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Introduction

The 21st-century faces some severe challenges including degradation of language, grammar and vocabulary. This has resulted in emerging of pidgin languages or slung that are indeed “killing” vocabulary and writing skills.

Texting in its simplest is a mode of communication. Communication is the passing of information from one individual to another. Vocabulary is the range of words used in any particular language, while writing skills is the ability to use grammar, proper punctuation, correct spelling in written communication.

The combination of proper writing skills used with appropriate vocabulary is the key to adequate comprehensive communication. In ancient days modes of communication were quite different from modern ones. They included:

- Smoke signals
- Crafting and scrawls
- Horning
- Sending messengers to deliver a message
- Use of animals

Modern communication on the other hand has diversified things to a whole new dimension. Evolution in communication has caused an entire shift from sending messengers to sending e-mail messages, from using smoke signals to using a satellite signal to send a communication. Texting is one of the most efficient, simplest yet effective modes of modern communication. Social media platforms are computer-mediated technologies which facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expressions through networks and virtual communities.

Text messaging or "texting" was only developed and released to the public in the mid-1990s. By 2009, 60 percent of the world's population already had access to a cellphone, and texting was the second most common way to use the technology to communicate, after speaking person-to-person. Studies about how text messaging affects reading and writing began emerging in the early 2000s. It was obvious that with an almost universal limit of 160 characters and a tiny, awkward keyboard that was usually QWERTY-based, the majority of text message users would likely sacrifice the correct use of language for speed.

Types of texting around the world

Text messages in different countries around the world have produced varying ways to spell and write in English. In the United States, abbreviations (e.g. "ur" for "your" and "you're"), word shortenings (e.g. "Feb" for "February"), and acronyms are very common. In Sweden, on the other hand, text message users more commonly write in all lowercase or all capital letters, omit spaces between words, and alter the spelling of words from correct to phonetic (e.g. using "becucz" instead of "because"). The impact of this is that, after prolonged use, spelling mistakes like this become unintentional. Additionally, if English-speaking countries around the world begin adopting different ways to write, there will be communication barriers in the future. On the other hand, teenagers everywhere are writing and editing more nowadays than in any previous generation.

Texting among scholars

The general consensus about text messaging that scholars in every discipline are giving is positive. Studies in medicine have shown texting is a great way to communicate with patients about recovering after they leave the hospital. Business scholars are saying text messaging can be used to recruit employees (for instance sending a message about a special project available to a few people at once) and also to advertise. Even environmental studies have shown that sending texts about clean water sources or images of deforestation help locals on the other side of the globe find these important areas. So, while texting has numerous helpful uses in the informational and research side of communication, other, more harmful forms of texting do exist.

Some schools have made having cellphones during tests against the rules, but that does not seem to deter students from trying to use texting to cheat. Cellphones can easily be stashed in backpacks, pencil cases and pockets, and although teachers are wising up to the use of texts to cheat, the number grows exponentially every year. The repercussions of this on writing and speaking are obvious--students are not studying as much as they should, cannot generate and communicate ideas on demand, and the risks of being expelled or failing school greatly increases because even if they're not caught, teachers can detect plagiarism and even place "red herrings" like fake test keys online to make cheating students fail. One example of this occurred at the University of Maryland in 2003, when 12 students were text messaged answers off a fake answer key the professor posted online as soon as an exam started. Faculty members suspected students of using cellphones to cheat, so they set up this sting to catch them in the act, which they successfully did.

Effects on speaking

Texting has been used in place of speech to mediate conflicts, stay in touch with family members and friends, and increase intimacy in all types of relationships. Teenagers and adolescents commonly use "small talk" in text messages to communicate about issues of little importance to them. This, however, is a way to deviate from talking about issues adults would deem more "socially relevant" and creates tension between the values of the two age groups. An example of this is when a teenager sits at the dinner table texting about sports to a friend. The teenager's family would probably prefer to talk about their day, but according to several studies, what the teenager texts about with his friend is more beneficial to how he communicates with the public. Because the teenager is shifting his communication to the world outside the family, he becomes less shy and more likely to open up to new people. On the other hand, since his talking is based more and more on an electronic platform, speaking which should be done face-to-face, like breaking up with a girlfriend or listening to a teacher in class, is moving to texts and online and driving intimate conversations away.

Conclusion

Writing skills are developed by exercising writing and making it a habit. Vocabulary is improved by the continuous reading of grammar and written pieces whether formal or informal. From childhood, we learned how to write and we have developed the skills yet still using social media platforms. In fact, texting gives us a platform for us to exercise our writing skills and a chance to use the vocabulary we have. Social media platforms also grant us the opportunity to learn spellings of words since advanced settings in electronic gadgets have auto-correct features that writing books do not have so we can get to learn, correct and improve our vocabulary through social media platforms

Literature

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https://www.techwalla.com/articles/text-ability-write-speak-english_

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