

Donate your text messages to science: Texto4Science project

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A Université de Montréal researcher has a special request for Canadian texters: "Everyone young and old, students and workers, artists and business people, no matter who you are, send me your text messages," says Patrick Drouin, a linguistics professor at the Université de Montréal who is overseeing the North-American leg of the international research project called Texto4Science.

"In recent years, texting as a means of communication has become a genuine societal phenomenon," says Drouin. "These messages, also known as [SMS](#), are of a limited length and can be sent or received with a cell phone. This growing phenomenon is the source of great debate especially with regards to language. There is also great creativity stemming from the need to communicate succinctly and quickly, which is what my team plans to study."

The European part of the Texto4Science project was launched in 2004 as the sms4science at the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) in Belgium. "The objective is to build an international text message database to analyze what language is utilized - is it poorly written or a parallel code? Is the code similar and does it use the same logic from one continent to the next? From one region to the next? And how do people living in a multilingual environment communicate?" asks Drouin.

More information: The research team hopes to collect 300,000 French text messages between November 2009 and April 30, 2010. To reach this target, participants are asked to forward text messages that they have

sent to other cell phones to a short code number: 202202. Texters can then complete the online form at www.texto4science.ca .

Source: University of Montreal ([news](#) : [web](#))

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