Text (SMS) Language and Its Effects on Standard of English: A Study of Malaysian Senior Generations Perceptions

Arlini Binti Alias[13]

Abstract

Technological advancements have affected the way people use languages especially in virtual communication. The language of text messaging and electronic communication resembles speech, with simple syntax, incomplete sentences and informal structure (Proysen, 2009). This paper is aimed not only to explore senior generations' language style in their text messages, but also to observe the problems they face in understanding text language. Subsequently, perception of the senior generation users on the effect of text language on Standard English was also gathered. Results displayed the existence of a collateral effect of text language on Standard English among users due to the recurring usage of non-conventional forms of written English as well as short forms and abbreviations leading to the deterioration of (written) language proficiency. 75% of the respondents experienced and showed difficulty in interpreting and understanding text language. Finally, respondents also expressed concerns that the evolvement of SMS (text) language may lead to the endangerment in the standard of a language.

Key words: *SMS (Text) language, abbreviations, comprehension, perception, Standard English*

---

[13]The author is a faculty member of UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has led to the modernization of the methods in which people communicate. Despite the ordinary usage of a mere conversation over the phone, an alternative method of technological advancement in communication is by sending text messages through their mobile communication device, also known as Short Messaging Service or SMS.

SMS, though dominantly used by people of the younger generation (Freudenberg, 2009), has also become prevalent among the senior ones. A research conducted by Tekelec, a mobile messaging company, found that SMS is reaching across all demographics and is now prevalent among senior generations; not just young adults and teenagers (Harnick, 2010). Texting, what was once mainly an activity dictated by the younger generation, has become trendy with adults over 45 years of age. Mobile phones are becoming more integrated into the everyday lives of consumers across continents and age groups.

Proysen (2009) highlighted that in the beginning of the 21st century, television shows that are based on text messages have emerged. These are so-called "chat shows", where the viewers are able to send text messages to the television station, and the text message are televised on the screen nationwide. These shows typically have one or two hosts who are in the studio to read out loud the text messages that appear on the screen, in relation to what is being discussed on the television show. Occasionally, there are competitions such as contests or prize-givings, where the host then asks a question and the viewer has to text his or her answer. These text messages are charged more expensive than the average text message that one sends to another user, and thus, television companies make profits from chat shows that are typically sent during night time.

In recent time, local newspapers in Malaysia have also provided spaces in their publications for their readers to put across opinions through SMS. The Star newspaper for an instance provides two columns for this, one for the readers to send opinion regarding any general issues and the other specifically on sports.

Consequently, these technological advancements have affected the way people use languages in their online communication. English, which is the most widely used language in the Internet, is affected by these advancements. Proysen (2009) said that the language of text messaging and electronic communication resembles speech, with simple syntax, incomplete sentences and informal structure. The spelling conventions used in the text messages are relatively different from Standard English and the use of abbreviations and phonetic spelling frequently occurs. Proysen (2009) discovered that some high school students maintained the language of text messaging instead of the Standard English written texts in their academic writing. He identifies several non -conventional written forms in the students writing such as lack of punctuations, lack of capitalizations and incorrect spelling usage, which has led to the fluctuation of school grades. In relation, this has shown that the prediction of texting inevitably will erode the younger generation's ability to spell, punctuate and capitalize correctly, and the tendency of transferring these new habits into their academic writing.

Crystal (2008) explains that Textspeak (text language) is characterized by its distinctive graphology. Its chief feature is rebus abbreviation. Words are formed in which letters represent syllabus. The clear ideology behind the usage of such abbreviations is directly related to less consumption of time, energy, as well as space.

As one of the features of SMS language, abbreviation is a shortening, specifically, a letter or group of letters, taken from a word or words, and employed to represent them for the sake of brevity (Proysen, 2009). They are shortened in everyday writing for the reason of saving space, less amount of effort, and convenient. At the same time, it still retains the full meaning of words.

Due to the limited message lengths and minuscule user interface of mobile phones, SMS users commonly make extensive use of abbreviations, particularly the use of numbers for words (an instance: *"4"* in place of the word *"for"*), and the omission of vowels, as in the phrase *"txt msg"*.

With the truly instantaneous media (SMS, IRC and IM), there is the desire for one to have a conversation almost as fast as the oral equivalent, thus creating an extra pressure to do away with awkward spelling and grammar. Despite the desire for immediacy, the awkwardness of typing a text message on a cell phone due to the

limited characters of the messages (about 126 characters) is combined to produce bizarre results. For instance, a word or phrase such as:

"Night"	written as	*"nite"*
"later"	written as	*"18r"*
"see you"	written as	*"c u"*
"talk to you later"	written as	*"ttyl",*
"thank you very much"	written as	"*tqvm"*
"Okay, I will see you there"	written as	*"K c u thr"*

Aziz, Shamim, Aziz and Avais (2013) in their study revealed that the profuse use of abbreviation and contraction forms of text language among students is an identified factor to the occurrence of SMS features in their academic writing, which also claimed to cause endangerment to the standard forms of language.

Apart from that, Balakrishnan and Yeow (2008), in their study of mobile phone texting satisfaction, revealed that texting users also tend to apply code-mixing in their text messages.

"Nak see you esok" (Want to see you tomorrow) written as *"nk c u sok"*

"Want to go makan" (Want to have lunch) written as *"wanna makan"*

Above examples mark the tendency of code-switching the two languages (Bahasa Malaysia to English) or vice versa. All these example of non-conventional written forms would not only affect the structure of the standard language and proficiency, but also miscommunications and misinterpretation of the text meaning itself (Tayebinik and Puteh, 2012).

Many researches have been conducted on the emergence and effects of this 'distorted' form of English. However, these researches mainly focused on how English language is used when people send messages, the features of SMS (text) language and the reasons behind their usage. Additionally, previous researches also show that teenager's ownership of mobile phones is close to 100% in most of countries such as Norway, Japan and Taiwan. The result of the survey implies that teenage consider mobile phone as an important necessity in their daily life (PewInternet, 2005). In other words, the focus on mobile phones has been normally

correlated with the younger generations. Here is a gap in research on how the senior generations use English when sending text messages and whether this group of users has difficulties understanding and deciphering the text messages sent by those of the younger generations.

The following questions are dealt by the study:

1. To analyze the English language used by the senior generations' users of mobile phones in their text messages.
2. To identify the abbreviations and/or short forms used in the SMS that are posing problems to the senior generations in understanding text messages.
3. To obtain perception of the senior generation users of mobile phones on the possibility of text language to be part of Standard English in the future.

With the rapid advancement of communication technology, the way people communicate and use languages are also extensively transformed. While some of these changes have been positive in nature, some have negatively impacted their users' ability to effectively send and receive messages (Nelson, 2012). Therefore, this study is important in seeing the effect on understanding text messages between two generations of mobile phone users. Moreover, Freudenberg (2009) proposes that the SMS (text) language is not only unique but also dominated and largely utilized by adolescents. As such it will be interesting to investigate whether the senior generations would have difficulties in understanding the language.

The mobile phone is viewed as an important communication tool and has become an integral part of the Malaysian and global society. A study conducted by Sheeren and Rozumah (2009) concludes that Malaysians preferences of using mobile phones for various purposes in comparison to fixed telephones are widely increased. Texting on mobile phones is one of the mentioned preferences of mobile phone usage.

Texting is referred to the action of constructing short character based messages and exchanging it between mobile phone users. Text messages or also known as SMS (Short Message Service) is an evolution of the mobile phone which has developed to service a number of unanticipated different uses (Lewis 2005). Text

messages were initially a form of communication frequently used by teenagers to reduce cost and an easy way for social communication.

As development occurs through technological advances, people of different ages have different perspective and are taught with different assortments of technology. As Balakrishnan and Yeow (2008) explain that age differences among people reflect their communication styles parallel to the technologies of their period. There are numerous studies related to age factor, such as Bunce and Sisa (2002, Cited in Jiahong, Esa & Kan Zhang, 2010) by examining age differences in the perceived workload related to the performance of a demanding, high event rate, vigilance task.

A number of studies correlating the usage of technology with age show that usage is lessen with age, and to an extent, it is associated with attitudes and perception to particular technologies like the Internet (Pew-Internet, 2005: US Department of Commerce, 2002). Wright *et al.* (2000) concluded on a study that younger generations had a faster text entry on mobile phones in comparison to senior generations. However, they are less accurate at touch-screen keyboards due to their rapidity.

The research study identifies SMS (text) language of the younger generation as the independent variable correlating how it has a substantial effect to senior generation citizens and their usage. The effects and usage of the framework are moderating variables that are constructed on the basis of composing the Standard English and understanding SMS language through the varieties of structures, such as abbreviations, age differences, relationship statuses, and language usage. The fear of the critics of the texting culture is that the more young people use text language, the more their likelihood to forget about syntactic rules, since texting de-emphasizes the importance of correct spelling and grammar (Taiwo, 2010).

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
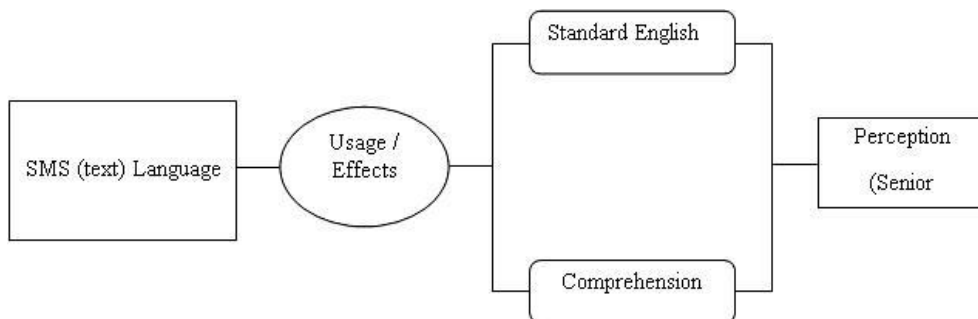
METHODOLOGY

This research deploys the data collection used in Proysen (2009) with modifications in the designated instrument. A self-designed questionnaire was distributed to each respondent through emails. The questionnaire contains of four parts:

Part A: Background Information
Part B: SMS Language Use
Part C: Content of SMS Messages
Part D: Abbreviations

Data collected from items in Part B and C were used to answer research question one. Part B inquired the respondents to notify whether any sort of abbreviations and short forms were applied in their messages to different groups of receivers. In Part C, text messages were collected from the eight respondents. The respondents were requested to record in writing their last five text messages on the questionnaire provided. Additionally, the respondents needed to provide information related to the messages such as to whom the messages were sent to and whether the topic in the messages was formal or informal. Subsequently, the respondents could also forward their messages to the researchers instead of writing them in the questionnaire. Data collected from these two parts were used to support each other during data analysis.

To achieve the answer to research question two, the respondents were asked to answer Part D which was prepared based on Proysen (2009). Basically, they were inquired to make an assumption of the definition of a list of 'vocabularies' of SMS language. Lastly, as for research question three, the respondents were inquired to respond to the open-ended question in Part B on their perception of the possibility that the abbreviations used in the text language may be accepted as the Standard English.

Respondents for this research were eight ESL lecturers from a number of selected universities: International Islamic University Malaysia, UCSI University and Tun Hussein Onn University of Malaysia. These individuals were selected based on their background in English education and communicating via text messages in English is a norm among them.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Part A and B

The research data was collected from a total of eight senior generation participants; five females and three males. A set of questionnaire consisting of four sections were given to the respondents from a selection of higher learning institutions in Malaysia to examine the use of SMS (text) language among senior generations and their perceptions on the usage of SMS language. Each part requires participants' response on their experience and understanding of the utilization of SMS language in their communication both in formal and informal settings.

A majority of the participants exhibited that they have experienced with the usage of mobile phones for more than six years. Only two of the participants have less experience in the utilization of SMS with 4-6 years experiences, while the rest of the participants have been exposed to this function of mobile phones for more than 6 years.

Although all participants may be considered as having a significant amount of experience with SMS, two of the eight participants send text messages a few times a week and does not use their mobile phones mainly for messaging purposes in comparison to making phone calls. Nevertheless, the other five senior generation participants used their mobile phones daily, as well as sending messages more than making phone calls.
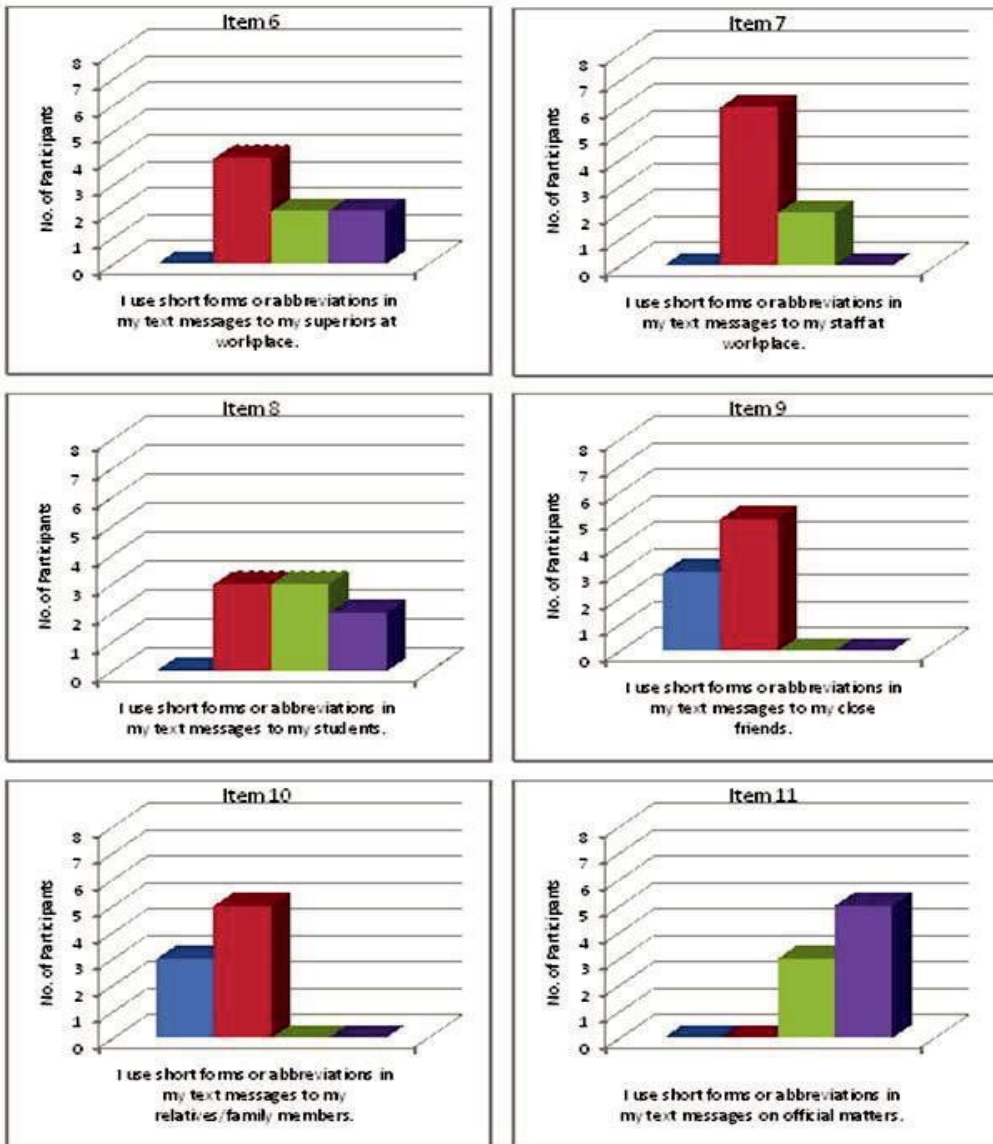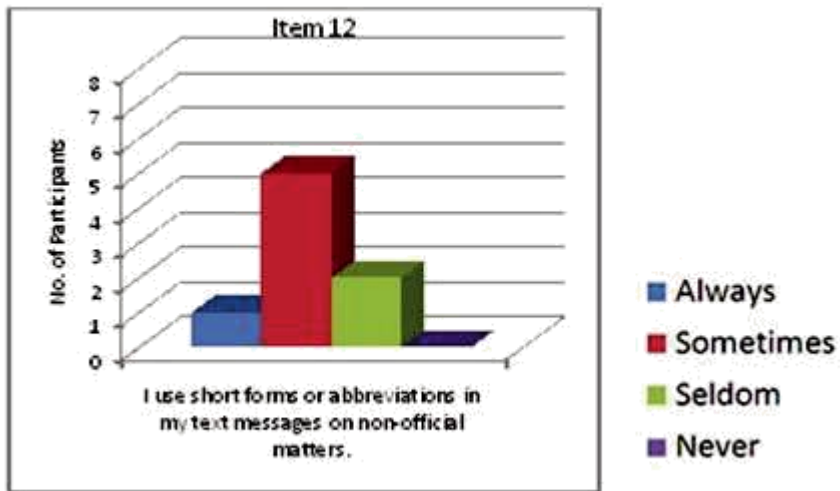
Figure 2: Distributions of Response (Part B)

The above charts display the analysis of differences in the usage of abbreviations in text messages among the eight participants depending on the context or the relationship they have with the receiver of the text message. It is clearly shown that the differences in relationship have various effects to the usage of abbreviations. For example, in item 6, 8, and 11, the level of formality needed is higher compared to other sets of replies, where the usage of short forms or abbreviations are rarely used. Item 7, 9, 10, and 12 reveal that these senior generations were engaged in using abbreviations and/or short forms in the text messages intended to colleagues, close friends, and family members. Hence, it is observed that a less formal interaction is employed due to their intimacy and relationship statuses with the receiver.

Furthermore, there is a constant uncertainty to the issue of whether text messages written in the form of abbreviations or short forms to be a part of the Standard English in the future. Two from the eight respondents believe that this form of writing will have no effect to the Standard English in the future due to its informal setting and how it revolves to the area of a specific community. On the other hand, the other six remaining respondents feel that the younger generations are transferring

the language of text messages and have even shown it in their formally written messages. Thus it is slowly being accepted and causing a setback when group backgrounds are dissimilar and makes interpretation a problem when it is not properly coordinated.

Part C: The Use of SMS Language

Analysis of Part C of the questionnaire showed that text messages sent by the senior generation users of mobile phones contained a combination of the following styles:

a. Complete sentences written in Standard English
b. Incomplete English sentences
c. Abbreviations or short forms
d. English- Bahasa Malaysia code-switching/mixing

Messages written in full sentence

This is a common style of writing text messages among senior generation users of mobile phone. Clearly shown from samples of text messages collected, many of their messages were written in full sentence. This practice is performed even though when writing messages to close friends.

> *Hi, how are you? Have you enrolled already? When is the start of the semester?*
> *(*R1)

In fact, R1 and R3 responded that they 'Never' used abbreviations and short forms in their messages to their superior and students respectively. Similarly, R2, R4 and R7 responded that they 'seldom' used the features in their messages to their students. The following are 5 samples of text messages sent by R3 to her students:

1. *Good morning. What time are your classes today? I need to see you - it's urgent. Dr Elizabeth*

2. *It's ok. I won't be available then. Just to inform that i won't be around tomorrow. Please check edmodo for further instructions. Ask everyone to log on and complete the given task.*

3. *Morning. If you are coming after 8, I will be in the multimedia laboratory 1.*

4. *There will be no meeting on Monday coz I will be away on official matters. Use the time to do independent research & study about brochure and feedback form.*

5. *The meeting will be on Wednesday in BK B3. Please inform everyone!*

When interviewed, R3 claimed that she has never used abbreviations in her messages to her students because she intended to maintain the formal atmosphere between her and the students.

Incomplete/incorrect sentences.

Besides the complete sentences, incomplete and incorrect syntax also appeared in the respondents' text messages intended to close friends and family members.

1. *Morning called u but no one replied.* (R1 to a family member)

2. *Got the maid. Taking amma to BP tomorrow morning*. (R3 to a family member)

3. *Really mad at this fella*, *nanti I story u.* (R6 to a close friend)

In sample 1, the message was written syntactically unacceptable (fragments). A standard form of sample 1 could be *'I called you in the morning, but no one replied'*. Apart from that, sample 2 appears to abandon 'subject' in the sentence, as well as the misused of verb tense. Moreover, sample 3 indicates the use of code-switch language (English and Malay) with the modification of spelling convention.

The appearances of such sentences in the respondents' messages were perhaps due to the informality of the context. Furthermore, the messages were written to family members and close friends, therefore writing the messages in incomplete or imprecise structure was similar to the structure used in informal conversation, and the idea that those receivers have mutual understanding of the intended communication or meaning. This connotes to the view set forth by Proysen (2009) and Freudenberg (2009) that writing messages in speaking flavor is a feature of SMS language.

Abbreviations and short forms

Just like the younger generation users of mobile phones, the elements of short forms did appear in the senior generations' messages. However, it was not easy to detect the use of abbreviations or short forms in messages written by majority of the respondents. This element was used only occasionally in their SMS messages and was also the common ones, perhaps globally understood by people of all generations.

Morning. <u>FYI</u>, am on MC today - knee injury. (R3)

Morning. Was discharged from Damansara Specialist Hospital last night. Am on <u>MC</u> till Friday. (R3)

<u>Tqvm</u>. Good <u>nite</u>! (R3)

Hv a meeting still, pls come bck 2morrow. (R6)

Sent 2 ur email, FYA. Can u check and revert bck to me latest by 2nite? (R8)

From the above examples, the abbreviations and short forms used by the respondents were well- established ones. *FYI* (For Your Information), *FYA* (For Your Action), *MC* (Medical Certificates) and *Tqvm* (Thank you very much) have been existed since long ago perhaps even before the existence of mobile communication technology. Furthermore, the usage of abbreviations also appears in the writing of proper nouns such as name of places and days. In the examples below, *BA* and *PJ* are acronyms of Batu Arang and Petaling Jaya respectively while *Fri* means Friday.

Change of Easter plan. We are going home. Will drop them in <u>BA</u> and be in <u>PJ</u>. If you wish to join us, try to be here on Thursday, as we will leave on Fri morning.

The respondents also put into consideration the receiver of their SMS when sending the text messages. Based on responses in Part B of the questionnaire, R3 and R7 claimed that they have never used short forms and abbreviations when sending text messages to the students. A crosscheck with R3's messages to her students showed that the messages written were long and in complete form. When interviewed, R3 asserted that she has never used abbreviations in her messages to her students because, as an English educator, it is important to show them the proper way

of writing English sentences.

> *There will be no meeting on Monday <u>coz</u> I will be away on official matters. Use the time to do independent research & study about brochure and feedback form. The meeting will be on Wednesday in BK B3. Please inform everyone!*

A close analysis of the samples however showed that an abbreviation did creep in into one of her messages (*coz* for because). When interviewed, she said that she did not realize using it as she was typing the message in a hurry. In conjunction to this, R7's reply to his students indicates that he as well maintains the standard language when communicating with students.

> *Please be informed that the deadline of the submission of your final project is on week 12.*

Unlike R3 and R7, the other respondents however admitted that they did use of abbreviations or short forms in their messages to both superior and students. The message below illustrated a message sent by R2 and R6 to their students.

> *Only 1boy's group <u>n</u> 1girl's group had presented last friday. the others have to come to class <u>2moro</u> including you.* (R2)

> *Yup, u cn still send d assg. nxt wk, dont hv to give d article* (R6)

The word *2moro* and *n* in R2's message were respectively used instead of 'tomorrow' and 'and', whereas, a more unusual form of contractions was used in R6's messages such as; *cn* (can), *assg.* (assignment), *nxt wk* (next week) and *hv* (have).

This is perhaps due to their view that such messages were intended for informal communication. As such, both respondents felt it was acceptable to use abbreviations in the messages even to their students.

> *Short forms and abbreviations are only used in an informal setting, or when writing short messages because people are always on the go and need to think and act fast. In a more formal setting, I think (and hope) people will revert to writing in a more formal and correct way.* (R2)

The text language is created specifically to suit the mobile function; hence it is required for one to use this form of written language when communicating through phones. It is the responsibility of the educator to later notify students on the language variation. (R6)

Nevertheless, their respective 'sometimes' and 'seldom' responses indicated that these senior respondents did not freely use the SMS languages in their messages. Perhaps, they carefully wrote text messages to their superior and students especially when it involved official matters. These responses indicated that their use of SMS language was not due to their deteriorating level of English. In fact, these senior generation people were able to switch to the more formal English when the situation requires. Interestingly, R1 and R7 felt that the use of SMS language among the younger generations showed that there is a high tendency for language deterioration among younger generation.

Young generation of users are too lazy to use the long/formal forms. They even use short forms in formal written language. (R1)

The SMS language has badly influenced student's writing proficiency. As a consequence, reflecting their academic writing and bringing forth inaccuracy. (R7)

On the other hand, text messages sent by R2, R4 and R8 contained abbreviations which are also quite commonly used by the younger people.

the others have to come to class <u>2moro</u> including you (R2 to a student)

mr puran. just found nelia's mark for the <u>spkg</u> test. It's 19.2 (R2 to a staff/office mate)

*just sent 3 <u>msgs</u>. 1 was to my <u>stnt</u>, 1 to my sons and the other one to a colleague. <u>Tnx</u>. (*R2 to a staff/office mate)

The above samples show the use of abbreviations in which vowels were left out from the words (spkg - Speaking; msgs- messages; stnt – student; Tnx- thanks). Her use of *2moro* instead of tomorrow is an example of the use of homonym (2 or two) and phonetic-based spelling instead of the Standard English spelling.

Equally, R4 and R8 seemed to be bolder in using abbreviations in their text messages as all their sample text messages were filled with such abbreviations.

R u on leave? (R4 to a staff/office mate)

C u l8r (R4 to a close friend)

Btw wh does sem begin? (R4 to a staff/office mate)

nd to check again wht we hv 2 do, r u cuming? (R8 to a staff/office mate)

Their bold use of the SMS language was probably due to their preference in using mobile phone for making calls rather than sending text messages. As such, both probably felt that sending messages are for matters that they could ask quickly thus explained their uses of the abbreviations. The abbreviations used (*R, C, u l8r*) are also examples of the use of homonym (2 or two) and phonetic-based spelling instead of the Standard English spelling which are very popular among the younger generation of mobile phone users. Furthermore, considering that the respondents are aged 45 and above, they can be considered as senior staff at the work place. Perhaps this also explained their use of abbreviations in messages to their superior who could also be their friends or maybe younger than them.

Code Switching

Another element that can be found in the text messages by the respondents is code switching. In short, code switching refers to the mixing of words of other languages in a sentence of a language. Example can be seen from R3 and R6 messages:

Yeah, indeed. Itu lah pascal (pasal) when Alvin told me dr kat uni hospital trauma unit told I had minor heart attack - I kata impossible! Tapi u know lah bila it came from a dr from the emergency unit semua panic dsb. To prove them I am ok I came here for second opinion. I just need to slow down and rest! (R3)

Really mad at this fella, nanti I story u (R6)

In the above example, several words of Bahasa Malaysia appeared in the messages. *Itulah pasal* (That's the reason why), *kata* (said), *semua* (all) were some words used by R3 in her message to her close friend. The usage of these words was perhaps due to the closeness and familiarity between the respondent with friends of the same native language. There also appeared abbreviated words of Bahasa

Malayssia such as *kat* which actually came from the word *dekat* (at). As such they comfortably switched back and forth between the two languages in their messages.

In conclusion, the text messages sent by the senior generations did include elements of SMS language features such as abbreviations, code-mixing and even slang. However, their usages were more due to informality of the online interactions. Furthermore, the messages were sent while the senders were on the go, in situation where they needed to think and act fast, thus affected the spelling of the English words in their text messages. In a more formal situation however such as when communicating with their superior and students, the senior generations tend to either not apply or minimized the use of abbreviations and short forms of English words.

Part D: Abbreviations

A list of 23 abbreviations adopted from Proysen (2009) was given to the respondents to provide the meaning of the short forms. Analysis showed that the respondents managed to give correct meaning to just a few of the abbreviations.

Abbreviations	Meaning
lol	Laughing out loud (R2, R3, R4, R5,R6,R8)
bf	boyfriend (R1, R3, R5,R6, R7,R8) best friend (R3) brought forward (R4) before (R2)
fe	Friends forever (R3)
fyi	For your information (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5,R6,R7,R8)
emo	Emotional (R3,R6,R8)
roflmao	Rolling on the floor laughing my ass out (R4)
brb	-
jam	-
pc	Personal computer (R1, R3)
nagi	-
nb	Nota biene (R1), Notebook (R3)
ad	Advertisement (R1)
kwim	-
ps	Post script (R1,R6), Please see (R2), note (R7)
bcg	Background (R8)
tnx	Thanks (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5,R6,R7,R8)
bgn	Begin (R1, R2)
sms	Short message system (R1, R2) short message service (R3,R6,R7,R8)

ie	That is (R1) Example (R6,R8), Internet Explorer (R3), such as (R7)
nkotb	-
atm	Automated teller machine (R1,R7), At the moment (R3)
vip	Very important person (R1, R3)
sys	System (R1, R3, R6)

All respondents unanimously gave correct meaning to only two abbreviations which were *fyi* (for your information) and *tnx* (thanks) respectively. Majority of the respondents (except R1) provided correct meaning to *lol* (laugh out loud). Other abbreviations that were given correct meaning by one or two respondents and were not answered by other respondents included *emo* (emotion), *roflmao* (rolling on the floor laughing my ass out loud), *pc* (personal computer), *bgn* (begin), *sms* (short message system / short message service) and *vip* (very important person). The respondents were divided in giving the meaning to majority of the abbreviations. Some did not even answer at all. As an example from Proysen (2009), *bf* could either mean 'boyfriend', 'best friend' or 'before'. All the respondents have correctly provided the meaning of the abbreviation. One respondent (R4) however, wrongly defined the meaning of *bf* as 'brought forward'. Apart from that, they were also divided in giving the meaning to *atm*. Only two respondents (R1 and R7) defined the abbreviation correctly which is 'automated teller machine' while R3 thought that it means 'at the moment'. Whereas, other respondents could not figure out the meaning which was rather surprising, considering this abbreviation is considered by Proysen (2009) as a common short form. Other abbreviations which were *fe* and *sys* were incorrectly termed by R1, R3 and R6 and were not answered at all by other respondents. Such discrepancies among the respondents in their correct or incorrect responses as well as non- responses to majority of the abbreviations strongly indicated that many abbreviations were giving problems to the senior generation of mobile phone users in understanding text messages.

CONCLUSION

SMS language has evolved tremendously as people come across innovative constructs of the English language to deliver messages. Since text messages are constantly used and its expertise are of the younger generations, the senior generations seemed to have a difficult time to adapt to various usage of short forms

or abbreviations of words in the English language. However, it is a growing trend that even the senior generations are learning to utilize this form of text messages.

Older generations have clearly shown that the forms used in their text messages depended on situations as well as the receiver of the message. Messages sent to friends or colleagues were less formal compared to those of formal situations such as students or superiors. Even though in some circumstances, there were still some forms of short forms or abbreviation usage, as well as ignoring rules of punctuations in their SMS to all recipients.

Yet a majority of the participants felt that SMS language is deteriorating the English language and responded that they hardly use short forms and abbreviations. Their attempt to manage grammatically structured sentences in their text messages could be seen from some text messages where time and focus was given into typing such messages.

All respondents have sufficient amount of experience with mobile phones as well as short messaging services, however, senior generations do have problems understanding messages from those within the younger generations. The senior generations were not able to respond to a majority of the abbreviations in the list, which contain short forms and abbreviations frequently used by teenagers.

The perception of senior generation users on text messages shows concern toward the evolving language short forms and abbreviations of text messages. Their concern with the how those of different backgrounds will interpret and understand messages differently. Additionally, most of the respondents notice that the younger generations are continuously using informal forms, and have even applied such method into formal writing. Generally, based on the findings, the older generation users do feel that the SMS language will alter the Standard English in future due to the evolution nature of the SMS language. Nevertheless, with hope, they believe that people will revert to formal writing structures in formal situations.

REFERENCES

Aziz, S., Shamim, M., Aziz, M.F., and Avais, P. (2013). *The Impact of Texting/SMS Language on Academic Writing of Students- What do we need to panic about*?. Elixir.

Balakrihnan, V. and Yeow, H.P.P (2008). Texting Satisfaction: Does age and gender make a difference?. *International Journal of Computer Science and Security*, Volume (1): Issue (1).

Bunce and Sisa. (2002). In Jiazhong, Y., Esa, M.R. & Kan, Y. (2010). *The Impact of Time Efficacy on Air Traffic Controller Situation Awareness and Mental Workload*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group. LLC

Crystal, D. (2008). *Text Messages: Texting.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming.

Freudenberg, K. (2009). Investigating the impact of SMS speak on the written work of English first language and English second language high school learners. Stellenbosch University. Retrieved on April 10, 2012. URL: http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2052

Grinter, R. E. and Eldridge, M. (2001). 'y do tngrs luv 2 txt msg?'. USA and Xerox Research Centre Europe, Cambridge, UK.

Harnick, C. (2010). SMS becoming prevalent among senior generation. Retrieved on May 2, 2012. URL: http://www.mobilemarketer.com/cms/news/research/5077.html

Lewis, A. (2005). Mobile Phones: The New Domesticated Artefact. *Australian Counseling Association Journal*, Counseling Australia.

Proysen, S. (2009). The Impact of Text Messaging on Standard English. Norway: University of Bergen. Retrieved on April 15, 2012. URL: https://bora.uib.no/bitstream/1956/3320/1/56404526.pdf

Sheeren, N.Z. & Rozumah, B. (2009) . Mobile Phone use Amongst Students in a University in Malaysia: Its Correlates and Relationship to Psychological Health. *European Journal of Scientific Research: EuroJournals Publishing, Inc*. Vol.37 pp.206-218.