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Texting Language as Destructive or Constructive: Perceptions of Pakistani University Students

Seemab Jamil Ghouri

Lecturer in English, University of Management and Technology (UMT), Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

seemab.jamil@skt.umd.edu.pk**Insram Elahi**

Associate Professor, Government Graduate College, Model Town, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

shinsram@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the rising prevalence of texting language and its impact on Standard English among L2 learners. It discusses the emergence of "texting language," "SMS language," or "digital language," characterized by abbreviations, contractions, acronyms, emojis, and other non-standard elements due to technological advancements and widespread mobile and internet use. The primary objective is to assess whether texting language harms English or represents a natural evolution of the language. The study examines students' capacity to differentiate between informal texting behaviours and formal academic writing, with a focus on 120 university-level EFL learners. This study aims to dispel myths about texting language by taking an optimistic stance. It makes the case that texting is a creative and flexible mode of communication that represents linguistic innovation rather than a danger to English. By offering a fair assessment of the connection between students' writing proficiency and digital communication behaviours, the results are anticipated to have a favourable impact on the fields of education and applied linguistics.

Keywords: Texting Language, SMS Language, Digital Communication, University-Level EFL Learners

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 will expose the positive side of texting language, and will discuss about texting from an optimistic point of view.

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.

Research Objectives

- To investigate university students' perceptions of texting language as a form of language destruction or language development.
- To examine the extent to which university-level students can differentiate between texting language and Standard English in academic writing contexts.
- To explore the perceived impact of texting language on students' writing competence and communication practices.

Research Questions

1. How do university students perceive texting language: as language destruction or as language development?
2. To what extent are university-level students able to distinguish between texting language and Standard English in formal academic writing?
3. What impact do university students believe texting language has on their writing skills and communication practices?

Significance of Study

This research will prove 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. Media is also playing an active role in creating a strong negative image of texting in the minds of people. This research will also 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.

Literature Review

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. However, this research study focuses on texting language from an optimistic point of view and argues that, texting language is not destroying the English language; it shows the flexibility, creativity, and dynamic nature of the English language.

As Tomas Chamorro of "Mr. Personality" blog states in his post "Is Technology Making Us Stupid (and Smarter)?" that since the arrival of technology and machinery from the late '80's till the present, life and society are influenced and affected drastically because of the advancements in technology. Life has become difficult and is even becoming more difficult but we barely ever note it because technology is there, it has made complexities simpler than ever. Technology is making our lives simpler, easier and better in every possible way.

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. These new forms of communication also changed the English language to suit and fit with the day by day changing technology for efficiency and usefulness. Previous inventions such as the printing press and telegraph have also had a similar effect on English and on language as well.

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, p.183). 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.

According to a Pew Research Center Publications article, "Teens, Cell Phones and Texting: Text Messaging Becomes a Centerpiece Communication", Mobile phone texting has become the favored way of essential communication between teens and their friends, around 75% of children aged between 12 to 17 year now hold mobile phones. Entirely 72% of all teens or 88% of mobile phone users are addicted to texting. The study also shows that "One in three teens sends more than 100 text messages a day and half of teens send 50 or more text messages a day" (Lenhart, 2010). However, teens are not the only class who are sending text messages. David Crystal (2008), 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. Naomi Baron (2008) 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.

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 uses 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 (2009), 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 is 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.

Opposing views

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 (2010) 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 (2008) 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 (2008):

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 (2008), 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 (2008) 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 (2008) 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 (2008) 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.

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 (2000) says that "trying to standardize language once and for all is like trying to stop the tides" (p.95).

Nigella Lawson (2000) 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.

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, then 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 2008). 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.

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 Helderma 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 fun 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.

Research Methodology

The research approaches and processes used in the study to investigate the research problem are described in this part. The purpose of this study was to investigate how texting language affects Standard English. This chapter will cover a wide range of research technique topics, such as population, sampling, research design, and the description of the questionnaire used for data analysis. The type of research that was done was descriptive. The study was conducted using a quantitative research methodology. A questionnaire has been used as a technique for data collection. The researcher then conducted a methodical analysis of the information gathered via the questionnaire.

Population and Sampling

The study was carried out in the Sialkot district. 120 EFL beginners at the university level made up the cohort chosen for this study. For the purpose of gathering data, the researchers selected the samples (n=120) from a private university using a straightforward random selection procedure. Random sampling was used in the study. Only 120 learners were chosen as the population for data collection due to the researcher's limited time and resources; other students and teenagers were seen but were not included in the sample.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using the questionnaire as a research tool. Twelve questions made up the questionnaire, which was given out at random to 120 English majors from different semesters. Every question on the survey was created to provide particular data and satisfy the requirements of the study. It was maintained clear and straightforward so that everyone in the public could understand it.

Results

The research is aimed at investigating and elucidating the concepts of texting language. Data were gathered from university students and analyzed using quantitative method. The researchers systematically arranged the data. The number of students who selected similar responses was calculated and the responses were translated into percentages. The results indicate that there is no evidence that texting language causes any deterioration of the English language. For clarity, the results were also represented graphically with percentage response for each statement.

Figure 1: *You mostly use text speak while texting.*

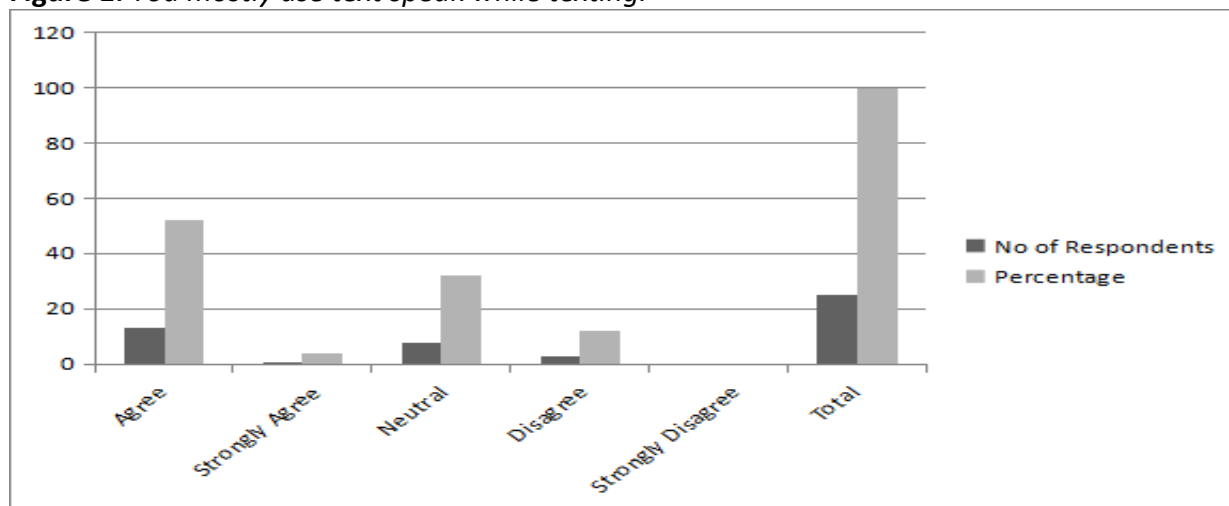


Figure No.1 shows that 52% respondents agree with this above statement and 4% are strongly agree, while 32% respondents show a neutral response to this question, 12% of the respondents disagree with the statement, hence showing that the large number of our teenagers are now involved in this text language 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 days.

Figure 2: *You use short and abbreviated forms frequently in your formal writings.*

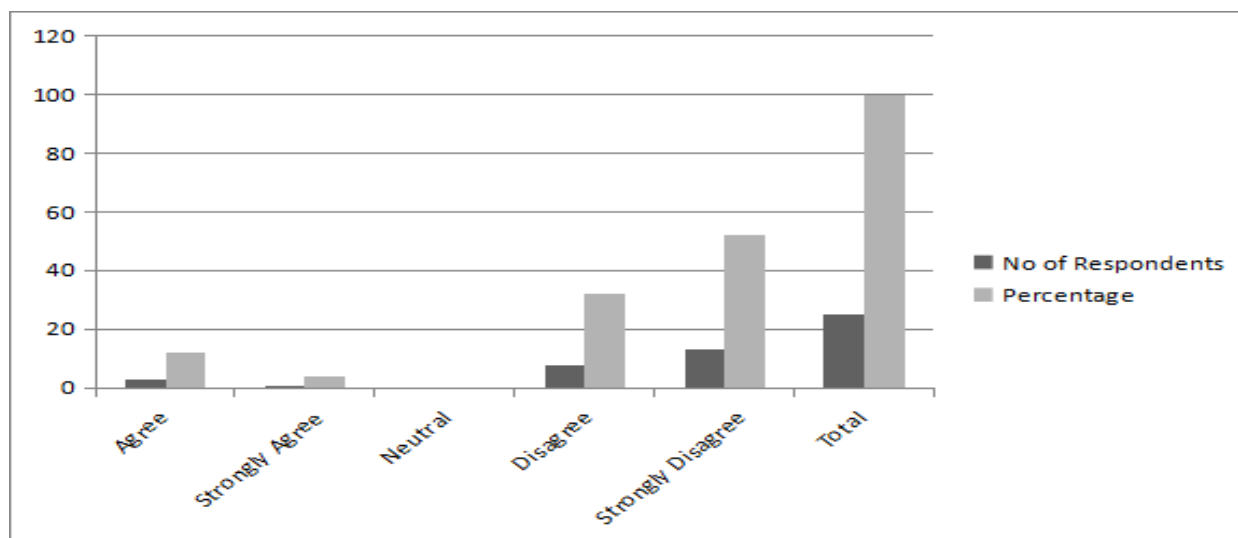


Figure 2 presents that 12% of the respondents agree with the statement, 4% strongly agree, while on the other hand 32% of the respondents disagree the above statement and 52% of the respondents strongly disagree. This response clearly shows us that students mostly do not tend to use short and abbreviated 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.

Figure 3: *You are losing interest in formal English.*

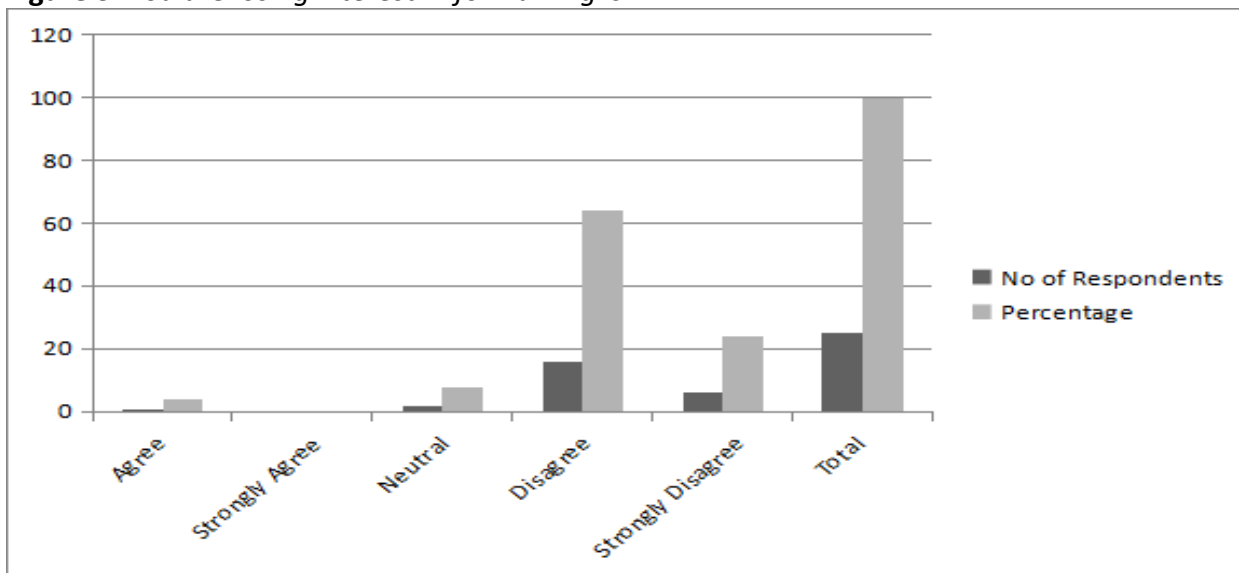


Figure 3 shows us that only 4% respondents agree the statement, 8% of them remains neutral to the question, but 64% of the total respondents disagree with the statement, and 24% strongly disagree the statement. This result evidently shows that teenagers are not at all losing their interest in formal 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.

Figure 4: *You are forgetting the actual spellings of English words.*

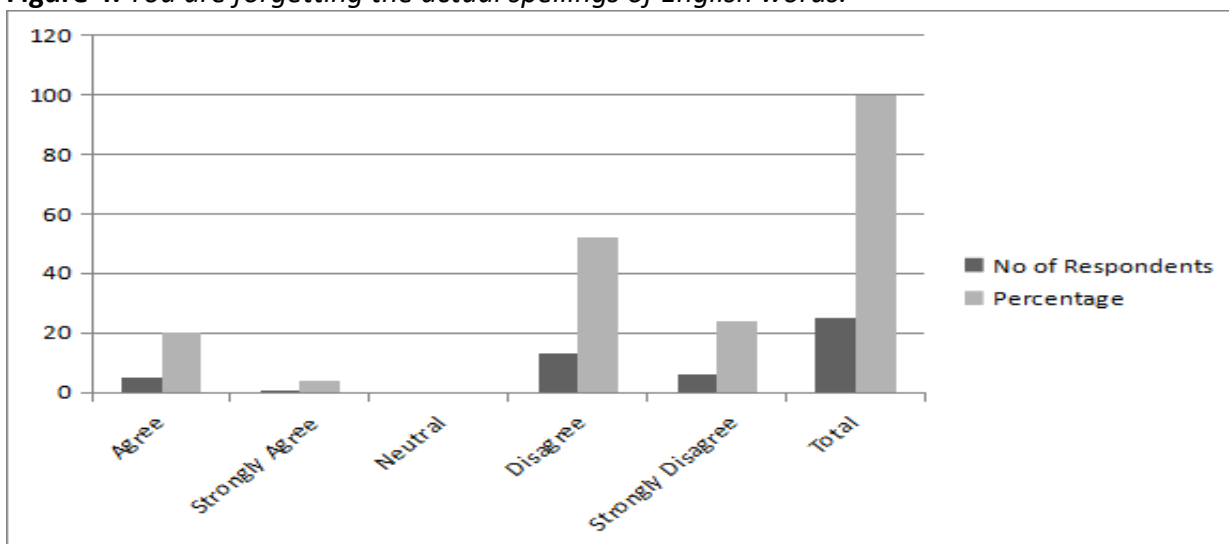


Figure 4 show that 20% respondents agree the above statement while 4% respondents strongly agree the statement. On the flip side of it 52% of our respondents disagree with the statement and 24% shows a strongly agree response. The result makes us able to conclude that students and teenagers are not going 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.

Figure 5: *Still much of your time spends with formal English rather than text speak.*

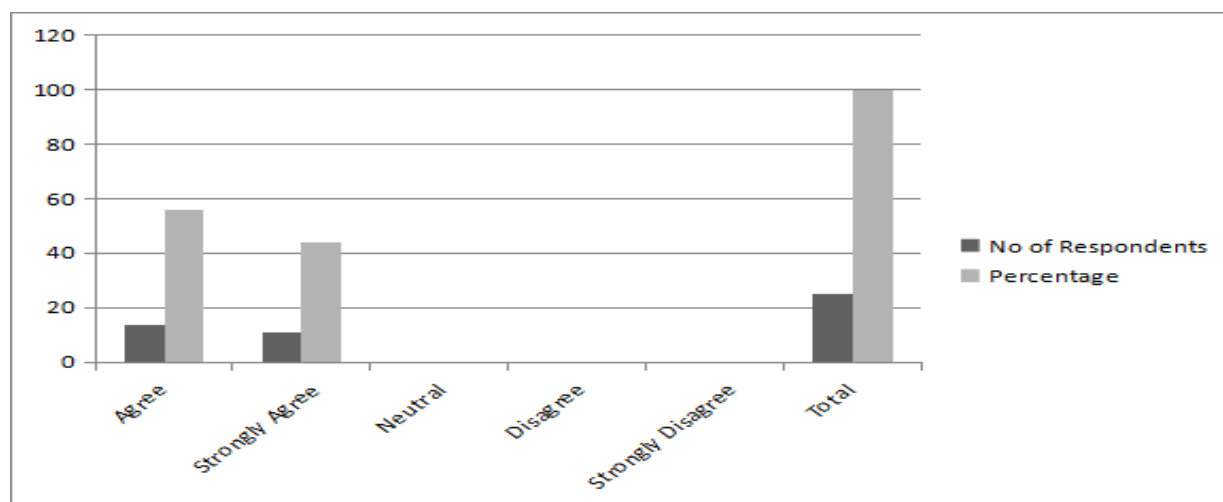


Figure 5 presents that 56% of the total respondents agree with the above statement, while 44% shows a strongly agree response. This result hence evidently proves that texters are spending much of their total time with formal English tasks. Texting is just a pass time activity that is used only in texting 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.

Figure 6: *While using 'OMG' and 'B4', you have the knowledge about 'Oh my God' and 'before' respectively.*

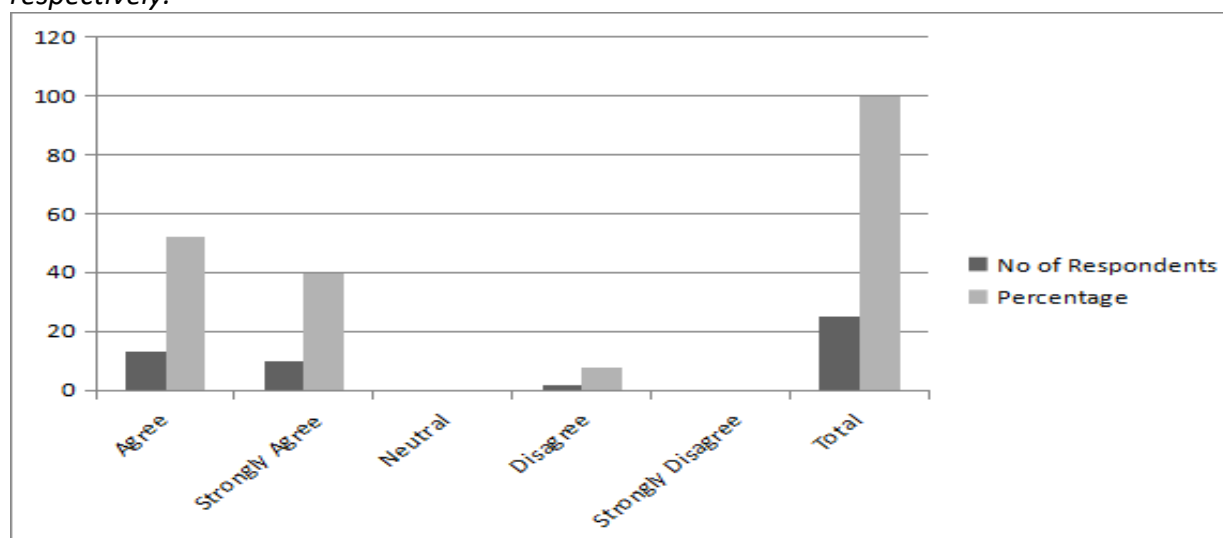


Figure 6 shows us that 52% of the respondents agree with the statement, while 40% of total respondents strongly agree the statement and only 8% of the 100% respondents disagree with it. This response makes us able to conclude that texters when use short and abbreviated words during text messaging, they 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' with knowing the correct spellings and pronunciation as well

Figure 7: *The impact of internet and text language upon formal English language is very minimum.*

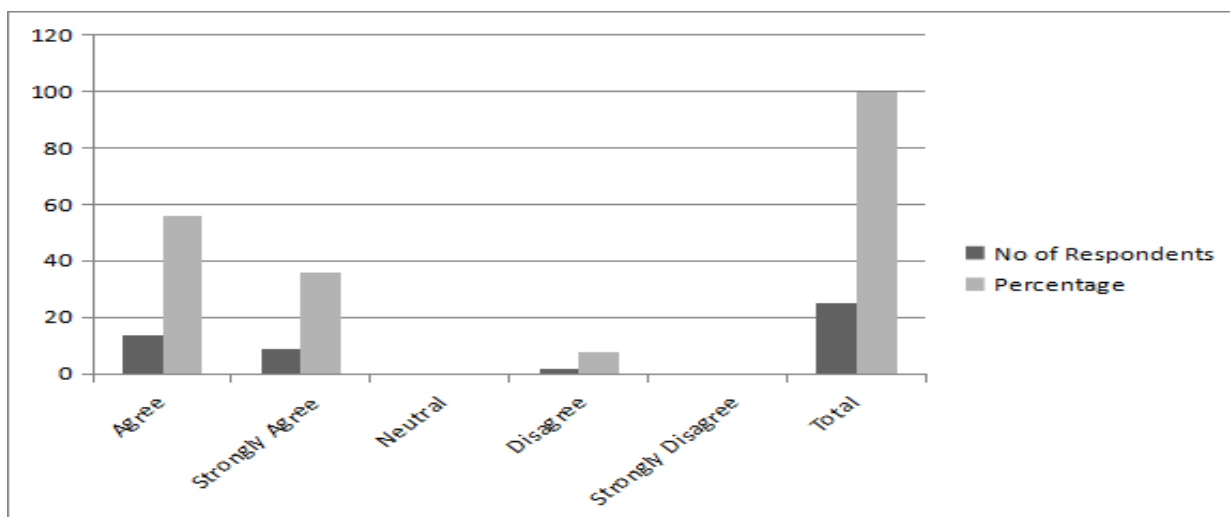


Figure 7 demonstrates that 56% of the total population agree with the statement and 36% even strongly agree with it, there are only 8% of the respondents who shows a disagree response. The result makes us clear that text language is not penetrating into formal language area, and its impact or influence 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.

Figure 8: *Internet and text language is a new language variety of English along with the formal English.*

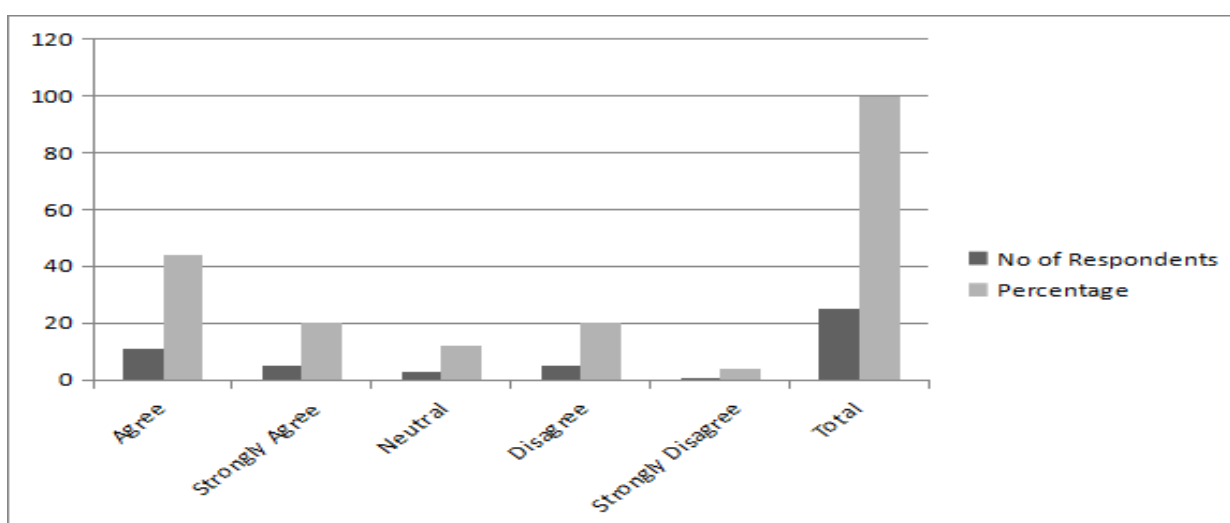


Figure 8 shows that 44% of our total respondent population agrees with the statement and 20% strongly agreed with it, while 12% of the respondents remain neutral. Among them 20% respondents disagree with the above statement and 4% strongly disagree. The result of this response shows that many of the 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.

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

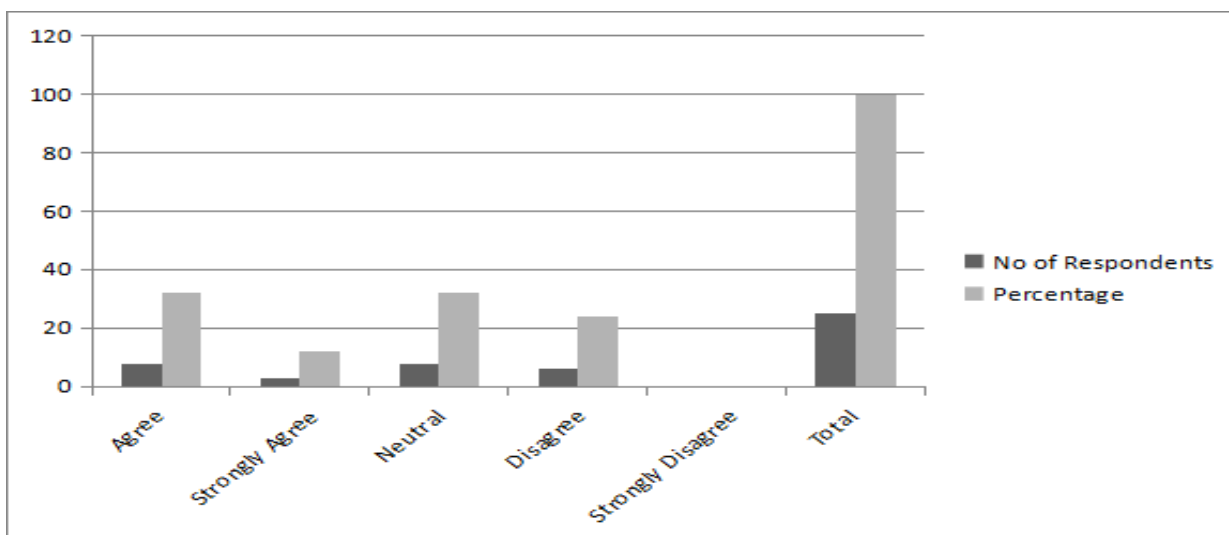


Figure 9 shows that 32% of the respondents agree the statement, 12% strongly agree as well, 32% of the total population remain neutral to this, while we have 24% respondents who disagree the statement. The result shows that teenagers hold really mixed opinion about the life time of this new language 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.

Figure 10: Text language is not destroying English language.

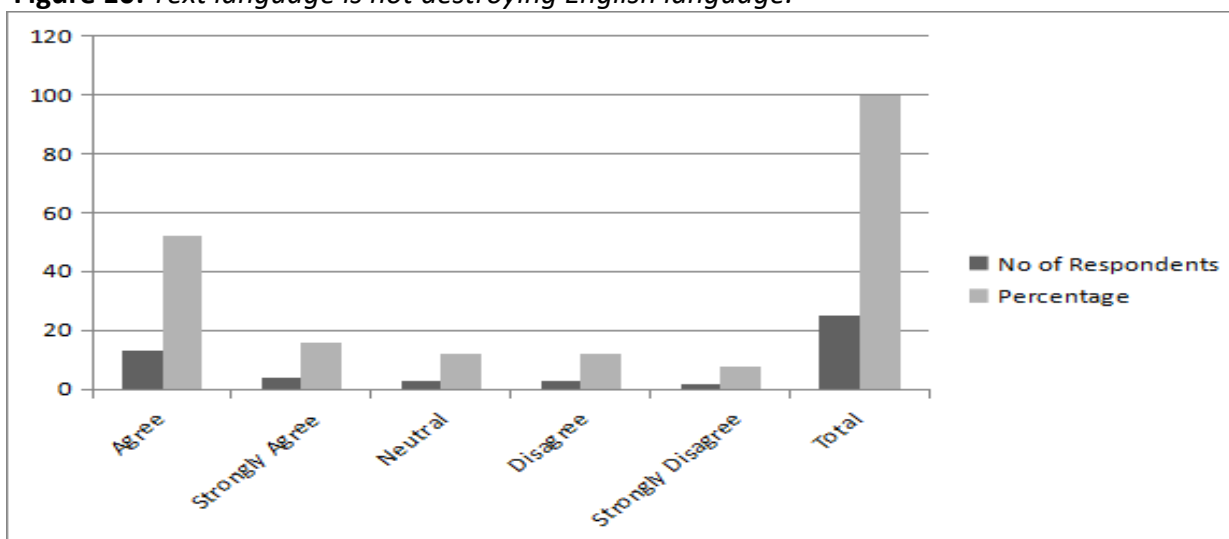


Figure 10 demonstrates that 52% of the total population agrees with the statement, 16% were strongly agree, 12% respondents remain neutral to this question. While there are 12% respondents who disagree the statement and 8% strongly disagree. From this result we can drive that many teenagers are of the 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.

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

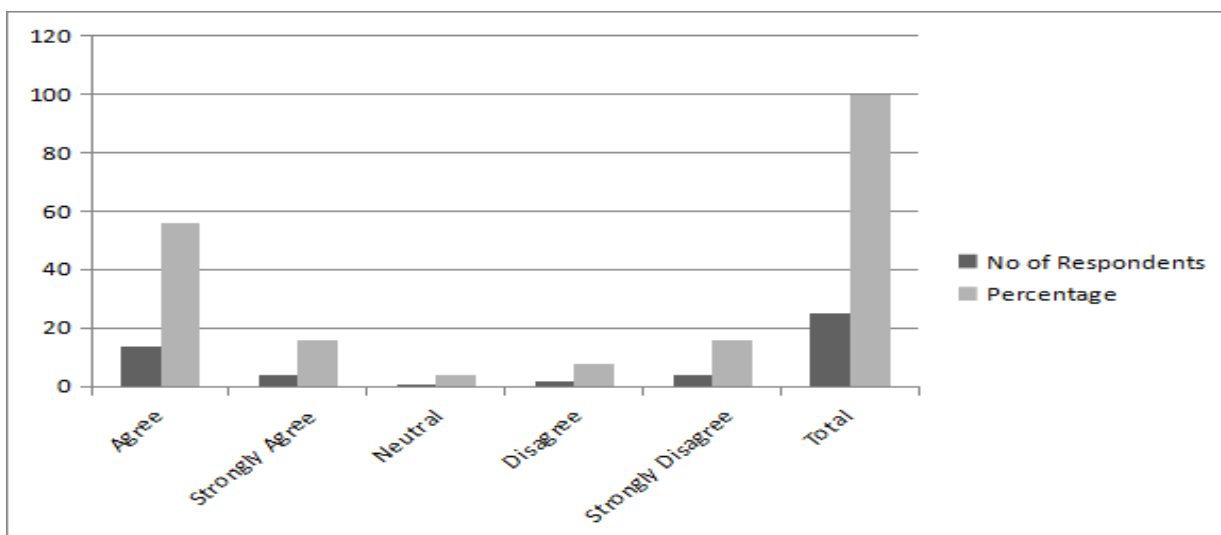


Figure 11 shows that 56% respondents agree with the statement and 16% even strongly agree, 4% respondents remain neutral. While 8% of 100% respondents disagree the statement and 16% are strongly disagreeing. As the population who agree outnumber the disagree population, so it becomes clear that text language is more like enriching 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.

Figure 12: Texting can be used as an educational tool.

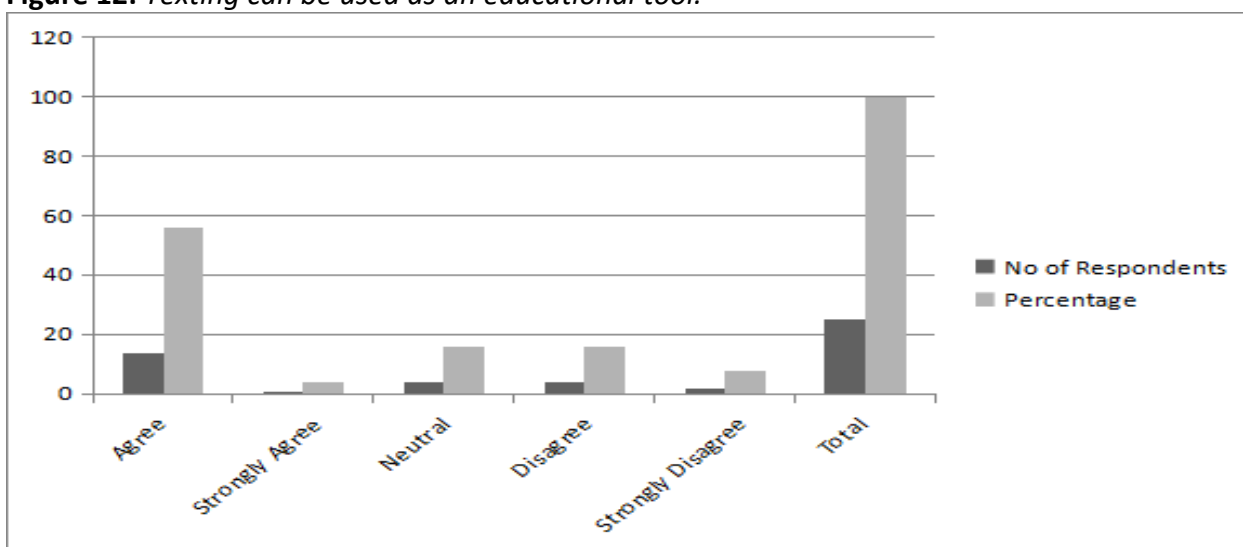


Figure 12 shows that 56% of the respondents agree with the above statement, 4% agree strongly. 16% remains neutral when asked about it. While 16% disagree with the statement, and 8% also shows a strongly disagree response. This shows that many of the teenagers regard that texting can be utilized in educational 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

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 that will serve as guidelines for the parents, educators and linguist, will be made.

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 texters 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. Theses 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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Appendices

Commonly used Emotions

A list of some commonly and widely used emotions and smileys is as follow:

S.No	Emotions	Target expressions
1	:-)	Happy/Smiling
2	:-(	Unhappy/Sad

3	:-D	Laughing with mouth open
4	:-P	Naughty/Tongue out
5	;-)	Happy with blinking eye
6	n_n	Bored/Not in mood
7	>.<	Angry/Annoyed/Unhappy
8	^_^	Happy/Smiling
9	B-)	Smiling with glasses
10	@_@	Sleepy
11	<3	Heart
12	o.O	Confused
13	:*	Kiss
14	O:)	Angel
15	;-)	Crying
16	:3	Curly lips
17	:-/	Unsure
18	:-O	Surprise
19	=((	Broken heart
20	:-c	Call me
21	:-&	Sick
22	:	Straight face
23	:-?	Thinking
24	(Y)	Like/Thumb up
25	8-)	Cool
26	:-[	Embarrassed
27	:-\$	Money mouth
28	:-X	Lips sealed
29	@>---	Rose

Commonly used abbreviations

Some abbreviations, shortened words and initialisms that are widely used in text messaging are as follows:

R are C see U you

4	for	B	be	V	we
Y	why	Txt	text	moro	tomorrow
Nit	night	Gud	good	Lisn	listen
2day	today	2b	to be	L8	late
Gr8	great	4ever	forever	F9	fine
Ryt	right	Abbr	abbreviation	Addr	address
Approx	approximately	Corp	corporation	Ctrl	control
CV	curriculum vitae	Dept	department	Diff	difference
Edu	education	Fwd	forward	Etc	etcetera
Imp	important	IKR	I know right	Info	information
Govt	government	No	number	Plz	please
LOL	laugh out loud	Brb	be right back	BTW	by the way
BFF	best friends forever	OMG	oh my God	Ttyl	talk to you later
Yolo	you only live once				