

Kauthar Alhaddad

Apple's Predictive Text

How does Apple's predictive text work?
Has it benefited its users overtime?



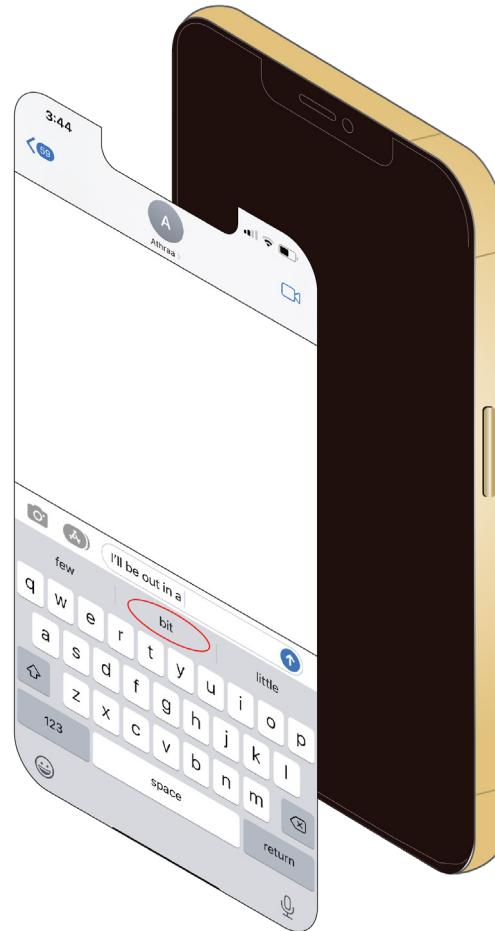
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Over the years, Apple has focused on delivering new major features with iOS updates and releases to further create convenience for its users. Predictive text was included as one of Apple's newer features in the iOS 8 release. It was designed to be the most intelligent engine built, to be accustomed to major languages all over the world. It's an input technology that enables users to write out complete sentences with suggested words and phrases based on past texts, conversations and even recently visited websites. Overtime, the iPhone's keyboard becomes a little more intuitive and recognizes the words you often use.

It is known that since the release of iOS 13, many users reported inaccuracy leading to frustrations with the feature. Sometimes the iPhone keyboard 'learns' an incorrect spelling, or offers words that are completely out of context.

Despite being a form of increasingly sophisticated technology, the software is still notoriously prone to errors, leading users to simply disable the function.



However, for it to function properly, it may rely on how the user utilises it. Once a glossary is curated based on repeatedly typed phrases, the system then works to score these words by the probability of when you're most likely to use it again.

The main features for text prediction are frequencies of words, bigrams, trigrams and tetragrams. Research shows that the most frequently suggested words by are; the, to, I, a, you, and, for, in. This is based on the common everyday conversations that users have with each other. It is also known that the words suggested by the feature are gender biased, with male related responses being 72%.

To enable and disable the predictive text function is simple. The settings are turned on by default but the switch can always be toggled in Settings > General > Keyboard. Like any other app, predictive text comes with pros and cons, where it can be both helpful and frustrating. The obvious advantage of predictive text is the ability to speed up you're typing and streamline your words and phrases.

As this function adapts to word choices overtime and corrects any simple mistake, it creates convenience and efficiency for most users. On the other hand, the cons include the limit of word usage and disruption while typing. Predictive text may lessen the use of cognitive skills, causing the user to be dependent on the function itself and in addition it is still prone to errors.

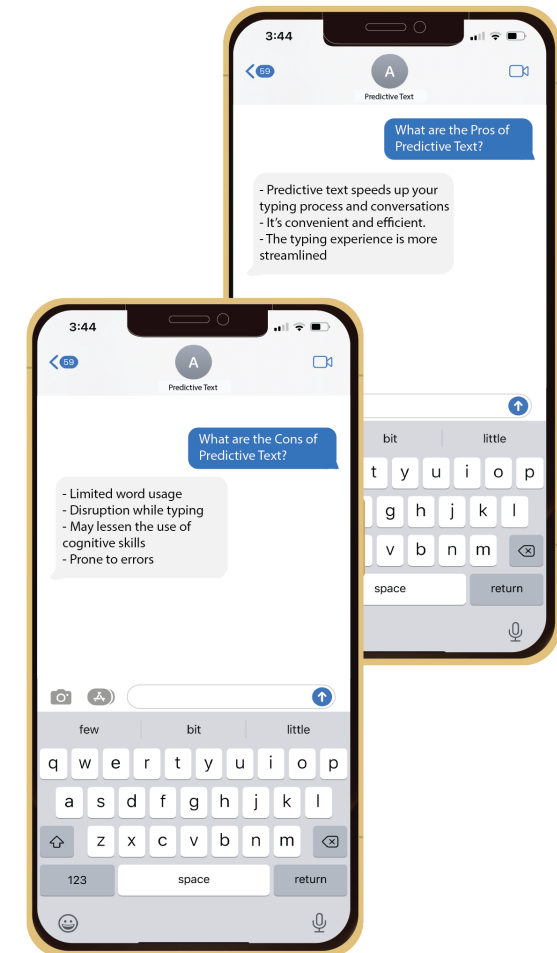
Ultimately, this feature can be a hit or miss to most users as some prefer to have it on while others don't. It's usually recommended that, like most widgets, it is used based on personal preferences.

Despite the disadvantages that Predictive text may bring to most users, it is still widely used by an audience that benefits and/ or relies on it. The function is especially beneficial for people with disabilities, as it minimizes the physical aspect of typing.

It essentially enables users to save as many keystrokes as possible, while helping them determine and choose the next word of a sentence or conversation. Even students, particularly those with learning disabilities,

often benefit from the Predictive Text feature as they struggle with writing and editing text.

It is stated by Apple that in the coming years, typing will be a thing of the past. Organisations and researchers are developing new ways to build intelligent engines that learn from a user's behaviour and automatically suggest / types required text. With QuickType already winning the interest of many Apple users, its future developments and improvements will be sure to satisfy those that prefer convenience and efficiency when using the smart function.



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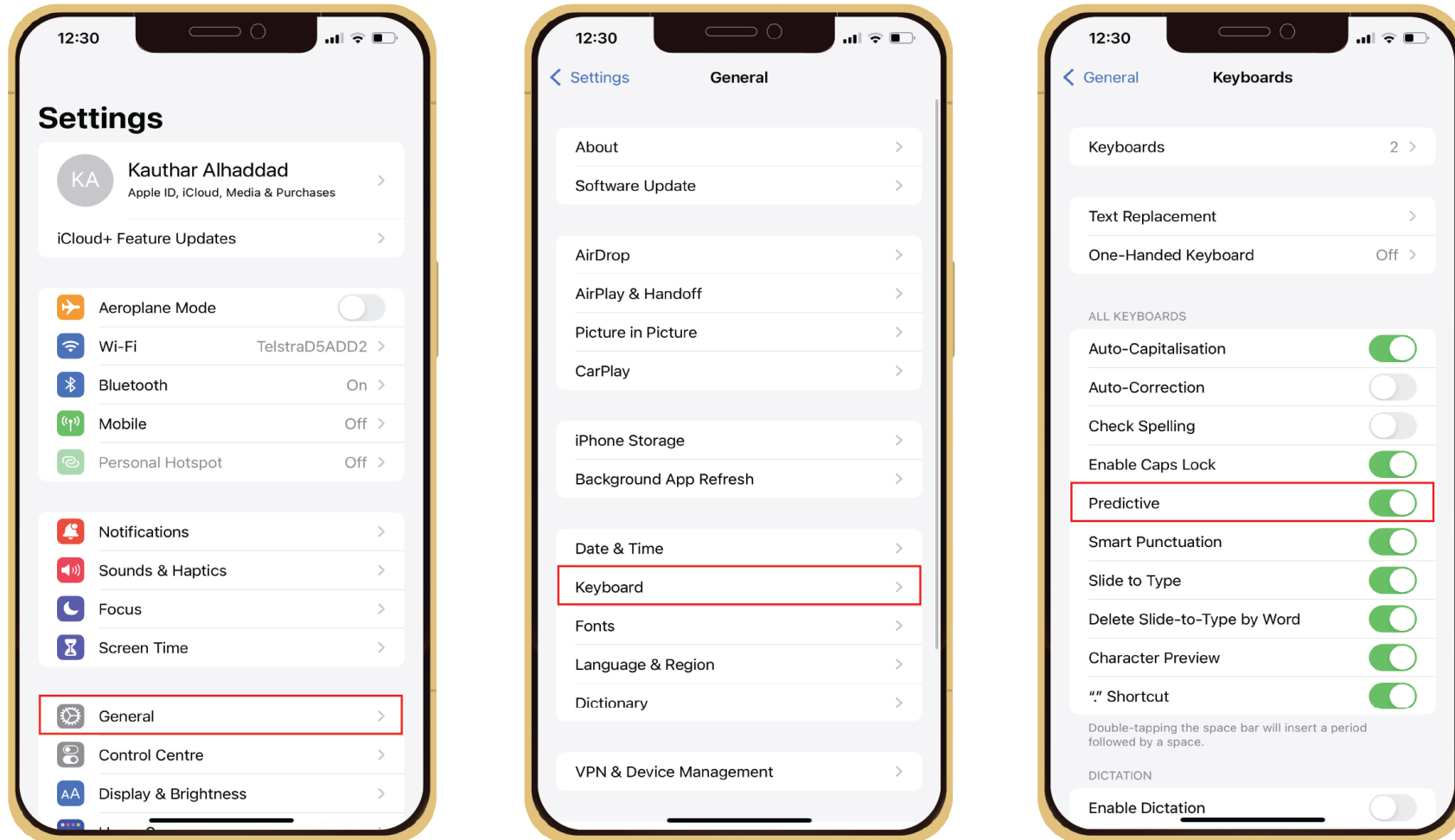
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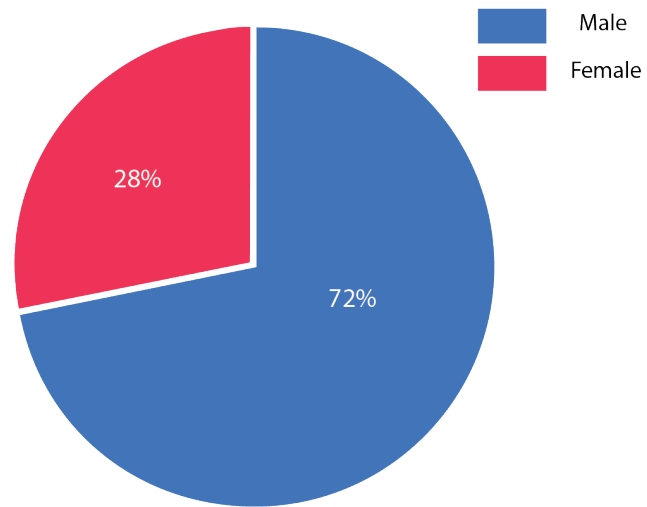
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Enabling & Disabling Predictive Text

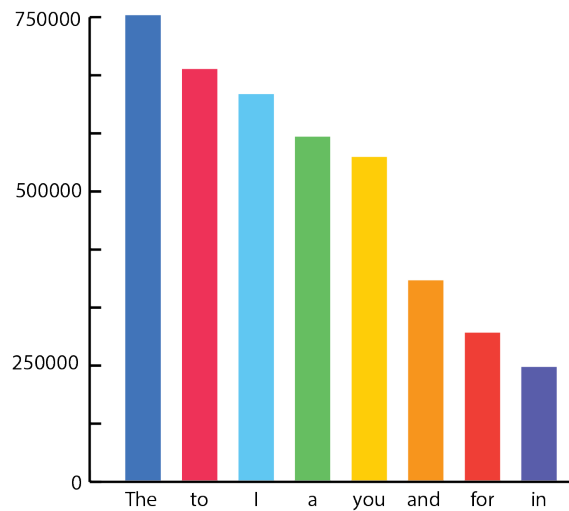


Predictive Text Data

Percentage of gender biased suggestions from Predictive text



8 most frequent words suggested from Predictive text



Population of Predictive text users over the years

