HOW TEXT MESSAGING AFFECTS TEEN LITERACY

by:

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Textism, as defined by MacMillan Dictionary, is the language used in text messages characterized by the use of abbreviations, single letters and symbols. This has been a part of the lives of teenagers as social media invades the educational system.

What is the impact of textism to the students’ literacy? Are there negative effects that need to be addressed right away? How does textism become a tool for students to learn or unlearn?

Sending SMS (Short Messaging Service) or simply texting has become a part of the day-to-day activity of anybody. Many of the text messages that we send or receive often contain textisms. As we all notice, the use of textisms is now accepted in our generation today. The young people or the millennials are mostly engaged in textism even in facebook posts, status or messenger chats. They tend to utilize this kind of communication rather than using complete sentences and spelling to express their responses.

Thinking about it deeply, how would this activity affect the literacy skills of the learners?

Writing is always part of the teaching-learning process. If textism will be integrated in students’ writing exercises and drills, are there possibilities that problems might arise? Come to think of it, maybe if our learners become used to textism, they could also apply this skill in their performance tasks that involve formal writing abilities. Teachers play an important role to encourage students to reduce their use of textisms, and to instead use correct grammar and spelling while they are using texting as a form of communication.
Despite the known effects of textism to students’ literacy, it cannot be denied that it is already part of the lives of the students at present. It cannot be eradicated at all. What we now need is to draft ways in order to enhance writing skills even textism has invaded our communication scheme.

Some of the ways where a teacher could resolve the problem is by means of intensifying writing skill enhancement program. This could be done especially by English teachers by creating a social media account like Facebook where he or she could post writing lessons that the students could see and download. The quotations and short essays to be posted should be written appropriately for student reference. In this way, the teacher could also let the students post or comment on something using rules of proper English as set by the teachers. The teacher could

There could be other ways where a teacher could address the problem on textism, but what is important is that we could always devise our own strategies to adapt to the ever changing world and its effect to education. Instead of stressing ourselves to stop textism, we think of parallel ideas that focuses on students’ literacy.

Change is something that we can’t stop. Change is a challenge we have to accept. We can learn to adapt to these changes by making the learning of our students our major priority.

References: