

Gilsdorf, Jeanette and Don Leonard. "Big Stuff, Little Stuff: A Decennial Measurement of Executives' and Academics' Reactions to Questionable Usage Elements." The Journal of Business Communications. Volume 38, Issue 4 (October 2001). Business Source Premier. ESBCOhost. Manchester College Library, North Manchester, IN. 19 November 2005. <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.

*This article focuses on what is considered "good writing." It takes a look at word choice, organization, suitability to reader, and many other factors. The article points out those usage errors in business messages can cause serious issues. Written and spoken English are different dialects of the language, mutually influential, but not identical (440). A study was done that looked at questionable usages of the written English language. The results were broken down into the most distracting items and the least distracting items. The respondents were male and female executives and academics. The executives were represented by executive vice presidents, senior vice presidents, and vice presidents from large publicly held U.S. companies. They were selected based on the assumption that they are effective communicators, since they reached that high of a position in very large firms. The academics were represented by members of the Association for Business Communication who are teaching at a four-year institution of higher learning in the U.S. The differences in responses between the executives and academics were then analyzed. The responses were also broken down by age and gender. After the analysis of the results is a discussion and recommendation section. One recommendation the article offers is, "that teachers need to emphasize more to our students that spoken and written English are two different dialects, that they cannot always rely on speech patterns to guide them to correct written English..." (460). Another recommendation is that teachers also need to stress proofreading of papers. Students' awareness that differences exist between acceptable spoken and acceptable written English needs to be build up (467). The dialect in a certain area affects the writing of those in that area. We tend to write how we speak. This can be seen in the web communication that we do. At the end of the study the participants were questioned about their opinions on the quality of writing in web communication. Both groups agreed that email and web communication has worsened people's writing capabilities.*

*This article relates to the books by Thomas and Petyt in that it illustrates how language has developed as the generations pass. This is evident through the results of the study. The article states, "Language is shaped by habit, and people resist changing their habits..." (467). This article can also be related to the other article by Gilsdorf, "Standard Englishes and World Englishes: Living with a polymorph Business Language" and Hamilton's article because they too also discuss the changes in what is considered Standard English.*