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IN GENERATION Z

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Texting does not affect Grammar and Spelling skills in Generation Z

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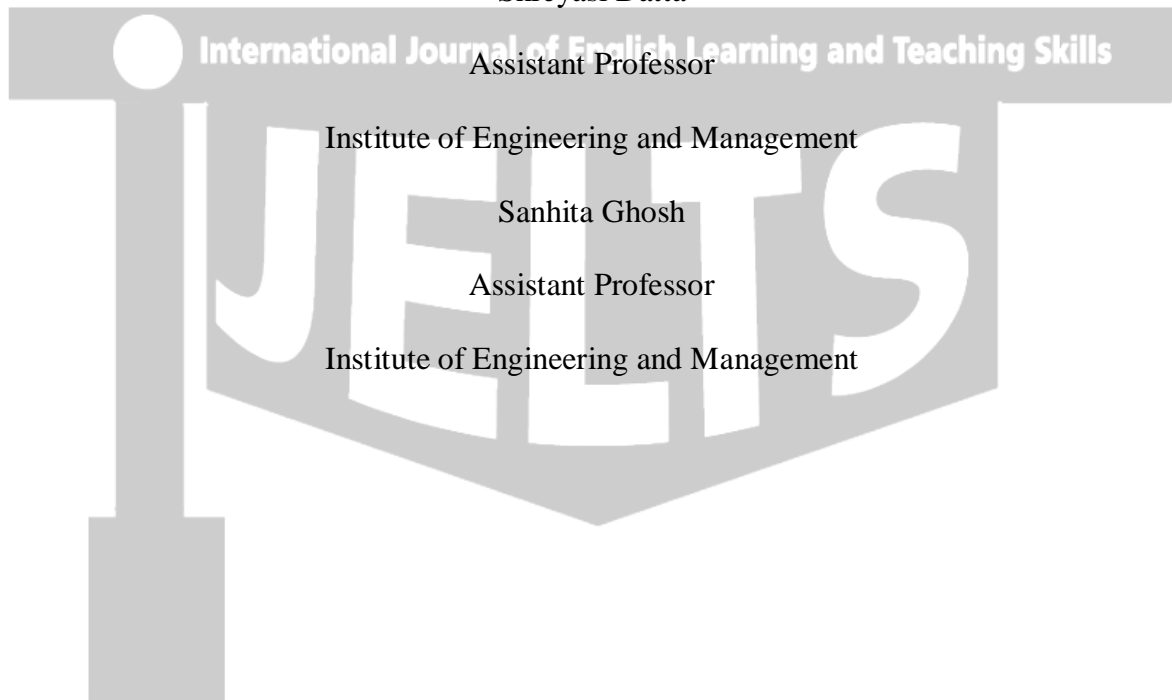
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Abstract

The current world has seen a rampant use of digital devices and text messaging the most common form of communication among young adults. The debate persists that constant application of abbreviated texting has reduced the grammar and essay writing skills among the young students. However, the opposite observations have emphasised that the statement is not true. This article will analyse the various observations which will establish that text messages does not affect language skills in the young generations.

Keywords: Texting, Speech, Grammar, Spelling, Communication.

Introduction

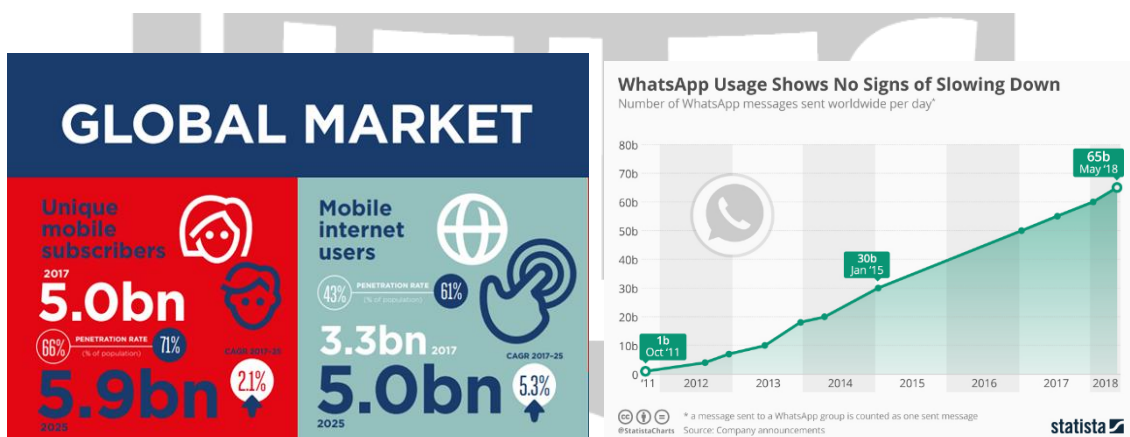
The advent of science and technology has led made the world a smaller place. The emergence of mobile phones has a massive impact on children and most importantly on the young adults. There are several debates relating to what is the right age for using mobile phones or it is right for the teenagers to use mobiles. Regardless of all these concerns it a fact that is universally acknowledged, that young generations these days are most comfortable to communicate through different forms of texting. In 2012 a poll held by the United Nations concluded that the number of mobile phones held by humans are same as the population of the world: that is over six billion. It is an incredible observation when around half of the global population live below subsistence level. (1)

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History of generations of digital explosion

The representation of various phone generations is ‘G’. The first mobile phones which used analogue technology where 1G technology was introduced by Motorola in the mid-1980s. (1) In 1990s for the first time phones using 3G technology went beyond simple voice technologies and introduced digital technologies including internet communication (1) Subsequently with the advent of 4G, live messaging and other forms of ‘instant’ writing have become the norm for mobile users (1)



PC: Statista

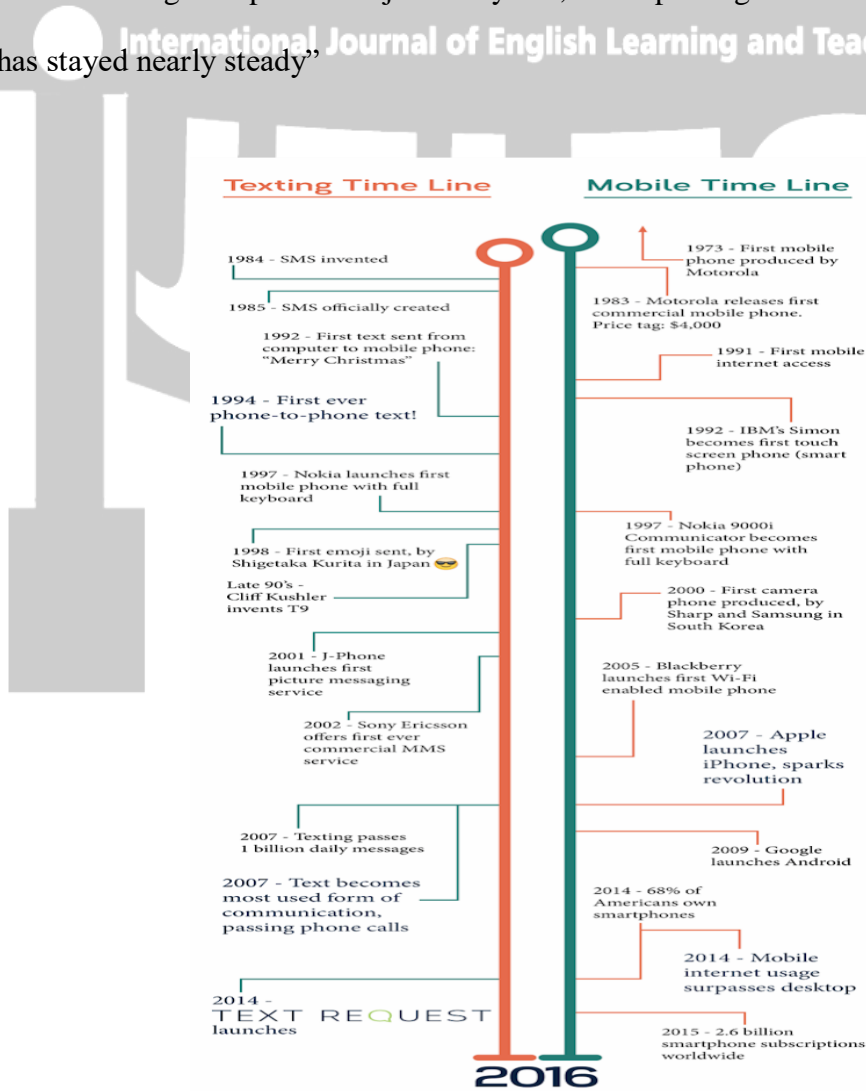
(11) In 2017 Fortune estimated about 750 million iPhones were in use globally. Apple CEO, Tim Cook stated that the company handled worldwide “about 40 billion iMessages per day in 2014. Eddy Cue stated that in 2016 the company recorded about 200,000 messages per second at peak rates across the globe. iPhone users transmit approximately 53 messages per day. Android controls about 50% of the worldwide smartphone market and process nearly 40 billion text messages per day. (11)

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WhatsApp is another popular messaging app which was bought by Facebook when the former reported more than 65 billion messages. Now WhatsApp processes 1.95 trillion messages per month or 23.5 trillion messages per year. (10)

In 2009 the Nielson Company stated that “the average U.S. mobile teen now sends or receives an average of 2,899 text-messages per month compared to 191 calls” and also that “the average number of texts has gone up 566% in just two years, far surpassing the average number of calls, which has stayed nearly steady”



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Source: Statistic Brain Research Institute

(11) Research shows the following among American adults:

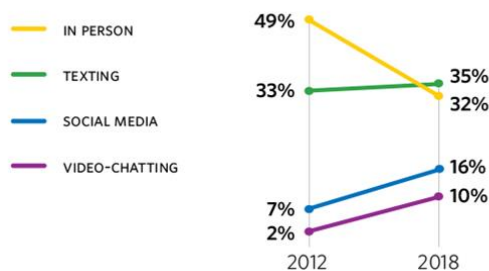
American teens' age Group	Called and received text messages per day
18-24	128
25-34	75
35-44	52
45-54	33
55+	16

However, there are two limitations to the research. They are:

- It is difficult to get the accurate data used for SMS
- Certain app-to-app messages for example iMessages, Messenger, Whatsapp etc. are not considered.

Teens don't value face-to-face communication with friends as much as they used to.

Teens favorite way of communicating, 2012 vs. 2018



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PC: Common Sense Media

Text Messages statistics in US

Year	June	June	June	June	June	June	June	June	June	June
	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
No of text messages received each month	781	634	531	498	423	367	247	161	75	45

Source : Statistic Brain Research Institute

Observations

Linguist John McWhorter, from Columbia University believes in the fact that modern texting is a linguistic miracle. He says that texting is not a written language as it resembles the current spoken language. The writer has certain limitations while writing that are eased out while speaking the same thoughts. In Victorian era, communication language was crisp, precise and detailed- something that was and usually not commonly spoken. Formal oratory sounded like writing. However casual speech is less reflective and more telegraphic., While speaking, neither does a speaker think of punctuation or capitalization. (13)

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Example :

A Typical Text Conversation of a teenager with mom:

Mom: What does IDK, ILY, TTYL mean?

Me: I don't know, love you, talk to you later

Mom: Fine, I'll just ask someone else.

Me: ... ??????

Face to face conversations are more than just words (for example, facial expressions, body gestures and voice inflection). Everything has to be portrayed in gestures via text and that is not an easy task for the sender of message.

Misconception of texting

The generation Z text by truncating phrases and use shorthand notations like "LOL" "Gr8", "Idk" etc. It implies that they have greater creative communication abilities. Educationists are perplexed by this optimal form of communication and directly hold these texting methods responsible for wild and poor writing skills. (14)

Analysis and Observation

After detailed analysis it has been concluded that texting only leads to 10% of misspellings in kids today. It has also been noted that kids develop the skill of better spelling creating the art of language manipulation with texting.

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Speech or texting is an expression of interpreting thoughts from the mind.

Derek Denis and Sali. A Tagliamonte observed that excessive application of abbreviations and acronyms among teen texting only affect 3% of their communication skills that connect what they visualize and write.

There is an argument that texting has led to deterioration in digital communication. But an exclusive language has been formed by mobile technology which can be considered a "linguistic miracle." (15)

Coventry University in UK states that text messaging does not negatively impact on literacy outcomes among children but in fact children and young adults benefit in understanding grammar. (3) Their tendency to make grammatical violations when texting and their performance on formal assessments of spoken and written grammatical understanding, orthographic processing and spelling ability has no direct correlation with texting messages as per Plester, Wood and Bell (2008) (16)

Conclusion

An attempt to write like one speaks is no different. With incredibly fast technique of transmitting messages and receiving responses, the pace of texting is similar to two way speaking. McWhorter suggests this method of communication during the digital era is

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“fingered speech.” Fluency in spoken, written and texting language can be considered an unconscious act of balancing the linguistic repertoire of the speaker. People will simply benefit from the use of an entirely different method and language of communication in the near future.

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