RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Texting and Technological Dependence- A Negative Impact on the Writing Skill

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Abstract

The word "technology" is never a new word because we are presently living in the world of technology. The word 'technology' brings a lot of different ideas to our mind, because we are adapted to its use. The improvement in the field of technology has made our day today living easy, pleasant and happy. From an infant to an adult, people of all age groups keep using the modern technology in one way or the other for their everyday living. It's not wrong to say that the development in the field of technology has not only made our life beneficial and worth living but it has also drawn us towards a negativity that has been unnoticed by us. Hence one can surely argue the good and bad sides in the use of technology, but it's evident that we must not remain ignorant of the bad influence. Technology is surely essential for human existence; we live in a fast-moving world and time is one of the crucial factors that we value. Over the years, advancement of technology has taken place at a very great speed. There are a lot of innovations and new gadgets that have entered the market. Communication and skills of language have been badly affected by too much of interdependence. Modern learners who are looking for a good opportunity fail to impress in their writing skills like writing ability tests (WAT), entrance exams, thesis writing, research-based writing etc. because they are too much dependent on ChatGPT, Gemini, you.com etc. Hence technological advancement has cut short the creative thinking of students and this is a concern one has to address in today's world.

Keywords: Technology, Communication, Writing skill, Advancement.

Language is one of the effective tools of communication. Any language for example has its own beauty and creativity and serves a purpose of its use. English is one language that has got an international repute because it is an effective language of communication worldwide. In a modern study English language has proved to be the most influential language. Technology has made a very great impact on this language in the 21st century. Today's

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younger generation is the one who are under its influence (bad and good). Technology has become multi- cultural and globalised, and because of this the direct influence is on the use of language itself. The beauty of English language rests on the use of its vocabulary and the structure in which the various ideas are presented and put forth. But due to the casual use of the language without any structure and appropriateness one can find a very different form of structure and usage very prominently in practice through the language of texting. The influence can be seen in the form of shortened words and incomplete sentences with words of varied length becoming very small either to two or one alphabet and also the use of numerals in substitution to words or sentences. E.g.: before (b4), you (u), how are you (how r u?).

Texting and its Impact on Writing

This development has put an adverse effect on the writing skill and especially on the creativity of writing among the learners. Young people use emoticons to express and convey emotions or lay emphasis. Hence more casual salutations are being used. The concern is that this kind of influence has put down the value of English language. A lot of errors in spelling, grammar, syntax, capitalization, phonetic script has become common among the English users. The major concern is that the varied style in text messaging has also put a major effect on communication as well. This component of text messaging in all forms has been a major component of debate from a long time. Observations are being made in both ways as its positive and negative sides. There was once a time when the focus was much on grammar, sentence structure, subject- verb agreement etc. But in today's world as text messaging has become a unit of everyday phenomenon no one is either serious or even today's education system more concerned. Many people have only debated over these shortened forms of writing as the new methods of writing techniques. It's a known fact that many language experts have studied these developments and many research

studies have also been taken up with the related themes. But it's quite embarrassing to say that even after all possible assertions, studies and debate people compel themselves to use shortened words and sentences in texting language. This in turn has drastically reduced an individual's ability to utilize skills for writing and one suffers from lack of fresh ideas or goes through a phase of dry run.

The Importance of writing Skill

Writing as a skill is a process of expressing ideas and intentions in a form, for a specific purpose. When a writer expresses his ideas, he puts forth his original feelings and expressions through words and makes the other understand. The writer expresses his internal thoughts by giving an external structure of words where vocabulary plays a major role. Secondly the writer is able to capture the reader or is able to convince the examiner on the understanding of the topic and the context. Good choice of words and expression not only brings out the originality but also provides a self- expression. (Rajkumar, 2013, p56).

According to Russell (2010) he considers SMS language as an independent and a new language. He argues that students need to learn the basics of English language in pedagogic situations so that they could distinguish between slang texting, lingo and correct English. Hence one can understand that text language and English as a language always plays a pivotal role to express the original ideas rather than shorten the words in complex situations which may not be able to solve any problems but only give rise to major problems.

As the younger generation grows up with cell phone and texting, it will be critical to determine the impact of texting on literacy when children are learning texting in tandem with more formal academic language (Plaster, Wood, & Joshi, 2009). The challenges among the younger generation are the rapid adjustment to technology rather than the established structures of the language, hence there is a

tendency today among the students that writing skill is not so important and innovative methods of texting and abbreviations are common to be used even in academic assignments.

Linguistic challenges and the road to overcome it:

Lack of language skills and ability: Many second language users of English language through the influence of 'Texting' do not have a convincing feel that they are using an international language. They feel that it is only an ordinary language and hence it can be used in any way without strict adherence to grammar, vocabulary and structure which needs high standard of prominence when appearing to exams and interviews abroad. Messaging is a trend where a message is texted in a form of sentence or words or alphabets to an individual or a group of users. In text messaging the only intention is, a message must be circulated to an individual or a group of individuals. The intention of the message could be for any specific or for a general purpose like to deliver a specific information, it can be for a special purpose like to wish or greet someone, a casual one without a specific intention. In reality formal language is more important than the message, because if a recipient of the message is unable to understand the message, then there is no purpose in sending one.

The destruction of the Linguistic Legacy: In most of the cases, when the text messages were analysed, there was absolutely no input, the text messages are too casual and monotonous without a comprehensive and clear output. Let's analyse the following example presented by David Crystal in his book 'Txtng – the gr8 db8'.

> nobody is txting me
> im troubled s im stressed
> wen no one even thinks of me
> it makes we feel dpressd
> my mates r probly having fun
> while I'm fed up s bored
> waiting 4 am
> th@ proves I m not ignored.

The following is a reported extract found in the book written by David Crystal.
My smmr hol wr cwot. B4, we used 2go2 NY 2c my bro, his GF & thr 3:- @ kids FTF. ILNY, its agr8 plc.

Translated as –

My summer holiday were a complete waste of time. Before, we used to go to New York to see my brother, his girlfriend and their three screaming kids face to face. I love New York it's a great place.

These two examples in context help us to analyse the situation and make us come to a conclusion as to what is the real meaning of such text messaging. Has the desired impact and outcome through the language use able to reach the intended audience or could it be termed an innovation of an individual with the language use just to destroy its legacy.

Texting is a trend which is not only limited to the English language, but one can find ample examples where even the regional terms and jargons are translated to English by words or short phrases which intently brings down the beauty of both the English language as well as the regional language, here is one example for the same:

> The message goes like this.
> Pehle EK rupay me Anaaj
> milta tha…….
> Iss liye Thhenga
> dikhaya hai.

The following message is a translation of Hindi into English with the alphabets still written in English language, but the pronunciation is in Hindi. In the following message one would find a word 'Me' interpreted as a Hindi equivalent, In English the word means a word of address, but here it has to be understood as a Hindi equivalent. Hence this has brought upon our language a tragic flaw, because they neither have the flow and texture of an original language nor is there a link between the languages. In such circumstances what is the use

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of 'texting' if one has to spoil the legacy of two prominent languages. This has become a very common trend, and it is also right to be noted that it is not only with one language it's the same with most of the regional languages.

It's a Misconception that it Saves Time: Today we live in a world where everything is fast moving. Many people feel that time is not sufficient for doing or completing the desired work and hence people feel that all things must be done instantly within a quick duration of time. It's an agreeable fact that we must be quick to complete the desired task. It's in fact true, in most cases the invention of technology itself was made to complete tasks within a short period of time, we may be able to reach larger audience or group of people and we may achieve success to transfer information to each other.

Mobile technology aims to achieve the same result. It was first invented for business people so that they could get access to their workplace from any part of the globe. With the improvement of Technology there was a time when people used to send telegraphic messages where only the major words were highlighted and the message was sent. But what was the result with the improvement of technology? The improvement of technology had two levels one was a set group of people who used the abbreviated language in their messaging so that they could send the message effectively and quickly whereas the other group of people, started using the abbreviated language without knowing the purpose of such messaging. According to the observed fact in real the abbreviated language is not used by the group of people who really are in need to save time, but it is used by those people, who in reality have lots of time. But the difference is that, most of them feel it an accomplishment when one 'texts' something in least number of words and this is quite alarming. On other hand it is also a fact that in most of the cases the context of 'text' messaging is solely unimportant and a waste of time as one of the researchers observes that around 90% of the cases of text messages do not

have any unique reason to be sent, but people still spend time in group or individual chatting and at the end, one can find that a number of messages have been sent successfully in short words or compressed alphabets.

Collision of words that represent various ideas in one theme: This is another unique as well as a major problem that one can find as there are some words in English that have the same pronunciation but they signify a different idea e.g.

- Eye (sense organ) and I (Pronoun for first person) in both the cases the word used would be 'I' in text messaging.

- Where (question of enquiry) and were (plural) in both the cases the word used would be used as 'wer'.

- The word didn't (negation) is misplaced by the word 'dint' (narrow escape).

These are just examples, in such a category one can find enough number of words misspelt, over spelt and wrongly used. It's quite evident that now some alphabets in words have also been cut short to shorten conversations like:

- Picture – this word is written as 'Pictur' were 'e' is eliminated.

- The – specific article is now written either as 'da' or 'th'.

- They – is written as 'te'

- Of – is written as 'f'.

The following can be given as some of the major influences in writing and as a result one can find that the language competency among the students has fallen drastically as they commit major errors even at major sections where it is mandatory to not commit one. David Crystal analyses another such example from the following short poetry extract taken from a competition on abbreviated language form on English –

I left my picture on the ground wher u walk so that somday if th sun was jst right

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& th rain didn't wash me awa u might c me out of th corner of yr I & pic me up.

Another example is –

O hart tht sorz

My lvu adorz

He m aks me liv

He m aks me giv

Mys y 2 him

As my lvu prz.

Through these examples we have to now think as well as analyse if we can convince ourselves if one is able to make any intentional communication through the abbreviated words used and how the real meaning of the words or terms used really convey desired communication or result.

Students Lack Presentation skills and language ability: Today we speak of the term 'soft skills and 'skill development' as one of the major requirements for effective presentation skills. A person must be able to present oneself skilfully before others in whatever presentation he is opted to make. But today students fail miserably in their language competency as many of them lack the skill of perfection in writing, because all throughout they are quite busy in text messaging and then they are required to adopt a formal approach in the language presentation. In most cases it so happens that they are unable to achieve success because they commit similar errors as they are too adapted to text messaging. And this is now a major problem observed by many of the companies during job interviews. In today's world one can find that most of the companies now highlight on the need for candidates to be fluent in English or have a good command over the English language and in order to prove this they conduct exams to test language ability and skills. In many cases students fail to perform to the best of their ability and through this experience they realise the fact that they have now lost on their linguistic and language acceptancy or the presentation ability.

The problem of effective language competency is not only associated with writing skill, it is also seen with respect to speaking. As discussed earlier the poor presentation of words will surely have an adverse effect on the speaking skill too. In many instances through text messaging an individual loses the capacity of critical thinking, this is because the individual sends only short messages appropriate or related to a specific context or situation. There is nothing beyond that stipulated boundary that he or she thinks, hence this leads to a situation where the mind doesn't think for new ideas or has a constrained flow. In many situations when a person is asked to present himself on 'self – Introductory' speech contexts, the person fumbles to provide a comprehensive presentation, because he cannot think beyond the boundary or imagine distinctly. Automatically his language and flow of thoughts fall short and he is assessed or considered incapable.

Technology – The Need of the Hour: As we all know today's world has given us a number of positive as well as negative results, through the advancement of technology. On one hand one can debate on the unique changes brought about in all spheres, but on the other hand, there are many drawbacks that have made thing too worse. It is quite impossible to change things that are destroyed by our own faults, but one can still make some attempt to preserve things from becoming far too worse and in achieving this one can put in best efforts to preserve the language-based challenges that have been badly hit by text messaging among the modern youngsters.

Change is evident, but it would be always better to be a part of constructive change rather than a destructive one. Thus, the heritage of any language is a complex one, we have to admit the fact that every human being present is able to survive because he is capable of using a

language to converse and earn his day-to-day living. Hence here are some roles that one has to understand about himself because every individual can surely be able to contribute for a positive change.

Personal Role in Preserving a Language: Every language has given an unending value to a particular culture. Even the English language has helped individuals to survive especially in countries where they were unable to converse in their regional language. The growth of the English language is a blessing to many people who travel to various western countries for better opportunities. However, the role of an individual is always complex. Every person is responsible to build or destroy a language and its competency. It is not wrong to expect others to change unless we change ourselves and hence at the individual level every person has to take a decision to make use of the English language as a real language even in case of technological adversity. It's a fact that we ourselves are prone to send text messages, so every individual has to make it a point that he or she will adhere to the rules and regulations of an apt language presentation in all circumstances without any difference of opinion. Every person has to make it a point that the language he or she uses for conversation has to be in the form of appropriate choice of words and comply with the regular usage of words and vocabulary. Similarly, we need to make people understand the importance of written communication as it is a display of his skill. Writing is an art in itself; hence every individual must make a self-assessment that he or she will not destroy the language creativity and the legacy of the words will be used in an acceptable form always. Genuine attempt has to be made at the personal level to abstain oneself from using short words, alphabets or numbers in communication.

Role of Teachers and Parents: Every individual has to pass the stage of an infant to a student and then to the stage of adulthood. It's quite noteworthy to say that the role of parents and teachers play a very essential role in making children and students aware about their mistakes and errors. English language has its own beauty and creativity hence one can say that text messaging is at a peak mostly in the age group of students who basically spend a lot of their time in chatting and messaging. The parents and teachers have to take a responsible step in order to make these students aware that in the long run this will adversely affect their language competency. A famous person once said 'Technology can be used in both ways to make living happier or worse'. Students must be taught to use vocabulary in an acceptable way, because when they use new words then the source and the receiver both get to know new words and structure and apply them in the relevant contexts of language conversation. Otherwise, both of them will lack in their creativity of the use in language and communication. Emphasis has to be laid especially by language teachers to make aware of the problems that rise through text messaging by use of irrelevant words. Discussions have to be made especially in the classroom context on the use of acceptable vocabulary and the ill effects of text messaging on vocabulary and word formation, students must be made to know the clear difference in context-based communication. Exercises should also be conducted where words have to be given to students and they must be asked to make presentation through seminars. Assessment can be made to see the effects on their language competency. Students must be thoroughly emphasised not to make use of unacceptable written script in messaging and chatting. It is also possible that more and more exercises be given to students to improve the vocabulary and also exercises that make them think to apply apt words in contexts. Words which are quite similar in meaning and pronunciation have to be discussed like – didn't and dint' and the actual difference between the words and its use must be explained.

A modernisation in the field of syllabus framework has to be done. today's students take

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the English language quite lightly because in their school days emphasis is not given on language skills. The inert perception present among many is that English is only a language. Many feel that because they have learnt in an English Medium, they know the language in totality. Many feel that for a long time even at the graduate level only emphasis is given on simple writing skills. When these students go to the job market or other foreign countries, they end up in a failure because they have not developed competent skills of the language in an effective manner. Many students end up with poor presentation skills in writing and speaking. It's disheartening to see that many of the students might text and chat for long hours, but they fail to produce a simple essay of ten sentences on any topic. We need the advancement of technology, but if we are not able to make use of technology in an appropriate manner then I think technology can fail us. We live in a world of such technological progress and innovation that we have inbuilt dictionaries in laptop, computer, android phones etc. But we are the ones who don't use them effectively a word like 'see' or 'sea' has a contextual meaning but we replace it as 'c' for both in texting, what justice have we done in such matters if we are unable to make the other person understand true communication. Hence, parents and teachers must take up this matter quite seriously and see that they do not be responsible to bring about damage to the language structure. Language is a creativity let us not be the people who break down the creativity of language that is given as a gift.

The Role of Language Experts: The improvement in the field of technology has left behind both good as well as bad outcomes. The language presentation itself is a best example for this. English language teaching and the skill-oriented learning have always been a mutual co-relation between each other. English language teaching has a lot of courses that are offered by many institutions and they are also career oriented courses in major fields. It's a known

fact that the English language has a very high ranking among all languages and it is one of those languages that is used in all fields. At National and International level e.g. sports, games, tournament, talent shows etc. English tops as a major language with a widespread recognition.

Now, there is a debate on the modernity and trend of language use. There is an opinion that change in trends and fashion is acceptable or is a part of modern revolution and language too is affected by the same. There are groups of people who have an opinion that by shortening the usage of words and sentences and also eliminating the use of repeated letters in some words is acceptable. Arguments are also presented that usage of words in any language isn't a matter of concern, only the message must be understandable. Some people have no regret for spoiling a language through poor use of words and vocabulary. The language experts in the field of English should make an attempt to convince the people on these matters and see to it that the beauty of the English language and all other languages too remains in its originality.

Conclusion

Writing skill is the most significant and productive skill among four language skills and there are so many challenges in achieving the skill. The teachers of English language face numerous challenges relating to teach skill-based writing in English for the students who learn English as a second language. The challenges in teaching the language and making the students understand its role in developing language skills needs to be addressed with utmost promptness. They should also be motivated and put into practice the habit of using technology for specific purpose in overall development of language competency. Techniques and strategies must be provided to students to practice opportunities of paraphrasing, sequencing synthesizing and hence empowering them to develop their writing skills. These strategies give students a

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more holistic package of academic writing skills that make them more confident. The collaborative learning helps the learners to develop their interpersonal skills and this in turn helps them attain positions of repute and excel competitive examinations. Autonomous learning is a lifelong learning that helps to face challenges by innovative learning methods. The major concern of the article is to bring to light and discuss a major problem among young learners who are too much addicted to technology and in turn are suffering from lack of creative thinking and linguistic competency.

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