



## Modern semiotics in an internet-mediated world

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## **Abstract**

English has become the dominant language for internet users throughout the world and the internet has had its own impact on the English language. The main aim for this essay is to compare and contrast different online discussion forums and other related online discourses in order to show how meaning is created and to identify any differences that may exist depending on the forum. To do this, I have chosen specific features of language and analyzed their use in a number of different online sources.

The research has shown that most of the language features commonly used in everyday speech are also present online. There is a difference in which features are used, where, and how frequently they occur, but the determining factor differs depending on the feature; the use of some features depends on the topic while the use of others depends on the website.

The overall conclusion of the research is that the language on the websites used as primary data is not at all simplified in comparison to spoken language. The same language features and conventions are still used and understood in the same way as spoken language.

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Literature review .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. Syntactics .....	5
2.2. Semantics .....	6
2.3. Pragmatics .....	6
Theory of Implicature.....	6
Grice’s Maxims .....	7
Speech Acts .....	8
Deixis .....	8
2.4. Sociolinguistics.....	9
<b>3. Methodology .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1. Choosing the Primary Data.....	10
3.2. Similarities and Differences between the Sources .....	10
3.3. Analyzing the Text .....	11
<b>4. Results and Analysis.....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1. Motorcycle Forum .....	12
4.2. General Forum .....	14
4.3. Comments Section on Article Website.....	15
4.4. Comments Section on <i>The Guardian</i> Website .....	17
<b>5. Discussion .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7. References .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>I</b>

Motorcycle Forum .....	I
General Forum .....	V
Comments Section on Article Website.....	IX
Comments Section on <i>The Guardian</i> Website .....	XIV

# 1. Introduction

The internet was created as a way of linking computers all over the world to each other (Berners-Lee, 2000) and, as intended, it has become a platform for many different people to connect. However, many websites and forums today are anonymous thus making it difficult to know when to shift register and style depending on the interlocutor. It also creates an opportunity for people to hide their true identity, creating a problem that does not exist in real life communication. One example of this, given by Yus (2001:21), is the movie *You've got mail*, where two people have an intense romance online, not realizing that they hate each other in real life.

As Mey (2001:43) states; “The context determines both what one can say and what one cannot say; only the pragmatics of the situation can give meaning to one’s words”. Therefore, in this essay, I will investigate how pragmatics, semantics and sociolinguistics are used to create the needed context in Computer Mediated Communications, known as CMC. This includes online discussion forums, both general and specialized, as well as comment sections on news media sites and social networks. The questions I will attempt to answer are:

1. Do we create meaning the same way online as we do in real life speech?
2. How is meaning created in different ways depending on websites, and what are the similarities and differences in regards to various language features?

The way I attempt to answer these questions is by choosing various language features common in everyday speech, and investigate how common these features are in CMC and in what way they are used. In the literature review, I will present a selection of language features common when studying how meaning is created in a language. In the methodology chapter, I will explain how I have chosen the sources and what their differences and similarities are. I will also briefly present the aim for the analysis of the texts. In the results chapter, I will present the results I have found when analyzing the primary data. The analysis chapter will contain an analysis of the texts in order to determine how meaning is created and which features are used, or not used, when doing so. Finally, in the discussion chapter, I will describe how I see the wider implications and potential applications of my research.

## **2. Literature review**

Within the field of linguistics, there are a number of sub-disciplines, each of which has its own approach. Syntactics, pragmatics and semiotics all focus on different ways in which meaning is created and language is interpreted. In order to understand meaning creation and so on, it is necessary to have at least a basic understanding of these disciplines. Sociolinguistics, on the other hand, enables us to understand the social and cultural features that are present within language and the relationship between language and society. It seeks to explain how and why we speak in a different way from others who may also speak our language, but do so differently owing to regional and social variations. In the case of English and the internet, with some 3 billion users (Internet World Stats), there is also a possibility that much of the English that is to be found online is written by people who do not have English as a first language. Language on the internet is also different from other types of language in that it is not always typical of other written texts, nor is it typical of face-to-face speech: therefore, it has been referred to as “written speech” (Crystal, 2001:25). For example, it is often written and posted without proof-reading or editing.

### **2.1. Syntactics**

Syntax could be seen as the skeleton of the language. Its focus rests on structure and grammatical order of the words used. However, correct syntax does not necessarily mean that an utterance is comprehensible for the listener or reader. Chomsky (from Mey, 2001: p.20) cites an example which demonstrates this in the following sentence: “Colorless green ideas sleep furiously”. This sentence is perfectly accurate in terms of sentence structure, but incoherent when it comes to semantic meaning. The word “green” is cancelled out with the use of the word “colorless”, and ideas cannot sleep at all since they are not animate entities.

It does, however, matter to semantic meaning how syntax is used. The sentence “The man ate the fish” does not convey the same meaning as “The fish ate the man”, even though they are both comprised of the exact same words.

## 2.2. Semantics

Semantics deals with the literal, or conventional, meaning of an utterance (Kearns, 2000). For example, when saying “I have a paper to write”, the semantic meaning is that “I”, the person uttering the sentence, have a task to do in the future, in this case the task is writing a paper.

According to Kearns, there are two basic ways to create semantic meaning. This can be done either by “ostensive definition” or by “paraphrasing” (p.2). They are both ways to describe what the word denotes, but ostensive definition means explaining by pointing, i.e. pointing to an object and saying the name of the object, e.g. “Dog”. Paraphrasing is what one can find in a dictionary. In the case of “dog”, that would, for example, be something describing defining traits of a dog such as four legged animal, long canine teeth, fur etc.

Semantics can also be said to include different rhetorical features such as hyperbole, metaphor, simile, metonymy and synecdoche.

## 2.3. Pragmatics

Pragmatics, unlike semantics, deals with the intended and the perceived meaning and how this is created by looking at both language and context together. To use the example from the semantics section, the pragmatic meaning of “I have a paper to write” could, for example, mean that I decline an invitation to a party. There are many pragmatic features to take into account when analyzing the pragmatics of a certain discourse.

### Theory of Implicature

There are two major types of implicature, conversational and conventional. With conversational implicature, the meaning has to be deduced from context in order to be understood correctly. For example, if I am asked:

*What time is it?*

it might, in certain cases, be sufficient for me to simply reply:

*The train just left.*

This would not make sense in the conventional sense, but if I am just about to leave a railway station platform where I have waved goodbye to a friend who just left on the only train departing that day, and a man with a suitcase comes running from the parking and ask me this question, then my answer is sufficient for him. By knowing the context of the situation, he can come to the conclusion that it is just past the time when his train departed and that he has missed it. However, conversational implicatures can be negated or cancelled by adding another sentence or clause. For example:

*The train just left, but it left early because it was broken and there are buses coming soon instead.*

By adding the second clause, the implicature is no longer the same.

Conversely, conventional implicature is inferred by the sentence itself and does not need any context. The meaning remains the same regardless of the situation. For example:

*He is fit, for his age,*

would imply that people of his age are not normally as fit. Conventional implicature cannot be negated by adding another sentence.

### **Grice's Maxims**

In an attempt to describe functional communication, Grice presented what he called the "Cooperative principle". This is based on the notion that a successful communication depends on the mutual cooperation between the interlocutors. He divided this principle into four different maxims, namely *Quantity*, *Quality*, *Relation* and *Manner* (Mey, 2001). The maxims can be applied or defied in different ways, depending on speaker intention and the desired effect. They can be violated for various reasons including, for example, in order to deceive the addressee, or they can be flouted in order to create an effect such as sarcasm, irony or humor. Intentional ambiguity is one example of flouting the maxims; it is often done in order to create humor, for example in the joke; "I'm a linguist, so I like ambiguity more than most people". By not

cooperating, such as when violating one or more of the maxims, the communication cannot be successful.

## **Speech Acts**

When we use certain words and phrases, we perform certain actions with our words, and the things we do are called “speech acts”. Speech acts are divided into three main categories. Firstly, the locutionary act is the strict semantic interpretation of an utterance, which is the result of decoding the meanings of the individual lexemes as they follow conventional grammatical rules. For example, the locutionary act of; “Could you pass the salt?” is a simple question eliciting a yes or no answer. Secondly, all utterances have an illocutionary meaning, which can be understood by the notion which suggests that, when we are saying something, we are doing something. According to Searle (1985), there are five types of illocution, namely:

1. Representative: Representing a state of affairs
2. Directive: Getting the addressee to do something
3. Commissive: Getting the speaker to do something
4. Expressive: Expresses the mental state of the speaker
5. Declaration: Brings a state of affairs into existence.

If I for example say;

*It is a bit warm in here,*

the illocutionary act might be a covert directive for someone to open a window or turn on the air conditioner. If this person then understands my intended meaning and goes to close the window, the perlocutionary effect corresponded with my illocution (Bell, 2013). Under speech act theory, misunderstandings occur when the illocutionary act is not reflected in the perlocutionary effect.

## **Deixis**

Deixis can be explained as describing the world in relation to the deictic center, or as the act of pointing. The center, called the “origo”, is always me, here, now, and thus it changes

depending on the speaker and the situation. Therefore, deictic words, for example *this/that* or *here/there*, always need context in order to be fully understood. As Mey (2001: p.197) states: “Deictic pronouns such as *this, that* presupposes a center of orientation”. In real life, if no specific context is given, one usually assumes that the deictic center is somewhere close to the speaker. This is something that is not always possible online since the situation does not always necessitate conveying information as to who, or where, the speaker is. In order to resolve this issue, further contextual information is often provided. A specific deictic word can also infer different meaning depending on the context. Both spatial and temporal deixis have varying degrees, for example, using the word *here* can mean in this room, in my apartment or even this country, depending on the context. Similarly, the deictic word *recently* can refer to an event that has taken place one day ago, or an event that took place a year ago but that might be recent in relation to the frequency of similar such events.

## **2.4. Sociolinguistics**

The field of sociolinguistics is concerned with language as a social construction and the relationship between language and society. For example, it can take into account race, ethnicity, class, sex and social institutions (Spencer, 2011). Every speaker has his or her unique style and as Bell states; “We cannot talk without giving ourselves away socially” (2013, p.4). One’s language can give the hearer information about one or more of the mentioned notions. Groups of people who share common features of language are called “speech communities” (ibid: p.106), but there are many different ways to define these groups depending on what kind of research is being conducted.

Most people are also able to belong to more than one group or speech community simultaneously by shifting their register and style. This might, for example, be the case when using one variety of language at work, and another at home. At work, or in an academic environment, there might be a need for a more formal way of phrasing while at home, or with close friends, it is more acceptable to use colloquial language.

According to Herring, gender makes a difference in the language online. From her research, she concluded that women are more interactional and informative in their posts while men more often express critical views (1996:82).

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Choosing the Primary Data**

The websites that comprise the primary data for the research were chosen in order to represent different areas within the genre of discussion forums. It was important for the research to contain a mix of specialized and general discussions, as well as a mix of websites which are anonymous and those which are not, in order to be able to investigate the possible similarities and differences which are manifest online. The specific threads from these websites were chosen at random with the only qualification of them being substantial enough to perform a sufficient analysis of the possible features of discourse.

The chosen sources are as follows:

1. Motorcycle forum: Discussion about motorcycles.
2. General forum: Discussion about what makes one feel old.
3. Comment section on article website: Comments regarding an article.
4. Comment section on *The Guardian* website: Comments regarding the same article.

#### **3.2. Similarities and Differences between the Sources**

The thread in Appendix 1 is from the forum *www.advrider.com* (adventure rider). This forum is for people interested in motorcycles and as the name suggests, the focus is on off-road and trail riding. It is primarily an American site, but has members from across the world as well as specific sections for each continent. The site has roughly 270,000 members as of November 2014 and the design is such that members post under an alias, but membership is required to start threads and to post replies. The membership procedure is simple and requires no revelation of any personal data other than date of birth and e-mail address. This makes the forum anonymous

as far as other members are concerned since a specific member can only be tracked via IP address. It is, however, open for anyone to read without having to sign in.

The thread in Appendix 2 is from a site called *www.generalforum.com*. As the name suggest, it is not specified in any direction, but it is open for all sorts of discussions. The forum is considerably smaller than *advrider* with roughly 44 000 registered members. Otherwise, the design is similar regarding membership; one can only post threads and replies if registered, but no personal data other than date of birth and e-mail address is required and posts are made under an alias.

Appendix 3 is from a website called *iflscience*. The website is a collection of usually scientific articles written for the general public, with a simpler language and often illustrated. There is no information about how many people regularly visits the webpage but, with over 19 million “likes” on *Facebook*, there is reason to believe that the website is regularly visited by at least as many as the other sources. The comment function on the website is constructed so that the person commenting can choose to be completely anonymous. There is a login requirement, but there is no need to give any actual information. However, there is the choice to use a *Facebook* account to log in, thus giving the reader information about the writer’s name and all other public information posted on *Facebook*.

Appendix 4 is from the online edition of *The Guardian*. This newspaper was first founded in 1821 and is a much more traditional newspaper than *iflscience*. The comment function is similar with a login required, but no need to give any personal information although, as on *iflscience*, there is the option to use a *Facebook* account to log in.

Appendix 5 is from the site *Digital Spy*. They claim: “Our discussion forums have more than 445,000 registered users and 57.3 million posts, and together are amongst the world's busiest English-language social venues for entertainment and technology”. The membership system is similar to that of the websites in Appendices 1 and 2.

### **3.3. Analyzing the Text**

In the analysis of the texts, the aim was to establish which linguistic conventions are observed in Internet forums and how these conventions vary depending on the type of forum. The

aim was also to find examples of where conventions did not apply. I decided to focus mostly on pragmatic features, since an analysis of all the linguistic features presented in modern linguistics would have taken too long and the aim of the research was to be able to show specific differences and similarities. When using the term “speech communities”, I define those as groups of people who share a specific style and register that might generally not be used outside of the group, for example slang, allusions, metaphors or specific synecdoches and also those with meaning which must be recovered from implicatures.

## **4. Results and Analysis**

### **4.1. Motorcycle Forum**

This thread is a discussion following a question about what motorcycle to buy. In short, the first post is a list of what the writer has liked or disliked with previous motorcycles, and what he or she is looking for when buying a new motorcycle. The following posts are answers to the first post.

The language in the first post is, as expected, very informal. However, the language in the following replies is more strict and focused on giving information and different points of view. For example, the first post has several metaphors such as: “you folks here on ADVrider are the shit” (line 44), “throw some insight to me” (line 45) and “seat sucked” (line 16), but there is an absence of metaphors in the later replies. The first post also contains some implicatures, for example on line 7 and 8, the sentence: “I have no garage, and barely anything you’d call a toolbox”, can imply that not having a garage is what is keeping the writer from having more than one motorcycle.

The first post also lacks questions intended to be answered. There are only two questions in the first post and they are both rhetorical, yet the replies interpret the post as a question for help to pick a new motorcycle. In the following replies, there is only one instance of questions being asked expecting an answer and they are all asked by the same person: “What kind of body type are you? Tall? Thin? Short? Fat? Muscular?” (line 59).

Deictic words are somewhat common in the text. Even disregarding personal deixis, which is difficult not to use in a conversation between several people, there are still some examples. One example is the spatial deictic, *here*, used on several occasions. In some instances, it is used in the sense of presenting something, for example on line 10; “here’s the jist (sic)”. However, it is used in the true deictic sense of describing a place on line 70; “Never heard of any demo days around here”. As mentioned earlier, this use of deixis might be difficult in computer mediated communication since one does not always know the deictic center; however, in this case, the writer has disclosed his or her location in the information shown under the avatar, making it easier for the readers to understand the statement and possibly respond accordingly. The reply following this post also contains the word “here” in the same sense and, similar to the previous writer, the writer of this post has also disclosed his or her location as well, albeit not as precisely as the first. There is only one example of temporal deixis and it is in the phrase “at the moment” (line 40).

The language is closer to speech than to traditional, written, language, but there are not many obvious violations of Grice’s maxims: however, violating a maxim, for example by lying, can be difficult to determine online. Nevertheless, there are examples of flouting the maxims throughout the text. For example on line 76: “Got big legs from soccer and skateboarding heh (sic)”, the maxim of quantity is flouted because more information than needed is given in order to answer the question. The writer might want to assert that he is not unfit, even though he writes that he has got a “bit of a beer belly” (line 75). There is also an example of violating relevance on line 89: “Stop doing so much maintenance”. By writing this, the writer disregards the initial post that states that the first poster does not want a chain driven motorcycle.

When analyzing speech acts, I found that representative speech acts were by far the most common. Directives were the second most common with seven cases, for example on line 89: “Stop doing so much maintenance”. The third most common were expressives with three cases, for example expressing a wish on line 40-41: “How I wish the big 4 made a mid control cruiser outside of the Shadow RS”. Finally there was one example of a commissive speech act on line 47 where the writer assured the readers that he would “pick up” some hard bags in the future: “Probably buy a bullet for summer and definitely pick up some hard bags with my tax returns”. There were no examples of declarations at all in the text.

## 4.2. General Forum

This thread is concerned with what makes people feel old. The first post is a simple question and the following posts are answers to, and comments on, that question.

Similar to the previous text, the language in the general forum is also quite informal and metaphors are common. Some of the examples are; “behind the latest trends” (line 5), “blown away” (line 13), “out of step” (line 40) and “getting on in years” (line 52).

Also similar to the first text, there is a distinct lack of questions in this thread. The only question that is not rhetorical is the name of the thread, “What makes you feel old?” All other sentences structured as questions are rhetorical and serve different purposes than being directive speech acts, for example in order to create sarcasm as on line 9: “21? Old? HA.” The purpose of the thread was to receive answers to the original question; therefore, there is no need to ask questions in the thread other than rhetorical ones used as sarcasm or to reinforce the age of something or someone. Asking questions in a thread which has the purpose of receiving answers could have been seen as violating the relation maxim.

While spatial deixis is more common than temporal deixis in the text from *advrider*, the opposite is true for the text in *General Forum* where temporal deixis is much more common. Some examples of the deictic phrases used to describe time are; “this year” (lines 29 and 50), “now” (line 66), “9/10 years ago (sic)” (line 66), “last week” (line 85), “on Friday” (line 31) and “back in the Fall (sic)” (line 71). Spatial deixis is only present in very few instances, for example “our place” (line 58) and “in the building” (line 68).

Failure to observe the maxims is common in this thread as well. For example, sarcasm is used to flout the relevance maxim on line 9; “21? Old? HA”. There are also examples of flouting the quality maxim with the statement; “still not sure how that happened” (line 59). The writer is probably well aware of how human growth and maturity works, and uses this expression to imply that he or she feels sad about the fact that the daughter has grown up. Relevance is also flouted on lines 74-83. The text is not directly relevant to the posed question; it does, however, carry a number of implicatures. For example, it implies that the writer is older than 50 years and that he does not think that the younger writers have a reason to complain about their age. The text also contains an example of infringing the quantity maxim. One of the writers adds the word “Meh” at

the end of his post (line 44). This does not really carry any implicature, other than what has already been stated earlier in the post, and it is not something that is added in order to deceive or mislead. On one instance, the manner maxim is infringed by being ambiguous; "going to my high school reunion back in the Fall (sic)" (line 70-71). It is most likely not done on purpose, but by capitalizing "the Fall", it could refer to a place rather than a point in time. It might, in fact, refer to an actual place; however, it would still be ambiguous in that it could be mistaken for the season.

The speech acts in the text from *General Forum* is similar to that of *advrider* in that representative speech acts are, by far, the most common and there are no examples of declarations. There are, however, differences in the way the speech acts are presented. In this thread, many of the utterances can, due to the convention that old age is something undesirable, be seen as covert expressive speech acts, for example: "Whenever some go getting youth talks about the gazillion million things they've achieved before they got weaned off of mummy's breasty milk, I get lethargic and depressed." (lines 41-42). It is structured as a representative, yet it is just as much a covert expressive with the implicature that the writer regrets not having achieved enough in his life. Similarly, "If someone ever starts calling me grandma that is when I will feel old.haha" (line 20), also contains a covert expression of regret that her youth will pass, or already has. Most of the directive speech acts are in fact rhetorical questions, thus not actual directives. The only example of a true directive is the question in the topic. However, this question has great perlocutionary force since most of the posts in the thread are answers to that question. There is also one example of a commissive speech act in: "I swear I'm not kidding" (line 35). Even if it is not as formal as swearing an oath, it still commits the writer to the truth of his proposition.

### **4.3. Comments Section on Article Website**

The article for this discussion is regarding a breakthrough in medical science, namely, the first baby born from a transplanted womb.

The language in this text is generally informal and often emotional. The topic might be considered sensitive for women who have experienced the disease which prompted the research and, therefore, the tone of the discussion is bound to be personal when the need for this kind of progress is questioned. It has a number of metaphors such as "opens up doors", "ripple out" and

“laying around”. However, metaphors are not quite as common as in previous texts, even though this sample size is somewhat larger.

Deictic words and phrases are also not as common as in previous texts. There are no examples of temporal deixis and only a few of spatial deixis although, as in previous texts, personal deixis is common. For example, “going to have to disagree here” (line 55) could be seen as discourse deixis as it refers to the specific comment where the word is written. In a similar way: “They might discover something here, that will ripple out and be used elsewhere” (line 58-59), could be deictic as it depends on which specific field of study is discussed in the thread. In this case, “here”, is the specific medical field, and “elsewhere” is some other field or branch of medical research. Context is needed in order to fully understand the sentence.

The text presents examples of flouting all the four maxims. For example, quality is flouted on line 93; “So saying just adopt isn’t that easy”. The meaning has to be recovered from context. Saying the words “just adopt” is usually very easy; however, just adopting a child is not always easy. However, if this sentence would have, for instance, been spoken in a class learning Chinese, the meaning could have been that saying the words is not easy. On lines 62-71, multiple maxims are being flouted. Not only is the quality maxim flouted by using a hyperbole to prove a point: “I’m sure you’d want the punishment to be something super harsh like death if someone woman came up pregnant right?”, the sentence is also not true, based on the given information. It also flouts the manner maxim by being unnecessarily long and replete with rhetorical questions. The reason for all the violations of the maxims is to create the implicature that the writer does not agree with the previous comment. On line 87, relevance is flouted by the sentence: “How many children have you adopted, a&o?” The question is not relevant to the discussion since the person referred to as a&o, has not said that everyone should adopt, but merely said that people should adopt rather than go through surgery to be able to have children of their own. However, the reason for posing the question is to discredit the first comment by implying that he or she is being hypocritical.

Similar to all the previous texts, representative speech acts are by far the most common here as well. There are also no examples of declarations. When it comes to commissive speech acts, the examples found in the text are all expressing either agreement or disagreement. There are two examples of agreeing, line 82 and line 95, and two examples of disagreeing, line 47 and

line 55. Close to twenty directive speech acts are to be found in the text, however, approximately half of them can be understood as rhetorical questions. For example, the first post in the thread has two directive speech acts. First, there is the question: “Why are we spending money on this technology?” (lines 4-5). The utterance is formed as a question but the writer, most likely, does not expect an answer to the question, but is merely expressing his or her view on the subject. However, the last word in this post: “Adopt”, is a way of urging people to adopt; therefore, it is a clear directive. Similarly, the sentence: “Does that child carry your bloodline?” (lines 20-21), is formed as a question, however, the writer then answers the question herself, making it rhetorical. Other clear examples of directive speech acts are to be found on line 33: “Why is a bloodline important?” This is a direct question posed to one of the previous writers, making it a directive speech act.

#### **4.4. Comments Section on *The Guardian* Website**

The article for this discussion is the same news article as the previous text. The only major difference is that this article is posted on a different website.

The language in this text differs from the other texts used in this research. It is not quite as informal and contains fewer grammatical errors. As with Appendix 3, metaphors are not as common as the first texts. Many of the metaphors that are present can also be considered to be conventional, for example: “Humans are the most destructive plague this planet has ever seen” (line 64), the use of “weed” to mean cannabis (line 56) and “heartache” (line 76). There are some instances where the metaphor is less conventional, for example the use of “stocked” and “warehoused” when talking about prisoners on lines 41-42.

Similar to the previous text, yet unlike the two first texts, there are few deictic words and phrases. Only one of the examples is spatial deixis; “abroad” (line 108). Three examples are temporal: “in a few years” (line 27), “these days” (line 52) and “the last decades” (line 53). Personal deixis is, as in all of the other texts, by far the most common type used. The article that the posts comment on is the same news report as the text from *iflscience*; therefore, it is not surprising that the pattern is repeated.

Few clear examples of not non-conformity to the maxims in this text were identified. One example, however, can be seen on line 121: “fairly basic information was available when basically reading the article”. This sentence is flouting the manner maxim by "prolixity", i.e. being unnecessarily long. The implicature is that the writer is irritated by people asking questions to which the answers are clearly stated in the article. An example is present of violating the quality maxim by being sarcastic: “Of course, we must spare no effort or expense to add to the total” (line 62). The implicature here has to be drawn from context as well as relevance.

Apart from the few clear examples, one might argue for some sentences violating the maxims. For example: “It's all about profits, and judges are complicit. They even feed prisons crap food like baloney sandwiches to maximize profits” (line 44-45) might be considered violating the quality maxim since no evidence is provided in the text to substantiate the statement.

Two notable features not manifest in any of the other texts in this research are examples of hedging. The hedging here is done by adding “I assume” (line 49) and “I think” (line 67). It could be seen as a way to flout a maxim that might otherwise had been violated by the statement. For example: ” I could only suffer for those who went there innocent by court mistake, but they are not many” might be viewed as violating the truth maxim by the absence of evidence for the statement that not many people are sent to jail by mistake. However, the writer then adds “I assume” after the initial statement, thus creating the implicature that the statement is an uncertain truth and the writer should not be held responsible if it were to be proven that many innocent people actually do get sent to jail by court mistake.

As in all the other texts in this research, representative speech acts are by far the most common. There are, however, also many examples of directives, even though roughly half of the directives are actually rhetorical questions. They might still be considered as directives as defined by Searle because they are intended to prompt a response, even though they do not constitute a direct answer to a question. There are also a few examples which are noteworthy because they can be seen as expressive and representative at the same time. The phrase “Well said” (line 16) can be seen as agreeing to the previous statement, thus making it an expressive, expressing approval about what has been said. It is also a representative, stating the speaker's view that the

previous statement was a valid thing to say. Apart from this, there are no expressives and, as with all the other texts, there are no examples of declarations.

## **5. Discussion**

There are some observable patterns evident in the research. For example is it fairly common to digress from the topic and not answer a sincerely posed question. It is common to repeat previously stated facts and it also appears as if metaphors are more or less common depending on the importance, or perhaps level of social effect, of the topic. For example, metaphors are common in the first two texts, which have no real social implication; these two texts are merely discussions for the sake of discussion and for the purpose of seeking advice. The latter two texts, however, discuss articles that present research which may have real life implications. In these texts, metaphors are much less common and the examples that are present are usually more conventional. This might point towards people being more restrictive with the use of metaphors, and more likely to try to be as clear as possible when discussing important matters.

However, given that people appear to be more precise in terms of metaphors when dealing with important matters, one might expect them to be more prudent when presenting factual statements, yet it appears as if hedging is very uncommon in important discussions as well as in unimportant threads. Most factual claims in the texts are presented as true without any evidence or hedging. This might be due to the writer having no real connection with the person on the other side of the debate, and therefore he or she does not have to verify or defend a false statement. If someone were to be proven wrong, that person could simply stop participating in the discussion. This is not possible in a real life discussion, where one would, most likely, be held accountable for the false statement.

Speech acts also differ depending on topic; however, there are some patterns within the use of speech acts. For example, directives are often rhetorical questions rather than true directives. Usually, the context surrounding the question is the most likely way to interpret meaning and understand the implicature of the question.

There are no examples of declarational speech acts in any of the texts. However, this is not surprising since there is often no way of knowing who is making the statement and therefore

it is not likely any examples of this are to be found on a public website. There could be declarations online, but they would have to be on an official website, such as a government website, or somewhere similar. One example would be applying for a visa online. The website could, in theory, approve the application, thus making a declaration. Commissive speech acts are also fairly uncommon. This might be because, similar to the way facts are stated without presenting evidence, a commissive speech act would rarely carry any real implication when written anonymously. Even a promise of not continuing to write can easily be broken by simply creating a new user on the same website.

Deictic words and phrases appear to be more common on forum threads and quite uncommon in the comments sections used in this research. This might be due to the fact that forum threads are generally more of a discussion while comment sections often evolve into becoming a debate between those who agree and those who disagree with the main article. In a debate regarding a certain article, there is no need to refer to time or place, while in a discussion forum, questions are often asked and the answer might need a reference in order to be understood correctly because of the variation in meaning within the same deictic words.

Regarding the co-operative principle, there is no clear pattern in which maxims are most likely to be flouted or in what way. However, there is an interesting point in that it appears to be more common to flout the maxims in the more emotional discussions from *iflscience* than in the other texts. Even though the text from *The Guardian* discusses the same topic, the difference might be explained by diversity of people who write on the respective websites, *iflscience* is aimed towards the general public with a close connection to *Facebook*, while readers of *The Guardian* are generally thought to be people with, on average, a higher level of education.

Lastly, the research shows a tendency for replies to become longer as the debate progresses. With the exception of the text from *advrider*, the first post is never the longest. This is most likely due to the way a discussion works: the more opinions that are presented, the longer the reply has to be in order to cover all the statements and questions. There are of course exceptions to this and, when the entire discussion is taken into account, it may very well be that it ends with short replies again. However, in this research, it has not been possible to analyze every discussion in its entirety.

## 6. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to determine how meaning is created online and whether there is any difference to how language works in real life as well as between different websites. To do this, I have analyzed a number of texts from online sources and compared the presence of certain language features within the texts.

The results show that most language features are represented, in various degrees, in all the texts. There are no major differences in the use of language online from the use in real life, though there are some minor differences, patterns and tendencies, such as the lack of both hedging and omitting evidence when making factual statements. It seems as if the determining factor of where a certain feature is the most, and the least, common differs depending on the particular feature. For example, the presence of metaphors depends on the topic being discussed and the social impact that topic might have. Similarly, the use of deictic words and phrases depends on the topic of the discussion. Conversely, flouting and violating Grice's maxims appears to be more common on sites where the writers are not necessarily as accurate in terms of grammar and structure.

Even though this research has shown some patterns in the way language is used online, and how it differs depending on the topic and website, it is by no means conclusive or representative for all websites on the Internet. Nevertheless, it has shown that language online does contain many of the same language features used in real life.

There may be websites which differ greatly from those used in this research and, therefore, a possible avenue for further research could be to include a wider range of websites, such as blogs or *Twitter*, in order to determine whether or not the patterns in this research are present elsewhere. It could also be interesting to analyze the texts in this research in their entirety to investigate whether the same patterns are present from beginning to end.

Another possible avenue would be to analyze a number of live debates or discussions in order to determine if there are differences and similarities to a debate or discussion online.

A third possible way to continue this research could be to try to determine whether there are certain patterns depending on factors such as age, gender, country and social group and, if so, to establish what the patterns are and how they coincide with the research in this paper.

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## Appendices

TS – Thread starter

R1, R2, etc – Reply 1, Reply 2, etc.

### Motorcycle Forum

5 <http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=1015202>

TS

#### 2 years into riding, I'm conflicted as to what I want

In a perfect world, I'd have 2 or 3 bikes. I have no garage, and barely anything you'd call a toolbox.

10

Here's the jist:

First bike, CBR250R. 2nd Bike: Gladius.

15 What I've learned since riding those two bikes as far as what I want:

All day comfort: The CBR sucked. Seat sucked (even after a Saddlemen), buzzy in the power band. Good learner bike. The Gladius could go about an hour. Two with an Airhawk, but the windblast got to my neck after that. Powerband was perfect, but couldn't handle freeway windblast for very long. Too jerky on the throttle/engine breaking.

20

Drive Train: I don't want to screw with the constant attention a chain requires. 500 miles, lube. 1k, clean and lube; adjust slack. Just don't care. Want to service a bike every oil change, and not worry about shit until the next one.

25

So here's the back and forth I've going through. I like sporty bikes with good handling and lean. But I want all day comfort and low maintenance. Basically, I have chain driven, middle

weight sport standards/ADV bikes on one hand, and not horrible cruiser style bikes on the other.

30

Sport Tourers you say? Most are too expensive, too tall, and too damn heavy. The FJR works pretty good, but finding a good condition one for 6k or less isn't happening in my region. Not sure I want to deal with the weight on a day to day basis anyway.

35

So here we have it: There are no middle weight sport/adv bikes w/o a chain other than the F800ST and maybe the NT700V. I'll only buy big 4 jap bikes due to dealer network (yes, I've looked at harley's), and the NT seems to be holding it's value WAY more than you'd think it should in my region.

40

So, at the moment, I'm looking at a Vulcan 900 classic. How I wish the big 4 made a mid control cruiser outside of the Shadow RS. Why did they decide to put a chain on that bike anyway?

45

Not sure how I'd feel on a bike like the Vulcan, it has floorboards but isn't crazy forward, but you folks here on ADVrider are the shit and I'm sure some of you have maybe come up from similar situations and could throw some insight to me. Probably buy a bullet for summer and definitely pick up some hard bags with my tax returns. New 2013 leftover for 6k and comes with a Batwing fairing.

50

As much as I like tossing around my Gladius at will, a good 85%+ of my riding in this region is straight-line, 55+ MPH roads.

Wish I could rent all the bikes in the world to try them out!

---

55

**R1**

That's why companies do demo days.

What kind of body type are you? Tall? Thin? Short? Fat? Muscular?

60

---

R2

The Guzzi V7 has a shaft drive and I personally ride a Yamaha Bolt with a belt drive.

My previous bikes were a 919 and EX500. The Bolt has the most comfortable riding position.  
65 It's sporty, but you're somewhat limited with lean angle. The upgraded shocks which cost me \$180 gave me more lean angle and more comfort.

It's a great all rounder bike and can be modified to suit your needs.

---

70

TS

Never heard of any demo days around here. Maybe in Chicago? I'm pretty antisocial so I'd probably be too nervous to ride a bike. I'd like to try one, but I don't even know how to find out about those demo things.

75 And I'm 5'6", 175 pounds, 29-30" inseam. So a bit short, slight stocky, bit of a beer belly but not fat otherwise. Got big legs from soccer and skateboarding heh.

---

R3

You mentioned Harley and \$6k in your post. Have you given thought to a Dyna Superglide. Seen some preowned ones going for around that here in my area. Mid controls. Very low  
80 maintenance with belt drive and no valves to adjust. Plethora of seats, windshields and luggage to make the bike as you want it. If you take your time and buy right, you'll have a bike that should keep it's value for a good while. Just a thought.

---

TS

85 I actually looked at the bolt, but couldn't find much besides new ones around here for 8K+. Was kinda surprised I didn't see more used ones. Wasn't really sure if the Bolt was what I wanted to ride for hours on end either really.

---

R4

90 Stop doing so much chain maintenance. Plenty of folks get 5-digit mileage out of a drive set without any more than an adjustment every few thousand miles as needed.

Any decent chains are internally lubricated, have hardened contact points, and are rated for waaaaaay more load than they'll ever see in a motorcycle application. Don't worry about it. It doesn't look like you're pursuing real powerhouse bikes so there's really no reason for this to be a factor; much less require constant attention.

95

I'd recommend you stick with steel sprockets, essentially ignore chain maintenance, play with the seat/ergos of your Gladius, and experiment with adding a windshield of some sort.

## General Forum

<http://www.generalforum.com/general-discussion/what-makes-feel-old-109449.html>

### What makes you feel old?

TS

- 5 I am turning 21 soon and way far behind the latest trends that are happening out there because I still prefer old style music, old style clothes, etc. So, when I hear kids talking, they have the weirdest slangs.
- 

R1

21? Old? HA.

- 10 I'm 27 and I still don't consider myself old. I may not be up to the absolute latest trends, but what kind of things make me feel old? How about the Matrix being 15 years old? Playing **Gameboy** and being blown away by the graphics? \*\*\*\* like that.
- 

R2

- 15 Your no where's near old, neither one of you.

I haven't understood slang from day one, not all of it anyway. Some people every other word out of their mouth is slang, I don't see how you would ever understand that.

- 20 If someone ever starts calling me grandma that is when I will feel old.haha
- 

R3

In Afrikaans, we have this thing where kids call adults "aunt" or "uncle", even if they are no relation to you. It's a respect thing. So when a 20 year old calls me "aunt", I feel really old. I usually ask them to call me by name, but I can't change a tradition.

- 25 Also, my age makes me feel old. 😊
-

#### R4

I will turn 35 this year and it is not often that I feel old.

30

The only times that I really feel old is when the other girls at work have a birthday, On friday one of the girls celebrated her 19th birthday and it made me realise that I am over 15years older than her.

---

#### R5

35 I was born feeling old. I swear I'm not kidding. I was always an old soul in a young body in my childhood and teens, and it was only in adulthood that I finally felt like a boy... pretending to be a man. I just can't win. 🙄

40 That thing of feeling like a man child didn't last long though. I soon went back to feeling like I was a hundred years old, and wishing I wasn't permanently out of step with those younger than me. Whenever some go getting youth talks about the gazillion million things they've achieved before they got weaned off of mummy's breasty milk, I get lethargic and depressed.

Meh.

---

45

#### R6

Apart from my body being in a constant state of pain that someone my age shouldn't be in, not much.

50 I realise that I'm not getting any younger, but some things do remind me of the years past, such as the new Turtles movie coming out this year, I was already ten when that franchise began.

The way I see it is my body and mind may be getting on in years, but having kids has helped me capture some of that childlike innocence again.

I mean I have a legitimate reason to buy toys now, like the new supersoaker I have on order, is it

55 for the kids,hell no that's for an awesome water fight battle we grown ups have planned.

I guess if I had choose something that makes me feel old, it would be my eldest daughter moving out of our place and into a place with her boyfriend, I don't get to see her everyday anymore because she grown up and started her own life, still not sure how that happened.

---

60 **R7**

I don't feel that old, mainly because I am 27 going on 7. Very occasionally though I will be reminded of how old a song or movie actually is, and that will make me feel a bit old. Or when a youngster doesn't know who someone that I think is quite famous/well-known is.

65 I work with children, so get to play a lot of the day, but I felt really old when I realised that children I looked after 9/10 years ago are now teenagers at secondary school.

---

**R8**

70 Let's see, a pretty young woman in the building asking me "excuse me sir, can you tell me what time it is?" waking up with pains in my back and my knees, playing one-on-one with my 22 year old nephew and struggling, realizing Van Halen's album 1984 was released 30 years ago, going to my high school reunion back in the Fall, seeing a little grey hair on the sides of my head (I'm going to start looking like Reed Richards) amongst a host of other things.

---

**R9**

75 Anybody here that is 50 and over have a right to feel old...  
This is considered middle aged and this is the true beginning of the end..

You start to really feel all kinds of aches and pains..  
Your body seems to want to rest more often or for a longer of amount of time..  
You probably to start going to a doctor a little more often..

80 Your senses may be changing a little by now...etc etc

So I would say if you are still in your 20's and 30's and you're feeling old when you really are old things are going to be a whole lot worse for you.

---

**R10**

85 I don't look old so but I do feel old like for example last week at Barnes and Nobles, I saw toys that I used to play and they're labelled "retro toys" hahaha.

---

**R11**

90 I am 52 will be 53 in August I feel old after a hard days work as my body seems to ache more and I get a bit stiff in my joints but I am old school and imho anyone under 40 isn't old school or don't know what old school is and I am proud to be Old School when the world was a better place to live and prices were much much lower than they are now and athletes in pro sports played for the love of the game not \$\$,\$\$\$,\$\$\$ . . . . .

---

## Comments Section on Article Website

<http://www.iflscience.com/health-and-medicine/first-baby-born-womb-transplant>

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[applesandoranges](#)

5 And all over the world there are children who need parents. Why are we spending money on this technology? Screwed-up priorities. We don't all get everything we want in life, including a functioning womb.

Adopt.

---

[Ganesh Sivamani](#)

10 That may be true, and I am in agreement with you. But some people want to raise something of their own, if you know what I mean. Adopting is very satisfying, and makes almost no difference, except with one's own child, you are also passing down your bloodline.

---

[Kelu](#)

15 Being an adoptive mother, who has suffered 8 miscarriages, one ectopic pregnancy and almost died from it, I think I can offer a perspective that maybe others aren't seeing. I have a malformed uterus. We tried everything to have our 'own' child. It wasn't meant to be. What I object most to in your comment and Sandy Kelly's comment is first, it's a baby, not a 'something',  
20 and two adopted children are your 'own'. Does that child carry your bloodline? Sometimes. It's when an adoptive parent(s) adopts the child of a family member. Most of the time these kids won't be relatives. I don't think this research is a messed up priority at all, also being a renal transplant recipient, this study can opens up doors and avenues that may not have  
25 been discovered without it. I think we all just need to accept that no two people share the exact same opinions and sometimes it's better to just agree to disagree.

---

30

[Ashley](#)

Why is a bloodline important?

35 [TS](#)

The adoption process is very long and complicated, and some people want to have the ability to create something they can call their own. Not being able to have a child can be very painful for some women, even those with a uterus but have had multiple miscarriages for whatever reason. Would you say that to someone who is paraplegic, that spending the time to create better functioning prosthetics is pointless, or someone who is blind, that spending time to create a way for them to see is pointless? That woman has feelings, and so does everyone else, and this is giving them a chance to do something that they would never have the chance to do if we didn't take the time to find a way to change that.

---

45 [persason](#)

I have to disagree here personally I would never adopt as it just wouldn't be the same thing. It is though different from person to person.

---

50 [Jayde](#)

as an adopted child I find that to be horribly offensive. Thanks for letting me know I'm not good enough!!

---

55 [Machina](#)

Going to have to disagree here. You have a narrow-minded view and a shamefully harsh attitude. Adoption is very difficult and complicated. It costs thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars.

60 Research like this leads to breakthroughs in other fields of study. They might discover something here, that will ripple out and be used elsewhere. It is NOT screwed-up priorities to the women that are plagued with a deformities and medical issues that are accompanied by this syndrome.

65 Instead of stopping all research in to whatever because something else non-related  
to it is also happening, why not try to improve it? How about better sexual  
education in schools instead of this puritan attitude of "just don't" and sticking  
ones fingers in their ears while singing "lalala" to ignore it that is obviously  
working so well? How about free birth control and prophylactics available to  
anyone? How about required parenting classes for the mother and father? How  
70 about not voting to do an end run around Roe vs Wade? Maybe you'd like it to go  
so far as until all babies are adopted, no one may have children of their own. I'm  
sure you'd want the punishment to be something super harsh like death if someone  
woman came up pregnant right?

75 I do hope that since this cause is so important to you that you would like all  
research stopped until every child in the world has a home, you are volunteering  
your time and donating money to help these children. Otherwise, you are another  
jackass on the internet.

---

[hmm?](#)

It is quite rare to see an articulate answer on the web. Thank you for taking  
the time to write this responce

---

80

[Amber Sheeler](#)

I completely agree with your response. You nailed it!

---

[Sara](#)

85 I must say that as a swede I'm glad that my tax money can help women who aren't  
able to have children.

---

[rdm80](#)

How many children have you adopted, a&o?

---

[Tasha Blackburn](#)

90 Being a 36 year old woman that is not able to have my own children I say this  
from experience, its not easy to just "adopt", there are so many stipulations and  
financial obstacles that keep a lot of good people from being able to do so. So  
saying just adopt isn't that easy.

---

[Amber Sheeler](#)

95 I agree, the rules to adopt are crazy and why should you have to pay to adopt a child that needs a loving home? That is what I want to know.

---

[mikey](#)

it's not the same all over Earth, in most places you don't have to pay anything

---

100 [Jayde](#)

"But its hard!!" So I'm not worth any effort...

"But its expensive" So you'd only want me if i was cheap...

"But they have so many rules to qualify!" So you have no concern for my safety...

---

105 [Ashley](#)

110 Did you know you're not allowed to adopt if you have certain mental conditions? Or if you have a criminal record of any sort? (Of course it doesn't matter if the charge was bogus.) Adoption is a privilege that often times only the rich can afford. Most people don't have \$10k-100k just laying around. And of course the parents who are adopting the child have a concern for the child's safety. That's incredibly ignorant of you to suggest these things. You've obviously never had to deal with this in real life. Shame on you for judging others and not even taking a moment to consider what it must be like for them! (And being an adopted child does not qualify as being in this situation.)

---

[Chelsea Sparks](#)

Jayde, Bless your heart.

120 I have two children, that I can clothe, feed, shelter and love. However, I have looked into adopting, and there is no way I could afford that much money all at once. It has nothing to do with "They're too expensive". Every child on this earth is priceless. However, in the society and economy we live in, the reality is that adoption agencies do not make it the easiest way to start a family. Not that they should hand a

125

child over to just anyone, but asking for that much money makes it impossible for some really great couples to adopt

---

[Jayde](#)

130 Did you bother to recognize all the "me's" in that statement?  
Take a moment and check your own ignorance. And being  
adopted myself and knowing my own parents story means I  
don't know anything?!? No Ashley SHAME ON YOU. My  
135 parents did NOT have 100K, They didn't have to PAY  
anyone, they just had to show they were CAPABLE of  
caring for a child. Show that their house was clean, show  
that they had jobs, and yes absolutely show that they were  
mentally capable of raising a child. HOW DARE I  
140 SUGGEST YOU ARE CAPABLE OF CLOTHING A  
CHILD!! OH MY GOD THE WORLD HAS ENDED  
because I DARE think for a moment that you should  
absolutely be required to have a clean house, not have a  
criminal record. Raising a child SHOULD be a privilege.

145 Just going back to that whole crime thing.. Really Ashley  
REALLY you'd just had a child over to a someone because  
they say its totally bogus?? REALLY?

---

## Comments Section on *The Guardian* Website

<http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/oct/04/woman-gives-birth-womb-transplant-medical-first?commentpage=1>

**Haironmyback**

5      Awesome, but I hope this does not lead to an unsavoury market in women's wombs from the developing world.

---

**someone132**

Depressing, but well-founded concern. I guess we would still have at least five years before that becomes a thing, though.

---

10     **kaff**

And after that men will be wanting wombs.

---

**witnaff**

I hope so.

---

15     **GoddessOFblah**

Well said

---

**Elizabeth Boots**

20     I'm done with mine at the age of 32, I think many women would happily donate something they no longer need.

---

**Hobbes2014**

Love your comment. It shows you follow the philosophy of benevolent reciprocity--do unto others as you would have them do unto you--and your sense of empathy is something the world could use. Be well.

---

25 **Andy Gunn**

Im sure many women who for medical reasons could not utilise their womb would be thrilled by this concept, i hope it becomes cheap and safe in a few years!

---

**thehumanrace2014**

Hooray for good news!makes a change from the 90% fear news.

---

30 **Projection123**

I could not agree more! We need a balance in the media. The world is not as dreary as what the media makes out. Good things do happen.

---

**jdanforth**

35 Incredible what we humans can achieve, but imagine what more we could do if we didn't have imperialist war or the prison industry!

---

**Andy2222**

I agree about the wars, but what shall we do with the murderers?

---

40 **Topher S**

The issue isn't with murderers but with a corporate system of prisons stocked with underprivileged citizens warehoused, often in dehumanizing conditions for extended sentences without attempts at rehabilitation.

45 It's all about profits, and judges are complicit. They even feed prisons crap food like baloney sandwiches to maximize profits.

---

**Andy2222**

50 Well, I don't suffer much about those who went so far, that had to be imprisoned. I could only suffer for those who went there innocent by court mistake, but they are not many, I assume. I work mostly with children and families who live in dehumanizing conditions with little or

no attempts at rehabilitation but who never do anything antisocial.  
I've seen much, I've read much and these days I think that every man and woman has much more choice and responsibility over her/his actions than we used to believe the last decades. I would say: read more psychological research and less preaches by lawyers and politicians.

---

55 [djkbrown2001](#)

And also for non violent drugs offences. Like carrying a small amount of weed for personal use. What's that about? I don't smoke but I will not condemn someone for smoking a bit of weed in the privacy of his own home. Who the fcuk is the government to infringe on that right.

---

60 [Doug Salzmman](#)

7.3 billion humans and (rapidly!) counting.

Of course, we must spare no effort or expense to add to the total.

---

[AlgyMoncrieff](#)

65 Yes Humans are the most destructive plague this planet has ever seen. Why would any sane person think this is good.

---

[Andy2222](#)

Then convince at least those with 10 kids to stop reproducing. They are not Swedish, I think...

---

[Paul Underwood](#)

70 Agreed. My wife donated her organs in 07 after being killed in a traffic accident. With the way things are in the UK, even though she had a donor card, I had control of what was donated and to where (slight simplification). I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have agreed to donate for this reason (yes, I'm aware this donor is living, but the article states most come from the deceased). Just doesn't seem right to me, neither does surrogacy. No shortage of people in the world, too many if anything.

---

75 [steena](#)

I'm guessing you've never known the heartache of infertility.

---

Shelfunit

Or the headache of complex thought...

---

80

salamandarine

And helping those with unhealthy genes to spread those further.

Yes, I know this comment will start up the eugenics hysteria anew.

85

However, why should not humans have the privilege afforded to other domesticated animals of not being forced to raise and maintain offspring who can only live a full life with external help. (Note this baby is born with an irregular heart beat - how much angst and resources will be expended over its life?)

---

steena

90

Why not go even further and just shoot all the sick people now? Not to mention the mentally deficient. In fact, I'd start with you.

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Doug Salzmänn

I'm guessing you've never known the heartache of infertility.

Ha.

No, but I have a cure for that 'heartache' -- two, actually:

95

1. Adopt. Your genes aren't really that special.

and/or

2. Get the hell over it.

---

captflashheart

100

Doug, brilliantly put.

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steena

Wow, what a pleasant individual you are. Never had anything bad happen in your life? Lucky guy.

105 I don't think my genes are all that special, no. Would be happy to adopt (I was adopted myself, I know the situation from the other side) but it's not that simple when very few children are given up for adoption in the country you live in and you don't have the means to go abroad.

110 I am now, as you nicely put it, the "hell over it". Surviving uterine sarcoma made me stronger than I knew I could be. It also gave me a deeper understanding of the harshness of life than you obviously have.

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ID8127072

115 Some basic information "desperately" needed here: Why was the transplant needed in the first place ???? Was the woman born without a womb? Or was her womb removed (hysterectomy) because of disease.  
This information is fairly basic to several thousand women who have one, or the other, of these situations.

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ID7010672

She was born without one. It's stated in the article.

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120 Elainenz

fairly basic information was available when basically reading the article

“The Swedish woman had healthy ovaries, but she was born without a uterus, a syndrome seen in one girl in 4,500.”

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