SMS Text-Messaging and the Nigerian Christian Context: Constructing Values and Sentiments

Innocent Chiluwa

Covenant University, Nigeria

Abstract

The Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) in Nigeria brought with it a variety of English that is situationally distinct and context sensitive. Thus SMS text-messages are viewed as discourses that presuppose speech events among interlocutors that share a common social behaviour and cultural values. This study shows the extent to which test-messaging constructs Christian values, belief systems and sentiments in Nigeria. Fifty-three (53) text samples collected in Lagos and Ota areas of Southwest Nigeria between 2005 and 2007 are analysed within the framework of computer-mediated discourse analysis (Herring 2001). Result shows that with its peculiar orthographic convention and style, text-messaging has become popular among Christian adherents not just because it is short, cheap and fast but that it is individualistic and fits well into a context where respect for individuals is emphasized. Analysis also shows that SMS text-messaging is used to disseminate messages associated with faith-based pronouncements, prayer and well-wishing, admonition and assurance, appreciation and praise, seasons greetings and general information/announcements. These functions tend to promote love and cooperation among church members.

Key words: SMS-text messages, Christian, Discourse

Introduction

The Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) came to Nigeria with the licensing of *MTN* and *Econet* (now *Celtel*) in 2001 during the Obasanjo administration after many years of decayed telecommunication infrastructure. Within a short time after the introduction of mobile telecommunication, almost a million subscribers mainly in the urban centres made a rush at possessing mobile phones and were willing to pay as much as N50 per minute per call and N15 per text message. This was said to be the highest GSM tariff in Africa. In the last three years about 5 million subscribers had join the various GSM networks and it is expected that by the end of 2007, there will at least 10 million subscribers in Nigeria. While airtime tariff has been reduced only once in three years, two of the three biggest networks (*MTN, Celtel* and *Globacom*) each added one million new subscribers in the last one year. The result is overcrowding and congestion of the networks. However with the prepaid recharge card "pay as you go" services, and a guarantee of nationwide coverage, subscribers cannot help patronizing the networks. But many times they have had to resort to quick text messaging which is cheaper and appears to have less network problems.

SMS (short message service) gives the subscriber the advantage of choosing specific number of words that would communicate comprehensively but briefly with the minimum cost. Again subscribers are constrained by space and time. Most handsets allow a maximum of 250 characters including space, symbols and punctuation marks. So subscribers are actually forced to create new linguistic forms to enable them maximize the available space and say all that has to be said. On Nokia phones, users can receive new ring tones or replacement background logos in an SMS text-message after placing an order on specialized website (Bernatchez, 2000) and apart from mobile phones, text messages can also be sent from a cellular service provider's web page. Interestingly text messages have become a dynamic written communication strategy occurring naturally in practical communication contexts, constructed in short texts to convey some very important concerns and values of the Christian faith. Text messaging combines the advantage of dynamism, mobility and personality largely due to its unique linguistic style.

Review of Literature

A good number of studies on the new media/computer-mediated communication (CMC) have thrown some interesting insights on the extent to which CMC has extended and enhanced relationships apart from the traditional face-to-face communication. Researches have also showed that the new media have increased the level of performance at the work place through shared understanding among workers (Dickey et al 2006; Kim et al 2007). In an increasing range of contexts, collaborative communication technologies provide a common means through which individuals share information, coordinate activities and sustain relationships in a distributed work environments (Moshowitz, 1997; Wilson 1999; Dickey et al 2006). Contrary to the conclusions of the media richness theory (Daft, Lengel & Trevino 1987) which proposes some objective characteristics of communication such as immediate feedback, language variety, number of cues and personalization (Dickey et al 2006) in a continuum of media communication, Dickey et al argue that text-based communication (or lean communication) do indeed enhance efficiency and success in a complex work place. What causes miscommunication in some cases is not technology, rather the lack of shared understanding among individuals (Hindus & Wiesbond, 2003, Dickey et al 2006). With the increase of CMC research more and more findings support the fact that more people adopt emails, voice mail, the internet and SMS text-messaging in practical communication. This shows the prevalence of greater "socio-emotional" content and relational development in mediated communication (Kim et al 2007, Walther 1992) and research is now focusing more on the social influences, network contents and processes of media uses and perceptions (Fulk et al 1990; Rice 1993; Kim et 2007). Some studies conclude that characteristics of a medium are defined and used on the basis of the social activities for which the medium is made available and that specific condition of communication such as medium, purpose and participants influence how different media are perceived and used (Desanctis & Poole, 1994; Licoppe & Samoreda, 2005; Kim et al 2007). SMS text messages for instance are constraint by space, so the length of information is limited and communicators must rely on shared knowledge of the context and of the understanding of each other as part of an ongoing communication network (Kim et al 2007). Miyata (2006) points out that in Japan for instance mobile phones emails tend to reach people that are more socially and physically present than those contacted through PC email. Thus, communication technologies provide more implicit ways of providing social contact (Erickson & Kellog, 2003; Nastri et al, 2006), maintain social relationships and enable people maintain constant connections with those that are spatially separated and the rest of the world (ITU, 2004).

In the context of religion, studies have also shown that religious traditions have embraced the internet and computer-mediated communication to propagate their tenets, values and practices (Ess &Kawabata, 2007). In fact there is actually a rush onto the internet and other CMC technologies, which is not peculiar to Christians alone; other religions like Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism have shown great manifestations online and practised through mobile phones (Ess & Kawabata, 2007; Fukamizu, 2007; Ramo, 1996; Cambell, 2006). CMC technologies allow religious adherents and worshippers around the world to form online communities and sustain their tradition and allegiance and also through text-messaging quick religions traditions are observed and monitored among members. Most religions of the world have so embraced CMC that not having internet representation is considered as a rarity (Ess & Kawabata, 2007). The present study focuses on the Nigerian Christian environment, about how Christians have embraced CMC technology, especially text messaging in not just practising their religion but in fostering interpersonal relationships among worshippers.

SMS Text Messages as Discourse

The new linguistic forms, coinages and spelling innovations in text-messaging have emerged as a variety of English that is situationally distinctive and context sensitive - a style that is dependent on the speech event and as discourse "because it is based on a particular linguistic domain and at the same time explicates different relationships between interlocutors" (Awonusi, 2004:45). According to Brown and Yule (1983), discourse is language in use, functioning in social contexts and performing definite functions in human situations. Because it occurs naturally and spontaneously, it may be rendered in oral or written mode (Coulthard & Montgomery, 1981, Chalon, 1985, Onadeko, 2000). What matters is not that it conforms to grammatical rules, but the fact that it communicates and is recognised by its receivers as coherent (Cook, 1989). In terms of discourse structure, text messaging is bidirectional. Although messages and feedbacks are not always simultaneous, there are cases where interlocutors actually involve in reciprocal simultaneous exchanges through chat devices. Most SMS text-messages (as we shall see later in the analyses) often follow the introduction, body and conclusion structure.

With openings often signalled by greetings such as 'Hi', 'hello' or 'gmornin' what we find in the Christian context, is a form of tact that fuses the introduction with the body of the message. Some actually start with openings such as "Praiz God," "U'r blessd", "My praya 4 u" etc. However words are carefully chosen to reflect either the formality or informality of relationships among the interlocutors. Most of the messages are prayers and well-wishing; some are invitations and seasons greetings, while some are simple reaffirmation of Christian values.

Objectives

A reasonable amount of study has been done on the features and position of text messaging in Nigeria (c.f. Awonusi, 2004; Chiluwa 2007). A study that focuses on what may be called "domestication of text messaging" in a particular socio-cultural setting such as Nigeria is rare. The present study aims at bridging this gap and therefore attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

- How does text messaging construct Christian values, ideals, beliefs and sentiments in the Nigerian Christian context?

- Why is text messaging becoming so popular among Christian adherents and their leaders?

Methodology

The study applies a social discourse analytical theory to examine the discourse structure and contents of text messages that occurred in the Nigerian Christian context. In her analysis of "Away Messages", Herring (2001, 2004) applies a "computer-mediated discourse analysis" (CMDA) in which discourse is classified as medium and situational variables that may shape language use. The CMDA framework describes different levels of analysis of online discourse which include structure, meaning, interaction management and social practice (Nastri et al, 2006; Herring 2004). Away messaging or Instant Messaging (IM) is classified as "asynchronous" and single-channel (text) medium and being typically short. Because they are characteristically short, away messages (or text-messages) involve non-orthographic forms that minimize typing effort and space (Nastri et al, 2006; Herring 2001). Interaction management analysis of CMDA which involves the study of the patterns of turn-taking is not possible since away messages like text messages are bidirectional and single-channel text; it therefore concerns more with the analysis of social and contextual factors that shape discourse (Nastri et al, 2006). In adopting some domains of CMDA, i.e. structure, meaning and social practice, this study examines common grammatical structures of text messages and how contents or meaning determine those structures to represent Christian values and sentiments.

Linguistic Features of SMS Text Messages

Most text messages are constructed in an informal telegraphic style with features such as phonetic spelling and a unique spelling convention occasioned by the influence of the mass media, computing and Americanisms. Others are some general abbreviations occasioned by space, time and money constraints (Awonusi 2004).

Unique Spelling Conventions

To	-	2
For	-	4
At	-	@
Before	-	be4, b4
Tomorrow	-	2morrow, 2mrw, tmrw
Today	-	2day, 2dy
Forever	-	4ever, 4evr
Forget	-	4get, 4gt
Tonight	-	2night, 2nite

And   -   &, n

Thanks -   tanx, tks

Love   -   luv

Good   -   gud

Move   -   muv

Could   -   kud, cud, kld

News   -   nus

Praise   -   praiz etc.

This type of orthographical representations are largely influenced by computer language and mass media English, especially sensational spelling in adverts and some forms of Americanisms

Phonetic Spellings

You   -   U

They   -   dey,

Other   -   oda, odr

The   -   D, d

You   -   U

Be   -   B, b

Been   -   bin, bn

Some   -   som, sm

That   -   dat

Those   -   dose, dos

This   -   dis, ds

These   -   diz, dz

Order   -   oda etc.

Sir   -   sa

Sorry   -   sori

Thought -   tot, thot

Courage -   korig, koreg

Number -   numba, nmba

This kind of spelling generally alters or totally ignores the morphological representation of some particular words. Much of the phonetic spellings correspond with the pronunciations of uneducated Nigerian English.

General Abbreviations

Month   -   moths

Capsules   -   capsls

Want   -   wnt

Please   -   pls, plz

News   -   nus

Continue   -   cntnue

Submitting	-	sbmtg
Call/called	-	cl, kl, culd, kld, cld
Loaves	-	loavs
National	-	natnl
Greet	-	grit
Hope	-	hop, ope, hp
Just	-	jst
Peaceful	-	piecfl
Exhausted	-	exhstd
Weekend	-	wkend, wknd
Paid	-	pd
I have	-	I've, I'v
I haven't	-	I vn't
I am	-	I'm
You are	-	u're, u'r
You will	-	U'll, u'l
Good morning	-	gmornin
Good evening	-	gevnin
Hello		helo
Good night	-	gnite, gnight etc.

Total or partial abbreviations as we can see above, afford the text writer to say more within the available space with the advantage of paying less.

Data

Data comprise a total of fifty-three (53) text messages collected in Lagos and Ota areas of Southwestern Nigeria, between 2005 and 2007. They are text messages from Nigerian Christians to one another. My use of "Christian" refers mainly to the Pentecostals and the Charismatic irrespective of denominations. This is because text messaging is a phenomenon mostly common in the urban areas where these "modern Christians" live and operate. This is not to say however, that the Christian orthodox churches do not send messages through the SMS, rather the specification is merely a matter of convenience and religious affiliation of the author. Data are grouped into seven (7) value areas or discourse themes namely: faith-based individual pronouncements; prayer and well-wishing; admonitions and assurance; appreciation; praise and worship; seasons greeting and general information/announcement. This is necessary for a better study of the discourse functions of the texts.

Occurrence of the Types of Text Messages in the Data

	No	**%**
Faith-based Pronouncement	16	30
Prayer & Well Wishing	12	23
Admonition & Assurance	05	09
Appreciation	02	04
Praise & Worship	03	06
Seasons Greeting	10	19
Gen.Inform./Announcement	05	09
TOTAL	53	100

Data Analyses

Each of the groups will be discussed as a unit identifying their uniqueness, their social functions and how the message of each group is constructed as discourse.

Faith based Pronouncement

- As d wisemen locatd Jesus star, came to hm with gifts, so shll men of substance identify ur star n com 2 u wit precious treasures!

- 2007 shll not expire without his abundance of goodness manifesting n ur life in Jesus' name

- Ur joy wil not be once upon a time, victry song wil not cease 4rm ur mouth, each new day wil bring u closer 2 d fulnes of ur destiny. U shall b a shining example.

- If 2007 is sunny it'll brighten ur life, if it rains, its ur showers of blessing,   if dry it'll dry ur tears, if windy, it'll blow away ur sorrow. D good wk of God & his blsngs wll continue 2 manfst in ur life in Jesus name. Amen.

- Like de cedar of Lebanon u wll grow unhindered, like d palm tree u will florish beynd measure, like mounth zion u wll remain unmoveable. 4 u re D Lord's delight.

- As u enter ds yr, u wll not breakdown @ d point of ur breakthrough. Success, promotn, prosperty & gud thins wil follow u ds yr, etc.

Faith-based pronouncements are generally written in formal grammatical structures, either as simple or complex sentences. Some of the texts are a collection of simple sentences merely separated by commas. Interestingly, complex sentences in the texts begin with the subordinate clauses generally introduced by "as" e.g. "as d wisemen located Jesus," "as u enter ds year," "as ducks enjoy water…etc. This feature introduces the statement in the main clause. Since the statement is a pronouncement which characteristically presupposes an obligation, the main clause has to include the modal, "will" and "shall" or "will not" and "shall not." Thus, "*so shall men...", "victory song wil not cease,"or "U wil make it,"* …etc runs through all the texts in this category. Some are direct quotations from scriptures that are generally considered as intrinsically pronouncements or decrees. Some others consist of a personification of abstract qualities following the allegorical tradition of Spencer's *Faerie Queen* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* which mirrors the interest of the writers in modern literary practice.

Functionally, the texts reflect the character, value and the belief system of the writers. The text messages in this category are faith-based, which appears to respond to man's need of the supernatural or the miraculous. In modern Christian circles, the ideology of "positive confession" has indeed taken root and there have been claims that the "say it and have it" mind set does indeed work. Text messages in this category account for 30% of the data, showing their prevalence. A pronouncement text message will appeal to the receiver's confidence in the efficacy of the spoken word by another Christian rather than by God directly. This re-echoes the Christian belief of a transfer of authority by Christ to the Christian, which is to enable the Christian make pronouncements and get possible results. In this context, the receiver relies more on faith rather than objective judgement. The assumption here is that Christian faith ultimately presupposes a state of perfection or a destiny that has been "purchased" by Jesus Christ, so Christians are simply urged to believe it and access it. This type of anticipation however is at risk of obvious misinterpretation, such that a misinformed adherent might take the pronouncements for granted, without accompanying his faith with the appropriate works. In my opinion the text writers do not intend to imply that miracles just happen by mere saying it without corresponding actions of faith. There is no doubt however, that the faith-based pronouncements reflect fundamental Christian values and does demonstrate profound love and concern for the well being of the receivers. It has the tendency to enhance unity, cooperation and confidence among church members or social groups.

Prayer & Well-Wishing

- My praya 4 u: De glory of d Lord wil be yr great reward, wher ordas ar limitd u'l be liftd. D peak of ordas will be yr beginin. Sori I'vn't cald, I'v bin busy, nxt wk.

- U crossed my mind jst now, so I whisperd a prayr 2 ask God 2 take gud care of u, protct u, provide 4 u, abv all grant u ur heart desire

- Without ur permission, I askd d Lord 2 bles u, pamper u, guard n shower u wt hs merices n I ope u don't mind.

- A smile 2 end ur day, a pryr 2 bless ur sleep. A song 2 linten ur dreams. A cheer 2 praiz his presence, wishin u a peacfl nite.

- Hurray! Welcom to a yr ov uncommon favour & open heaven breakthroughs (Gen. 20:16). Best wish frm Pastor Akintayo etc.

Text messages of *Prayer and Well-Wishing* are mainly prayers to God for the receivers and wishing them well. Constructed in similar grammatical structures as the pronouncement texts, they differ significantly in terms of discourse structure. Unlike the pronouncements, prayer and well-wishing text messages reflect the opening, body and the termination of the discourse. However discourse structure is bidirectional. Many of the texts begin with the opening, signalled by greetings such as *"Gmorning," "Hurray," "Saying gud day*," or "*Hi, gd morning*." Then the body of the text is introduced with "*I pray that…", "I ask d Lord to…", "my praya 4 u…,* etc. Some of the texts or discourses end with the prayer, while some include a formal termination, signalled by "*Amen,*" or "*Hv a nice day*." Some of the texts do not have formal openings; the text writer simply goes straight to the body of the message and end with the message. On the whole, text messages in this category merely function as prayers. They do not presuppose any form of instant miracle as the pronouncement texts suggest. A prayer text rather than appeal to the receiver's faith in a pronouncement, directs the receiver's attention to God and attempts to re-enact the Christian confidence in God. Again they serve as catalysts for social and religious cooperation.

Admonition & Assurance

- An angel vistd me dis evening n I askd hm if u're ok. He laughed & showd me a picture of u wrappd in God's arms.

- Pls opn ur door 4 dse visitrs waitng outside 2 come in coz de1y nd a place in ur life, they're – happiness, joy, peace & prosperity. Pls open ur door.

- 5 steps 2 a lovly morng: cloz ur eyes, take a deep breath, opn ur arms wide, feel ur heart beat, and say… "here I am Lord…

- God is abov u 2 bless u, below u 2 support u; befor u 2 guid u, behd u 2 protect u, besd u 2 comfort u n insd u 2 sustain u. Ave a luvly nite.

- U're a child of destny, meant 4 de top, created 4 impact, configured 4 excellence, packaged 2 be distinguished, called 2 be great & ordained 2 be celebrated… etc.

Admonition and Assurance text messages are structurally similar to the ones discussed above. However this category is somewhat peculiar in the sense that the grammatical forms are informal in with simple sentences functioning in series. In no. iii for instance, the text comprises itemised short imperative sentences made up of "5 steps" for achieving a "lovly morning. Again, some lexical items in the body of the text are a direct personification of virtues. As discourse, the text constructs the teacher/student relationship. The teacher reminds his student of the obvious and admonishes with some basic Christian principles. In a form of stylistic parallelism, some of the texts maintain a consistent flow of rhythm that may make some emotional appeal to the receiver. Expressions such as *"U're a child of destny, meant 4 de top, created 4 impact, configured 4 excellence, packaged 2 be distinguished, called 2 be great & ordained 2 be celebrated…*" etc follow a consistent rhythmic pattern. And while communicating the theme of hope and comfort, it is also capable of giving pleasure to the reader.

Appreciation

- God bles u so much 4 sharing ur joy wit us. Ur support, pryas & presence was hily appreciated. Ur pocket wil neva run dry.

- My heart is ovawhlmd wit d levl of luv u av shown on me & my husband. De Almighty God will bless u in every area of ur life.

The *Appreciation* text messages presuppose an earlier interaction or discourse between the sender and the receiver, for which the present text message is only a follow up or feedback. The text writer acknowledges the receiver's "support, pryas & presence." The statement: "*ur pocket wil neva run dry*" implies that the writer had received some financial assistance from the receiver. In the second text, the writer's heart is "ovawhlmd" by the receiver's "levl of luv." The fact that these text messages are feedbacks shows that text messages are indeed discourses. It reflects an ongoing interaction and commitment of church members to one another and the SMS text-messages provide a medium for expressing these.

Praise & Worship

- Beloved, praiz God 4 hs mercies

- Sing dis unto d Lord. 'Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness O'Lord unto me…

- Praiz d Lord!

Praise and Worship texts begin with short openings like "*Beloved,*" or "*Sing dis unto the Lord!*" In the three (3) messages in the data, there are evidences of imperative statements in the body of the text, advising the receiver to praise God. Significantly, praise and worship is a core value of the Christian religion and interestingly, SMS-text messaging is being used as a medium for re-emphasizing this value. As discourse they

Seasons Greeting

- May ds Xmas fill ur home wit joy, ur heart wit luv & ur life wit laughter. Ds text brings luv & best wishes at Xmas. Meri Xmas n hapi new year.

- Its ur x studnt... Do ve a lovely festive season

- As d wisemen locatd Jesus star, came 2 him with gifrs, so shall men of substance identify ur star n com 2 u wit precious treasures. Merry Christmas n happy Nu year…

- U're d reasn 4 d seasn. Wishin u d best.

- Happy Easter, May ds resurrectn, brng happiness to ur famly etc.

In terms of content and style, Seasons Greetings tend to combine the features of all the text message groups put together. Because the messages go in various directions they capture, prayers and well wishing, faith pronouncements, assurances and praise. Season's greetings are a universal phenomenon that captures some essence of social relationships and in the Christian context, messages sent during Easter, Christmas and the New Year generally spread well-wishes to friends and loved ones. Interestingly, electronic cards and text messages are increasingly becoming an alternative to paper cards. Evidently during festive periods, season's greetings by SMS text messages precede the paper cards and reach more and wider receivers than the ordinary cards. People who may never get the paper cards are easily and satisfactorily reached. It is possible that in the next few years, paper greeting cards may be completely replaced by SMS text message seasons greetings.

General Information/Announcement

- Beloved, Calvary greetns. Pls be reminded dat we'll wait behnd after d meetin with d GS…Pls pray along wit one of us, Bro… for quick recovery, Many thanks, Bro…

- Pls. remember, we're meeting aftr service on Sunday to meet wit d pastrs wife.

- My church weddin is slated 4 June, 2007 @ RCCG (Every Day wt Jesus Parish). I need ur both mral & real financial support.

- Bro…We've not met since I came back. I'll love to meet u & ur wife immediately aftr serv. on sun. We'll meet @ cent. Church, etc.

Lastly, text messages function as an effective medium for disseminating *short information, notices, announcements, reminders and invitations*. In the data are samples of reminder notes, notice of meetings, invitations and assignment information. Thus as discourse, SMS text messages are designed to address specific message themes or field (Halliday 1978). Because it is easy to send, cheap and short, SMS text messaging is fast accommodating almost all aspect of information frame-

work where people live, work, or engage in social activities. The Christian context is just one example. Text messaging is a personally operated communication system, emanating from the individual and religion generally is viewed as essentially individualistic – an individual's relationship with his maker within a spectrum of people, society and culture. Little wonder SMS text messaging has become a popular communication option within the Christian context.

Conclusion

The study has attempted to provide a brief description and functions of SMS text messages in the Nigerian Christian Environment. In particular the study shows that text messaging has become an effective and sustainable medium of communication among Christian Pentecostals and the Charismatic. The study demonstrates that text messaging with its peculiar orthographic convention and style has become so popular in Christian communication context not just because it is short, cheap and fast but that its individualistic nature tends to fit well into a context where genuine personal feelings toward God and man is emphasized. Text samples in the data shows that SMS text messaging is used for sending messages associated with faith-based individual pronouncements, prayer and well-wishing, admonition and assurance, appreciation, praise & worship, seasons greetings and general information/announcements. These functions no doubt promote love and commitment among church members and foster social relationships and cooperation among social groups.

References

Awonusi, V. O. (2004) "Little Englishes and the Law of Energetics: A Sociological Study of SMS Text Messages as Register and Discourse in Nigeria." In Awonusi, Vincent. & Babalola E. (eds.) *Domestication of English in Nigeria: A Festschrift in Honour of Abiodun Adetugbo.* Lagos: University of Lagos Press (pp 45-62).

Babajide, A. (e.d.) (2000) *Studies in English Language.* Ibadan: Enicrownfit

Bernatchez, Eric (2000) *The History of Text Messages.* http://cellphones.about.com,

Brown, G. & Yule, G. (1983) *Discourse Analysis.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Campbell, H. (2006) "Religion and the Internet." *Communication ResearchTrends. 25 (1) 1-24*

Chalon, Y. (1985) "The Structure of Communicative Interaction." In Paul. Riley (e.d.) *Discourse and Learning.* . 12-19. Essex: Longman.

Chiluwa, 1. (2007) *Nigerianness of SMS Text Messages in English.* A paper presented at the Nigeria English Studies Association Conference, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Cook, G. (1989) *Discourse.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Coulthard, M. & Montgomery M. (1981) *Studies in Discourse Analysis.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Daft, R., Lengel, R. & Trevino, L. (1987) "Message Equivocality, Media Selection and Manager Performance: Implications for Information Systems." *MIS Quarterly*, 11, 355-266.

DeSanctis, G. & Poole, S. (1994) "Capturing the Complexity in Advanced Technology Use: Adaptive Structuralism Theory." *Organization Science*, *5*(2), 121-147.

Dickey, M. H., Wasko, M. Thatcher J. B. (2006) "Do You Know What I Know? A Shared Understandings Perspectives on Text-Based Communication". *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12 (1) article 4.

Erickson, T., & Kellogg, W. A. (2003). Social translucence: Using Minimalist visualization of Social activity to support collective interaction. In K. H. D. Benyon, & A. Munro (Eds.), *Designing Information Spaces: The Social Navigation Approach.* New York: Springer. pp. 17-42.

Ess, C., Kawabata A. & Kurosaki H. (2007) "Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Religion and Computer Mediated Communication." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12 (3) article 9.

Fakumizu, K. (2007) "Internet Use among Religious Followers: Religious Postmodernism in Japanese Buddhism." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12 (3) Article 11.

Fulk, J., Schmitz, J. & Steinfield C. (1990) "Social Influence Model of Technology Use. In Fulk & C. Steinfield (Eds.). *Organizations and Communication Technology*. California: Sage Publication, (pp. 177-140).

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold

Herring, S. C. (2001). Computer-mediated discourse. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.). *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, (pp. 612-634).

Herring, S. C. (2004). Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online be-haviour. In S. A. Barab, R. Kling, & J. H. Gray (Eds.), *Designing for Virtual Communities in the Service of Learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press, (pp. 338-376).

Hinds, P., & Weisband, S. P. (2003) "Knowledge Sharing and Shared Understanding. In Virtual Teams." In C. B. Gibson & S. G. Cohen (Eds.), *Virtual Teams That Work.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, (pp. 21-36).

ITU (International Telecommunication Union) (2004) "Shaping the future Mobile Information Society: The Case of the Republic of Korea. ITU/MIC Workshop on Shaping the future mobile informa-tion society, Seoul. http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue4/kim.html

Kim, H., Kim, G.J. Park, H. W. & Rice, R.E. (2007) "Configurations of Relationships in Different Media: FtF, Email, Instant Messenger, Mobile Phone and SMS. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Com-munication*, 12 (4) article 3.

Licoppe, C. & Semora, Z. (2005) "Are Social Networks Technologically Embedded? How Networks are Changing Today with Changes in Communication Technology. *Social Networks, 27 (4), 317-335.*

Miyata, K. (2006) "Longitudinal Effects of Mobile Internet Use on Social Network in Japan. A paper presented to International Communication Association Conference, Dresden, Germany.

Moshowitz, A. (1997) "Virtual organization." *Communications of the ACM, 40* (9), 30-38.

Nastri, Jacqueline, Pena, J. Hancock, J. (2006) "The Construction of Away Messages:

A Speech Act Analysis. ." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11 (4), article 7.

Onadeko, T. (2000) Discourse Analysis: the Fundamentals. In Adeyemi Babajide (e.d.) Studies *in English Language.* 81-104 Ibadan: Enicrownfit Publishers.

Ramo, J. C. (1996) "Finding God on the Web." *Time, 149 (1)*
        http/jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue3/fukamizu.html.

Rice, R.E. (1993). "Media Appropriateness: Using Social Presence Theory to Compare Traditional and New Organizational Media." *Human Communication Research, 19 (4), 85-108*

Walther, J. B. (1992) "Interpersonal Effects in Computer-Mediated Interaction: A Relational Perspec-tive." *Communications Research, 19* (1), 52-90.

Wilson, F. (1999) "Cultural Control within the Virtual Organization." *The Sociological Review, 47* (4), 672-694.