

## Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-07/msg00216.html>

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- *From:* "Seán O'Leathlóbhair" <jwlawler@xxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* 5 Jul 2005 01:24:49 -0700
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Lee Sau Dan wrote:

> >>>>> "Seán" == Seán O'Leathlóbhair <jwlawler@xxxxxxxxxx> writes:  
>  
> Seán> I had expected that many people would have answered this  
> Seán> one. It is "Short Message Service". This is a feature  
> Seán> available on most or all GSM mobile (cell) phones. It is  
> Seán> also commonly called "text".  
>  
> "Text"? I've never seen such a usage. People say "SMS". This is  
> true in Germany as well as Hong Kong. "SMS" is also the term used by  
> the mobile phone providers in their pamphlets, service contracts, etc.

Here in the UK, it is very common to say "text". If you hear text as a verb then it probably refers to SMS. E.g. "I will text you when I arrive". I think that "text" is now much more common than "SMS". My phone bill uses the term "text" rather than "SMS". Mobile phone adverts also normally use "text".

In the Philippines the same applies.

> (The German translation is "Kurznachricht", but people usually say  
> "SMS". Like "Fernsprecher" vs. "Telephon". A German teacher of mine  
> once wanted to make a sentence with "SMS". But she didn't know how to  
> pluralize this word. She asked the class. Most students, including  
> me, suggested "SMSen".)  
>  
>  
> Seán> It allows you to send short (usually <= 160 characters)  
> Seán> messages from one mobile phone to another. It is very  
> Seán> popular in Europe and Asia but it does not seem to be  
> Seán> popular in the USA.  
>  
> Asia? Not sure. Since voice calls in Hong Kong are so cheap, people  
> simply don't bother to type such messages. Making a call and telling  
> the recipient the message verbally is often cheaper than sending an  
> SMS. And you don't waste time typing the message, and you get  
> immediate verbal acknowledgement from the recipient.

OK, I have not sampled every Asian country but it is popular in several

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of them.

You are right that sometimes a voice call is better but sometimes a text is better. Sending an address or phone number by text may be more accurate than dictating it by phone. Also, you can send a text in circumstances when a conversation would be rude or even forbidden.

> In Europe and Japan, it is quite popular, though. This is because an  
> SMS costs much less than making a 1-minute voice call. (Japan doesn't  
> use GSM. They have their home-brewed PHS system.)

Price is part of the factor but not all. Some people seem to prefer text even though a short voice call would have been cheaper. On my plan, I could talk for at least a minute for the price of a text. However the text rate is the same across the world so it becomes attractive for distant destinations.

> --  
> Lee Sau Dan  
>  
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> Home page: <http://www.informatik.uni-freiburg.de/~danlee>

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Seán O'Leathlóbhair

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• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Tommi Nieminen
- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Nigel Greenwood

• *References:*

- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Nigel Greenwood
- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Peter T. Daniels
- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Seán O'Leathlóbhair
- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
    ◇ From: Nigel Greenwood
- ◆ **Re: Letters with **\*\*three\*\*** cases?**  
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