

Language Change in Texting: Situation Analysis of Graduate Students

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Abstract

Text language is increasing and gaining popularity day by day, with this the linguistics and teachers concern is also increasing. Educationists think that this new trend is a serious threat to English. Traditionally many works have been done, but most of them enlighten the negative impacts of texting. This research study exposed the positive side of texting language, and will discuss about texting from an optimistic point of view. The objectives of the study are the identification of the language usage of the students in daily life and investigation of the effect of text language on traditional language. It was quantitative study. The population of the study was graduate students. Self-developed questionnaire was used to collect the data through personal visits of the researcher. Data were analyzed by calculating percentages of each statement. The findings of the study unveiled that although texting language is gaining popularity in today's time, but still there is a distinguishing line between formal English and text language. Text language has its own medium of use, while formal language has its own. Through the finding of the study it may be recommended that the use of texting should be utilized positively in language learning classrooms. Texting is reading and writing, hence it may be encouraged for language improvement. Texting improves spelling skills, so it might be used for spelling learning tasks.

Keywords: Change, texting, language, students

Introduction

Language is simply defined as a system of communication. It is the basic necessity for human survival. "Language plays a great part in our life" (Bloomfield, p.3). Among many languages of the world, English language is the one that is widely spoken and is in fact becoming the universal language. As languages are always subjected to change, development and expansion, same is the case with English. "Though the rate of change varies from time to time and from language to language" (Charles Barber, p.33).

With great advancements in technology, and with the invention of mobile phones and internet, people lives, jobs, communication, education and speech styles have changed dramatically. Texting language is a latest language variety that comes into sight with the arrival of technologies like mobile phones, internet and digital media. Texting is one of the most recent forms that people use to communicate. Much like other new technologies, texting has generated its own style of language including abbreviations and graphics. It differs from other forms of written communication to a great extent. This language has developed a unique variety of English, which separates it from the daily written language. This language is very familiar among mobile users, internet users, chatters and bloggers, who are in most cases the teenage students. These activities resulted in creation of a new body of "discourse, identity, authorship, and language" (Kern, p.183).

People use several different terms to describe this new language variety like texting language, internet language, SMS language or digital language. Texters are always been criticized for their use of texting language, as people hold a common belief that it is damaging students writing skills. It makes the young ones unable to distinguish between the formal and informal writing. However, opposed to this popular belief, texting is actually not posing any serious threat to the English language. As David Crystal stated that "All the popular beliefs about texting are wrong or at least debatable" (p.7).

Statement of the problem

Due to the growing concern about the texting language, many people are forced to write their views on the issue. Traditionally many works have been done, but most of them enlighten the negative impacts of texting. Like John Humphrys in his article "I h8 txt msgs: How texting is wrecking our language", Ryan Lytle in "How Slang Affects Students in the Classroom", Christopher Dawson in "Text messaging and the death of the English language" and Jason Tomaszewski in his article "Do Texting and "Cyber Slang" Harm Students' Writing Skills?" discusses the negative impacts of texting on English language. However, this research study exposed the positive side of texting language, and will discuss about texting from an optimistic point of view.

Significance of the study

This research proves to be influential and momentous for all those who are affiliated with education in one way

or another. Especially those associated with English language speaking, teaching and learning.

Text language is increasing and gaining popularity day by day, with this the linguistics and teachers concern is also increasing. Educationalists think that this new trend is a serious threat to English. Parents fear that their kids will now lose their skills of English. People panic about the thought that “will English be the next dead language?” Media is also playing an active role in creating a strong negative image of texting in the minds of people.

This research can and will contribute to the correction of this above concept. It will bring people closer to the idea that text language is not actually destructive as they are judging it. To give them the idea that the young generation is using text language while texting and while spending time online but when it comes to write something formally, they are still able to do so.

Purpose of the study

The goal of this particular research is to demystify the concepts affiliated with texting language. It aims to reveal the positive aspects of using texting language. Educators and linguists believe that texting is destroying English language, and students are unable to write in proper English now. But this study will clarify these misconceptions and will demonstrate how all these ideas are wrong and exaggerated.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To identify the language usage of the students in daily life.
- ii. To investigate the effect of text language on traditional language.

Research questions

Following are the research questions for the proposed study:

- i. What is the usage of language in daily life?
- ii. What is the effect of text language on traditional language?

Delimitation of the study

The study is delimited to

- i. University of Haripur, Government postgraduate college for women, Haripur.
- ii. Graduate students from the department of English literature.

Literature Review

Introduction

The trend of texting is one that is rapidly increasing. Many theories have been proposed to explain the different aspects of texting language. The debate is whether texting language is destroying English language, is a progress in English or whether it has no association with formal writing skills of English. Many of the previous researches are based on the concept that texting language has destroyed English and students writing skills. According to Mark McCrindle, technology has some impact on language in the 21st century and the English language is no exception to this powerhouse force. English and language's role is for interaction and communication. Because of technology, the internet, and the cell phones, the manner in which we communicate is dramatically altered. Technology and new inventions have changed people lives, speech styles, jobs, hobbies, communication, and education. Modern smart phones and other communication websites like face book, whatsapp etc, and other new devices have affected the way we use language. People communicate with each other through e-mail, instant messaging (IM), and text messages. They “chat” in different chat rooms on internet, may join interesting online groups, comment on different websites and face book, write in blogs and “wikis”. These practices construct new forms of “discourse, identity, authorship, and language” (Kern, 2006). These practices that are texting, chatting and commenting online can be held responsible for the creation and development of new variety of interaction, communication, personality, and even new language. David Crystal, reports a study in the UK saying that, 80% of people below 25 years preferred texting rather than calling. On the other hand, so did the 14% of people above 55. This undoubtedly demonstrates that texting is not just a passing teenage trend but alongside the teenagers, our elders also make use of it. Texting, however, is not just something for private lives (Crystal, 2006). Naomi Baron notes how texting has made its approach into the place of work as well. She elaborates on the use of texting with business partners, as well as within the office to maintain contact with co-workers. Seeing the popularity of texting across many genres of society it is apparent that it is making its way into various facets of life on a global level (Baron, 2008).

David Crystal in his article explains that with the arrival of texting, a new language makes its appearance by the name of text language. It is more like decoding or translating a message; they require a different and special understanding of the language. There is a different usage of symbols and punctuations that

the traditional language does not use, and it is a whole new way of thinking about language that has never been used.

According to Crystal text language is different from the conventional language varieties, the following are the ways in which it differs or forms its unique identity with regard to the conventionally used language:

1. Abbreviations: An abbreviation is a shortened or contracted form of a word, used to represent the whole word as Dr for Doctor, Msg for Message.
2. Initialisms: A kind of abbreviation consisting of only the first letters that are pronounced separately such as CPU for Central Processing Unit and OMG for Oh my God.
3. Acronyms: Acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a whole word for example, LOL for Laugh Out Loud, YOLO for You only live once.
4. Shortenings: Shortenings are words with missing end letters (Thurlow & Brown, 2003). Days and months are commonly shortened in SMS and IM, for example, "sun/Sunday", and "Feb/February".
5. Contractions: Contractions are words with omitted middle letters, usually vowels (Crystal, 2008). It is like contracting or combining two words to make it as a single word. E.g., using "don't" instead of "do not", I've for I have. Text language also use contractions like gonna for going to.
6. Clippings: In clipping a word is reduced or shortened without changing the meaning of the word. Examples of clipping are goin for going, ad for advertisement, photo for photograph.
7. Single Letter/Number Homophones: Also termed logograms, phonetic reductions, or letter/number homophones use a letter or-number to represent a word or part (Thurlow & Poff, in press). Examples are c for see, u for you, 2 for to, l8r for later.
8. Emoticons: Emoticons are symbols or combinations of symbols used to convey an emotion with the use of punctuation marks or other objects like :-) happy, :-(sad.
9. Typographic Symbols: Typographic symbols are single or multiple characters which represent whole words (Bieswanger, 2008). A popular example is one or several "x" used to symbolize a kiss, or "zzzz's" to suggest sleep, tiredness or boredom, @ for at and <3 for heart.
10. Accent stylization: Replacing the alphabets with others for obtaining stylized look like yew for you, dat for that, xmart for smart etc.
11. Excessive use of punctuation: The excessive and useless use of punctuation or capitalization for expressing emphasis or intensity of emotion such as 'what!!!! For 'what!' NEVER for never.
12. Repetitions: Repeating some letters to mirror lengthening sometimes for emphasis such as soooo for so, grrreeeeennn for green, Yesssss for just yes.

In text language, the standard spelling conventions and grammar rules are overlooked and the use of "textisms" or "text slang" is widespread. As stated by Nenagh Kemp (2011), these orthographically unconventional language forms are used for a number of reasons.

They function as shortcuts to reduce writing time for a quick response. As the main purpose of language is communication and the main purpose of a text message is just to share some information, or to convey a message, so if that purpose is being achieved in less writing time than what is the worry.

Another reason of using text language is the past restriction of 160 character text message limit; hence the text language is used in order to achieve the shortness and economy required.

A small screen and an alphanumeric keypad contain both numbers and letters on the same keys. It makes difficult for the texter to type, so text language can help reducing texter's difficulty.

It can save time, space and money; it is considered 'cool' 'stylized' and 'modern' by many young people.

According to a 2009 University of Alabama study, "Text messaging has surely given our society a quick means through which to communicate, taking out the need for capitalization, punctuation, the use and knowledge of sentence" (p.1). Texting trend has provided our generation with a new kind of trend that makes communication easier, simpler and fast. In the course of texting we can totally ignore the need for capitalization, punctuation, grammar and other conventions related to the Standard English language. According to Lauren Collister, these emoticons and symbols are not destroying language, but actually they show a kind of creative repurposing and are a part of this new era of technology. Aside from ignoring all these rules and regulations the texter is always aware of the fact that he or she must also be understood and that the text message must be understood able.

Today's youngsters, according to Nikirk, symbolize the millennial generation or Net generation (those born after 1980's or early 1990's). This generation is kind of unique generation, whose life is and has always been set in media and technology (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2008) and for that reason the quick acceptance of text messaging may perhaps be a result of a somewhat natural tendency to turn towards internet and communication technologies (ICTs). Keeter and Taylor (2009) assert that millennial are the first generation in the whole human history not to regard activities such as text messaging, face booking and tweeting as remarkable innovations but rather as a fundamental part of social life.

Newspapers have printed headlines supporting both the viewpoints that messaging help language skills and that messaging is destroying language skills. “The Globe and Mail” for example published one article entitled “Texting helps teens” grammar” (Alphonso, 2006) and another one entitled “Texting, Twitter contributing to students” poor grammar skills, Profs say” (Kelley, 2010). It's a well-known fact that languages are always in a continuous state of progress and change. The question is whether texting language should be considered language progress or language decay. There are pretty opposing views about it. So, the opposing views are discussed below.

“Negative Influences”: At first the group of thoughts revolves around the idea that text language is a bane of technology and the Internet because it has negative impacts on student’s communication skills, and particularly on their writing skills. Thus, some linguists, educators and even parents as well believe that literacy skills may be are under a great danger and that standard English can be the next dead language. Rosen, Chang, Erwin, Carrier, and Cheever claim that by regular using the service of text messaging can have a negative impact on their everyday language. They investigated that the regular use of texting expressions was interlinked to the poorer scores in the formal writing tasks among teenagers.

John Humphrys supports and strengthen the argument by writing in the Daily Mail (2007), he described SMS as absurd, grotesque and a barrier in the communication and even speak about texters as "vandals who are trying to do to the language what Genghis Khan did to his neighbors eight hundred years ago" (p.7). Furthermore, he also revealed that:

“They are destroying it: pillaging our punctuation; savaging our sentences; raping our vocabulary. And they must be stopped. The texters have many more arrows in their quiver than we who defend the old way” (p.7).

He clearly and undoubtedly expressed that text messaging destroys the user’s ability to use essential mechanics of writing, such as grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. He says that texters are destroying language with such great speed and frequency that we are not capable to defend. This argument denies the positive impact of texting as generalized by David Crystal and others.

“Positive Influences”: David Crystal belongs to the second group who consider texting not a bane but as blessing. Crystal goes against the general opinion that texting language and its use of abbreviations and slang can impact negatively on student’s literacy and linguistic abilities. Text messaging is not the threat many fear of. He cites six main points:

First, fewer than 10% of words in a typical text message are abbreviated. Secondly, abbreviating is not a new thing because it has been used for decades. Thirdly, children and adults alike use text language only the students and teens are not to be blamed. Fourth, students do not usually abbreviate in their homework and examinations, it’s just an assumption. Fifth, texting cannot cause bad spelling because people must know how to spell before they text. Sixth, texting improves people’s literacy because it provides people with the opportunity to engage in the language through reading and writing.

According to Crystal, the beginning of printing, telegraph, telephone, and broadcasting generated identical threats but the curiosity, interest, suspicion, terror, uncertainty, conflict charm, excitement and enthusiasm all at once that texting has triggered in such a short duration of time is surpassed by no linguistic phenomenon. Crystal claims that many of the features that are used in text messages were being used in chat room interactions much before the arrival of mobile phones. Texting involves an immediate turn taking way. So texters usually choose abbreviated word forms and also omit punctuations and ignore capitalization which requires pressing extra keys and consumes more time, effort and the recipient may need to show extra patience in taking his/her turn and hence it slows down the process of communication.

David Crystal (2008) writes,

“The popular belief is that texting has evolved as a twenty-first-century phenomenon — as a highly distinctive graphic style, full of abbreviations and deviant uses of language, used by a young generation that doesn’t care about standards. There is a widely voiced concern that the practice is fostering a decline in literacy. And some even think it is harming language as a whole” (p.7).

He further continues to write that

“All the popular beliefs about texting are wrong, or at least debatable. Its graphic distinctiveness is not a totally new phenomenon. Nor is its use restricted to the young generation. There is increasing evidence that it helps rather than hinders literacy” (p.9).

He believes that the average texters are aware when they are breaking the rules. They are also aware of the ways in which Text language violate the Standard English rules.

Crystal states that even in text messages, no more than hardly 10% of the words are shortened. However, the common fear is that the abbreviated language, alternative words and lack of punctuation used on the net, bleeds into our more formal uses of language and might eventually even replace it. Author and internet linguist David Crystal says that everyone can stop worrying. There's enough research now to show that the internet word

is not destroying the written word. In fact, it's making it even better.

Baron argues that the use of SMS language actually reflects creativity, due to its creative use of letters, punctuation and numbers and it increases phonetic awareness in children. It is also observed that different people have their own unique texting styles. Moreover, different messages use different patterns and styles due to their different communicative functions.

“No Influence”: The third camp doubts whether texting really has any effect, either positive or negative, on literacy skills and language grammar at all. This group assumes that text messages have neither positive nor negative impact on student writing whatsoever. This group looks at text messaging as totally another language variety of English. Because learning a new language does not affect students' ability to use English grammar, it would be illogical to conclude that text messaging can affect their grammar skills. Linguists provide strong evidence by comparing texting language to slang. They state that slang words do not affect English rules and grammar. English grammar has not changed over the years although each generation creates its own jargon. If students learn the foundation of English language in their class, they will be able to distinguish between “slang, texting lingo, and correct English” (Russell, 2011, p. 223).

Texting is being held responsible for most of the supposed ills and evils of our societies, together with language shortage and language change. In this regard, David Crystal says that there is "nothing new about fears accompanying the emergence of a new communications technology" (Crystal, p.2), there is nothing so new about the fears related to this new technology, because in the fifteenth century, the Church considered printing "as an invention of Satan" because it was thought that "the dissemination of uncensored ideas would lead to a breakdown of social order" (Crystal, p.2). Church viewed the invention of printing as dangerous because it will lead to spread and propagation of free and open ideas that will eventually lead to the failure and breakdown of social organization or discipline. The telegraph was viewed to be the medium that "would destroy the family and promote crime" (Crystal, p.2). Even the telephone and broadcasting were also thought to have negative effects on society as the first "would undermine society," while the second was thought to "be the voice of propaganda" (Crystal, p.2). But these were nothing else than just the baseless fears of people, now same is the case with texting.

2.2 Language change is inevitable

Many poets and philosophers throughout the ages commented on the fact that, everything on this planet is continuously in a state of change. A glance through any book of quotations uncovers frequent statements about the unpredictable world we live in. Language like everything else joins in this general change. As the German philosopher and linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt noted “There can never be a moment of true standstill, in language” (p.63). Language never stands motionless. Language change is natural, inevitable, and unstoppable. The only languages that do not pass through change and that do not show any variation over the passage of time are dead languages.

Even the plain, simplest and most colloquial or everyday usage English of several hundred years ago seems extremely odd and strange to us. Just look at the work of Robert Mannyng, who in the mid 14th century wrote a history of England. He stated that he made his language as simple as possible so that the average people can also understand it easily, yet still it is hardly logical to the average person in today's age and time:

Then, Language, like everything else, slowly but surely transforms itself over the centuries. There is nothing shocking in this, in a universe where humans grow old, tadpoles grow into frogs and milk turns into cheese, and it would be surely be strange if language alone remains unaffected and unchanged. As Ferdinand de Saussure noted. “Time changes all things: there is no reason why language should escape this universal law” (p.77). Saussure holds the view that in this universe where each and everything is the state of a continuous change, why language should remain unchanged and untouched. Language is interlinked with the society and people who speak it, so when the society and people acquire some kind of change, language will automatically change itself according to need.

“There is no disaster pending. We will not see a new generation of adults growing up unable to write proper English. The language as a whole will not decline. In texting what we are seeing, in a small way, is language in evolution” (Crystal p.25).

He is saying that texting has useful characters, which includes better vocabulary; shorter exchange of messages, cheap, and relationships are usually stronger because to texting.

The reasons for language change are very clear and noticeable. Whenever we create something new, we have to name it as well, and this is the point where a new word makes its entry into the language. Consider some of the words that are now commonly used in English, such as Google it, blogging, texting, SMS, iPhone, instant message, Facebook, Twitter, tweet and many more. If we could travel back to the time of 1990's, and talk to the people, they will not be able to comprehend all our words, and even we also can never understand what they are talking about. Baron says that “trying to standardize language once and for all is like trying to stop the tides” (p.95).

Nigella Lawson states, "Language is nothing if not a social tool; as society changes so must speech changes with it" (p.1). The main cause of making language was the desire and need for communication in the society, so, language is purely human creation, and we create new words in order to meet the need of smooth and easy communication.

While David Crystal states about language change that, "Language change is inevitable, continuous, universal and multidirectional. Languages do not get better or worse when they change. They just change" (p.3). Change is very normal in case of language; every language is constantly changing into something different. Language changes in several directions, and in several ways, like some in vocabulary, pronunciation, semantically etc. By change, languages do not get good or bad; it's just become easier to communicate in the present society by the present generation.

2.3 Will it remain or vanish?

David Crystal states that "Texting language is no different from other innovative forms of written expression that have emerged in the past" (p.156). Since many years there have been many new technologies that have come along and that may have emerged as a serious threat to the English language. All of those technologies skip out in favor of new and better ways to communicate. If the past is an indicator as to what we can expect in the future, than text messaging may also find its way out of the society.

If in case text speech is here to stay, then it still poses no threat to the English language. As a matter of fact it is a segmented part of the English language. There are reasons that can be used to explain why so many people are fearful that texting is destroying the English language. One reason is over exaggeration by the media (Hendrick). Our system of media is famous for taking a subject that has very little research and attempting to exaggerate it to everyone.

David Crystal holds the view that most of these innovations will probably die away, but some may live on, and add new acronyms to the spoken language. "Texting has added a new dimension to language use, but its long-term impact is negligible. It is not a disaster" (p.18). He holds the view that it is totally useless to predict the future of any language and especially in this fast moving and ever changing world.

2.4 Texting and literacy

Frequently new technologies are criticized for their negative impacts on the society. Invention of television raised people concern that it would develop a nation whose attention will be diverted just to television, and will move away from any productive work. Same was the case with the advent of radio, though none of these and other criticized technological inventions proved people's concern. Now text language is facing the same kind of criticism.

Beside the fact that much of the media attention has been directed at the negative effect that texting is imposing on student's literacy and skills. But still some studies disagreed with this and stood against this opinion by claiming and even evidently showing that texting may actually have a positive effect on the literacy skills of students. Writing about the benefits of student's texting, Lee, Bell, O'Conner and Helderman put forward that texting may be beneficial because it involves children in writing (Plester, Wood, Bell). Through texting, students are now involved in writing more than ever before. For young students, at their spelling development stage, using cell phones and texting can generate their interest and raise curiosity, allowing them to text their thoughts and ideas will be a sun exercise for them and will be beneficial in their spelling learning.

Crystal states that, "The more you text, the better your literacy scores" (p.160). He strongly believes that texting is not humiliating and destroying the language; but actually people who send text messages and frequently use emoticons, initialisms and other abbreviations, generally know how to spell perfectly well. As Crystal remarks, "There is increasing evidence that it helps rather than hinders literacy. And only a small tiny part of it uses a distinctive orthography"(p. 17).The history of language is filled with similar examples of nonstandard usage. He further says that texting is nothing else than the process of reading and writing. Although many texters enjoy breaking linguistic rules, they also know that they need to be understood by the reader or receiver of text. He explains that texting is simply the newest form of communication and will not damage language. If a person texts with abbreviations they must already understand the way it sounds and the way letters combine.

Texting may develop children's spelling and pronunciation skills because using abbreviations such as 'l8r' makes them think about language phonetically. So when children are playing with these creative representations of language they have to use and practice their understanding of letter and sound: This is a skill that is formally taught as phonics in classrooms. It gives students the opportunity to develop their understanding and develop link between sounds of letters and their written spellings.

SMS/ Text Message: SMS stands for the Short Message Service. "Short Message (or Messaging) Service, a system that enables mobile phone users to send and receive text messages" (OED). It is commonly referred as a text message and is a part of mobile phones, internet, or mobile communication systems. It is a fast and

convenient way of sending a short message to someone mostly on wireless networks. These text messages must not be longer than 160 characters per text. SMS can contain letters, numbers, punctuations and emoticons.

1.8.2 Texting/ Text messaging

A mobile phone service that enables a user to send short written messages to other mobile users” (Crystal, P.187). Texting or text messaging is the act of typing. It is the general term for sending brief typed messages from one wireless cell phone set to another one using the Short Message Service or SMS (Brown, Shipman & Vetter, 2007). The term text messaging refers to the messages that are not too much lengthy, or that do not extend than a few hundred characters. This title is usually applied to messaging that takes place between two or more than two mobile devices

1.8.3 Texter

Texter is a general word used for those who frequently send text messages. Texter is referred to “person who prefers to send text messages instead of picking up the phone” (Urban Dictionary). Texters are known to develop a language that is apparently different from the Standard English, based on the usage of smileys, abbreviations or other similar techniques.

1.8.4 Texting language

Text language can also be identified and recognized by the well-known names like txt-speak, text chat, text lingo, net lingo, chat speak, texting language, SMS language, txtslang or txt-talk.

It is the name “for the kind of abbreviated language used in text messaging, and sometimes for any kind of text messaging, whether abbreviated or not” (p. 187). Text language is the English language slang used when communicating through text message on a mobile phone (Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, & Smallwood, 2006). Texting language is a latest language variety that comes into sight with the arrival of text messaging, internet and digital media. Texting has developed its own manner lingo including abbreviations and graphics. It is much different from other forms of written communication. This language has developed a unique style, which separates it from the daily written language.

1.8.5 Standard/Formal English

Standard English sometimes abbreviated as SE in the linguistic circle. “Standard English refers to whatever form of the English language is accepted as a national norm in any English-speaking country” (Wikipedia, 2015). This form is commonly used by the educators, writers or linguistics in their written and spoken communications. It includes grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling rules. The standard form of English is usually the most formal version.

1.8.6 Abbreviations

Abbreviation according to Crystal is “In texting, a reduced version of a word” (p.176). An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word, used to represent the whole word. A word is abbreviated by omitting letters from one or more parts of the whole word. There are four main kinds of abbreviations, ‘shortenings’, ‘contractions’, ‘initialisms’, and ‘acronyms’. Initialism is a kind of abbreviation consisting of only the first letters that are pronounced separately such as CPU for Central Processing Unit and OMG for Oh my God. Acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of all words and pronounced as a whole word for example, LOL for Laugh Out Loud, YOLO for You only live once. Shortenings are words with missing end letters (Thurlow & Brown, 2003). Days and months are commonly shortened in SMS, for example, "sun/Sunday", and "Feb/February. While contractions are words with omitted middle letters, usually vowels (Crystal, 2008). It is like contracting or combining two words to make it as a single word. e.g., using ‘don’t’ instead of do not, ‘I’ve’ for I have. Text language also use contractions like gonna for going to and wanna for want to.

1.8.7 Students writing skills

Like speaking, writing is also a form of communication, in which the feelings and ideas are written down. Writing skills are the particular abilities that help to write words in a meaningful form. It comprises of grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and some other micro abilities.

1.8.8 Decay in English language

By decay it is meant to be slowly destroyed by some natural processes. A language is said to be in decay when it moves from better to worse. When people start to change the original language rules, vocabulary or pronunciation, some call this as decay for language. Texting is a natural process or a trend, which is considered to be responsible for the decay in English language.

1.8.9 Progress in English language

By progress it is meant to have some development and advancement in it. A language is said to be in progress when it moves from worse to better conditions. A positive change in language leads to its progress. English language is in change since its origin, and today’s English is different from the old English to a great extent. Nowadays English is again going through a process of change because of some new technologies and trends, like texting.

language

Students are

Methodology

Research design

The design for this study was quantitative in nature based on closed ended questionnaire. This study was conducted with the intention to explore the impacts of texting language upon Standard English language. This conducted research was descriptive in nature. For the study questionnaire was developed on the basis of literature review. The data was then analyzed systematically by the researcher.

Population

The population of the study was universities and postgraduate colleges conducted within the district of Haripur. The research utilized the technique of random sampling.

Sample and sampling technique

The random sampling technique was used to select sample for the study. Sample for the study was 75 students. The researcher has chosen the students from BS English department from university of Haripur and Post Graduate College Haripur, for the collection of data.

Instrument

Self-developed closed ended questionnaire was constructed for the study. The questionnaire was used as a research instrument for the collection of data. The questionnaire was composed of 12 questions and was distributed randomly among the selected population of 75 students of BS English department. Each question of the questionnaire was designed to yield specific information, and to meet the needs of the research. It was kept simple and precise, so that it can easily be understood by each member of population.

Data collection

The data were collected through personal visits of the researcher. Data were collected through questionnaire which was given to 100 student participants out of which 75 gave feedback.

Data analysis and interpretation

Every statement's percentage provides an evident that texting language cannot be held responsible for any kind of decay in English language.

Analysis and Interpretation of the data

After the transformation of data into percentage form, the researcher than showed the results of every statement in the form of a graph as given below, in order to make the data results clear and more intelligible.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.1

1. "You mostly use text speak while texting"

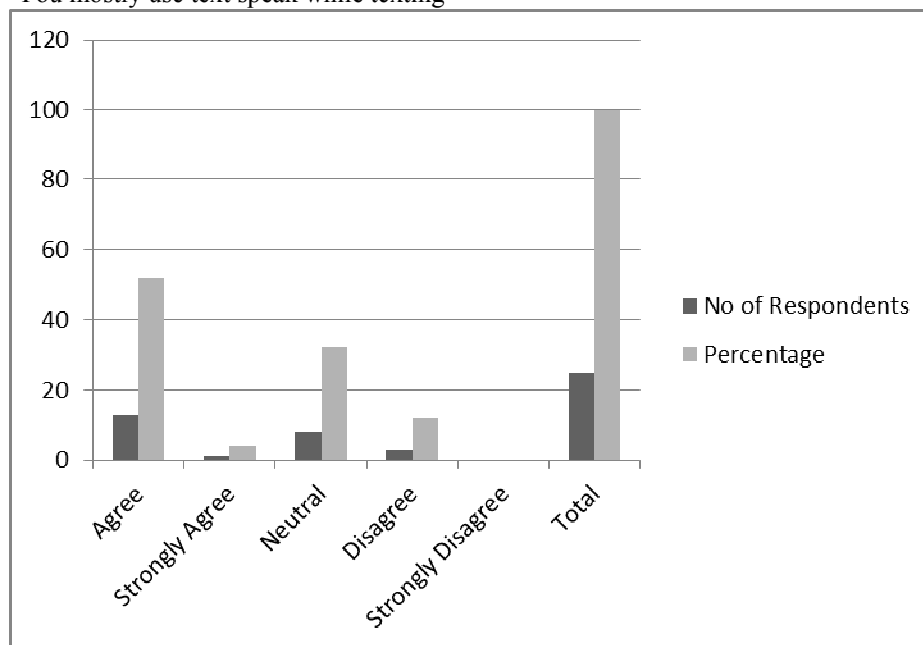


Figure No.1

Comments

Figure No.1 shows that 52% respondents agreed with this above statement and 4% strongly agreed, While 32% respondents showed a neutral response to this question, 12% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, hence showed that the large number of our teenagers are now involved in this text language trend. The generation of this century is always in search of something different and cool, so they adopt text speak in their texting, which is different, stylish, easy and comfortable as well. This result shows us the popularity of text

language now-a-days.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.2

2. “You use short and abbreviated forms frequently in your formal writings”

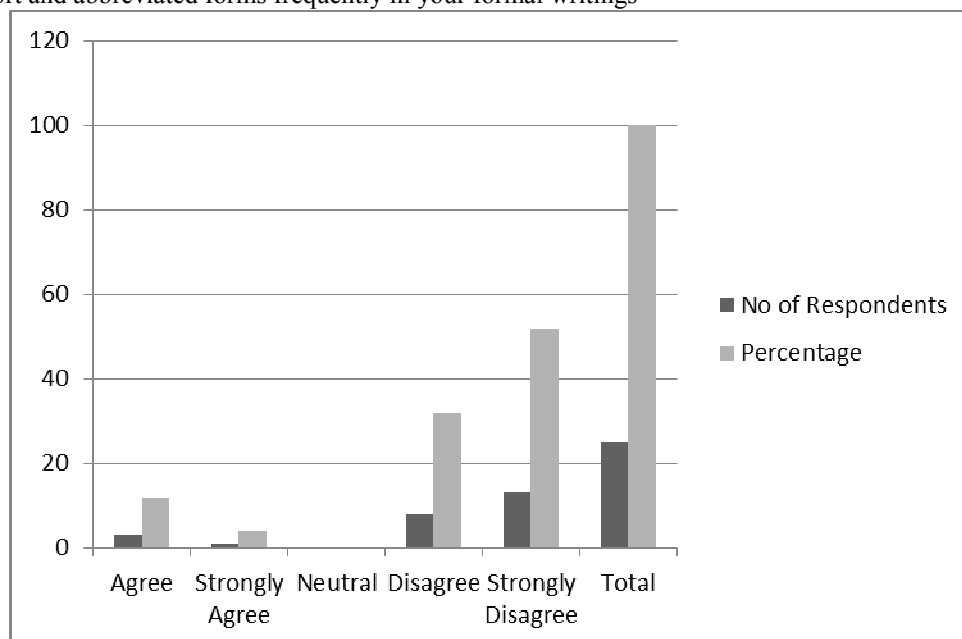


Figure No.2

Comments

Figure No.2 presents that 12% participants agreed with the statement, 4% strongly agreed, while on the other hand out of total 32% participants disagreed the above statement and out of total 52% participants strongly disagreed. This response clearly showed that students mostly do not tend to use short and abbreviated forms in their formal writing tasks. They use text language frequently but only in messaging media and other online communications especially with the closer ones, and do not mix it with the formal writing tasks. Because they are aware of the differences between the both and are also aware of the fact that the use of text language in formal writings will never help them in gaining any scores. The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.3

3. “You are losing interest in formal English”

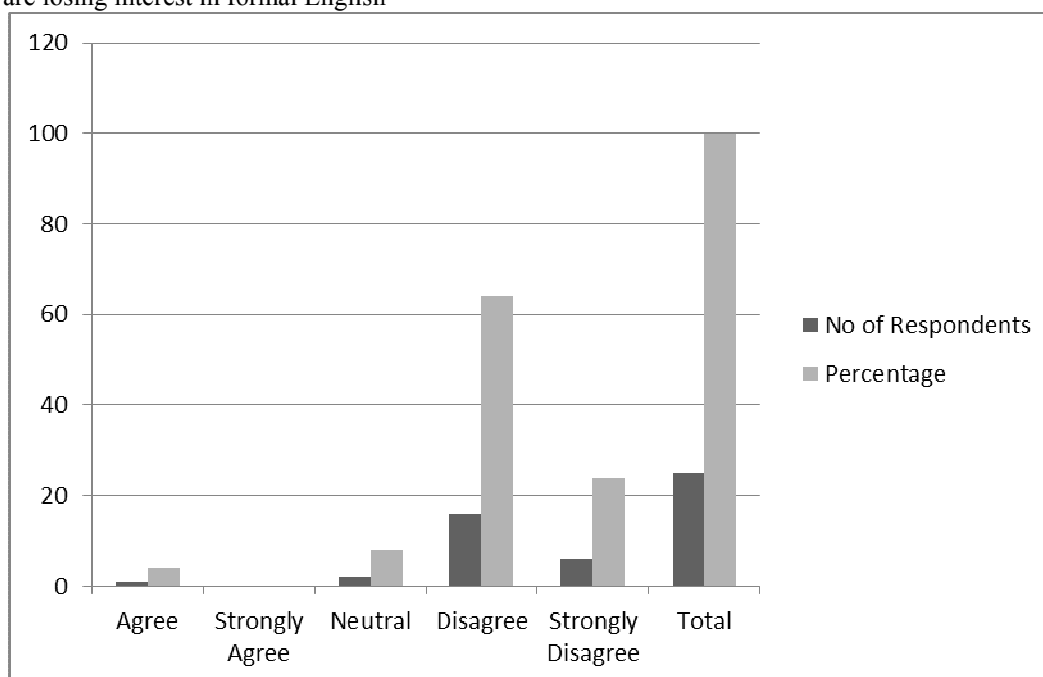


Figure No.3

Comments

Figure No.3 shows that only 4% respondents agreed the statement, 8% of them remained neutral to the question, but 64% of the total participants disagreed with the statement, and 24% strongly disagreed with this statement. This result evidently showed that teenagers are not at all losing their interest in formal English. They seem to be fully aware of the truth that formal English have its own importance in the field of success and will always have. Respondents' shows that they still learn English rules, and follow them in their formal writings. Claim that students are losing interest in formal English is just an exaggeration.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.4

4. "You are forgetting the actual spellings of English words"

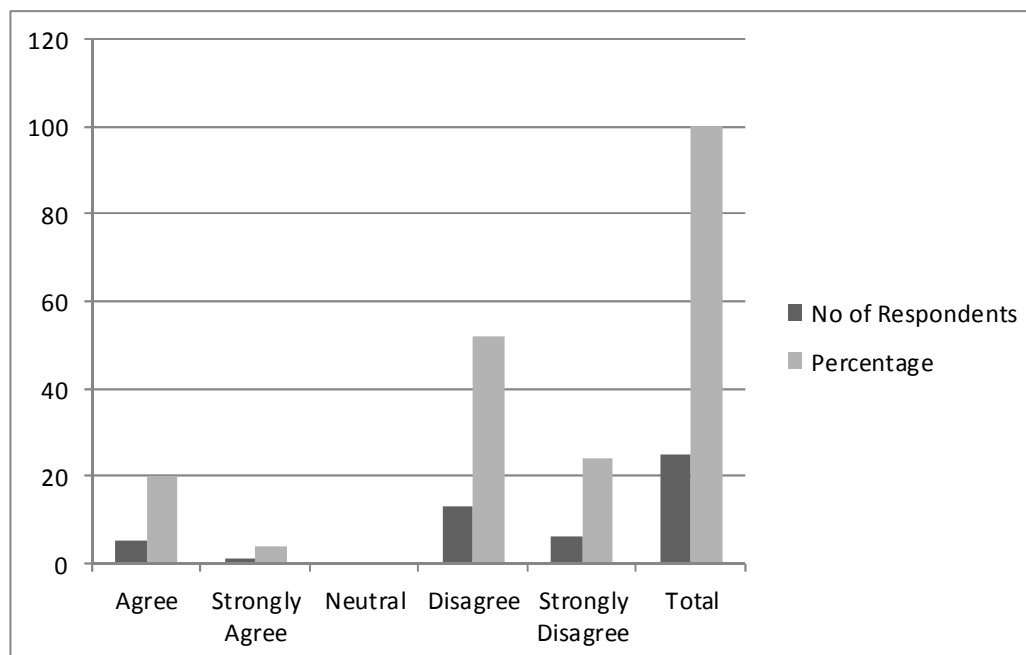


Figure No.4

Comments

Figure No.4 show that 20% respondents agreed to the above given statement while 4% participants strongly agreed with the statement. On the flip side of it 52% of respondents disagreed with the above given statement and 24% strongly disagreed. From this result it can be concluded that students are not going away from the spelling rules. They still know how to spell correctly. Young children are still taught spelling rules, and are examined not only on the basis of content but also spellings. By forgetting the actual spellings of English will make the texters unable to create new words or to use old words with new spellings, because texters just revise the spellings and shorten them to the extent it seems possible without losing its meaning.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.5

5. "Still, much of your time spends with formal English rather than text speak"

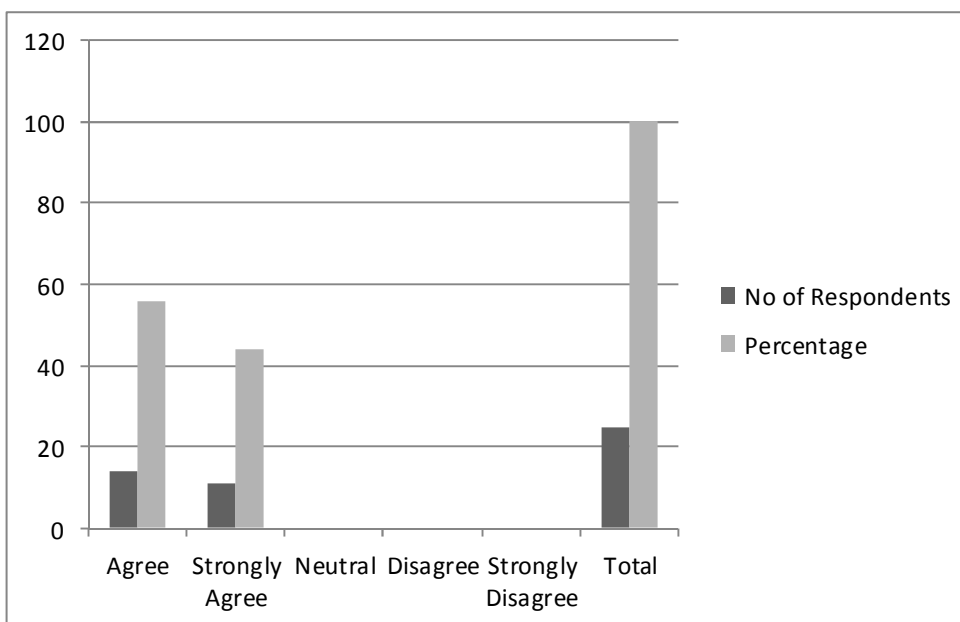


Figure No.5

Comments

Figure No.5 presents that 56% of the total respondents agreed with the above given statement, while 44% strongly agreed. This result hence evidently proved that texters spend much of their total time with formal English tasks. Texting is just a pass time activity that is used only in texting and some other online media. Texters also gain education, where they interact with the formal English. So, it is clear that text language is not colliding with the formal language.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.6

6. “. While using ‘OMG’ and ‘B4’, you have the knowledge about ‘Oh my God’ and ‘before’ respectively”

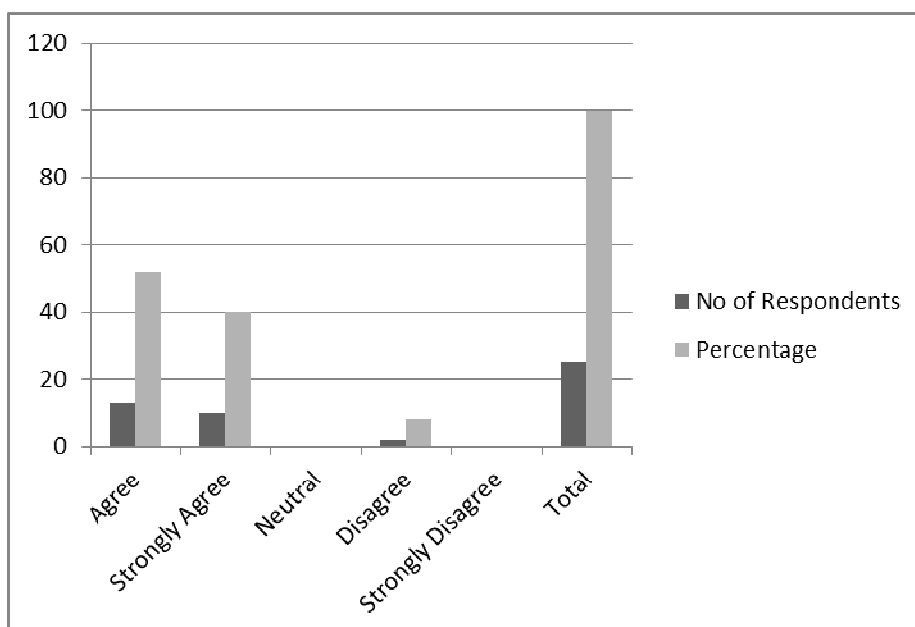


Figure No.6

Comments

Figure No.6 show that 52% of the respondents agreed with the statement, while 40% of total respondents strongly agreed with the above given statement and only 8% out of the 100% participants disagreed. Through this response it can be concluded that texters when use short and abbreviated words during text messaging, they already have the knowhow about the full words and spellings. It’s obvious that without knowing what OMG stands for, nobody will dare to use it. It is also impossible for a person to create shortcuts like ‘b4’ without

knowing the correct spellings and pronunciation as well

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.7

7. “The impact of internet and text language upon formal English language is minimal”

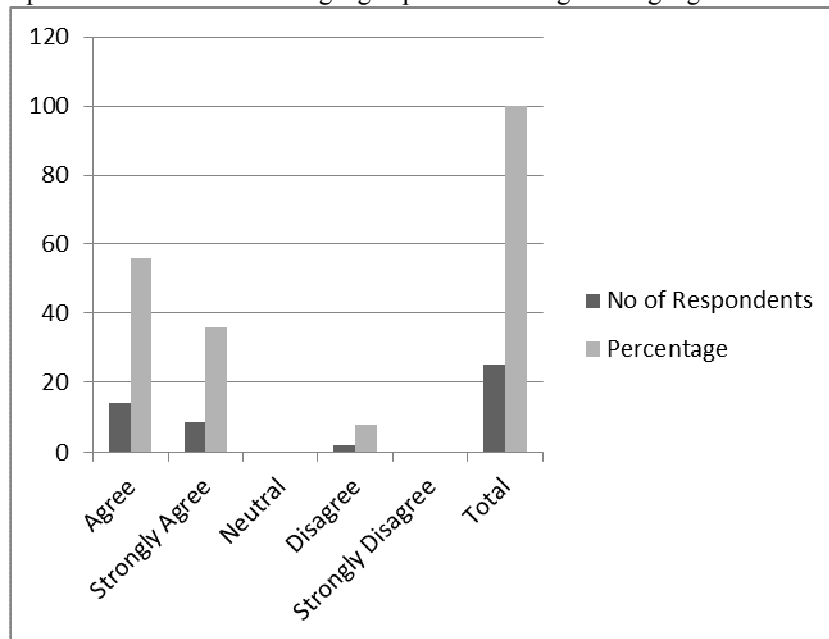


Figure No.7

Comments

Figure No.7 demonstrates that 56% of the total population agreed with the statement and 36% even strongly agreed with it, there are only 8% of the respondents who showed an opposing response. The result makes clear that text language is not penetrating into formal language area, and its impact or influence upon formal English language is very least. It is an unquestionable reality that students do give exams in formal English and at the same time do text in text language; each one has its own medium for use. Mixing them both is not that much common as people seems to believe.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.8

8. “Internet and text language is a new language variety of English along with the formal English”

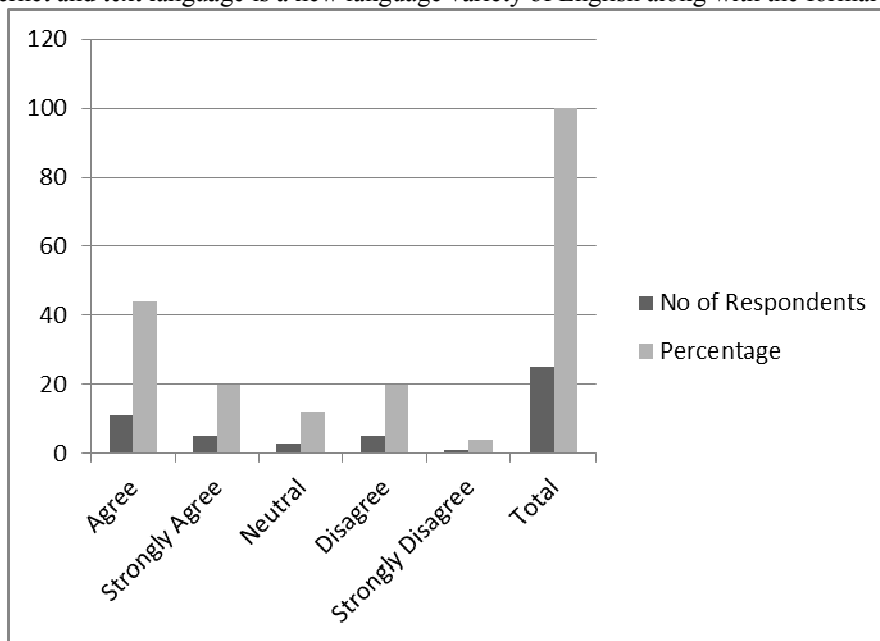


Figure No.8

Comments

Figure No.8 show that 44% of our total respondent population agreed with the above statement and 20% strongly agreed with it, while 12% of the respondents remained neutral. Among them 20% respondents disagreed with the

above statement and 4% strongly disagreed. The result of this response showed that many of the teenagers' belief that text language is kind of new language that is making its appearance and position alongside the formal language. Only few of the respondents are of the view that it is not a new language, and this idea need to be changed with the positive one.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.9

9. "Text language is a trend that is going to disappear with time like any other trend"

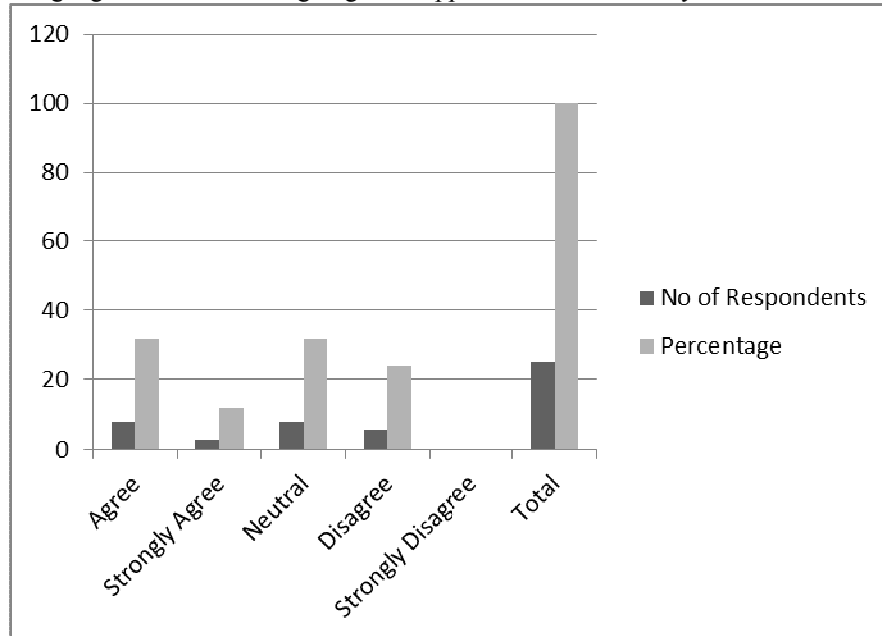


Figure No.9

Comments

Figure No.9 show that 32% of the respondents agreed to the statement, 12% strongly agreed as well, 32% of the total population remained neutral to this, while we have 24% respondents who disagreed the statement. The result showed that teenagers hold really mixed opinion about the life time of this new language variety. Some thinks that it is just a trend that will be replaced with any other new trend. Some are still confused regarding the question. While there are some people who, due to its popularity and increasing number, thinks that it will remain as a new language forever, which is actually very difficult.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.10

10. "Text language is not destroying English language"

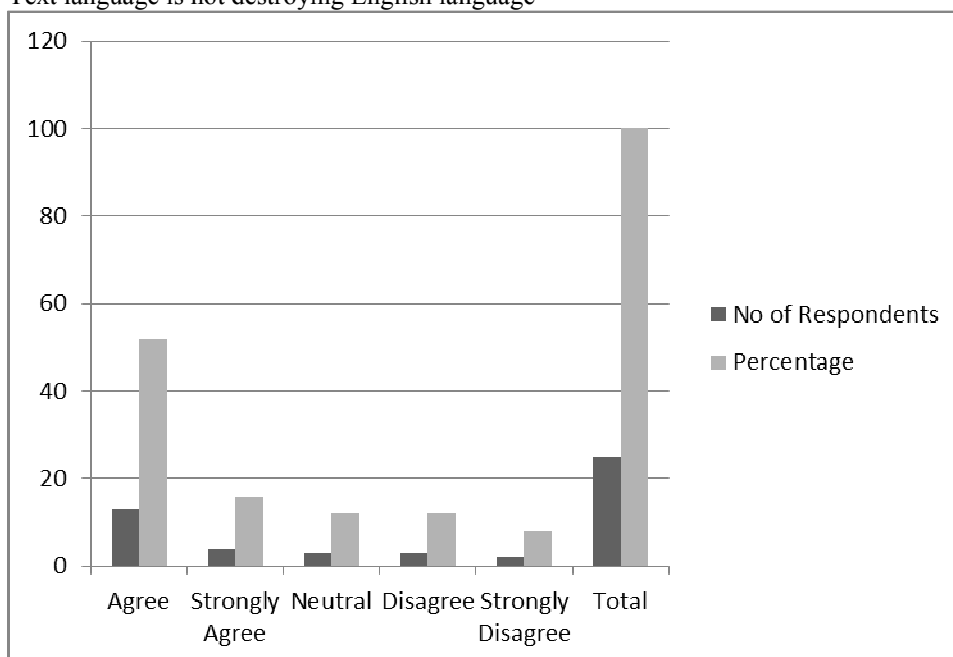


Figure No.10

Comments

Figure No.10 demonstrates that 52% of the total population agreed to the statement, 16% strongly agreed, 12% respondents remained neutral to this question. While there are 12% respondents who disagreed to the statement and 8% strongly disagreed. From this result it can be concluded that many teenagers are of the belief that text language is not at all a kind of destruction or nightmare for the formal English. Only a few of them thinks that it is killing language, these respondents belong to the category of people who do not seem to use text language frequently while text messaging, due to one reason or another.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.11

11. “Oxford Dictionary is making new entries like OMG and YOLO, so text language is expanding English vocabulary”

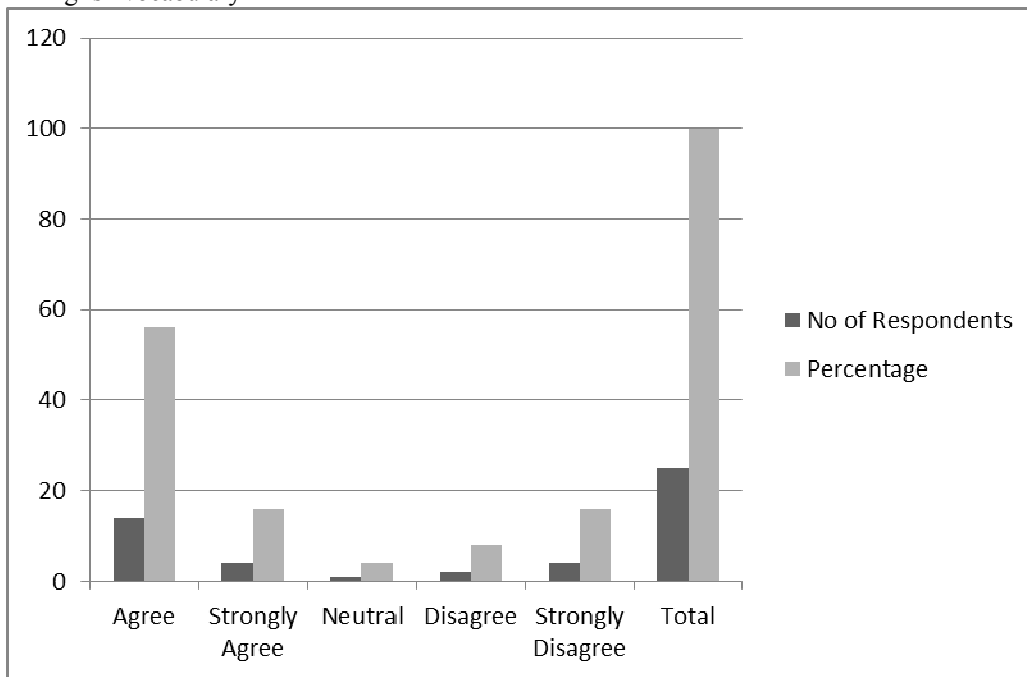


Figure No.11

Comments

Figure No.11 show that 56% respondents agreed to the statement and 16% even strongly agreed, 4% respondents remained neutral. While 8% out of 100% respondents disagreed to the statement and 16% strongly disagreed. As the population who agreed outnumber the disagreed population, so it becomes clear that text language is more like richening and expanding the English language vocabulary. OED is adding new words and abbreviations into its new editions. Text language is not taking anything away from English but in some way adding to it.

The Result and Interpretation of Statement No.12

12. “Texting can be used as an educational tool”

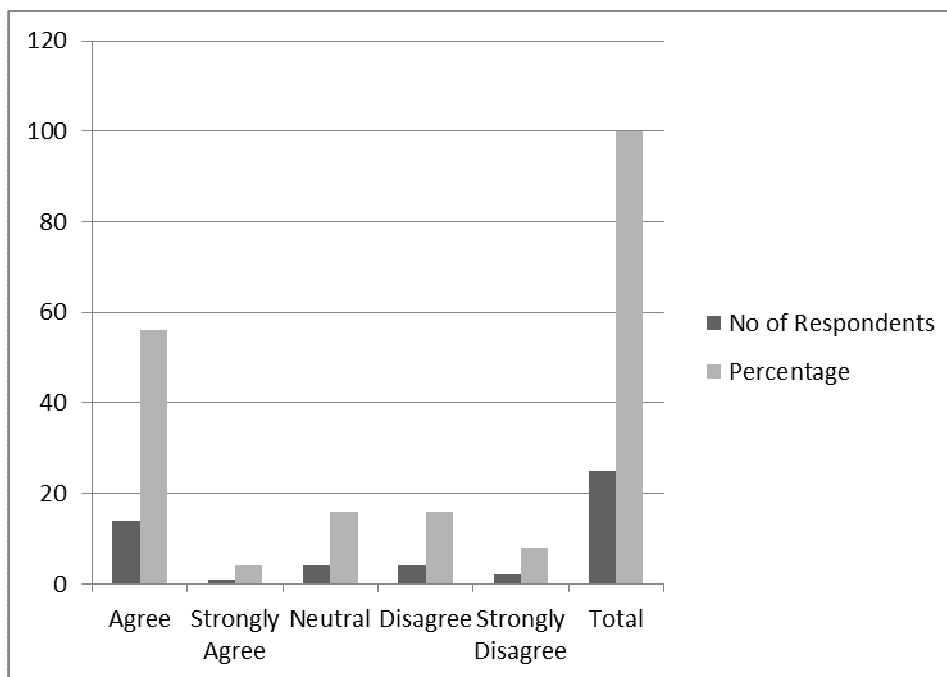


Figure No.12

Comments

Figure No.12 show that 56% of the respondents agreed with the above statement, 4% agreed strongly. 16% remained neutral when asked about it. While 16% disagree with the statement, and 8% also shows a strongly opposing response. This shows that many of the teenagers regard that texting can be utilized in educational areas as well. Only to see the darker side of texting and text language is not fair at all, one really need to have a look on its positive or brighter side in order to know its advantages and uses in society. So texting can be used as a useful tool in education field.

Conclusion and Findings

The aim of this chapter is to present the conclusions acquired from the results of the analysis of the questionnaire and then to describe findings of the overall research study. The recommendations may serve as guidelines for the parents, educators and linguist.

Findings

In the light of the literature review and responses to each question of the questionnaire will be presented below.

1. Texting is spreading like a wildfire, but even though text language is not always used during texting. Hardly 10% of the words are abbreviated, while the others remain the same.

2. Short and abbreviated forms are not frequently used by the students in their formal writing tasks. Text language has its own medium of use, while formal language has its own.

3. Students who texts habitually, are not losing their interest in the formal English. They are still achieving good grades in English writing tasks and also interested to learn new English vocabulary in order to be able to communicate with other groups of people as well.

4. Students do not seem to forget the authentic spellings due to the extreme use of short and abbreviated forms while texting. It is to keep in mind that for abbreviating a word, you must know the full spelling and pronunciation of that word.

5. Despite the fact that students nowadays are involved in text messaging and text language, but even now they are spending a great amount of their time with the formal English writing activities.

6. That it is not possible to use an abbreviated form of a word without having any knowledge about the full word. Like for using OMG, the person should know that it is the abbreviation of Oh my God, what it means, and in which situations it is to be used.

7. Though texting language is gaining popularity in today's time, but still there is a distinguishing line between formal English and text language. Hence text language cannot cross that line and cannot influence formal English.

8. Text language is not affiliated with the formal variety of English. The truth is that it is a new language variety which is in use by the text makers only during texting, along with the formal variety of English.

9. In this technological era, many trends come and go; same is going to happen to the use of text language. It is not here to stay for a long period of time, and will soon be replaced by some other new trend.

10. English language is going through a change since its origin, even now it's going through it, this change because of the use of text language, cannot be claimed as destruction.

11. As English is a universal language, hence it demands expansion over time. These additions of new words and phrases in Oxford English Dictionary show the progress of English.

12. Texting can be used as an educational tool because texting itself is reading and writing. Through texting students are engaged in full time reading and writing.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made for the positive use of text messaging and text language.

1. The use of texting should be utilized positively in language learning classrooms.
2. Texting is reading and writing, hence it must be encouraged.
3. Texting is the convenient way of simple communication.
4. Texting improves spelling skills, so it can be used in spelling learning tasks.

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