

Annotated Bibliography

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Cingel, Drew P., and S. Shyam Sundar. "Texting, Techspeak, And Tweens: The Relationship Between Text Messaging And English Grammar Skills." *New Media & Society* 14.8 (2012): 1304-1320. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2014.

In Cingel and Sundar's piece, the authors first provide the reader definitions for the nuances of textspeak. Textspeak involves both word adaptations and structural changes. Word adaptations include shortening words, and structural changes encompass lacking or over-emphasized punctuations. The article conducts a study on the impact of text speak on middle school students, and then applies this to the educational arena.

First, though, it is important to recognize the perceptions that the authors bring to the table. Textspeak is perceived to be less harmful by adolescents than by adults, possibly because they grew up with the "language." However, most teens recognize that texting lacks the equivalent of real writing. Finally, education leaders and parents are worried about the perceived dangers of textspeak, especially since middle school is a formative time for the comprehension of grammar skills.

Now, to the study. The authors conducted a study on the grammar proficiency of middle school students over their 6-8th grade years. The result, though it cannot be determined as cause and effect, does show a general negative correlation between textspeak and adolescent grammar skills.

As for textspeak's inclusion in education, the authors propose lessons to help students learn the definite difference between textspeak and formal writing. It also encourages the practice of more formal writings, rather than an inclusion in the technological world. While the data and perceptions of this piece are helpful, the educational propositions made go against much of the other research I have collected, which may either weaken my argument, or provide for interesting conversations between scholars.

Ferguson, Niall. "Texting Makes U Stupid." *Newsweek* 158.12 (2011): 11. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 24 Mar. 2014.

Niall Ferguson, a professor of history at Harvard University, contributed to *Newsweek* with this article titled "Texting Makes U Stupid." In his piece, Ferguson's central argument claims that the decline in literacy of American children and teenagers is a result of the surge in texting. Another consequence, according to Ferguson, in this new text culture, is the decline of pleasurable reading. The author claims this will alienate the teens of today from past generations because of their ignorance of the past.

The article provides useful statistics supporting the claim. A Nielson study reported that 13-17 year olds send an average of 3339 texts per month. Also, in 2004 the National Endowment for the Arts estimated that less than 1/3 of 13 year olds read for pleasure each day. Finally, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reported that the reading gap for 15 year olds in Shanghai and the US is just as big as the gap between the US and Serbia.

Because this is more of a popular article, it emphasizes a perception that lots of people accept. Thus, this article can help to stimulate the conversation as to how the perception of an under-literate generation can affect media/news reporting in society. I will just need to be skeptical when referencing Ferguson's data to make sure it is not arbitrary but that a trend is taking place in reading for pleasure and the literacy gap.

Lu, M. "Effectiveness Of Vocabulary Learning Via Mobile Phone." *Journal Of Computer Assisted Learning* 24.6 (2008): 515-525. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2014.

In Lu's article, he researches and discusses how effective mobile phones and text messaging can be on the growth of one's secondary language vocabulary. In one of his studies, students who used text messaging to learn vocabulary outscored both those who learned through computers or on paper. He cites that the environment of mobile phones is more conducive to a student's lifestyle. The time span can vary, occurring at different lengths and times of the day, which is much more natural than studying through cramming. Similar results were also found for English speakers; using texting for educational purposes actually increased their vocabulary growth levels more than did paper methods.

One limitation that Lu understands for learning a new language with the help of texts is the maximum amount of characters that can be used in each message. Choppy, half-complete sentences have the potential to confuse students.

This article is helping to shape my application of research. I knew previously that I wanted to focus on the effects of text messaging in either education or media. This article, along with a few more, give me scholarly articles that support embracing text messaging as a new medium of teaching that embraces student environments and possibly motivates the participation of more students.

Sweeny, Sheelah M. "Writing For The Instant Messaging And Text Messaging Generation: Using New Literacies To Support Writing Instruction." *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 54.2 (2010): 121-130. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 25 Mar. 2014.

Sweeney's article focuses on the techniques that can be used to enhance writing instruction for a new(er) generation: the millennials. The author identifies this generation as a techno-savvy group with constant interactions with the Internet and cell-phones. Given this new generation's relationship with this technology, Sweeney indicates that these new and evolving literacies should

be woven in to education rather than being avoided. In other words, communication is changing, as should education.

One of Sweeney's arguments rest on the fact that schools need to help students function in the world outside of the classroom. With that, rather than alienating the new literary world of text speak and technology as a mode of communicating thought, schools should embrace these methods. One method of messaging applications in education is to use texts. Teachers would have students provide a summary of a passage through a text message. Or, by students creating Twitter accounts and having to post so many times per week, a greater sense of community can be felt.

Sweeney's guidance to the education sector leaves me skeptical, which I find useful for my paper. Sending a summary in one single text can prove to be restraining, with less room for a creative and comprehensive approach. This limiting approach seems to have the danger of lacking the development of truly complex thoughts, but it does possibly engage students to a greater level.

Verheijen, Lieke. "The Effects of Text Messaging and Instant Messaging on Literacy." *English Studies* 94.5 (2013): 582-602. *Ebsco Host*. Web. 23 March 2014.

The millennial generation is increasingly using instant messages and text messages as a form of communication. In Verheijen's article, he reviews media perceptions of this communication medium as well as the scholarly research revolving around the topic.

Verheijen first begins by defining terms surrounding this topic. A variation of text language exists in the conversation, ranging from terminology like textese, text talk, and text language. He also emphasizes efficiency (both in time and money) as a core reason for the expansive use of textese.

The conversation of the topic of texting's effect on literacy has created opposing viewpoints, as the research has been split in its conclusions. However, Verheijen does recognize that more studies have concluded that there exists a positive correlation between English literacy and text messaging than negative correlations or no correlation.

Despite the inconclusive results and difficulty in establishing causality, Verheijen's attention to the media's perception will be very helpful to the paper. The author provides ample examples of media bashing on the perceived effects of texting. In fact, media's overwhelming view of this topic is extremely pessimistic, with texting being called the "threat of social progress."

These perceptions will help my paper as I discuss the importance of perception in this issue, while the various studies give examples for the scholarly research. Media perception influences its readers, which has the potential to affect how textspeak will influence other sectors of society, like education and advertisements.

Witte, Shelbie. "'That's Online Writing, Not Boring School Writing': Writing With Blogs And The Talkback Project." *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 51.2 (2007): 92-96. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2014.

Witte begins this article with a personal anecdote about a former student in order to show the growing divide between traditional, print teaching and a new form on online writings such as blogs. Witte writes that on-line writing excites and motivates students to a higher level. This adaptation of technologies grows with the Millennial Generation, and these students thrive on technology.

Witte's article focuses on a program called the Talkback Program, which uses on-line blogs to engage students in writing. With educational standards under the former No Child Left Behind Act and a new initiative called the Common Core State Standards, technological literacy has become a growing topic of importance. Traditional methods are no longer engaging students, so new techniques must be created. The Talkback Program exemplifies this idea.

Witte's article, although a few years old, places the emphasis on teachers' willingness to adapt. In the age of texting and smartphones, this can continue. Her article made me think of ways to engage with students, such as writing each stanza of a poem through one text, or posting their research not on notecards to prove that they have sought out information, but rather on an on-line blog, which will be helpful in my paper.

One hindrance to this article is its small purview of application. It focuses just on one program and not education in general. But, I think it can act as a starting base for my original ideas.
