It is

possible that it is used instead of either the letter <p> or the letter <u>. However, the use of punctuation is not a primary focus in this paper, and it will not be analysed in detail.

Another morphological category is omitted letters: clipping. Clipping is one of the word formation processes in which a new word is formed by its reduction to either a disyllabic or monosyllabic part (Katamba 2005: 180).

In this paper only initial and final clippings will be analysed in which "[l]etters [are] omitted from word beginnings or endings" (Drouin & Driver 2012: 8), e.g., *def* (definitely), *prob* (probably) (ibid), *mon* (Monday) and *tues* (Tuesday)(Lyddy et al. 2012: 551). It is also important to note that clippings are characterized by omitting at least two letters (ibid).

Interestingly, twenty-one occurrences of clippings were found in the texting corpus, whereas they do not occur in Lolcats. Some clippings in texting are illustrated by the examples *apt* (apartment) and *prof* (professor):

(8) Alright I'm leaving my apt now and heading to coolbeans area (TM 4)

(9) I'll just have an appointment with my prof this morning but I can't even close my eyes (TM 123)

In addition, the thesis data results show that seven examples of SMS clippings appear in nonstandard spoken words such as *bro* (brother, TM 111), bruv (brother, TM 180), *coz* (because, TM 78, 190), *cus* (because, TM 33), *cuz* (TM 86) and *iight* (alright, TM 74). Some of these examples are shown below:

(10) are you working late? wanna pick me up after work coz it's gonna be COLD (TM 190)

(11) Wuthering or beloved are the ones i'd prefer... Cuz of the dates (TM 86)

(12) Kewl bro (TM 111)

The data results concerning initialisms, contractions and clippings having been presented, it is fascinating to question why some of them appear in Lolspeak. To answer this, it is noteworthy to mention that texters draw on linguistic processes (e.g., initialisms, contractions, clippings) that are not genuinely novel (Crystal 2008: 53). Lolspeakers "[also] draw on already existing linguistic resources and apply them in a creative way in order to exploit language as a means of play" (Fiorentini 2013: 105). As Crystal (2008:

37, 43) points out, initializing was used in CMC before the appearance of the mobile phone industry (ibid), in chatrooms for instance, and also in informal writing long before the existence of computers (ibid). In addition, the fact that contractions are present in the two outputs is, it seems, not surprising, since they are widely popular in informal writing in general, outside Internet. It seems that Cheezpeeps, as avid computer users who are perfectly familiar with Netspeak (Rosen 2010: 5), not only use these spelling changes in chatrooms or emails, for instance, while using their computers, but sporadically employ them in Lolcats.

However, despite using some already existing spelling changes in the two outputs, what really makes a particular spelling change novel is combining it creatively with other spelling changes within one nonstandard word. This will be illustrated with the help of some examples in this paper.

In contrast to Cheezpeeps, texters appear to use more initialisms, contractions and clippings for the obvious reason. These spelling changes reduce the number of characters, making communication shorter by saving space and time, while simultaneously preserving the message's intelligibility (Crystal 2008: 51). In addition, the financial aspect must be taken into account in situations in which the texters are required to pay for the number of text messages they send (Grinter & Eldridge 2001: 220). Thus, it not only saves space and time, but also money (Crystal 2008: 51).

However, it is important to stress that as the data results reveal, only eighty-two morphological spelling changes were found in the SMS corpus containing three hundred text messages. It seems that using too many of them would interfere with the goal of effective communication. It might be assumed that using a reasonable number of spelling changes that reduce the number of characters in a word would shorten SMS communication and put the meaning of the message across with less time and effort, contributing to the efficiency of the communication.

In addition, the thesis data results are consistent with the the accounts reported in the literature that "the majority of texting language is standard" (Lyddy et al. 2013: 547).

6.1.3. Omitted letters: g–clipping, t-clipping, d-clipping

Apart from initialisms, clippings and contractions, g-clippings, d-clippings and t-clippings are other morphological categories taken into consideration in this paper. In g-clippings the final <g> is omitted in words with *–ing* endings (De Jonge& Kemp 2012: 57), e.g., *studyin* (studying) (ibid). G-clipping is popular in texting ((Frehner 2008: 99) and it also appears in Lolspeak, e.g., *makin* (making), *nethin* (nothing) and *beginnin* (beginning) (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 111).

The data in Table 7 show that in contrast to initialisms, contractions and clippings, which were less popular in Lolcats data in comparison to texting (or did not occur in Lolcats at all), Lolcats use one and one half more g-clippings per 1,000 words (3.4239 g-clippings per 1,000 words) in comparison to texting (2.2253 g-clippings per 1,000 words). Nevertheless, it is significant to emphasize that it might be possible that g-clippings are more prevalent in Lolcats owing to the fact that Lolspeak typically describes states or actions. For this reason, it might be assumed that it contains more –ing forms. As g-clippings belong to the –ing forms, it might also be expected to contain more g-clippings.

However, the fact that there are one and one half as many g-clippings per 1,000 words in Lolcats in comparison to texting is not just an artificial result of the assumption of there being more –ing forms in Lolspeak. As the data results show, Lolspeak does not include more –ing forms than texting. Interestingly, more –ing forms were investigated in SMS data. Specifically, ninety-six instances of –ing forms were found in texting, and ninety-four in Lolspeak.

Thus, the data results show that the number of g-clippings per 1,000 words is not only one and a half time bigger in Lolcats in comparison to textese, but at the same time the number of g-clippings per 1,000 –ing forms is also almost twice bigger in Lolspeak (163.0434 g-clippings per 1,000 –ing forms) than in texting (83.3333 g-clippings per 1,000 –ing forms).

It seems that g-clippings are more prevalent in the Lolcats data owing to the fact they are perceived as funnier, which is compatible with the purpose of Lolspeak. Specifically, they are not used in Lolcats as a mere communication shortcut, as is the case with text messages, but only for humour. It seems that these clippings provide a sense of informality, illiteracy and childishness, and it might be assumed they would be more

prevalent in Lolcats data for this reason. Cheezpeeps deliberately try to make a cat sound like a baby (Rosen 2010: 2), someone who does not know English well (Ferguson 1968: 5 in Lefler 2011: 2) and thereby provide a sense of uneducatedness (Frehner 2008: 99). In contrast, it seems that in texting data g-clippings are used instead to shorten communication by reducing the number of characters.

The data clearly show that g-clippings are used in Lolcats for humour only. Illustrating this, seven examples of g-clippings in cat macros data include an apostrophe at the end, making the number of characters of a word the same as in the original spelling, as is illustrated by the figures below:
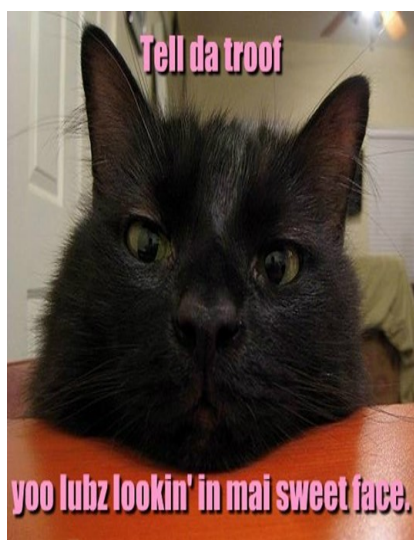
You Got Me!   **Wanna be Friends, er What?**

Figure 4 (LC 122) and Figure 5 (LC 184) G-clippings in Lolcats

The g-clippings *lookin'* in fig. 4 and *thinkin'* in fig. 5 have an apostrophe at the end. Although the letter <g> is omitted, an extra apostrophe is added, with the result that the number of characters remains the same. This clearly shows that these spelling changes are not applied to shorten a word. However, it is unclear why this extra apostrophe is added. Perhaps it is for mere fun. In fig. 5 apart from the apostrophe in *thinkin',* it is also used instead of the letter <a> in '*bout* (about), again preserving the number of characters. A similar case of a spelling change in which an extra apostrophe was added was discussed previously in the case of contractions. Specifically, the example *s'posed* (supposed, LC 145) was analysed. However, the number of characters in *s'posed* is reduced by one in comparison to the SE spelling. This is because the letter <p> is omitted in this example.

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In the case of text messages, g-clippings might be used to shorten a word, as seen here:

(13) I iz goin to bed yh coz I iz not feelin well. U slp 2 kkkk (TM 78)

(14) Y u lyk to punch me I dusnt do anythin to u. Now wt shud I do? (TM 243)

However, it is unclear that the g-clippings in the above messages are used to shorten words due to the fact that the messages also contain a few humourous non-efficient spelling changes such as *dusnt* and *iz.*

Also, in the texting data only one example was found in which the apostrophe was added: *makin'* (making) (TM 71). Adding apostrophes is not common in texting, because "apostrophes are more difficult to type than any other letter of the alphabet" (Frehner 2008: 99). Furthermore, adding an extra apostrophe increases the number of characters in a word.

In addition to all this, it is important to stress that g-clippings are coded as a morphological spelling change (they can be instances of omitted letters) and as a phonological segmental spelling change: phonetic spelling (Frehner 2008: 99, Cutler 1986: 201). More specifically, they might be phonetic spellings of some nonstandard English dialects, e.g., in AAVE (Rickford 1999: 4). In nonstandard English dialects the letter <n> in <ing> is pronounced as normal /n/ (ibid). In Standard English, however, <n> in *ing* is pronounced as /ŋ/ (ibid). Therefore, *singin* (singing) pronounced as /sɪŋɪn/ for instance, might be a phonetic spelling of nonstandard English, but it is not a phonetic spelling of GA (General American) or RP (Received Pronounciation) (ibid).

However, without detailed sociolinguistic information about the texters and Cheezpeeps, it seems, it is difficult to identify what type of spelling change g-clipping is: morphological or phonological. For this reason g-clippings are classified as both omitted letters: g-clippings and as g-clipping as a phonetic spelling.

Apart from g-clippings, other examples of final letter omissions were observed. Specifically, the examples in which the final letters <t> and <d> of a word are omitted were analyzed, e.g., *nex weeken* (next weekend) and *jus* (just) (Frehner 2008: 99). Similarly, as in the case of g-clippings, t-clippings and d-clippings are coded as a single spelling change that might be an instance of letter omission (morphological spelling change) (Frehner 2008:99). However, at the same time, it might also be a phonetic

spelling for spellers who speak some nonstandard English dialect (e.g., AAVE) in which final <d> and <t> are not pronounced (Rickford 1999: 4). However, again without sufficient demographic information regarding the spellers, these clippings are coded as both instances of letter omissions and as phonetic spellings.

Concerning the textese data, t-clippings and d-clippings are not present in textese at all, while 2.0543 instances of t-clippings per 1,000 words and 0.9130 occurrences of d-clippings per 1,000 words were detected in Lolspeak's corpus. For instance, the <t> was omitted in *jus* (just) and the <d> was omitted in *an* (and) (see Fig. 6, Fig. 7 below):
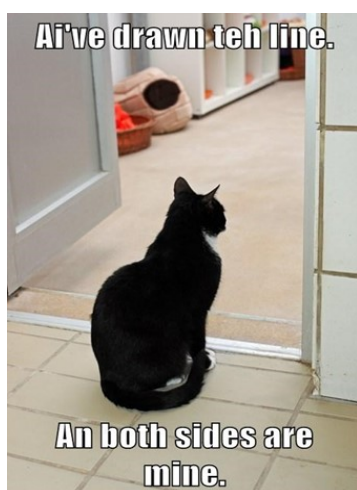
Don't Make Me Cross!   **Jus wun ov dose dayz**

Figure 6 (LC 15) and Figure 7 (LC 262) D/t-clippings in Lolcats

Similarly to the case of g-clippings, t and d-clippings are a marker of uneducatedness (Frehner 2008: 99). This might be the reason they appear in Lolcats data, giving it a sense of childishness and cuteness.

6.2. Symbolic categories: typographic symbols, emoticons

In the preceding subsections, the morphological spelling changes were examined. Now, the symbolic spelling changes will be taken into account.

The term symbol refers to "[g]raphemes used for words, actions or emotions" (De Jonge & Kemp 2012: 57). Typographic symbols along with emoticons are classified as symbols

(Thurlow 2003). Table 8 illustrates the types and numbers of occurrences of symbolic spelling changes:

Table 8 Overview of the types and numbers of occurrences of symbolic spelling changes

	SMS	Lolcat
Symbol-emoticon:	10.8484 ‰ (39)	0.2283 ‰ (1)
Symbol-typographic symbol:	5.8414 ‰ (21)	0.2283 ‰ (1)
Total number of occurences	16.6898 ‰ (60)	0.4565 ‰ (2)

The data results in Table 8 clearly show that symbolic spelling changes are prevalent in texting accounting for sixty instances (16.6898 instances per 1,000 words) and barely appear in Lolspeak, accounting for two instances only (0.4565 instances per 1,000 words). The most common symbolic spelling changes in texting are emoticons (thirty-nine instances), followed by typographic symbols (twenty-one instances).

An emoticon (also known as a smiley face) is "[a] sequential combination of keyboard characters designed to convey the emotion associated with a particular facial expression" (Crystal 2004: 39). The simplest emoticons represent positive and negative attitudes, e.g., :-) and :-(, respectively (ibid). They are also referred to as pictograms (pictographs) in which pictures or visual shapes refer to concepts or objects (Crystal 2008: 38).

Although hundreds of different emoticons have been created, the literature reports say that only very few of them appear in Textspeak (Crystal 2008: 38, 39). This is confirmed by the data results where of thirty nine emoticons found in texting, the most frequent ones are only happy smileys faces :) (Crystal 2004: 121) (eighteen instances), very happy smileys faces xD, :D (Crystal 2004: 122) (four instances), and unhappy smileys faces :((Crystal 2004: 121) (nine instances) , as shown in the text messages:

(15) they were thorough. as usual :) (TM 106)

(16) Okidoki :) let's do this? ;D i'll call you when my class is over :) (TM 130)

(17) That's a good deal! I would want to but Curtis says no :((TM 156)

(18) Trueeeee... I've still got so many episodes to catch up on :((TM 198)

As seen in these examples, all the emoticons appear at the very end of these messages.

In contrast to what was found in texting, only one emoticon was detected in Lolcats, as shown in Figure 8:

Mama Loves You

Figure 8 (LC 218) Emoticon in Lolspeak

The shape of the emoticon <3 resembles a heart and is used to express love and affection (*Urban Dictionary* "<3"). It appears here for the humorous cute effect in the picture of a mother cat next to its small kitten. Their heads together resemble the shape of a heart, which is illustrated by the symbol <3. This emoticon is also used in combination with another symbol ~ that usually follows a word in order to make it longer, and it can additionally serve the function of exclamation points (*Urban Dictionary* "~").

It might be assumed that the use of this emoticon in Lolcats is probably an influence of Netspeak on Lolspeak. As has been already noted, people who post Lolcats spend substantial time sitting at their computers (Rosen 2010: 5) and it might be expected they are familar with other Internet varieties such as chatrooms, instant messaging or emails (Herring 2001: 612). For this reason, it is surprising that only one emoticon was found in Lolcats.

Lack of emoticons in Lolspeak might be explained by the fact that they can distract attention from the cat macro. Furthermore, the expression of a cat is visually represented in its picture. For this reasons emoticons are not necessary in Lolspeak. In texting, on the contrary, they substitute for lack of prosody and body language (Frehner 2008: 121,122).

Apart from emoticons, typographic symbols are also coded as symbolic spelling changes. These are used to "represent words, parts of words, or even–as in the case of *x* and *z*– noises associated with actions" (Crystal 2008: 37). For instance, *x* denotes the action of kissing, @ denotes *at* (ibid) and additional typographic symbols used in combination occur, such as *zzz* (sleeping) and *xxx* (kisses) (Crystal 2008: 38).

As shown in Table 8, similarly to the emoticons, the number of typographic symbols is considerably higher in texting (twenty-one instances) than in Lolcats (only one instance). In terms of occurrences per 1,000 words, 5.8414 typographic symbols are found in texting, whereas only 0.2283 typographic symbols were identified in Lolspeak.

It appears that this result makes sense, given the fact that it is difficult to 'transcribe' some noises in actions, such as kissing or sleeping, in a communication. Typographic symbols are used in texting specifically to achieve that (Crystal 2008: 38) and at the same time they often reduce the number of characters in a message, e.g., @ instead of at (ibid). In Lolspeak, it is not required, as the cats and their actions are depicted in the image macros (Lefler 2011: 1).

Concerning the actual data, nineteen typographic symbols out of twenty one in texting were a single or multiple *x* representing an action of kissing, one was @ (at, TM 82) and one was & (and). Sending kisses at the end of a message in the form of multiple *x's* is characteristic of Textspeak, it seems, as it is the way people show affection to each other in a mutual communication. As captions in Lolcats are non-dialogic (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 101) and are not meant to communicate between people (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98, 101) such typographic symbols are not necessary.

Some examples of the typographic symbols in text messages are illustrated here:

(19) Hello, just going to get car. If you're back before me could you get washing out please? I love you! E x x (TM 54)

(20) It's ok, cake's in the oven n I'm making the frosting. Will put it together after we open. Get limes n chives @market. Syl (TM 82)

(21) Poor you - do you need me to bring you anything? Go back to sleep and keep drinking lots xx (TM 210)

In Lolcats, typographic symbols almost do not appear with only one example *zzzzzzzzz* referring to an action of sleeping, as seen in the Lolcat below:

Figure 9 (LC 129) Typographic symbol in Lolcats

The *zzzzzzzzz* describes the snoring of sleeping. The humour resides in the fact that the cat is supposed to be standing guard, but is actually falling asleep.

6.3. Phonological suprasegmental categories: emulated prosody

What is interesting, apart from the morphological and symbolic spelling changes in the two outputs, is that some of the spelling changes might also be phonological involving suprasegmental level (Bergs 2003: 60). Specifically, such spelling changes are employed to emulate prosody (ibid).

Layout and format of text messages does not allow texters to use italics, underline words or use coloured or bold letters (Frehner 2008:103). In the Lolcats data, however, some words in the thesis data, can be used in different colours other than black, but they lack the functions of underlining or italicizing. Owing to the above-mentioned reasons, graphological means are used "'to emulate suprasegmental phonological features" for stress and emphasis (Bergs 2003: 60). They include words written in asterisks, as well as letter and word reduplications (Frehner 2008: 103). Importantly, these graphological means had already existed in some Internet outputs, for example in emails or chatrooms, before the emergence of Lolspeak (ibid). These graphological means and the number of their occurrences are provided in Table 9:

Table 9 Overview of types and number of phonological suprasegmental spelling changes

Emulated prosody:	SMS	Lolcat
letter reduplication	7.2323 ‰ (26)	2.5108 ‰ (11)
word reduplication	5.0069 ‰ (18)	1.1413 ‰ (5)
word written in asterisks	0.8345 ‰ (3)	0.6848 ‰ (3)
total number	13.0737 ‰ (47)	4.3369 ‰ (19)

Table 9 shows that the spelling changes emulating prosody are three times more common in SMS language (13.0737 occurrences per 1,000 words) than in Lolspeak (4.3369 occurrences per 1,000 words). Among these three phonological suprasegmental spelling changes, letter reduplication is most prevalent in the two outputs. However, it is almost three times more common in text messages (7.2323 instances per 1,000 words) in comparison to Lolcats (2.5108 instances per 1,000 words). The difference between the outputs is even greater when word reduplication is concerned, being almost four and one half times more frequent in texting (5.0069 occurrences per 1,000 words) than Lolspeak (1.1413 occurrences per 1,000 words). The smallest difference between the two outputs is in terms of the category emulated prosody: word written in asterisks. Specifically, the number of occurrences of a word written in asterisks, accounts for 0.8345 in texting and 0.6848 in Lolcats (three examples of a word written in asterisks were found in each corpus).

On the whole, as the data suggest, phonological suprasegmental spelling changes emulating prosody are more prevalent in texting for various reasons. First, Textspeak is a written language complementing or substituting for telephone calls (Frehner 2008: 180). The drawback of the written form is the fact that it lacks prosody, e.g., intonation, rhythm or tone of voice (Crystal 2011: 19). For this reason, Textspeak frequently uses spellings reflecting orality (Herring 2001: 617 in Frehner 2008: 103) such as word and letter reduplications (Frehner 2008: 103). Such spelling changes "rather than reflecting impoverished or simplified communication, demonstrate the ability of users to adapt the computer medium to their expressive needs" (Herring 2001: 617 in Frehner 2008: 103).

In Lolspeak, in contrast, phonological suprasegmental spelling changes emulating prosody are less common, because they are not required. It is because Lolcats are not aimed at efficient communication but at entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). Emulated prosody appears to be typically a texting feature used to bring some lacking orality to written messages (Frehner 2008: 103; Herring 2001: 617 in Frehner 2008: 103). However, it is also important to note that emulated prosody might also be used for a humorous purpose in texting.

6.3.1. Emulated prosody: word reduplication

Concerning the category emulated prosody: word reduplication, as has been mentioned previously, the SMS corpus contains almost four and a half time more word reduplications than the Lolspeak corpus. Among eighteen such spelling changes detected in text messages, the majority are of an onomatopoeic nature. The reason for the high frequency of onomatopoeic words in a form of word reduplications in text messages is the fact that texting lacks "auditory information such as [...] laughter and other nonlanguage sounds" (Herring 2001: 617 in Frehner 2008: 103). For this reason these spelling changes appear in texting. To illustrate this, the SMS data include thirteen word reduplications of an interjection of onomatopoeic nature: haha (e.g., TM 143) (Wiktionary 2015 "Ha ha"). This interjection imitates the sound of laughter (ibid). It seems that it is natural for SMS language to include such onomatopoeic interjections, as people often laugh in spoken conversation. Furthermore, two occurrences of word reduplication of onomatopieic words, such as *grumble grumble* (TM 195) and *vroooom vroooom* (TM 76) were found in texting. Some examples of such word reduplications used for emulated prosody occurring in the texting data are illustrated below:

(22) hahahaha no worries. Your hair looks gorgeous (TM 143)

(23) Grumble grumble gurgle roar! (TM 195)

(24) Haha, no worries! Time is wobbly wobbly, right (: (TM 176)

In Lolcats, in contrast, repetition of some words, e.g., verbs, is used for emphasis and to express "the iterativity of the action" (Fiorentini 2013: 103) as in "[d]ey lublublubs u foarebber" ("They love you forever") (ibid). In addition, word reduplication is characteristic for pidgin languages, and it is sometimes connoted with baby talk in some European languages (Holm 2000: 121 cited in Fiorentini 2013: 103). For this reason, it

might be assumed that word reduplications appear in Lolcats data, because they resemble baby talk. However, the data results show that word reduplications are not as popular in Lolcats, accounting for there being only five examples: *blah blah*, two instances of *tuna tuna tuna*, and *[y]eh yeh kiss kiss* as seen in the cat macros:

Think Happy Thoughts...Tuna, Tuna, Tuna   **It's Just so Much Blah Blah!**

Figure 10 (LC 50) and figure 11 (LC 197) Emulated prosody: word reduplication in Lolcats

Goggie Gits Awl Gud Fuds   **Shiny Trumps Kiss Kisses!**

Figure 12 (LC 242) and figure 13 (LC 191) Emulated prosody: word reduplication in Lolcats

6.3.2. Emulated prosody: letter reduplication

Regarding the category emulated prosody: letter reduplication, as has been already observed, Textspeak has almost three times more letter reduplications in comparison to Lolcats. The reduplicated letter, usually a vowel, strengthens the meaning of the word, as is seen in the following text message:

 (25) It was tasty but hoooooot xD (TM 29)

The vowel <o> in *hoooooot* is reduplicated six times to emphasize the word *hot* reenforcing its meaning in the context of the above text message.

According to Thurlow (Thurlow 2002 "Generation Txt" cited in Frehner 2008: 58) and Chiad (2008: 6) letter reduplications emulating prosody in Textspeak tend to occur in onomatopoeic words and in interjections. The data analysis confirms Thurlow's (Thurlow 2002 "Generation Txt" in Frehner 2008: 58) and Chiad's (2008: 6) claims. Specifically, letter reduplication to emulate prosody indeed appears in onomatopeic words and interjections in texting (including one interjection of an onomatopoeic nature: *hahaaa*, TM 51) (Wiktionary "Ha ha"). The remaining examples that do not belong to onomatopoeic words and interjections are classified as *other*. All of these instances are listed in Table 10:

Table 10 Emulated prosody: letter reduplication in Textspeak and Lolspeak

	Onomatopoeic words	Interjection/onomatopoeic	Interjection	Other
Textspeak	*baaaaang* (TM 232), vroooom vroooom iiiiiiiiiikkkk (TM 76) **1.3908 ‰ (5)**	hahaaa (TM 51) **0.2782 ‰ (1)**	aaah (TM 278), ahhh (TM 47), aiyaaaaah (TM 26), naaah (TM 279), ohhhhh (TM 230), oooh (TM 297), yeaaaaaah (TM 230) **1.9471 ‰ (7)**	studyyyyy (TM 26), boiiii (TM 215), goooo (TM 179), hoooooot (TM 29), knooow (TM 233), laate (TM 64), soo(TM 89), sooo (TM 3), sooo (TM 152), SOOO (TM 169), trueeeee (TM 198), wanttttttt (TM

				67), sheeeeeeeeed (TM 201) **3.6161 ‰ (13)**
Lolspeak	0	0	ooooohhh (LC 260) **0.2283 ‰ (1)**	Haiii (LC 94), NOOOOO (LC 157), NOOOOO (LC 254), N-o-o-o-o-o-o (LC 192), Purrrrchase (LC 32), Paaaass, Paaaass (LC 129) **2.0543 ‰ (9)**

The data in the table above indicate that letter reduplications emulating prosody in onomatopoeic spellings and in interjections are characteristic for Textspeak.

However, in Lolcats only one instance of a letter reduplication in an interjection was found: ooooohhh (LC 260), and no letter reduplications in onomatopeic words were detected.

 Some examples of letter reduplications to emulate prosody in textese are listed below:

(26) Well, I could imagine liking rugby.. But formula 1? It's always the same xD vroooom vroooom iiiiiiiiiikkkk *crash* (TM 76)

(27) Ohhhhh yeaaaaaaah, sorry :((TM 230)

Text message 26 contains four spelling changes that are letter reduplications for emulated prosody (reduplication of the letters: <o>, <o>, <i> and <k>) in onomatopoeic words imitating the sound of a car engine, while text message 27 contains two spelling changes that are letter reduplications in interjections.

Regarding Lolcats data, in contrast, letter reduplications are less popular than in texting. If they appear, they are often used for mere fun, as illustrated by the pun *[p]urrrrchase* in Figure 14:

Confirm Your Purrrrchase

Figure 14 (LC 32) Emulated prosody: letter reduplication in Lolcats

 The example *[p]urrrchase* is comprised of an onomatopeic word *purr* referring to the sounds a cat makes (Wikipedia 2015 "Purr"). The word *purr* is pronounced as /pɝː/ (GA) and *purchase* is pronounced as /pɝːtʃəs/(GA)(*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Such examples, where *purr* is "used in substitution of similar-sounding segments" are characteristic of Lolspeak (Fiorentini 2013: 98).

6.3.3. Emulated prosody: word in asterisks

Apart from letter and word reduplications, another phonological suprasegmental spelling change employed to emulate prosody is to write a word in asterisks. Asterisks at word boundaries draw attention to a word (Frehner 2008: 103).

The texting and Lolspeak data show that most words written in asterisks are onomatopoeic, as seen in the following examples in texting:

(28) Well, I could imagine liking rugby.. But formula 1? It's always the same xD vroooom vroooom iiiiiiiiiikkkk *crash* (TM 76)

(29) *baaaaang* (TM 232)

The word *baaaaang* includes two spelling changes emulating prosody: a word written in asterisks and a letter reduplication for extra emphasis.

The third example in textese is a whole phrase written in asterisks, as follows:

(30) *belts out song lyrics like a dork* I CAN FEEL IT COMING IN THE AIR TONIGHT. HOLD ON (TM 281).

Similarly, in Lolspeak three onomatopoiec words are put in asterisks, as shown in the following cat macros:

Maybe it was the Delivery... Nope

Figure 15 (LC 24) Emulated prosody: word written in asterisks in Lolcats

Why Cats Never Get Caught Being Bad   **That Phrase Seems Vaguely Familiar**
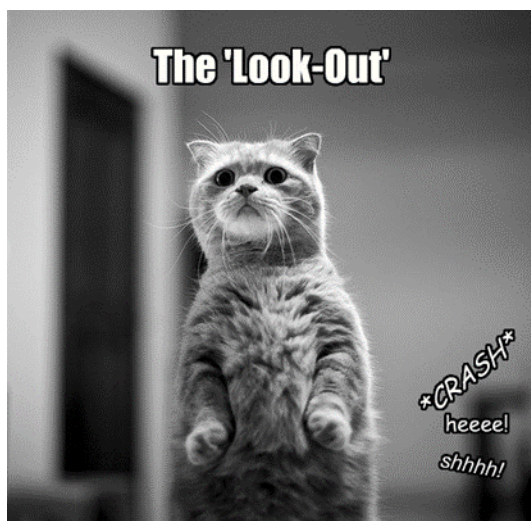
Figure 16 (LC 205) and figure 17 (LC 276) Emulated prosody: word written in asterisks in Lolcats

In Figure 15, an onomatopiec word *sigh* is stressed to emphasize an act of sighing by the cat, who tries to say something funny receiving without achieving a satisfying effect. The word *CHEEZ*GURGLE** in Fig. 17 is an interesting example. This nonstandard word was created through the proces of word-formation. It was coined from the popular Lolspeak word *cheezburger* (cheeseburger). Instead of *burger*, the *gurgle* appeared. The gurgle was put in asterisks to make it onomatopoeic, reffering to the sound of a cat's throat gurgling with cheese.

6.4. Phonological segmental categories: homophones

The phonological suprasegmental spelling changes emulating prosody have already been analysed. Now, phonological segmental spelling changes: homophones will be considered (Cutler 1986: 201). In terms of different types of homophones, single number homophones, single letter homophones (De Jonge & Kemp 2012: 57) and combined number/letter homophones (De Jonge & Kemp 2012: 57) are distinguished, as shown in the Table 11:

Table 11 Types and numbers of homophones in textese and Lolcats

	SMS	Lolcat
Single letter homophone:	5.2851 ‰ (19)	1.8261 ‰ (8)
Single number homophone	0.2782 ‰ (1)	1.5978 ‰ (7)
Combined number/letter homophone:	0.5563 ‰ (2)	0 ‰ (0)
Total number of occurrences:	6.1196 ‰ (22)	3.4239 ‰ (15)

The first two spelling changes listed in the table above are "[s]ingle letters or numbers used to represent words" (De Jonge & Kemp 2012: 57), as in 2 (to, TM 78) or u (you, TM 173). Combined number/letter homophones, on the other hand, are "[n]umber/letter names combined to represent words/phonemes"(ibid) as in w8 (wait) or NE1 (anyone) (ibid).

According to many media representations, some language features (e.g. homophones) are frequent in text messaging (Shortis 2007: 22; Crystal 2008: 22; Thurlow 2003). However, according to some published studies of naturalistic SMS messages, they are not as frequent as one would expect (ibid). This statement appears to be confirmed by the thesis data results. More specifically, only 6.1196 homophones occur per 1,000 words in a three hundred text message corpus. The number of homophones in the Lolcats corpus is even smaller, amounting to 3.4239 homophones per 1,000 words. It seems that this result is not surprising, however, as messages with too many homophones would be unintelligible. In addition, as has been discussed already, the data results also confirm this statement in the case of morphological spelling changes.

In addition, it might be assumed that homophones are more prevalent in texting than Lolcats because they are used more pragmatically in SMS language. In particular, they reduce the number of characters in a word (Baron 2008: 154), thereby saving time and

space (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22). However, in Lolspeak they are used for pure fun. The cats appear not to find homophones particularly funny, because they are not used very frequently in the data. For instance, the data results show cats preferring to spell *you* as *yoo* (twelve instances) (e.g. in LC 192) instead of *u* (seven instances) (e.g. in LC 111). *Yoo* seems to be funnier than *u*.

Interestingly, while looking at different types of homophones in the data, it is interesting to notice that texting has more letter homophones (5.285 occurrences per 1,000 words) than Lolspeak (1.8261 occurrences per 1,000 words).

Nineteen examples of letter homophones are identified in the SMS corpus but only eight in the Lolspeak corpus. Among these examples, thirteen homophones are *u* (you)(e.g., TM 173), five are *r* (are) (e.g., TM 173) and one is Y (why) in the SMS data, while one is *r (are)* (LC 63) and seven are *u* (you) (e.g., in LC 111) in Lolcats. The data results show that the homophone *u* is the most prevalent homophone in the two outputs.

As far as the number homophones is concerned, only 0.2782 number homophones occur per 1,000 words in texting, whereas 1.5978 number homophones appear per 1,000 words in Lolcats.

There were only two examples of number homophones found in texting (two instances of 2 standing for 'too') and seven examples of number homophones investigated in Lolcats (LC 157, 160 , 160, 160, 160, 160, 162). All the number homophones in Lolcats are 2 standing for either *to* or *too* in the data. This result is surprising, as it could be expected that Textspeak uses more number homophones owing to the fact they comprise one character only- a number instead of typing an entire word. One possible explanation might be that in order to type a numeral in a mobile phone, you need to press several keys (Frehner 2008: 102). It might be assumed that this prevents texters from using number homophones. In Lolspeak, in contrast, typing numbers on a computer keyboard requires pressing only one keyboard button.

Concerning the third type of homophone: combined number/letter homophone, two examples of this category were found in texting, whereas they do not occur at all in Lolspeak. This type of homophone that appears twice in textese is *2zday* (Tuesday, TM 146, 147). It is comprised of a number homophone 2 (two) and the letters <zday>. It reduces the number of characters by two in this nonstandard word. Furthermore, two (2)

is pronounced as /tuː/ (GA) which matches the pronunciation of Tuesday /tuːzdi/ (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

Examples of homophones in the actual text messages are presented below:

(31) I iz goin to bed yh coz I iz not feelin well. U slp 2 kkkk (TM 78)

(32) hav a safe 2zday (TM 147)

(33) Where r u? (TM 39)

In text messages 31-33, the homophones are used in a message along with other nonstandard words with reduced numbers of characters. For instance, in text message 31 they are used along with *goin* (going), *coz* (because) or *slp* (sleep). These messages show that the purpose of homophones is to make communication shorter in SMS language.

While some homophones in the Lolcats are illustrated here:

Sum May Need Glasses...   **Usually When the Vacuum Comes Out**
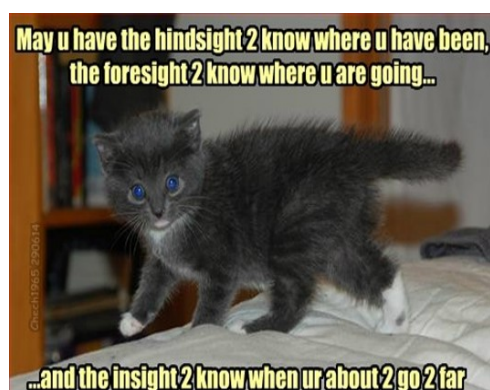
Figure 18 (LC 160) and figure 19 (LC 162) Homophones in Lolcats

In Figure 18 the homophones are overused for humour rather than to decrease the number of characters in a message. Specifically, they appear multiple times in the Lolcat: the homophone *u* occurs three times, whereas the homophone *2* occurs five times.

6.5. Phonological segmental categories: phonetic spellings

In this section, a closer look will be taken at phonological segmental spelling changes (Cutler 1986: 201): phonetic spellings.

Phonetic spelling is "[a] spelling of a word from sound" (Lyddy et al. 2013: 551), e.g., *cum* (come), *luk* (look), *nite* (night) (ibid), *elp* (help), *wiv* (with) and *anuva* (another) (Plester et al. 2009: 151). It might be assumed that phonetic spelling is a spelling of how people who are non-linguists think a word is pronounced, as will be illustrated by some examples later in this thesis.

All the types and numbers of occurrences of selected phonetic spellings are listed in Table 12:

Table 12 Phonetic spellings in Lolspeak and Textspeak

	Lolspeak	Textspeak
<th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE) → <d>	12.0978 ‰ (53)	0 ‰ (0)
<th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <f>	3.4239 ‰ (15)	0 ‰ (0)
th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <t>	0.6848 ‰ (3)	0 ‰ (0)
<th> (pronouncedas /ð/ in SE) → <v>	0 ‰ (0)	0.2782 ‰ (1)
z-spelling	10.9564 ‰ (48)	3.3379 ‰ (12)
/ʌ/ → <u>	3.1956 ‰ (14)	0.8345 ‰ (3)
/ə/ → <u>	3.1956 ‰ (14)	0.2782 ‰ (1)
/ɜː/ → <u> /ɝː/ → <u>	1.1413 ‰ (5)	0.2782 ‰ (1)
Diphthong phonetically spelt	11.1847 ‰ (49)	0.8345 ‰ (3)

G-clipping as a phonetic spelling	3.4239 ‰ (15)	2.2253 ‰ (8)
T-clipping as a phonetic spelling	2.0543 ‰ (9)	0 ‰ (0)
D-clipping as a phonetic spelling	0.9130 ‰ (4)	0 ‰ (0)
/i:/ → <ee>	2.2826 ‰ (10)	0 ‰ (0)
/u:/ → <oo>	8.2173 ‰ (36)	0 ‰ (0)
Total number of occurrences	62.7711 ‰ (275)	8.0668 ‰ (29)

As Table 12 shows, the number of phonetic spellings is nearly eight times higher in Lolspeak (62.7711 instances of phonetic spellings per 1,000 words) in comparison to textese (8.0668 instances of phonetic spellings per 1,000 words). The data results reveal that the cats appear to be familiar with sounds and attempt to spell words in a manner that reflects pronunciation more precisely than their original SE spellings.

The most prevalent phonetic spellings in Lolspeak are: <th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") spelt as <d> (53 examples), followed by z-spelling (48 examples), diphthong phonetically spelt (49 examples) (this category will be analysed separately in the section on diphthongs) and the letters <oo> representing the sound /u:/ (36 examples). Furthermore, the only phonetic spellings that are distinctive only for Lolspeak (are not present in the texting data at all) are <ee> and <oo> representing the long vowels /i:/ and /u:/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"), d/t-clippings as phonetic spellings and <th> spelt as <d>, <f> and <t>. In texting data, on the other hand, the most common phonetic spellings are z-spellings (twelve examples) and g-clippings treated as phonetic spellings (eight examples).

Interestingly, many categories provided in Table 12 existed in Netspeak (e.g., in emails or chatrooms) and in informal writing before appearance of Lolspeak or Textspeak (Crystal 2008: 37). As the data will show, many of these already existing phonetic spellings are creatively used, especially in Lolcats.

Each category from Table 12 will be discussed separately in the upcoming subsubsections, with the exception of the category diphthong phonetically spelt.[2]

6.5.1. Nonstandard th-spellings

The most prevalent spelling change in the entire data, nonstandard th-spellings (seventy-one occurrences of <th> spelt as <d>, <f> and <t> in Lolcats) are presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Nonstandard th-spellings in Lolspeak and Textspeak

<th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) spelt as <d>
(Frehner 2008:105, *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics")
Th-fronting:
<th> (representing the sound /ð/in SE) spelt as <v>[3]
<th> (representing the sound /θ/ in SE) spelt as <f>
(Frehner 2008: 105, 108)
<th> (representing the sound /θ/in SE) spelt as <t>
("How to speak lolcat"[4], *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics")

The thesis data results in regard to nonstandard th-spellings in the table above are really interesting. According to Urban Dictionary, for instance, the nonstandard th-spelling in the word "dat" is "a short way of saying 'that' mainly used in text messages" (*Urban Dictionary.*"Dat"). For this reason, it might be expected that textese would include some of them, owing to the fact that they reduce the number of characters in a word, shortening communication. In addition, in Frehner's (Frehner 2008: 104) study of private English text messages, <th> spelt as <d> is the most prevalent phonetic spelling in the data (ibid).

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[2] This category will be analysed not under the section-phonological segmental spelling changes: phonetic spelling, but in the section about nonstandard diphthong spellings.

[3] Only one occurrence of nonstandard th-spelling was identified in texting: <th> spelt as <v>.

[4] "How to speak Lolcat" is a website whose purpose is to provide information on how to write a proper Lolcat. It is helpful in understanding the syntax and grammar of Lolspeak (LOLCat Bible Translation Project 2011 "How to speak lolcat"). This online Lolspeak guide is a part of the "Lolcat Bible Translation project – a wiki-based website set up in July 2007 by Martin Grondin, where editors aim to parody the entire Bible in LOLspeak" (Wikipedia 2015 "LOLCat Bible Translation Project").

However, in the thesis data nonstandard th-spellings do not appear in texting at all, with the only one exception. Only one instance of this spelling change was found, in which <th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) is spelt as <v> in a spoken word *bruv* (brother) in the context of the text message:

(34) You seriously need a dictionary *bruv* i aint google yano (TM 180).

Bruv is "[a] word used mainly by South Londoners. It's the shorter version of 'bruvva' which is a slang variation of 'brother'" (*Urban Dictionary."*Bruv"). This information is confirmed with the place of origin and residence of the text message's author. This person is from London, England (see questionnaire nr 46).

Nonstandard th-spellings might be used as phonetic spellings of some nonstandard English dialects the texters speak (Rickford 1999: 4). For instance, <th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) spelt as /d/ is characteristic for AAVE and Cockney (Rickford 1999:4; Frehner 2008: 108; *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). For this reason, it might be assumed that one of the possible reasons that the texting data is scarce in nonstandard th-spellings is the fact that they create a sense of being uneducated (*Urban Dictionary."*Da").

However, the majority of the texters who took part in this study, as has already been noted, are students with an educated background, the majority of them studying languages or linguistics. This is a possible explanation of the fact that the text messages include only one nonstandard th-spelling. In Lolcats data, in contrast, similarly to the case of g-clippings, d-clippings and t-clippings which were more prevalent in Lolspeak in comparison to Textspeak, non-standard th-spellings are deliberately used to make a cat sound like a baby (Rosen 2010: 2). For this reason, it seems, in the data the nonstandard th-spellings are used to present a sense of uneducatedness. Although a majority of Cheezpeeps, as the data show, are educated, they deliberately use these spelling changes to make a cat sound uneducated. This, it appears, contributes to the humorous effect of Lolspeak, in accordance with its purpose.

To understand the role of nonstandard th-spellings in Lolspeak, it is worthwhile to include the claims of Mrázová, a Czech student of English who wrote a BA paper about spelling and phonetics in Lolcats. According to her (2013: 27), in Lolspeak "the voiced consonant /ð/ has been replaced by also voiced /d/ which is easier to pronounce" (ibid). Similarly "[a] voiceless consonant /θ/ has been replaced by also voiceless /f/ to ease

pronunciation" (ibid). However, it seems that Mrázová as a Czech student of English is projecting her own bias into this. It is highly unlikely, it seems, that the letters <d> and <f> are used in Lolspeak to make pronunciation of words easier (Mrázová 2013: 27).

It is true that the th-sounds in English are not present in many languages spoken by English learners who try to replace these sounds with /d/, /f/ or /t/ (Mrázová 2013: 15). However, it appears rather improbable that English learners or immigrants post the Lolcats. It is rather more likely that most Cheezpeeps, as the data suggest, are native speakers of English well acquainted with the English language and able to play with it in an effective manner (cf. Fiorentini 2013: 95). For this reason, it rather seems that they deliberately use nonstandard th-spellings in Lolspeak to imitate the pronunciation of the foreigner talk that Lolcats are often compared to (Ferguson 1968: 5 in Lefler 2011: 2).

It is also possible that nonstandard th-spellings, apart from reflecting the pronunciation of foreigner talk, also mirror the pronunciation of baby talk in Lolspeak. More specifically, English-speaking children do not master the pronunciation of th-sounds before at least "the age of five" (Wikipedia 2015 " Pronunciation of English th"). Before reaching this age, they tend to replace the sounds /ð/and /θ/ with /d/ and /f/, respectively (ibid).

Additionally, as Lolspeak's main objective is to have fun with the language (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98) and, as the data indicate, many Cheezpeeps come from the USA, it might be that some nonstandard th-spellings are used deliberately as phonetic spellings of some low prestige dialects, e.g. Brooklyn, New York English (Wikipedia 2015 "New York City English"). It seems that this dialect is perceived as humorous and funny by some speakers. Perhaps, some nonstandard th-spellings in Lolspeak mirror the pronunciation of some low-prestige dialects that people tend to laugh at.

Concerning the actual Lolcats data, the most prevalent nonstandard th-spelling change is the writing of <th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) (Frehner 2008: 105) as <d>. This spelling change tends to be used with a high frequency in Lolspeak, certainly deliberately for humour. Among fifty three spelling changes where <th> is spelt as <d>, thirteen were the spellings of the word *the* as *da* (e.g. in LC 54, 71 and 98) and two as *de* (LC 90, LC 90). Another data examples are the word *this* spelt as *dis* (thirteen occurrences) (e.g. in LC 76, 92, 107) and the word *that* spelt as *dat* (eleven occurrences) (e.g. in LC 20, 94, 97). In addition, an interesting example is the spelling of the word *other* as *udder* (LC 207), where <th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE)(*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") is spelt as <d>. The

letter <d> in *udder* is reduplicated for some unknown reason. Perhaps, it is reduplicated in order not to change the number of characters in a nonstandard word in comparison to the original spelling.

In Figure 20 below, five nonstandard th-spellings can be detected, namely, *that* spelt as *dat* (three occurrences), *this* is spelt as *dis* (one occurrence) and *mouth* is spelt as *mouf* (one occurrence). In only one image macro, nonstandard th-spellings occur several times. This shows that this spelling change is definitely used for fun.

Regarding /th/ spelt as /f/, it is definitely less frequent than /th/ spelt as /d/, accounting for fifteen occurrences in the data. For instance, the word *with* (GA) is written as *wif* (two instances, LC 93, 111), mouth as *mouf* (LC 91) and think as *fink* (LC 283). The example *free (three)* (LC 105) is also of interest and occurs in Figure 21 below.

Am Bery Cleber Me

Figure 20 (LC 91) and figure 21 (LC 105) Nonstandard th-spellings in Lolcats

Apart from spelling the letters <th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) as <f>, in three Lolcat examples <th> (also pronounced as /θ/ in SE) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") is written as <t> as found in *ting* (thing), *tree* (three, LC 43) and *Tundurstarms* (thunderstorms, LC 231) in Figure 22 below:

Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measure

Figure 22 (LC 231) Nonstandard th-spelling in Lolcats

The letters <th> are represented by the single letter <t>. As has already been noted, foreigners who do not have the th-sound in their language, often say /t/ instead of /θ/ (Mrázová 2013: 15). As Lolspeak is also compared to foreigner talk (Ferguson 1968: 5 in Lefler 2011: 2), it might be assumed that this spelling change is a phonetic spelling of a foreigner talk.

6.5.2. Z-spelling

The third most frequent phonetic spelling in the Lolspeak corpus is the category z-spelling. This spelling change mirrors the pronunciation of the letter <s> (Fiorentini 2013: 96). It occurs in both the texting and Lolspeak corpora. However, the difference between the two outputs lies in the number of occurrences of z-spellings. More specifically, Lolspeak uses almost three and one half times more z-spellings (10.9564 occurrences per 1,000 words) than Textspeak (3.3379 occurrences per 1,000 words). This big difference in the number of occurrences of this spelling change might again be explained by the purpose each genre serves. As Textspeak is used to communicate, it occasionally uses z-spellings to approximate pronunciation of a word. However, in Lolspeak z-spelling is considerably more prevalent. The fact that it is used so frequently in the Lolcats data, in turn, contributes to its humorous effect. Cats seem to love to use z-spellings that, as the data clearly show, are an emblematic and characteristic means of spelling in Lolcats.

Interestingly, the cats tend to add the extra letter <s> to any word (Gunsing 2009: 20). This extra letter <s> is often phonetically spelt as <z> (ibid). This spelling feature is characteristic only of Lolcats, as in texting it would interfere with effective

communication. However, what is interesting, one text message was found that was written entirely in Lolspeak:

(35) Ohai. I'z makin' dinurz (TM 71)

It seems that the author of this text message is a Lolcats lover and incorporates Lolspeak into texting. It is highly probably that the intended recipient of the message also knows Lolspeak and that they both correspond using it. In this text message, *I am* is spelt as *I'z* (I is). The cats tend to use language structures lacking person agreement between verb and noun (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 115) what is illustrated by the example. While in *dinurz* (dinner), the extra letter <s> is added that is phonetically spelt as <z>. What is even more interesting, z-spelling in *dinurz* is combined with a spelling change in which the letter <u> represents the /ə/ sound (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). This shows that different nonstandard spelling changes can be combined creatively within one nonstandard word, which is an effective way of playing with the language.

Another instance of lack person agreement between verb and noun and adding the extra suffix <z> is illustrated in the following Lolcat:

Figure 23 (LC 125) Z-spelling in Lolcats

In the above image macro, the cat says *i iz* instead of *I am*. Also in this Lolcat four examples include occurrences of extra letter <s> spelt as <z>: *paparazziz* (paparazzi), *takingz* (taking) , *stalkingz* (stalking) and *movez* (move). Similarly, in Figure 24 an extra letter <z> is added to a word *wunt* (want) resulting in *wuntz*:

Read My Whiskers!

Figure 24 (LC 236) Z-spelling in Lolspeak

In the already mentioned example *dinurz* (dinner, TM 71), z-spelling is combined with a phonetic spelling in which the letter <u> stands for the sound /ə/, whereas in *wuntz* in Fig. 21 above, z-spelling occurs along with a spelling change in which <u> represents the sound /a:/ (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). There was one more instance of extra letter <z> in the data in the example *lubz* (love) combined with a spelling change in which the sound /ə/(GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") is represented by the letter <u>. That is interesting, in the example *lubz,* the letter <v> is written as <b>, which is distinctive only for Lolcats data. The tendency to pronounce the sound /b/ instead of the sound /v/ is characteristic of baby talk (Wikipedia "Baby talk"). Thus, it might be assumed that this spelling change mirrors the pronunciation of baby talk.

It is also noteworthy that the first instance of spelling <v> as <b> occurred in January 2008, when two people, Shawna ad Chris, spelt *gravity* as *grabbity* (Gunsing 2009: 17). The reason for using <b> instead of <v> is unclear. Perhaps what could influence them was the fact that in Spanish there is a sound that is between /v/ and /b/ which is usually "interpreted as /b/ by speakers of English" (Whitley 2002: 50-51 cited in Gunsing 2009: 17).

Additionally, in the data apart from the examples *paparazziz* (paparazzi), *takingz* (taking) , *stalkingz* (stalking), *movez* (move), *wuntz* (want) and *lubz* (love), an extra letter <s> spelt as <z> is also added to nonstandard words such as *buleebz* (believe) (LC 279), *ambulintz* (ambulance)(LC 177) and *gibz* (give) (LC 279).

6.5.3. U-spellings representing the sounds [ʌ], [ə], [ɜː]/[ɝː]

U-spellings are another category of phonetic spellings mirroring the pronunciation of sounds such as [ʌ], [ə], [ɜː] or [ɝː] (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

The Lolspeak corpus contains 7.5325 instances of all u-spellings standing for the sounds [ʌ],[ə],[ɜː] and [ɝː] per 1,000 words. In contrast, the Textspeak corpus contains only 1.3908 instances of all u-spellings per 1,000 words. These data results might be explained by the fact that some u-spellings (e.g., *enuff* standing for *enough*) are a marker of uneducatedness and usually connote dialectal or colloquial speech (The Free Dictionary by Farlex "Eye dialect"). As a majority of respondents are linguistics students, it might be assumed, similarly as it was in case of nonstandard th-spellings, that they avoid using u-spellings in their messages. Cheezpeeps, on the other hand, are also well educated, but as the data clearly show, they attempt to make a cat sound uneducated, making the Lolspeak spelling particularly humorous.

First, the analysis of the u-spellings representing the sound /ʌ/ will be presented. This is an intended phonetic spelling due to the fact that some SE words contain the letter <u> pronounced as /ʌ/, e.g., *umbrella* or *upwards* (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to phonetics).

This phonetic spelling occurs 3.1956 times per 1,000 words in the Lolspeak corpus and only 0.8345 times per 1,000 words in the textese data set. Interestingly, according to Frehner's (2008: 106) study, Textspeak is rich in nonstandard spellings in which the letter <o> (its pronounciation is /ʌ/) is spelt as <u> in combination with omission of final <e> as in *cum* (come), *luv* (love), *dun* (done) and *sum* (some) (Frehner 2008: 106). However, in the SMS data no such example occurs. In contrast, the Lolspeak corpus contains four of them, including examples such as *sum* (some, LC 160, 201) and *wun* (one, LC 262, 280).

In addition, Lolspeak uses some u-spellings representing the sound /ʌ/ in creative ways in combination with other nonstandard spelling changes within one word. To illustrate this, the Lolcats examples *cuzzin'z* (cousin's, LC 279) and *udder* (other, LC 207) are worth considering. The letter <u> in *cuzzin'z,* mirroring the pronunciation of the sound /ʌ/, is followed by the reduplication of the letter <z>. The letter <z>, in turn, reflects the pronunciation normally associated with the letter <s> (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Similarly, in the case of *udder,* the u-spelling standing for the sound /ʌ/ is followed by the reduplication of the letter <d>. The letter <d> mirrors the pronunciation of <th>

(pronounced as /ð/in SE) in baby talk (Wikipedia 2015 "Pronunciation of English th") and in some nonstandard English dialects (Rickford 1999:4).

These examples are illustrated below:

Heer, Let Me Gibz U Hiz Number...   **It's Stewielicious**

Figure 25 (LC 279) and figure 26 (LC 207) U-spelling mirroring the pronunciation of the sound [ʌ] in Lolspeak

Another creative way of using the u-spelling reflecting the pronunciation of the /ʌ/ sound is that it can be followed or preceded by another spelling change that phonetically mirrors the pronunciation of baby talk. Three words of this kind were found in the Lolspeak data such as *ub* (of, LC 231, 269) (GA) and *[f]wum* (*from*, LC 115) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). In *ub,* the u-spelling is followed by the letter <b> instead of the letter <f> and in *fwum,* <w> is used instead of <r> (Child Talk. "Child Speech Development: Part 2").

In the SMS data, in contrast, u-spelling standing for the [ʌ] sound appears in only three words, including two colloquial words *bruv* (brother) and *blud* (RP) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"; Urban Dictionary "Bruv","Blud") and the word *dusnt*, as shown in the following text messages:

(36) Y u lyk to punch me I dusnt do anythin to u. Now wt shud I do? (qs 18) (TM 234)

(37) I didn't have it, I'm afraid. Sorry, blud! (TM 147)

(38) You seriously need a dictionary bruv i aint google yano (TM 180)

The word *bruv* was discussed in subsubsection 6.5.1. Concerning the word *blud* (might come from bloodbrother) it does not have a literal meaning of brother but rather means

friend or mate and it is "mainly used in the UK" (*Urban Dictionary* "Blud"). The texter who used the word *blud* comes from Ireland and resides in Glasgow, Scotland (see questionnaire 38).

Another example of u-spelling in Lolspeak is when the letter <u> is used to represent the schwa sound. There were 3.1956 instances of this spelling change per 1,000 words detected in Lolcats whereas only 0.2782 instances of it were found in texting. This is an intended phonetic spelling, because in some SE words, the letter <u> represents /ə/as in, for instance, *us* /əz/ or *supply* /sə'plaɪ/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

Similarly to the u-spellings representing /ʌ/, u-spellings for /ə/ are also used creatively in Lolcats in combination with other spelling changes within a word. Two examples are particularly worth discussing in which the letter <u> standing for /ə/ is followed by letter reduplication. This resembles the previously analysed examples *cuzzin'z* (LC 279) and *udder* (LC 207) in which <u> for /ʌ/ is followed by letter reduplication. Here the <u> for /ə/ is also followed by letter reduplication in *purreber* (forever) and *enuff* (enough, GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"), as illustrated in the Lolcats below:

What's So Great About Dis Anyways?   **Shakespaw in the Park**

Figure 27 (LC 97) and figure 28 (LC 245) U-spelling imitating the pronunciation of the sound /ə/ in Lolcats

In the example *purreber* (forever), the u-spelling is combined with a reduplication of the letter <r>, which already existed in the original spelling *forever*, whereas in *enuff* (*enough*)*,* the u-spelling is followed by a letter reduplication that did not exist in the SE spellling *enough.* The reduplicated letter <f> is a newly introduced letter that phonetically mirrors the pronunciation of enough /ə'nʌf/(GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

In addition, the letter <u> standing for /ə/ similarly to the letter <u> representing /ʌ/ can also be combined with a spelling change mirroring the pronunciation of baby talk within one nonstandard word. For instance, in Figure 28, the letter <p> in *purreber* is written instead of the letter <f> at the beginning of the word, and the letter <v> is spelt as <b>. This is characteristic for baby talk, in which "/f/ and /v/ become /p/ and /b/" (Child Talk. "Child Speech Development: Part 2"). What is even more interesting, the word *purreber* includes an onomatopoeic word *purr* imitating the sound of a cat within it (*Onomatopoeia Dictionary* "Purr").

The examples *buleebz* (GA) (believes, LC 279), *lubz* (GA) (loves, LC 122) and *[e]bul* (GA) (evil, LC 260) are also interesting, because in each of them the letter <v> is written as <b> copying the pronounciation of baby talk (Child Talk. "Child Speech Development: Part 2"; *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). The letter <b> either precedes the u-spelling as in *[e]bul* or follows it as in *lubz* and *buleebz*.

In addition, in the examples *lubz* (GA) (love, LC 122), *luv* (GA) (Love, LC 191), *welcum* (*welcome*, LC 18) and *dun* (GA) (*done*, LC 220), the letter <o> pronounced as /ə/ is written as <u>. In these examples, the u-spelling representing /ə/ is combined with an omission of final <e>.

Regarding the SMS data, the u-spelling for /ə/ appears in only one already dicussed example *dinurz* (see subsubsection 6.5.2.) in the context of the text message written entirely in Lolspeak:

(39) Ohai. I'z makin' dinurz (TM 71)

Apart from the tendency to spell <u> to represent the sounds /ʌ/ and /ə/, the letter <u> can additionally mirror the pronunciation of the sounds such as /ɜː/ or /ɝː/. This nonstandard spelling change is an intended phonetic spelling because some SE words include the letter <u> representing the sounds /ɜː/ or /ɝː/, as seen in words such as, e.g., *fur* or *purr* (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

Interestingly, not much research has been conducted on the spelling of <u> for /ɜː/ or /ɝː/ in Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 31). Similarly, any concrete information regarding this spelling change in textese that there might be in the literature was not found. For this reason, it was included in the data analysis.

Only 1.1413 instances of this spelling change per 1,000 words were detected in Lolcats, while even fewer instances, 0.2782 per 1,000 words, were found in texting. Five examples of this spelling change were found in the Lolspeak data, *wurrie* (GA)(*worry*, LC 278)*, wurry* (GA) (*worry*, LC 177), *furst (first*, LC 216)*, purrfectly* (*perfectly*, LC 44) and *wurld* (*world*, LC 163). In three out of these five examples (*wurrie, wurry* and *wurld*), the letter <o> mirroring the pronunciation of the sounds /ɜː/ and /ɝː/ (*PhoTransEdit* " Text to Phonetics") is spelt as <u>.

Furthermore, this spelling change is also followed by a reduplicated letter <r> in *purrfectly* (perfectly, LC 44), similarly to the case of the already analysed examples *purreber* (forever, LC245), *enuff* (enough, LC 97), *cuzzin'z* (cousin's, LC 279) and *udder* (other, LC 207). In all these examples <u> is followed by a letter reduplication. The example *purrfectly* is illustrated below:

I Couldn't be More Cozy

Figure 29 (LC 44)) U-spelling imitating the pronunciation of the sound /ɝː/ in Lolspeak

In *purrfectly*, similarly to the already discussed example *purreber* (forever), an onomatopieic word *purr* (Wikipedia 2015 "Purr") is embedded in a word for humour. Nevertheless, there is a difference between *purrfectly* and *purreber*. The pronunciation of the word *purr* itself /pɜː/ (GA) is only reflected in the word *purrfectly* /pɜːfəktli/(GA), but not in *purreber* /pəˈrebər/ (GA), in which the letter <u> stands for /ə/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

In contrast to Lolspeak, only one example of this spelling change was found in Textspeak data, and it was again a spoken word: *gurl* (girl, TM 74). It is typical for texting to use many spoken words (Frehner 2008: 118-119) for everyday communication (Frehner 2008: 90),

and this is clearly observed in texting examples such as *gurl* (TM 74), *blud* (TM 147) and *bruv* (TM 180).

6.5.4. Letters <ee> representing the sound /i:/

A further interesting phonetic spelling is the one in which the letters <ee> are used to represent the long vowel /i:/ (Fiorentini 2013: 99, Rosen 2010: 4, *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). This is an intended phonetic spelling owing to the fact that in some words in SE the letters <ee> are pronounced as /i:/, as in, e.g., *seem* or *keen* (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). In this phonetic spelling the letter <e> from the original SE spelling is reduplicated to mirror the pronunciation of the long vowel /i:/ more accurately than the original spelling.

It is worth noticing that in the previous sections, the letter reduplication was discussed when it was employed to emulate prosody (see subsection 6.3). It is, therefore, interesting to observe that letter reduplication can be used either for emulated prosody or as an intended phonetic spelling. In both cases the existing letter in a word is reduplicated, for emulated prosody, as the data suggests, usually multiple times.

As far as the Lolcats corpus is concerned, ten examples of this phonetic spelling change (2.2826 occurrences of this spelling change per 1,000 words) were detected, as shown in Table 14:

Table 14 Phonetic spelling: /i:/→ <ee> in Lolcats

deez (these, LC 118)
pleeze (please, LC 155)
pweeze, leeb (please, leave, LC 192)
dreemz (dreams, LC 218)
teecher (teacher, LC 249)
leepid (leaped, LC 269)
beleeb (believe, LC 275)
buleebz (believe, LC 279)

meen (mean, LC 279)

In seven Lolspeak examples *deez, pleeze, pweeze, leeb, dreemz, beleeb* and *buleebz* in Table 14, the letters <ee> are combined creatively with other spelling changes within one nonstandard word. For instance, in four nonstandard words it is combined with the omission of the final <e> in *deez, leeb, beleeb* and *buleebz.* The letters <ee> also appear along with the z-spelling as illustrated in *deez, pleeze, dreemz* and *buleebz.* Furthermore, it can also be followed by some spelling changes characteristic of baby talk, where <v> is spelt as <b>, as in *leeb, beleeb and buleebz*, or where <l> is written as <w> in *pweeze* (Child Talk."Child Speech Development: Part 2").

Considering the texting data, the letters <ee> representing the sound /i:/ are unlikely in Textspeak, it seems, because this spelling change does not reduce the number of characters in a word making communication shorter and its meaning might be difficult to grasp immediately during rapid communication.

It is also noteworthy to observe that one nonstandard word can be spelt in various ways in Lolspeak (Lefler 2011: 29; Herring 2012 in Fiorentini 2013: 91), which is after all a sort of language play (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). For instance, the word *please* is spelt as *pleeze* (LC 155) and *pweeze* (LC 192). And the word *believe* is written as *beleeb* (LC 275) and *buleebz* (LC 279). This is characteristic for Lolspeak only (Lefler 2011: 29; Herring 2012 in Fiorentini 2013: 91). In SMS language, on the other hand, it appears that spelling one word in various ways would be an obstacle to effective communication. Specifically, it would be difficult for the recipients to understand the meaning of words that are not spelt consistently.

6.5.5. Letters <oo> representing the sound /u:/

Another example of letter reduplication that is a phonetic spelling is when the letters <oo> represent the long vowel sound /u:/ (Rosen 2010: 6; Gunsing 2009: 15, 16; *PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). This nonstandard spelling change is a phonetic spelling, because some SE words contain the letters <oo> in their spellings representing the sound /u:/, e.g., as in *moon* or *soon* (*PhoTransEdit* " Text to Phonetics").

This spelling change is distinctive only for Lolcats and does not occur in texting data at all, which is not a surprising result. Words such as *hooman* (e.g. in LC 238) for instance, are highly unlikely to appear in SMS language, because they not only increase the number of characters in a word but also are difficult to understand during communication.

Concerning the Lolspeak corpus, thirty-six cases of this phonetic spelling (8.2173 instances of this phonetic spelling change per 1,000 words) were found. In twenty-four examples out of the thirty-six, the letter <o> that is reduplicated does not exist in the original SE spelling (it used in place of the letter <u>), e.g., as in *hooman* (human, e.g. in LC 238, 294) or *toona* (tuna, LC 254, 287). The only exceptions are twelve examples of *yoo* (you, RP, e.g. in LC 125, 149, 177, 177, 177)(*PhoTransEdit* " Text to Phonetics") where the already existing letter <o> in the original spelling is reduplicated (the reduplicated letter <o> occurs in place of the letter <u> in *you*).

Fourteen examples out of thirty-six are nonstandard spelling changes in which *human* is spelt as *hooman* (two occurrences: LC 238, 294), *hoomin* (ten occurrences, e.g. in LC 65, 65, 94, 97) and *hoomins* (two occurrences: LC 73, 267). It is worth noting that these examples are not real phonetic spellings, but only attempts to be phonetic spellings. This is because the word *human* is pronounced as /ˈhjuːmən/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). The sound /j/ occurs before the sound /uː/. For this reason, the Lolcat spelling *hoomin* /huː mən/ does not accurately reflect the SE pronunciation of human /ˈhjuːmən/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Some Lolcats examples are illustrated below:

I Think My Hoomin is Lonely   **Now We're In Trouble...**
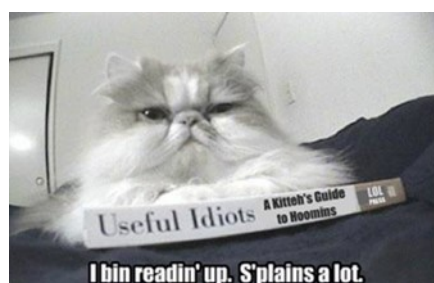
Figure 30 (LC 65) and figure 31 (LC 73) /uː/→ <oo> in Lolcats

Turn it On Vibrate!   **The Universe Is Beyond Human Understanding**

Figure 32 (LC 238) and figure 33 (LC 267) /u:/ → <oo> in Lolcats

What is even more interesting is the fact that, as has been already mentioned (see previous section), one nonstandard word may be spelt in various creative ways, e.g., as *hooman* or *hoomin*, a characteristic property of Lolcats (Lefler 2011: 29; Herring 2012 in Fiorentini 2013: 91). Similarly, the words *tuna* and *stupid,* can each be spelt in two ways as *toona (tuna,* LC 254, 287) and *toonah* (tuna, LC 299) and as *stoopie* (stupid, LC 10) and *stoopy* (stupid, LC 20, 97), respectively.

6.6. Undetermined spelling changes

The previous sections analysed morphological, symbolic and phonological spelling changes. This section and next sections will analyse undetermined spelling changes. The examples of this category are distinctive for Lolcats only. They were labelled 'undetermined' owing to the fact they do not belong to the morphological, symbolic and phonological categories. More specifically, they are not used to reduce the number of characters in a word to make communication shorter, as was the case with morphological categories, they cannot be classified as symbolic categories, and they are not phonetic spellings. It is unclear why they are spelt the way they are.

There is a considerable difference between Lolspeak and textese in terms of undetermined spelling changes. Textspeak includes only 0.2782 instances of undetermined spelling changes per 1,000 words while Lolspeak contains 16.8911 instances per 1,000 words. These results are not surprising, if the purpose each output serves is considered. Specifically, undetermined spelling changes are not frequent in textese owing to difficulties that can arise in deciphering their meaning in messages instantly during communication that is supposed effective (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22).

In Lolcats, on the other hand, they are very likely to occur, because Lolspeak is aimed at language play for entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). These spelling changes are, as the data will show, meant to be funny and creative as a part of language play (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98).

6.6.1. Undetermined u-spelling

U-spellings reflecting the pronunciation of the sounds /ɜː/, /ɝː/,/ʌ/ and /ə/, as was already discussed, are quite popular in Lolspeak (see subsubsection 6.5.3). However, apart from these u-spellings, some examples were found in the data in which the letter <u> is used not to mirror pronunciation of any sound phonetically. These u-spellings are coded as undetermined spelling changes, because it is unclear why they are used. It might be assumed that the only reason of using them in the data is to play with the language for fun and humour. It seems that in the Lolcats data, the letter <u> can appear in any nonstandard word, not only in a form of phonetic spelling.

As far as the actual data are concerned, none of these spelling changes appear in Textspeak, while five examples were found in Lolcats. These examples are shown below:

(40) dun (don't) (LC 278)

(41) dunt (don't) (LC 162)

(42) purty (party) (LC 260)

(43) wuntz (want) (LC 236)

(44) fur (for) (LC 283)

In *dun* and *dunt* the letter <u> is used in place of the letter <o>, representing the diphthong sound /oʊ/(GA) (*PhoTransEdit* " Text to Phonetics"). This u-spelling is definitely not a phonetic spelling of this diphthong sound. It is possible that these spellings might be a sloppy way of saying *don't.* They might be adopted from a spoken word *dunno*, which is a contraction of *I don't know* (InternetSlang.com. "Dunno").

In the examples *purty* and *wuntz* (GA), the letter <a> representing the sound /aː/in SE is spelt as <u> in Lolspeak (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Again, <u> standing for the sound /aː/ is not a phonetic spelling, and the original spellings approximate the pronunciation of these words more accurately. In the example *fur* (for) on the other hand,

the letter <u> is used instead of the letter <o>, representing the sound /ɔː/, which is also not a phonetic spelling, and it less accurately mirrors the pronunciation of the word in comparison to the original spelling.

6.6.2. Undetermined letter reduplication

In the previous sections, it was said that letter reduplication can be classified as a phonological suprasegmental spelling change to emulate prosody and letter reduplication in the form of phonetic spelling. More specifically, it was discussed that letter reduplication for emulated prosody is prevalent in texting where, as the data suggest, usually a vowel (already existing in the original spelling) is reduplicated multiple times to emphasize the meaning of a word (see subsubsection 6.3.). In addition, letter reduplications in a form of phonetic spellings such as <ee> to mirror the pronunciation of /iː/ and <oo> to reflect the pronunciation of /uː/(characteristic for Lolspeak only) were analysed (see sections 6.5.4. and 6.5.5.).

The letter reduplication to be described in this subsubsection is classified as undetermined letter reduplication due to the fact it is unclear why it is used. It is not a phonetic spelling. Also, it is not employed to emulate prosody.

In terms of occurrences per 1,000 words, only 0.2782 instances of undetermined letter reduplications were found in texting, whereas 3.6521 were observed in Lolcats. Interestingly, in the textese corpus, only one example of undetermined letter reduplication was found, the example *doinn* (doing) as shown in the text message:

(45) Whatchu doinn (TM 112)

In *doinn* the letter <g> is omitted (it might also be a phonetic spelling, if a texter speaks a nonstandard English dialect) (Frehner 2008: 99; Rickford 1999: 4) reducing the number of characters, but at the same time the existing letter <n> is reduplicated, increasing the number of characters. As a whole, the number of characters remains the same. The reason for reduplicating the letter <n> is unclear. Perhaps, the speller intended only to use a g-clipping, with the letter <n> being a result of a typo.

The Lolspeak corpus, on the other hand, contains sixteen spelling changes that are letter reduplications coded as undetermined spelling change. It varies across the data; either the letter from the original SE spelling is reduplicated or a new letter is introduced and

reduplicated. All the undetermined spelling changes in the form of letter reduplications are listed in Table 15 below:

Table 15 Undetermined spelling change: letter reduplication in Lolcats

Existing letter reduplicated		New letter introduced and reduplicated	
ennymoar (anymore, LC 71)	purreber (forever, LC 245)	enuff (enough, LC 97)	udder (other, LC 207)
purrfectly (perfectly, LC 44)	reddy (ready) (LC 257)	wiff (with, LC 111, LC 177)	forebber (forever, LC 76)
rawrr (roar, LC 17)	mebbe (maybe, LC 279, LC 278)	Hebben (heaven, LC 85)	habbint (haven't, LC 192)
		Iffen (even, LC 235)	cuzzin's (cousin's, LC 279)

Seven nonstandard words in the table, include reduplication of letters already existing in the original SE spelling. For instance, in *reddy* the reduplicated letter <d> already exists in the original spelling *ready.* The same holds true for the words *purreber* and *purrfectly* in which the already existing letter <r> is reduplicated. The letters <rr> are used deliberately for humour, it seems, owing to the fact they are part of an onomatopoeic word *purr* (*Onomatopoeia Dictionary* "Purr").

Apart from the nonstandard words in which the already existing letter is reduplicated, in the nine remaining words in the table, a new letter is introduced and then reduplicated. For instance, in three words out of nine, such as *udder* and *wiff* (two occurrences, GA), the letters <d> in *udder* and <f> in *wiff* (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") mirror the pronunciation of th-sounds, as has been previously discussed and assumed, in baby talk to make a cat sound uneducated (see subsection 6.5.1.) (Child Talk. 2011. "Child Speech Development: Part 2"). In *cuzzin's* the newly introduced letter <z> stands for the sound /s/, and in *enuff* the letter <f> is a phonetic spelling of *enough* /əˈnəf/ (GA) (*PhoTransEdit*

"Text to Phonetics"). In addition to all this, the letters <f> in *enuff*, <d> in *udder* and <f> in *wiff* reduce the number of characters in a nonstandard word in comparison to the SE words. However, at the same time, in the process of reduplication of these letters, the number of characters in a word is increased. The result is that in *udder* and *wiff*, the number of characters is the same as in the SE words and in *enuff* is reduced by one. These combinations of spelling changes reducing and increasing the number of characters are, it appears, creative manner of playing with the language distinctive for Lolcats. In contrast, combining such spelling changes in SMS language is unlikely, as is also reflected in the data. To be more specific, increasing and at the same time reducing the number of characters makes no sense in texting, which is aimed at effective communication (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23).

Furthermore, in three words: *habbint*, *forebber* and *Hebben,* a new letter <b> is introduced that is not present in the original spelling. It is used instead of the letter <v>, it seems, to mirror the pronunciation of baby talk (Child Talk. 2011. "Child Speech Development: Part 2"). Interestingly, the SE word *forever* may also be spelt as *purreber* where the already existing letter <r> is reduplicated. In addition, in two more examples *mebbe* (*maybe*, two occurrences), the already existing letter <b> is reduplicated. This is interesting, because the SE word *maybe* is spelt in the same manner as *mebbe* in two different Lolcats.

What is even more fascinating and adds to the creativity of Lolspeak spelling is the fact that letter reduplication coded as undetermined spelling change can also be combined with another spelling change, in which the letter <u> is used to represent the sounds [ʌ], [ə] and [ɜː] within one nonstandard word. This occurs in the already discussed examples *enuff, purreber*, *purrfectly, udder* and *cuzzin'z* (see subsubsection 6.5.3.).

6.6.3. Eh/ah-spellings

Another undetermined spelling change is the tendency to spell words ending with <y> as <ah> or <eh> in Lolspeak ("How to speak lolcat"), e.g., *baybeh (*Gunsing 2009: 46) or *funneh* (Gunsing 2009: 6). This spelling tendency has not been studied much previously (Gunsing 2009: 31). It is unclear why such a tendency developed (ibid). For this reason it is coded it as undetermined spelling change.

No examples of this spelling change were found in texting. Such spellings are unlikely to occur in SMS language it seems, because their meaning is difficult to grasp instantly, and

they increase the number of characters in comparison to the original SE spellings. Thus, they do not ease communication.

However, thirteen examples of <y> spelt as <ah> or <eh> (in terms of occurrences per 1,000 words, there were 2.9674 occurrences of this spelling change found) were identified in the Lolcats corpus. Thus, it is distinctive exlusively for Lolspeak.

In one example *my* was written as *mah* (LC 245). Additionally, in eleven cases the word *kitty* was written as *kitteh* (e.g., LC 93, 98, 231) and in one as *kittah* (LC 106). Such nonstandard spellings of the word *kitty* are popular in Lolcats, as seen in the cat macros below:

Yoga Kitteh's Sun Salute

Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting

Figure 34 (LC 93) and figure 35 (LC 106) Eh/ah-spellings in Lolcats

I'm Playing a Sloth   **Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measures**

Figure 36 (LC 98) and figure 37 (LC 231) Eh/ah-spellings in Lolcats

The question arises why the final vowel <y> is spelt as <eh> or <ah>. This nonstandard spelling change obviously does not reflect SE pronunciation. To illustrate this, the standard word *kitty* is pronounced as /kɪti/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). When it is spelt as *kittah,* it would be pronounced as /kɪtɑ:/, while when it is written as *kitteh,* it should be pronounced as /kɪte/(GA) (ibid).

However, it worthwhile to include the fact that teenagers tend to pronounce some words in ways they think sound cool (Learn English Teens "Slang") when discussing the reason for spelling <y> as either <eh> or <ah>. According to Urban Dictionary for instance, the word *funneh* is defined as " [s]lang term for 'funny' [u]sually only used on 'teh' [I]nternet" (Urban Dictionary. "Funneh"). Perhaps, the Internet slang has influenced the teen talk. It is possible that for someone who actually speaks in that manner it is a phonetic spelling. For this reason it might be assumed that eh-spellings and ah-spellings may be used deliberately for this effect in Lolspeak to make a cat sound like a child or a teenager . This makes sense as Lolspeak is often compared to baby talk (Rosen 2010: 2 cited in Fiorentini 2013: 92).

It is also interesting to consider the example *mah.* According to Preston (Preston 1982: 325 cited in Lefler 2011: 29), this nonstandard word "has been used years prior to indicate nonstandard English accents, and it seems that its appearance in Lolspeak parallels this depiction" (ibid). It appears to be an attempt to be a phonetic spelling of Texan English (Southern American English) (Wikipedia "Texan English", Labov et al. 2006: 126, 127). This type of nonstandard English dialect is well known for "monophthongization of /aɪ/ before voiced consonants and word-final position" (ibid), where the diphthong

/aɪ/ is monophthongized to /a:/. For instance, *guy* /ga:/ or *side* as /sa:d/ (ibid). It might also reflect the pronunciation of another Southern English dialect- AAVE, in which it is also popular to "monophthongize /aɪ/ to /a:/" (Wikpedia 2015 "African American Vernacular English"). Thus, it might be assumed that the usage of *mah* is employed deliberately in Lolcats to make a cat sound uneducated for the purpose of humour.

In addition, Lolspeak is also compared to already noted Leetspeak (Rosen 2010:2) (see subsection 5.2.). Some Lolspeak words such as *baybeh* (Gunsing 2009: 46) or *funneh* (Gunsing 2009: 6) may appear in the gaming background of Leetspeak (Hf-leet.forumotion.net. "Jessie Babeh Have You Ever Loved Somebody So Much"). As a result, it is highly probable that spelling changes in which <y> is spelt as <eh> or <ah> originate in Leetspeak.

In addition to this, not only the final vowel <y> tends to be spelt as <eh> or <ah> in Lolspeak. This spelling tendency of eh or ah-endings seems also to spread to other words that do not end in <y>. To illustrate this, twenty examples (4.5652 occurrences per 1,000 words) with an –eh ending were also found in a form of the definite article *teh* (the) that also probably originates in Leetspeak (Wikipedia. 2015. "Teh"), as seen in the Lolcats below:

Yawn...   **Yep, Dat's Totally Wot Happened**

Figure 38 (LC 220) and figure 39 (LC 94) 'Teh' in Lolcats

Time to Get Up! Your Life Depends on it...   **Noms Noa, Pweeze!**

Figure 40 (LC 131) and figure 41 (LC 192) 'Teh' in Lolcats

The word *teh* might also be a result of a typo that has become conventionlised in the context of Leetspeak and Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 12; *Wikipedia*. 2015."Teh"). The letters <h> and <e> in *the* switch their places resulting in *teh* (ibid).

In addition, the spelling tendency of eh or ah-endings seems also to spread to other words that do not end in <y> but end in a vowel <a> or <e>, as seen in five Lolspeak examples, *toonah* (tuna) (LC 299) and *meh* (me, four occurrences: LC 123, 149, 231, 235):

Figure 42 (LC 299) and figure 43 (LC 123) Eh/ah-spellings in Lolcats

Iffen Yoo Dont Believe Meh Ask Teh Goggie   **Noa Git Meh Mai Noms!**

Figure 44 (LC 235) and figure 45 (LC 149) Eh/ah-spellings in Lolcats

It is even more interesting to observe that this spelling tendency can spread to words that are vowels themselves and include the diphthongs within them. For instance, in Figure 46 a SE word *a* (pronounced as /eɪ/) is spelt as *ah* (pronounced as /ɑː/) and in Figure 47 *I'm* (I'm) is written as *Ahm* (LC 221) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

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That's a Steal

Figure 46 (LC 167) and figure 47 (LC 221) Ah-spellings in Lolcats

The example *Ahm* (I'm) might mirror the pronunciation of Texan English, in which /aɪ/ in *I* is monophthongized to /a:/ in *Ah* (Wikipedia. 2015. "Texan English"; Rigsbee, Ken." A dictionary of the Texas language").

7. Nonstandard spellings of diphthongs

Little research has been conducted on the nonstandard spellings of diphthongs in Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 31), and little information was found in the literature on diphthong spellings in texting. Thus, this area of language will be explored thoroughly and innovatively in the thesis, and more attention will be paid to it.

As far as the Lolspeak data are concerned, some of the diphthongs are phonetically spelt and for this reason coded as phonological segmental spelling changes: phonetic spellings. In addition, some of them are not phonetically spelt and it is unclear why they are spelt in that way. As the data will show, they are probably spelt the way they are for mere entertainment and to play with the language in Lolspeak. For this reason, these nonstandard diphthongs are coded as undetermined diphthong spellings.

Nonstandard spellings of diphthongs are very prevalent in Lolcats data, accounting for 11.1847 instances of diphthongs phonetically spelt per 1,000 words (forty-nine examples were found in the Lolcats corpus) and 3.1956 instances of diphthongs not phonetically spelt- undetermined diphthong spellings per 1,000 words (14 examples were found in the Lolcats corpus).

Altogether, there are 14.3803 instances of nonstandard spellings of diphthongs per 1,000 words in Lolcats (sixty-three examples of this spelling change are found in Lolcats corpus) making it the second most frequent spelling change among all of the discussed spelling changes in the entire data.

In the SMS data, on the other hand, there were scarcely any nonstandard diphthong spellings; only 0.8345 occurrences of diphthongs phonetically spelt were found per 1,000 words (three examples of diphthongs phonetically spelt were found in the texting corpus).

As has been above-mentioned, in the Lolcats data, forty-nine diphthongs phonetically spelt were identified. Among the most popular are *ai* (I, eighteen occurrences; e.g. in LC 149, 259, 15, 33,149), followed by *mai* (my, thirteen occurrences, e.g. in LC 7, 20, 76, 85, 149) and *hai* (four occurrences, LC 149, 7, 94, 268). In contrast, only three diphthongs phonetically spelt were identified in SMS data: *mayk* (make, TM 202) (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"), Ohai (Oh, hi, TM 71) and *lyk* (like, TM 234).

It is important to emphasize that many diphthong spellings, especially phonetic, often increase the number of characters in a word. This is not recommended in textese that aims to reduce the number of characters in a message to save time, space (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22) and to reduce financial costs (Grinter & Eldridge 2001: 220). It is for this reason, it appears, that only three nonstandard phonetic diphthong spellings were found in textese data.

Concerning diphthongs coded as undetermined dipthong spellings, fourteen such diphthongs were found in the cat macros. All of them are listed in Table 16:

Table 16 Undetermined diphthong spellings in Lolcats

taeking	doan	dun
(taking, LC 117)	(don't, LC 177)	(don't, LC 279)
mebbe	noep	[n]ao (now, LC 125), nyow (now, LC 125) naw (now, LC 216)
(maybe, LC 278, 279)	(nope, LC 242)	[n]oa (now, LC 192, LC 149)
okai	noe	
(okay, LC 215)	(no, LC 242)	
a (ah, LC 167)		

No undetermined diphthongs were identified in the SMS data. The reason for this is the fact that such spelling changes might cause difficulties in understanding them instant in SMS communication. For instance, *nyow* (now, LC 125) and *noe* (no, LC 242) will likely not be understood during normal everyday communication.

By looking at all these undetermined and phonetic diphthong spellings in the data and also at some examples of nonstandard diphthong spellings in the literature, some spelling patterns of diphthongs were observed that will be described in upcoming thesis subsections.

7.1. General pattern of spelling diphthongs in Lolspeak: making every diphthong in Lolspeak different from what it is in SE

Little precise information can be found on nonstandard diphthong spellings in Lolcats in the literature. In the "How to speak lolcat" guide, only little information was provided to the effect that "diphthongs are often exaggerated or misplaced" ("How to speak lolcat"), with some examples provided. In addition, Gunsing (2009: 31) suggests that there is a tendency "to spell diphthongs commonly with two vowels" (ibid) in Lolspeak, e.g., *dae* (for day) and *nao* (for now) (ibid). However, it seems that this description is not sufficiently precise owing to the fact that most diphthongs are typically spelt with two vowels in SE, e.g. *loud*, *lied* (Wikipedia 2015 "Diphthong"). There are also diphthongs written as one vowel, as in examples such as *lane* and *no* (ibid), or as a vowel glide, as in the above-mentioned examples *day* (spelt as *dae)* and *now* (spelt as *nao*) (Gunsing 2009: 31; "Sounds

of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides"). For the above-mentioned reasons, it might be assumed that the description of diphthongs in Lolspeak must be formulated more carefully and precisely.

By looking at the examples of nonstandard diphthong spellings in the analysis of Lolcat messages in the literature and Lolcat data set, it has been observed that Cheezpeeps play with the above-mentioned three ways of spelling diphthongs in SE. They are aware of these ways of spelling diphthongs in SE. What has been noted by analysing all the diphthong spellings in the data is that Cheezpeeps try to make every Lolcat diphthong spelling different from what it is in SE. In order to achieve this, they change every original SE diphthong spelling into another diphthong spelling chosen from these three common ways of spelling diphthongs in SE. For instance, the vowel-glide ("Sounds of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides") diphthong in SE word *now* is spelt as two-vowels diphthong in *noa* in Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 31), the one-vowel diphthong *I* is spelt as two-vowels *Ai* (LC 15)*, and the vowel-glide diphthong in *maybe* is spelt as the one-vowel diphthong in *mebbe* in Lolspeak (LC 278). This is done deliberately, it seems, for the effect of creatively playing with and manipulating the language. For this reason these nonstandard spellings are much more popular in Lolspeak, while almost none of them appear in Textspeak.

Now that the general spelling pattern of nonstandard diphthongs in Lolspeak has been described, the more specific spelling patterns will be discussed in detail in the next subsections.

7.2. Vowel-glide diphthongs in SE spelt as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

As has already been shown in the previous subsection the general pattern of diphthong formation in Lolcats is to make every Lolcat diphthong spelling different from what it is in SE. One possible way to achieve this is to write a diphthong spelt as a vowel and a glide in SE ("Sounds of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides") as two vowels in Lolspeak, e.g., *nao* (now) and *dae* (day) (Gunsing 2009: 31). These examples, *nao* and *dae* are interesting. One possible reason that the diphthongs such as *day* or *now* are spelt as *dae* and *nao* is to bring these spelling changes closer to the actual pronunciation of the diphthong sounds in the original words. The letters <ay> in *day* and <ow> in *now* appear not to reflect the pronunciation of the diphthongs as well and as accurately as their nonstandard Lolspeak counterparts: *dae* and *nao* (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). It is also important to stress that a diphthong "refers to two adjacent vowel sounds occurring within the

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same syllable" (Wikipedia 2015 "Diphthong"). This definition indicates that in the pronunciation of a diphthong, the mouth must be moved and "there is a beginning and an ending position" ("English: How to Pronounce OW [aʊ] Diphthong"). Referring to this definition and coming back to the examples *dae* and *nao,* these examples appear to be intended to be phonetic spellings imitating how the tongue moves in the pronunciation of these diphthongs. For instance, in the pronunciation of *nao* the lips move from /a/ to /o/, in what might be considered to be a type of a mistaken phonetic spelling. However, they are not real phonetic spellings and for this reason are coded as undetermined diphthongs.

Another possible explanation for the fact that diphthongs spelt with a vowel and glide ("Sounds of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides") in SE are spelt as two vowels in Lolcats is the fact that Cheezpeeps are aware of the fact that many diphthongs in SE are spelt with two vowels (Wikipedia "Diphthong"). They might notice that the diphthongs in *day* and *now* (Gunsing 2009: 31) are not spelt with two vowels in SE but with a vowel and a glide ("Sounds of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides"). This observation might motivate them to fit these diphthongs spelt with a vowel and a glide in SE to the same pattern as the usual pattern of spelling most diphthongs in SE with two vowels (Wikipedia "Diphthong").

As far as the thesis data are concerned, four instances of nonstandard diphthong spellings were found in which a diphthong that is spelt with a vowel glide in SE is spelt as two vowels in a Lolcat macro. These were [*n]oa (now,* two instances*: LC 149, 192), [n]ao (now,* LC 125) and *okai (okay)* (LC 215). The example *now* is particularly interesting, because it can be spelt in many different ways, as shown in the data. It can be spelt as *[n]oa* and as *[n]ao* as illustrated below:
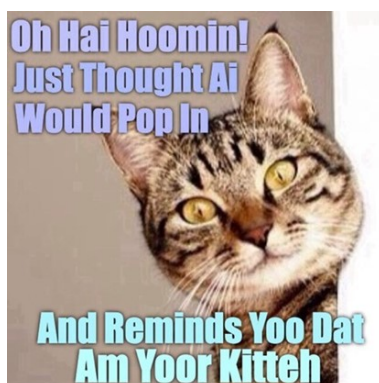
Noa Git Meh Mai Noms!   **Nao Howz Yoo Werk Dis Ting?**

Figure 48 (LC 149) and figure 49 (LC 125) Vowel-glide diphthongs in SE spelt as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

The diphthong in [*n]oa* is spelt with two vowels <oa> and these vowels switch their places in [*n]ao.* Additionally, in Figure 49 *now* is also spelt as *nyow.* The extra letter <y> is added between the letter <n> and the letter <o>. It is possible that this letter is added in *nyow* to make it sound like *meow*.

7.3. Two-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats

Apart from the tendency to spell vowel glide diphthongs as two vowels in Lolspeak, the reversed spelling tendency occurs where two vowel SE diphthongs are written as a vowel glide diphthong in Lolcats. To illustrate this, *loud* can be spelt as *lowd*, *couch* as *cowch* and *moan* as *mown* ("How to speak lolcat"). All these nonstandard diphthong spelling changes appear to borrow the spellings from other SE words with similar pronunciation. The examples *loud and lowd* and *couch* and *cowch*, for instance, are homonyms owing to the fact they are pronounced in a same manner but their meanings are different ("How to speak lolcat", Wikipedia "Homonym"). The pronunciation of /ow/in *lowd*, for example, might be borrowed from the pronunciations of *how* or *bow* (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics").

In the thesis data, however, only one example of this spelling tendency was found in Lolcats, namely *owt* for *out* as illustrated below:

Possibly I Will Nap First As Well

Figure 50 (LC 259) Two-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcat

The diphthong in *out* /aʊt/ is phonetically spelt (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") as *owt* in Fig. 50 above. This is because <ow> in *owt* is pronounced as /aʊ/(RP)(ibid). It might be a borrowing of a spelling from such SE words as for example, *how* or *bow* that have the same diphthong pronunciation (ibid).

Even more interesting is the fact that not only the two vowel diphthongs in SE are spelt as a vowel and a glide in Lolspeak. It appears that even words not containing diphthongs can follow the same spelling pattern as is illustrated in the example *you tube* spelt as *yewtewb* ("How to speak lolcat"). The vowels <ou> in *you* are spelt as vowel glide <ew> in *yew*. It looks as if tendencies of nonstandard diphthong spellings can also spread to words without diphthongs in Lolspeak.

7.4. Two-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as one-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

Another spelling tendency of diphthongs that similarly to the previously noted patterns, belongs to the general spelling tendency to make every diphthong in Lolcats different from what it is in SE, is spelling a two-vowel diphthong in SE as a one-vowel diphthong in Lolcats.

This spelling tendency follows the –aCe pattern (Gunsing 2009: 13). More specifically, the letter <a> is followed by the consonant (usually <r>, <k>, <t>, <d>) and the consonant is followed by the vowel <e> in these words (ibid). For instance, it often applies to words that end with a liquid, e.g., *sware* (swear), *chare* (chair), *ware* (wear) (Gunsing 2009:13) and to words that include the letters <ea> in their spelling and "are ended with a plosive" (Gunsing 2009:12), e.g., *brake* (break) and *grate* (great) (Gunsing 2009: 13). What is also

interesting is the fact that the nonstandard Lolspeak words such as *ware, sware* and *chare* also exist in SE, but their meanings differ from the meanings of the words *wear, swear* and *chair*. Thus, the pairs *wear-ware, swear-sware and chair-chare* are homonyms because despite having different meanings, they are pronounced in a same manner (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"; Wikipedia "Homonym").

As diphthongs include two vowel sounds (Wikipedia 2015 "Diphthong"), it seems that the pronunciation of diphthongs spelt with two vowels in SE is more accurately reflected by these two vowels than spelling diphthongs with only one vowel in Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009:13; *PhoTransEdit* " Text to Phonetics").

In the entire thesis data, however, only one example of this spelling pattern was found in Lolcats corpus, namely *grate* (for *great*, LC 43) as illustrated below:

Just Watched "All Dogs Go to Heaven"

Figure 51 Two-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as one-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

The word *grate* exists in SE but has a different meaning to that of *great*. Despite having the different meanings, these words are both pronounced as /greɪt/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Thus, they are homonyms (Wikipedia "Homophone").

7.5. One-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

Having discussed the tendency to write two-vowel SE diphthongs as one-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats, it is interesting to consider the reversed spelling pattern. More precisely, the pattern of spelling one-vowel SE diphthongs as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats. For instance, the words *by* and *my* might be phonetically spelt as *bai* and *mai*, respectively (Lefler 2011: 29).

Only one example of this spelling tendency was found in texting data (0.2782 occurrences per 1,000 words) in the context of an already discussed text message written entirely in Lolspeak. This is the word *Ohai* (oh hello, TM 71), which is considered to be a popular spoken form of *oh hello* in Lolspeak (Fiorentini 2013: 91).

In the Lolcats data, in contrast, forty-two instances of this diphthong spelling tendency were found (9.5869 occurrences per 1,000 words) all being phonetic spellings. These forty-two examples of diphthongs phonetically spelt included *I* spelt as *Ai* (eighteen occurrences, e.g., LC 15, 33, 149), *Aih* (LC 167, 216, 221, 260, 56) and *Ais* (LC 232), followed by *my* written as *mai* (thirteen occurrences, e.g., LC 7, 20, 76, 85, 149), *hi* written as *hai* (LC 94, 149) and Ohai (LC 7, 268) and *dry* spelt as *drai* (LC 242). Furthermore, four examples of this spelling tendency were also identified in the Lolcats data belonging to the category undetermined diphthongs (diphthongs not phonetically spelt). These four examples are only attempts to be phonetic spellings because they more accurately reflect the pronunciation of the two vowel diphthong sound (Wikipedia. 2015. "Diphthong") than the single vowel in the original SE spellings (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). However, as they are not real phonetic spellings, they are classified as undetermined diphthongs. These examples include *taeking* (taking), *[n]oep* (nope), *noe* (no) and *doan* (don't), as illustrated in the cat macros:

Sheesh! hoomin groomin   **Goggie Gits Awl Gud Fuds**

Figure 52 (LC 117) and figure 53 (LC 242) One-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

Teh Doctor Recommends Yoo Wear A Helmit...Awlways

awww yoo bwoke yoo widdo hed?
Dr Tiny Cat iz awn teh way wif an
ambulintz

and doan wurry
it cud be hearse
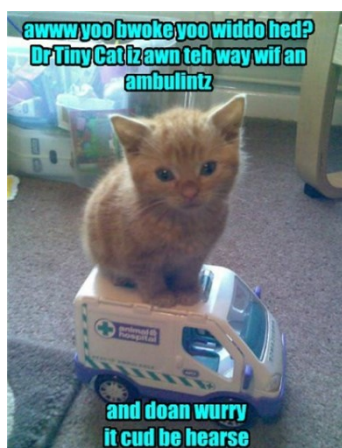
Figure 54 (LC 177) One-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

Interestingly, the nonstandard words *taeking* (taking) in Figure 52 and [*n]oep* (nope) in Figure 53, apart from matching the spelling pattern of writing one-vowel diphthongs in SE as two vowel diphthongs in Lolcats, are also examples of metathesis (letter shifting) (Wikipedia 2015 "Metathesis"). This occurs when the final vowels and consonants change places (Gunsing 2009: 12). Such letter shifting spellings have their origin "in the idea of making a typo" (Gunsing 2009: 12). They were easily accepted because they more accurately reflect the diphthong pronunciation than the original spellings (ibid).

The data results indicate that the cats seem to be fond of producing spellings that mirror the pronunciation more precisely than the original spellings. It also appears that the above-mentioned nonstandard diphthong spellings are instances of letter shifting on the superficial level only. More specifically, they are more functional than mere letter shifting. Apart from the process of letter switching, another more important process of diphthong formation appears to take place where the final <e> from the end of a word moves to the middle of the word changing the pronunciation of the vowel in the middle. It seems to be more reasonable for the letter <e> to appear next to the vowel in the middle where the letter <e> would have its effect and where, for that reason, one would expect it to be.

To illustrate it, in *nope*, the final letter <e> that is not pronounced (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") comes before the letter <p> in *noep.* The two vowels <oe> in *noep*, more accurately reflect the two-vowel sound pronunciation of the diphthong than the single vowel <o> in *nope* (ibid).

It is also interesting to note that the first recorded instance of letter shifting in Lolspeak was probably the word *tiem* (time) (Gunsing 2009: 12), having a nasal as a final consonant (ibid). The other occurrences of letter shifting also involved examples having plosives as final consonants, e.g., *liek* (like) and *haet* (hate) (Gunsing 2009:13). In addition, words that end in a fricative can also include letter shifting in their nonstandard diphthong spellings, such as in *lief* (life) and *liev* (live) (Gunsing 2009:14). As far as the already-mentioned data examples with letter shifting are concerned, they end with plosives as seen in *taeking* (taking)and *[n]oep* (nope).

All the examples described in this section follow the pattern of spelling one-vowel SE diphthongs as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolspeak. Interestingly, some examples were found in the data that almost follow this pattern but stand out, because as well as including two vowels, they also have an extra letter <h> added. These oddities include the personal pronoun *I* spelt as *Aih* (five instances: LC 56, 167, 216, 221, 760) as shown below:

One Day I'll Beat You in the Staring Contest   **Dis Mai Chair!**

Figure 55 (LC 56) and figure 56 (LC 216) Spelling oddities in Lolspeak: aih

In the example *Aih*, it appears that the speller attempts to phonetically spell the pronoun *I.* However, this speller adds the letter <h> to *Ai* resulting in *Aih.* It is possible that the letter <h> is added for mere fun, copying popular Lolspeak spellings such as *kittah* (kitty, LC 231) or *kitteh* (kitty, LC 106) ending in <h>. Similarly, in the example *Ais* (I, LC 232), the extra letter <s> is added to the phonetic spelling *Ai* resulting in *Ais.* As has been noted many times, adding extra letter <s> "to any part of word" is a distinctive language property of Lolspeak (Gunsing 2009: 20). Perhaps, a spelling tendency has developed to add an extra letter <h> to any word. However, more data are required to verify this claim.

7.6. One-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats

Apart from the already analysed nonstandard diphthong spellings in which one-vowel SE diphthongs are spelt as two vowels in Lolcats, another spelling tendency emerges. Specifically, some one-vowel diphthongs in SE can be spelt as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats. Previously, the spelling tendency to write SE two-vowel diphthongs as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolspeak was investigated (see section 7.3.).

In the data only one example of this spelling tendency was found in Textspeak, namely *mayk* (make) in the context of the text message:

(46) We shud mayk world peace yh. Stop killin n start lovin (TM 202).

The nonstandard word *mayk* has the same pronunciation as its SE counterpart *make*. To be more specific, <ay> in mayk is pronounced as /eɪ/ and *make* as /meɪk/ (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). As the pronounciation of diphthongs has to do with two sounds, in general (Wikipedia 2015 "Diphthong), spelling it with two letters <ay> instead of with only one letter <a> more accurately reflects its pronounciation.

In addition, the letters <ay> in *mayk* might be a borrowing of spelling from some SE words that more accurately reflect the pronunciation of the diphthong sound in *make* /meɪk/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") such as, for instance *say* /seɪ/ or *lay* /leɪ/ (ibid).

Apart from the one example (0.2782 occurrences per 1,000 words) *mayk* found in the texting corpus, two examples (0.4565 occurrences per 1,000 words) of this spelling tendency were detected in Lolcats, namely, *sew* (so) *and Romeow* (Romeo) as illustrated in the following cat macros:

Shakespaw in the Park

 Figure 57 (LC 245) and figure 58 (LC 221) One-vowel diphthongs in SE spelt as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats

In Figure 57, the diphthong spelt as one vowel in *Romeo* is spelt as <ow> in *Romeow.* It is possible that the /ow/ in *Romeow* is also a borrowing of a spelling from SE words more accurately reflecting the pronunciation of the diphthong in *Romeo.* For instance, it might be a borrowing from SE word *low* /ˈloʊ/ (GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Furthermore, what makes this diphthong spelling particularly humorous is the onomatopoeic word *meow* embedded in *Romeow* (Wikipedia "Onomatopoeia"). Apart from the onomatopoeic spelling *meow* in *Romeow,* another interesting example appears in the same Lolcat. It is *[s]hakespaw* and is used humorously instead of *Shakespeare. Paw* in *[s]hakespaw* refers to a cat's paw and *shakes* refers to an act of shaking paws by two cats in this romantic love context.

In Figure 58, on the other hand, the one-vowel diphthong in *so* (pronounced as /soʊ/, GA) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") is spelt as a vowel-glide diphthong in *sew.* It is possible that *sew* might be a borrowing of a spelling from the SE word *sew (*/soʊ/, GA) meaning "[t]o make, repair, or fasten by stitching, as with a needle and thread or a sew ing machine" (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"; The Free Dictionary "Sew"). Further more, it seems that the two letters <ew> in *sew* reflect the pronunciation of the two sound diphthong more precisely than the single letter <o> in *so.*

7.7. Vowel-glide diphthongs in SE spelt as single vowels in Lolcats

Previously, the spelling pattern of writing one-vowel SE diphthongs as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats was described. Interestingly, the reversed spelling pattern is also observed, in which diphthongs spelt with a vowel and glide in SE are spelt as a single vowel in Lolcats. Only two examples of this spelling tendency were found in the Lolcats data. Specifically, two instances of *mebbe* (maybe) were detected as shown in the cat macros:

Alternate Universe Lassie Cat Takes Her Time   **Heer, Let Me Gibz U Hiz Number...**

Figure 59 (LC 278) and figure 60 (LC 279) Vowel-glide diphthongs in SE spelt as one-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats

What is interesting, what in SE *maybe* is a diphthong /eɪ/, in *mebbe* is pronounced as /'mɛbi/ reflecting monophthongization (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Additionally, in *mebbe* the letter <e> is used instead of the letters /ay/ in *maybe*, reducing the number of characters by one in comparison to the SE diphthong spelt as <ay> while at the same time the letter <b> is reduplicated, increasing the number of characters in a word. The effect is that the number of characters in *mebbe* remains the same as in *maybe.* Applying two spelling changes, one increasing and one reducing the number of characters in a word, occurs in Lolspeak, but is unlikely in texting aimed at effective communication (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23).

7.8. Patterns of spelling SE diphthongs pronounced as /aɪ/ in Textspeak and Lolspeak

It is interesting to see that the SE diphthongs pronounced as /aɪ/ can be spelt in various ways in the two outputs. According to the thesis data, the most popular way of spelling such diphthongs in Lolcats is to spell them with two vowels. For instance, SE diphthongs spelt with one vowel such as *hi* and *I* might be spelt as *hai* (e.g., LC 94, 149) and *Ai* (e.g., LC 15, 33, 149) in Lolcats. However, there are also other ways of spelling SE diphthongs pronounced as /ai/.

One spelling tendency can be observed when one-vowel diphthong (pronounced as /aɪ/) in SE is spelt as <ah> (pronounced as /ɑː/) in Lolcats (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics"). Two examples of this spelling tendency were found in the Lolcats data. One is *Ahm* (I'm, LC 221)and the other one is *mah* (my, LC 245). The already discussed examples *mah* (my, LC 245) and *Ahm* (I'm, LC 221) (see subsubsection 6.6.3) appear to be phonetic spellings of Texan English (Wikipedia 2015 "Texan English"), where /aɪ/ diphthong is monophthongized to /a:/ (Wikipedia 2015 "Texan English"; Rigsbee, Ken." A dictionary of the Texas language").

Another spelling tendency may be identified when diphthongs written as a single vowel <i> and pronounced as /aɪ/ in SE are spelt as <y> in Textspeak (Frehner 2008: 107) and Lolspeak (LC 236). It was already mentioned that one-vowel diphthongs can be phonetically spelt with two vowels (see subsection 7.5.). For instance, the one-vowel diphthong in *my* standing for the sound /ai/ is phonetically spelt with two vowels <ai> in mai (e.g., LC 7, 20, 76) (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics). However, the opposite spelling process can occur in which the letter /y/ representing the sound /aɪ/ (*PhoTransEdit* "Text to Phonetics") is introduced in the new spelling rather than being dropped as in the case of, for example, *lyk* (like), *tym* (time) and *myn* (mine) (Frehner 2008: 107). Additionally, the final letter <e> is omitted in these words (ibid). It might be expected that such spellings are prevalent in textese owing to the fact they are easy to understand and are combined with the omission of the final letter <e>, reducing the number of characters by one. However, in the texting data, only one such example, *lyk* (like), was found, in the text message:

(47) Y u lyk to punch me I dusnt do anythin to u. Now wt shud I do? (TM 234)

In the Lolcats corpus as well, only one example, *fynd* (find), was identified, as shown in Figure 61:

Read My Whiskers!

Figure 61 (LC 236) Diphthongs pronounced as /aɪ/ in SE spelt as <y> in Lolspeak

8. Overview of all analysed categories

Now that all selected spelling changes have been analysed, a brief overview will be provided in this section.

In total, thirty-three different spelling changes were analysed in this thesis (listed in Tables 1-6 in subsection 2.2). They were grouped into larger categories such as morphological, symbolic (Thurlow 2003), phonological segmental: homophones, phonetic spellings (Cutler 1986: 201), phonological suprasegmental: spellings emulating prosody (Bergs 2003: 60) and undetermined. Of those thirty-three spelling changes, seventeen occur in both textese and in Lolcats, whereas sixteen were observed in only one of the two outputs. Concerning these sixteen spelling changes characteristic for one output only, three out of sixteen spelling changes are distinctive for Textspeak only and thirteen out of sixteen for Lolcats exclusively. These are listed in the table below:

Table 17 Spelling changes exclusive for one output only

Exclusive for textese (three instances found):	Exclusive for Lolcats (thirteen instances found):
Single initialism	t-clippings t-clippings as phonetic spellings
Combined letter/number homophone	d-clippings d-clippings as phonetic spellings
<th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE)→ <v> (only one instance found in texting)	<th> (pronounced as /ð/ in SE) → <d>
	<th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <f>
	<th> (pronounced as /θ/ in SE) → <t>
	/i:/ → <ee>
	/u:/ → <oo>
	Undetermined letter reduplication
	Undetermined diphthong (not phonetically spelt)
	eh/ah-spellings
	undetermined u-spellings (not phonetically spelt)

Every spelling change from the table above was already discussed and analysed, and it was speculated why the particular spelling change appears in the concrete output only. Interestingly, the most frequent spelling changes amongst the spelling changes exclusive for Lolcats are nonstandard th-spellings (<th> spelt as <d>, <f>, <t> accounting for seventy-one instances altogether), spellings with –eh and –ah endings (thirty-nine instances) and the letters <oo> representing the sound /u:/ (thirty-six instances). These spelling changes are the most distinctive spelling changes for Lolspeak only.

While comparing spellings of Lolcats and textese, apart from observing what spelling changes they share in common or which are exclusive for only one of the outputs, it is also

important to look at an overview of all categories and the number of their instances in the two outputs. In Table 18 below are provided the numbers of instances of all analysed spelling changes grouped into larger categories such as morphological, symbolic, phonological and undetermined.

Table 18 Overview of categories and numbers of their occurrences in texting and Lolcats data

Category:	Textspeak	Lolspeak
morphological	22.8095 ‰ (82)	8.2173 ‰ (36)
symbolic	16.6898 ‰ (60)	0.4566 ‰ (2)
phonological: emulated prosody	13.0737 ‰ (47)	4.3369 ‰ (19)
phonological: homophone	6.1196 ‰ (22)	3.4239 ‰ (15)
phonological: phonetic spelling	8.0668 ‰ (29)	62.7711 ‰ (275)
undetermined	0.2782 ‰ (1)	16.8911 ‰ (74)
Total number	67.0376 ‰ (241)	95.0968 ‰ (421)

As Table 18 shows, the total number of all instances of selected categories analysed in the Lolcats corpus (95.0968 instances per 1,000 words) is almost one and one half times higher than the number in the textese corpus (67.0376 instances per 1,000 words). These data results indicate that Lolspeak is more nonstandard than SMS language in terms of spelling, taking the selected categories into consideration.

It is also interesting to observe that even though Lolspeak has a higher total number of instances of all spelling changes per 1,000 words than texting, it has a smaller number of occurrences of morphological, symbolic and phonological (emulated prosody and homophones) spelling changes per 1,000 words in comparison to SMS language. However, it has a significantly higher number of instances of phonological segmental

spelling changes-phonetic spellings and a considerably higher number of undetermined spelling changes per 1,000 words than texting has.

This considerable difference in the total number of spelling changes between the two outputs might be explained on the basis of the purpose each output serves. Specifically, the high number of nonstandard spelling changes in Lolspeak might be a result of the fact that it is aimed at entertainment and mere language play by manipulating the English language on different linguistic levels (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98,104).

Using a greater number of spelling changes in the Lolcats data, as in the case of, for example, phonological segmental spelling changes, phonetic spellings being the most prevalent category in Lolspeak (62.7711 instances of phonetic spellings per 1,000 words), contributes to humour in accordance with its purpose. The data clearly indicate that the cats enjoy spelling words in the ways they are pronounced. In texting, on the other hand, aimed at effective interhuman communication (Frehner 2008: 90), phonetic spellings (8.0668 instances per 1,000 words) tend to be used occasionally by texters to make the reader "'hear' their voice" (Goddard & Geesin 2011: 23), in agreement with Thurlow's fourth sociolinguistic maxim (ibid). This considerably smaller number of phonetic spellings in SMS language in comparison to Lolcats, it seems, might be explained by the fact that too high number of phonetic spellings or of any other nonstandard spelling change, in general, would decrease the efficiency of SMS communication. More precisely, it is highly probable that it would cause difficulty in understanding a text message instantly during everyday communication.

As far as the differences in the numbers of occurrences per 1,000 words of morphological, symbolic, phonological and undetermined categories between the two outputs are concerned, the biggest difference, as has already been noted, is in terms of phonological segmental spelling changes- phonetic spellings. The second largest difference has to do with undetermined spelling changes, followed by symbolic, morphological, phonological, such as emulated prosody (suprasegmental level) and homophones (segmental level), respectively. Interestingly, phonological segmental spelling changes-phonetic spellings and undetermined spelling changes are the most prevalent in Lolcats data, whereas they are one of the least common spelling changes in texting. Symbolic categories, on the other hand, are the second most frequent category in texting data and the least frequent one in Lolcats.

Of the texting data, the most popular spelling change is morphological (22.8095 instances per 1,000 words), followed by symbolic (16.6898 instances per 1,000 words), phonological suprasegmental: emulated prosody (13.0737 instances per 1,000 words), phonological segmental: phonetic spelling (8.0668 instances per 1,000 words), homophone (6.1196 instances per 1,000 words) and undetermined (0.2782 instances per 1,000 words), respectively. In the Lolcats data, in contrast, the most prevalent spelling change is phonological: phonetic spelling (62.7711 instances per 1,000 words), followed by undetermined (16.8911 instances per 1,000 words), morphological (8.2173 instances per 1,000 words), phonological suprasegmental: emulated prosody (4.3369 instances per 1,000 words), phonological segmental: homophone (3.4239 instances per 1,000 words) and symbolic (0.4566 instances per 1,000 words), respectively.

As the data results show, the morphological category is the most dominant in SMS language, and this result might be explained by again considering the main objective of texting, which is to communicate (Frehner 2008: 90). To be more specific, owing to the fact that text messages are restricted in size (Bieswanger 2008: 1) and texters "have only a limited space for their communication", they deliberately attempt to omit some letters (Goddard &Geesin 2011: 22). The omitted letters, such as some vowels in contractions, for instance, do not affect negatively the intelligibility of text messages (Goddard &Geesin 2011: 22; Frehner 2008: 100).

In Lolspeak, the morphological category is the third most frequent category (8.2173 instances per 1,000 words). Although, Lolspeak has fewer instances of morphological spelling changes overall in contrast to texting (22.8095 instances per 1,000 in texting), it has a greater number of g-clippings (3.4239 occurrences per 1,000 words), t-clippings (2.0543 occurrences per 1,000 words) and d-clippings (0.9130 occurrences per 1,000 words). As has already been discussed, it seems that these three types of clippings deliberately contribute to humour in Lolcats, rather than being used to reduce the number of characters in a word, as in texting. Specifically, in Lolspeak these clippings provide a sense of uneducatedness (Frehner 2008: 99) making a cat sound like a baby (see subsubsection 6.1.3.).

Morphological spelling changes, the most frequent spelling change in texting, are followed by symbolic changes. The symbolic spelling changes are so dominant in texting for obvious reasons. To be more specific, as has already been observed, while composing SMS

messages, texters cannot rely "on such extralinguistic cues as facial expression and gesture to aid meaning" (Crystal 2011: 18), as they can in speech (ibid). For this reason they use graphic devices, such as emoticons, to convey emotions (Crystal 2004: 38, 39). This recalls the third of Thurlow's sociolinguistic maxims, that of paralinguistic restitution, which says that "txters *[sic]* need to find ways to replace the aspects of physical communication (such as body language) that are absent" (Goddard & Gessin 2011: 23). In Lolcats, however, emoticons can distract from focusing on the cat and are not necessary, because the cat's expressions are evident in the picture.

Spelling changes emulating prosody take third place among all spelling changes analysed in textese. It is important to stress again here that Textspeak, as a written language, lacks the prosody that is common in face-to-face communication (Crystal 2011: 18, 19). Such features of prosody as intonation, pause, rhythm and tempo are characteristic for speech but difficult to express through written language in texting (ibid). It is for this reason that spelling features such as word or letter reduplication are employed to emulate prosody in textese (Frehner 2008: 103).

Undetermined spelling changes, on the other hand, are almost not present in texting data at all (only 0.2782 instances per 1,000 words) whereas in Lolspeak they are the second most popular spelling change among all analysed categories (16.8911 instances per 1,000 words). It might be concluded that, as has been previously noted, undetermined spelling changes are highly unlikely in SMSspeak, because they make communication more difficult. For instance, nonstandard words such as *noa* (now, LC 149) and *fur* (for, LC 283) would probably not be understood in the context of everyday SMS communication. In Lolcats, on the other hand, it seems that these spelling changes are used deliberately to play with the language for humorous purposes.

Another important issue that is taken into consideration in comparing Lolcats and texting spelling is how different spelling changes (at least two) are combined within one nonstandard word.[5] The concrete examples of such combinations were already discussed. However, it is also interesting to look at an overview of the numbers of instances of

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[5] It is important to stress that while looking at combinations of different (at least two) spelling changes within one nonstandard word, only thirty-three spelling changes were selected for analysis. However, there are also many other spelling changes within nonstandard words that were not analysed in this paper. Thus, it is significant to emphasize that there are even more possible combinations of different spelling changes within one nonstandard word, if all existing possible spelling changes are taken into consideration.

nonstandard words containing at least two different spelling changes within them. The data reveal that Lolcats show more creativity in its combinations of spelling changes in nonstandard words in comparison to textese. Specifically, Lolcats use almost three times more such words (6.3912 occurrences per 1,000 words) in comparison to texting (2.2253 occurrences per 1,000 words) (see Apendix H).

In most data examples, two different spelling changes are combined in one nonstandard word. For instance, in *pleeze* (please, LC 155) the letters <ee> representing the sound /iː/ occur together with a z-spelling. However, the six Lolcats examples are an exception in which three different spelling changes are combined in one nonstandard word, as seen in *buleebz* (believe, LC 279), *sumfin* (something, LC 275), *deez* (these, LC 118), *udder* (other, LC 207), *enuff* (enough, LC 97) and *cuzzin's* (cousin's, LC 279) (see Apendix H). In texting, on the other hand, only one example was found in which three spelling changes are investigated, the nonstandard word *bruv* (brother, TM 180) (see Apendix H).

These combinations of different spelling changes in a word add to the creativity of spelling in Lolcats in accordance with its purpose. In texting, in contrast, it appears that they occur sporadically, because it would be difficult to understand in an instant a word containing multiple spelling changes during communication.

In addition to all this, another difference between the outputs in terms of spelling is the fact that, as was illustrated numerous times throughout this paper, some words are spelt less consistently in Lolcats than they are in texting. To be more specific, it is common for Lolspeak to spell the same SE word in various nonstandard ways as, for instance, is observed in the word *now* spelt as *nao* (LC 125), *nyow* (LC 125), *naw* (LC 216) and *noa* (LC 149) or the SE word *don't* written as *doan* (LC 177), *dun* (LC 279) or *dunt* (LC 162). Another example is the SE word *you* spelt as *yoo* (twelve occurrences, e.g., LC 235, LC 192) and as *u* (seven occurrences, e.g., LC 111) in Lolspeak, while it is spelt only as *u* (thirteen occurrences) in Textspeak. While analysing the data, it was observed that in the Lolcats, 3.6521 SE words were spelt in at least two or more different nonstandard ways per 1,000 words. In SMS language, on the other hand, only 0.5563 such instances per 1,000 words were found. All of these examples are listed here:

Table 19 SE words spelt in at least two different nonstandard ways in Lolcats (sixteen examples found)

SE word	Nonstandard words
don't	doan (LC 177), dunt (LC 162), dun (LC 279)
now	[n]ao (LC 125), nyow (LC 125), naw (LC 216), noa (LC 149, LC 192)
tuna	tuna tuna tuna (LC 50, LC 242), toonah (LC 299), toona (LC 254, 287)
I	Ai (x18, e.g., LC 149, 259), Aih (LC 167, 216, 221, 260, 56), Ais (LC 232), Ahm (I'm, LC 221)
my	mai (x13, e.g., LC 7, LC 20, LC 76), meh (LC 123, 149, 231, 235), mah (LC 245)
the	teh (x20, e.g., LC 220, LC 94), da (x13, e.g., LC 54, 71, 98), de (LC 90, LC 90)
human	hooman (LC 238, 294), hoomin (x10, e.g., 94, 97)
with	wif (GA, LC 93), wid (RP, x2), wiff (GA, LC 111, LC 177)
you	yoo (x12, e.g., LC 125, 149), u (x7, e.g., LC 160)1
forever	purreber (LC 245), forebber (LC 76)
love	luv (LC 191), lubz (LC 122)
believe	beleeb (LC 275), buleebz (LC 279)
please	pleeze (LC 155), pweeze (LC 192)
worry	wurrie (LC 278), wurry (LC 177)
mouth	mouf (LC 91), moufs
stupid	stoopie (LC 10), stoopy (LC 20, LC 97)

Table 20 SE words spelt in at least two different nonstandard ways in texting (two examples found)

SE word	Nonstandard words
because	coz (TM 78, 190), cus (TM 33), cuz (TM 86)
brother	bro (TM 111), bruv (TM 180), blud (TM 147)

The examples in the above tables clearly indicate that spelling in Lolcats is less consistent and at the same time more creative than in textese. While in textese, it seems that spelling the same SE word in various ways is highly unlikely owing to the fact that it could affect comprehensibility of text messages negatively. To be more specific, sending text messages in which, for example, the SE word *now* is spelt as *nao* (LC 125), *naw* (LC 216) *or noa* (LC 149) would cause difficulty for the recipient in understanding the meaning of the word in the context of everyday communication.

9. Conclusion

To conclude, the content of the thesis centered around two research questions involving issues such as how Textspeak and Lolspeak are similar to or different from each other in terms of their usage of selected nonstandard spelling changes and what effects their purposes have on the nonstandard spellings they use.

While discussing nonstandard spellings in the two outputs, it is important to note that almost all of the nonstandard spelling changes selected for analysis in this paper already existed in Netspeak (e.g., chatrooms or emails) or in informal writing before the appearance of Lolspeak and Textspeak (Crystal 2008: 37, 53). However, they are used in novel ways in two different contexts, everyday SMS communication (Crystal 2008: 53) and Lolcats (Fiorentini 2013: 105), as confirmed by the data results.

In addition, through data analysis of three hundred private text messages and three hundred Lolcats, it has been proved that Lolspeak and Textspeak are totally different outputs as far as spelling is concerned, despite various misconceptions that texting is Lolspeak or vice versa (Lefler 2011: 58; *Urban Dictionary* "Lolspeak").

It is possible that these misconceptions might be based on the fact that the two outputs have some language features (in this context spellings) in common. This is clearly shown by the thesis data results, where seventeen out of thirty-three spelling changes selected for the analysis are present in both texting and Lolcats. However, the fact that the two outputs indeed have certain spelling changes in common should not automatically imply that they ought to be perceived as being the same.

Furthermore, the data reveal that some spelling changes appear in one output exclusively. Specifically, three out of thirty-three spelling changes are characteristic for texting exclusively, whereas thirteen out of thirty-three are present only in Lolcats. Of those spelling changes distinctive exclusively for Lolcats, the most prevalent ones are nonstandard th-spellings (seventy-one examples found of <th> spelt as <d>, <f>, <t>), followed by spellings with –ah , –eh endings (thirty-nine examples) and the letters <oo> standing for /u:/ (thirty six examples). These spelling changes appear to be emblematic for Lolspeak. It was speculated that the reasons why they are so popular in Lolcats might be various.

Concerning nonstandard th-spellings, they tend to be connotated with lack of education and illiteracy (Wikipedia 2015 "African American Vernacular English"; Wikipedia 2015 "Th-fronting"; Urban Dictionary."Da"). For this reason, it is possible that they almost do not occur in texting data at all (only one example was found) because the majority of the texters who provided their text messages have an educated background studying linguistics or languages. Perhaps, while communicating via text messages they pay more attention to the language they use. In Lolspeak the majority of Cheezpeeps who post their Lolcats are, as the data indicate, also well educated. However, they use the nonstandard th-spellings deliberately in Lolcats to make a cat sound uneducated, contributing to the humour. Such nonstandard th-spellings resemble pronounciation of the baby talk or foreigner talk that Lolspeak tends to be compared to (Ferguson 1968: 5 in Lefler 2011: 2). While –eh or –ah- spellings, where for instance, the final <y> is written as either <ah> or <eh> might be borrowings from Leetspeak, which Lolcats also tend to be compared to (*Hf-leet.forumotion.net.* 2014. "Jessie Babeh Have You Ever Loved Somebody So Much", Wikipedia. 2015. "Teh").

What is also significant to mention is that, as has been noted numerous times, the purposes of the two outputs determine what nonstandard spelling changes are used in

them and how they are used. Specifically, as the data clearly indicate, the fact that Lolspeak is aimed at mere language play and entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98) makes its spelling more creative in comparison to textese . Textspeak, in contrast, uses its spellings for more pragmatic reasons, viz., to communicate (Frehner 2008: 90). The texters attempt to use space in an economical way in text messages limited by size restrictions (Bieswanger 2008: 1; Goddard &Geesin 2011: 22) without negatively impacting comprehensibility during everyday communication (Goddard &Geesin 2011: 22). For this reason, as the data results show, the morphological category is the most dominant in SMS language.

In addition, Lolcats data contain almost one and one half times more (95.0968 instances per 1,000 words) of all occurrences of the selected thirty-three spelling changes in comparison to text messages (67.0376 instances per 1,000 words). Furthermore, in Lolcats almost three times more creative combinations of at least two different spelling changes in one nonstandard word are found than in texting. What is even more, Lolspeak has less consistent spelling than texting. Specifically, it contains almost seven times as many of the SE words spelt in at least two different nonstandard ways than texting.

What is also significant to mention again is that very little research has been conducted on spellings of diphthongs in Lolcats (Gunsing 2009: 31). Diphthongs phonetically spelt and undetermined diphthongs (not phonetically spelt) combined are the second most frequent category (14.3803 instances per 1,000 words) after nonstandard th-spellings (16.2063 instances per 1,000 words) in the entire data. For this reason, the extensive part of the thesis was a thorough analysis of nonstandard spellings of diphthongs in Lolcats.

Through data analysis, it was discovered that Cheezpeeps creatively play with three forms of SE diphthong spelling. In SE diphthongs can be spelt as one vowel, two vowels (Wikipedia 2015 "Diphthong") or as vowel and glide ("Sounds of English: Nasals, Liquids, & Glides; Gunsing 2009: 31),

What Cheezpeeps attempt to do is to change every SE diphthong spelling into a different diphthong spelling chosen out of these three SE forms of diphthong spelling. For instance, three pairs of opposite patterns were observed. The first pair is to spell SE vowel-glide diphthongs as two-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats and vice versa. The second pair is to write SE two-vowel diphthongs as one-vowel diphthongs in Lolcats and vice versa. The last third pattern is to spell SE one-vowel diphthongs as vowel-glide diphthongs in Lolcats and

vice versa. These patterns are perfect examples of language play in Lolcats. Whereas in text messages they almost do not occur at all owing to the fact they would not contribute to the efficieny of SMS communication: they often add extra characters to a word and it would be difficult to understand them in the context of SMS communication.

I hope that this work on nonstandard spellings in Lolspeak and Textspeak might be of use to future linguists. As Internet language constantly evolves and changes (Crystal 2011: 57) it would be interesting to observe how it is reflected in spelling in these outputs in the future. My data could be of use to linguists who would like to compare spelling in texting and Lolcats after time passes, and how it evolves. Furthermore, the focus of the thesis was exclusively on the orthographic aspect: spelling linked to other language areas such as phonology or morphology. However, the research possibilities are endless; not only spelling, but also perhaps some grammatical issues can become the principal focus of analysis. In addition, texting and Lolspeak might be compared to some other mode of CMC, such as that of emails or chatrooms.

10. References

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11. Appendices

Appendix A: Abstract

This thesis focuses on the nonstandard spellings in Lolcats and Textspeak. Specifically, it investigates how and to what extent Textspeak - the language used in text messages (Pathan 2012: 1), and Lolspeak (Lolcats, specifically) - funny playful language in captions of cats' photos (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98) - differ from or resemble each other in their use of nonstandard spellings. Thus, the thesis makes an innovative comparison of nonstandard spellings in Lolcats and Textspeak.

Additionally, the thesis examines how the difference in purpose between the two language types influences the types of nonstandard spellings used in them.

Three hundred authentic private text messages and three hundred authentic Lolcat messages were retrieved through a designed online questionnaire (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N) and the "I Can Has Cheezburger" (www.cheezburger.com) website, respectively, along with some demographic and sociolinguistic information regarding its participants. Some examples of such actual text messages and Lolcats (in the form of pictures) are presented and analysed.

A list of thirty-three spelling changes (categories) was prepared to be identified in the data. The spelling changes are organized into larger categories, including morphological (Plester et al. 2009: 151; Crystal 2008: 42); symbolic (Thurlow & Brown 2003: 6-20); phonological suprasegmental: emulated prosody (Frehner 2008: 103); phonological segmental: homophones (Thurlow & Brown 2003: 6-20) ; phonetic spellings (Frehner 2008: 104, 108; Mrázová 2013: 26,27; Gunsing 2009: 15, 22) and undetermined.

It was observed that seventeen out of the thirty-three spelling changes occur in both Textspeak and Lolcats, while sixteen occur only in either Lolspeak or Texspeak.

The data analysis reveals that Lolcats are more nonstandard and creative in terms of analysed spelling changes in comparison with Textspeak. Two criteria were used while examining spelling creativity: consistency of spelling and investigation of combinations of at least two or more spelling changes within one nonstandard word.

Additionally, it was found while investigating all the principal categories that the Lolcats

data contain fewer instances of morphological, symbolic, and phonological (emulated prosody and homophones) spelling changes than the Textspeak data, but considerably more occurrences of the phonological (phonetic spellings) and undetermined categories in comparison to Textspeak.

These results appear to be explainable in terms of the different purposes that Lolspeak and Textspeak serve. On the one hand, they are both forms of human communication (Frehner 2008: 90; Crystal 2004: 97; Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). However, the main objective of Lolspeak, which is non-dialogic, is to play with the language for fun and entertainment (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98) whereas the main purpose of Textspeak is efficient communication of content in the form of a dialogue with another texter (Frehner 2008: 112; Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23).

In brief, the data analysis of thirty-three spelling changes reveals that Lolcats and Textspeak are very different in terms of the analysed nonstandard spellings (despite having seventeen spelling changes in common). In addition, the difference in purpose between the two does affect the types of spelling changes used in them, their creativity, and their frequency of occurrence.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation konzentriert sich auf die nicht standardmäßigen Schreibweisen in Lolcats und Textspeak. Konkret wird untersucht, wie und inwieweit sich Textspeak - die in Textnachrichten verwendete Sprache (Pathan 2012: 1), und Lolspeak (speziell Lolcats) - eine lustige, spielerische Sprache in Bildunterschriften von Katzenfotos (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98) - in der Verwendung von nicht standardmäßigen Schreibweisen unterscheiden oder ähneln. Daher macht die Dissertation einen innovativen Vergleich von nicht-standardisierten Schreibweisen in Lolcats und Textspeak.

Darüber hinaus untersucht die Dissertation, wie der Unterschied in der Zweckbestimmung zwischen den beiden Sprachtypen Einfluss auf die Arten der nicht standardmäßigen Schreibweisen hat, die in ihnen verwendet werden.

Dreihundert authentische private Textnachrichten und dreihundert authentische Lolcat-Nachrichten wurden über einen entworfenen Online-Fragebogen (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K9T3N8N) und die "I Can Has Cheezburger" (www.cheezburger.com) -Website abgerufen, zusammen mit einigen demographischen und soziolinguistischen Informationen über die Teilnehmer. Einige Beispiele für solche aktuellen Textnachrichten und Lolcats (in Form von Bildern) werden vorgestellt und analysiert.

Eine Liste von 33 Rechtschreibänderungen (Kategorien) wurde erstellt, um in den Daten identifiziert zu werden. Die Änderungen in der Rechtschreibung sind in größere Kategorien eingeteilt, einschließlich morphologischer (Plester et al. 2009: 151; Crystal 2008: 42); symbolischer (Thurlow & Brown 2003: 6-20); phonologischer, suprasegmentaler, emulierter Prosodie (Frehner 2008: 103); phonologischer, segmentaler, homophoner (Thurlow & Brown 2003: 6-20); phonetischer (Frehner 2008: 104, 108; Mrázová 2013: 26,27; Gunsing 2009: 15, 22) und unbestimmter Schreibweisen.

Es wurde beobachtet, dass siebzehn der dreiunddreißig Rechtschreibänderungen sowohl in Textspeak als auch in Lolcats auftreten, während sechzehn nur in Lolspeak oder Textspeak vorkommen.

Die Datenanalyse zeigt, dass Lolcats im Vergleich zu Textspeak nicht dem Standard entsprechen und kreativer sind, was die analysierten Rechtschreibveränderungen angeht. Bei der Prüfung der Rechtschreibkreativität wurden zwei Kriterien herangezogen: die

Konsistenz der Rechtschreibung und die Untersuchung von Kombinationen aus mindestens zwei oder mehr Rechtschreibänderungen innerhalb eines nicht standardmäßigen Wortes.

Zusätzlich wurde bei der Untersuchung aller Hauptkategorien festgestellt, dass die Lolcats-Daten weniger morphologische, symbolische und phonologische (emulierte Prosodie und Homophone) Rechtschreibveränderungen enthalten als die Textspeak-Daten, aber wesentlich mehr Vorkommen der phonologischen (phonetischen Schreibweisen) und unbestimmten Kategorien im Vergleich zu Textspeak aufweisen.

Diese Ergebnisse scheinen in Bezug auf die verschiedenen Zwecke, denen Lolspeak und Textspeak dienen, erklärbar zu sein. Einerseits sind sie beide Formen menschlicher Kommunikation (Frehner 2008: 90; Crystal 2004: 97; Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98). Das Hauptziel von Lolspeak, das nicht-dialogisch ist, ist jedoch das Spiel mit der Sprache zum Spaß und zur Unterhaltung (Gawne & Vaughan 2011: 98), während das Hauptziel von Textspeak die effiziente Kommunikation von Inhalten in Form eines Dialogs mit einem anderen Texter ist (Frehner 2008: 112; Goddard & Geesin 2011: 22, 23).

Kurz gesagt, die Datenanalyse von 33 Rechtschreibänderungen zeigt, dass Lolcats und Textspeak sehr unterschiedlich in Bezug auf die analysierten Nicht-Standard-Schreibweisen sind (obwohl siebzehn Rechtschreibänderungen gemeinsam sind). Darüber hinaus wirkt sich der Unterschied in der Zweckbestimmung zwischen den beiden auf die Art der in ihnen verwendeten Rechtschreibänderungen, ihre Kreativität und ihre Häufigkeit aus.

Appendix B:

A survey on the nonstandard spellings in Lolcats and Textspeak

I am student at the English department at the University of Vienna. I am writing Master thesis on 'Nonstandard spellings in Lolcats and Textspeak'. The purpose of my study is to analyze nonstandard spellings of Lolspeak (hilarious captions written to cat pictures) and Textspeak (the variant of English typically used in SMS messages). In order to be able to complete the empirical part of my thesis, I have to collect authentic text messages. Not much research has been conducted on the creativity of private text messages so far which, makes this study particularly interesting and useful for other researchers.

The aim of the questionnaire to collect authentic text messages and to gather sociolinguistic information about participants to examine how sociolinguistic factors (such as age, gender, level of education etc.) influence the nonstandard spellings of Textspeak. All data collected will be anonymized before use. This survey is not a test and therefore there are no wrong answers. Please get in touch if you have any further questions or anything is unclear in regard to the questionnaire. Thank you for your participantion and for helping me complete my study by taking part in this online survey.

I.   Authentic   SMS   messages   collection

Please provide one or more of the last text messages you have sent to other people without using predictive texting software. Please copy text messages exactly as they are, without editing. The characteristic feature of Textspeak is the breaking of grammatico-lexical rules, resulting in deviation from Standard English. Most importantly, breaking the language rules in SMS language is not a sign of illiteracy, but rather shows an extensive knowledge of language and the ability to play with it in a creative way.

Please provide only single text messages restricted to 160 characters with plain text, without videos, animations, or melodies. Along with each text message please provide:
- the intended recipient of the message (details about the intended recipient : not the real name but your relation with recipient e.g. friend/cousin/co-worker, or such)

- the purpose of the message
- the kind of device the text message was sent from

I. Asking for sociolinguistic information to examine how it affects the creativity of Textspeak

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is your gender ?

☐ male

☐ female

2. What is your age ?

[   ]

3. What is your education level ?

[   ]

4. Which subjects, if any, do/did you study ?

[   ]

5. What is your current occupation ?

[   ]

6. What is your country of origin ?

[   ]

7. What is your country of residence (indicate state/province/region, city) ?

[   ]

8. What is your native language ?

[   ]

9. Do you speak any other languages ? If yes, indicate which languages ?

[text input box]

10. How often do you text ? Indicate how many times do you text :

per hour: [input box]

per day: [input box]

per week: [input box]

per month: [input box]

11. Why do you text ? What is the reason and motivation behind your texting ? Please check one or more of the following:

☐ It is efficient.

☐ It is cheap.

☐ It is less time-consuming than telephone or email.

☐ I enjoy texting.

☐ I enjoy playing with language.

☐ Because other people do it.

☐ Any other reason. Please state which:

. [input box]

Thank you for your cooperation. All information will be anonymized. Some text messages may be quoted in my thesis as examples, but any identifying information they may contain will be removed. As a sign of my gratitude, I will acknowledge you by name in my thesis, should you wish. If you are interested, I can also send a summary of my research findings. Contact me at polakowska_22@hot mail.com

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SV2HZX5

Appendix C: Categories involving morphological characteristics

Omitted letters: initialism single in Textspeak (seven instances):

b (be)
w/ (with)
E (first letter of the person's name) x 3
v (very)
v (very)

Omitted letters: initialism single in Lolspeak: no examples found

Omitted letters: initialism multiple in texting (thirty-four instances):

btw (by the way) x4
fb (facebook)
Ikr (I know, right)
HK (Hong Kong)
idk (I don't know)
JFC (Jesus Fucking Christ)
lol (lauging out loud) x13
lolcano, wtf (what the fuck)
lvl (laugh very loud)
omg x 3
Mlp (my little pony)
rn (right now)
smh (shaking my head)
Syl (see you later)
tbh (to be honest)
Wtf (what the fuck)

Omitted letters: initialism multiple in Lolcats (three instances):

brb, brb, lolmachine

Omitted letters: contraction in text messages (twelve instances):

apt (apartament)
congrats (congratulations)
pics (pictures)
yh (yeah)
Slp (sleep)
Sry (sorry) x 2
Thx
wt (what)
yh (yeah)
yr (year)
BROS (brothers)

Omitted letters: contraction in Lolcats (five instances):

hapnd (happened)
s'posed (supposed)
Srsly, SRSLY (seriously)
Sry

Omitted letters: shortening in Textspeak (twenty-one instances):

apt (apartament)
coz x 2
cus
cuz (because)
bro (brother)
bruv (brother)
def (definitely)
iight (alright)
n (and) x 7

postgrad (postgraduation)
prof (professor)
Steph (Stephanie)
Wed (Wednesday) 2x

Omitted letters: G-clipping/G-clipping as a phonetic spelling in texting (eight instances):

anythin
doinn
goin feelin
leavin
lovin killin
makin'

Omitted letters: G-clipping/G-clipping as a phonetic spelling in Lolcats (fifteen instances):

carryin
cheatin'
flippin'
givin
groomin
Lookin'
lookin'
nuthin
readin'
sayin
sumfin
sleepwalkin'
thinkin'
wearin, bathin

Omitted letters: d/t-clipping (d/t-clipping as a phonetic spelling) in texting: no examples found in texting

Omitted letters: d/t-clipping (d/t-clipping as a phonetic spelling) in Lolcats (thirteen instances):

brekfus (breakfast)
doan don dun (dont)
nex (next) ol' (old)
Jus (just) x 3
An (and) x 3
mus (must)

Appendix D: Symbolic categories

Symbol: emoticon in Textspeak (thirty-nine instances):

=/
(:
(:
(:
:(
:(
:(
:(
:-(
:(
:)
:)

:)
:)
:)
:)
:)
:)
:-)
:-)
:)
:)
:)
:), :D
:), ;D
:):):)
:-/
:p
:P
;)
;)
;-)
\ô/
^^
xD
xD
xD

Symbol: emoticon in Lolcats (one instance):

<3

Symbol: typographic symbol in text messages (twenty-one instances):

& (and)

@ (at)
x (x10)
xx (x3)
xxx (x2)
Xxx
xxxx (x3)

Symbol: typographic symbol in Lolcats (one instance):

zzzzzzzzz

Appendix E: Phonological suprasegmental categories (emulated prosody)

Emulated prosody: letter reduplication in text messages (twenty-six instances):

baaaaang
Aaah
ahhh
Aiyaaaaah; studyyyyy
boiiii
goooo
hahaaa
hoooooot
knooow
laate
naaah
Ohhhhh, yeaaaaaaah
Sheeeeeeeeed
Oooh
soo
sooo
sooo
SOOO
Trueeeee

vroooom vroooom;
iiiiiiiiiiikkkk
wantttttt

Emulated prosody: letter reduplication in Lolcats (eleven instances):

Haiii
NOOOOO
NOOOOO
N-o-o-o-o-o-o
Ooooohhh
Purrrrchase
Paaaass, Paaaass

Emulated prosody: word reduplication in text messages (eighteen instances):

Grumble grumble
Haha x 8
wobbly wobbly
hahaaa
hahaha
hahaha
hahahaha
hahahahahahhahah
Knock knock
SHUT UP
SHUT UP
Vroooom
vroooom

Emulated prosody: word reduplication in Lolcats (five instances):

Blah Blah
Tuna Tuna Tuna
Tuna, tuna, tuna

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Yeh yeh kiss kiss

Emulated prosody: word(s) written in asterisks in texting (three instances):

belts out song lyrics like a dork
crash
baaaaang

Emulated prosody: word(s) written in asterisks in Lolcats (three instances):

CRASH
sigh
CHEEZ*GURGLE*

Appendix F: Phonological segmental categories (homophones)

Single letter homophone in Textspeak (nineteen instances):

r (are) x5
u (you) x13
Y (why)

Single letter homophone in Lolcats (eight instances):

R (are)
u (you) x2
U (you) x5

Single number homophone in Textspeak (one instance):

2 (too)

Single number homophone in Lolcats (seven instances):

2 (to)
2 (to)
2 (to)

2 (to)
2 (to)
2 (to)
2 (too)

Combined number/letter homophone in Lolspeak: no examples found

Combined number/letter homophone in Textspeak (two instances):

2zday (Tuesday), 2zday (Tuesday)

Appendix G: Phonological segmental categories (phonetic spellings)

Letter reduplication: /i:/ → <ee> in Textspeak: no examples found

Letter reduplication: /i:/ → <ee> in Lolcats (ten instances):

deez (these)
pleeze (please)
pweeze (please), leeb (leave)
dreemz (dreams)
teecher (teacher)
leepid (leaped)
beleeb (believe)
buleebz (believe)
meen (mean)

Letter reduplication: /u:/→ <oo> in Textspeak: no examples found

Letter reduplication: /u:/ → /oo/ in Lolcats (thirty-six instances):

hooman (human)
HOOMAN (human)
hoomin x4 (human)
hoomin x6 (human)
Hoomins (human)
Hoomins (human)
Kyootness (cuteness)

kyootness (cuteness)
cyootest (cutest)
stoopie (stupid)
stoopy (stupid)
Stoopy (stupid)
toona (tuna)
toona (tuna)
toonah (tuna)
troof (truth)
yoo (you) x12

/ɜː/ → <u> in texting (one instance):

gurl (girl)

/ɜː/ → <u> in Lolcats (five instances):

wurrie (worry)
wurry (worry, GA)
furst (first)
purrfectly (perfectly)
wurld (world)

<u>→ /ʌ/ in text messages (three instances):

dusnt

bruv

blud (RP)

<u>→ /ʌ/ in Lolcats (fourteen instances):

cuzzin'z (cousin's)
duz (does)
fwum (from, GA)
sum (some)
sum

ub (of, GA)
ub (of, GA)
wun (one)
Wun (one)
wuz (GA)
Wuz (GA)
sumfin
nuthin
udder (other)

<u> → /ə/ in text messages (one instance):

dinurz (dinner)

<u>→ /ə/ in Lolcats (fourteen instances):

brekfus (breakfast)
buleebz (believe, GA)
Englund (England)
enuff (enough, GA)
kwestshun (question)
purreber (forever)
lubz (love, GA)
luv (love, GA)
Tundurstarms (Thuderstorms)
WELCUM (welcome)
whut (what)(GA)
whut (what) (GA)
DUN (done) (GA)
Ebul (evil)

<th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) → <d> in Textspeak : no examples found

<th> (representing the sound /ð/ in SE) → <d> in Lolcats (fifty-three instances):

da (the) x13

DIS (this)
dat (that) x9
DAT
dis
der (there)
Dats
de, de (the)
dem (them)x3
der (there)
dere (there)
dey
dey (they)
dis x 11
dose (those)
den (then)
doze (those)
udder (other)
wid, wid (with, RP)

<th> (representing the sound /ð/in SE) → <v> in Textspeak (one instance):

bruv (brother)

<th> (representing the sound /ð/in SE) → <v> in Lolspeak: no examples found

<th> (representing the sound /θ/ in SE) → <f> in Textspeak: no examples found

<th> (representing the sound /θ/ in SE) → <f> in Lolspeak (fifteen instances):

bowf (both) free (three)
Erf (Earth)
Fank (thank) x2 wif (with, GA) x2

fings (things)
Fink (think)
free (three)
mouf (mouth)
moufs (mouth)
troof (truth)
wiff (with, GA) x2

<th> (representing the sound /θ/in SE) → <t> in Textspeak: no examples found

<th> (representing the sound /θ/in SE) → <t> in Lolspeak (three instances):

ting (thing), tree (three), Tundurstarms (Thunderstorms)

z-spelling in Textspeak (twelve instances):

2zday (Tuesday) x2
coz x2
iz x2
Cuz ,cus
howz
howz
I'z, dinurz

z-spelling in Lolspeak (forty-eight instances):

CHEEZ*GURGLE*
cheezburger
cheezburger
Cheezburgers x3
cozy (cosy)
dayz (days)
doze (those)
dreemz (dreams)

Eyez (eyes), haz (has)
Gibz (give), hiz, seemz (seems), alweyz (always), buleebz (believe), cuzzin'z (cousin's)
haz, tailz
Howz, iz, paparazziz (paparazzi), takingz (taking), stalkingz (stalking), movez (move)
hugz, hugz
pawz (paws)
iz x12
iz, ambulintz (ambulance)
lubz (love)
pweeze (please)
therz
wuntz (want)
wuz, exercize

Diphthongs phonetically spelt in Textspeak (three instances):

mayk (make, GA)
Ohai (Oh, hello)
lyk (like)

Diphthongs phonetically spelt in Lolcats (forty-nine instances):

Ai (I) x18
mai (my) x13
DRAI (dry)
owt (out, RP)
Haiii (hi)
Hai
Ohai (Oh, hello)
Ohai

Romeow (Romeo)
sew (so)
fynd (find)
grate (great)
mah (my)
Ahm (I'm)
Aih (I) x5
Ais (I)

Appendix H: Undetermined categories:

undetermined u-spelling (not phonetically spelt) in texting: no examples found

undetermined u-spelling (not phonetically spelt) in Lolcats (five instances):

dun (don't, GA)
dunt (don't, GA)
fur (for)
purty (party)
wuntz (want, GA)

Undetermined diphthongs (not phonetically spelt) in Textspeak:no examples found

Undetermined diphthongs (not phonetically spelt) in Lolcats (fourteen instances):

doan (don't)
dun (dont) mebbe (maybe) x2
nao, nyow (now)
naw (now)
noa (now)
noa (now)
noep (nope) noe (no)
taeking (taking)

okai (okay)	
a (ah)	

Undetermined letter reduplication in Textspeak (one instance): doinn (doing)

Undetermined letter reduplication in Lolcats (sixteen instances):

Existing letter reduplicated		New letter introduced and reduplicated	
ennymoar (anymore)	purreber (forever)	enuff (enough)	udder (other)
purrfectly (perfectly)	reddy (ready)	wiff (with) x2	forebber (forever)
rawrr (roar)	mebbe (maybe) x2	Hebben (heaven)	habbint (haven't)
		Iffen (even)	cuzzin's (cousin's)

Eh/ah-spellings in Textspeak: no examples found

Eh/ah-spellings in Lolcats (thirty-nine instances):

<y>→ <eh>/<ah>
kittah
KITTEH
Kitteh x 7
Kittehs x2
Kitteh's
mah (my)

<eh> in *teh* (twenty occurrences)

<a>→ <ah>   <e>→ <eh>
ah (a)
meh (me) x4
toonah (tuna)

Appendix I:

Overview of all instances of nonstandard words containing at least two different spelling changes within them in Lospeak and Textspeak

Textspeak (eight instances)	Lolspeak (twenty-eight instances)
apt (apartament)	brekfus (breakfast)
coz (because)	doan (don't)
cuz (because)	dun (don't)
bruv (brother)	haiii (hi)
baaaaang	CHEEZ*GURGLE*
2zday (Tuesday, x2)	deez (these)
dinurz (dinner)	pleeze (please)
	pweeze (please)
	dreemz (dreams)
	buleebz (believe)
	toonah (tuna)
	troof (truth)
	cuzzin's (cousin's)
	duz (does)
	wuz (was, GA, x2)
	sumfin (something)
	udder (other)

	enuff (enough)
	purreber (forever)
	purrfectly (perfectly)
	lubz (love)
	doze (those)
	udder (other)
	wiff (with, GA, x2)
	Tundurstarms (thunderstorms)
	doan (don't)
	mebbe (maybe, x2)

Overview of all instances of nonstandard words containing at least two different spelling changes within them in Lospeak

(words marked in red bold contain three different spelling changes in them, whereas words in black bold contain two spelling changes within them)

brekfus (breakfast):
<u> → /ə/ + t-clipping (or t-clipping as a phonetic spelling)
doan (don't):
undetermined diphthong + t-clipping (or t-clipping as a phonetic spelling)
dun (don't):
<u>→ /ə/ (GA) + + t-clipping (or t-clipping as a phonetic spelling)
haiii (hi):
diphthong phonetically spelt + emulated prosody: letter reduplication
CHEEZ*GURGLE*:
z-spelling (<s> → <z>) + emulated prosody: word in asterisks

deez (these):

<th> → <d> + /iː/ → <ee> + z-spelling

pleeze (please):

/iː/ → <ee> + z-spelling

pweeze:

/iː/ → <ee> + z-spelling

dreemz (dreams):

/iː/ → <ee> + z-spelling

buleebz (believe):

/iː/ → <ee> + z-spelling+ /ə/→ <u> (GA)

toonah (tuna):

/uː/→ <oo> + ah-spelling (<a>→ <ah>)

troof (truth):

/uː/→ <oo> + <th> → <f>

cuzzin's (cousin's):

/ʌ/→ <u> + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>) + undetermined letter reduplication

duz (does):

/ʌ/→ <u> + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

wuz (was, x2):

/ʌ/→ <u> (GA) + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

sumfin (something):

/ʌ/→ <u> + <th> → <f> + g-clipping/g-clipping as a phonetic spelling

udder (other):

/ʌ/→ <u> + <th> → <d> + undetermined letter reduplication

enuff (enough):

/ə/→ <u> (GA) + <th>→ <f> + undetermined letter reduplication

purreber (forever):

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/ə/→ <u> + undetermined letter reduplication

purrfectly (perfectly):

/ɜː/ → <u> + undetermined letter reduplication

lubz (love):

/ə/ → <u> + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

doze (those):

<th> → <d> + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

wiff (with, x2):

<th> → <f> (GA) + undetermined letter reduplication

Tundurstarms (thunderstorms):

<th> → <t> + /ə/ → <u>

mebbe (maybe, x2):

undetermined diphthong + undetermined letter reduplication

Overview of all instances of nonstandard words containing at least two different spelling changes within them in Textspeak

(words marked in red bold contain three different spelling changes in them, whereas words in black bold contain two spelling changes within them)

apt (apartament):

omitted letters: clipping + omitted letters: contraction

coz (because):

omitted letters: clipping + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

cuz (because):

omitted letters: clipping + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

bruv (brother):

omitted letters: clipping + /ʌ/→ <u> + <th> → <v>

baaaaang:

emulated prosody: letter reduplication + emulated prosody: word written in asterisks

2zday (Tuesday, x2):

number homophone + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

dinurz (dinner):

/ə/→ <u> + z-spelling (<s>→ <z>)

Appendix J: Lolcats data

Lolcat 1. http://cheezburger.com/8083748096?ref=rightarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 2. http://cheezburger.com/8078627072?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 3. http://cheezburger.com/8116488192?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 4. http://cheezburger.com/8086917888?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 5. http://cheezburger.com/8090958592?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 6. http://cheezburger.com/8091723008?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 7. http://cheezburger.com/8093484032?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 8. http://cheezburger.com/8092151808?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 9. http://cheezburger.com/8094530560?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 10. http://cheezburger.com/8093957376?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (1March 2013).
Lolcat 11. http://cheezburger.com/8094843648?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 12. http://cheezburger.com/8094742272?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 13. http://cheezburger.com/8101248768?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 14. http://cheezburger.com/8098810112?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 15. http://cheezburger.com/8099057408?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 16. http://cheezburger.com/8094404096?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 17. http://cheezburger.com/8103047168?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2March 2014).
Lolcat 18. http://cheezburger.com/8103090432?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 19. http://cheezburger.com/8102744576?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 20. http://cheezburger.com/7145333248?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (2 March 2014).
Lolcat 21. http://cheezburger.com/8104855296?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 22. http://cheezburger.com/8110377216?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 23. http://cheezburger.com/8110878976?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 24. http://cheezburger.com/8111648512?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 25. http://cheezburger.com/8111409152?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 26. http://cheezburger.com/8113444096?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 27. http://cheezburger.com/8114962688?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 28. http://cheezburger.com/8116235008?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 29. http://cheezburger.com/8116326912?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 30. http://cheezburger.com/8119680512?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (3 March 2014).
Lolcat 31. http://cheezburger.com/8120646144?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (4 March 2014).
Lolcat 32. http://cheezburger.com/8120899840?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (4 March 2014).
Lolcat 33. http://cheezburger.com/8120940800?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (4 March 2014).
Lolcat 34. http://cheezburger.com/8123289344?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (4 March 2014).
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Lolcat 300. http://cheezburger.com/8347319296?ref=leftarrow&siteId=15632 (25 June 2014).

Appendix K: SMS data

Text message 1: Thx!
Text message 2: hahaha that'll be effective
Text message 3: They timed that well....omg sooo stereotypical! My brother never watches it :p my dad is an i was earlier but game is gonna go on forever.
Text message 4: Alright I'm leaving my apt now and heading to coolbeans area
Text message 5: Mmmhmmm. A great specimen
Text message 6: All done! Not fantastic, but helpful discussion about experiments and they'll pass me :-) now for a catch-up worth mum. I love you. E x
Text message 7: OK, coming down. Sorry to keep you waiting.
Text message 8: If you are off tomorrow you will have to call ilc to cancel things because trudie will be there. Hope youre feeling better xxx
Text message 9: howz things?
Text message 10: howz things?
 Text message 11: Right, I'm in the postgrad space on level 5. You'll need your student card to get in, and I'm on the left when you come in the door
Text message 12: yes speak in morning glad inky better x
Text message 13: Good! Just finished swim and coffee.
Text message 14: Not much. A little work and hoping my check arrives. In other , same shit, different day
Text message 15: i just love the "i love you tim". could she be more of a mum??
Text message 16: OH MY GOSH i haven't actually seen it yet but i'm SUPER PSYCHED and i'll send you a ridiculous thank-you card asap also i love you v much.
Text message 17: Institute tonight??
Text message 18: :P I wanted to see you.
Text message 19: Hi there, Just checked & she said nope, didn't have it
Text message 20: Traditional clothes only for ceremonies
Text message 21: So we are back in town! We've got your tupperware, tools, and a bag of

veggie straws for you! Let me know if you want to come swimming tonight!

Text message 22: Yeah you'd better wait

Text message 23: Oh, neither my phone nor my iPod said I had a message. I thought you fell asleep.

Text message 24: Hey. You signed us up for watering the garden tomorrow. What time are we doing that?

Text message 25: I am done after the 17th so whatever suits you. Or im also home for a few days before mark central now. I go home april 26. Your choice

Text message 26: Aiyaaaaah I don't want to studyyyyy

Text message 27: I thought we had agree d on 2.30 pm, but 2.00 is fine, though I may be a bit late. Did you mean outside or inside of building D in front of the info point?

Text message 28: Of course Miggy went to picnic day instead of Cal Day...

Text message 29: It was tasty but hoooooot xD

Text message 30: But those are so counter intuitive!

Text message 31: Indeed. I'm scared to death you know

Text message 32: Hey Chi, I haven't seen you in ages. What are you up to for lunch? Keen to grab a bite somewhere?

Text message 33: Bit wierd xi don't know what it is, but there's something about him that screams sxi, its the way he acts i think,cus although i find loads of peeps on there tellybox attractive its rare i find them sxy i honestly cant wait now xD xxxxx

Text message 34: Darn it that's kind of far... :(

Text message 35: That would b swell!!! The tv has a usb port. It's a blu:sens n it looks brand new. The box s still here

Text message 36: Hiya, so you asked me out and then you backed out. Can I know the reasons why? I'm not angry or anything, just out of curiosity.

 Text message 37: Well the dinner I made is one of he terrible pasta failures only your father would appreciate

Text message: 38: Me: Hi 9:57

Text message 39: Where r u?

Text message 40: Id rather not, but if you can't find anyone else I will.

Text message 41: I am waiting right outside walgreens where r u?

Text message 42: Say word. With that nigga and Revis the D would be beast.

Text message 43: Ikr?! I mean, I didn't take it seriously, but still not okay

Text message 44: Ah...I get it....of course....I will pay dinner and drinks

Text message 45: Haha this session is falling apart around me... Ok well if you can do Tuesday, come on Thursday if you can and if not I'll make something up as I go along :) thanks for letting me know.

Text message 46: There's a german board gamenight while you're here wanna go?

Text message 47: Yes, it's realistic but ahhh just want to knock their heads together

Text message 48: No worries, I speak swype :)

Text message 49: We are getting a refund if $36 from Verizon btw

Text message 50: Highway is a goddamn parking lot again

Text message 51: Yea it aint too bad, like my sister just sleeps most of that day hahaaa. wanna go for a weekend away somewhere nice like devon but aint got anything solid.

Text message 52: Nah it's alright. Keep it simple, I dislike when people segregate.

Text message 53: Have you seen the music video to fancy? It is clueless!

Text message 54: Hello, just going to get car. If you're back before me could you get washing out please? I love you! E x x

Text message 55: Ugh. They must have reset things for the World Cup semifinals.

Text message 56: I will check.. think it is. Thank you xxxx

Text message 57: worry free wed

Text message 58: worry free wed

Text message 59: Grand

Text message 60: i will too :) :) :)

Text message 61: Can I use the roti in the fridge? Or the one behind the bread bin?

Text message 62: You at the shop?

Text message 63: LOUD AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY BROS IN MY CORRIDOR SHUT UPSHUT UP

Text message 64: Dang, sorry lady. You're already in class tho so it's too late to apologize (it's too laate). It's prolly for the best tbh.

Text message 65 : Yessir! No no one is anymore because everyone bailed

Text message 66: Sry

Text message 67: I can make you an omelette with cheese and spinach if you wanttttttt

Text message 68: They wear western clothes now....

Text message 69: Well we should also probably go food shopping . I'll make a menu today.

Text message 70 : Dad says "thanks for the yummy dinner"

Text message 71: Ohai. I'z makin' dinurz.

Text message 72: I just changed the light. It worked great. The light are smaller and the cans are bigger so I didn't need the suction cup part.

Text message 73: I put you as an emergency contact for the conference i'm going to may 1-7 because I think mom and dad will be im HK.

Text message 74: iight no worries gurl

Text message 75: Okay. You go to Concord right? So I'll probably go to North Concord for 7:30 and then wait for you at Concord.

Text message 76: Well, I could imagine liking rugby.. But formula 1? It's always the same xD vroooom vroooom iiiiiiiiiikkkk *crash*

Text message 77: What did Reginald do? Haha it's a dangerous world

Text message 78: I iz goin to bed yh coz I iz not feelin well. U slp 2 kkkk

Text message 79: K I logged off of skype because I'm pretty exhausted and it's close to midnight.

Text message 80: You need to remember that some unfortunate people (example, myself) cannot quite grasp your level of awesome. 'Tis a terrible affliction and quite untreatable. Pity me. Soothe me with kind and homemade cookies. Wrap a moist towel around my fevered brow and sing softly until I reach the sweet lands of sleep.

Text message 81: lol yeah it was freaking exhausting hahaha

Text message 82: It's ok, cake's in the oven n I'm making the frosting. Will put it together after we open. Get limes n chives @market. Syl

Text message 83: We're gonna win the match!!!

Text message 84: So basically, tell me you're coming, for how long you want to stay, and whether or not you'll be having the continental breakfast.

Text message 85: Kaitlin Osborne : Hi. 9:58 PM

Text message 86: Wuthering or beloved are the ones i'd prefer... Cuz of the dates

Text message 87: Okay

Text message 88: when r u leavin i wanna give u a hug

Text message 89: smh, yea I just spoke to him

Text message 90: Oh god i got a bra from that lingerie store and it's soo good my boobs look so different and much better and it's so fucking comfy

Text message 91: Well...let's do it again!

Text message 92: That's fine - I'll talk to mum and check that she doesn't want to change the date, but if she doesn't, I might arrange something for when you're on the rib x

Text message 93: Haha, well, you went with the normal one, I just totally blanked

Text message 94: Are y'all stopping by here first before the party?

Text message 95: Lol alright. Umm... let's do oak st. That's my go-to lol

Text message 96: Knock knock?

Text message 97: Dont think you did... :) oh dear. You might as well just drink through the day and be done with it dude

Text message 98: Awesome thanks.

Text message 99: I cannot focus at the working times

Text message 100: Hello! Just wondering whether you're free for lunch at ours this coming Sunday? Elspeth x

Text message 101: What happened??

Text message 102: How exciting. We will find out properly ob 31st July, they think boy though xxx

Text message 103: how u doing? quiet at ur end? wen do u fly?

Text message 104: how u doing? quiet at ur end? wen do u fly?

Text message 105: Nope. Carson?

Text message 106: they were thorough. as usual :)
Text message 107: Can you and Dashi pick up some milk?
Text message 108: Is lee there or james?
Text message 109: well we seemed to have arrived at the same time as 20 fourteen yr olds who are taking FOREVER to order. so we're a little behind schedule.
Text message 110: Hello! It's snowing! Also dyou want to come w/ me n myrtle n rachel to an orchestra thing tonight at 7:30?
Text message 111: Kewl bro
Text message 112: Whatchu doinn
Text message 113: I think so...lol
Text message 114: We just let him open a new car. He for so excited. He's playing with both now
Text message 115: we have about 1/8 tank
Text message 116: How much exercise does it take before your body starts to look good? =/ Maybe a week and a half is a bit soon to be expecting results . . .
Text message 117: Yeah it was great. I'll plan on 12.
Text message 118: That is too hefty a fine for me to risk. I will report back when the task has been completed.
Text message 119: Have fun studying :(
Text message 120: Apparently I qualify for EOP at UCSC.
 Text message 121: Hah very
Text message 122: Kk
Text message 123: I'll just have an appointment with my prof this morning but I can't even close my eyes
Text message 124: I believe you passed your drivers test. Well done oke! That's lank kiff.
Text message 125: Hey *****, I know that ******* is doing a shift tomorrow from 8:30pm. Unfortunately she is vitally needed for a project tomorrow and requests for tomorrow to be taken as holiday. She did not know about this commitment and, lacking your mobile number, asked me to text you this information. Thank you.
Text message 126: PLEASE NO CHINESE I DON'T HAVE THE BRAIN FOR IT RIGHT NOW. lol
Text message 127: Don't overdo it man, it was just a friendly match...
Text message 128: He's kind of a weird dude, probably an alien...
Text message 129: Me: Wait it costs no money to send text messages
Text message 130: Okidoki :) let's do this? ;D i'll call you when my class is over :)
Text message 131: How about wraps for supper?
Text message 132: <(")
Text message 133: It's going well so far. Work hasn't been crazy today so I've been catching up on my work load. How about you love?
Text message 134: gon be late quite a bit
Text message 135: Ah...so sorry...was busy earlier
Text message 136: Well how about we book a table somewhere for about 1:00? That way it's not too late to eat but you can have your lie-in and the evening is still free for getting ready for work x
Text message 137: Yup (: btw, just thought you'd like to know you make me very happy.
Text message 138: Ain't that the goddamn truth
Text message 139: Yeh.. idk i sent it yesterday but i also only got some of the "undeliverable" responses today
Text message 140: The usual should be fine: fried rice, egg foo young, rangoon
Text message 141: Aww but it's keeping you busy aint it? I know it's not ideal but it's fucking hard, me lucky my old sixth form approached me but im in london. Job hunting in the shire is a whole nother level lol
Text message 142: Humph!
Text message 143: hahahaha no worries. Your hair looks gorgeous
Text message 144: Okay, great. If we could stop for dinner and see you that would be nice, but no worries if not.
Text message 145: OK.
Text message 146: hav a safe 2zday

Text message 147: hav a safe 2zday
Text message 148: I didn't have it, I'm afraid. Sorry,blud!
Text message 149: Many thanks! Any chance of meeting up this time? New production of Tosca and Forza del destino... Or whatever.
Text message 150: I'll probably be in later. Enjoy
Text message 151: like, is that when you're leaving work or dya wanna go home and then pick me up?
Text message 152: :) you're cute. You can def wear it if you want. It was ONLY $10. It's sad that you can't capitalize numbers. But thank you sooo much!
Text message 153: Chica! I need an update!
Text message 154: I'm walking home right now. I'll call you soon.
Text message 155: Good....just ate dinner with my family
Text message 156: That's a good deal! I would want to but Curtis says no :(
Text message 157: We need to stop for gas. So stop. :)
Text message 158: Did you take the good pots and pans or did they get stolen?
Text message 159: You can come at 1145. In running behind.
Text message 160: Oh my. Sounds serious. Maybe see you after the exam?
Text message 161: Thanks gurl!
Text message 162: Of course it's worth it! I mean, until things change, there are always going to be people and organisations like that. But if you give up, then they win. It's better to prove them all wrong and kick ass when you transfer. If they refuse to give you money over your status, then they're the ones who aren't worth it. And then when you are successful, and the stigma has changed, there will be more opportunities for other students to get those scholarships.
Text message 163: My head had an unpleasant encounter with a coke crate
Text message 164: Lol I feel like I should go. What was last year's?
Text message 165: Is that an oral surgery? So can you eat something because of that
Text message 166: Hell YEAH they are. That's why women make sandwiches; it's a bred talent. Or should that be a bread talent?
Text message 167: Um lol what does Chapter 0 even mean... ? Does that mean it doesn't exist and you don't have to read/learn it? Lol
Text message 168: Sounds nice! What kind of music?
Text message 169: I'm sorry, I've been SOOO busy lately with LATG.
Text message 170: Kaitlin Osborne : Nope. 9:59 PM
Text message 171: No problem
Text message 172: K... will get back to u
Text message 173: JFC OF COURSE I WILL
Text message 174: Send me a message if you're free today...
Text message 175: No, but I ran out of time so drove to the dentist rather than parking at yours, and then only got out after you'd told me you were going to have left. Will hopefully see you on Wed tho
Text message 176: Haha, no worries! Time is wobbly wobbly, right (:
Text message 177: Pretty funny. Reminds me slightly of Venture Bros with the high tech yet stuck in the 70s look/feel.
Text message 178: Next Tuesday works for me. Sry things are so crazy. It's school stuff?
Text message 179: Where'd you goooo
Text message 180: You seriously need a dictionary bruv i aint google yano
Text message 181: I'm not watching the game, but saw Germany was killing it on Facebook...
Text message 182: :-) thanks, boo
Text message 183: Sorry! 20th we're busy then away on camp! Hopefully we will be able to see you all again at some point! Elspeth x
Text message 184: OK, don't worry :)
185: r u there?
186: r u there?
187: Ah deadly!
188: I think we said 1 tomorrow, but would 1.30 be possible? Slightly better for me but if no good for you 1 is fine.
189: Ah fuck it. I'm headed down with the pipe. Need out of the house

190: are you working late? wanna pick me up after work coz it's gonna be COLD
191: Ice beans:
192: I was up early but fell asleep again: Sorry! I'll be there soon:
193: Just meeting with a co author on a paper were working on
194: Do you know anythingabout html from doing your blog?
195: Grumble grumble gurgle roar!
196: Where do you live anyway?
197: Steph says no need to know emotions
198: Trueeeee::: I've still got so many episodes to catch up on :(
199: I wouldn't dwell on it: I mean, I'm sure there are a ton of other scholarships you're going to get: They don't deserve to have you listed as one of their winners:::
200: My bf wanted to put the crateinto the shopping cart and I wanted to help by removing some small stuff: Well, he didn't see me^^
201: Sheeeeeeeeed
202: We shud mayk world peace yh: Stop killin n start lovin
203: Do you ever feel like a moth, irrevocably attracted to the glittering flames of self-destruction? I don't: I only wondered if you did:
204: If I've math-ed right the tuition for one month will be somewhere around $2300::: Plus I need food and transportation and stuff
205: Well I like it because it's tasty:::but in comparison with the Italian, Spanish food is a bit monotonous:::
206: Me: RIP phone 10:47 PM
207: I love you too
208: have my number
209: Am gonna make coffee now::: ;)
210: Poor you - do you need me to bring you anything? Go back to sleep and keep drinking lots xx
211: I won't be home till late, have to tutor::
212: Oh hey, no worries: Will do that in just a min!
213: Omg:: it's been years since I stayed up till 4
214: Remind me of your address, btw? And what time will this be at?
215: Ahh dude you're gon be so fucked but it will be amazing: There were a few all day/night raves in birminghand an boiii: But you're just dead for like two days after
216: Haha yep
217: herdy bersh! Yes he does:
218: Okay: I'll just pack up my things and be with you soon: E x
219: Yup still at 28
220: friendly friday
221: friendly friday
222: Twice as effective, and free of charge!
223: Xxx
224: Make it home in one piece?
225: I'm fishbowling rn, but i'd be fine with just going to the swkt at 3::
226: Hurray!! Can't wait to see the pictures: Send them via email?
227: Guess what I'm gonna do:::
228: Sorry I didn't let you know sooner! We've been stopping a lot and our gps has been acting up! See you soon!
229: Im coming home now
230: Ohhhhh yeaaaaaaah, sorry :(
231: I figured they wouldn't so early: But they should for the World Cup!
232: *baaaaang*
233: I knooow :-(
234: Y u lyk to punch me I dusnt do anythin to u: Now wt shud I do?
235: Ermergerd, yh i know reet? Like wtf is going on with people sumtimes lolcano!! xxxx
236: I'm gonna miss my kitties when I go to college
237: Hey, how are you? Are you gonna watch the final under 21 tomorrow? Lol!
238: Kaitlin Osborne : Lol: 10:59 PM
239: Brandon wants a hookah for his birthday so I was wondering if you might know where I

could get one

240: Good:::wanna meet again?

241: Guessing you've stayed for a drink or gone to Adam's? I'm just about to head to bed: What sort of time do you think you'll be back?

242: This is the size difference: What do you say?

243: ::smiles:: Very cute!

244: Haha glad you are getting into it! Youll be lvl 90 in no time :)

245: don't know how to tell

246: No I didn't know that!!

247: It's just a guy: They don't always stay around long ;-)

248: Thanks love x

249: We just had a v brief powercut: You?

250: Nice: I was just looking at the pics you sent of the kids sleeping in your car

251: Um I'd /prefer/ Thursday night, but if friday's better for yall then that's chill too:

252: Hey Sam, congrats on finishing high school: What are your plans for graduation? I won't be able

253: Thanks for coming::::I had a great time

254: Why don't you guys come over early since Curtis had to leave: You can start packing up these bags im the car

255: Yeah we did: We're asking doe $475 plus utilities and got two emails, one of whom is a male so we had to reject:The other girl responded quickly initially but hasn't in a few days:

256: Ready when you are:

257: They were a special offer for easter: So I just bought 3 xF

258: Meet 2-3?

259: I keep the useful chats anyway: I delete the rest lol

260: Are college classes like AP? or are they harder or easier or all different

261: but he's not your fb friend!

262: Kaitlin Osborne : My data doesn't work at my house: 11:04 PM

263: Hm: I guess that would depend on what the look like and how well used they are:

264: Let's meet soon regardless

265: We missed being there! Spent the day learning about how to deal with challenging behaviour and how to recruit more scout leaders::: Love you lots xx

266: Mlp!! Omg!!

267: Aww! Happy Valentine's Day to you too Frankie! I miss you as well :) Hope it's a good one :D

268: Wtf? Where do I park?

269: Crown Height, I think: I'm at my friend's girlfriend's apartment: About to go to bed!

270: Are you alive?

271: I think he's going to be gone back,though I can't quite remember: I'll ask later,if that's ok?

272: That elvis might be worth keeping: He just came on the radio in the shop where I am

273: Haha, that video is so funny: You know she made bank off that? Did a music video and a pistachio ad :)

274: Yes::::am in my office

275: We just pulled in the middle school too

276: Great! I already passed on your info: Hope it works out but he never replied:

277: Ah, coolio:

278: Aaah, ok ;)

280: Since I decided to become a fish I couldn't close my eyes anymore

281: *belts out song lyrics like a dork* I CAN FEEL IT COMING IN THE AIR TONIGHT: HOLD ON:

282: can't see him:::maybe he blocked us hahahahahahhahah

283: Kaitlin Osborne : You know you can call on google voice too: Don't ya? 11:06 PM

284: Thanks!

285: But let's meet for coffee soon

286: Sounds good :) He's away on wed night, but other than that should be around all week x

287: Okidoki: And you'll get to see my awesome hair (:

288: Not surprised

289: On the loveseat by the front window: It left me in pain and still tired lol, I just woke up from the replacement sleep
290: I'll be there in about 20 min
291: Hey I heard about the bug in your ear :-/ are you doing ok?
292: Yes,think I prefer it to the asos one from the other day: Very elegant!
293: Ah, cool, have lots of fun!
294: Meet u later::::
295: We are over by the bounce houses: Where are you?
296: Salut! C'est Allie Mo :)
297: Oooh haha yeah: Good luck with that: Maybe some of my coworkers: Some of the admissions people are less awkward:
298: Beer \ô/
299: Such grammar! Pub at 7:30 btw?
300: Where are they going? It's still super early huh