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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE EFFECT OF SMS (SHORT MESSAGE SERVICE) ON LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL, PHILIPPINES

\*Breezy R. Abroguena

Mindanao University of Science and Technology - Cagayan De Oro City, Philippines

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#### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to determine the effect of SMS (Short Message Service) on language proficiency of the Public High School Students in Misamis Oriental. Likewise, it sought to answer the following aspects of the main problem as sms language is affected by the profile of the respondents and their language proficiency skills. Analysis also includes the implications of the results toward a significant study on both sms (short message service) and language proficiency. The researcher made use of the descriptive-survey method of research. There are three(3) sets of research instruments used for the purpose of gathering data and information needed for the study. Student's Questionnaire is composed of four(4) parts. Part I - inquires specific information such as age, gender, length of ownership of the cell phone, amount of spent in texting and type of message sent; Part II - SMS test which indicates a 25-list of words, phrase and sentences written in a text or sms which requires the students to write the correct spelling of the words, phrases and sentences; Part III- Diagnostic Test consists of 50 items for Grammar, Vocabulary and Spelling; Part IV- Three Composition Writing which is to assess student's grammar, vocabulary and spelling. The result of the students' proficiency skills in terms of grammar, spelling and vocabulary that is based on the transcription of SMS is significantly better compared to the diagnostic test given to the respondents. Anchored on the findings, teachers should implement extra reading reports to improve vocabulary, grammar and spelling.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in man's environment and it has a social relevance that lies in the given context in interpersonal and inter-group communication. The study states that language is regarded as the source of human life and power. Possession of language enables the individual to have human essence; the distinctive qualities of mind that are unique to man. Fromkin Victoria, Robert Rodman and Hyams Nina (2003). However, the advent of new technology brought a lot of changes in the latest developments of automobile technology the way people view communication. Today texting is a worldwide phenomenon. Certainly texting is an activity composing of short character messages and exchanging it between mobile phone users. Moreover, the resultant variations in written language have raised concerns about the negative impact of this technology on language. Some language researchers argue that the deterioration is due to increased use in electronic communication Lucas-Biesenbach S. and Wiesenforth D. (2001).

\*Corresponding author: Breezy R. Abroguena  
Mindanao University of Science and Technology - Cagayan De Oro  
City, Philippines.

The lack of face-to-face interaction that sometimes characterizes this digital platform means that many contextual and nonverbal language cues may be lost, and it is questionable whether language maxims such as appropriateness, relevance and formality level are still adhered to in electronic communication. M. S. G. B. Hamzah et al (2009). Today's students, dubbed the "Net Generation," live in a digital world. Recent studies reveal that students spend over 10 hours a day using multimedia devices, such as mobile phones, mp3 players, and computers, with over an hour of this time spent online using the Internet. Rideout, V. et al (2010). The students are predominantly exposed to technology particularly cellphones and gadgets therefore the focus of this study is to examine the effect of sms on students' proficiency skills specifically in written communication thus students considered as frequent texters compared to other groups hence using sms or texting closely associated to the students therefore this habit tremendously affect the students academic learning. The Philippines has been tagged as the "texting capital of the world". Many Filipinos exchange text messages with the use of their mobile phones. People have become frequent texters, and they have started sending messages in shortened ways (AHN Media Corporation, 2009).

The challenges in this particular observation are to find out the effect of sms language on the English proficiency skills among high school students. Indeed, the purpose to conduct this study is to assess the English proficiency skills among high school students and the implication of the sms language in spelling and grammar of students. Therefore, it is an advocacy to bring together the common goal of preserving the language. Moreover, the outcome of the study will enlighten especially the administrators in decisiveness for improvement in the implementation of such program in a successful curriculum that will develop the proficiency of the students in terms of grammar and spelling.

### Objectives of the Study

Generally, this study is to determine the effect of sms language in English proficiency skills such as spelling and grammar of the 4<sup>th</sup> year high school students.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used the descriptive-survey method of research involving the use of questionnaire as the main instrument. The study was descriptive in nature since it attempted, recorded, analyzed the general profile of the respondents, length of ownership of the cell phone, amount of spent in texting, type of message sent and proficiency skills in spelling and grammar.

### Research Setting

This study covered all secondary public schools in Misamis Oriental and the respondents of this study were the 4<sup>th</sup> year high school students who were studying in their respective school in the division of Misamis Oriental.

### Research Respondents

The student respondents of this study were composed of 1,041 4<sup>th</sup> year high school students who were studying in their respective schools in Misamis Oriental. The researcher obtained permission from the principal of different school to conduct a research study and for uniformity in giving instructions the researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents.

### Research Procedure

Data gathering was done in selected public high school in the division of Misamis Oriental. These are Aplaya National High School, Baliwagan National High School, Bobuntugan National High School, Binuangan National High School, Casinglot National High School, Dampil National High School, Jasaan National High School, Looc National High School, Lumbo National High School, Misamis Oriental National High School, Misamis Oriental General Comprehensive High School, Opol National Secondary Technical School, Salay National High School, Sta. Ana National High School and Villanueva National High School. To come up with the sample size of the study, the researcher used the multi stage sampling.

### Research Instrument

There are three (3) sets of research instruments used for the purpose of gathering data and information needed for the

study. Student's Questionnaire is composed of four (4) parts. Part I - inquires specific information such as age, gender, length of ownership of the cell phone, amount of spent in texting and type of message sent; Part II - SMS test which indicates a 25-list of words, phrase and sentences written in a text or sms which requires the students to write the correct spelling of the words, phrases and sentences; Part III- Diagnostic Test consists of 50 items for Grammar, Vocabulary and Spelling; Part IV- Three Composition Writing which is to assess student's grammar, vocabulary and spelling. The researcher facilitated the study if they followed the instructions in order to avoid any distortion. The data is processed, analyzed and interpreted with the assistance of a statistician.

### Hypotheses

For the purpose of statistical testing, the following hypotheses are posited in their null form and tested at 5% level of significance:

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference on the proficiency skills of students when grouped according to number of years in texting.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference on the proficiency skills of students when grouped according to number of text messages sent per day.

### Statistical Treatment

The following statistical tools were utilized in this research study for analysis in order to answer the research questions. The t-test is a test used to compare the means of two populations (groups). If the probability-value (p-value) is less than the significance level,  $\alpha=0.05$  (or 5%), then we reject the hypothesis of no difference. Thus, we say that the means of the two groups are significantly different from each other. However, if the p-value is greater than or equal to the level of significance ( $p\text{-value} \geq \alpha$ ), then we say that there is no significant difference between the means of the two groups being compared. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is an F-test used to compare the means of three or more groups (an extension of the t-test). The decision to reject or not the null hypothesis of no difference in the means is based on the p-value (probability-value) obtained from the ANOVA table.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the summary of the profile of the respondents. The table indicates that 88.47 percent are in 15-17 years age range of the total number of the respondents. Moreover, table 1 indicates the gender of the respondents. It reveals that 57.64 percent of the total respondents are female on the other hand 42.36 percent are male student-respondents. This further explains that majority of the respondents belong to the 15-17 years age range and these are students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders. On the other hand, the respondents in this study reveal that majority are female student-respondents than the male student-respondents did part in this study probably because the later was more involved in games and the like. Table 2 shows respondents quantity of text messages sent per day. The table indicates respondents respond to the text messages sent per day thus it shows that there are 58.98 percent or approximate 21-25 texts a day which obtains the highest number of texts messages sent.

**Table 1. Profile of the Respondents**

Age	Count	Percentage
12-14	5	0.48
15-17	921	88.47
18-20	106	10.18
21-23	6	0.58
24-26	3	0.29
Total	1041	
Gender		
Female	600	
Male	441	
Total	1041	

**Table 2. Quantity of Texts Messages Sent Per Day**

Number of Texts Messages Sent per Day	Count	Percentage
5-10 texts a day	222	21.33
11-15 texts a day	97	9.32
16-20 texts a day	108	10.37
21-25 texts a day	614	58.98
Total	1041	100.00

Table 2 further indicates that the student-respondents are heavy texters. In a study text messaging (SMS use) continues to increase in popularity: the number of texts sent worldwide was estimated at 7.8 trillion for 2011, with a further 1.8 trillion predicted for 2012 (2012). Mobile phone use and text messaging now form part of many young people's everyday activity. In the UK, Ofcom (2012b) has found that the number of text messages sent by children rose in 2012, with 8- to 11-year-olds sending about 41 messages per week (up from about 27 in 2009-2011) and 12- to 15-year-olds sending about 193 (up from about 113 in 2009-11). Teenagers and young adults, too, are keen users of text-messaging, sending an average of 50 texts per week. Thus, teens and young adults are attached to their mobile phones therefore text messaging is considered as a phenomenon. Table 4 shows the result of the proficiency skills of the students based on their performance on the transcription of SMS in grammar, spelling and vocabulary. It shows that the students have the highest mean of 24 or 17.89 with standard deviation of 3.902 and a percentage of 71.56 %. This signifies that the student-respondents have obtained better. On the other hand, the result of the diagnostic tests obtain a mean of 20 or 10.10 with standard deviation of 2.605 and a percentage of 50.50% in grammar; the result of the diagnostic tests in vocabulary obtain a mean of 15 or 5.43 with the standard deviation of 3.069 and a percentage of 36.20% ; the result of the diagnostic tests in spelling obtain a mean of 15 or 5.75 with the standard deviation of 2.563 and a percentage of 38.33%.

**Table 4. Proficiency Skills of the Students**

	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Descriptive Equivalent
Words/Phrases						
Sentences	0	24	17.89	3.092	71.56%	Better
Grammar	0	20	10.10	2.605	50.50%	Poor
Vocabulary	0	15	5.43	3.069	36.20%	Poor
Spelling	0	15	5.75	2.503	38.33%	Poor

The result of the student-respondents regarding their proficiency skills in terms of grammar, spelling and vocabulary that is based on the transcription of SMS is significantly better compared to the diagnostic test given to

them in order to measure their proficiency skills in grammar, spelling and vocabulary it reveals that they perform poorly. Thus, it shows that the student-respondents are poor in regard to their vocabulary, spelling and grammar when they were given a diagnostic exam. Furthermore, Lourdes Villanueva (2007) stated in her article "Filipino vs. English as a Medium of Instruction" that learning to speak and write in English in this age of globalization is necessary especially if we would want to compete in the worldwide. As we in the Philippines recognize the need to establish the national language, Filipino, English has remained an absolutely popular language. In fact, Cruz (2004) stated in a relatively recent newspaper column that even at this time, most of the official notices, laws, court decisions, bar and board examinations and even the Constitution, are mostly in English.

At some point, English seems to be more official than Filipino, as the latter is still in the process of establishing its status after having been established just recently to include some words from major regional dialects all over the country. What is clear, though, is that English is a language that continuously enjoys a more privileged status in the Philippines. According to Bernardo Villegas, (2000) the youth have all the chances to speak and listen to the Filipino language in their day-to-day lives such as in conversation with members of the family, friends, going to the movies, et cetera. The majority of the youth, however, do not have enough occasions in their normal lives to speak nothing but English. With the goal of increasing the number of English proficient Filipinos, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo implemented Executive Order 210 Series of 2003, which established the policy to strengthen English as a Medium of Instruction in educational system in the Philippines. The President's intention in implementing EO 210 is motivated by a concern to keep Filipinos competitive and to make them well-educated. Based on this findings it is necessary to strengthen the proficiency skills of the students hence it would not lead to horrible circumstance.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The result of the students proficiency skills in terms of grammar, spelling and vocabulary that is based on the transcription of SMS is significantly better compared to the diagnostic test given to the respondents. English teachers must also attend intensive trainings and seminars in order to employ innovative learning strategies, methods and techniques in teaching language in order to attain an outstanding performance in language proficiency among students. Parents and teachers should advice their children to avoid spending

much time in using their cellphone and encourage them to be responsible in using cellphone. Using of cellphone is relevant only for important communication purposes. Teachers should implement extra reading reports to improve vocabulary,

grammar and spelling. Parents should encourage their children not to bring cellphones and gadgets in the school.

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