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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Tiaret Ibn Khaldoun
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and Languages
Section of English

The Advent of Texting in Students' Language: a Curse or Bless on Academic Writing

Case of English Language

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment for the requirements of the Master degree in Linguistics

Submitted by   *Supervised by*

Mr. Abdelhak **KADDOUR**   **Dr.** Ghlamallah **HEMAIDIA**

Mr. Abdallah **BEDRANI**

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Dr. Ghlamallah **HEMAIDIA**	Supervisor	University of Tiaret
Dr. Amina **ABDELHADI**	Examiner	University of Tiaret

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Dedications

To my **father** and **mother** who have guided me to pursue knowledge wherever it is.

To my **grandparents** whom I consider as father and mother indeed. They are my happiness.

To **Abdallah**, **Abdelrahman**, and **Amin**, my brothers, whom I love very much.

To **Tasnim**, my only sister, the source of my happiness may Allah bless her.

To my kins: my uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my father and my Mother and my teachers.

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Abstract

The present research work is to investigate the possible effects that texting has on University English major students. This work aims to shed light on the potential effects of texting informal style on academic writing that is seen as a strict formal production. Also, it examines whether students' deficiencies in English writing is due to textese register or their misuse of it. In this respect, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilized to optimize the success of our research by involving both students and teachers. A questionnaire was distributed to eighty students of English from Ibn Khaldoun University, and a face-to-face interview was designed for five teachers of English from the same University. The research findings indicate that texting has a negative effect on the way how students write academic essays, projects, and writings in general. Findings also indicate that students' use of this trendy innovated language help them enriching their vocabulary background and make them practise English more frequently.

Keywords: Texting, Academic writing, English major students, Students' deficiencies, Effects of texting.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

SMS: Short Message Service

IM: Instant Messaging

CD: Compact Disk

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

FIFA: Federation International de Football Association

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ADA: Algerian Dialectal Arabic

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Contact and communication are two requisites of the existence of the different species on earth. Means, however, differ from a species to another. Bees, for example, communicate with one another through a particular meaningful dance, ants through a chemical secretion, dolphins through particular squeaks, and so on do members of the different species transmit messages through peculiar codes. Humans, conversely, are endowed with intricate physical and mental systems which allow them to communicate through far more elaborate codes, the most obvious of which is language. Human language is characterized by variety that is determined by ethnicity and distance; dynamicity which is determined by time, users' needs and contact between varieties; and systematicity which crystallizes in the norms of use respected users. Hence, history witnesses of plenty of language varieties; some of them appeared, kept on during certain eras in history then vanished; others dated back to remote history, remained and strengthened by time; others appeared some time in the near history due to fortuitous circumstances, but gained ground and persisted owing to their effectiveness and wide use.

Communication via a particular variety is measured against the efficacy in transfer of messages from the sender to the receiver; therefore, recognition of the language variety follows the extent of its use, the number of its users, and its maintenance among users. Such factors impose the variety on the linguistic community as undeniable means of communication. Its systematization and codification are matters which ensue its recognition and agreed use by a considerable community of users. Language varieties which appeared in the remote history were mainly verbal then people started inventing graphic representations of the sounds that belong to their language. That marked the first kind of change afflicted upon the language variety; later, changes of different kinds were introduced on languages in response to ever-changing common

needs of the speech communities. Back in the days, people were able to communicate with each other in real life only, but now and thanks to the development of technology humans are able to communicate virtually too by tons of means; one of the latest of them is text messaging.

In fact, text messaging has recently come up to be reckoned as a linguistic phenomenon that has affected people's daily life to a great extent. The relatively little time it takes to write a message, the immediacy of transfer, and the rapidity of feedback are all factors among others which bind youth to use this abbreviated form of language. However, an important category of people touched by text messaging namely students, face a problem about it. For them writing in a mistake-free language is one of the most important virtues and ideals set for the educational mission. Hence, writing in a 'deteriorated' form of language, and its ensuing fossilized misuses are not that appreciated by educators. They are even considered to be a threat to one of the most important language skills in English which is academic writing. Text messaging is a two-faceted phenomenon. It has many advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis academic writing; thus, some linguists argued that texting is regarded as a bonus for learners' literacy abilities as well as grammar performance. On the other hand, others claim that texting heralds the slow extinction of language and is a threat to social progress.

The conflicting views of linguists have boosted us to investigate whether the use of textese influences students' grammar performance and academic writing abilities. Moreover, as students of English, we are tempted by the easiness of using acronyms and abbreviations and send them swiftly rather than spending time and effort writing whole grammar-bound stretches of words. However, texting created bad writing habits that made us forget how to write words without spelling mistakes, use punctuation and formal style. Also, we found difficulties reading textisms while we text people from other countries; thus, we could not understand some

abbreviations and we were forced to search for them. Accordingly, a research work seems self-imposing as a way to find out about this phenomenon, the rational ways to benefit from its allowances, and the wise tips to avoid its negative effects.

The present research work is concerned with texting, this new trend of creating electronic messages and sending them to people using cell phones, computers and laptops. Textese is usually sent through cellular network and over the internet. People, youth in particular, have found ways to turn spoken utterances into shortened written structures, including acronyms and abbreviated words. Grammar is no longer strictly respected, nor are spelling and punctuation rules carefully applied. Now texting language has its own reduced and relatively shared codes and systems. Some linguists see it as a creative and smart way to write words and sentences in time-saving ways while others consider it as symptom of poor spelling and mental laziness.

The main objectives set for the research work at hand can be summed up as follows. First, it sets out to check for any relationship between developing texting as a writing habit on the one hand and the redundant grammatical and spelling mistakes that figure in students' academic written products on the other. Second, it is targeted at finding out whether the problem is due to the lack of systematization in texting or the students' deficiencies in using it. Third, it intends to find out if texting contributes any positive asset to the enhancement of learners' competences.

The research problem pursued in this endeavour revolves around the effects of texting as a novel reduced linguistic means of communication that has undeniably spread among school and university students, on the academic monitored writing. It is entitled The Advent of Texting in Students' Language: a Curse or Bless on Academic Writing.

For the sake of feasibility, the stated research problem is divided into three research questions.

1- Does Texting affect grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language?

2- Does textism have interference in students' academic papers?

3- Does textism serve student's literacy abilities anyhow?

Three hypotheses have been put forth as anticipated answers to the research questions raised just above:

1- When students text too often, they will forget how words are spelled and they will get used to deteriorated grammar, and start ignoring punctuation. This will affect their academic writing negatively.

2- Students are supposed to write in Standard English and they are aware of this. Errors in grammatical and spelling are not necessarily due to textism interference; they are rather caused by students' deficiencies in the language systems.

3- There is a positive relationship between texting and literacy because texting develops the phonological awareness and reading skill for students of English. It also encourages them to understand how sounds and letters work; moreover, it improves note-taking while listening because students will know how to communicate big ideas using few words and in a short time.

To sum up these hypotheses, texting affects students' academic writing differently. It enhances academic literacy of some students and impacts negatively on the students who misuse it.

To fulfill the objectives of the research both quantitative and qualitative tools are used. A questionnaire is addressed to students to find out about the impact of texting on their literacy

abilities. In addition, an interview is conducted with some teachers of English in our department of English to find out about the impact of textese on academic writing.

In this research work, there are three chapters: the first chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework, the second and third chapters are for methodological framework and the discussion of findings.

The theoretical part is meant to frame the recent linguistic phenomenon 'Texting' and its features as a catalyst change for students' overall literacy. The chapter accounts for previous and recent works on texting and its possible effects on students' academic writing. These works serve to raise awareness of texting and what has been said about it as both negative and positive perspectives.

The second chapter is the practical field that could serve to pursue the validity the hypotheses put forth heretofore. It investigates students' use of textese register, and it seeks to gather data from expert teachers and their attitudes towards students' performance. The tools that were employed helped to gather data and analyze them to finally discuss them as a form of findings.

The third chapter consists of a set of recommendations inspired from the insights attained through the research tools. This chapter is meant to help to impart knowledge to learners, teachers, and researchers in general. The last part of it includes some suggested issues that are much recommended for further investigations.

Chapter One

Chapter One: Fundamentals of Texting

1. Introduction

Language is an organized system of symbols used for creating and transmitting meaning. For many of us, language has evolved to become a means of expressing ourselves and make accounts for the world that surrounds us through sounds, symbols (spoken or written words), signs, posture, and gestures which are used for the sake of communication. Indeed, there is a strong bond between language and communication; concerning language, it is the tool that delivers a message, whereas communication is how this tool should be used. On the whole, language is the vehicle of communication, without which, it cannot be realized.

Above all, language is in a continuous state of evolution. Some languages which are said to have existed at particular spans of time in history have no signs of life today; other languages are said to have no roots in history but surged in response to particular urgencies, other ones have long history but have changed at different extents throughout time. Language evolution is often influenced or even determined by environmental, social, physical, or psychological variables. It also varies across space, social groups and changes across time. Furthermore, language holds certain attributes that enable it to create new forms, drop obsolete ones, or adapt others into its different systems due to fortuitous circumstances.

Changes in language systems may show on its phonology and the systematic organization of sounds, on its lexis with the expansion of its vocabulary due to cultural changes and the need to create terms to express abstract thoughts and emotions, and to meet the requirements of the never-ceasing scientific and technological innovations and inventions. Changes also show on its syntax with the introduction of new arrangements of words and phrases used to create well-formed sentences in a language. Progress in science and technology has benefitted from the evolution of language and served it at the same time. Progress in the two

fields has accompanied the evolution of language. Inventions got all named, and innovations got all exhaustively described and explained in the language. On the other hand, scientific and technological progress eased language evolution, speeded it, and spread it in unprecedented ways.

Perhaps, the genuine tendencies that humanity took in its continual evolution revolve around the notions of time and money. People's views of time and of money in the past are not same with the ways they are valued now. And so are the things bearing to any of them valued differently now. A long time devoted to an activity that could, otherwise, be done in shorter time means unnecessary expense. This idea has found its way in communications. People have commonly acquired a tendency to use the means that take them the shortest time to communicate with one another provided that their messages are genuinely transmitted. Speed and efficiency have been upheld to the detriment of appropriacy and accuracy in language use. This tendency becomes more conspicuous in the cases where language extensive use costs you even money. The fee you pay for a telegraph, for example, is counted after the number of letters of the message you intend to send. Such facts constituted strong drives towards the invention of new time-savings and less-costing fashions of language use.

However, in the digital era people started to communicate virtually by the so-called SMS (short message service) that used to be limited to 160 characters and required users to pay additional fee per text (in the 1990s); thus, this feature forced users' hand to abbreviate most of words due to length restrictions. As time goes by, users have got accustomed to writing in such a deteriorated form of language which is referred to as Texting that came into existence on account of language flexibility and divergence as well as technological development. So, texters have neglected grammatical rules, spelling, and punctuation just to write in mistake-free

language that is fun, easy, and saves time in writing. Texting now is reckoned as a language form due to its shared codes and systems among virtual communities and especially digital youth.

Additionally, texters have always attached texting to academic writing which, as opposed to texting, follows strict rules and high degree of formality. Hence, it might be more prudent to analyze this linguistic phenomenon that has always been a point of discussion and debate amongst linguists whether it damages student's writing skills or improves it. When texting first came to existence, it generated a state of panic to most linguists who believed that texting is a herald of student's overall writing skills downfall, but most recently other linguists found out that texting plays a pivotal role in improving writing abilities. Yet, studying and analyzing this new language form is still in process due to its complexity and ambiguity; in addition, changes in texting are in a continuous state because language has always been changing and will continue to change.

The present study is particularly addressed to English language learners who are learning English as a second language. It is mainly intended to impart some knowledge about texting as it is a recent subject that bears heavily on English as a source whence it gets it symbols and representations and as it is of immediate relationships with English language learning.

2. Texting

"It's gr8 2 c a msg huh 😌? Wen u'r in a 🏃‍♀️□ u jst ned 2 send a ✉ rather dan makin' a 📞 call."

What you have just read above is called "texting" or "txtng" which is the most widely used language variety and medium of communication in the virtual world which means computer-based simulated environment where people can interact with each other. Texting has

a meteoric growth in popularity alongside the development of technology among virtual communities, especially youth, who use technological platforms and services as SMS (Short Message Service) and Instant Messaging by changing words and expressions from Standard English into texting language. Texting has started with the birth of SMS (Short Message Service) that used to be limited to 160 characters. In the 1990s, SMS (Short Message Service) required users to pay additional fee per text; thus, this feature forced users' hand to not adhere to conventional written language in order to write as much data as possible in one SMS due to length restrictions, and avoid sending more than one message **(Mose, 2013, in Zheng, 2015).** As a result, people have disseminated, to an overwhelming extent, a culture of shortened written structures known as a texting argot or **"txt talk" (Kasesniemi, 2003; Vincent, 2006, in Acker, 2014, p. 69).**

Textspeak, Netspeak **(Crystal, 2001, in Greiffenstern, 2010)**, SMS Communication **(Hard af Segersteg, 2002, in Mahmood, Iqbal, Zaidi, & Ahmad, 2015)**, Textese, Phone Shorthand **(Sutherland, 2002, in Mahmood et al., 2015)**, Txt **(Shortis, 2007, in Mahmood et al., 2015)**, Electronic Language **(Callot & Belmore, 1996, in Pasfield-Neofitou 2012)**, or Texting **(Crystal, 2008)** are all terms that refer to 'Texting language' which becomes widely accepted since its lexical items are included in dictionaries such as Lingo2word and Texting Dictionary that contributed to codification of the shared codes and systems of texting language **(Frehner, 2008)**. Texting is seen as if the sender is writing talking – that is to say as if it is **"written speech" (Davis & Brewer, 1997, in Crystal, 2006, p. 27)**. For instance, instead of writing 'you' users, who are referred to as texters, write 'u'. Texters use mobile phones (British English) or cellphones (American English), computers and laptops to send text messages over

cellular network, or via the internet. Consequently, they, especially adolescents, send and receive hundreds of text messages a day **(Quadrello et al. 2005, Smith 2011, in Acker, 2014).**

The stunning growth of the Internet has covered all the geographical parts of the world **(Hobbs, 2008)**. In the case of Algeria, the expansion of mobile use started in the early 2000s when the Egyptian company Orascom, known as Djezzy, was the first foreign telecommunications operator established in 2001, and later Nedjma telecommunications in 2003 while the public telecommunications operator Algérie Telecom was already there in 2000 **(Mostari, 2009).** With the rapid spread of such companies' services, mobile phones became available and affordable to an extent that Algerians sent nearly billion text messages every month **(Les accros de l'internet, 2008, in Mostari, 2009).**

Texting, however, co-exists with ADA (Algerian Dialectal Arabic), MSA (Modern Standard Arabic), Berber and its varieties, and foreign languages as French and English; thus, language contact is there and MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) is primarily affected by texting language because youth are always on their phones practicing local dialects that are heterogeneous form of language varieties compared to MSA (Modern Standard Arabic). Also, texting has a major impact on French and English as well. In the case of both MSA (Modern standard Arabic) and French, Algerians tend to communicate virtually by using, more frequently, ADA (Algerian Dialectal Arabic) which is an amalgam of different languages as Arabic, French, Turkish, Spanish and Berber which is **"certainly of Phoenician origin in its essence and structure" (Salem, 1980, p.31, in Chami, 2009, p. 387)**; due to the use of such language variety Algerians created a new means of communication on the internet using Latin script in particular and Arabic script as well. For example, they write 'b1' instead of 'bien' (French word means 'good'), 'nrmlmnt' instead of 'normalement' (French word means

'normally'), and 'kirak' (ADA word means 'how are you') instead of 'كيف حالك' (MSA word). Whereas in the case of English, Algerians, the ones who master English, imitate how natives communicate in the internet because texting language is a shared codes and systems among virtual communities.

English is de facto the common language of the world today. Its significant state drove Algerian students to be more interested in studying English because it approximates the state of the world's lingua franca. Now, they, especially English major students, use internet connection daily and communicate with friends or strangers from different parts of the globe using English which is referred to as Global Language. They use textese register in order to keep up with the technological developments by using Instant Messaging that allows them sending messages through Internet-based communication. With the advent of smartphones and messaging applications, SMS seemed to be unpromising service in Algeria especially when people can, presently, access to "Facebook" for free, this feature is provided by Nedjma telecommunications operator (known as Ooredoo nowadays) and recently Djezzy telecommunications.

2.1. Linguistic Features of Texting

Texting is always correlated with thumbs to an extent that **"Tokyo's keitai kids are known as "oya yubi sedai", or the thumb generation" (Plant, 2002, p.53)**, and texting itself is called **"thumbspeak" (Menand, 2008)**. Thumbs first exercised texting on Alphanumeric Multi-Press Keypad mobile phones where one button was pressed up to four times to write the letter or symbol you want; for instance, pressing number nine key - which contains the letters 'wxyz'- four times in a row to write the letter 'z' **(Taylor & Vincent, 2005, in Kent & Johnson, 2012).**

With the development of smartphones, touchscreens, and full keypads, texting has become easy to operate and has become a place where youth of today live in **(Skierkowski & Wood, 2012, in Kent & Johnson, 2012)**, and they started to express big ideas in shortened structures. Such creativity brought about the birth of a new language form with its own vocabulary known as textese **(Drouin, 2011, in Kent & Johnson, 2012)** and its unique **"set of orthographic, lexical, phonological and grammatical structures" (Akande & Akinwale, 2010, in Taiwo, 2010, p. 357)**. Consequently, youth have spread this culture of abbreviated words and non-conventional spellings to save time, money, and effort using some techniques or linguistic features of texting which involve shortenings, number and letter homophones, symbols, contractions and colloquial contraction, consonant spelling, double-letter reduction, emotions and humor with letters, and emoticons.

2.1.1. Shortenings (Acronyms, Initialisms, Clipping and Blending)

Shortenings refer to words where final letters are omitted **(Thurlow & Brown, 2003, in Farina & Lyddy, 2011)**. Shortenings fall into four main categories: acronyms, initialisms, clippings and blending. Acronyms are formed from the initials of a word or phrase, pronounced as one word, and **"considered as formal shortenings" (Farina & Lyddy, 2011, p.147)**; for example, 'radar/ radio detection and ranging', or 'laser/ light amplification by the stimulated emission of radiation'. As opposed to acronyms, initialisms are considered informal and pronounced letter by letter; thus, initialisms as 'bf/boyfriend', and 'ttyl/talk to you later' are more frequently used in texting. As a result, the practice of acronyms and initialisms is so deep-rooted that people may be unable to know what is meant originally by CD, FBI, FIFA, or AIDS*, for example **(Crystal, 2008)**.

In clippings the word is reduced without changing its meaning as in 'doctor/doc'. There are four types of clippings: back clipping in which the back part of a word is retained 'gymnastic/gym', fore clipping in which the final part of a word is retained 'telephone/phone', middle clipping in which the middle part of a word is retained 'influenza/flu', and complex clipping in which two words are shortened and combined in one word 'organization man/org-man'. Another feature of clippings is **"dropping a letter at the end" (Crystal, 2008, p.45)** as in 'goin/going' which is also known as G-clipping. The word formation process 'blending', however, aims to combine two or more words to create a new word as in the word 'cyborg' which means 'cyber organism', and 'brunch/ breakfast, lunch' **(Kosur, 2019).**

2.1.2. Number / Letter Homophones and Symbols

Number and letter homophones, the significant linguistic feature in texting, are also termed **"phonetic spellings" (Akande & Akinwale, 2010 as cited in Taiwo, 2010, p.357), "logograms, phonetic reductions, or syllabograms" (Farina & Lyddy, 2011, p.146).** This feature is used to represent a word or part thereof that sound akin to a number or a letter; for instance, the number 8 is phonetically transcribed /eit/, so if we put it in any word that contains the sound /eit/ it will sound similar to the letters it represents as in the word 'm8/mate', or 'w8/wait', and the best example might be the book of David Crystal 2008 'The gr8 db8' which means 'The great debate'. It also represents the letters 'ght' in some words as in 'alri8/alright'. Also, the numbers 4 and 2 can represent a whole word or part of it such as '4/for', 'b4/before', and '2/to', '2gether/together'. Number and letter homophones are usually used along with each other as in the frequently used example in SMS and IM **"cu 18r/see you later" (Farina & Lyddy, 2011, p.146)**. So, 'cu/see you' illustrates letter homophone as in the following examples: 'q/queue', 'b/bee or be', 'y/why', and 'thru/through'.

'Cu l8tr @ 8/9 p.m.' this example denotes the use of number/letter homophones as well as symbols where '@' means 'at' and '/' means 'or'. Symbols are also used to represent a word or part of it phonetically as in '+/plus', '* /star', and **"@om" (Crystal, 2008, p.39)** which means 'atom'. Eventually, this creativity allowed gamers and hackers to innovate a new means of communication using just numbers and symbols, this latter is known as '1337' which represents the word 'leet' which is an innovative word of 'elite'

2.1.3. Contractions and Colloquial Contraction

One of the most important vowels sounds in English is the schwa sound /ə/ that **"represents a mid-central vowel in an unstressed syllable" (Rahal, 2014, p.4)** as in the first syllable of 'alike'. This vowel sound is mostly used as a tool of contraction in spoken English and texting language as well; for instance, people may say or write 'wanna' instead of 'want to', 'woulda/would have', and 'outta/out of'. In the aforementioned examples the words 'to', 'have' and 'of' are all contracted to schwa sound /ə/; so, contraction feature aims to combine two words in one word to facilitate pronunciation and writing as in 'dja/would you', 'kinda/ kind of', 'tryna/trying to', and 'gimme/give me'. Additionally, examples like: 'can't/can not', 'they're/they are', and 'don't/do not' are also contractions that **"can alternatively be classified as the shortform of words" (Farina & Lyddy, 2011, p.146)**. People, however, like to share their culture and be proud of where they live; as a result, they use some informal/regional words that are called colloquial contractions as in 'gonna, gon'/going to', 'wiv, wid, wit/with', 'dis/this', 'wassap, sup/what's up' and 'dunno/don't know'.

2.1.4. Consonant Spelling and Double-letter Reduction

Do texters care about vowels? Well, it is obvious that vowels are of great essence in English language, but consonants give much information than vowels **(Crystal, 2008)**; for instance, **("tmrrw") is relatively easy to decipher whereas contracting by omitting consonants ("ooo") eliminates meaning" (Farina & Lyddy, 2011, p.147)**. As a result, texters do not give any importance to vowels when dealing with texting language, they omit vowels from words, this feature is called consonant spelling because the words are written only in consonants as in the following words: 'mst/most', 'tmrrw/tomorrow', and 'ppl/people'. Consonant spelling feature might be tricky somehow for it is ambiguous and do not have a particular meaning as in the word 'wk', which has various meanings, can refer to: 'week', 'weak', or 'wake'; however, it is ambiguous only when it is used in isolation **(Frehner, 2010)** therefore 'wk' in the following example obviously means 'week' when it is used in its specific context: 'I cant b witcha dis wk' which means 'I cannot be with you this week'.

Furthermore, in consonant spelling not only vowels are omitted, but also some consonants in some cases as the letter /r/ when preceded by a vowel can be omitted by non-rhotic accent speakers as in some regions in Britain and America; for example, in the word 'work' both the vowel /o/ and the letter /r/ are omitted to form a consonant spelling structure spelt as 'wk'. The same thing goes with the letter /c/ when it is combined with /k/ letter; for instance, 'bk/back' in which both the vowel /a/ and the consonant /c/ are deleted **(Frehner, 2010)**. Eventually, consonant spelling words **"can't easily be spoken because of their lack of vowels" (Crystal, 2008, p.145)**.

Texters, on the other hand, are likely to use another feature which is called double-letter reduction where **"doubled consonants are written as a single consonant" (Al Shlowiy, 2014, p.458)**; for example, 'hello/helo', 'bigger/biger', 'account/acount', and 'fully/fuly'.

2.1.5. Emotions and Humor with Letters and Emoticons

When expressing a feeling or physical action in reality it is easy to convey meaning because we are likely to express what we feel by gestural actions or facial expressions. In contrast, it is difficult to do so in the computer-mediated communications; thus, features came out to represent those emotions and expressions of humor with: first, typographic symbols in which one letter or more represent (s) a whole word **(Bieswanger, 2008, in Farina & Lyddy, 2011)**; for example, 'haha, hehe' to symbolize laughter, 'mmm, umm' to express thinking, 'x' to indicate a kiss, 'zzzz' to represent sleepiness or tiredness, and '<3' to represent heart **(Javed & Mahmood, 2016)**. Second, emoticons or smileys **"a new word coined from 'emotions' and 'icons'" (Ndimele, 2016, p.304)**. Emoticons are symbols used together to shape icons that represent emotions as '(^_^)' which represents cuteness **(Crystal, 2008)**, ':-)' that represents smile face, and ':-o' that represents surprise; additionally, emoticons are found now on mobile phones as colored icons ready to be sent directly without typing and combining symbols together as in the sad face 😧 or the angry face 😠. This feature was displayed **"by an automated protocol which converted sequences of punctuation symbols in this way" (Shortis, 2016, p.194).**

2.2. Texting vs. Ancient Writing Systems

Since texting is a written-based language, there must be a strong relationship between texting and language writing systems; hence, there are some similarities between texting and

ancient writing systems. When writing single numerals '4/for', letters 'r/are', and symbols '@/at' to represent words or a part thereof or even to represent sounds 'z/noise', these graphic units are called logograms or logographs **(Crystal, 2008)** that can be visualized, imagined, and read. Logographs are part of proto-writing systems that emerged in the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and Mexico **(NativLang, 2015, 7:14)**. Besides, consonant spelling feature, as in "gng/going", is the same as consonant alphabet writing that Egyptians and Phoenicians used to write with, and even Arabs nowadays (Arabic script "Abjad"). Another similarity could be found in Egyptian writing where the message **"consists entirely of pictures that are used to represent the sounds of words, rather than the objects they refer to" (Crystal, 2008, p.39)**, this type of writing is called 'Rebus'; for instance, '⊙ ▢ ♡ ☞' that means 'I love you', and '☺ 👍🎉' which means 'he likes parties'.

3. Previous Studies on Texting

As texting language started to glitter in the technological era, people in general and language scholars in particular compiled a set of negative thoughts around texting. In the public context, people see that texting has serious repercussions on students' reading and writing skills, as shown in a study done by Crispin Thurlow who gathered opinions from public about texting **(Dijk, Witteloostuijn, Vasić, Avrutin, & Blom, 2016)**. In addition, people think that computer-mediated communication is having negative impacts on the language itself **(Segerstad, 2002, in Greiffenstern, 2010)**. The mass media on the other hand generated rather great critiques on this new language. Newspapers, for example, wrote on their headlines viewpoints supporting the idea that texting is influencing English badly as Thurlow wrote in May 2007 in a report in Washington paper **"text messages destroying our language" (Crystal, 2008, p. 8)**. Seeing texting as **"the abnormal intruder" (Carrington, 2005, p. 167)**, of course, that made educators

also conceive a belief upon the potential damages that this intruder may cause to students' overall literacy. Indeed, Kate Rose **(2010, in Everett, 2016)** states that texting is altering students' spelling and grammar performances.

4. Recent Studies on Texting

In contrast to what previous studies aimed to – the range of negative perspectives on the effect of texting on writing abilities – the recent studies attempted to draw a good image for texting, and found that it **"does not harm writing ability and may even help it" (Crystal, 2008, p. 161)**. However, the urge to have 'literate generation' is very strong according to several educators. But that does not mean that all adolescents must have a 'top level', their abilities differ from one pupil to another. And the complain about pupils having deficiencies in writing skills is not recent, it was even before 'Texting'. Bullock Report on English in 1975, for instance, quoted many complaining statements that firms have mentioned about their workers and their poor levels in both speaking and writing **(Crystal, 2008)**. This latter clearly shows that texting is not a reason of deteriorating writing skills, and thus there are certainly children **"who are weak at writing, poor spellers, and bad punctuators" (Crystal, 2008, p. 156)**.

5. Systematism in Texting (Codifiability of Texting)

Languages are not static, they change through time in terms of structure, pronunciation, writing style, adopting new words, etc. This change happens due to many factors, one of the most catalyst for change is 'technology' that has influenced the way people communicate by introducing the so-called innovative language 'Texting' which is not private to a specific group of people nor is it for specific age; at this point, users of texting must be literate so that they can be aware of what they are writing and reading. Consequently, texters share the same codes and systems in order to communicate and to fulfill mutual intelligibility.

Language play and creating new words is not recent, many authors in the Elizabethan period **"invented new words, along with new meanings to already existing words" (Prøysen, 2009, p. 10).** Shakespeare, for instance, coined about 850 new words that are still being used in English language **(Prøysen, 2009).** Some of those words continued to be used in the language, and other words are no longer in use. The sustainability of words is related to those who use them **(Prøysen, 2009).** In the case of texting language, it has begun to accumulate a group of native community who can learn the same shared electronic interaction codes **(Castro, 2014)** to achieve the sustainability of the shared words by systematizing and codifying their use into definite systems and create dictionaries of them.

Speaking of dictionaries, between 1550 and 1650, English was a matter of discussion among people and particularly elite ones about purifying and stabilizing English spelling **(Wardhaugh, 1999, in Prøysen, 2009).** Thus, in 1664, a French Academy was settled to do so by registering the existed and approved words **(Barber, 2000; Knight, 2008, in Prøysen, 2009)**. This operation was supposed to **"compile a dictionary, a grammar, a treatise on rhetoric, and a treatise on poetics, but only the dictionary project was carried out" (Prøysen, 2009, pp. 10-11).** Plainly, dictionaries are of a great significance in preserving the language. Correspondingly, there are considerable websites (Transl8it!) and many dictionaries (Eric Partridge's Dictionary of Abbreviations/Text Slang Dictionary) to translate texting into standard English and vice versa. As a result, since texting is:

Officially acknowledged and included in dictionaries, it will certainly gain greater acceptance also by those people who have so far disapproved text-speak. Yet this is not to say that text-speak will lose its ludic mode; rather, individual spelling and language-play will persist to a certain extent because texting has become a grammar-/spelling-rule-free writing zone which is enjoyed and experienced to the full.

(Frehner, 2008, p. 243)

Technology is still in progress and users are always on their phones exercising this hybrid language in the virtual world because they do not meet and talk face-to-face quiet often. Hence, according to Locke (1999), people lack confidence in social interaction and can be controlled, unlike the virtual interaction where they feel free and cannot be affected; thereby, **"texting is typically embedded in people's lives" (Herring, Stein, & Virtanen, 2013, p. 165).** In this sense, texting has gained popularity and is being used in different fields even in poetry as Crystal (2008) states that Benjamin Zephaniah in his poem wrote 'yu' instead of 'you', and 'wanna' instead of 'want to'. And more interestingly, his usage of those words was before the advent of texting **(Crystal, 2008).** Moreover, words like **"wotcha are in dozens of novels" (Crystal, 2008, p. 50)**. This shows that texting is increasingly gaining ground and is becoming a language on its own. In this respect, Johnathan Green in his article 'Language Intrtxtlty' describes how it is a language on its own **(Gorney, 2012)**. **Green (2007) says that "standard English dictionaries, especially those aimed at the college market, like to lard their latest edition with the announcement of a smattering of smart new words" (Gorney, 2012, p. 40).** That is to say, the latest words and updated ones are a matter of interest in language. Eventually,

with all what is mentioned about texting along with its specific characteristics that are different from Standard English ones, **"texting can be viewed as its own language, simply because of the vast amount of differences between the two of them" (Gorney, 2012, p. 40).**

6. The Use of Textese by Students

Technology is advancing faster and taking less time to be widely adopting than ever before. Thus, students are adopting internet in the learning process. Indeed, **"E-learning can happen in or out of classroom or the learning context" (Jamalifar & Chalak, 2014, p. 2).** So, the use of new technologies is inevitable for it is useful, easy, and effective. Regarding this emerging phenomenon, students' use of textese register is considered, on the one hand, as a drastic change in their linguistic interactions, and as an effective way of developing reading and writing skills.

Textese is the use of abbreviated words to either minimize grammatical complexity or save time. But, anxiety about the grave danger of using textese by students is highly increasing. For example, the words 'their', 'they're', and 'there' are pronounced exactly the same and that may lead to the misuse of all of them in the writing process, especially when teenagers use letter homophones. Also, the overuse of autocorrect and predictive features may possibly make teenagers lazy and make them rely on their phones not their brains.

However, Crystal (2008) believes that as long as children are writing and reading while texting, it is good for them because 'Reading' and 'Writing' are two of the important skills in English language. And he claims that who use textese register **"would not be able to use the mobile phone technology at all if they had not been taught to read and write, and this means they all had a grounding in the standard English writing system" (Crystal, 2008, p. 48).**

Additionally, textese **"motivates young people to engage in decoding, encoding, interpretation, and analysis, among other literacy processes" (Lewis & Fabos, 2005, in Braun, 2007, p.17).**

7. *The Effects of Textese on Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation*

Grammar in English is defined in many dictionaries as a set of rules that govern how words change when combined together to form sentences. Texting is mostly related to small talks or brief conversations between individuals; therefore, it is affecting the way people perceive language and use its aspects. In this case, many studies show that the more people send and receive texts the worse their grammar skills become **(Maltais, 2016)**; primarily**,** texters violate grammar rules at the level of word, phrase and sentence **(Wood, Kemp, & Plester, 2014).**

Texting, however, is constantly modifying language and coming up with new abbreviated forms of structure. Many words that are abbreviated such as 'exam', 'vet', 'fridge' and 'cox' are found in the dictionaries and they became parts of the language **(Crystal, 2008)**. Textese register is intimate and personal, meaning that individuals share certain words and expressions that might not be understood by others **(Crystal, 2008)**.

People do not respect punctuation while forming textese for many reasons. For example, researchers in Binghamton University found out that when someone send a text that has punctuation it may not seem true or genuine **(Klin, 2015)**. However, Klin (2015) in her study shows that punctuation in textese register can affect the meaning of the message. On the whole, texting effects punctuation and grammar in general by taking away its written language features, replacing them by certain speech characteristics that are informal, full of misspellings and in the most shortened form.

8. Academic Writing and Texting

8.1. Academic Writing

Academic writing in English is an elegant form of writing which follows certain conventions of structure, style and content. **"Writing good academic English is one of the most demanding tasks students face" (Bailey, 2003, p. 2).** Notably, academic writing aims to focus on one main idea or theme, avoid repetitions and stick to certain standards; additionally, **"in academic writing, you are expected to produce logically-structured ideas with well-argued, substantiated points taking different opinions into consideration" (Gillett, Hammond & Martala-Lockett, 2009, p. 88).** Besides, when writing in an academic context people tend to avoid slang that has a relation to personal writing, and try to give importance to each element starting from a word to a whole sentence **(Oshima & Hogue, 2007).**

8.2. Features of Academic Writing

Academic writing is complex when it comes to its ideas, objectives, formal style and way of presenting thoughts and concepts, and it has very little of the author's personality and responsibility; above all, it uses language precisely and accurately. There are many features of academic writing that create its organized and well-planned structure. Willson (2018) illustrates these features as follows:

1- Formal vocabulary: academic writing style must avoid many informal words or phrases that are usually used for speech purposes such as phrasal verbs: shut down, bring up. Or abbreviated language forms as: can't, ain't.

2- Cautious language: academic writing requires a cautious style of writing, therefore the ideas that are presented should be based on absolute truth and strongest arguments.

3- Objectivity: the author should thoroughly focus on the information that he is giving, by keeping his point of view as limited as possible.

4- Precision: when showing a certain type of data in academic writing, it is best to be precise and keep away from ambiguity. For example, instead of writing "a bunch of people" write "90 thousand people".

5- Organization: academic writing is a well-organized style; it shifts from one concept to another with logical sense and planned direction.

6- Complexity: written language is known to be more complex than spoken language. It has more lexical variation. Moreover, academic texts are shorter; they also have longer words and complex phrases.

8.3. Texting vis-à-vis Academic Writing Style

Texting is known to lack the proper rules and regulations of academic writing. It uses typographic symbols to form words that are shared among individuals. It is essentially the spoken form of language combined with abbreviations, acronyms, emoticons and word shortening to communicate with people **(Dijk et al., 2016).** Furthermore, many consider texting as a form of casual speaking where rules are not observed. Compared to academic writing, there is no formality when using acronyms and abbreviations in textisms, and no complexity and depth in textese register. Most of the time textese are sent using emotive language where the sender is somehow subjective rather than objective and the shared ideas are not that organized or well-planned as those of academic writing **(Boştină-Bratu, 2015)**. On the whole, texting tends to follow non-conventional standards because texters believe that they are inventing a new language that can be used for different purposes, and they see it as an easier way of communication.

9. Conclusion

As communities grow their language use becomes more expressive and descriptive of their environment. Each language must experience some type of transformation and modification with the various life events that are taking place through time. The academic language domain faces similar fate, as it is regularly being altered by many evolutionary technologies that are forming their own linguistic elements and challenging the ones which are linked to an academic context. Texting is considered as a famous tool of interaction; it uses both SMS forms that are mostly related to phones, and instant messaging that takes advantage of internet and social media.

The evolution of texting mirrors the technological development from computers to cell phones all the way to laptops. Internet by itself has spread its influence all around the globe; this means that all people are introduced to the idea of using mobile phones in order to communicate with one another. Phone companies are also distributing their text messaging and cellular network services with some reasonable prices among social groups. Furthermore, texting is coming in contact with Algerian Dialectal Arabic, Berber and some foreign languages such as English and French; hence, it has to fuse elements from each language into a new type of texting register. Algerian students are becoming more interested in the English language as an academic career, some use it in their daily conversations and eventually it has to be affected by their use of non-standard varieties while they deal with their academic settings. Additionally, there are many features of texting that consist of shortenings, acronyms, numbers, sounds instead of words, alternative spelling and emoticons. Moreover, the writing system of texting is modern

and obviously different than that of the ancient language system; through history, this ancient language witnessed magnificent swing from simple shapes to complex utterances.

When studying this novel phenomenon, there are plenty of scholars and researchers who dealt with it since its appearance; yet there are others who are still seeking how to explain it in this current era, and each of those researchers have their own perspectives. The structure of texting has a rich background and it has to follow a specific order that is agreed upon by texters. With the help of technology this register is being introduced in many dictionaries with a variety of vocabulary. Students may face two possibilities when indulging themselves with texting habit; they would worsen their language values by the overuse of non-standard elements and time-saving speech, or learn to write and read simultaneously while sending and receiving textese. That is why it is considered that thoughtless texting on long periods of time would bring bad-side effects on conventional English norms and structure. Finally, academic language has different characteristics that are violated by texting, the reason for it basically is that texting uses vocal language properties that trades formality, objectivity, precision and complexity with an easy, time-saving and opposite alternatives.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Field Work

2.1 Introduction

Texting has gained ground in the Algerian social context. It has become characteristic to youth linguistic interactions especially university students. The latter are the focus of the present study since the use of English teaching is their reserve; hence, they are approached through a direct questionnaire to inform the researchers of their rationale behind the use of this novel linguistic fashion of communication, as they are speculated through the eyes of their teachers so as to size up the effect of texting on their academic writing skills.

In this chapter, both quantitative and qualitative approaches are conducted in our research for the sake of a better understanding of the subject under study. The study was carried out on English major students (all levels) of Ibn Khaldoun University by handing them a questionnaire. Also, an interview was designed to some of our experienced teachers of Ibn Khaldoun University department to help us find out about this issue under investigation.

This chapter, includes data collection methods that have been used in this research and the explanation of each instrument. In addition, it will detail the data collection and analysis to find answers to the research questions and purposely reach out to the research objectives.

2.2. Aim of The Study

The present work sets out to examine the interrelationship between texting and academic language regarding the possible influence of texting on students' academic writing. It is intentionally conducted to determine if there is any misuse of texting language by students that contributes in their poor academic writings or it is due to the lack of texting systematization. We also intend to seek if texting language has any positive contribution to students' writing abilities and find out about what has been said about texting and its negative effects.

2.3. Methodology

To meet our research objectives, we adopted the questionnaire instrument to identify the possible effects of texting practice by English major students. The present study investigates the influence of texting on students' academic writing by asking experienced teachers of English of the same sampled informants. On the whole, the two adopted approaches worked just perfectly for the teacher is the one who is responsible for correcting the student's formal examination paper.

2.3.1. Student-addressed Questionnaire

Our topic requires certain questions that would uncover how much students are aware of texting features. Twenty-four questions are designed to show if texting has any effects on students' literacy abilities; moreover, it would address the responsibility that students carry when writing textisms in their academic papers.

2.3.1.1 Questionnaire in Details

For the sake of simplicity, the questionnaire consists of three sections including personal data. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, and multiple-choice questions.

The questionnaire was virtually distributed to the sample of students, this allowed them to provide us with real and crucial data anonymously. The study of the present work evolved around three sections as follows:

In the first section, we intend to collect data about the effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language. In the second one, we attempted to find out whether texting figures in students' academic papers or not. Finally, the third section was accurately intended to shed light on texting contribution to student's literacy abilities.

2.3.1.2 The Questionnaire Sample

Students of English at university are somehow accustomed to using English language whether by writing or speaking practices. Therefore, the questionnaire was addressed to them since they are adults and they have a better understanding of texting phenomenon. The informants' number was eighty students and it allowed us to get a quantitative data that could help us understand the subject under study. Through the questionnaire the participants are allowed to provide concrete responses and feel free to answer anonymously to the questions. Indeed, their responses were of a great significance for the success of the present research.

2.3.1.3 Pilot Study

To ensure the feasibility and efficiency of the approach being utilized, we distributed the questionnaire to ten students so that they can check for intelligibility and clarity, they ought to be experienced in the field of our topic. The questionnaire went through several changes before stabilizing in its final controlled trial.

2.3.1.4 Questionnaire Results

The informants provided us with pivotal data through the questionnaire tool. Some findings are presented in pie charts to give crystal-clear views to readers. And some other findings are presented in charts and others in a form of short answers to provide examples and reasons. In sum, the findings are divided into three sections as follows:

Personal data

1- Indicate your age:
80 responses

Legend:
- 18-22
- 22-26
- 26-30
- .
- 17
- 37
- 30

63.7%
22.5%
8.8%
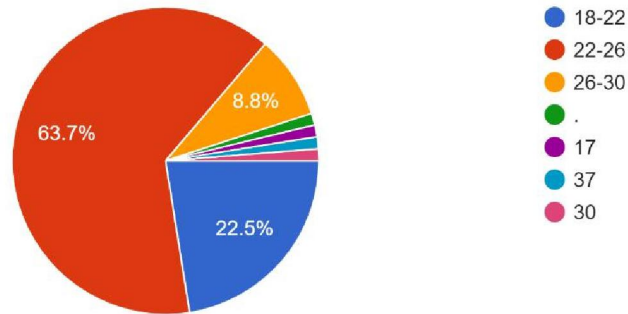
Figure 1 Personal data

The age of students ranged from 17 years old to 37 years old

Sex
80 responses

Legend:
- Female
- Male

72.5%
27.5%
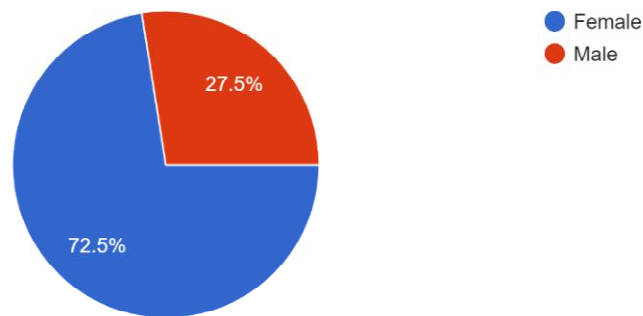
Figure 2 Personal data

Females ranked first in their collaboration in a percentage of 72.4%. And only 27.6% of males

participated.

Section One

1- Do you communicate with people through Social Media?
80 responses
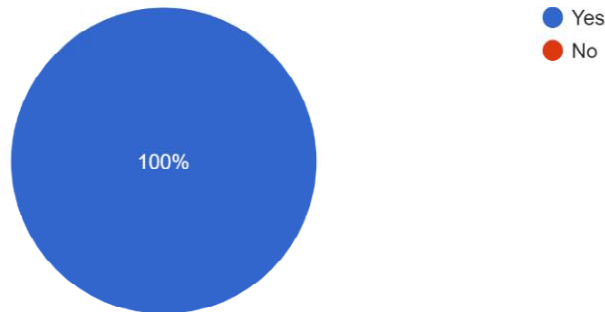
Figure 3 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

All participants, as expected, communicate with people through social media platforms.

2- What platform do you use to communicate with others?
80 responses
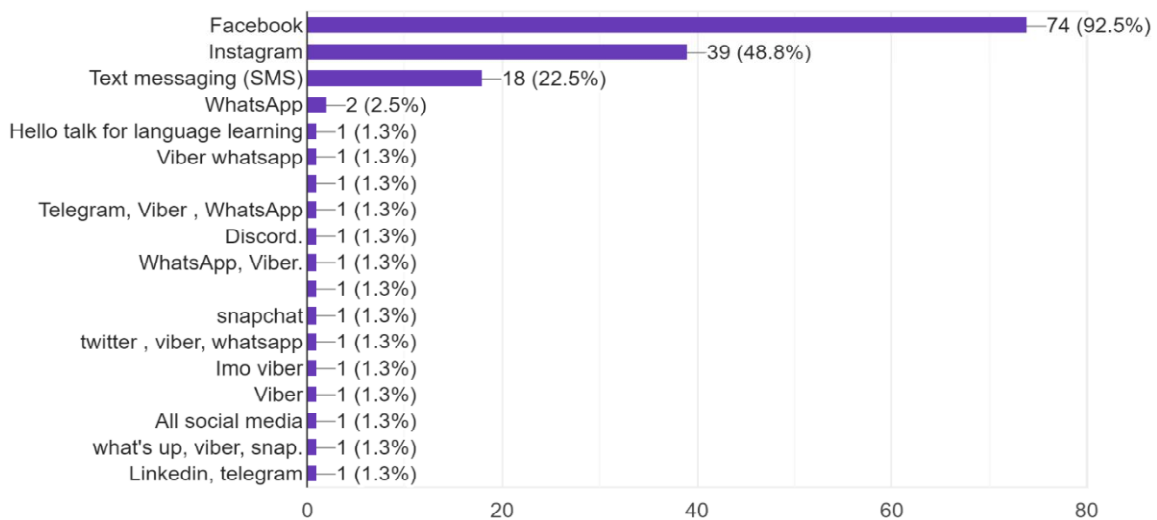
Figure 4 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

The striking majority of students, 92.5% use Facebook messaging application; while 48.8% prefer to use Instagram, and just a few students prefer to use other platforms as WhatsApp, Viber, Snapchat, Imo, LinkedIn, Discord, Twitter, Hello Talk, and Telegram.
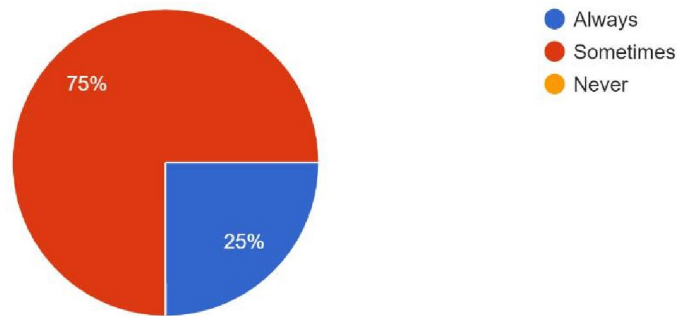
Figure 5 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

The pie chart reveals that there is no student who never uses English in his/her communication with others. Thereby, 75% of them, plainly, use English sometimes; while 25% use it always.
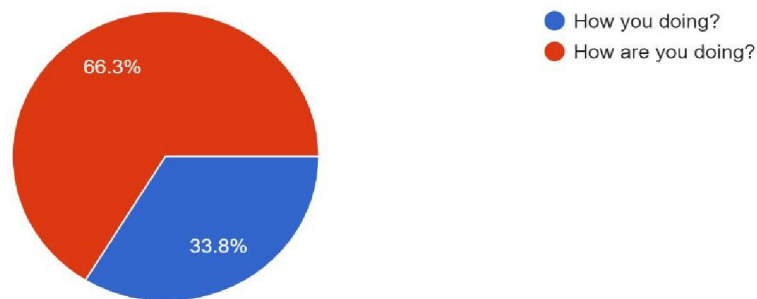
Figure 6 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

The majority of students, 66.3% do write 'how are you doing?'; while 33.8% write 'how you doing?' when texting.

5- Which one is grammatically correct?

80 responses
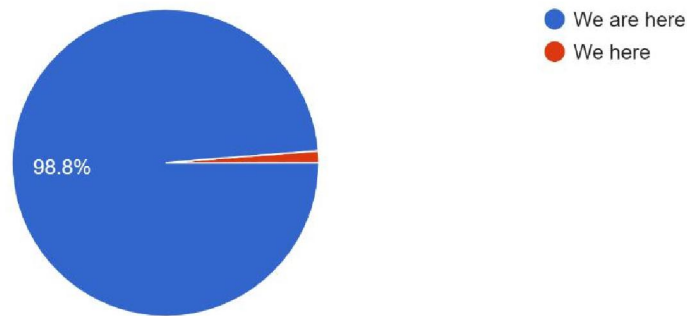
Figure 7 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

98.8% of students chose 'we are here' as a correct answer; whereas one student 1.2% chose 'we here'.

6- how do you spell "thanks" when texting someone?

80 responses
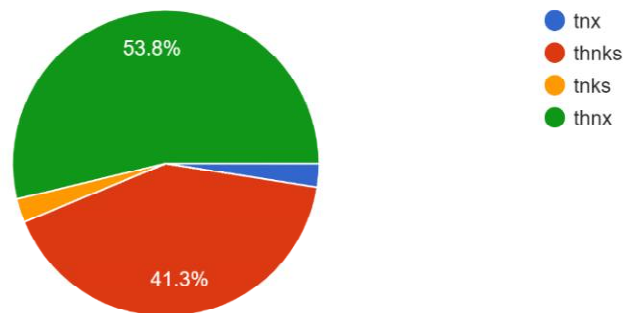
Figure 8 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

53.8% of students spell 'thanks' as 'thnx' when texting, 41.3% spell it 'thnks', and only 2.5% spell it 'tnx', while just 2.5% spells it 'tnks'.

7- Are you aware of the written abbreviation of "hw r u", for example?
80 responses
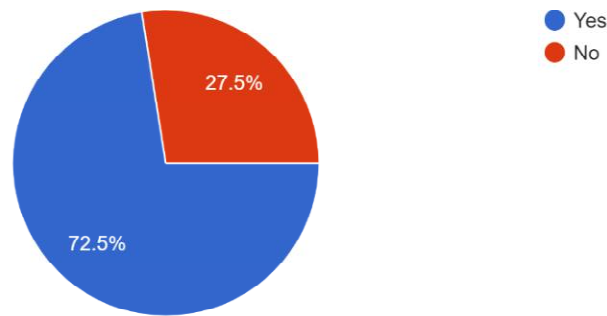
Figure 9 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

The awareness of the written abbreviation of 'hw r u' reached 72.5%; while 27.5% of students do not know what this sentence does mean.

8- Do you use punctuation when texting? If no, do you use them in your examination paper?
80 responses
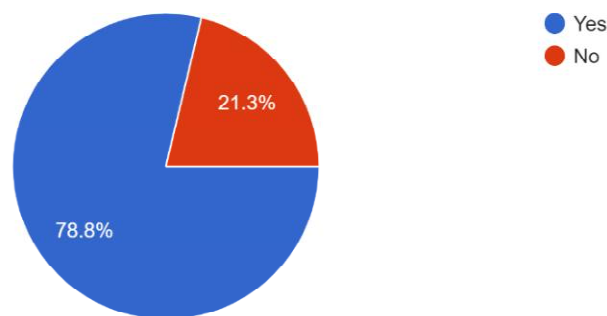
Figure 10 The effect of texting on grammar, spelling and punctuation systems of the target language

As shown in the pie chart, 78.8% of students do use punctuation in their examination papers, and 21.3% of them do not.

9- Write the following sentence into academic writing "wat u doin bro"

In this question, students differ in the way how to write 'wat u doin bro' academically; however, just 6 students, 7.5%, were able to write it grammatically correct 'What are you doing, brother?'. And 8 of them, 10%, wrote it without punctuation 'What are you doing brother'; while 13 of students, 16.25%, wrote it without comma before the word brother 'What are you doing brother?'

Section Two
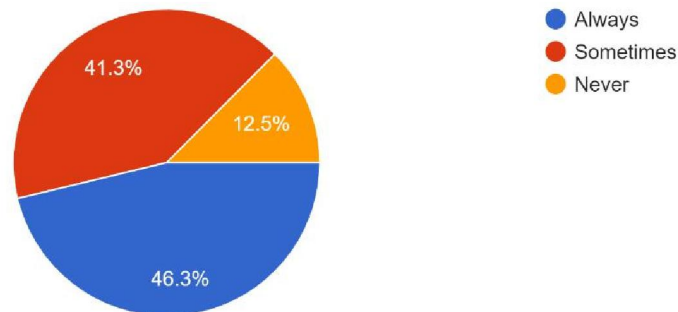
Figure 11 The interference of texting in students' academic papers

46.3% of students always use 'u' instead of 'you' when texting; while 41.3 of them use it sometimes, and the rest, 12.5%, never use 'u' instead of 'you'.

2- Do you use "u" in your examination paper?
80 responses
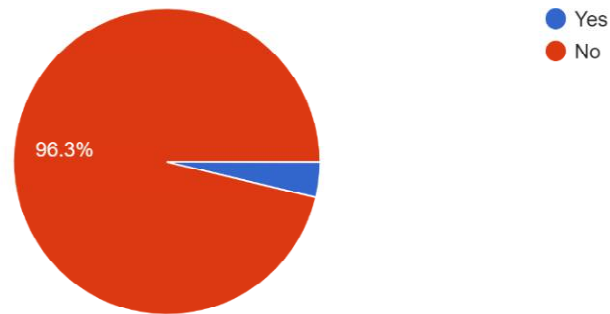
Figure 12 The interference of texting in students' academic papers

The striking majority of students, 96.3% do not use 'u' in their examination papers; while just 3.8% of them use it in their examination papers.

3- Do you rely on autocorrect and predicative features to help you enhance your writing skills?
80 responses
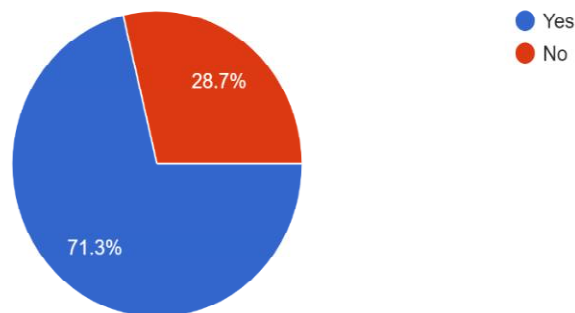
Figure 13 The interference of texting in students' academic papers

The reliance on autocorrect and predicative features in enhancing writing skills have been approved by 71.3%; whereas, 28.7% do not rely on those features.

4. Does your reliance on autocorrect and predicative features affect your word spelling in formal writing?
80 responses
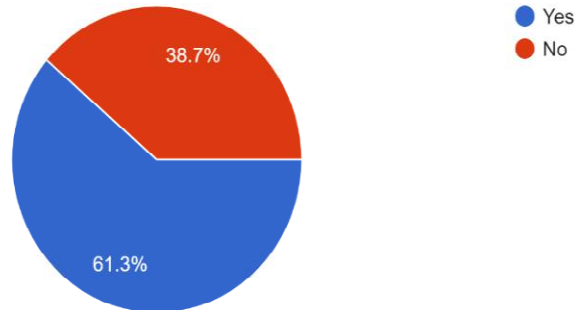
Figure 14 The interference of texting in students' academic papers

61.3% of students assert that their reliance on autocorrect and predicative features affect their word spelling in formal writing; while others, 38.7%, do not believe that it affects the way they spell word properly.

5- Can you differentiate between informal and formal writing?
80 responses
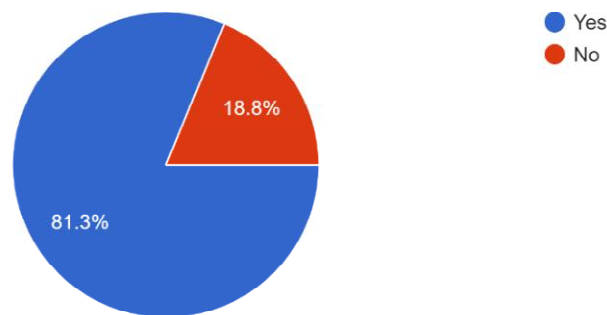
Figure 15 The interference of texting in students' academic papers

The majority of students, 81.3% said that they can differentiate between informal and formal writing. In contrast, 18.8% of them cannot differentiate between the aforementioned writing styles.

If yes, give us two examples of both texting form of writing and academic one.

Astonishingly, 93.75% of participants provided us with examples like: want to/ wanna, welcome/ wlcm, and I do not know/ Idk. Just five students, 6.5% did not write the examples.

Section Three

1- Do you think that texting can improve reading and writing ability for students of English?
80 responses
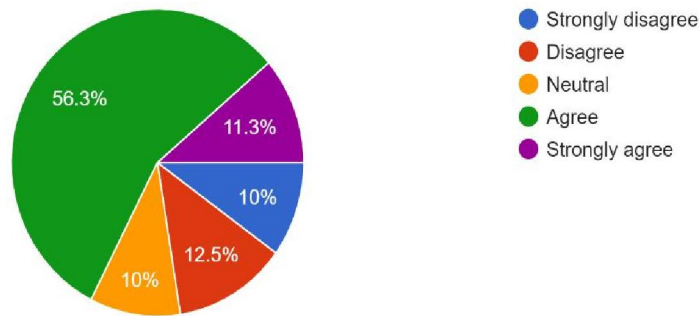
Figure 16 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

56.3% of participants agree that texting can improve their reading and writing abilities, 11.3% of them strongly agree. While, 12.5% of students disagree, and 10% strongly disagree. And 10% remain neutral.

2- Would you consider texting a good technique to practise English with friends and colleagues?
80 responses
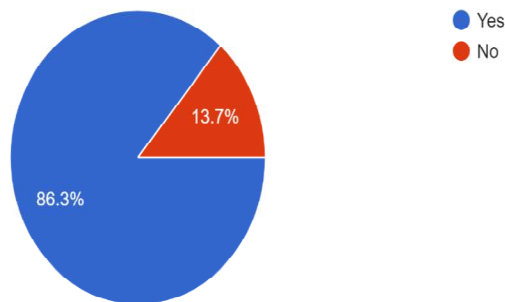
Figure 17 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

A considerable percentage of students, 86.3%, consider texting as a good technique to practise English with friends, while 13.7% disagree with that.

3- In your opinion should texting be incorporated as a tool for learning English in an academic context?
80 responses
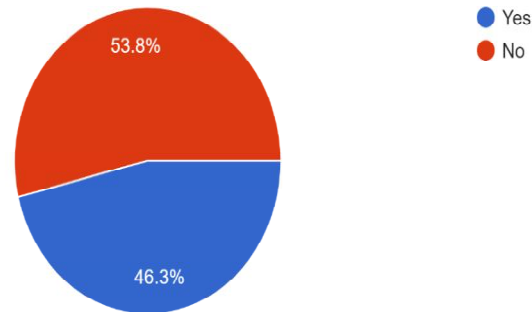
Figure 18 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

53.8% deny that texting could ever incorporate as a tool for learning English in an academic context. Whereas, 46.3% of them see that it should be incorporated in academic context.

Give your reason

The range of reasons differ from one informant to another. In whole, the ones who disagree,53.8% of the sample, simply say that texting does not contain academic writing style. However, the ones who agree, with a percentage of 46.3%, do believe that texting subconsciously implants English in our minds while enjoying the process of learning how to read and write.

4- Do you believe that texting register could evolve to become an essential part of the English language?

80 responses
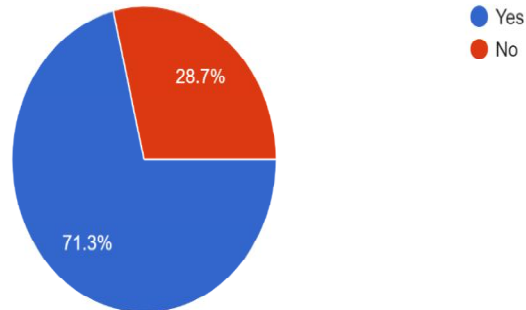
Figure 19 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

The majority of students, 71.3% agree that texting could be an essential part of the English language. While 28.7% of them refute this idea.

5- Do you agree that texting motivates students to learn more vocabulary and to enrich their lexical background?

80 responses
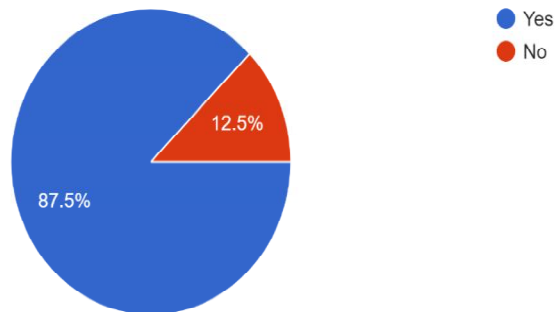
Figure 20 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

The striking majority of the addressed-students, 87.5% believe that texting could motivate students in learning more vocabulary. However, 12.5% of them disclaim that.

6- In the future, will it be possible that reading text messages or reading in general using cell phones would replace books and letters?
80 responses
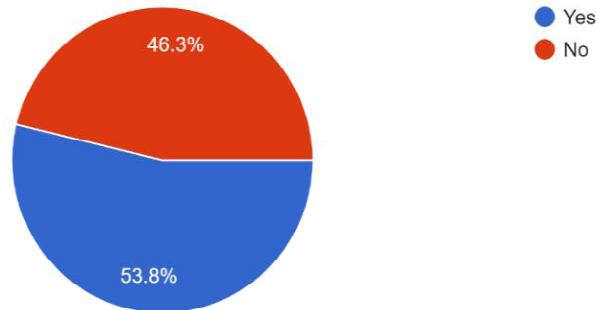
Figure 21 Texting contribution in student's literacy abilities

Finally, 53.8% think that it is possible that reading through cell phones could replace books and letters; while 46.3% of them disprove this possibility.

2.3.1.5 Preliminary Reading in the Questionnaire Results

As expected, the collaboration of students was at a higher rate of participation; plainly, they contributed to conducting the questionnaire successfully. And their efficient responses were of a high value for this investigation.

The effective instrument, the questionnaire, helped us to gather data that revolve around the effects of texting on students' academic writing. Accordingly, although students claim that they are aware of the formal and informal style, it appears obvious as shown in the pie charts that texting does have, to some extent, a negative effect on the learner's academic writing in regard to spelling and punctuation. Moreover, according to the questionnaire results, texting cannot be faulted for students deteriorated academic writing for they are fully aware of what an informal style is. Notably, texting is seen by participants as a good tool to practice English and expand vocabulary background.

2.3.2. Teacher-addressed Interview

Following the qualitative approach, a face-to-face interview is conducted with several teachers of to unravel how their students are familiar with the fact that texting has effects on academic writing. We formed certain questions that would expected highlight the effects of texting (register) on their academic performance, and how this habit is reflected on their writing tasks and examination papers. Choosing this qualitative method helped us to avoid embellishment and maintain the integrity of our research.

2.3.2.1 Interview in Details

The interview contains sixteen questions that are designed for this research. First, it investigates whether students recognize the importance of formality in their style of writing through three introductory questions, they are also meant to find out at what degree they use it when linking words and sentences together. Besides, it is meant to discover how the effects of texting 'register' figure in the students' grammar and spelling papers, as well as how often they apply punctuation. Seven questions are designed to reveal the variety of mistakes which are caused by the use of texting.

Finally, the interview is aimed to reach a conclusion with the six remaining questions, to show the reaction of teachers when having textism interference in their students' examination papers if there are any to begin with.

2.3.2.2 Interview Sample

A number of English teachers from the university of Ibn Khaldoun are chosen for this interview. We interviewed five teachers from two different generations; which allowed us to know more about the growth of texting alongside the English language through the years of their career.

2.3.2.3 Interview Results

After completing the interview, we found few similarities between teachers' answers concerning many questions that were related directly to students' abilities. The results differ when texting is the main focus of the question. That is why the interview results are divided into two main phases: first phase shed-light on the students' performance whether positive or negative depending on teachers' experience; the second phase is aimed at finding about the effects of texting 'language variety' on their students' academic papers.

First Phase Students' performance

1- Do students differentiate between formal and informal language?

At the level of formality, teachers believe that many students are unable to tell the difference between formal and informal language. Some teachers suggest that even good students may use informal words in their writings.

2- Do you notice informal use of language in your students' open talk?

All teachers agree that students are accustomed to using informal style of language when they are expressing themselves orally. Some teachers consider films and social media a big influence to their learners' language, while others tolerate informal use and see that interaction in class is what really matters.

3- Do you notice informal use of language in your students' exam papers?

The majority of teachers find their students using informal words and expressions in their exam papers. Few teachers think that even native speakers find trouble with using purely formal academic style.

4- Do your students make grammar mistakes in their academic papers?

When it comes to grammar, teachers are frequently struggling with this issue because all students make mistakes, some are basic; others they believe are serious errors.

5- What kind of grammar mistakes do you find redundant in your students' papers?

Most common mistakes among students consist of grammar and spelling, ill use of proper tenses; incomplete clauses and wrong word order, misuse of articles, linking words and conjunctions.

6- Do your students make spelling mistakes in their academic papers?

Teachers always come across frequent misspellings in learners' academic papers no matter how competent their students are in English.

7- Do you tolerate grammar and spelling mistakes in academic papers?

Tolerance is not an option for most of teachers, they consider academic papers as a sacred piece of writing that must be dealt with as sternly as possible.

8- Do you find explanations to such deteriorated use of academic language?

Many explanations are mentioned by the teachers when it comes to the poor academic language use; most importantly the lack of exposure to formal standards on a daily basis, and their main source of knowledge is not from reading books but from social media platforms or other languages.

9- Do you think students will develop such mistakes as language use habits?

Developing academic mistakes as language habits is expected by many teachers to become a reality, because those mistakes are often tolerated to the point where they become a part of the students' repertoire, and by time they will be used unconsciously.

10- To what extent does such language use habits effect students' academic writing?

Students' academic writing is affected in a negative way to an extent that leads them to fail when required to create any formal, expressive and ordinary piece of writing.

Second Phase The effects of texting language on academic papers

1- Do your students use contracted words in exam or assignment papers?

Half of the teachers who are interviewed see that their students use contracted words when writing tasks or exam papers, yet the other half find no trace of any contracted terms.

2- Do your students use letters and symbols instead of words in academic papers just as they do in SMS messages for instance?

Few teachers claim that their students use symbols and letters instead of words in academic context just the same as in SMS, but the majority believe they do not see any symbols nor letters while correcting academic papers.

3- Do you tolerate abbreviations, contractions, and sign language in academic papers?

When we asked teachers if they tolerate the use of abbreviations few of them said they do with certain cases for example: don't, won't as for abbreviations such as: EFL, ESL. But most of them ensure that academic writing is not to be tolerated with in any shape or form.

4- Students allege that the use of abbreviations, contractions, and sign language is time-saving. Do you agree with this?

All teachers agree that it is not an excuse for students to use abbreviations, contractions, and sign language to save time while sitting for their examinations, and students must abide by the rules so that their academic production be acceptable.

5- Do you think such new trend of language use can get approved in academic writing in the future?

Many teachers stated that academic writing is in a constant growth, they believe that language is dynamic and it must change through time. They see that social media shall introduce many new words just as it happens for other languages, and most importantly they all agree that the basis of the English language should be protected from alternation.

2.3.2.4 Preliminary Readings of the Interview Results

The interview results showed that texting somehow is not the primary cause of the students' poor academic performance. Students tend to fail at writing in a proper academic style because they do not work hard enough to develop an elegant formal type of language.

Student nowadays do not care much about the knowledge of the language but rather the mark they get eventually. Texting on the other hand cause student to write in an informal style and use emotional language, yet it does not have that much effect on their grammar and spelling while writing in examination papers.

2.4. Conclusion

Using both qualitative and quantitative approaches when dealing with this topic helped us in many ways. We were able to figure out that texting doesn't have that much effect on students' academic abilities. It might lead them to use informal expressions and many shortenings, but they are completely aware of the responsibility they have when writing in an academic setting.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three: Recommendations and Suggestions

3.1. Introduction

Languages are flexible and change through time because of many variables and factors. This flexibility allows speakers of the particular language to perform what is called 'Language-play'. Plainly, language-play phenomenon in not recent, it has been there for a long period of time and is still thoroughly performed by people nowadays, especially youth. But above all, the belief of language-play having altered language standard entities is highly a matter of discussion among researchers and linguists. Thus, the advent of texting accumulated different perspectives among them, and they investigated the possible effects it has on learners' competences. Their researches have contributed to written communication strategies, developing instructional materials of written productions, improving proficiency in written language, and enhancing learners' spelling, grammar, and punctuation skills and invaluable assets alike.

The main goal of the present work is to identify the effect of texting and provide concrete views based on analyses and interpretations of the gathered data. In this respect, to get data, both a questionnaire and an interview have been deployed to ensure the success of our research work. The effectiveness of the questionnaire has provided us with exhaustive crucial data from the sample of students, it allowed us to discover students' attitude towards texting in regard to their exposure to it. The interview, on the other hand, has helped us gather data from expert teachers. Another point worth mentioning is that they are teachers of the same sample students, which ensure pinpoint accuracy of the study.

As long as Algerian English major students are attached to English subject, the interpretations of the research findings are of high value in the field of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and other fields such as Sociolinguistics and Didactics that may have interests to investigate the new variables that affect the learner's overall literacy. The

interpretations of the findings will be elucidated into recommendations that will, certainly, help to explore texting phenomenon more fully and contribute to the literature about the linguistic properties of this novel linguistic fashion.

3.2. Readings and Insights in Questionnaire Results

The simplicity to get data and answers to our provided questions was our top priority to perform the data analysis process from the questionnaire. The interpretations of the gathered data reveal some crucial insights that highlight the effect of texting on students' academic writing.

The findings help us to deduce some perspectives that can be divided into three views. These views are key to extrapolating texting phenomenon and its relationship with academic writing.

3.2.1 Students' Flexibility of Using Social Networking

Nowadays, people in general are familiar with the different social networking platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. However, students' use of those platforms is expected, and that is what has been discussed in two points.

3.2.1.1 Students' Use of Messaging Applications

To communicate with people virtually, you need to have access to internet connection and have to know well of how to use social networking platforms. Accordingly, all participants have an ample knowledge of how to use messaging applications and they all use Facebook because we shared the questionnaire in Facebook platform. Also, they use other platforms for different reasons, one of those reasons is to learn English by using Hello Talk application, for instance, which is dedicated to learn and practise languages.

3.2.1.2 English Usage in Social Networking

It is no surprise that English major students use English to communicate with others; hence, they either use it always with a percentage of 75%, or sometimes with 25% of students. So, this drove us to infer that English language is a part of English major students and indeed they always practise it either with reading or writing. Also, this usage of English is due to students' exposure to the virtual world that helped them to speak freely and express their ideas. And social networking platforms are used as a shelter to practise English with no shy nor hesitation.

3.2.2 The Potential Effects of Texting on Students' Overall Literacy

The interpretations of the questionnaire results lead to impart a better understanding of the interrelationship between texting and students' grammar, spelling, and punctuation aspects. Thus, the potential effects of texting on students' overall literacy will fall into three main facets:

3.2.2.1 The Effects of Texting on Students' Systematic Grammar

The results of the questionnaire show that the student can differentiate between the correct form of a sentence and the wrong one as shown in section one question four (Chapter 2) of the questionnaire that students, while texting, write either in a formal way (How are you doing?) or in an informal way (How you doing?), but when it comes to distinguishing between grammatical correct sentence (We are here) and grammatical wrong sentence (We here) they, 98.8% of students, chose 'We are here' to be the correct one. Therefore, it is clear and lucid that there is a high rate of grammar awareness among students and thus texting can be seen as just a means of communication and not as a perilous tool that jeopardizes students' grammar standards.

3.2.2.2 The Effect of Texting on Students' Systematic Spelling

When students were asked of how often they write 'u' instead of 'you' when texting, 46.3% of them aver that they always do; while 41.3% of them report to use it sometimes, and the rest, 12.5%, deny the use of 'u' instead of 'you'. This obviously shows that writing 'u' instead of 'you' has become a habit for most of participants, but when asked if they use it in their examination papers, 96.3% of them said NO; while there was a sporadic appearance (3.8%) of 'u' in students' examination papers. In addition, 93.75% of participants have provided us with examples that contain formal and informal word spelling. These findings clearly illustrate that texting has no impact on spelling. Yet, the striking majority of students, 61.3% plainly confirmed that autocorrect and predicative features do affect their way of writing words properly. In sum, according to the aforementioned findings, we deduce that students' deficiencies in writing words properly is caused by texting autocorrect and predicative linguistic features. Similarly, in a study conducted by Ashraf (2019) on seventy participants, she found that 77.1% of them assert that the frequent use of texting affects their writing skills.

3.2.2.3 The Effect of Texting on Students' Systematic Punctuation

Texting (register) does not generally adhere to punctuation rules such as commas and end marks. Therefore, we notice that just six students, out of eighty students, were able to write the abbreviated sentence: 'wat u doin bro' correctly as follows: 'What are you doing, brother?'. Also, most of students did not pay any attention to capitalization aspect. In this respect, we infer that students have no interest in using punctuation and hence they are poor punctuators. And this is why teachers complain that **"their students are forgetting commas, apostrophes, and even capital letters to begin sentences." (Buenviaje & Lopez, 2017, p. 58)**.

3.2.3 Texting Appearance in Students' Academic Productions

To investigate whether texting figure in students' academic productions or not, there are three perspectives as follows:

3.2.3.1 The Awareness of Students Towards Formal and Informal Writing

The sample of students, 81.3%, show that they are fully aware of the informal and formal written forms, and that leads to support our anticipation that texting informal argot has nothing to do with students' deficiencies in formal writings. And texting informal style may even help students to be more creative as Crystal (2008) illustrates, in some findings of recent studies, that a **"team of Finnish researchers found that the informal style of texting was an important motivating factor, especially among teenage boys, and provided fresh opportunities for linguistic creativity" (pp. 161-162).**

3.2.3.2 The Effect of Autocorrect and Predicative Features on Students' Academic Productions

The habit of texting more often can affect students' spelling standards and that is what has been affirmed by 61.3% of students that the reliance on autocorrect and predicative features makes them forget how to spell words properly. Hence, this results in supporting what has been anticipated in the first hypothesis that students who have a sheer propensity to text more often would rather have difficulties in writing words properly in academic contexts.

3.2.3.3 Students' Deficiencies in The Language Systems

All participants, eighty students, were able to decipher the following example: 'wat u doin bro'. This results in the awareness of students towards written abbreviation. Thereby, the result supports our hypothesis that the mistakes done by students are not necessarily due to textese register interference, those mistakes are rather caused by students' deficiencies in the

language systems. In this respect, **Crystal (2008) claims that "there are indeed children who are weak at writing, poor spellers, and bad punctuators" (p. 156).** And he continues saying:

> **Another group of children are said to be poor writers and spellers, compared with previous generations, for a whole host of other reasons – too much television, too many video games, too much internet, not enough reading...It is not my purpose in this book to explore these issues. All I want to point out is that these reasons pre-date texting.**
>
> **(Crystal, 2008, pp. 156-157)**

3.2.4 Texting Contribution in Students' Literacy Abilities

The contribution of texting in helping students enhancing their overall literacy skills is discussed in four phases:

3.2.4.1 The Contribution of Texting in Students' Reading and Writing Abilities

When we analysed the answers to the question of 'how often do you use English to communicate with others?' in the questionnaire, we found that no one can do without using English for communicating with people; Thereby, 86.3% of students consider texting as a good technique to practise English with friends. That means that texting enables students to practise reading and writing abilities and motivates them to do so. Also, some of the informants, they say that as long as they enjoy texting, they enjoy the process of learning how to read and write. That would help in developing their English skills and self-engage in spontaneous learning process rather than considering English as a tedious subject of learning.

3.2.4.2 Texting Motivation in Enriching Students' Vocabulary Background

The striking majority of students, 87.5% agree that texting can aid in enriching their vocabulary background. This entails that texting practice has a major influence on motivating learners acquiring new words as long as they text-message their friends.

3.2.4.3 The Phonological Awareness with The Help of Texting

When dealing with a non-phonetic language as English, we normally have to trust our ears not our eyes; hence, learners of English, in a way or another, find a way to know how sounds and letters work, and that is because of texting that manifests the creative use of spoken speech into innovative script. This allows students to decipher and encode difficult abbreviated written forms as 'wat u doin bro', and being familiar with the abbreviated sentences and words respectively as: 'hw r u', and 'u'. Hence, we conclude that they are fully aware of the phonological system as mentioned, too, in their way of spelling 'thanks': tnx, thnks, tnks, and thnx.

Furthermore, students make evidence of a better understanding of connected speech linguistic aspect as the example of 'wat u doin bro' for they know that the letter 't' is connected or linked with the sound /ju:/ as a one word to become: /wa:tʃju:/, that is why they all knew that 'wat u doin bro' is the abbreviated written form of 'what are you doing brother' by adding the linking verb 'to be'.

3.2.4.4 Students' Attitude Towards the Incorporation of Texting in Academic Context

It is common that formality is an essential part of academic writing, and teachers would never let learners to trespass the strict rules of language standards. However, learners are exposed to informal style of speaking and writing due to many factors as TV shows, series, movies, and social networking. These variables lead students to adopt informal way of speaking

and writing; despite that, 53.8% of students agree that texting informal style should never be incorporated in academic context for it has low degree of formality in accordance to academic properties.

Another point worth mentioning is that 71.3% of students agree that texting could play an important role in English learning. This explains that they benefit from texting in enriching their vocabulary and more importantly to keep practising some of English skills daily as reading and writing simply for the reason that 53.8% of them believe that reading through cell phones could replace books and letters.

3.3. Readings and Insights in The Interview Results

The results for the interview give many views of the issues that our topic deals with. It allows for a possibility to size up the influence of texting on students' literary skills. Formal writing is associated with rules of grammar, vocabulary, conjugation, morphology and syntax. The answers to our questions show that not all students are aware enough of the drawbacks that informal and non-academic language has on their performance, even brilliant learners face many difficulties with using a perfect style that would be clear from mistakes in their writings.

3.3.1 The Importance of Academic Strict Criteria

Teachers are stern towards formal style and they do not tolerate mistakes that can be considered as errors sometimes. This matter is discussed below in five main views.

3.3.1.1 Teachers' Attitude Towards Students' Way of Speaking

All teachers admitted that students are unaware of informal and formal style and they just know few English basic lexical items like greetings 'Hi' and 'Hello'. Also, they find that formality is rare in students' academic productions, and even good students are likely prone to committing the mistakes. And this is reported by teachers having noticed informal use of

language in open talk. So, we conclude that the overuse of informal speech affects the way students write academic projects.

3.3.1.2 The Interference of Informal Style in Students' Examination Papers

Most teachers affirm that they notice a lot of informal style in students' academic productions. And this informal style has become a common phenomenon among students and, to a certain degree, it has become a deep-rooted habit. The informal style that students' use is not because they are foreign language learners, but it is done unintentionally. And one teacher says that even native speakers fail to write in formal academic style properly. In this vein, it is obvious that the use of informal style is out of students' control for it is done unintentionally and unconsciously.

3.3.1.3 Students' Deficiencies in Grammar

Grammar is highly regarded as an important entity in academic writing; however, students do fail to follow the strict rules of grammar. Hence, all teachers complain that their students make mere mistakes to become serious errors. Teachers also say that only few students do not make mistakes but the majority do; even good students fail to adhere strictly to grammar rules. Most common grammar mistakes according to the sample of teachers are: Subject-tense agreement; Inappropriate tense use; Inappropriate use of articles; Inappropriate use of linkers, correlatives, and conjunctions; Inappropriate use of prepositions; Wrong word order; Incomplete clauses; Subject missing; Object missing; Past simple 'ed' missing; and Extensive use of prepositional phrases.

According to the findings, we can finally infer that students, either high achieving students or low achieving students, are not aware of the serious mistakes they do, and they are remarkably poor in grammar and do not follow its strict regulations. In addition, teachers do not

tolerate such mistakes because they believe that those mistakes can cause distortion to the meaning.

3.3.1.4 The Influence of French Language on English Spelling

Algerians in general start studying French from an early age (primary school. The practice of French by Algerians is highly regarded as a 'necessity' because Algeria adopts French language in its sectors and even education system. Therefore, Students of English are used to spell words in the French system, and this drives them to insert French spelling into English spelling which entails that French language affects the way English major students spell words in English and yet texting might be just a tiny fraction of the numerous factors that affect students' spelling systems.

3.3.1.5 Teachers' Attitude Towards Grammar and Spelling Mistakes

Observing redundant mistakes made by students would certainly make any teacher discontent of his/her students' level. Consequently, most teachers do not tolerate such mistakes because academic style properties should be followed, and as English major students they should never fall into basic mistakes. Most importantly, regardless what examination mark means to students, teachers believe that students should acquire and manifest skills in the target language. However, just one teacher agreed to tolerate such mistakes as long as students have low levels at English before enrolling in university studies, and hence, teachers should tolerate such mistakes and try to guide students in the course of time because learning a language is a process that takes time and effort. In general, most teachers are strict as to grammar and spelling regulations. So, we have to say that teachers really struggle this issue and as University teacher, his role is to guide students not to teach them how to spell words or how to conjugate verbs. In

this respect, we deduce that students' literacy abilities are not built upon strong basis before coming to University.

3.3.2 The Reasons Behind Using Such a Deteriorated Academic Language by Students

Teachers have approved that students use a deteriorated academic language in their academic productions. In this vein, we deduced five reasons behind this phenomenon.

3.3.2.1 Negative Language Interference

From the interview findings, teachers have pointed out to an interesting subject which has, indeed, helped us to conclude that students' mother tongue, Arabic, causes them to neglect conventional English and write in a non-academic style; this linguistic phenomenon is called 'interference'.

Also, the first foreign language in Algeria 'French' plays a major role in affecting students' repertoire to derive from English spelling and structure norms by overgeneralizing rules of French and even Arabic as preceding the adjective by subject (in English vice versa). Again, students' deficiencies are caused by many factors that differ in the degree of its effects on literacy abilities.

3.3.2.2 Students' Exposure to Informal Language Negative Technological Interference

One of the most influencers on students' behavior, literacy, and thinking is technology alongside its different platforms. Students have been exposed to technological platforms from an early age; they surely watch movies, series, TV shows, etc. They listen to music and chat in social media sites. All these technological influencers contain mainly informal speech which, as the findings entail, affect to a certain degree the formality norms of students' intellectuality.

Eventually, technology can be both positive and negative for students' overall literacy, and it is a matter of choice to pick which side the student should follow.

3.3.2.3 Students' Abstention from Reading Formal Texts

It is common that reading is important for learners to strengthen their English level. However, teachers complain that students nowadays do not read that much and if they ever do, they would read electronic texts which are normally text messages. Hence, the necessity to read formal texts is highly recommended by teachers, and reading text messages, which contain abbreviated words and informal style, can affect their formal writing; thereby, the language used in the social media platforms is in parallel to the one used in academic contexts.

3.3.2.4 Students' Abstention from Making Efforts to Learn

According to our findings, we found that students are not motivated to enhance their English level; what matters to them is to get a good mark and pass to the next level. Teachers claim that they are too lazy to make efforts and try to ameliorate the language that they chose to study. This entirely entails that students' laziness is caused not by texting but, rather, by their unintended choice of the English language subject.

3.3.2.5 Students' Lack of Basic Teachings of English in Previous Stages of Education

One of the most interesting points that teachers have pointed out is students' lack of the basics of English. Teachers say that they face difficulties in teaching students, especially first year students. And they find that their students are already structurally deficient in English to an extent that they do not differentiate between an adjective and adverb.

3.3.3 From The Habit of Making Mistakes to Mistakes Being The Norm

It is a common sense that getting used to making mistakes in language will be fossilized and later cannot be easily corrected; this linguistic phenomenon is called 'fossilization'. It is discussed in two points

3.3.3.1 Developing Mistakes as Learners' Repertoire

Building a belief upon a false rule, meaning, or word spelling is something likely to occur in students' learning process. The habit of using those falsified beliefs will, by time, become part of the student's repertoire and used unconsciously as though they were correct forms. Thus, teachers need to correct those mistakes and rebuild the learner's knowledge on a strong basis.

3.3.3.2 The Impact of Fossilized Forms of on Academic Writing

Being exposed to informal language is inescapable due to the various technological platforms. Students, as the findings show, are somehow used to using informal language in their daily life discourse with people; therefore, they are more likely to develop this habit to become part of their style of writing, and the learner might never consider it as a deteriorated language form but rather as a formal one and use it deliberately in academic contexts.

3.3.4 The Potentials of Texting Getting Approved in Academic Writing

The future of texting vis-à-vis academic writing is unpredictable; still, we can analyse this phenomenon from different angles to at least show the possibilities of approving texting in academic context. This will fall into three views:

3.3.4.1 The Importance of Academic Features

All teachers stick to the idea that academic writing with its features should be respected and must be preserved. Yet, many variables can affect the strict norms of academic writing as technology, for example, and students' informal style use is a living example. Ultimately, we

can say that texting is being used extensively by students, we expect a new style to emerge alongside academic style. But as long as academic norms still persist for the time being, it is still hard to reckon whether texting language will surpass the importance and value of academic features or not!

3.3.4.2 The Emergence of Texting as a New Style

The most catalyst factor for language change is technology that has been always correlated to having effects on language as a whole and writing literacy in specific. A teacher of the sample say that "social media participate in this alteration and as much as new words were added to French, and new words have altered Latin into Romance languages; innovative speech will affect English as well and many words will be introduced to the English dictionary"; this statement clearly explains that innovative speech will alter English standards as written and spoken forms. Another burning issue that can be discussed here is that the same teacher affirms that English is always expected to cease to be the matrix language of the universe as long as other new languages could emerge to serve the needs and interests of the future generations. In this respect, we infer that the emergence of texting could replace academic language to serve the needs of this or the future generation as time-saving writing, practicing English with joy and in a funny way, and expressing their ideas freely without being monitored by strict regulations. The future generation is more likely to rely on new technologies to write, read, or even speak instead of them. Who know? It is again something unpredictable.

3.4. Conclusion

University students are in a high level of awareness when it comes to their use of English in a proper academic frame. They must face the reality that their language is going to be judged and monitored by their mentors and teachers; this should only push them to stay focused and work hard to prevent any poor and mistreatment of the language properties based on their daily use of it. Teachers should also keep an eye on their learners' strengths and weaknesses; by doing so, they would guide them to overcome those weaknesses and motivate them to fuel their strengths.

The results of this fieldwork give us an idea of how both teachers and learners see texting as a new phenomenon that should be treated with responsibility and care. Even though mistakes are a normal concept in the literature of education, there must be a line between hard work and laziness. Languages are able to adapt on multiple levels such as phonology, terminology and syntax. The growing nature of languages suggests that the research on different contexts of their elements is a crucial part of the development process. We ought to examine if the changes that occur might affect the roots or not, if they do, then preventing them would keep the language from decaying.

New technologies are making us closer than ever; they are also creating interactions between different languages and dialects. Sooner or later these interactions shall affect the way we utter sounds and word, whether we like it or not. Yet, young learners need motivation and they can easily lose interest and concentration during the learning process. Technologies such as texting are able to be one of the best ways to create an enjoyable atmosphere for language learners when it is used correctly and effectively.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Humans are created with the ability to learn and adopt to their surroundings. They tend to develop and form systems that would govern everything that is remotely related to their survival on this earth. Thanks to the physical and mental nature of human beings which allows them to live in communities and arrange into groups, they would agree on a pattern of life style, culture, traditions and a language for communicating. Each variety that is made by people is meant to have a span of life; from its appearance to the climax and finishing with its decay. Some varieties took a long period of time and were spread globally, because of their nature and how common they were through their existence; others were the opposite and didn't take that much time to disappear and become forgotten.

Defining language in this era is not as simple as it used to be decades ago. In the old days there used to be three elements in the process of using communication through language which are: speaker, listener and the tool of communication that is used. Nowadays, there are plenty of linguistic domains that are set to explore how time, human development and variation are affecting the process of communication. People now use an advanced field of academic contexts to gain knowledge; English language has a system of formal academic rules that organize the proper ways if using it. This system is affected by modern technologies that people use to communicate with each other. One of these ways is text messaging. In our topic we were able to figure out how it affects academic language. Throughout this research we explored how texting affects grammar, spelling and punctuation for students of English; we also went on finding out whether texting is responsible for learners' poor academic language use while writing their examination papers; and finally, whether it has any good side effects on their literacy.

First, our research started with a brief and general definition of language aspects that are crucial to communication. After, we introduced the history of texting; which initially appeared in the1997s alongside the development of modern technology as we know it today. Then, we defined texting as a digital tool of communication that contains many informal uses of shortenings and abbreviated language. We then explored the linguistic features of texting: shortening, number and letter homophones and symbols, contractions and colloquial contractions, consonant spelling and double-letter reduction as well as emotions and humor with letters and emoticons. Next, we had to know if texting is linked to language writing systems, so we showcased the common concepts that it had with ancient language. Henceforth, we needed to reinforce our research as much as possible to avoid any misconception, so we took a look at some former studies also few modern ones to map our topic and frame it. After, we had to deal with texting as a linguistic fashion on its own, that contains a system of symbols and acronyms. This revealed that there is a difference between face-to-face conversations and virtual world contact among individuals.

We dealt with the situation of students of English that text too often to the point that textisms figure in their academic tasks. We saw how their obsession with their phones drives them to simplify their grammatical use, and choose to write in time-saving language even when dealing with an academic topic. Most importantly, we explained how texting has such an effect on grammar, spelling and punctuation; also, how texting register is considered as a form of language that deals with daily life conversations which means that the more people text the more their language is affected. Last but not least, we were able to define academic writing based on comparing it with texting register. We showed the features of academic writing and the way texting language properties are not similar to the formal norms.

Our research consists of a fieldwork chapter to discover if texting has an effect on the academic capacities of Tiaret English major students. We used quantitative and qualitative research tools to make sure that both students' and teachers' opinions are taken into consideration. For the students' part, a questionnaire was administered to eighty participants of the English language major. We used an online type of questionnaire so each participant is familiar with mobile technology and internet. Yet, for the teachers' part, a face-to-face interview was more than enough to find out if students use any of the texting register in their academic papers, or whether texting is the reason for their unacceptable performance. The results show that texting has no clear effect on learners' language skills. It might have some minor impact on their formal style of language but they are fully aware of the consequences that they would face. Teachers suggest that it is not due to texting that learners are using language conventions poorly, yet it is more of the students' laziness and lackadaisicalness that make them fill their papers with mistakes.

We concluded our research with some insights that can possibly be useful for further investigations. We discovered that texting can have both positive and negative effects on students' writing systems. Yet, it ultimately comes down to the student's efforts on taking advantages of texting. It is considered for students of English as a training mechanism that would motivate them to learn more about the language. Additionally, it would definitely raise their phonological awareness because texting is basically spoken English language transformed into symbols and acronyms. We reached our objectives and demonstrated them through our conclusions and result of the fieldwork.

Finally, with the use of the findings that this research has revealed in the last chapter. There is more to find out about the current topic if different tools are taken advantage of in the

upcoming years. The development of new and smart technologies is going to open many doors and opportunities for variable studies to be conducted at different levels such as phonology, morphology and syntax. Innovation is an important feature of the human mental capacities; with it many discoveries came to exist but everything must have limits. Coming up with new words for the purpose of identifying the modern world is a crucial task for each researcher, yet for the sake of language sustainability this new vocabulary must respect the roots, and adhere to the rules and regulations that languages are managed by. Failing to follow the rules would result in chaos and the destruction of linguistic norms that are the origin of each language.

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Appendices

Appendix '1'

The questionnaire

Personal data:

1- Indicate your Age.

☐ 18-22
☐ 22-26
☐ 26-30

2- Sex:

☐ Male
☐ Female

Section 01:

1- Do you communicate with people through social media?
☐ Yes
☐ No

2- What platform do you use to communicate with others?

☐ Facebook
☐ Instagram
☐ Text messaging (SMS).

3- How often do you use English to communicate with others?

☐ Always
☐ Sometimes
☐ Never

4- When texting, do you write:

☐ How you doing
☐ How are you doing

5- Which one is grammatically correct:

☐ We here
☐ We are here

6- how do you spell "thanks" when texting someone?

☐ Tnx
☐ Thnks
☐ Thnx
☐ Tnks

7- Are you aware of the written abbreviation of "hw r u", for example?

☐ Yes
☐ No

8- Do you use punctuation when texting? If no, do you use them in your examination paper?

☐ Yes
☐ No

9- Write the following sentence into academic writing "wat u doin bro"
……………………………….

Section 02:

1- When texting, how often do you use "u" instead of "you"?

☐ Always
☐ Sometimes
☐ Never

2- Do you use "u" in your examination paper?

☐ Yes
☐ No

3- Do you rely on autocorrect and predicative features to help you enhance your writing skills?

☐ Yes
☐ No

4. Does your reliance on autocorrect and predicative features affect your word spelling in formal writing?

☐ Yes
☐ No

5- Can you differentiate between informal and formal writing?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, give us two examples of both texting form of writing and academic one.

a- …………………………………………………
b- …………………………………………………

Section 03:

1- **Do you think that texting can improve reading and writing ability for students of English?**

   ☐ Strongly disagree
   ☐ Disagree
   ☐ Neutral
   ☐ Agree
   ☐ Strongly agree

2- **Would you consider texting a good technique to practise English with friends and colleagues?**

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

3- **In your opinion should texting be incorporated as a tool for learning English in an academic context?**

☐ Yes
☐ No
Give your reason:
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……

4- **Do you believe that texting register could evolve to become an essential part of the English language?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

5- **Do you agree that texting motivates students to learn more vocabulary and to enrich their lexical background?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

6- **In the future, will it be possible that reading text messages or reading in general using cell phones would replace books and letters?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

Appendix '2'

The interview

1. Do your students make grammar mistakes in their academic papers?

2. What kind of grammar mistakes do you find redundant in your students' papers?

3. Do your students make spelling mistakes in their academic papers?

4. Do you tolerate grammar and spelling mistakes in academic papers?

5. Do you find explanations to such deteriorated use of academic language?

6. Do you think students will develop such mistakes as language use habits?

7. To what extent do such language use habit effect students' academic writing?

8. Do your students use abbreviated words in exam or assignment papers?

9. Do your students use contracted words in exam or assignment papers?

10. Do your students use letters and symbols instead of words in academic papers just as they do in SMS messages for instance?

11. Do you tolerate abbreviations, contractions, and sign language in academic papers?

12. Students allege that the use of abbreviations, contractions, and sign language is time-saving. Do you agree with this?

13. Do you think such new trend of language use can get approved in academic writing in the future?

ملخص

تقوم هذه الدراسة بتحري إمكانينة تأثير الرسائل النصية على معرفة القراءة و الكتابة لدى طلاب جامعة ابن خلدون. يكمن دور هذه الدراسة في إضهار التأثيرات المحتملة من أسلوب غير لائق بلكتابة الأكادمية التي يعتبرها الكثير على أنها ذات طابع صارم من جانب اللغة. بالإضافة إلى معرفة ما إذا كان سبب الأخطاء الشائعة في طريقة كتابت الطلبة ناتج عن طبيعة الرسائل النصية أو إستعمالها الخاطئ من طرفهم. من أجل التأكد من نجاح هذه الدراسة تم إستعمال كل من أسلوب نوعي وكمي موجهان إلى مجومعة الطلبة و الأساتذة.تشير النتائج أيضًا إلى أن استخدام الطلاب لهذه اللغة العصرية المبتكرة يساعدهم على إثراء خلفيتهم من المفردات وتجعلهم يمارسون اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل متكرر.

كلمات مفتاحية: تأثير، الرسائل النصية، طلاب، الكتابة الأكادمية

Summary

The present research work is to investigate the possible effects that texting has on University English major students. This work aims to shed light on the potential effects of texting informal style on academic writing that is upheld as a strict formal production. Also, it examines whether students' deficiencies in English language is due to textese register or their misuse of it. In this respect, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilized to guarantee the success of our research by involving both students and teachers. Findings also indicate, conversely to people's allegation, that students' use of this trendy innovated language helps them enrich their vocabulary and make them practise English more frequently.

Keywords: Texting language, Academic writing, English major students, Students' deficiencies, Effects of texting

Résumé

Le travail de recherche actuel vise à étudier les effets possibles de l'envoi de SMS sur les étudiants d'anglais à l'Université. Ce travail se concentre sur les effets potentiels du style informel de textos sur l'écriture académique qui est considérée comme une production formelle stricte. En outre, il examine si les lacunes des étudiants en langue anglaise sont dues au registre de textos ou à leurs défaillances linguistiques. À cet égard, des approches de recherche qualitatives et quantitatives ont été utilisées pour garantir le succès de notre recherche en impliquant à la fois des étudiants et des enseignants. Les résultats indiquent également que l'utilisation par les étudiants de ce style linguistique innové les aide à enrichir leur vocabulaire et les incite à pratiquer l'anglais plus fréquemment.

Mots-clés: Langue des textes, Écriture académique, Lacunes des étudiants, Effets des SMS.