With its new technologies and tools (personal computers, smart phones, tablet computers), the digital era has created new genres of communication and language use (email, news groups, listserves, texting, instant messaging, chat, blogs, social media use, etc.) (Palfrey and Gasser 2008). Language use in the digital domain was further affected by the development of Web 2.0 in the early 2000s, which made internet content dynamic, interactive, user-generated and collaborative (Herring 2012). As a result of these changes, the written language use of the users of digital media has increased (Baron 2008), since it has taken over many of the functions language use that used to be oral: keeping in touch (by email, text messages, IRC), expressing opinions, asking questions, sharing personal experiences and practical knowledge (through social media and blogs).

In this presentation, I discuss issues of standard language use pertinent to the digital domain – the proliferation of informal language use, the very existence (or lack) of the standard in the case of endangered languages, and borrowing and code-switching – and their effect.

References: