

# Convergence of SMS Language in Formal Writing by ESL Learners at Higher Secondary Level

**Asma Kashif Shahzad**

Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Vehari Campus, Pakistan. Email: [asmashahzad@cuivehari.edu.pk](mailto:asmashahzad@cuivehari.edu.pk)

**Rabia Jabeen**

Associate Lecturer, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Pakistan

**Dr. Tahira Asgher**

Assistant Professor, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Pakistan

## ABSTRACT

The acquaintance of teenagers with the advent of time-economical and an advanced interaction mode has threatened the English language's standard form. This research explores the phenomenon of mixing SMS language in ESL learners' writing skills regarding the choices of lexical and morpho-syntactic items and the presence and absence of SMS features at higher secondary level in Bahawalpur. Two questionnaires have been administered to collect data for quantitative analysis. The data has been collected from 80 ESL learners and 50 ESL teachers at the Intermediate level in private and government colleges sectors in Bahawalpur. Content analysis of 15-20 recently sent SMS has been conducted through of 80 ESL learners. The study shows the violation of standard norms of the English language, i.e., contractions, vowel deletion, punctuation mistakes, use of letters and symbols observed in SMS, and written assignments collected from ESL learners of both sectors. Although SMS has its radical effects in the form of learners' negligence, carelessness, syntactic ignorance, and absence of teachers' guidance, teaching methodology, and educational context are also the cause of learners' inept written work.

**KEYWORDS:** Tesxtisms, Gadgets, Texting, Chat, Mobiles, ESL

*Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020*

## INTRODUCTION

In Pakistan, English is one of the official languages. Following Great Britain's invasion, it spread its roots throughout the subcontinent's culture. Since then, English has been used as a Lingua Franca, with varying degrees of importance in different parts of Pakistan (Bieswanger, 2007; Doring, 2002 as cited in Bieswanger, 2007; Ling, 2005). With the creation of the first computer in 1946 and various educational institutes that helped increase knowledge and reproduce the learned experience, technology has embraced training (David H. Jonassen et al., 2002). The most well-known CMC features (Computer-mediated Communication) technology has given rise to a new medium of communication: the mobile phone. This fascinating revolutionary device allows you to contact anyone on the planet in the meantime (Pew Research Centre, 2010).

Initially, mobile phones were used for making and receiving calls with selected and limited components present in them. (Ali, Rizvi & Qureshi, 2014). Over time keyboard-equipped mobile phones were transformed into an android phone. They were facilitated with unlimited software of communications which have added a

lot in the amusements and recreation i.e., SMS, MMS, WhatsApp, IMO, Facebook and e-mails, etc. (Zubair & Umair, n.d). The well-known cellular companies of Pakistan like Mobilink, Telenor, and Ufone have provided significantly affordable SMS packages for the youngsters, including ESL learners. The most common possession of Pakistani youngsters is Mobile phones (Ali, Rizvi & Qureshi, 2014).

Texting helps improve school-going learners' writing and reading skills (Coe & Oakhill, 2011). But it creates miss-comprehension and perplexity in ESL learners' correspondence by ruining the spelling and syntax also (Zubair & Umair, n.d). This well-known component consists of characters of up to 160 words, so the user is bound to deliver their messages in minimal terms (Zubair & Umair, n.d). Particular morphological variations are found in the textisms, but the grammatical structure remains the same (Chaka, Mphahlele, & Mann, 2015). The adolescents consistently display a greater level of devotion to their mobile phones. The habit of continuous mobile phone usage causes distractions among youngsters (Merson & Salter, 2010). SMS language has diversified the way of communication with many other genres.

'Texting' or 'SMS' language has become a significant area of interest in Applied Linguistics to check its great influence on English exclusively (Courtesy: GSM digital mobile phone standard). Most of the teachers complained that learners' English written works are full of slang, inappropriate abbreviations, poor grammar, and punctuation errors that are an alarming signal for the English Language norms (Powell & Dixon, 2011). SMS language is damaging the learners' comprehensive ability to determine the correct grammatical rules and standard spellings. The learners use many SMS language features that are offensive in formal writing if uncontrolled (Ping et al., 2011). Most learners include grammatical mistakes, poor spellings, and punctuation errors in their English assessment (O'Connor, 2006). The learner usually transforms the language's lexical items by shortening them into abbreviation, clipping, and acronyms. So it is noticed that learners use shorter textisms terms in SMS language as compared to any other way of communication like CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication) or IM (Instant Messaging) (Crystal, 2008).

The text message user may induce shortened phrases by using symbols to interpret the emotions rather than words. A text may equally consist of a series of alphanumeric blending, i.e., "forever" as "4ever", "2ni8" as "tonight" (Essohet al. 2014; Crystal 2008, Dansieh 2011; BBC-Focus on Africa, 2004). But all the language procedures have caused the SMS language to be viewed as a kind of autonomous composed register that does not rely upon the introduction of standard written language (Veronica et al., 2014). Text users use a mere type of sentences and abbreviated symbolic language that is diverted from the accurate usage of principles of syllable structure, sentence structure, semantics, spellings, and punctuation (O'Connor 2006). It is undeniable that ESL learners choose different linguistic items in texting, depending on their educational background. Complex statements, capitalization, and inappropriate punctuation usage are prevalent among Pakistanis.

This mixed-method study has been conducted to learn the role of educational backgrounds, i.e. private and government sectors, for SMS's effects on ESL learners' writing skills at higher secondary level in Bahawalpur. As it is observed, SMS language effects vary according to educational backgrounds and the different modes of instruction provided by instructors.

The following research questions help to develop the objectives of the study:

1. What are the effects of frequent use of texting on ESL learners' writing skills?

2. Does SMS affect ESL learners' writing skills, or do learners general grammatical errors?
3. Does educational background, i.e., private or government institutes, play any role in SMS Language's effects on ESL learners' written work?

The questions as mentioned earlier will help to acquire these objectives given below:

- i. To identify text messages' influence on learners' academic performance, primarily written work.
- ii. To explore educational systems' function, i.e. private and government institutes, to convergence SMS language within ESL learners' English written work.
- iii. To view the various solutions to sweep over the texting convergence problem in formal composition.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan came into existence on August 14, 1947, and the pattern of the use of English is fundamentally alike in both India and Pakistan. The area that comprises Pakistan came under British rule. Thus, the tradition of literary writing in English is stronger and more established in India (Lyengar 1973; Jussawalla, 1985) than in Pakistan (Rehman, 2007). The central government of Pakistan, the provincial government, and higher education institutes use English as a medium of formal communication and medium of instruction (Tariq Rehman, 2015). Due to this approach, English has become a mandatory part in the whole system (Muhammad, 2009). Instant Messaging is considered to be the most distracting element. Pupils do not converse during the lectures, but they silently text on the phone when mobile phones ring in the classroom (Tapscot, 1998). This habit created a disturbance during the classes and diverted the students' attention from lectures to messaging. That's how learners cannot focus on their lesson and started involving themselves in a side activity of texting, even without observing that they were. It is calculated in June 2011 that Pakistan has become the 5th largest growing community of mobile telephone subscribers (THE DAWN 2011). The use of mobile phones depends on the economic and social solidarity of its users (Rice & Katz, 2003). Cell phones can significantly give profit to the learners in Asia and Africa contrasted with web-based reading (Motlick, 2008).

The most common part of the mobile telephone set that has imprisoned the young generation of 21st century is the utilization of 'texting' it has emerged as a novel genre in the 20th

century and brings off a revolution in English words. "Short Message Service" renowned as SMS/text message these days, is a technological software that mimics the oral communication in the digital cellular network and transmits typed text messages from one phone to another in a limited and controlled way (Segerstad 2005, Fandruch 2007 & Carter 2003). Youngsters are recorded to receive an average of 46.03 and 45.11 send messages per day (Cingel and Sundar, 2012). Another study resulted that about eleven texts are posted weekly by seventh to twelfth-grade learners (Kemp and Bushnell, 2011).

Most Pakistani adolescents enter the advanced world of technology at an intermediate level. Among ninety-six percent of the cell phone users' group, about ninety percent of young mobile users use SMS (Plester, Wood & Bell, 2013). Henderson (2002) claimed that ESL learners use the SMS service, share their numbers with friends and spend most of their time chatting, chatting, and ticking their fingers along with the keyboard. An exciting part of the messaging is utilizing a unique register called 'texts', which is described by unusual spelling and easy syntactic ways. Most of the mistakes (i.e., initialization, wrong usage of punctuation and spelling errors) committed in the textisms showed a part of the anticipated connection to more unfortunate and better education scores, individually (Drouin & Driver, 2014).

A research survey conducted by Nwankwo (2011) observed that syntactic mistakes among mobile users, which highlights that there are oversights of punctuation marks, wrong phrasal blends, spellings and the utilization of reduced forms. Similarly, emoticons play the role of body language within the written text composition to understand how the person feels (Grinter & Eldridge, 2001). The abbreviations and acronyms help understand the exceptional shared information and choose to utilize it accordingly (Döring, 2002). SMS enables users to shorten words without losing any significance. For example, October and November can be abbreviated to 'Oct/Nov' and so on. Correspondingly, punctuation, for example, the full stop, is regularly pointless because the end of a line will imply the use of punctuation (Chiluwa, 2007).

The suitable utilization of orthographic and punctuation is frequently dismissed while massaging at the sentence level. It is common to overlook punctuation marks and initialization when SMS users are non-native English speakers (Herring & Zelenkauskaitė et al., 2009). During the SMS exchange between local SMS users (non-native English speakers), they may use traditional punctuation, which is substituted with numerous exclamations or question marks during textisms

because such features are not taken as formal English markers. Texters feel free to violate the rules of grammar. (Grace and Kemp et al., 2012). It is also noted that age is the primary factor influencing such violations. Tagliamonte and Denis conducted a study (2008) had studied millions of uncontrolled sent SMS. They followed the previous studies, which were conducted by Baron and Ling (2005) and later another survey undertaken by Baron in 2007. It was found that most of the textisms features were the adulteration of formal speech items, which decrease and increase according to the age of the users. The use of textisms features like LOL is the replacement of interjection 'Hahaha' which is observed, usually decrease according to the maturity level of the users.

A study, which was conducted by Plester, Wood & Bell (2014) had presented the concept of correlation of abbreviated words used in the textisms and verbal thinking score, which observed that the use of more abbreviated words resulted in the higher verbal thinking scores, so it focused on the clear positive relationship between textisms use and verbal thinking. A study by Tagg (2009) has presented that texting is the part of creativity rather than toiling with the keypad as accurate spellings of the words make it meaningful to understand, and inaccurate spellings vary from context to context, so in SMS, certain words and phrases are repeated to develop coherence. Crystal (2008) claimed that text language helped to improve literary skills that could add something to the previous acquired language means that SMS is one of the components that engaged the users in reading and writing activity that's how it boosted up learners' literacy writing. According to different studies textisms has positive impacts on literary skills of the ESL learners (e.g., Crystal, 2008; Thurlow, 2003; Wood, Kemp, & Plester, 2014). It doesn't have any harm to the children and considered to be a supportive element to enhance the literary skills, especially orthographic development among the learners of 8 to 12 years of an age (e.g., Bushnell, Kemp, & Martin, 2011; Coe & Oakhill, 2011; Plester, Wood, & Bell, 2008).

Veronica, Ndobbo & Floribert in 2014 had conducted a study in which Nigerian University learners were targeted. They observed that the frequency of SMS language was equally presented in mobile texts as well as in learners' English written essays which depended upon the time duration in which learners interacted with their mobile phone so the written essays of ESL learners were overwhelmed by SMS features which were according to the result of frequent use of SMS for communication.

In a study mentioned in Kemp and Bushnell's (2011), those who were not involved in

textisms practice were found with zero involvement of textisms in their English academic writing or slight impact but had a better output than those who used textisms. The quantitative research of Yousaf & Ahmad (2013) explored that as much as learners use SMS message that much they made composition mistakes so it progressively had a negative effect on writing abilities of University learners in Pakistan. Cingel & Sundar (2012) found a negative relationship between Grades 6–8 US kids' execution in a modified language structure test at a secondary level. They had utilized textisms in their last three sent messages. Muhammad (2011) has conducted a study to investigate the impacts of SMS content on the spelling abilities of ninth and twelfth grade learners, which revealed that there was no huge sign of textisms on learners' spelling in their written composition and every targeted member, except one, considered the utilization of content composition strategies improper in literacy composition (Taylor & Todd, 1995).

Ogbonna (2012) investigated a sociolinguistic investigation that arouses the need to learn about using the Nigerian language within text messages. Speaking of Hymes' (1962) ethnographic study as a sample, she found that young Nigerian SMS users mix their language into Nigerian social, semantic, political and monetary settings. Their usage shows an association of SMS formation with Nigerian background to make various sorts of messages that are important. The examination uncovered the significant reason for writing is social holding, which was essential for them to be in Nigeria expressions. Such mistakes are given to short of time to express so many thoughts and feelings, so preferably, short sentences are used in texting. This habit causes hindrance to express the ideas in proper sentences of the ESL learners' English creative written work, i.e. reports, essays, letters, paragraphs and story etc. Furthermore, ESL learners do not use a dictionary while writing text messages to forget the correct spellings of the words.

Even though the cell phone has brought numerous advantages to its clients, it is clear from inquiries that serious utilization of this specialized gadget may hurt those phone users who used textisms, including their mental prosperity. It was found in the examination that learners made more mistakes when they needed to read textisms instead of Standard English books (Kemp and Bushnell, 2011). That's why Thurlow (2003) has taken textisms as the indication of language death gradually. Studies from various nations, for example, Thailand (Kawasaki, 2006) also, Korea (Jee Hyun et al., 2008), had discovered those ESL learners who were distracted by their cell phone would, in general, experience mental unsettling influences.

## METHODOLOGY

Two questionnaires were administered to collect data for quantitative analysis. The data was taken from 80 ESL learners and 50 ESL teachers who were teaching at the Intermediate level in private (Superior College & Punjab College) and government colleges (Govt. S.E College & Govt. Post Graduate College) sectors in Bahawalpur. The items of the questionnaire recorded the opinion of learners regarding the influence of SMS on their writing skills and the role of their educational background in the convergence of SMS language in their writing. The ESL learners' questionnaire included 25 items. It was divided into following 5 points of Likert scale responses: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral/ Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

The questionnaire covered the following relevant information about teachers' opinion:

- i. The attitude of learners towards the damaging effects of SMS language in English written work while conversing on the mobile phone.
- ii. Effects of Education sectors (private & government) using SMS features in the written work.

The ESL teachers' questionnaire contained 15 items of close-ended questionnaire items. The questionnaire covered the following relevant information about teachers' opinion:

- i. Teachers' opinion about the use of SMS language in the written work of the learners.
- ii. Teaching methodology during ESL lessons and teachers' mode of communication during lectures.
- iii. Impact of academic background and learners' English knowledge of SMS usage.

80 ESL learners' 15-20 SMS sent or received from the social groups of ESL learners were taken for qualitative analysis to observe the presence of SMS features such as the omission of the vowel, use of letters instead of words, use of numbers at the place of words, contractions, over-ruled punctuation marks and incorrect grammatical sentences. Learners' checked and marked English written assignments were collected to study the influence of SMS language with correlation to the English language's educational background as it was noticed through previous literature that gender matters to have different impacts of SMS language on written work. These written assignments help provide in-depth information to investigate SMS language's effects, including educational English background and gender.



## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Among the eighty ESL learners of four private and government Colleges, 40 were males, and 40 were females in Bahawalpur. Learners of the government sector usually bring phones to their classrooms or college premises and have a sense of possession. Learners of government sectors overuse shortened words, punctuation and words other than SMS. All the learners' and teachers' responses of questionnaires, learners' SMS and written assignments of both sectors have presented that SMS has affected the writing skills of the learners, but male learners of both sectors are affected more than female learners. Learners usually confused the actual with SMS spellings. Some of the learners favour the function of SMS to improve their English written ability.

The comparison of SMS and written assignments identify that the only SMS is not the matter for poor English grammar and written ability, but the learners' negligence, carelessness and obsession with SMS is the real cause of this damage. Learners considered themselves engaged in such language that it is inappropriate, so this SMS language caused a great threat to the English language's syntactic structure. The teaching methodology is quite subjective in the government colleges of Pakistan, where the primary purpose of teaching is the aim to get high grades. Teachers use code-mixing or translation method to enhance the perception of delivered lectures. Moreover, teaching technique are changed at higher secondary level in which classrooms are converted from learner-centered to teacher-centered classrooms. Teachers usually focus on providing the lectures and course coverage to meet the concerned college's requirement and syllabus division policy. They do not bother to give home assignments to assess the learners' ability and compatibility. Class tests are mostly avoided in government sector due to number of students present in the class. Monthly assessments are taken at private sector level once in a month and in government sector, assessments are taken once or twice in a year. Government teachers do not get the chance to interact with each individual to learn their problems and characterize their mistakes individually.

Learners who are more interacted with their mobile phones for SMS chats with friends and social circles than books gradually lost their ability to identify between actual spelling and SMS, appropriate and inappropriate use of English language, incorrect syntax, and morphological errors. Learners of private sectors are restricted to bring their cellphones to college premises, especially females so the hours they spend at college usually keep them away from this technological effect. Teachers' responses tell that

ESL learners intrude SMS language in their written work and do general grammar mistakes, incorrect subject-verb agreement and violation of tenses. Similarly, they misspell the words, one of its reasons is the mispronunciation of the students that are commonly found among ESL learners who belonged to Urdu-medium school backgrounds.

The analyzed latest 15-20 sent or received text messages of the learners show that learners violate the aspects of English morphologically, semantically, phonologically and contextually. Learners' SMS were found with different processes like shortening or reduction, punctuation, numbering, clipping, omission of vowel, abbreviation, contraction, use of single letter, context, use of emoticons, capitalization and letters repetitions etc. Learners of both sectors were observed to violate the rules of standard form such as i.e., Hlpfl (helpful), Hsptl (hospital), Gd (good), and Frthr (further) are taken as morphological error of shortened and reduction process.

Words like 'Com' for computer, 'Bro' for brother and 'sis' for sister, which are clipped form of words, are commonly found in the text messages. Like in the 3rd (test), 2nd (second) here letters 'seco' are deleted, f9 (fine) in this word 'ine' are omitted. 2morrow (tomorrow), 2 as a 'to' for 'preposition', too 'for addition', and two 'for number'. Ni8 (night) where 'ght' are replaced with 8 which were commonly observed in the text messages of male learners of both sectors. Idt (I don't care) first letter of each word is combined, TC (Take care), LOL (laugh out loud), IA (In Sha Allah), GWS (Get well soon), Tysm (Thank you so much) and YK (you know) are abbreviated in the phrases which were observed in the SMS of females of private sector. 'Hru?' initial letters of (How are you?) are taken and rest of the letters were deleted. But in words like 'sme', 'nd' and 'lte' vowel 'a' is deleted. Many words are replaced by letters i.e. 'c' for see, 'b' for be, 'k' for okay, 'q' replaced the Urdu word 'kyoun' means why, 'r' for are 't' for tea, 'x' for ex (former) and 'Y' for why. In this situation words are contracted to shorten the words due to shortage of time. Letters are repeated to represent the emotion and feelings. Words like 'Heyyyy!', 'Ohoo!', 'Aww!', 'Gggg!', 'Hmmm!' last letters of the words are repeated to present the stress within the word. But in many cases first letters are also repeated 'ooof!' to present the expressions.

Different words like 'Nthng' vowels (o and i) are omitted. In many other regular conversational words are written without vowels i.e., day is written as 'dy' where vowel 'a' is omitted. Care is written as 'cr' and vowels 'a' and 'e' are deleted. Before is written as 'bfr' and 'e' and 'o' are removed. Similarly, college is written as 'clg' and 'o' and 'e' are omitted in the word. This aspect is observed in the learners' SMS of both sectors. English is not the

mother language of Pakistanis. Especially in Bahawalpur, more than two or three languages are taken as regional languages i.e., Saraiki, Punjabi and Urdu. It is common that second language user mixes his own native language while conversing on phone through text messages.

In the sentences 'Tumhari firthr leave dedo phr?' vocabulary items 'further' and 'leave' are added in the Urdu statement. Similarly, in the statement 'Dctor lte ho gya' words like 'doctor' and 'late' are meddled in Urdu statement. In the sentences i.e., 'Teachers ny koi syllabus specify nhi kia' 'teachers', 'syllabus' and 'specify' are English words that are included in Urdu statement. But in the case of 'Aww! Ye my favrt' and 'Aww! i m shareef' words 'ye' and 'shareef' are Urdu words used in the English sentences. There can be different reasons of such aspect. May be the user feel more comfortable while using his own native language or he has limited English vocabulary so he mixes some vocabulary items from his native language. It can be possible that the person with whom he is sharing those messages is not good at English so the receiver better comprehend the actual message in his own language rather than imposing another language which he cannot understand.

Among 80 different assignments of the learners, it was observed that most of the learners used incorrect form of verbs in their creative writing paragraphs. Most of the nouns missed its demonstrators or used them incorrectly. Number of prepositions were misplaced or inaccurately used. Unnecessary lengthy statements were used where pointless and not used where necessary. Symbols, letters and numbers i.e., '2day' for 'today', '2morrow' for 'tomorrow' and 'v' for 'we', were obsessively used in males' written work of both sectors. When all the provided SMS and written assignment were compared together then grammar, punctuations, capitalization and spellings mistakes were found. In many assignments 'and' is replaced by '&' or 'nd' which is a common feature used in the SMS chatting.

Tenses mistakes were commonly observed. In the assignments, where learners had touse past tense, they used present tense. In one of the assignments of 1<sup>st</sup> year student, 'Dog stood at the safe distance' was replaced by incorrect form of verb 'Dog stands at the safe distance.' In other sample assignment of government sector learner used, 'poor man didn't seem right or wrong' where 'see' should be used at the place of 'sees' and in another sentence 'Hubert felt ashamed was being is called a thief and liar' here tense is used incorrectly. Words were found misspelled in the assignments of government sector such as, 'piece' was written 'peaic', 'bridge' was written as 'brige', 'cross' as 'crous', 'seriously' was written as 'sriously', 'vegetable' was written as 'vegitable', 'innocence' was written as 'innosance' and 'excuses' was written as 'excusses' etc. Many punctuation errors were found in the written assignments of both sectors, but government sector learners committed more than private ones, i.e. 'I' was usually written small in the middle of the sentences. In the sentence 'moreover, they did not like that's climate' here apostrophe (') is mistakenly used. At many places (s) is found common while using plural (s) i.e., the words 'astrologer's', 'star's', 'aim's and in many others (') is misused.

The most common error learners commit while texting and this habit led them to do the same mistakes in their written work as well. In the example of 'I has it' student has used the incorrect verb. Subject 'I' is first person which requires 'have' but the student has used verb according to singular noun. In the sentences 'The women is kicking' the student has used the singular auxiliary verb with plural noun here. In the sentence 'In the beginning Earth were very hot' the student has used the plural verb with singular noun. In another sentence 'House garbage were thrown' student has committed another mistake of using plural verb with singular noun. These errors are found in males' assignments and SMS. In the sentences i.e., 'I'm getting daily report' the first person 'I' should be capital always which is mistakenly written small in the middle of the sentences. In another sentence 'They did not travel on tuesday.' Capitalization error is found.

**Table 1. Linguistic Analysis of learners' SMS and Assignments**

Sr no.	Textisms	English forms	Process	Term Repetitions in written work	Aspects
1.	Gd	Good	Shortened and Reduction	2	Phonology
2.	Frthr	Further	Shortened and Reduction	2	Phonology
3.	Chem	Chemistry	Clipping	6	Morphology

4.	2nd	second	Numbering	10	Phonology Morphology
5.	IA	In Sha Allah	Abbreviation	4	Morphology
6.	iz	is	Spellings according to phone	3	Phonology
7.	Hru?	How are you?	Contractions	3	Morphology
8.	Ur	Your	Contractions	2	Morphology
9.	U	You	Use of single letters	6	Phonology
10.	clg	college	Omission of Vowels	3	Morphology
11.	I has it	I have it.	Subject-verb Agreement	5	Semantics
12.	Tuesday.	tuesday	Capitalization	6	Semantics
13	Don't	Dont	Punctuation	6	Morphology

In Table 1 it shows all the textisms find in both learners' SMS and written work. When researcher asked about the use of cellphone among the 80 ESL learners. Almost 100% learners of both sectors agreed that they use their cell phone. Similarly, when they were asked about the interaction of learners with their phones, then it was observed that 78% average learners of private sector and 89% learners from government sector interact with their phones most of the students. One side, 100% teachers from private agreed that learners do grammar mistakes i.e., subject-verb agreement and tenses errors, besides, this 84% of them consider grammar mistakes and SMS errors are same. On the other side, 92% government ESL teachers agreed that their learners do grammar mistakes and 84% of them agreed that they found textisms in their learners' written work.

### CONCLUSION

While concluding the discussion, after getting the results of collected data from the ESL learners and teachers of private and government sectors, the researcher supports the point that youth takes great interest in the emerging technology components like the mobile phone that has become the vital part of learners' life. All the features of SMS like shortened words, abbreviations, emoticons, misspelled words or other informal phrases and sentences are found in learners' SMS. The excessive use of the component leaves an impact on learners' formal English written work that is not acceptable as a standard course.

The analysis of research work supports the point that educational sectors play an important role in the effects of SMS on the writing skills of

the learners. Learners of both sectors (private and government) equally interact with mobile phones which are equipped with the internet. Learners of both sectors greatly influence SMS on their English writing skills, but learners of the government sector are more pretentious due to its continuous use. Males' assignments of both sectors are found with symbols, shortened, abbreviated and misspelled words. Males of the government sector commit more grammar mistakes.

The teachers of both sectors equally provide proper guidance to their learners. Code-switching is the requirement for external examination because English is taught as a subject not as a language. The private sector somehow plays a supportive role to learn Standard English. However, according to the results extracted from the data, SMS is a notable component of interaction and communication which helps the learners to improve their phonics and spelling ability. The teaching methodology and educational sectors are responsible for mixing of SMS language in learners' English written work. Emergence of SMS feature in the written work of the learners is not the only issue, but learners' own negligence, English language ignorance and carelessness are also notable components that lead to that learners are not capable to differentiate between common and SMS language mistakes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers have to make their learners differentiate between standard and informal English language during ESL lectures. Teachers must categorically highlight the mistakes on the assignments of the learners so they comprehend

their mistakes. All the mistakes should be highlighted and corrected by the teachers. Teachers must arrange a discussion class where all the learners guided individually. Learners must be inflicted to use English as a medium of communication during ESL lectures. They are encouraged to raise questions in English and teachers must interact with each individual to give the answer. Moreover, learners should use an auto dictionary during the use of SMS so they can differentiate between the actual spellings and textisms that's how they can learn the spellings as well.

### REFERENCES

- Shahzad, A. Rizvi, S. A. A. & Qureshi, M. S. (2014). Cell Phone Mania and Pakistani Youth: Exploring the Cell Phone Usage Patterns among Teenagers of South Punjab. In *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, Winter 2014, Vol. 8, No.2, 42 – 50).
- Bushnell, C., Kemp, N. & Martn, F. H. (2011). Text-Messaging Practices and Links to General Spelling Skill: A Study of Australian Children', *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 11, 27–38.
- Caroline Tagg, (2009). Corpus Linguistics Study of SMS Text Messaging” A thesis submitted University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
- Cingel, D. & Sundar, S. (2012). Texting, Techspeak, and Tweens: The Relationship between Text Messaging and English Grammar Skills. *New Media & Society*, 14(8).
- Crystal, D. (2008). *Txtng: The Gr8 Db8*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- David, H., Jonassen, K. Peck, L. & Wilson, B. G. (1999). *Learning with Technology: A Constructivist Perspective*. USA: Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall.
- Döring, N. (2002). *Abbreviations and Acronyms in SMS Communication*. Retrieved from <http://www.nicoladoering.de/>.
- Grinter, R. E, & Eldridge, M. A. (2001). *Proceedings of the Seventh European Conference on Computer*. Germany: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Herring, S. C. & Zelenkauskaitė, A. (2009). Symbolic Capital in a Virtual Heterosexual Market: Abbreviation and Insertion in Italian iTV SMS. *Written Communication*.
- Kemp, N. & Bushnell, C. (2011). Children's TextMessaging: Abbreviations, Input Methods and Links with Literacy. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 27(1), 18-27.
- Ling, R., & Baron, N. S. (2007). Text Messaging and IM Linguistic Comparison of American College Data. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 26(3), 291-298.
- Motlik, S. (2008). Mobile Learning in Developing Nations, In *International Review on Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 9, no.2. Retrieved from <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/564/1071>.
- Plester, Beverly, Wood, C. & Bell, V. (2013). Txt Msg N School Literacy: Does Texting And Knowledge Of Text Abbreviations Adversely Affect Children's Literacy Attainment. *Literacy*, 42(3), 137-144.
- Powell, D., and M. Dixon, (2011). Does SMS Text Messaging Help Or Harm Adults' Knowledge Of Standard Spelling. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 27(1), 58- 66. Academic Search Complete. Web. 26 Sept. 2013.
- Porter, G., Hampshire, K., Milner, J., Munthali, A., Robson, E., de Lannoy, A., Bango, A., Gunguluza, N., Mashiri, M., Tanle, A., and Abane, A. (2016). Mobile Phones and Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: From Youth Practice to Public Policy. *J. Int. Dev.*, 28: 22–39.
- Tapscot, D. (1998). *Growing up digital. The Rise of the Net Generation*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Tagliamonte, S. A. & Denis, D. (2008). Linguistic ruin? LOL! Instant Messaging and Text Language. *American Speech*, 83(1), 3–34.
- Taylor, S. and Todd, P. A. (1995). Understanding information technology usage: A test of competing models. *Information systems research*, 6(2):144–176.
- Thurlow, C. (2007). Fabricating Youth: New-Media Discourse and the Technologization of Young People. In S. Johnson and A. Ensslin (Eds) *Language in the Media: Representations, Identities, Ideologies* (pp.213-233), London: Continuum
- Studies* 94(5), 582-602.
- Veronica, Ndobbo & Floribert, (2014). Effects of SMS Texting on the Writing Skills of



University Students in Nigeria: Case of  
the College of Education Akamkp  
*International Journal of Linguistics and  
Communication*, 2(3).

Soomro, Z. A. & Kamran, U. (n.d). Effects of  
Texting on Students' Spelling in  
Academic Writing. Unpublished Thesis  
of Department of Linguistics, Faculty of  
Social Sciences, Quaid-i-Azam  
University, Islamabad, Pakistan.