

COMPUTEZE - Relaxed English Simulation Accelerates Computer Word-processing and Data Entry

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Abstract: Stale old habits die hard because it is human nature that 'solutions' we adopt to problems are often less than efficient, highly complex and expensive. Somehow these solutions become entrenched in unwritten law, creating digression from which, for the sake of improvement, can lead to failure in exams, to ruined images, to papers not being published, or to missed promotions. Consider the enormous time, perfectionist skill and paper wasted in computer typing, word processing and coding. There must be far better alternatives. A review of these entrenched, inhibiting and stalling literary attitudes and habits is long overdue. There are many inspirational examples and suggestions presented to illustrate the colossal typing time and effort that could be saved. As a pensioner I should know because my partial dyslexia leads to abysmally slow typing. Better keyboard layout, grammar, phonetics, usage, symbols and shorthand are examined here. Intentionally, there are few References in this virtual language exercise because: (a) it is more useful to mention such in the text; (b) data searching is now vastly automated; and (c) this is entirely my initiative. Using the COMPUTEZE approach on this abstract could save 50% typing effort and environmental paper as will be demonstrated in the Conclusion. About 95% of shortened words were 'correctable' by MS-Word spell check.

Keywords: Spelling; Language; Linguistics, Shorthands; Keyboards

1. INTRODUCTION

If computer typing or data entry is to be radically reduced and sped up, it won't be due to a few monumental changes, rather to many small obvious reductions - like self/sufficiency is to the cost of living. COMPUTEZE differs from and is far more compact and profound than Journalese.

Before Dr. Sam Johnson formulated the English dictionary, our language constantly adapted, improved and simplified. Caps replaced double lower case. 'Thou', 'thee', 'thine' were rejected as were 'got' - except in the colonies. Americans wisely progressed at least a small step with 'harbor', 'labor', 'neighbor', 'color'... but lost ground by lengthening trivia like 'gotten'. At least letter accents were dropped unlike French, Germanic, Spanish, Norsk and others. Therefore we in the 21st century are entitled to entertain English optimisation, besides the horrendous flood of readily acceptable technical/computer jargon - sometimes thought to comprise 10% of a subject (medicine, biology, botany, palaeontology...).

We are silently grateful for our deep coding level in 26 alphabeticals and 10 numerals. Hawaiian has 5 vowels and 7 consonants, single-case Korean 24

letters, Hindi about 44 [Compton's Encyclopedia, 1982 and The World Book Encyclopedia, 1983]. These, unlike Chinese and Japanese characters, leave plenty of time for better things than merely grasping perfection, justifying 'culture' and clogging the brain or computer/printer with 1000s of useless squiggles. Such is reminiscent of wasting 25% junior school class time merely soaking up non-decimal conversions, including times-tables which the *Kalcard* has now reduced from 144 to 36 numbers for children to remember [Howden, 1981]. Curious how most but Scrabble and crossword dictionaries don't list plurals! This was my motivation for publishing a special list of 1378 two and three letter words for Scrabble aficionados [Howden, 1995]

Occasionally in modern times we see redundancy reduction as in the perfectly pronounceable QANTAS (sans U). Or, starting with the computer language *BASIC*, we seldom cringe at GOSUB, GOTO, VAL... Sad *BASIC* originators didn't adopt a less putdown title than 'beginners all-purpose symbolic instruction code' so that future software designers wouldn't have overexerted to produce supposedly better (but less comprehensible) computer languages. We certainly aren't

advocating a switch to Esperanto [Encyclopedia Britannica, 1972].

Perhaps the official greatest latest radicle advance in COMPUTEZE is promoted by SMS (Short Message System [Baker, 2001], an add-on feature of the Global System for Mobile Communications where economy dictates only up to 160 characters per message.

2. KEYBOARD

For decades I saw no justification for manual typing when good handwriting was quicker, reliable, cheap and vastly more portable. The slowest possible QWERTY (also no U) keyboard was invented by Christopher Sholes [Compton's Encyclopedia, 1982], a resourceful Milwaukee newspaper editor way back in the 1870s to slow typists fingers down from mechanism jamming rates. Shortly later, mechanisms whizzed along whilst, like the super highways which followed the ambling path of that calf centuries long dead, we blithely ached with repetitive strain from a finger travel of km/day. How can all typing during these 3 centuries be so backward, slow, painful and unprogressive on such trivia? We should no longer support outmoded traditions of such monumental inefficiency!

Dvorak [Naiman, 1994 and under 'Typing' in several Encyclopedias including Britannica, 1972] in all his wisdom improved these RSI-prone km/d down to about 100m/d by placing most-used keys adjacent and under the fingers-at-ready instead of furthest away. Yes you can acquire and adapt to a Dvorak - they are PC/MAC supported. Years ago I noticed a form of shorthand taught in London called ABC Speedwriting originated by Emma Dearborn in 1923 that can actually be typed [The World Book Encyclopedia, 1983]! Pitmans look silly, complex and archaic in comparison, but it nets a tidy longterm income for secretarial colleges.

3. ALPHABETS

English could probably delete a token letter or two from its alphabet, but the Korean alphabet is superior [Compton's Encyclopedia, 1982]. King Sejong and his brilliant scholars in 1443-1446, realising that their oriental characters were clogging their brains, invented the single-case Hangul phonetic script. Evidently the letters of a word are separated when typed until, on pressing spacebar, the letters squeeze to save still more

paper. Natural shape redundancy allows easy word visual identification.

4. PREFIX/SUFFIX KEYS

Having semi-dyslexic, non-oriental fingers typing on my tiny solar-powered, 25year SHARP PC1500 pocket computer attached to a full size printer, I'm far faster than on a PC because I assign 6 vacant keys to most used prefixes/suffixes as follows: (as in: they, their, there, these, then, thence, bother, rather...); tha (as in: that, thank, than.); ing; you (your, yours, youth.); ion; tho (though, thorough, thought, thoroughly...), and so on. PCs can save plenty by typing all 'the' bits as say *, 'tho' as @, ei for Einstein etc. Later with the wordprocessing search/change mode, convert all the typed *, @, ei etc into their correct word letters. Timesavings are immense so why not design all machines to be so easily assigned?

5. SPOKEN ENGLISH

In 1950s I recall reading a Readers Digest study that claimed over 95% of conversation was irrelevant or redundant. Richard Lederer, I've been informed, points out that only 11 words account for a whopping 25% of spoken English. In order of frequency these are: I, you, the, a, to, is, it, that, of, and, in. This hints at what to assign on short form computer buttons mentioned in section 4. A corresponding word-frequency statistic undoubtedly exists for written English.

6. A SHORT LANGUAGE

Professors into indigenous affairs would extol the beauties of entrenched languages such as Pigeon applied for decades in PNG via old British merchant navy and Chinese sailor roots. When working at electronics in PNG during '68, I noted officials were oblivious to how indigenes suffer suppressed agonies trying to talk, travel, trade, learn and love overseas? Pigeon does little more than give orders or describe: 'Jesus is the seat of kindness' in Pigeon = 'Ass b'long Jesus e sittim down e good pella', whilst 'tin pis' = 'tinned fish'. So much for the repressing Professor's finer sensibilities... Note use of (') rather than (") which adds a shift for each upper case. To civilise from Pigeon, all that was needed was not to use it.

An aside, we are saddened by countries cutting themselves off from the communicating world by reverting exclusively to heritage language claiming 'culture preservation', ie: Welsh, Malay,

Creole, Urdu etc. In fact language/writing is merely a code, not a culture. Kudos to India and Sikkim for adopting at least one common language - English. Sounds racist, though without doubt English, contrary to other languages, is spoken and written in more countries if not by more people, assisted recently by computer proliferation.

Our recent 'four fathers' happily improved language by eliminating pages of waffle, verbosity and redundancies from earlier scientific papers. Lets (as in 'let's') carry on by selecting the shortest possible words and means to describe, whilst maintaining eventual comprehensibility, albeit preserving richness. After all few users squirmed at decades of MS-DOS 8-letter and .exe etc shorties - rubbish unheard among MAC users.

7. PHONETICS

To ease students excessive learning needs, spelling as in phonetics should truly correlate to the spoken word as does Korean. COMPUTEZE here completely justifies 'sensible' phonetic spelling rather than the unwieldy special-case spelling still practised. So, for example what's wrong about THO or THORO? (Or in COMPUTEZE shortform phonetic spelling: 'wots rong about THO, THORO'; and 'wots rite re 'thorough'?). Likewise drop all ph as in hyfenation. Why not Brisbn and Melbn as correctly pronounced analogous to Lincoln, sign or film? In other words, consonants aren't used enough. There's little sacred or absolute in spelling beyond maintaining comprehensibility - it's all been corrupted by early sages far smarter than us. Sensible phonetics radically decreases spelling, paper usage and language learning curves, resulting in a bonus of promoting greater rapid peace and understanding. Here I should point out on that score my deaf son's contention decades ago that everyone's common language should be the globally simpler Australian sign language - hopefully a computerised version.

8. NUMBERS

Savings come from using individual digits rather than spelling them, thus: 1, 2, 3, 1st, 2nd, 3rd... We prefer years as 5/6/34, ph/fx as 07 34095100, whilst volts, amps, distance, speed more easily bunch up as 12v, 6a, 44k, 60km/h rspct. Change superscript-reduced-point size 'o', together with its reset as in temperature; eg 3^oC -> 3.C or simply 3C. '1-5' beats '1 to 5'. Moreover let 207^o = angle 207^o, and 4.5r = 4.5radians.

9. COMPUTER TYPES, FONTS, SAVING PAPER

If I could be narrow minded, permit me to have recommended earlier Macintosh over all other competing systems, except that now Windows98 has finally become ergonomic once its desktop is optimally laid out and unhidden [Howden, 1998]. We treasured built-in WIMPSS (windows, icons, mouse, menus, pulldowns, scrolling, standardised screen...) over traditional PC-style, conflicting-committee-designed schemes which required wall charts or another reminding computer for special keystrokes. On that subject I could go on for hours, as did evaluating consultants and former Californian neighbours Arthur D. Little Corp in 1984 (note initial D. next to L) agree as in many references I have [Apple-Bug, 1996 and Apple News, 1995], though I'm in no way related to MAC. One PC advantage was cheap colour and 5.25" disks which seem to have much less halflife failure rate than 3.5" units, though the latter certainly lasts better if stored upright. I've taught brilliant old workable Macwrite to total sceptics and to English near-illiterates from Fiji in 1/2 hour or less, whereas even the best literates were still wrestling PC intricacies and inconsistencies 6 hours to 6 weeks later. Like the QWERTY keyboard, it's easy to get unnecessarily PC sales-hyped. To teach word-processing we stick to *WRITE* (.WRI) initially as it's vastly simpler than *MS-WORD* and consumes far less memory.

Some fonts are very 'green' (paper saving) - whilst still very clear. Fonts having seraph (small feet) are often claimed most readable; though our extensive tests amongst pensioners dispute this, at least for tiny point sizes. On MAC my favourite *TIMES* font was most paper-saving followed by *HELVETICA*. In Windows98, *TIMES* is 'green' whilst *ARIAL NARROW* 10pt is still more space-saving and evidently more comprehensible, especially by scanners. However much a line-space between sections or paragraphs looks pretty, subtitles can just as effectively be typed on the same line as the text. Thus we would not normally use the spaciousness required of this paper's format. Our latest disk color book and newsletter has smallest possible margins. Typing entirely in lower case saves paper, OR STAY IN CAPS EVEN USING 2 SMALLER POINT SIZES, at the expense of slightly reduced readability. Non-standardisation is an unpleasant concern relative to preparing papers, books, articles etc.

10. OVERKILL

We are not suggesting extreme compaction till readability ceases: as in 'ICURMT' (I see you are empty) or traditional school examples - though there's no rule against '4 sale', 'ow R U? (how are you)', 'U R ok' (you are ok?), or 'Q8 (Kuwait) is next to IRAQ.

2B or $\overline{2B}$ logic negation was extracted from Hamlet ("to be or not to be..."). There is no redeeming social virtue in zealously guarding arrant pedantry so beloved in most halls of learning. Conversely, ever-changing language practised by American Gulf War generals is an overkill example. Excess pride in such gamesmanship and one-upmanship [The World Book Encyclopedia, 1983] can only aid confusion and dictionary directors. We are suggesting a total shift from 1 level of stable chaos down to a much lower level of stable order via a 1/2-1/3 reduction in words, coding, spelling and typing time/space.

11. SYMBOLS

These and mathematical expressions are great spelling levellers and include: and=&; #=No.=number; ! indicates beware or take note; @=at (needing that SHIFT key); /=per as in \$/week, kw/h, or as in proposed/anticipated; versus (as US/UK if not US v UK). Numeric keypads have + and * to save shifting. 'and' preceding the last word or expression in a sequence separated by commas can be replaced by another comma. We also suggest eliminating needless 'a' and 'the'. How about 'do you have any ?s (questions)' or '? did u do it'. A sentence like 'Do you want partners?' = 'Partners?'. There's little need to end an obvious question using ?.

Let '->' = 'becomes' or 'goes to' like 'tadpoles -> frogs'. Likewise > or >> = 'greater than' or 'much greater than' and vice versa for <<. As in maths, <> means not equal, whilst for usual fonts lacking a wobbly '=', put '~' to mean 'approximately'. Somehow '=' isn't used enough, though it sure saves heaps. Thus '=' = 'infers', 'belongs to' (eg on an organiser could show 'Sally=5jun=56Bush st, Bris'). Note how '.' replaces 'or' in 'have tea, coffee'. '.' has many uses such as mentioned: '1-5' for the stodgy '1 to 5', where the '.' = 'such as...'. Replace 'etc.' by '...'. Ditto (") or shorter (") is still essential in column lists. For similar phone #s put 34095100, '200. '+' is used like 'and', like ',' or as 'with' : 'doctors+dentists+scientists' = 'doctors, dentists and scientists'. Depending if previous word was the rather inadequate 'neither' or 'either', ',' between 3 items just mentioned can mean NOR

or OR. School writing used ∴ = therefore, thus or 'so. ∴ = because (= cos), though these are not keys.

Observe that in some fonts, such as very paper-saving: Abadi MT Condensed Light or Arial Narrow, you can type a lower case L (ie. 'l' without shift) = l = upper case 'l'.

Apostrophes are atrocious time wasters. I could have said, 'An apostrophe is an atrocious waste of time' on extra keystrokes. Further, lets not be shy to accept most of: dont, shant, Im, il (i'll), wel (we'll), cant, wont, youre, thats, wed=we'd, whod, theyd, itl, sos (so) is/as, em or m (them), wouldnt, soons, cookings (eg I bet your cookings better), wots (for lunch), were (we're, but be careful!). Recall that ending a sentence using '?' or '!' usually involves SHIFT, so avoid if ok. Only make contractions if meaning's unequivocal.

For basic reports, notes, memos... save kgs paper wood pulp by not using carriage return after a paragraph - simply separate paragraphs by 3 spaces or // on same line. See how by using [square brackets] rather than (round) saves 2 SHIFTS. Other relaxing shift-saving ideas abound. ok is OK. Also delete '.' between initials as in U.S.A. -> USA.

12. INITIALS

Too readily accepting acronyms could lead to unmanageable proliferation of jargonisers, though several should be universal: tue, wed, sat, sund, pto (please-turn-over), AIDS, NB, asap as soon as possible, sae (stamped adres env), RSI (which I'm getting from typing this) st cres pl (place) rd cnr (corner), para (paragraph), ft, km, kg, \$\$, cmte (committee), re (ref to), ie, eg, id (identification), A/T (alt tech), w/o (without), esp (especially), chq (cheque), ut (such that, as beloved by logicians), inc (including), USA, Brit, Jap, UK, Auss, via, ad(vert), V (as in 'The People V Smith', or 'broncos V witesox'). 90 yo (mums age), u (micro as in uwave) and others.

QU, K, I, Z and S: Plenty of Scrabble dictionary words get on quite happily having no U after Q. Other words could easily exist without S - as in zneezing for sneezing. Before Norman Conquest, K was very rare because of its infrequent use in anglicised French words. Thus C was rampant before K was accepted, Cing = King =cyng, quic=quick and church=kirk=circ. Since in addition, syn=sin, we're only a short jump from deleting both i and K if that dont hurt - as

undoubtedly such would compared to over restrictive French. After all 'sky', 'shy' are common...

13. DELETION OR REPLACEMENT OF WORD PARTS

As we proceed, matters appear more controversial, though far from credible. Let's in a masterful stroke remove old USA/UK spelling disagreements by accepting American centr, harbr, labr, naybr (neighbor)... and consider metr (meter), se (see). Then add 1000s more: thru, loo, altho which should (tho), who (whom), wate (weight), ltr (litre), poss(ible), terif (terrific), foto, trof (trough), paralel (without double L), tmoro (tomorrow, tnite, trike, veranda (drop silent h), cheqs (cheques), mastr (master), yer or yor (your), hed (head); fone and fenomena.. (drop all ph (f, see Phonetics section 7), under (underneath), ort (ought), orta, wite (white), sola, cof (cough), buro (bureau), lo or hi (hello or high), lo (low), yot (yacht, nok (knock) etc.

Sentences and repeated names (once already defined) can start enjoying non-pedantic lower-case letters as in many languages. Fend off superficial criticism that this belittles the place or disrespects a person or the dead. Any reason Hitler shouldnt be hitler? I'm quite happy, sos jim, nic, jo, pete, bro(ther), sis, ma, pa, gran.

Its needless to repeat 'ing' twice in a word, thus: singing, ringing, winging, pingng.. Try 'singn'. Its fun searching for other repeaters like: 'que' (queue), jurny (journey). The last silent 'e' of many words such as mous(e), hous(e), articl(e), nam(e), som(e), miracl(e), may be deleted as was common after Middle English era [Peterborough Chronicles, 1155 as in The World Book Encyclopedia, 1983 and Encyclopedia Britannica, 1972] Its easy to extrapolate these cogitations to eliminate the 2nd, 1st or last letter 'e' in scads of words like: b(e)fore, b(e)yond, b(e)side, b(e)tween, b(e)hind, b(e)neath, d(e)ject, d(e)cease, (e)xces, (e)xact, xpres, xile, xpert, xposure, pleas(e), litr(e)... Well they do x-rays.

Lets go back a few centuries to John o' Groats [Encyclopedia Britannica, 1972] and put of=o'=o. thus why not try 'Lots o love', 'bits o philosophy'. 'Wots f lunch' where f=for may take longer to assimilate. Quit doubling letters for scads of words and names as: atak (attack), fiter (fitter), Keneth, apreciate, socer (soccer), leter (letter), beter, vilage, blisful, litle (little), ful (full), bal, al (all), smal... But not all conform like cok <> cook though cuk may.

14. WORD DELETIONS AND SHORTER ALTERNATIVE WORDS

These include translations from speech to writing, an extreme case being extracts from that famous language text 'Lets Stalk Strine (=Australian)'. Thus it is perfectly legitimate for: gunna (going to), gotta (if you must use 'got'), lotta, doin, goin=going, lyin, gimme (give me), writin, somethin, nix or nothin, byin (buying) and others.

I've yet to figure why we are so ashamed to rapidly improve efficiency of our deadish language despite dubious previous generation contributions like: deros (derelicts), relies (relatives), beaut (beautiful), tinny (beer or dinghy), berko (berserk), wellies and wheelies etc. The mind boggles re potential to readily accept or even expand the vernacular.

In what follows clearest sense is still maintained. Thus delete bracketed words in sentences such as: '(They) Come in 6m bits'; '(I) Adored (your) show'; '(I could) Suggest..'; '(have you) Heard her?'; 'This (is the one that) works'; 'Problems (which are now) arising'; '(Any) Problems?'; 'It's good for (the) Brits'; 'get a plastic (bag)', '(pair of) glasses, scissors or trousers'; 'cater (for) a party'; a 'shel call' beats 'she will call'; Sydney Uni certainly = The University of Sydney; and so on.

Using shorter words of same meaning economises: 'tiny' or 'mini' rather than 'small' or 'little'; nix (nothing, vegs (vegetables), breaky (breakfast), Xmas, Xing (traffic cross), Xformer (transformer), MUX (multiplexer), 4fathers (forefathers) etc.

15. DELETING SOME/ALL VOWELS

This almost takes us a jump beyond credulity, yet my schooldays shorthand coupled to some commercial ABC speedwriting methods mentioned are partly based on deleting vowels - including as above 'nocking' 'e' off endings like 'please' - sufficient to maintain 'enuf' redundancy for understanding in the event of a troublesome photocopier. These can be dreamt up by the 1000s: vbles (variables), formr (former), wrtng (writing), pls (please) and mmnt (moment). We may not be quite up to Pitmans for shorthand speed, though certainly we are on a vastly shorter 'lern' curve.

16. ALPHABET STEW WORDS

Simply write down all alphabet letters and assign a most used appropriate word to each - forever! Here a few suggestions which may conflict some above,

so choose best: b (be), c (see or sea), d (the), t (tea), f (for), k (key), gg (horse), j (jay), m (am or mam or 'them' as in "look at m"), p (pee), q (queue), r (are), y (why, ?), u (you), uve (you've), x (sex), z (sleep) and zz (easy as Americans put it).

17. MISSING MEANINGS ARE NEEDED

It is an awful bore to say 'let him or her mow the lawn'. So we need new words to shorten dual gender expressions: him/her (hir?), her/him (herm), his/hers (hirs?), herself/himself (hermsel).. Some 1970s feminists had good suggestions. Strangely many professional words have no single corresponding activity word. Thus gardeners DO gardening, engineers DO engineering, writers DO their stuff, but do physicists or chemists DO physicaling, chemicaling?

18. JOINSOME WORDS

If unobtrusive, unequivocal and inoffensive, try joining words like in German arbitrarily to save typingspaces! But though joining words as Aussielike, selfreliant, Fijibound etc saves space and key strokes, spellcheckers would have to adapt.

19. CONCLUSION

Well, (unnecessary expletive) somebody had to suggest it, because already of necessity we are being catapulted into truncated word forms, expressions and sentences, so why not one more organised step further? However, (did we really HAVE to insert 'however'?) if its too threatening, back off .5 step (cant shorten but could eliminate 'too' or 'off') and recall you are saving the secretary to be complaint-free and non-RSI prone. New stable COMPUTEZE conversion and familiarisation understandings will take but a relative snapshot of time in literary history, albeit favourably affect billions of people who write at least in English. Public, media, school and academic competitions can kickstart the vital process any time. As a child I was told that 'THRS NO SUCH WORD AS CANT'. So we should be proud not ashamed to change for vastly greater efficiency and economy coupled to a high degree of 'journalese' condensation, at least until precise audio character translators are common, ergo cheap.

Certainly some committee could be kept busy in helping guide COMPUTEZE Standards yet keeping doors open for newly-conceived shorter forms. Meantime, every word in all languages

should be critically examined for potential savings, ease of learning, simplicity of typing and rationality.

Finally permit me to appropriately albeit partially condense the Abstract 50% as promised in extra space-saving *Arial Narrow* font:

Abst #2 Ol habits di ard cos most 'solns' = least eficient, hi complex & xpensive. Someow these -> unwrittenlaw = fail xams, ruin image, papersunpubed, mised promos. Huge time, skil & paperwast in wordpro + coding. beter alternatives? review stuck & staling atitudes & habits lng overdu. mny xamples givn t sho typ time & efort saved. a pensoner, l shld kno cos my prt dyslexia = slo typng. beter keybord lay, grammar, fonetix, usage, symbols & shrthnd r xamined. fewrefs in this virtual xercise cos a] beter to txt mention; b] serch now mostauto; c] entirely my idea. COMPUTEZ onthis abst sav ~50% typ, se soon. ~95% ofshorted wrds 'corectabl' by spelchek.

Thats 114 opposing 214 words, 654 versus 1387 characters in original Abstract. Cert easy than a new game, software or MSwrld.

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