

SMART Communications, Inc., New York, is a software developer of programs that help technical writers to write clear, concise **Controlled English**.

What is Controlled English (CE)?

A limited, English technical vocabulary to write instructions for global product support. A **Controlled English** vocabulary uses approximately 1% of the English language, but can reach readers in 192 countries. An IBM rule states, a penny a word spent on simplification saves \$100 in global customer support.

The **Controlled English** vocabulary removes ambiguity, increases readability and improves the usability of complex technical documentation. The terms selected for the dictionaries are based on ONE MEANING. *(A controlled language is not suitable for novels or poetry.)*

The Size of a Controlled English Dictionary

A typical **Controlled English** dictionary has a "core" of 1,200 basic words. A technical dictionary ranges from 5,000 to 8,500 terms for a product or service. *(By comparison, the English language has a million terms.)*

The Simplified Grammar and Syntax Rules

Controlled English uses a *controlled* set of English grammar and style rules that make texts easy to read and understand. These texts easier to read by persons who use English as a second language. The **Controlled English** texts are easier to translate into other languages by hand or computer. *(See SMART Translator software specification sheet.)*

Text Simplification Results

Technical manuals written in **Controlled English** are clear, concise, consistent and easy-to-read and understand. For example, the Airbus A380 and Boeing 787 use the related *Simplified Technical English*. Another benefit is improved *customer satisfaction* and a decrease in procedural errors in customer support.



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Steps to Implement Controlled English

1. Use the **SMART Text Miner** or service to identify product terminology for the dictionaries.
2. Prepare a custom technical dictionary. **SMART** supplies an off-the-shelf 'Starter Kit'.
3. Use the **SMART Lexicon Manager** or dictionary service to manage the dictionaries.
4. Use the **MAXit Checker** software to enforce the **Controlled English** grammar rules and check texts for compliance to the vocabulary.
5. Attend **SMART Training** classes for Technical Writers, Authors and Engineers to learn how to write Controlled English. (On-site or Internet.)

The MAXit Checker

This tool is a 'plug-in' to authoring tools to interactively read text and make suggestions. The critique uses 9,500 rules and *artificial intelligence*. The errors and suggestions are shown by color codes inside the text.

The **MAXit Checker** is available for these tools:

- Microsoft WORD 2003 to 2010, COM 'add-in'
 - Adobe FrameMaker 7 to 10. All versions.
 - PTC Arbortext Editor 5.x. (XML)♣
 - WebX UltraXML and JustSystems XMetaL. ♣
- ♣ *Requires the MAXitServer software on your server.*

The SMART Text Miner

Rapidly discover key terminology from your texts in seconds not months. Available as software or service. Links to **Lexicon Manager** for terminology control.

Controlled English examples ...

Wrong: The operator *pays out* the cable for the drogue.

Correct: The operator releases and controls the cable for the drogue. (Better use of verbs for global users.)

Wrong: When selected FORMS displays forms you wish to use, click one.

Correct: Click the FORMS button, then select ONE form from the menu. (Easier to understand.)

Wrong: If you are not able to see results, power down the server and re-boot it.

Correct: If the screen displays four ****, push the STOP button. Wait 30 seconds, then push the START button.