

**GRADE 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTES IN ENGLISH AS A
SECOND LANGUAGE IN VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

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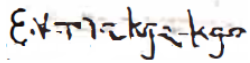
2023

DECLARATION

I, **ELELWANI VERONICA MAKGAKGA**, declare that:

**GRADE 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTESE IN ENGLISH
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT LIMPOPO
PROVINCE**

...is my own work and that all sources that I have consulted or quoted have been clearly indicated and acknowledged by means of references.



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- I thank my supervisor, Dr Muthambi S.K and her co-supervisor Dr Kaheru S.J.M for their dedication and commitment in supervising me. I thank them for their patience and belief in my ability to conduct this study.
- I wish to thank my sons Moyahabo and Matome for their untiring and loving support enabled me to come this far writing this dissertation.
- I am very thankful to all my informants and respondents for their inputs and allowing me to interview them. Your contributions is highly appreciated.
- To all of you I say thank you very much!

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

- My parents Tshisamphiri Wilson and Kgatjakja Anna Musandiwa, who laid the foundation of my education, nurtured it and taught me to work hard and persevere.
- My Sons Moyahabo and Matome for their support and encouragement throughout this study.

Thank you for believing in me. God bless you abundantly.

ABSTRACT

Due to advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), there is an increased use of shortened English words among the Grade 6 learners arising from their interactions with social media. Learners' writings of English First Additional Language (EFAL) at this level make frequent use of word versions which compromise their performance. The study, therefore, explores teachers' perceptions towards textese and whether it influences the increasing word-shortening in EFAL classrooms. The research paradigm of interpretivism was adopted for this study which is compatible with the exploration of teachers' perceptions towards textese among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District. It was further accompanied by a qualitative research approach where the researcher set out to find whether Grade 6 teachers believed there was a possible link between the ownership and usage of mobile phones by learners and the prevalence of grammatical and spelling mistakes described as textese in written work like essays. Ownership and usage of cellphones was considered the primary means of accessing social media by learners. A purposive sample of 12 Grade 6 teachers from four schools in the Mutshundudi Circuit of Vhembe East District was drawn from the entire population of all teachers of English First Additional Language (EFAL). 11 teachers were interviewed. The research techniques of interviews and document analysis were employed together with administration of questionnaires as research instruments. Document analysis of the Grade 6 essays from 12 interviewed and a number of errors found analysed. The research software of Atlas was used in the analysis of the transcripts of the interviews and discussions by coding and grouping the responses into themes and sub-themes to find repetitive issues which were treated as major factors according to inductive thematic analysis. The research participants unanimously agreed that grammatical mistakes of textese were positively correlated with access to social media through ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners. Textese was higher among those with more access and lower among those with limited or no access. Textese still prevailed among the latter group with no access to social media through their interaction in group work with their peers as postulated under social constructivism. Finally, the study suggested both micro recommendations which can be implemented at

the local school level and macro recommendations which involved the Department of Education itself making policy changes and issuing certain directives or instructions which can affect all schools in an effort to curb the spread of textese. Further studies with a larger sample of teachers and more document analysis of written essays of learners over a longer time was recommended.

Key Words: English first additional language, Information and Communication Technology, Social Media, Social Constructivism, Textese

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CM	:	Circuit Manager
DSM	:	District Senior Manager
EFAL	:	English First Additional Language
GSM	:	Global System for Mobile Communication
ICT	:	Information and Communication Technology
IRC	:	Internet Relay Charts
SFL	:	Systematic Functional Linguistics
SMS	:	Short Message Services
SNS	:	Social Network Sites
TAFE	:	Technical and Further Education
VOA	:	Voice of America
ZPD	:	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The observed geometric rise in Short Message Services (SMS) cited by Wellman (2018:1) and the restrictions on the allowable number of words and characters (Ngambi, Brown, Bozalek, Gachago & Wood, 2016:843) when typing has resulted in the use of abridged spellings (Zuilkowski, Jukes & Dubeck, 2016:100) which has encroached into the classroom thereby distorting learners written school work. According to Brashers and Gladstone (2016:22) teachers encounter gross errors such as omission of punctuation or capitalisation under the notion of textism which leads to poor literacy in both primary and secondary schools. Moreover, the extent of this textism which other researchers consider as a new form of illiteracy is significantly determined by the age group. Nobles, Glenn, Kowsari and Barnes (2018:413) have observed in Australia more pronounced textism among younger children in the 50 – 58% ranges which surpass the 5 – 20% textism among teenagers and undergraduates.

During my duties as a Grade 6 teacher, I observed an increasing prevalence of informal spellings among learners in my class. These errors take the form of shortening English words. Although the spellings are wrong from a purely grammatical perspective due to the conversational style in which the learners are writing, the meaning is conveyed. It is like a new kind of phonetic language has evolved. Instances are *gud* for good and *bcoz* for because where the emphasis is on the coded phonics which have become acceptable in social interactions.

The above scenario simply mirrors, on a much smaller local scale, the national and global trends. Berger (2017:61) indicates that since the turn of the 21st century, there has been a rapid rise in the usage of social media networks amongst learners in South Africa. Similarly, Wellman (2018:1) echoes the global observation that the last decade has seen a massive increase in Short Message Services (SMS), text messaging and

instant messaging (IM) among learners due to increased ownership of mobile phones and personal computers by households.

The functionality of texting on social media devices like mobile phones and personal computers comes with its own restrictions. Ngambi, Brown, Bozalek, Gachago and Wood (2016:843) note that messages are abridged in order to save space and time. Twitter, for example, only allows 140 characters when texting. Messages exceeding the maximum threshold of letters are simply rejected. Naturally, this leads to a shortening of spellings and encourages the departure from formal writing.

The texting behaviour of abridged spellings has encroached into the classroom as observed by Zuilkowski, Jukes and Dubeck (2016:100). It is no longer a social media phenomenon but a classroom reality in schools. This has led to gross errors in spelling. As I have observed in my class, learners have no idea of the correct English spellings because their first encounter with English words comes from the interaction with social media with its abridged and informal versions. By the time they come to class, they are penalised for wrong spellings when they have no idea of the correct spellings in the first place.

Brashears and Gladstone (2016:22) contend that learners' written schoolwork has become distorted as they make gross errors such as omissions of punctuation or capitalisation as under the notion of textism. Teachers believe that this textism leads to poorer literacy scores because text messages and instant messages often do not adhere to the standardised norms of correct language usage.

Pedwell, Hardy and Rowland (2017:249) observe that age group and nature of text messages tend to determine the extent to which textisms are used. An Australian study conducted by Nobles, Glenn, Kowsari and Barnes (2018:413) reveals that teenagers and undergraduates write 5-20% of the words in textism while younger children are more inclined, with estimates ranging from 50-58% of their messages being 'translated' into textese from the standard. Mujiyanto and Bharati (2018:229) indicate that in Europe, it is estimated that over 72% of the youth own mobile phones, although the proportion of young people estimated to be active 'texters' is even higher. The Centre of Science Education at Sheffield University in the United Kingdom

estimated that by 2001, approximately 90% of school children owned phones and that 96% of them used text messaging.

Aunzo and Engcot (2016:07) indicate that pre-teenagers are the fastest-growing market for mobile companies. More recently, the Ofcom Media Literacy Audit found that 49% of British 8-11-year learners had their own phones. At the time of these studies, very little research in South Africa had focused on this age group's usage, their text literacy and the association between interactive media and other literacies, including the language skills required for success in English at schools.

There are several ways that texting might be seen to affect literacy development, such as:

- increased texting style in written language, phonological differences that underpin many of the textism used, and the final one is related to the enjoyment of words, that is, the playful mix of written and spoken language that characterise text language (Bogetic, 2016:245).

In South Africa, Zebroff and Kaufman (2017:2197) explored the influence of textese on learners' proficiency. Increasingly, more learners use textese in their schoolwork and they become 'victims' of teachers as they are punished for wrong spelling. Waldron, Wood and Kemp (2017:384) argue that learners do not only mix words and numbers incorrectly but that they also fail to distinguish between formal and informal contexts in which the language is used.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As a Grade 6 teacher in Vhembe East District in Limpopo Province for the past 12 years, in the intermediate phase, I observed a deterioration in English literacy among Grade 6 learners in the classroom. Outside the classroom, I also noted, as a member of the local community, that the English language is not used as a medium of communication in the rural homes in which the schools are located. Rather, communication is done in Tshivenda, which is the home language of the learners. This leaves learners with a very poor foundation in the English language in the Foundation Phase. English is only spoken at school while vernacular dominates

discourse in the home. From experiential knowledge, I further realised that English only gains precedence as a medium of instruction from Grade 4 in the schools in the Vhembe East District.

Access to, and usage of, social media through ownership of mobile phones often happens before the formalisation of English as an instructional medium. This means that learners get exposed to social media and its informal English usage before they can learn the rules of grammar. Although by the time learners are in the 6th grade, they would be almost ready to graduate from primary school, only two of those six years would have been seriously mediated in English. This resulted in the observed challenge of learners with purportedly six years of schooling but only two years of formal English language usage.

Prior to familiarisation with formal English in Grade 4, learners would have considerably accumulated a significant wealth of textism which manifests itself in the form of wrong spellings, incoherent expressions and individualised word forms. These are the errors which I have been picking up in the past 5 years during the assessment of learners' work. Since these errors perfectly reflect the social media usage of the English language, it was the aim of this study to explore teachers' perceptions towards textese arising from mobile communication technology, particularly in cell phones as a possible cause of poor literacy in English among Grade 6 learners.

Graham, Barlett, Ng, Harris, Aitken, Barkel, Kavanaugh and Talukdar (2018:2) warn that the use of technology, specifically, the cellular phone, may have a negative impact on learners' vocabulary and spelling as more and more users resort to text-speak (SMS) language which is the use of non-standard language when messages are sent via mobile phones. Texting is, in a way a move towards the creation of a brand-new digital language. This emergent dialect has pitted learners against teachers and parents who fret over the rise of a new generation text. According to Bloom, Liang, Roberts and Ying (2015:167), usage of mobile phones among the youth has occasioned a mobile youth culture which is vocalized by textese as an expression thereof. Graham et al. (2018:2) fear that the detrimental impact of textese on vocabulary will extend beyond English as an individual subject to all other subjects which are mediated using the English language as a medium of instruction. Indeed,

textese becomes a far much bigger challenge standing in the way of entire spectrum of learning and subsequent assessments from literacy on the one hand to numeracy on the other.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to explore teachers' perceptions towards textese among Grade 6 learners' written work in Vhembe east district.

Hereunder were the objectives developed:

- To determine the teachers' perceptions towards ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners.
- To establish the teachers' perceptions towards the actual usage of textese in the classroom by Grade 6 learners.
- To find out the teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work of Grade 6 learners.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of the study was:

What are teachers' perceptions towards textese among Grade 6 learners' written work in Vhembe East District?

In order to answer the main question, the following subsidiary questions were formulated?

- How do teachers perceive the ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners?
- What are teachers' perceptions towards the actual usage of textese in the classroom by Grade 6 learners?

- What are teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work of Grade 6 learners?

1.5 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Pelser and Van Wyk (2016:1) agree that “social media offers various ways through which we can communicate with people. Social media is also known to have been used widely in the educational field”. Brauckmann and Schwarz (2015:752) agree that “over the last 30 years the nature of communication has undergone a substantial change and it is still changing. Bozkır, Mazman and Sezer (2017:96) concluded that “online communication tools increase our awareness of the movement of our professional or social contacts, for example, Twitter gives us an opportunity to update things people we know happen to be doing at a particular point of time”.

1.5.1 Social Media in the World

As social media continues to explode, conversations with and about individuals are taking place instantaneously on a global platform. While social networks continue to advance, the academic world is determining the way in which digital tools can work to educational advantage in correlation with conventional methods.

1.5.2 Social Media in Australia

Cardon and Marshall (2016:275) agree that “Social Network Services (SNS) are increasingly popular amongst Australian young people regardless of geographical location, background and age. Almost all young Australians are online with 90% of 16-29 year olds using the internet daily. Learners spend more time online (an average of 22 hours per week) than any other age group. The very nature of today's education system gives effect to the indispensability of the application of textese during online interaction. Chun, Ken and Smith (2016:68) observe that 90% of 11 – 15 year-olds and a further 97% of the 16 – 22 year olds rely on SNS when downloading content and doing internet searches as they look for information which is subsequently communicated by way of electronic mail (Email) as corroborated by ACMA (2009a:8).

Effectively, this means that today's education and learning are inseparably integrated to the social media via the SNS platforms. In view of that, the usage of textese becomes an unavoidable communication tool as it effectively shortens the intended messaging.

The centrality of social media in education in Australia is confirmed by Ciampa (2018:84) informed conclusion that “over the past decade Australian governments have invested significantly in digital education, creating a strong base in terms of technological infrastructure, digital resources and support for teachers' practice. In addition, most teachers in Australia have expanded opportunity to improve their skills in relation to the use of digital technologies”.

1.5.3 Social Media in Japan

With respect to Japan, Dunbar, Arnaboldi, Conti and Passarella (2017:41) agree that “40% of the total population (51 million) are social network service users and 65% of those users (33 million) actively post information. 71% connect via smartphones for convenient access. Japanese Twitter users are estimated at approximately 20 million as of September 2019, and this is likely to have surged by now. In recent years, Japan has established the process of participation in the learning pedagogy. Moreover, the social media technologies have increased hence the availability of education is realized”.

Gan and Wang (2016:355) asserted that “social media have become part of their lives and are building their social environment by using a variety of social media. The social media revolution's enormous success in creating online communities has caught language educators' attention”. Guesalaga (2016:71) agrees that “the spread of social media assists language educators to promote social learning beyond the classroom. English learners in Japan face additional difficulties and stress in academic writing largely due to the level of language competency. An electronic device such as the e-reader has the potential for aiding learners in the process of writing”.

1.5.4 Social Media in the Developing Countries

According to Amir (2011:56), distance learning can widen access to training and education, via open universities in India, Africa and Thailand, and language websites for schools. When people in the developing world get online, the internet typically becomes part of their daily lives”.

1.5.5 Social Media in India

Kramer, Guillory and Hancock (2017:789) agree that “teaching in the 21st century is so exciting yet frightful as well, because of opportunities to bridge the academic world with the real world”. Maier, Laumer, Weinert and Weitzel (2017:278) concluded that in India social media education is now needed more than ever and it also has important sharing and peer support element that can be valuable to young people. It is time to reconsider the roles of social media used for education since it will be or is now unavoidably integrated into daily lives.

1.5.6 Social Media in Nigeria

Sarker, Ginn, Nikfarjam, O’Connor, Smith, Jayaraman, Upadhaya and Gonzalez (2018:202) assert that Web-based social networking tools are growing in leaps and bounds in Nigeria and are also popular among learners. Like their other counterparts across the globe, Nigerian youths in institutions of learning are seriously engaged in communicating with each other both at local and global levels through these social networks. Wellman and Gulia (2018:332) stated that learners in Nigeria have more tendencies of writing something that will confuse others or impress their peers on social networks. They further point out the impact of social media on Nigerian education on lexis, punctuation and grammar which results in learners’ writing being unclear, vague and unrecognizable to those outside the learners’ social circles.

In so far as Nigeria is arguably the biggest economy in Africa followed by South Africa (World Bank, 2022), the proximity of these two nations in the developmental rankings point to some spill-over effects whereby, courtesy of globalization, a trend observed in one country is mirrored in the other country.

1.5.7 Social Media in South Africa

As a mirror image of observed trends in Nigeria cited in the foregoing, Maringe and Moletsane (2015:348) agree that “South Africa has also witnessed some traces of texting in learners academic work both in test scripts and examination, many teachers lament the problem of text creep in South African schools. It appears as if learners are not able to use appropriate language in different contexts, their informal textism appears in formal writing in the classroom”. In the South African context, Diem, Frankenberg and Cleary’s (2018:715) article entitled “r 2 days “teens eroding English?” states that textese is cause for concern among English teachers and academics alike and quotes an English lecturer from a local tertiary institution who expressed concern that due to South African learner’s textese use, the quality and level of their English are deteriorating”. Pan South African Language Board Chairperson, Professor Ngubane posits that learners should consider the difference between textese and academic writing. Texting is shorter and the youth will be looking at saving money and character. This problem is hard to resolve because they cannot distinguish between the two.

1.5.8 Teachers’ Perceptions on Texting Messaging Towards Learners’ Academic Writing in English First Additional Language

In the past decades, formal writing was one of the acceptable, trusted and effective means of communication from all walks of life. Teachers think proper writing is essential to formal learning. Prior to the era of mobile technology, from the 1970s to 1980s learners were far more literate in terms of the English language and the essential writing skills than the learners today. Teachers are complaining about the declining writing quality and effort of primary school learners in English First Language (Kiprono, Nganga & Kanyiri, 2018:243).

Mgijima (2018:198) explained that the newly invented text messaging language, which is coupled with mobile phones, most of the time disregards the basic rules of English grammar, which is passed on to school children. There has been an increase in the use of text messaging among teenagers especially school children due to increasing

ownership of mobile phones. There seems to be a new literacy being created as text messaging evolves and as a person's online presence grows.

School children are increasingly prone to texting and the result is that mistakes and shorthand used in texting are becoming commonplace in most of their writing, including academic work. According to Batista (2014:181), it becomes increasingly difficult to decipher the meanings of what learners write using social media shorthand. At the same time, a certain complacency has emerged among learners who simply rely on predictive abilities of technology which tends to suggest spellings of words as they are being written. Mncube and Mafora (2017:112) observe that some spelling suggestions given by internet technology are wrong and learners should actively strive to know what the correct spellings should be, instead of relying on internet technology. In some way, the disjuncture between standard English, which has not changed in terms of its standard rules of grammar, and social media English, which has evolved into textese, points to a gap between academia and society. Effectively, society's online community has created a new dialect of English which is more phonetic than the standard English in academia. Notwithstanding, the implications of this academia-versus-society disharmony are beyond this study.

Mathwasa and Okeke (2016:174) indicate that textese is to blame for the declining standard of spelling and grammar in learners' writing. Teachers also believe that learners write intentionally in shorthand like how they write on their mobile phones using more abbreviations. Above all, teachers have a great concern that textese is a new form of communication taking hold in the communication sphere, where words used in text messages sphere are not found in the standard dictionaries or recognized by language scholars such as (Reygan & Steyn, 2017:76). It is gradually taking over learners' academic writing and inadvertently impacting negatively their spelling skills.

Netshitangani (2018:97) in his study found that some teachers say there is a positive relationship between frequent text messaging and literacy skills such as spelling and reading fluency. Furthermore, McCarthy, Lambert, Lineback, Fitchett and Baddouh (2018:578) mentioned that from their study report that some teachers view technology as a positive force in learners' lives and their writing; as such, they preferred to use technology to teach.

1.5.9 The Effect of Texting Messaging on Learners' Academic Writing in English First Additional Language in the Classroom

Since the ICT began to have a part in the communication of the learners, mobile phones are increasingly available to young school children who are still developing their writing skills. The current study engages teachers who are becoming frustrated due to the textese they observe in learners academic writing (Eakin, Lerner, Manuel-Navarrete, Aguilar, Martínez-Canedo, Tellman, Charli-Joseph, Álvarez & Bojórquez-Tapia, 2018:326). Mobile phones and the associated technology are coming with the SMS language that has brought up a great challenge to learners' ability to follow what is expected of them in formal writing. The use of shorthand texting is a very good example of informal writing which is sometimes combined with acronyms. Indeed, this shorthand texting has also invaded the classroom.

1.5.10 Invasion of Social Media Jargon into the Classroom

While it is true that social media and related internet technology are a source of information for all stakeholders in the education system ranging from learners, educators and administrators, among others, such flexible technology has not been adapted to the true demands of today's formal learning and education systems (Das, Salam, Lassi, Khan, Mahmood, Patel & Bhutta, 2017:57). Salgado, Senra and Lourenço (2018:179) agree that since "teens and pre-teens are increasing the time they spend communicating through text-messaging, they obviously engage in more texting practice such as using abbreviations, intentional shortening of words and misspellings eliminating punctuations and omitting blank spaces among other violations of common spelling. When English teachers decide to use social media in class, they need to know which social platforms can support and improve their learners' writing abilities and which tool they can use with learners to have them experience the English language". Writing is one of the most important and complex skills in language and the power of literacy is determined through writing. Language is rule-governed behaviour and if the language community follows the rules, others will recognize when errors in writing are made (Evans, Langberg, Schultz, Vaughn, Altaye, Marshall & Zoromski, 2019:15).

Aly, Taylor and Karnovsky (2018:382) “contend that engaging in-text messaging can have a positive effect on the development of spelling skills in young people if it is used as a teaching tool. Using social media in classrooms can motivate learners to be creative and learn in an enjoyable environment. For example, they can easily write their essays anytime because they can find information about each topic when searching on the web. When the teacher selects the tools, it must be a writing media project that will aim in creating a virtual place for collaborative writing and that everyone can use to practice editing”.

While Gordon, Jacobs and Wright (2018:365) agree that “the use of social media in English First Additional Language classroom can enhance language learning in terms of promoting authentic text-based language communication in the electronic environment in which learners write collaboratively and edit their peers’ writings. The vital aspect of using text messaging to improve a child’s learning skills development is to incorporate spelling instructions and reinforcement of correct spelling practices as the learner experiments with technology”.

It is vital for teachers in schools to encourage and guide learners to use social media tools and provide them with some suggestions of websites available which are useful for enhancing learners’ language development, as explained by Yunus, Chua, Maimum and Rizaiddin (2016:208). Social media show value in the educational setting as long as they are used prudently. The teacher should talk at a learner’s level of comprehension, that is, the learner should be able to understand what the teacher is saying. Learners should also be encouraged to read a lot of writings and be allowed to use social media under supervision.

Montecinos, Pino, Campos-Martinez, Domínguez and Carreño (2018:27) argue that besides being used for authentic language interaction, Facebook as a social network tool is suitable for collaborative learning proposed by the constructivism theory of learning. There must be enough interaction as an imperative in the process of learning a second language.

Freeman, Wertheim and Trinder (2019:851) say learners who use shorter amounts of texts and increased hashtags, and pictures is appealing to English First Additional

Language learners. Shorter amounts of text can encourage learners to be brief and enable them to contribute more in future.

Poduska and Kurki (2018:85) say that social media directs learners to new opportunities to be independent in their studies and a wider range of expressive capabilities. The social network will stay, and it seems that it may exist in some other form. It is important to advise learners to use social media in an instrumental way.

1.5.11 The Influence of Social Media and Information Communication Technology Regarding Textese on Learners' Performance Inside the Classroom

This section discusses the impact of social media (which is grammatically lawless) as it encroaches into the classroom environment of formal learning which relies on compliance with standard rules of grammar (rules-based language). In a classic case of allowing the tail to wag the dog in the learning environment, Ramazani and Jergeas (2017:42) suggest that since teachers have to deal with millennials who are “characterized by their use of social media”, it becomes necessary for the teachers themselves to “successfully incorporate the medium into the classroom” by learning how to adapt it for their purposes. As learners are given the latitude to evaluate each other’s work online as peer reviewers, incorporating social media into the classroom can serve as a means of “connecting learners and creating an online community.” Ultimately, social media usage in the classroom ensures “learners are focused and are actively involved in expressing their viewpoints (ibid)”.

Saiti (2018:604) indicated that “textese has its origin in cellular technology and used to refer predominantly to the writing conventions used when typing a short message service, the term is used to refer to the linguistic phenomenon of shortening and amending words by any intelligible means possible to cram the maximum amount of information into the smallest possible space in the shortest amount of time, irrespective of the medium or platform through which it is used. When learners use technology in literacy learning, the positive interactivity for the teaching and learning of sentence grammar increases when monitored properly”.

Griffith, Connelly and Thiel (2018:156) agree that “learners are interested in communicating amongst themselves through these networks. Indeed, they present their ideas and respond to their classmates’ ideas through WhatsApp and many other social networks. The use of technology tools in EFAL writing classroom has shown that technology makes a supportive and encouraging environment for the learners to increase their writing skills in terms of quality and quantity”.

Shaw, Davidson, Smilde, Sondoozi and Agan (2019:267) agree that “learners write regularly, they then perceive their writing tasks as meaningful, and involve responses to their writing from peers, teachers and others, they are consequently motivated to write and value the purpose of writing. Their engagement in writing ultimately ignites learners to enjoy. However, too much exposure to and use of unconventional spelling may cause literacy problems compromising writing and spelling abilities”.

Salas, Shuffler, Thayer, Bedwell and Lazzara (2017:601) indicated that “incorporate social media into our language classes, it will not only be used to share classroom engagement, but learners will also gain linguistically, and they will develop their comprehension skills as well as their spoken speech. Learners use social media; they improve their vocabulary and their spelling through spell checks software in their handsets. The practice of invented spelling among learners can also be important in preventing difficulties in learning to read and learner’s phonemic awareness where they are able to identify speech sounds within a word that distinguishes one word from another”.

Maimane and Ndlela (2018:246) agree that “social media is used in the teaching of writing, for instance, learners are free to take charge of their own learning and feel free to comment on each other’s work. Through electronic chatting, learners are making countless syntax, subject, verb agreement and spelling mistakes in their classwork and tests. Learners’ spelling skills development that has implications to text messaging is that incorrect spellings of a word have no lasting impact when the correct spelling of the word is introduced”.

Abeysekera and Dawson (2019:7) argued that “it is found that the majority of learners enthusiastically accepted the use of Facebook as a tool for online learning and found

it to be both interesting and enjoyable. Learners are willing to incorporate social media into their learning experiences. However, text and Instant Messaging are negatively affecting learners' writing quality on a daily basis as they bring their abbreviated language into the classroom. Teachers see texting as a factor contributing to declining literacy and content that seriously curtails language development, and that is a key factor in their negative performance. Text-speak is a problem”.

Albayrak and Yildirim (2017:160) “emphasize that the teaching and learning process becomes more engaging and interactive with the utilization of technology in the classroom, especially in the facilitation of improving learner’s language proficiency. Learners like to learn facts and concrete material from their sensory and predictive outcomes than get involved in discussing and reflecting on the provided information. With mobile communication applications, learners can direct their own problem-solving process. Learners become actively involved in the learning process, unlike other educational viewpoints where the responsibility rests with the teacher to deliver knowledge while the learner passively receives it. Social media, therefore, is a learner-oriented tool, an intervention to instill interactive learning amongst the learning cohort”.

Allchin, Andersen and Nielsen (2017:123) agree that social media offers a learner freedom to engage in a learning relationship with others and as a result, this allows for ease of learners’ collaborative work. For example, learners can collaboratively create group reports, and in this instance, the quality of the whole tends to exceed the sum of its parts. In addition, the higher quality learning outcomes, participants in the process benefit from both peer recognition and peer review.

Eguchi (2018:62) agrees that when “learners work in an environment where they write for meaningful purposes and teachers provide explicit instruction on how to write effectively, the motivation to learn writing is seldom a problem. Additionally, when learners write for meaningful purposes, they have some choice in topic and publish their work to peers, parents and others, they develop a positive appreciation for the value of writing. Learners find learning exciting when they share, collaborate or work as a team”.

Henderson, Selwyn and Aston (2017:1568) study reveal that through “group participation in an online learning community of social network sites learners were motivated to support one another. Learners spend their time practicing English freely as they wish, and this can help them evaluate or grade their work at any time. Facebook and similar tools like WhatsApp, blogs and online forums can enable them to acquire new vocabulary which improves their reading and writing skills and also builds their confidence to communicate in English”.

1.5.11.1 Teachers’ use of social media as a corrective tool:

Howard, Chan and Caputi (2018:363) agree that “as alluded, the era of information technology has witnessed pervasive spring of social networks, which provide learners with access to easy interaction with peers through SMSs, WhatsApp and Facebook. Vhembe East District, as already mentioned, has also become a stereotypical area; learners are utilizing the available social networks. With the support of technologies, learner success rates could be improved, and the quality of the learning experience enhanced. In the realm of proactive learning, teachers find it interesting when learners search for information through technology, because they become happy when they come up with ideas on their own”.

Izadpanah and Asadi (2017:554) point to the fact that “teachers are using social networking technologies as a learning and teaching tool to blend informal learning into formal learning environments. There is a challenge that learners misuse the tools during lessons, as such, there must be serious monitoring during the lessons when social media is being used in class. Learners in grade 6 are to be discouraged from unnecessary browsing of social network. Texting must be combined with professional and consistent reinforcement for significant spelling skills development to occur. Combining the use of invented spelling with formal spelling reinforcement allows instructors to develop more effective teaching techniques”.

Lai (2018:78) has revealed that “social media could be used for teaching and learning in diverse ways. Since most of the features are in English, one has to understand English in order to participate in the activities and functions provided by social media. All the aforementioned features indicate that tools and platforms such as Facebook,

WhatsApp and many more which enhance community can potentially be harnessed for learning of English language”.

Instead of educators playing victim and point fingers at social media for violating the rules of English language and influencing learners to adopt textese which is a research problem for this study, a more proactive way would be for the education system itself to create its own content via SNS platforms. While McEwan (2017:355) confirms that “writing done on Facebook is quite different from the formal writing done in school for academic purposes,” nevertheless there is room for teachers to use blogs and online forums and demonstrate the correct spellings there. Admittedly, such an approach could spark the young learners’ curiosity in writing while also allowing them to text their thoughts as a fun exercise which could open up a new frontier for them.

Nguyen, Barton and Nguyen (2019:192) agree that “social media can be used to practice reading, writing in English and enhance learner’s English communication skills, and learner’s confidence to read write and communicate using English. Social networks have become a major preoccupation to most learners who solely resort to browsing and, in most cases, entertainment having no time to read good books that will enable them to assimilate and manipulate the language fluently and appropriately. Social revolutions’ enormous success in creating online communities has caught language educators’ attention. The spread of social media assists language educators to promote learning beyond the classroom”.

Pruet, Ang and Farzin (2016:1137) indicated that the “use of social media in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms can enhance language learning in terms of promoting authentic text-based language communication in electronic environments and increasing learner motivation in producing texts. Educators can use weblogs to create a communicative learning environment in which learners write collaboratively and edit their peers’ writing”.

Sung, Chang and Liu (2016:263) agree that one of the most difficult challenges concerning learners who struggle with writing is motivating them and developing positive attitudes towards writing. Instruction should pay special attention to the words most commonly used in learners’ writing. Many studies report increased motivation

for learning, generating meaningful output and stimulating learners' interest in language learning. Tasquier, Levrini and Dillon (2016:556) have argued that social web tools can facilitate educators in setting collaborative learning, as they place learners at the core of the learning experience while at the same time allowing the teacher to function as mentor and guide of knowledge construction and sharing.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given the nature of textese as a social media manipulation of the English language to as part of the mobile youth culture, the study naturally lends itself to linguistics on the one hand. However, the encroachment of textese from social media to the classroom points to yet another phenomenon of reality as a product of how human beings interact with one another (social construction). Accordingly, the two theoretical frameworks of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) from Michael Halliday and Social Constructivism from Vygotsky have been fused in order to explain the development of textese on the one hand, and its spread from one environment to another.

According to SFL, through social media, the incorrect spellings and grammar in written work known as textese is actually a stand-alone dialect or version of the English language which can be described as slang register. Therefore any written work can be subjected to analysis using SFL to check the field, tenor and mode (Halliday, 1997). According to SFL, the Textese prevailing in English First Additional Language (EFAL) written work of Grade 6 learners in Vhembe east district can be analysed through the Hallidayan concept of register. The notion of register itself is a derivative of the Hallidayan pillar of Context, which is one of the ways a piece of text can be analysed in isolation without considering other things like Semantics, Lexico-grammar and Phonology. In particular, *register* refers to the *context of situation* which looks at the actual language used to create the text (Halliday, 1997:5). Matthiessen and Halliday (1997:23) concur that language itself comes with a number of contexts which can either be context of culture, which falls outside this study, and the context of situation which is applicable to this study. Holguist (1981) agrees that social context affects language in one way while the language itself can be equally influenced by social context thereby creating a cause-effect-cause relationship between language and social context where the effect turns around to be a causative agent to the initial cause.

One of the major criticisms of Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is its inadequate consideration of socio-cultural factors coupled with disregard of the cognitive processes, among others, which necessitates the need for the social constructivism paradigm (O'Donnel, 2012). According to SFL, there should be a difference between formal English which is expected during academic school environments and informal language (such as slang which is considered as a stand-alone register) used in conversations among peers like school children. With the invasion of social media's textese into the school system, this demarcation is lost which invalidates SFL. Accordingly, the theory of social constructivism is required.

On the other hand, through social constructivism, Vygotsky believed that social interaction, cultural tools, and activity shape individual development and learning (Woolfolk, 2007:346). Children first use language in activities with others. Mental processes are first co-constructed during shared activities between the child and another person who is more capable or advanced in their thinking (Woolfolk, 2007:40). Then, the processes are internalised by the child and become part of their cognitive development. Vygotsky believed that all higher-order mental processes, such as reasoning and solving, are mediated by psychological tools, such as language, signs, and symbols. Adults teach these tools to children during daily activities and the children internalise them. As children engage in activities with adults or more capable peers, they exchange ideas, attitudes and values . They develop representative concepts; drawing maps to represent spaces and places. The co-created ideas are internalised by children. Thus, children's knowledge, ideas, attitudes and values develop through appropriating or taking the ways of acting and ways of thinking provided by both their culture and other members of their group (Woolfolk, 2007:41).

As such, there is a trinity of forces operating in the social context when learning takes place. During the assessment of Grade 6 EFAL learners' written work, the Grade teachers are picking textese. That is the first variable. The second variable is the environment (which is increasingly becoming digital because of technology) in which the Grade 6 teachers operate, which also influences both teachers and learners. Finally, there is the teacher's own individual or personal experience of textese. All these variables will be studied in this theory to explain how learning takes place.

The social constructivism paradigm as propounded by Vygotsky is the origin of epistemology forming the basis of this study which needs to explore teachers' perceptions regarding learners' textese creation of knowledge and new language using technology. In a classroom setting, for learners to learn, it takes the assistance of other people to help them to learn. These other people could be the teachers, siblings, friends, relatives and fellow learners themselves both inside the classroom and outside. 'Other people' could also refer to the digital world of social media in which learners with mobile phones are able to interact with others.

Therefore, when learners are placed into groups in a classroom and allocated work or a common problem to solve, they start learning from one another. For example, the learners exposed to social media may write textese, which is then adopted by other learners in the group who might not actually be exposed to it. The shortened spelling used by one learner may be adopted by others in the class. At the end, it is possible for both learners who own and use mobile phones to commit the same spelling mistakes as those who do not own or use mobile phones.

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), by Vygotsky (1978:80), is described as a range of tasks that are too difficult for an individual to master alone but can be mastered with the assistance and guidance of adults and more skilled peers. Thus, when working in groups, learners might be given spelling exercises, for example. If the group is dominated by learners exposed to social media, the prevalence of textese may be high. At the same time, there is the element of scaffolding, which comes with Social Constructivism. Scaffolding relates to the provision of the right amount of assistance at the right time.

In the digital world of the fourth industrial revolution, assistance comes from social media. Learners learn spellings during the usage of mobile phones when communicating with others (siblings, adults and fellow learners). This is a form of observational learning. This assistance given to them on social media platforms ensures that people learn from others and that explains the relevance of social constructivism in this study.

While Michael Halliday's SFL helps identify textese as a stand-alone register, its spread from the world of social media interactions into the formal corridors of academic classroom learning can only be explained by social constructivism paradigm. Accordingly, the study relies on both theoretical frameworks in order to provide an end-to-end perspective of textese from its identity as slang used in social media to its spread into formal learning by means of how people socialize with one another.

When teachers assess the written work of learners in English First Additional Language, the effects of the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding are witnessed. When textese is found in the books of learners with mobile phones and those without mobile phones, it shows that some learning has taken place. From the interaction with other learners exposed to textese, other learners who do not own or use mobile phones begin to commit the same mistakes.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.7.1 English First Additional Language

English first additional language (EFAL): In this study this refers to the categorization of the English language as a medium of instruction and learning for those learners who speak vernaculars of African languages who happen to be non-native speakers of the English language (Drouin, 2011:69).

1.7.2 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

For this study, the term ICT is specifically confined to usage of the mobile phone as the means by which learners access social media. This is contrary to the broader definition of ICT as any communication device or application, encompassing items like radio, television, cellular phones, computer, network hardware and software, satellite systems, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning (Fojtik, 2014:344).

1.7.3 Social Constructivism

Social constructivism in this study refers to how learners gain knowledge from their peers who might either be online or in a face-to-face setting. This definition resonates with how Vygotsky (1978:62) views social constructivism as a sociological theory of knowledge according to which human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978:62).

1.7.4 Social Media

Social Media refers to the internet platforms which allow people to share information with one another and which can be accessed through the mobile phone (Baruah, 2012:468).

1.7.5 Textese

For this study, Textese refers to the deliberate reduction of normal word forms with the intention to shorten texts, which results in grammatically wrong spellings when they appear in the learners' workbooks in a classroom setting of a formal school environment (Xodabande, 2017:42).

1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGM, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 Research Paradigm

The research utilised the research philosophy known as interpretivism (Saunders, 2016). It is alternatively known as the interpretive paradigm in so far as it seeks to explore the perceptions of teachers towards textese (Cohen et al, 2007). Under the interpretive paradigm, the subjective experiences of individuals constitute social reality. As outlined in the problem statement, the researcher herself is a participant-observer who noted, during assessment and interaction with her Grade 6 learners, that there is a marked deterioration in English language literacy among learners who are exposed to social media. In exploring the teachers' perceptions towards textese, the researcher also happens to be a teacher within the designated population of

participants. Thus, there is no clear demarcation between the researcher and the researched. As such, the researcher's past and present experiences will tend to affect the interpretation of information gathered during the research effort.

Naturally, the interpretive paradigm lends itself to qualitative research which relies on such research techniques as interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations together with the instruments thereof in the form of questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary reviews of records.

1.8.2 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design in the form of an interpretive and narrative Case Study. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:24), a qualitative research design is a reflective process operating through every stage of a project – the activities of collecting and analysing data, developing and modifying theory, elaborating or refocusing the research questions and identifying and dealing with validity, threats – which are, usually, going on more or less simultaneously, each influencing all of the others.

In this study, the qualitative approach was deemed appropriate as it would accurately provide the required information to achieve the aim of the study, namely, to investigate Grade 6 teachers' perceptions towards textese as an influencing factor in learners' inability to engage in academic writing. From this qualitative research design, an interview schedule, and text analysis were used to collect data.

This type of qualitative research design that is used to conduct this research is an interpretive and narrative phenomenological study. De Vos, Fouche and Delport (2005:264) indicate that a phenomenological study focuses on peoples' perceptions, and perspectives to understand a situation to be studied. In this study, the researcher is interested in the perceptions of Grade 6 EFAL teachers regarding textism in the classroom. The researcher, therefore, sought an in-depth explanation regarding learners' textism in their academic writing through the selected participants' perspectives.

1.8.3 Research Methodology

Research methodology considers and explains the logic behind research methods and techniques (Sertic, 2015:1). The concept of research methodology refers to the range of approaches used in research, to gather data; it is used as a foundation for interpretation, explanation and prediction (Mohammed, 2017:84). The research utilised the case study design as a strategy of inquiry. A case study examines a bounded system, or a case over time in-depth, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:24).

The research used a case study in order to place boundaries on the topic because there is a tendency for researchers to attempt to answer a question that is too broad or a topic that has too many objectives for one study, therefore the case study method enabled the researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. The researcher utilised a very limited number of individuals as subjects (in this case, teachers) since it exploits a case study method.

Grade 6 EFAL teachers were chosen so that comparisons can be made among their perceptions and the concepts, hence theories can be extended and validated. In this study, the researcher also investigated whether learners who use mobile phones are more susceptible to making textese errors than those who do not have mobile phones. An in-depth understanding of the study was achieved through semi-structured interviews with Grade 6 EFAL teachers. An interpretation and narration of the data collected will be an important key to understanding the analysis and conclusion.

1.9 SAMPLING

1.9.1 Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalise the results of the research (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:489). Goddard and Melville (2007:34) define a population as a set of entities in which all the measurements of interest to the practitioner or researcher are represented. For example, it might refer to all primary

school learners or teacher's district. Thus, the population is the group in which the researcher is interested, and it forms the basis of eligibility criteria. In this study, the population was constituted by Grade 6 EFAL teachers from Mutshundudi Circuit, Vhembe east district within Limpopo Province. The target population for the present study is focussing on all Grade 6 English First Additional Language teachers.

1.9.2 Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure refers to the method and order used to select a portion of the population for study (Creswell, 2010:79) In this qualitative research, purposive sampling was utilized to select 4 schools from Mutshindudi Circuit where grade 6 EFAL teachers have an understanding of the modern jargon in English classrooms as English is the grade 6 medium of instruction. Purposive sampling means selecting participants so as to meet certain criteria relevant to a particular research question (Ib id) The logic of purposive sampling lies in selecting information from cases which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research (Babbie and Mouton, 2010:43).

1.9.3 Sample

In this study, a sample of 3 Grade 6 teachers for each of the 4 schools in Vhembe was used, giving a total of 12 teachers. This was comprehensive enough to allow a detailed understanding of the population according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:56).

1.9.4 Data Collection Instruments

1.9.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

The researcher compiled and used an interview guide or schedule for semi-structured interviews which were conducted to understand teachers' perceptions regarding texting in learners' writing. To conduct the interviews, the researcher took a decision in line with Kvale (1996:3) a statement that 'If you want to know how people understand their world and life, why not talk to them?' The statement made the researcher realise how important it is to interview people, especially if one wants to understand the way they do things. According to Creswell (2010:87), an interview is a two-way

conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data about their ideas, beliefs, views, options and behaviour. The reason for selecting interviews is to obtain rich descriptive data that will help the researcher to understand the interviewees' perceptions by combining pieces of knowledge and social reality. In-depth interviews will allow the researcher to enter into the inner world of the other person and gain a better understanding of that person's view (Nunkoosing, 2005:698). Kumar (2011:389) explains that an interview schedule is a written list of questions, open or closed-ended prepared for use by an interviewer in person-to-person interaction.

1.9.4.2 Document analysis

In a qualitative study, most researchers use interviews and observation while the study of documents and secondary analysis is sometimes neglected. Document study indicates the analysis of any written material that contains information about the phenomenon which is being researched. By combining the use of interviews and document analysis, the researcher can validate and cross-check findings. As each data source has both strengths and weaknesses, the researcher can triangulate data to minimise the weaknesses of one method by the other (de Vos, Fouche and Delport, 2005:314).

In this case, the documents that were analysed are 12 Grade 6 learners' written work (essays) provided by the 12 sampled teachers; in order to establish the existence of textese in their writing activities. The researcher tense analysed the type of words used in learners' writing, the type of words which are shortened and Which symbols are used instead of proper formal English.

1.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The term trustworthiness " refers to the way in which an enquirer is able to persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to and that the research is of high quality (Johnson and Turner, 2003: 298). In qualitative research, there is a need to determine whether the study is believable and accurate and whether

it is useful to people beyond those who participated in it therefore trustworthiness needs consideration when undertaking a study (Maxwell, 2012:214). Trustworthiness is a term used in qualitative research as a measure of the quality of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985:64) suggest that for qualitative inquiry to be trustworthy, the following four concepts should be taken into consideration:

1.10.1 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the adequacy of information from the research question and the protocol of data collection, through the raw data, various stages in the analysis of data to the interpretation of findings. Johnson and Turner (2003:301), claim confirmability can be established by the researcher making provision of an audit of the material used in the study. The researcher provided an audit of how the data was collected from the participants to increase the reliability of the study. Furthermore, the researcher increased the reliability of the data by having intensive engagement with the material and establishing integration between data and the notes taken during interviews.

1.10.2 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is defined as the extent to which data analysis is believable and trustworthy. Credibility, therefore, refers to the degree to which a study's findings represent the meanings assigned by the research participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:15). Credibility is similar to internal validity, which is concerned with how research findings match realities. It is upon the reader to judge the extent of the findings' credibility based on their understanding of the study. Credibility is also used to evaluate whether or not the research findings represent a credible conceptual representation based on the interpretation of the data drawn from the participants. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher goes back to the participants to verify what the researcher has discussed with them and establish if that was what they said or meant; this is also known as 'member checking'. Lincoln and Guba (1985:314) consider member checking as one of the most valid techniques for establishing credibility.

1.10.3 Dependability

According to Maxwell (2012:223), dependability is similar to reliability which explains the consistency of observing the same findings under similar contexts. Reliability means that if the research was to be conducted again, then similar results would be produced. In this study, the researcher ensured dependability by aligning the research objectives with the research methodology as well as interviews which were piloted on another group of grade 6 EFAL teacher who did not participate in the study.

1.10.4 Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which generalisation can be made from the data context of the study to the wider population and settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:70). In other words, this implies that the results of the research can be transferred to other contexts and situations beyond the scope or confines of the actual study context. This concept is like external validity or the extent to which findings can be generalised. Qualitative researchers should focus on two important considerations so that transferability can be increased – look closely at how participants are linked to the context being studied, and the contextual boundaries of the findings. To achieve a high degree of transferability in this study, the researcher provided a detailed description of the context in which the study undertook to provide the reader with sufficient information to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings that they know (Johnson and Turner, 2003:298).

1.11 DATA ANALYSIS

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2011:397) describe data analysis in a qualitative study as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of data. Almaki (2016:288) posits that qualitative methods are more suited to looking at the meaning of events or circumstances. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:135) further state that qualitative researchers construct the interpretive narratives from their data and try to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study and since the study

is interpretive and narrative, the researcher will endeavour to obtain data through direct interaction with the phenomenon being studied. Yin (2009:13) discusses the aspect of data analysis in the qualitative study as the search for meaning through direct interpretation of what is observed by the researcher as well as what is experienced and reported by the participants or subjects. In this study, the researcher will analyse the qualitative data by discovering patterns, concepts, themes and meanings.

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews was analysed using inductive thematic analysis in order to develop a framework of the underlying structure of the experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data. The primary purpose of using inductive thematic analysis in this study was to allow the research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data, to address the main research questions – *What are the teachers' perceptions towards textese in the learners' written work? What is the effect of texting on learners' academic writing in English First Additional Language in the classroom?* Inductive thematic analysis is an appropriate approach for analysis of the qualitative data in this study which is concerned with trying to understand the lived experiences and with how respondents themselves make sense of it then categorise the patterns and make comparisons and contrasts between those patterns and then reflect deeply on certain patterns and their complex threads to try and make sense of them. Themes were derived from transcribed data obtained through semi-structured interviews after the researcher has transcribed the recordings and read them several times until saturation point was reached.

1.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study has the potential to answer some of the pertinent questions regarding technology as a teaching and learning tool. By determining which social network can establish commonality with teaching and learning, education specialists and curriculum advisors can evaluate these for possible implementation. This may help in reducing inappropriate texting in the formal teaching and learning environment.

The new pedagogies require learners to create new knowledge and connect it to the world with the power of digital tools. A key function of this study was to assist the Department of Education, Curriculum advisors and policy makers in developing and designing suitable curriculum support materials that will help teachers and learners to use social media in the classrooms without limitations. This approach will also address the need to understand better how to engage with technologies in order to provide the best learning experience which will maintain both academic standards and the quality of the teaching and learning experience.

It is, therefore, envisaged that the research will serve as a resource for teachers to gain a better understanding of how technology can enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms in the Mutshundudi Circuit Intermediate Phase landscape. English First Additional Language teachers might be trained in using technology in the classroom to improve classroom practice and learner performance.

1.13 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was confined to Mutshundudi in Vhembe where four primary schools were purposively sampled together with 12 teachers in total, distributed as 3 teachers from each of the 4 schools.

1.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Maree (2007:298) states that research cannot simply be conducted by anyone and anywhere. For example, it is essential that researchers must obtain permission from either Education Departments or the relevant authorities before conducting any form of research. Bearing this in mind, the following ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process (Carpenter and Krutka, 2014:414).

1.14.1 Permission to Collect Data

The researcher went through the process of applying for ethical clearance from University of Venda. She then went to seek permission from the Limpopo Department of Education, thereafter, to the District Senior Manager (DSM) to conduct the study in

Vhembe east district. With the letter from the District Senior Manager, the researcher also went to the Circuit Manager to seek permission, after which the researcher visited the principals where the study was conducted.

Once permission was granted by the principals from the identified schools, the researcher collected data from the selected participants (Castro, Exposito-Casas, Lopex-Martin, Lizasoain, Navarro-Asencio and Gaviri, 2015:46).

1.14.2 Informed Consent

According to Yin (2014) and corroborated by Saunders et al (2016), informed consent is one of the ethical principles upon which research should be conducted. In this study, participants were asked to sign consent forms confirming their willingness to participate in the study before data collection. The respondents were fully informed about the purpose of the study. The researcher recognised this ethical principle and applied it by way of issuing letters of consent to all participants before interviewing them (Cresswell, 2010). In this respect, a written agreement containing information regarding the purpose of the research, as well as the role of the participants in the research was issued (Yin, 2014). Participants were also informed that they can withdraw from the research at any time without any consequences.

1.14.3 Anonymity

Respondents were informed that data collected would be used only for this study and no names or any form of identification were used on any reports, thus their anonymity was preserved.

1.14.4 Confidentiality

In this study, confidentiality was highly respected because it is a critical aspect of any research study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:45) explain that 'confidentiality' means ensuring that any information that is used to link respondents to their responses is kept private from the public. No information regarding any participant was divulged to the public or any other unauthorised personnel. In this study, the researcher made

no participant's name is written on the responses. Instead, pseudonyms were be used. Participants' information was therefore be protected and kept safely so that no one can access it without the participants' permission.

1.14.5 Avoidance of Harm to Participants

The third ethical consideration which is vital to research is the avoidance of harm to participants. It entails being considerate when asking questions and dealing with other issues discussed during the interview sessions by avoiding asking sensitive questions (Babbie and Mouton, 2010:102).

In this study, the researcher I ensured avoidance of harm by making sure that all participants were informed of the contents of the interview before starting. The interview sessions were also conducted in places where the participants felt free and comfortable to avoid any emotional or physical discomfort.

1.15 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS

The research programme was divided into five chapters as set forth below:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

Chapter 3: Research Design, Methodology and Strategy

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the teachers' perceptions about textese in Grade 6 EFAL writing from a socio-linguistical perspective on the one hand and a psycho-social and socio-technological view on the other. Textese itself can be viewed as a linguistic infection spread through social media whose symptoms are manifesting as poor spellings by learners in class. The Hallidayan model of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) addresses the socio-linguistic paradigm while Vygotsky's social constructivism deals with the psycho-social and socio-technological perspective. The justification for the socio-technological perspective is the fact that mobile phone technology has greatly influenced writing. Wellman (2018:3) posits that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a predominant driving force in our society, of which the instant results in academic work may be observed".

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The observed geometric rise in Short Message Services (SMS) cited by Wellman (2018:1) and the restrictions on the allowable number of words and characters (Ngambi, Brown, Bozalek, Gachago and Wood (2016:843) when typing has resulted in the use of abridged spellings (Zuilkowski, Jukes and Dubeck (2016:100) which has encroached into the classroom thereby distorting learners written school work. According to Brashers and Gladstone (2016:22) teachers encounter gross errors such as omission of punctuation or capitalisation under the notion of textism which leads to poor literacy in both primary and secondary schools. Moreover, the extent of this textism which other researchers consider as a new form of illiteracy is significantly determined by the age group. Nobles, Glenn, Kowsari and Barnes (2018:413) have observed in their Australian study that teenagers and undergraduates write 5 – 20% of their words in textism while younger children are more inclined, with estimates ranging from 50 – 58% of their messages being "translated" into textism from the standard.

Berger (2017:65) confirms that the tendency of "passing abridged messages in written shape" globally prevalent in the education system as indeed observed amongst grade

6 learners in Vhembe east district, reflects an attempt to conform to the restrictions imposed by ICT communication platforms like Twitter which only allow sending of one hundred of forty (140) words as written text. The implication is that people communicating via twitter are socialised to abridge their messages to save time and space. These abridged messages, according to Pedwell, Hardy and Rowland (2017:252), transcend the social environment and have been found in the classroom as some kind of a spelling fashion which has also affected Grade 6 learners in Vhembe east district.

In so far as technology is impacting every facet of human life including language development, writing, learning, among others, the review *will chronologically commence with the definition and provenance of social media and its implications in society and subsequent encroachment into the classroom, the consideration of Michael Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory which identifies textese as a stand-alone register and finally Vygotsy's Social Constructivism which explains how learners are affected by their peers, whether online or real-life, in the course of learning as they are social beings who learn from others surrounding them.*

2.2 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

While social media generally refers to online platforms like websites which allow the sharing of content among individuals or companies, Ainin, Nashbandi, Moghavin and Jaafar (2018:65) clarify that the term social media has many definitions in both public and educational spheres. As a compound word with "social" on the one hand and "media" on the other, the term shows a blending of human element (social) in the sharing of records via the channel of technological conveniences or devices in the form of radio, television, newspapers which Albien and Naidoo (2019:113) concur as befitting the term media in their conventional styles. However, in this study, the focus is on the mobile phone as a technological device which has metamorphosed into a technological one-stop-shop where all the content from radios, newspapers and television stations is housed.

2.3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND TRENDS THEREOF

Mbokazi (2015:469) agrees that just as the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century created a printing revolution characterised by a marked change in written language as it deviated from its spoken version, so too has today's information age forged a new written English language divorced from the spoken version. The impact of social media is not restricted to the written language alone but also covers the verbal exchanges which Tupas (2015:114) believes will continue to rapidly evolve. Thus, the mobile phones have emerged as the number one screen displaying tool for regular social media users. To this concurs Watt (2010:143) by asserting that learners are increasingly gaining access to Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and YouTube which not only allow them to unpack messages and facts quickly at fast speeds, but are also shaping the spellings, wording and creation of meanings since the web itself like a treasured source of language for the twenty-first century language practitioners".

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Social media has already been defined as the collective term for all content-sharing internet based platforms in section 2.2 above. However, Baruah (2012:5) is more explicit and claims that social media is primarily based websites which facilitate sharing of information or content in audio, video, text or image form in an interactive dialogue. Indeed, Fleming and Hutton (2017:1873) observe that social media has impacted human speech in the process of influencing companies, groups and people. For the young people, it has created a new world in the online dimension where they engage with one another regardless of distance. Mobile phones supply facts to learners, provide a platform of interaction with one another and enable people to assemble and keep their social networks.

Kupchik and Catlaw (2015:97) argue that social media has contributed to the death of the old-style magazine industry relying on printed publications like Readers Digest while giving birth to e-magazines. By eliminating paper work, it has created the internet, boards, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, images and pictures. Relationships among the young people have been mediated by technology without face-to-face interactions. This affects both personal relationships and

community relationships. It is possible for an entire household, group or community to join a community platform on social media platform. According to Asterhan and Rosenberg (2015:137), social community is the number one method of verbal exchange. It is considered as brand-new verbal exchange medium by which human beings broadcast and obtain diverse bits of information.

The social community provides some flexibility to learners who are studying by allowing them to be in control of their studies through online classes and revision exercises, for example, which increases their self-confidence. Increasingly, platforms like Class Dojo are used by both teachers and learners where homework is posted on the same platform and assessment results are displayed as well. According to Bush and Glover (2016:213), such social communities like Class Dojo become an exchange tool which allows creation of chatrooms, boards, tests, homework, among others outside the traditional classroom setting. Both learner-to-learner interactions and learner-to-teacher engagements are enabled by social media as dialogue is promoted either way. *If the research problem of textese is to be mitigated, such platforms need to model the proper spellings and adherence to rules of grammar which are expected in the classroom.*

2.5 THE HISTORY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Technology eases human communication as postulated by Serfontein and De Waal, (2015:5). However, it was only in 1792 that humanity invented the telegraph to send and receive messages over long distances (Bush and Glover, 2016). This was followed by development of social networks in the 1800s by Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, regarded by many as the father of Sociology, and Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist. Further on in the same era of 1800s, the radio and telephone were used for social interaction. Subsequently in the twentieth century, the internet was born and along with it came a series significant improvements the generation of messages through digital means over the internet as cited by (Hall, Grimaldi, Gunter, Moller, Serpieri and Skedsmo ., 2015:490).

Hallinger (2018:263) agrees that twenty-first century noticed a spurt within the boom of social networking through the launching of Friendster, photo-log, Photo-bucket,

Flicker, Orkut, Facebook, Ning, Dig, Twitter, Netlog, Youtube, etc. Social media has come a long way since the days of the telegraph, even within the greater days of Internet Relay Chats (IRC), it maintains evolution. The social media is now popular, and widely accepted in the web panorama. *This brief historical discussion of social media helps in tracing its encroachment into the classroom and its manifestation as textese in the written work of learners.*

2.6 HOW HAS SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE TRENDS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME DEVELOPED?

Since social media content can take the form of audio, video, text and images, Pelsler and Van Wyk, (2016:1) conclude that “social media gives diverse methods through which we will talk with human beings.” *Since the turn of the millennium*, social media has also invaded the instructional field and brought with it the same changes which Brauckmann and Schwarz (2015:752) observed over the last 30 years where letters, with more formal language and longer waiting and reaction time, are replaced by electronic messages which are short, instantly real time and, such, assume a conversational tone in order to save time and money.

Dhakal and Chevalier (2016:1121) argue that “broadcast technology like Twitter remodel those quick bursts of verbal exchange from one-on-one conversations to new (or trivia) application which we will use every time we have something to say”. Bozkır, Mazman and Sezer (2017:96) concluded that “on-line verbal exchange equipment growth in social contacts, for example, Twitter offers us the possibility to replace matters to be done at a selected time factor”. In view of that input, the time factor aspect, and the saving of space during interaction will drive the user the want to use the modern online verbal exchange tools.

2.7 SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE ADVANCED WORLD

As human beings are social animals (Foster, 2019) who learn from others (Vygotsky, 1978), it is important to trace the development of social media in the advanced world before observing its effects in the emerging economies like South Africa. With the

evolution of social media, as a superior international technique, purchasers are taking new methods to have interaction with other human beings. Social media conversations with other people are taking place straight on the worldwide platform. While social networks attempt to strengthen education internationally by figuring out the manner in which virtual equipment can work for instructional benefit in line with traditional methods. Arshad and Akram (2018: 245) expressed that social networking websites sell facts sharing through collaborative platforms for educational institutions. In addition, the alternative of facts through Social Media systems assists the educational network to broaden a smooth and powerful verbal exchange amongst classmates and colleagues.

2.7.1 Social Media in Australia

Cardon and Marshall (2016:275) say “Social Network Sites (SNS) are increasing in number and famous among Australian younger population irrespective of geographical location, history and age. Almost all younger Australians (16-29 year olds) are online with 90% making use of the internet day by day. Learners spend greater time online (downloading content, searching up facts and emailing) with a minimum of 22 hours more than other age groups. Cell engagement with SNS is unexpectedly gaining popularity, 39% of SNS customers get entry to those offerings through cell devices”.

Chun, Kern and Smith (2016:68) argue that the “significance of SNS in younger human beings’ ordinary lives is indisputable: 90% of eleven to fifteen year olds and 97% of sixteen to 22-year olds, use SNS (ACMA, 2009a:8). SNS use is the primary online pastime for 23 to 30 year olds with 83% reporting they use them on a normal basis. There is an awful lot of tendency from schools, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and universities turn to SNS and social media along with blogs to leverage or supplement formal schooling, sports and beautify learning outcomes.

Ciampa (2018:84) expresses that “over the last decade, Australian governments have invested substantially in virtual schooling, growing a robust base in phases of technological infrastructure, virtual sources and help for teachers’ practice. Teachers in Australia have accelerated the possibility to enhance their abilities in terms of using

virtual technology”. Ciampa (2018:86) asserted that social media in Australia assist newbies to connect to every different source and settle higher for their studies. This constructs confidence, lessens attrition and will increase possibilities of instructional achievement. While for Australia this constitutes experiential learning, South Africa can apply the same lessons through observational learning and cut down the learning curve as the research problem of textese is being investigated.

2.7.2 Social Media in Japan

Dunbar, Arnaboldi, Conti and Passarella (2017:41) provide that “40% of the full population (fifty-one million) are social community provider customers and 65% of these customers (33 million) actively publish content. Approximately 71% join social communities through smartphones. Japanese twitter customers were projected to reach 20 million as of September 2019, and that is in all likelihood to have surged by now. As that information indicates, there's considerable use of social media in Japan, and newbies have interaction on social media on daily basis”.

Freelon and Karpf (2016:394) agree that the “social media community era assists teachers to sell social learning past the classroom. Developing energetic language studying surroundings is an important way of assisting English First Additional Language newbies. In latest years, Japan has hooked up the method of participation in the learning pedagogy. Moreover, the social media technology has expanded, consequently the provision of schooling is realised”.

Gan and Wang (2016:355) asserted that “social media have emerged as a part of their lives and are constructing their social surroundings by using variation of social media. The social media revolution`s big achievement is the growth of online groups which has attracted language teachers` attention”. Guesalaga (2016:71) agrees that “the unfold of social media assists language teachers to sell social studying past the classroom. English newbies in Japan face extra problems and pressure for instructional writing in large part because of the extent of language competency. A digital tool, along with the e-reader has the ability for helping newbies with the method of writing”. In addition, learners view Social Networking Sites (SNS) as an instructional studying device to help their English language learning in the Japanese context.

2.7.3 Social Media in Emerging Economies (Asia and Africa)

Hassan, Nadzim and Shiratuddin (2018:263) argue that social media creates access to information to anybody who seeks it. In developing locations, where human beings are in rural regions, with little access to resources, they can now get academic records, cellular fitness and monetary offerings in approaches that had not been possible earlier before the cellular era and the expansion of social media. Hu, Chu, Leung, Ngai, Kruchen and Chan (2017:1558) agree that “social media will cause dramatic developments within the discipline of training due to the fact that internet permits a trainer in growing and getting entry to the equal database records as one within superior location globally.... According to Amir (2011:56), distance learning can narrow gate entry to education and training, through open universities in India, Africa and Thailand, and language websites for schools. When human beings within the growing global trends... get online, the web generally will become a part of each day lives”. With the assistance of social Media newbies can get records, and can speak with their teachers, pals, and classmates easily. Learners additionally discover their abilities and get their opportunities in the future.

2.7.4 Social Media in India

According to World Bank (2023), India is classified as an emerging economy which also happens to be part of the BRICS block comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, among others. Kramer, Guillory and Hancock (2017:789) say “teaching within the twenty-first century is so interesting but frightful as well, due to possibilities to bridge the educational global with the actual global”. Lemola, Perkinson-Gloor, Brand, Kaufmann and Grob (2019:409) show that almost “80% of younger human beings have a profile on social networking sites inclusive of Facebook and Twitter, and that they use hand held gadgets inclusive of smartphones and tablets, and that they use this hardware to learn.” Maher, Lewis, Ferrar, Marshall, De Boudeaudhuij and Vandelannotte (2018:) agree that “the era is commonly creating an essential alternative in the manner in which teachers engage with their classes. At least 58% wish to make use of technology in teaching, while 77% say that they got an upward push in the classroom because of the use of newbies.

Maier, Laumer, Weinert and Weitzel. (2017:278) concluded that in India, social media training is now wished greater than ever and it has essential peer sharing and assistance that may be treasured by younger human beings. It is time to rethink the jobs of social media used for training, considering it will likely be or is now inevitably included in each day's lives. The technological innovation and expanded use of the net for e-learning with the aid of newbies has introduced progressive modifications in verbal exchange, Pfeffer, Zorbach and Carley (2016:120) concluded that the "introduction of the net and emergence of social networking has given upward push to new linguistic patterns and forms. There is likewise a developing tendency of reductionism towards growing verbal exchange skills on the value of correctness". Richardson, Castellano, Stone and Sanning (2016:60) explain that "the function of a trainer is to create a surrounding that could inspire more recent streams of thought, incisive arguments and logical deliberations, and to talk to the newbies of their language, the usage of their equipment so that it will make the magnificent atmosphere efficient and interesting".

Roshan, Warren and Carr (2016:352) agree that "social community web sites systems can be a veritable medium to elicit reviews and offer the spontaneous feedback. Different social media systems permit various teaching-learning abilities and provide differing modalities of engagement and provide a whole lot of language improvement possibilities. For the newbies having issues with the regions of grammar, the trainer may also publish the hyperlink of the Voice of America (VOA) English learning portal that a learner may also use right away and get their confusions cleared". Saridakis, Benson, Ezingard and Tennakoon (2016:322) agree that "the language used within the media may be informal, innovative and non-instructional. This non-instructional diction allows for higher expressivity on the part of the newbies.

2.7.5 Social Media in Nigeria

Since the World Bank (2020) ranks Nigeria as Africa's leading economy on the African continent in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) followed by South Africa, it is important to review the development of social media in Africa's leading economy as a benchmark for South Africa. Sarker, Ginn, Nikfarjam, O'Connor, Smith, Jayaraman, Upadhaya and Gonzales (2018:202) assert that Web-based social networking tools

are growing in leaps and bounds in Nigeria and are also popular among learners. Like their other counterparts across the globe, Nigerian youths in institutions of learning are seriously engaged in communicating with each other both at local and global levels through these social networks. In Nigeria, learners use text message language to exchange information on class assignments, football match scores and chatting about everyday life activities.

Simon, Goldberg and Adini (2017:611) argue that “computers and the internet are regarded as powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform, especially when used appropriately. It is undeniable that Nigerian children deal in a digital oriented-world, and as such could have access to various ICT devices and gadgets such as smartphones, laptops and the likes outside the school environment (Ogirima, Tolulope and Dasar, 2021:81). With reference to the incorporation of social networking sites into the teaching and learning of English, scholars such as Sofowora (2019:3) reported that social networking sites, particularly Facebook, do have positive outcomes for English language pedagogy”.

The adoption and desirability for use, and the resultant usage of the techniques, particularly by learners will result in the development of shortened styles of presenting information as referred to in the research.

Generally, the act of violating the rules of writing affects almost all the people using social networks. Ogirima, Tolulope and Dasar (2021:82) assert that Nigerian Basic Schools are increasingly making efforts to harness the potential of various Information Communication Technology tools to develop the various abilities and skills of learners.

Wellman and Gulia (2018:332) stated that learners in Nigeria have more tendencies of writing something that will confuse others or impress their peers because social networks provide the arena to freely write without fear of being guilty of violating the rules of writing. That is why illegitimate forms of abbreviations and deliberate use of wrong grammar are more common and prevalent among them. The wrong grammar manifests even in their formal or academic writing because they become addicted to text message language, instant messages and so on to the point of writing such language in their continuous assessment and examinations.

Taniguchi and Hirakawa (2016:480) say it is most astonishing to note that even though learners are aware of the dangers associated with the use of Text Message Language, especially during examinations they still cannot stop because they unconsciously use it. And as noted by Farrell (2015:440) the use of “Text Message Language can adopt the use of only simple and correct English when doing so. Writing by learners in Nigeria is hampered by serious writing impediments occurring mainly in three important and crucial writing aspects, lexis, punctuation and grammar. Learners distort their writing, thereby making it unclear, vague and unrecognisable, especially to the audience who are unfamiliar with this negative development or trend”.

Yemini and Sagie (2015:544) stated that bringing social networking sites into the classroom can reinforce the role of the English teacher to prepare learners for the global world. The statement is true because in all universities and internationally, social media is applicable and when learners have used it in the lower and higher grades, they are at the advantage at the university level. Wilkins (2015:184) agrees that “technology enhances the ability to interact with and observe others. Social media can provide the building blocks for a learning environment powered by multiple forms of support, allowing learners to connect, interact and share ideas in a fluid way”.

Hill and James (2017:57) say “despite the ambiguity of Web 2.0 in the lives of today's learners, teachers face impediments in infusing social networking tools into instruction. Schools have rules against accessing social networking sites using the schools` technology resources, such hindrances complicate the efforts of teachers to experiment with Web 2.0 tools for purposes of instruction”. Hogue, Goss, Hollis and White (2016:109) agreed that “learners especially at the intermediate and lower levels, are to be discouraged from unnecessary browsing of internets and another social network. We find that learners become addicted to browsing the internet at a tender age and become internet addicts.

2.8 SOCIAL MEDIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

English teachers in resources-restricted schools in South Africa have the hazard of the usage of social media systems to have interaction with inexperienced learners, thereby sharing content, writing, curation and different visible verbal exchange abilities

(Rwodzi, De Jager and Mpofu, 2020:4). In addition, the era of social media gives possibilities for inexperienced learners to broaden essential writing abilities, verbal exchange effectiveness and mastering experiences.

Maringe and Moletsane (2015:348) argue that “South Africa has additionally witnessed a few strains of texting in inexperienced learners’ instructional writings, in checked scripts and exam, many teachers lament the trouble of textual content creeping in South African schools. It seems as though inexperienced learners are not capable of using suitable language in contexts, as their casual text styles are seen in formal writing within the classroom”. In the South African context, Diem, Frankenberg and Cleary (2018:715) article entitled “2 days “young adults eroding English?” Explain that textese is the reason for difficulty in assessing the written work of learners.

Pan South African Language Board Chairperson, Professor Ngubane posits that inexperienced persons have to take into account the distinction between textese and educational writing. Texting is shorter and the learners could be searching at saving time and character (Armstrong & Lee, 2021). This trouble is difficult to remedy due to the fact they cannot distinguish among them. Mike Hart, the coordinator of Pietermaritzburg’s literacy program, is likewise quoted as pronouncing declining literacy as the actual stumbling block for the country’s training system. If the inexperienced learners use textese for instructional writing, it is due to the fact they have not been taught the distinction and what is correct in the contexts.

Arshad and Akram (2018:247) state that textese is turning into a norm, especially on Facebook and WhatsApp with the implied consequences indicating that teachers understand textese as having a terrible impact on inexperienced learners’ written English First Language (EFAL) books. The terrible effect of textese on written language abilities causes inexperienced learners to attain bad grades in English First Language”. Russell, Meredith, Childs, Stein and Prine (2017:92) observed that “textese negatively affected the inexperienced learners’ written English, figuring out g-clipping and non-traditional spellings because of the use of textese. Language teachers indicated that teachers both deduct marks for existence of textese in written language or refuse to mark writings that do not conform to the officially authorised requirements that the faculty has set in place”.

2.9 MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

According to Balakrishnan and Gan (2016:810) “cellular verbal exchange is lately rising within the subject of teaching and learning.” It is not changing conventional mastering; however, it may best complement the scope of conventional mastering. Social media and social networking web sites at some stage in the verbal exchange internationally after 2005, added approximately the transformation of private and social changes, specifically, among children of eleven to twenty-five who use social media intensely as a verbal exchange device. Rimm-Kaufman and Hulleman (2018:153) argue that present day teachers have to realise that non-public and wi-fi gadgets which include mobile phones, capsules and private computer systems have noticeably modified the manner in which customers of those gadgets want to be trained so one can distinguish between beneficial and superfluous records”.

Sofoluwe and Akinsolu (2018:15) agree that “language teachers and researchers have found out that social media and social networking sites have emerged as powerful and not unusual place strategies to assist with the language mastering procedure in recent times because the superior and complex era and occurrence of the kind of media have made the era emerge as an effective device to trim and dispose of language mastering”. Lucas-Molina, Williamson, Pullido and Perez-Albenis (2018:299) agree that “social media and social networking web sites have substantially affected and modified training. The Social media community website online has emerged as one of the coaching strategies in language mastering.’

Sedgewick, Hill, Yates, Pickering and Pellicano (2016:1301) agree that “the blessings of social media are that language teachers can offer inexperienced learners greater and elevated participation than in everyday face-to-face classroom activities. Computers have provided access into training inside and beyond the decade, and feature added sizable blessings to teachers and inexperienced learners alike”. Lauritzen (2016:320) says that “computer systems assist inexperienced learners to be greater answerable for their personal mastering abilities. In today`s evolved world..., a private computer system is one in all, with structures which aid inexperienced learners to enhance language abilities”. Kuppens and Langer (2016:329) agree that

“the social media cannot best sell fantastic attitudes, however, can also broaden more learner empowerment and decrease trainer management dominance.” The implication for learners is that they should not be viewed merely as victims of textese but can also contribute to its mitigation since social media empowers them accordingly, which may lessen the research problem at hand.

2.10 MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Revitch (2007:13) defines language proficiency as the ability of an individual to speak or perform in an acquired language. The extent to which an individual has mastered a language is measured by his/ her language proficiency. Recently, learners are reported to be using a form of shorthand native to texting or social internet. This also brings up the issue of social media encouraging people to spell words wrongly, because some people just don't even care about the way they are spelling words.

[2.10.1 Social Media and English Language Learning](#)

These days most teenagers in our country are nearly inseparable from their cell phones not because they are constantly talking, but because they are connecting with their friends through text-messaging.

Language teachers and researchers have realized that social media and social networking sites have become effective and common techniques influencing language learning nowadays (Louis, Murphy and Smylie, 2016:312). The advanced and sophisticated technology as well as the prevalence of media has made the technology a powerful tool that can enhance and promote learning. Textese, although like Standard English in its deep meaning, has notable structural differences. Poor vocabulary, spelling problems, lack of knowledge of punctuation, capitalisation and grammar can reduce learners' overall performance in English, hence writing inability should be remedied promptly. Mobile phones are increasingly available to young children who are still developing their written language skills, and this can negatively impact their entire academic achievement (Gualini, 2017:44). Al-Jarrah, Al-Jarrah,

Talafhah and Mansor (2016:90) claimed that social media is affecting learners' effectiveness well as their grades.

2.10.2 Teachers' Perceptions on Texting Messaging Towards Learners' Academic Writing in English First Additional Language

In the past decades, formal writing was one of the acceptable, trusted and effective means of communication from all walks of life. Teachers think proper writing is essential to formal learning. Prior to the era of mobile technology, in the 1970s to 1980s, learners were far more literate in terms of the English language and the essential writing skills than the learners today. Teachers are complaining about the declining writing quality and effort of primary school learners in English First Language (Kiprono, Nganga and Kanyiri, 2018:243).

Mgijima (2018:198) says that the newly invented text messaging language, which is coupled with mobile phones, most of the time disregards the basic rules of English grammar, which is passed on to school children. There has been an increase in the use of text messaging among teenagers, especially school children due to increasing ownership of mobile phones. There seems to be a new literacy being created as text messaging evolves and as a person's online presence grows.

School children are increasingly prone to texting and the result is that mistakes and shorthand used in texting are becoming common place in most of their writing, including academic work. This kind of writing has raised major concerns to teachers recently. The worry against teachers is that texting leads to jeopardizing learners' usage of the Standard English language.

Mathwasa and Okeke (2016:174) indicate that text message language is to blame for the declining standard of spelling and grammar in learners' writing. Teachers also believe that learners write intentionally in shorthand like how they write on their mobile phones using more abbreviations. Above all, teachers have a great concern that text message language is a new form of communication taking hold in the communication sphere, where words used in text messages sphere are not found in the standard dictionaries or recognised by language scholars such as Reygan and Steyn (2017:76)

is gradually taking over learners' academic writing and inadvertently impacting negatively on their spelling skills.

Netshitangani (2018:97) found that some teachers say there is a positive relationship between frequent text messaging and literacy skills such as spelling and reading fluency. Furthermore, McCarthy, Lambert, Lineback, Fitchett and Baddouh (2018:578) from their study report that some teachers' view technology as a positive force in learners' lives and their writing, as such they dominate in vocabulary development of English language.

Social media facilitate the English learners to learn new words and phrases to improve their vocabulary. Again, social media plays a vital role in English language learning because it provides opportunities to the English language learners to improve their writing, reading and similarly to read new text and phrases to improve vocabulary.

2.11 MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Revitch (2007:13) defines language skills as the ability of a person to speak and practice the language they have acquired. The degree to which a person learns a language is measured by language ability. Recently, learners have been reported to misuse text messages, social webs, and shorthand formats obtained from the American Life Project. This also raises the issue of social media encouraging people to spell incorrectly.

2.11.1 Social Media and Learning

These days, most teenagers in our country connect to their mobile phones almost inseparably, not because they are always on the phone, but because they connect with their friends via text messages. Language teachers and researchers recognise that social media and social networks have become effective as common technologies that influence language learning today (Louis, Murphy and Smylie, 2016:312). The proliferation of sophisticated technology and media has made technology a powerful tool for enhancing learning. Textese seems to be Standard English in its deep sense, but there are significant structural differences.

Mobile phones are increasingly available to young children who are still developing their written language skills, and this can negatively impact their entire academic achievement (Gualini, 2017:44), AlJarrah, Talafhah and Mansor (2016:90) claimed that social media is affecting learners` effectiveness as well as their grades. For that reason, teachers need to be worried about these problems and attempt to find better ways to solve these problems.

2.11.2.1 Digital native teachers

Recently, educational institutions across the country have witnessed a new generation of teachers known as millennials or digital native teachers. These newly appointed teachers are more tech-savvy and digitally connected than previous generation teachers. In this section, researchers describe millennial or digital native teachers associated with text messages in Grade 6 EFAL classrooms and bridge the gap in millennial expectations in text-related classroom environments.

Lai and Hong (2014:227) point out that assigning attributes to a birth cohort is a way to identify life experiences shared across society within a group collectively referred to as generations. Such assigned attributes influence the social acceptance of generational expectations set by people in a particular birth cohort. Census data and generation attributes provide perspectives on millennial birth cohort experiences and teacher involvement.

According to Billienux (2012:299), millennial was a cohort of people born between 1981 and 2000 and now represent the majority of teachers in the education sector.

These newly appointed teachers, millennial or digital generations, like today's generation, their educational environment was dominated by technology. No one can deny that this generation we teach today is crazy about mobile phones and laptops. Nicole and Johnson (2017:34) believe that these millennial teachers can also use copywriting as an educational tool, and technology is a great tool for encouraging learners' involvement and facilitating informal learning. The researcher also pointed out that. Teachers also believe that teaching has changed in the last years.

Millennial teachers appreciate the way learners write in their abbreviated words, texts because they still follow the same correct grammatical structure and there`s even an increased phonological awareness because learners learn what letters to use in their abbreviations to get their message across. Redish (2012:32) states that millennial teachers agree with texting as they are impressed by this creatively formed new word. They also noticed that the more adept learners are abbreviating, the better they do in spelling and writing.

Furthermore, they can also teach digital storytelling through texting. Storytelling is one of the best ways to communicate; it provides information, understanding and context (Nicole & Johnson, 2017:35). When millennial teachers try informal education with contemporary methods they teach storytelling with texting messaging, and on short sentences and punctuation marks that creating some amazing thriller and mystery stories. This is an example of a story written by one learner from the book “Rethinking the French classroom, fiction for the snap chat generation.”

- Ummm Why do u have Claire`s phone?
- “Well, if u must know i sat down on this park bench 2 read.
- “And sat right on someone`s phone, Claire`s I`m guessing?” “What r u reading.”

2.11.2.2 Digital immigrant teachers

Digital immigrants are the older crew; they are not used in the digital environment. The term digital immigrants, mostly applies to individuals who were born before the spread of the digital technology and who were not exposed to it at an early age (Billienux, 2012:305).

Many digital immigrant teachers are battling against the incursion of cellphone use and texting in the classroom. Cellphone texting has become the preferred channel of basic communication for children at younger ages to communicate with friends and relatives via text messaging.

Redish (2012:52) posits that digital immigrant teachers are worried about learners who frequently use this ungrammatical form of texting in their normal language. Furthermore, critical voices claim that the proliferation of texting language causes the deterioration of language proficiency, because of the paucity of vocabulary, and the collapse of the level of spelling as well, as texting is full of misspellings. Teachers also observed that learners no longer have the passion to build good phrases, and ideas are expressed in short sentences with poor punctuation and bad grammar (Chan, 2015:98).

All over the country, the technological advancements have happened at a very fast pace in the 21st century, and like every other field education has also benefitted from the proliferation of digital technology. There is a need for bridging the gap between millennial teachers and digital immigrant teachers in the teaching environment regarding textese in the Grade 6 English FAL classroom. Schools should adjust to the unique qualities of the millennial generation as well as the digital immigrants when it comes to the teaching materials.

This adjustment will aid millennial teachers to become successful teachers in the classroom by educating in a way that is relevant and caters for their desire to engage in technology with educational tools and social media knowhow. As a new generation of teachers entering the education sector, effective teaching strategies need to be adapted to their teaching style. Millennial teachers agree with the text that impressed with this creatively formed new language.

These lessons are designed to enhance literacy, attract learners, and motivate them to learn, using text messaging as a useful tool in activities commonly performed in traditional classroom environments. They also found that the more skilled learners learned the abbreviations, the better they spelled and wrote. Teachers with a background in digital immigration, on the other hand, often lack the experience of teaching and learning using digital technology. The worse part of it they are intolerant to texting writing. They are also unclear of the ways these devices can enhance formal writing in the classroom, because they have inadequate experience with using digital technologies for teaching and learning. So, they need to learn and adapt to new or emerging technology.

2.11.3 The Effect of Texting Messaging on Learners' Academic Writing in English First Additional Language within the Classroom

Since the ICT started having an element within the conversation of the teenagers, mobile phones are increasingly available to young learners who are developing their writing skills. Mobile phones are coming with the Text Messaging Language that has delivered up a superb task on teenagers' cap potential to observe what's anticipated of them in formal writing. The use of shorthand texting is an excellent instance of casual writing. In their investigations, they observed that using acronyms and shorthand texting amongst learners is to blame for their inability spell and to write ultimately.

Furthermore, Dupéré, Veventhal, Dion, Crosnoe, Archambault and Janosz (2018:593) observed that text message in the form of short or condensed phrases and expressions negatively influence writing. There is confusion among misspelling and textism due to the fact that there may be no precise rule for textism. Textese Messaging Language makes hassle and problems in writing and analysing textual content messages. In a few times one phrase may be written in many methods. Anshari, Alas and Guan (2017:1663) assert that texting is declining requirements of spelling and grammar in English educational writing. Furthermore, they determined that teachers are dealing with a superb task because of the reality that Grade 6 learners will be predisposed to apply textese as a formally regularly occurring and general language and as a consequence make distinctive mistakes from wrong spelling to even ungrammatical sentence construction.

Liang and Zhang (2018:764) agree that research show that textese together with acronyms, phrase shortenings, punctuations, capitalisation and different violations of grammatical regulations. Concerns are being expressed through learners that texting language causes intense damage to Standard English, and conversation failure. The use of abbreviations results in variations in know-how of unmarried phrases due to the distinctive methods of writing those phrases.

Lock and Lummis (2019:58) opined that “writers and language specialists have pop out in opposition to using texting messaging with the argument that it wrecks the traditional English language and as such, reduces, whilst harming their spelling and vocabulary. Furthermore, Darvan and Norton reported that technology did no longer routinely repair the spelling and grammar errors which they commit.

2.11.4 Teachers` Explorations on Social Community Toward Freshmen` Educational Writing

In one way, there is a similarity between primary school children like Grade 6 learners and freshmen, who happen to be first year high school or university students in North America (Page, 2018). Since the prevalence of textese has been observed across the entire spectrum of the demographic pyramid, the consideration of findings from the freshman studies is valid for the study of textese among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District.

Most of the Grade 6 learners throughout Vhembe east district do not communicate in English in their homes; they gather it below formal instruction. Social community is the area where younger human beings can write down without worry of being responsible for violating the regulations of writing (Malen, Rice, Matlah, Hoyer, Bowsher & Hyde, 2019:135). Illegitimate kinds of abbreviations and planned use of incorrect grammar are ordinary among teenagers. However, it's determined that the important purpose for anybody is to get his or her message as short as is feasible, irrespective of whether or not the regulations of grammar are maintained or violated. This incorrect grammar manifests even in their formal or educational writing: incorrect grammar makes use of quick codes, for instance, “hwur”, “how u doin”, “hop u ok”, “sorry u guyzar, I become sort of busy”.

Page (2018:133) concurs that freshmen are no longer capable of writing successfully and proficiently. There are instances where the researcher and her colleagues discover teenagers` writing wanted one hundred and forty characters and they may be compelled to shorten the message. That is where you discover learners using incorrect grammatical sentences and phrases abbreviated e.g., coz`` in preference to their use of social networks style. This incorrect grammar manifests even in their

formal or educational writings”. Seollon and Seollon (2017:183) agree that learners are so aware of the use of this manner of writing for their conversations that they distort their writing thereby making it unclear, indistinct and unrecognisable in particular to the target market who are unusual with this poor improvement or trend. This violation of writing regulations is unacceptable due to the fact that it is far opposite to the conventions of writing, in particular in a formal or educational setting”.

Seollon and Seollon (2017:183) suggest that the approach of writing is irritating to the conservative, educational network as it cannot realise the means therefore, on the alternative hand, because of the recognition of the use of social media, a lax mind set has advanced among learners, main to them perpetrating negative spelling and being grossly depending on handheld technological gadgets for the correct spelling. Coleman and Kugler (2018:953) indicated that learners use social programs extraordinarily successfully shorthand which reduces their cap potential to write down without counting on cellular technology for spell check. Indeed, while learners use an excessive amount of technology equipment exponentially, they generally tend to apply quick bureaucracy like “cos” to mean “due to the fact”, “ur” to mean “your” and plenty of others. They additionally like to apply this Text Messaging Language mostly in their classroom writing. Given that social media is rising in diverse bureaucracies to convey human beings collectively as communities. While many stay on social media, teachers are trying to find ways and means on how they can control over the use of Text Message Language in the classroom. Teachers must try and use studying technology within the classroom every time they can, to make the studying revel applicable to their learners.

Maringe, Masinire and Nkambule (2015:372) suggest that there's a developing tendency of reductionism to growing conversation skills on the price of correctness. Furthermore, Web-mediated and different kinds of digital conversation have come to be a veritable medium to cover the shortage of grammatical and fashionable competence. However, Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016:13) located that the recognition of Text messaging amongst learners affords possibilities to take advantage of the opportunities of the usage of Text Messaging for teaching and learning. Teachers to stay applicable and powerful, want to apply learning technology to assist

learners to attain the sector outdoor. One has to be completely conscious of the truth of generation and younger humans though.

The Text Message Language allows messages to be communicated as fast as possible. In a few instances, language teachers have determined that learners at many distinctive levels enjoy the greater writing in dialogue boards and its use to talk meaningfully within the actual context (Albasheer & Alfaki, 2016:4).

Teachers use technology in literacy teaching, the superb interactivity for the teaching and learning of sentence grammar increases. Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016:8) agree that teenagers are interested in speaking among themselves through those networks.

Indeed, they say out their thoughts and respond to their classmates' thoughts through Facebook, WhatsApp and plenty of different social networks". Sakiz (2018:287) identify the "use of technology gear in EFAL writing classroom has proven that technology makes supportive and inspiring surroundings for the learners to grow their writing abilities in phrases of standard and quantity. When learners write regularly, they then understand their writing responsibilities as meaningful and contain responses to their writing from peers, teachers and others, are therefore influenced to write down the motive of writing". Al-Jarrah et al. (2019:91) from their research hooked up those teenagers who especially used social media for approximately an hour each day to socialise with friends. This indicates what ability social media has as a way for online learners Sutterlüty (2017:200) agree that "learners in Vhembe East District display hobby in studying through technology while they are given homework and seek statistics from their mobile phones.

They additionally deliver them to the school environment despite the fact that there are guidelines in our schools that prohibit learners from bringing mobile phones to school. Despite this rule, learners sneak them in and use them while teachers are unaware". Maringe, Masinire and Nkambule (2015:375) argue that mobility and social media in schooling research in a few elements of Vhembe East District, especially the learning environment are nevertheless constrained a factor that motivates this study to find out more on the social media-studying nexus. When we contain social media

in our language lessons, learners may even benefit linguistically, and they may increase their comprehension abilities in addition to their spoken speech. When learners use social media, they enhance their vocabulary and their spelling through spelling assessments through software program on their handsets”.

Jones, Mackey and White (2017:166) agree that “social media is used within the teaching of writing, for instance, freshmen are unfastened to take pride in their very own studies and feel able to remark on each other’s tasks. Social media has come to be one of the most important venues for conversation among people due to technological tendencies in cellular technology. Learners are engaged in computer systems mediated shape and literacy improvement that could create powerful language learning if monitored properly”. Terek, Glusac, Nikolic, Tasic and Gligorovic (2018:81) agree that “Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp function as platforms for learners to exercise writing abilities. Learners spend their time training English freely as they wish. Although the writing completed on Facebook and WhatsApp is pretty distinctive from the formal writing completed in schools for instructional motives. It is tough to write down messages on cellular telephones given that there is no conventional keyboard or writing tool. Mobile phones and smartphone users, especially younger learners use easy abbreviated symbolism language without giving attention to the guidelines of grammar, punctuation or spelling. Teachers held a perception that ICT can also additionally have an adverse effect on learners` literacy abilities”.

Waligo, Clarke and Hawkins (2018:1344) argue that the case for incorporating social media into our language lessons is compelling. Not handiest can those web sites be used to percentage classroom resources; however, they have got additionally been proven to foster extra engagement and as rising proof suggest linguistic profits as well”. Herazo and Lizarralde (2017:245) “emphasise that the coaching and studying procedure will become extra enticing and interactive with the use of technology within the classroom, especially with the facilitation of enhancing learner`s language proficiency. Learners want to examine facts and solid material from their sensory and predictive final results that are required in discussing and reflecting on the information given. With cellular conversation applications, learners can direct their very own problem-fixing procedure”.

This study shows that learners were motivated to support each other through group participation in the online social networking learning community. Zenner, HerrnlebenKurz and Walach (2019:603) state that learners are free to spend their time practicing English, which helps them evaluate their work at any time. Language efforts are aimed at increasing the efficiency of the language, so text messages need to be carefully monitored so as not to compromise the learners' writing.

2.11.5 Reduce Social Media Jargon in the Classroom

Technology is changing the learning environment by offering flexible functional choices. Technology is flexible in that it provides learners, teachers, and managers with the information they need anytime, anywhere (Das, Salam, Lassi, Khan, Mahmood, Patel & Bhutta, 2017:57). Salgado, Senra and Lourenço (2018:179) agree that since “teens and preteens are increasing the time they spend communicating through text messaging, they obviously engage in more texting when searching on the web. When the teacher selects the tools, it must be a writing media project that will aim in creating a virtual place for collaborative writing and that everyone can use to practice editing”. Gordon, Jacobs and Wright (2018:365) agree that “the use of social media in English First Additional Language classroom can enhance language learning in terms of promoting authentic text-based language communication in the electronic environment in which learners write collaboratively and edit their peers' writings.

The vital aspect of using text messaging to improve a child's learning skills development is to incorporate spelling instructions and reinforcement of correct spelling practices as the learner experiments with technology”. Available for school teachers to encourage and instruct learners to use social media tools and help improve learners' language development, such as Yunus, Chua, Maimum and Razauddin (2016:208). It is important to make some suggestions for good websites. Social media is valuable in education as long as it is used wisely. Teachers need to speak at the learner's level of comprehension. In other words, the learner needs to be able to understand what the teacher is saying. Learners should also be encouraged to read many scriptures and be allowed to use social media under supervision.

Montecinos, Pino, Campos, Martinez, Dominguez and Carreno (2018:277) said that Facebook as a social networking tool is also very useful for collaborative learning, which emphasises constructivist learning theories. Learning the first additional language requires sufficient interaction with the target language community. It is imperative that the first additional language learner of English speaks that language. Microblogging such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp reduce communication text. "Freeman, Wertheim and Trinder (2019:851) said," Words are skipped and we are moving towards more visual communication.

Learners with less text, more hashtags, and images can be attractive to learners of the first additional language of English. With a small amount of text, learners are succinct and motivated to contribute in the long run. "Social media promises new opportunities for learners to become self-reliant and broader in their learning. The range of expressiveness. Social networks stay here" (Poduska & Kurki, 2018:85). It is possible to speculate on the future of social networks in the next 10 or even 100 years, but it is clear that they will exist in some way as long as humans are alive. Learners use social media as a means. It is important to help you learn how to do it.

2.13 TEACHER`S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A CORRECTIVE TOOL

Howard, Chan and Caputi (2018:363) agree that "as alluded, the technology of data generation has witnessed pervasive spring of social networks, which give beginners entry to clean interplay with friends through SMSs, WhatsApp and Facebook. Vhembe East District, as already mentioned, has additionally ended up being a stereotypical area; beginners are making use of the social networks. With the help of technology, learner achievement changes might be improved, and the mastering enhanced.

In the area of proactive mastering, teachers locate it thrilling while beginners look for data through generation, due to the fact they end up glad while they arrive up with thoughts on their personal...". Izadpanah and Asadi (2017:554) express that "teachers are using social networking technology as a mastering and coaching device to combo casual mastering into formal mastering environments. There is an undertaking that beginners misuse the gear all through classes, as such, there should be critical tracking all through the classes while social media is being utilised in class.

Learners in Grade 6 are to be discouraged from needless surfing of social networks. Texting should be blended with expert and regular reinforcement for massive spelling talents improvement to occur. Combining the usage of invented spelling with formal spelling reinforcement, teachers should broaden greater powerful coaching techniques”.

Lai (2018:78) has found out that “social media might be used for coaching and mastering in various ways. Since a maximum of the capabilities are in English, one has to apprehend English so as to take part in the sports and features furnished with the aid of using social media. All the aforementioned capabilities suggest that gear and systems inclusive of Facebook, WhatsApp and lots of greater... which beautify network can doubtlessly be harnessed for mastering of English language”. McEwan (2017:355) agrees “writing achieved on Facebook is pretty one-of-a-kind from the formal writing achieved in faculty for educational purpose, Facebook and comparable gear inclusive of blogs and online discussion boards may be used efficiently with the aid of using teachers in order that beginners see writing achieved in those new media as writing for educational purpose. For younger beginners at early spelling improvement stages, incorporating cellular telephone textual, content messaging can spark an interest in writing. Allowing younger beginners to textual content, their mind and phrases can be regarded as amusing exercising and possibly a brand-new frontier”.

Nguyen, Barton and Nguyen (2019:192) agree that “social media may be used to exercise analysing writing in English and beautify learners’ English verbal exchange talents, and learners’ self-assurance to examine writing and speaking the usage of English.

Social networks have ended up essential preoccupation to a maximum of beginners who completely in to surfing and, in maximum cases, leisure having no time to examine excellent books in order to allow them to assimilate and control the language fluently and appropriately. Social revolutions` vast achievement in developing online groups has stuck language teachers’ interest. The unfolding of social media assists language teachers to sell mastering past the classroom”.

Pruet, Ang and Farzin (2016:1137) indicated that the “use of social media in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classroom can beautify language mastering in phrases of selling genuine textual content-primarily based language verbal exchange in digital environments and growing learner motivation in generating texts. Teachers can use weblogs to create communicative mastering surroundings wherein beginners write collaboratively and edit their friends` writing”. Sung, Chang and Liu (2016:263) agree that one of the maximum tough demanding situations for beginners who war with writing is motivating them and growing high-quality attitudes closer toward writing.

Instruction has to pay unique interest to the phrases maximum usually utilised in beginners` writing. Many research documents extended motivation for mastering generate significant output and stimulate beginners` hobby in language mastering. Tasquier, Levrini and Dillon (2016:556) argue that social internet can facilitate collaborative mastering as it places the beginners at the centre of the mastering at the same time permitting the trainer to share.

2.14 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study views textese, characterised by an informal and conversational approach to writing English words in shortened form due to social media, as some form of a linguistic sickness affecting both learners and educators. Learners can be considered as perpetrator-cum-victims of the misspellings (the symptoms) while educators stand as the cognitive health practitioners who are eye-witnesses of this pandemic malpractice in the classroom.

Naturally, the study falls in the grey area where linguistic theories of language and its structure on the one hand blend with psychological models of learning and cognitive development of children on the other to form a hybridised theoretical framework spanning the disciplines of linguistics and psychology. The prevalence of Textese as broken English in written school work and its prominence among learners with access to social media can partially be analysed through Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) model. This sociolinguistic theory of SFL is complemented by the Vygotskian socio-cultural approach of social constructivism as applied in the cognitive development of children.

- **TEXTESE AS A STAND-ALONE REGISTER (SLANG)**

There is universal consensus among researchers that textese itself is understood by those who inhabit the circles in which it is used. Effectively, it has become a dialect or indeed some kind of slang (slang register) only understandable by those who have been initiated into it (Bakhtin, 2014). In Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the notion of register stems from the idea of Context. According to Michael Halliday (1978), context is one of the ways a piece of text can be analysed in isolation without considering other things like Semantics, Lexico-grammar and Phonology. In particular, register refers to the context of situation which looks at the actual language used to create the text (Halliday, 1997:5). Matthiessen and Halliday (1997:62) concur that language itself comes with a number of contexts which can either be context of culture, which falls outside this study, and the context of situation which is applicable to this study. Bakhtin (2014:55) agrees that social context affects language in one way while the language itself can be equally influenced by social context thereby creating a cause-effect-cause relationship between language and social context where the effect turns around to be a causative agent to the initial cause. In so far as Halliday considers text as pieces of communication which have been constructed for social purposes (Wardhaugh, 1986:47), the concept of register can be understood as the different ways in which language changes depending on the situation on the ground. For example, formal English is used during interviews while informal English is used in conversations among peers like school children. School children can speak in slang, and slang is considered as a stand-alone register.

At times, the same word in a text, like sun, can evoke different meanings in the people involved. For example, a Hindu sun-worshipper can look at the word “sun” and experience a different reality about the word in comparison to a botanist, who considers the same sun to be an object which provides energy to the plants which enables them to grow. The botanist and the Hindu sun-worshipper have different cultural programming which make them experience the word sun in different ways. The same applies to Textese among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District. They can write the word *gud* and the meaning conveyed to their peers is that of something which is good while the teachers assessing the work see the same as wrong.

Crystal and Davy (1969:36) claim that lawyers speak in technical language strewn with Latin phrases like *consensus ad idem*, *ratio decidendi* and this language is actually a type of register known as *legalese*. The same applies to medical doctors who employ complex medical terms known as *medical jargon*. The same is true for Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District. The point is that any variations in meaning in a given text are influenced by the user variables (dialect) and use variables (diatype) according to Halliday and Hassan (1976:12). User variables refer to the social background of the people involved with the text, their age, their gender and their geography. This explains why Grade 6 learners will have their own language (*Textese*) which is different from that of teachers (formal English).

When it comes to written text, register refers to how the writer of a text chooses their words, the spellings, the mood and the tone of the language itself (Hassan, 1976). According to this analysis, the abridged spellings known as *Textese* are indeed a language register in its own right. The ISO12620: Management of Terminology Resources – Data Category Specifications, lends weight to this conclusion by listing slang as a register, alongside other registers like informal register, neutral register, technical register, dialect register, taboo register and vulgar register, among others.

Halliday (2003:60) maintains that any meaning derived from a text depends on the three elements of field, tenor and mode which are known as the triune dimensions of register. This trinity of field, tenor and mode can be understood as attempts to answer the following questions about a given text: What, Who and How. The What question answers the question of what the text has been written about which also happens to be the topic or subject under discussion (*ibid*). The *Who* question points to who the people are in the communication and what is their relationship to one another. They can be friends or enemies, for example. Finally, the *How* question addresses the role played by language in the process of interaction and includes the exact form which the language takes when written down or spoken. It can be considered as a scale of formality with the extremes of informal language on the one side and formal language on the other (Halliday, 2003:72).

While SFL correctly identifies and classifies *textese* as a stand-alone register or slang, the theory is merely a socio-linguistic theory of language which does not adequately

cover the socio-cultural aspects of how language develops and is spread from one person to another within the sphere of peer influence according to social constructivism. There is need, therefore, to consider Vygotsky's Social Constructivism theory to explain the encroachment of textese, which is a social media standard or tradition, into the classroom environment of formal learning, where it is considered as an abomination.

- **SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE SPREAD OF TEXTESE IN LEARNING**

The cognitive development of children is socially mediated. Already, social mediation points to social constructivism (O'Donnell, 2010). This means that the social interactions primarily influence cognitive development of human beings (Vygotsky, 1978:80). When children acquire cultural values, beliefs and problem-solving strategies, they do so from their collaboration with more knowledgeable members of society (O'Donnell, 2012:63). This collaboration can be via social media where learners with access to mobile phones can be influenced to adopt abridged spellings on Twitter, for example.

O'Donnell (2012:65) concludes that ultimately, learning is a social exercise involving the construction of knowledge based on social negotiation. This leads to the pillars of Vygotsky's trinity of cognitive development based on culture, language and community. This implies that culture is significant in learning while language becomes the root of culture and individual learning develops within the context one's role in the community where the same community performs the role of making meaning (Vygotsky, 1978:82).

Language and its dual functions of reasoning (using inner speech) and conversing (using external speech), plays a fundamental role in the development of children. While children below two years old lack internal language of their own to apply their own reasoning, they tend to employ words socially for purposes of making conversations (O'Donnell, 2012:74). Subsequently, this social language is internalised and is later on used to help with reasoning. Consequently, the child's social environment becomes intertwined with their own learning and cognitive development. The interdependence between language and social context and social

context and language which Vygotsky is explaining above is similar to Halliday's concept of register under Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) discussed above.

Unlike Piaget's notion which claims child development precedes learning, Vygotsky (1978:90) believes that it is social learning which precedes development. "Learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organised, specifically human psychological function." (ibid). Using the analogy of the horse and the cart, Vygotsky claims that the horse is social learning which must pull the cart of development whereas Piaget asserts that development is the one which pulls learning.

From a chronological sequence, children start learning with the help of others in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) using scaffolding. As they progress with learning, they begin to rely less and less on help from others and begin to learn by themselves as independent learning. In the ZPD, there are found technology and tools like social media which actually help children to learn.

2.15 THE COMBINATION OF THE TWO THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Since the cognitive development of children is socially mediated, their learning of language becomes a product of many social factors represented by the circles below. Halliday's SFL is shown by the green circle labelled Thought and Language which is affected by the social environment of the blue and peach circles showing social, historical and cultural mediation on the one hand and social interaction with others on the other.

Vygotsky's socio-cultural approach to cognitive development is captured by the yellow circle showing the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffold Instruction which similarly intersects with the social environment (in blue) social, historical and cultural mediation on the one hand and the social interaction with others (peach circle) on the other.



Figure 2.1: Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffold Instruction

Source: Vygotsky

With the social constructivism underpinning this study, there is a trinity of forces working within the social context while mastering takes place. During the evaluation of Grade 6 EFAL beginners' written work, the grade teachers are picking textese. The shortened spelling utilized by one learner can be followed by others within the class. In the end, it is far feasible for each newbie who personally uses cellular telephones to devote the equal spelling errors.

The Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978:80) is defined as a variety of obligations which are too tough for a person to grasp on their own, however may be mastered with the help and steering of adults and extra professional peers. Thus, whilst operating in organizations, newbies are probably given spelling exercises, for example.

If the institution is ruled via means of newbies uncovered to social media, the superiority of textese can be high. At the equal time, there may be the detail of scaffolding, which comes with Social Constructivism. Scaffolding pertains to the provision of the proper quantity of help at the proper time. In the virtual international of the fourth business revolution, the help comes from social media. Learners examine spellings all through utilisation of cellular telephones whilst speaking with others (siblings, adults and fellow newbies). This is a shape of observational gaining of knowledge. This help given to them on social media structures, guarantees and suggests that human beings examine others and that explains the relevance of Social

Constructivism. When teachers verify the written work of newbies in English First Additional Language, the consequences of the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding are each witnessed. When textese is discovered within the books of newbies with cellular telephones and people without cellular telephones, it suggests that a few gaining knowledge has taken place. From the interplay with different newbies uncovered to textese, different newbies who do now no longer use cellular telephones start to devote the equal errors.

Perceptions on social and educational expectations of teachers toward textese vary in with Erikson`s psychosocial ranges of human improvement. Most Grade 6 newbies are within Erikson`s 5 – 12 years of age. In this age institution, Erikson states that encouragement and superb reinforcement are regularly at struggle fare with regulations and doubt approximately ability (Erikson, 1994:12).

When teachers verify the newbies` EFAL written works, they both inspire or limit behaviour. Since this virtual era is right here to stay, teachers ought to inspire EFAL newbies to put in writing in the right or suitable manner and preserve the usage of the virtual gadgets, which no longer limit them.

Social interactions among peers like school children who are usually in the same age bracket tend to promote collaborative learning (Syde & McLean, 2018:67). However, educators are not demographically privileged to occupy a single age group. There are teachers native to technology (millennials) and there are teachers who are foreign to technology (digital immigrants).

2.15.1 Mobile Learning in Education

Boyd and Ellison (2007:210) define a social network as a web-based service that allows individuals to create public files in a limited system, and your other users clarify the list. Share and intersect connection lists with others. Some social networking applications are used by Intermediate Phase learners, especially by Glade 6 learners in the Vhembe east district.

Common social networks used in the middle stage are Facebook, WhatsApp, Text Messaging and WeChat. Applications are very popular, Facebook, Friendster, and LinkedIn act as a dominant social network. Social networks have seen dramatic growth in recent years. Scherer, Siddiq and Teo (2018:202) stated that "learners were built to allow people to express themselves and interact socially with others. Many social networking sites appeared between 1990 and 2000. With the emergence of many social networking sites, social media has received a great deal of support, which has led to a common interest in music, education, movies and friendships based on social networks. The interaction of individuals and organizations has been greatly facilitated and transformed. Misty (2018:439), social networks Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Friendster, YouTube and LinkedIn. Teachers can apply instructions on social networking sites to enhance learners' learning by involving social networking sites in teaching and learning English. Social networks, especially Facebook, have a positive impact on English education as learners practice their writing skills and gradually become good writers.

Manathunga and Hernández-Leo (2018:357) agree that the college of South Caroline and the University of Florida found out that social networking along with Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube are the packages which can be in the main utilized by beginners. The declaration is really due to the fact our beginners too are continually on social media speaking with their friends or even sending snapshots to every different. Many teachers continue to be unsure approximately the way to meaningfully combine this era or determine its impact.

Cardon and Marshall (2016:280) argue that the "case for incorporating social media into our language training is compelling. Not only can these sites be used to share classroom resources, however, they have additionally been proven to foster more engagement and, as rising proof imply linguistic profits as well. Consistent with the noted literature, (as a trainer) the teacher observes that the Grade 6 beginners in Vhembe East District are particularly engaged in SMS, WhatsApp and Facebook messaging; they speak with their friends at some stage during faculty hours in school rooms each time they control to sneak in with their cell phones".

2.15.2 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking internet site released in February 2004. Facebook was established by Mark Zuckerberg and others. As of 2019, Facebook had 5 billion customers and WhatsApp 3 billion, genuinely one cannot forget about them! In January 2009, Facebook changed rank because it became the maximum used social community globally. Facebook and WhatsApp may be used for coaching and studying in numerous ways. Particular connection with Facebook utilisation in English language pedagogy (Kearney, Burden & Rai, 2017:53).

2.15.3 Twitter

Jiyane, Fombad and Mugwisi (2016:46) agree that Twitter, a famous social media platform, is a microblogging platform that hundreds of thousands of customers all around the international community use to ship messages of a hundred and forty characters or much less to family, buddies or simply the network at massive. Twitter set in motion between 2006 and 2020 has 330 million customers 2006 and in 2020 together send hundreds of thousands of messages called “tweets”, each day. Twitter has come to be a really famous manner to percentage content material, speak and broadcast facts. Social media is a notably new phenomenon that makes it feasible for human beings all around the international to attach through an extensive kind of communiqué platforms.

2.15.4 WhatsApp

Hamad (2017:74) states that WhatsApp is an immediate messaging app that is handiest for customers continuously related to the net, who choose to have a greater attractive cellular communiqué or chat with their friends. WhatsApp, which may be an alternative for and also can be used to make voice calls, video calls, percentage snapshots and movies, and to percentage files in PDF and different formats. SMS text messages came into use in 2009 initiated by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, Hamad (2017:77) from his research found that WhatsApp has over 1.5 billion customers globally

WhatsApp also can be used within the training sector, wherein chat groups may be shaped so that you can percentage training with beginners in digital mode, where beginners can share texts via video calls. It additionally gives beginners an area for speaking or expressing thoughts and changing facts whenever and anywhere.

2.15.5 YouTube

Ma, Han, Yang and Cheng (2019:29) agree that “YouTube is the chief in online video and the top-rated vacation spot to look at and percentage authentic movies globally via the web. It permits human beings without difficulty add and percentage movies throughout the net via websites, cellular devices, blogs and E-mail. The movies also can be used to sell discussions in class. You tube affords a discussion board for human beings to attach, inform, and encourage others throughout the globe and act as a chief distribution platform for authentic content material creators and advertisers, massive and small”. Before recording the video, beginners typically want to exercise what they are going to say, accordingly encouraging language schooling without forcing the beginners to behaviour repetitive drills. As movies are supporting them, they take into account facts and visualize actual international.

2.17 CONCLUSION

The focus in this chapter was on social media’s development and impact on learning in light of the prevailing research problem of textese which has negatively impacted performance of learners in the English language. Using Michael Halliday’s socio-linguistic theory of Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the chapter identified textese as slang register which then spreads like an infection from social media into the formal classroom learning environment through Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory of social constructivism which detailed how learners acquire knowledge about the English language and the spellings thereof (textese) from their peers through social interactions with them either through online encounters or face to face engagements. The next chapter discusses the methodology applied in the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH PARADIGMS, DESIGNS, METHODOLOGIES

Using a top-down or outside-in approach, this chapter provides justification of the data collection and data analysis approaches employed in the study. While the centrality of data collection and analysis in research are universally acknowledged, these are in turn influenced at a global level by the research philosophies known as research paradigms which determine research approaches which affect methodological choices which in turn impact research strategies. The English teachers' perception towards the written work of Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District are extracted, collected and analyzed in the chronological sequence highlighted.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to answer the following research questions:

- What are teachers' perceptions towards textese among Grade 6 learners' written work in Vhembe East District?
- How do teachers perceive the ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners?
- What are teachers' perceptions towards the actual usage of textese in the classroom by Grade 6 learners?
- What are teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work of Grade 6 learners?

The study has to start off with the research philosophy which is alternatively known as the research paradigm. The paradigm affects the research approach dealing with the question whether the research data at hand supports existing theories (deduction) or it leads to the establishment of a new hypothesis (induction) or a middle-of-the-road hybrid of the two approaches (abduction). Research approach further informs the role played by numeric data (quantitative) or non-numeric data (qualitative) in the study as methodological choices. In turn, the dichotomy of qualitative-or-quantitative has a bearing on the research strategy chosen, namely the Case Study strategy.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

While Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019 :65) assert that research paradigm is synonymous with research philosophy, De Vos et al. (2011:40) go further to break down what a given philosophy among researchers really means by clarifying that a paradigm is simply a collective sum of all the assumptions and perceptual directions shared by those members of a given research community. In this study, the researcher is a participant observer who teaches Grade 6 learners and assesses their written work sprinkled with Textese and cannot therefore, distance themselves from the research subjects. According to Saunders et al. (2019:70), the interpretivism paradigm is the most suitable in this case where the subjective experience of the researcher as a primary school teacher will influence their interpretation of the research findings on Textese in learners' English written work since individual subjective experience constitutes social reality. In other words, the researcher is not an unbiased or objective observer of Textese in Grade 6 written work since she is a teacher herself. It is difficult to draw a line between the researcher (conducting this study) and the teacher (experiencing Textese in written work of Grade 6 learners). Both the past and present experiences of the teacher will affect the interpretation of the research problem of Textese among Grade 6 learners.

Yin (2009:79) maintains that an interpretivist position is concerned with how the social world is understood or produced as echoed by Vygotsky (1978:76) and is based on ways of collecting data which are sensitive to their social context (Saunders et al., 2019:72). Furthermore, Yin (2009:80) believes that interpretivism is based on the assumption that reality is subjective, multiple and socially constructed. This can only bring to us that we do understand some's reality through their experience of that reality. The main venture of the interpretivist paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience (Yin, 2009:80). Accordingly, the study utilised semi-structured interviews and document analysis in the process of meaning creation, suitability, negotiations and modification, disclosing meaning, making practices while showing how those practices configure to generate observable outcomes and integrating human interest into a study.

Furthermore, the interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed so that the researcher can extract from the conversations with the participants a narrative that is faithful and true to the participants' original ideas.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Mouton (1996:175) the research design serves as a plan to structure and execute the research so that data collected will support unambiguous conclusion about the study. Research design can be in the line of thinking of as the logic of research that throws light on how the study can be conducted.

As a natural outgrowth, the interpretivism paradigm lends itself to qualitative research when it comes to methodological choice (Saunders et al., 2019:75). This is echoed by De Vos et al. (2011:84) who claim that when reality is socially constructed as obtains under the interpretivism research philosophy, research techniques belonging to qualitative research like interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations should be used together with accompanying research instruments of questionnaires, interview guides and documentary reviews of records. Employment of the above methods ensures existence of sufficient dialogue between the researcher and the researched in order to jointly and collaboratively construct reality.

3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

In harmony with the qualitative nature of the research consequent upon the adoption of the interpretivism research paradigm, the study proceeded to adopt the research strategy of a qualitative case study. Yin (2009:13) advocates the use of an interpretive and narrative case study. By its nature, the case study provides the researcher with a much more informed and better understanding of the teachers' perceptions towards textese in the Grade 6 written work.

Yin (2009:13) defines case studies as "empirical studies investigating modern phenomena in the context of the real world, especially for multiple sources of evidence." Moreover, Ragin (2000:2) supports case studies as they allow for in-depth

investigation understanding of complex phenomena like the continued use of textese in the written work of Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District.

Stake (1991:1) shows that in case studies, individuals have a real interest in learning how to work and in the background and are motivated to set aside many assumptions when learning. Additionally, Ragin (2000:90) states that case studies enable deeper insight into causality as the researcher is given the opportunity to acquire complete knowledge of the case and its history.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:24), Case studies use multiple data sources found in the field to explore a limited system or case in detail. In order to dig deeper into data about textese in Grade 6 English written work, the study sampled 12 Grade 6 EFAL teachers in order to get a better understanding of textese.

The study focused on multiple case strategies with a view to deepening the researcher's understanding of the social issues of Grade 6 EFAL teachers in the researched group. This allows comparison between theory and practice, meaning that either existing theories are validated, or they are challenged or tested.

3.5 SAMPLING

While McMillan and Schumacher (2010:488) explain the benefits of a sample as a limited fraction of the whole population which can be used to make generalisations about the entire population at lower cost and in quicker way, the study used purposive sampling. Since the study aims to explore perceptions of teachers about textese, it means only teachers experiencing textese are the ones who must be sampled for this purpose according to (Saunders et al., 2019:96).

3.5.1 Population

McMillan and Schumacher, (2010:489) elaborate that a population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalise the results of the research.

As reinforced by Goddard and Melville (2007:34) a population can be defined as a set of entities in which all the measurements of interest to the practitioner or researcher are represented. For example, it might refer to all primary school learners or teachers in a particular district. Thus, the population is the group which the researcher is interested in and thus forms the basis of eligibility criteria. In this study, the population comprises all EFAL Grade 6 teachers in Vhembe East District within Limpopo Province, Mutshundudi Circuit.

3.5.2 Sampling Procedure

In simple terms, a sampling procedure refers to the method and order used to select a portion of the population for study (Creswell, 2010:79). Random sampling along with purposive sampling were utilised in this study. Random selection is the process of selecting individuals from the population so that each member has an equal chance of being selected by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:476). Purposive sampling means selecting participants according to preselected criteria associated with a particular research question (Creswell, 2010:79). The logic of purposive sampling is to select information from a wealth of examples where you can learn a lot about the issues that are central to your research objectives (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:43).

In this qualitative study, the researcher used a random sample to select four schools from Mutshundudi Circuit in the Vhembe East District. Here, Grade 6 EFAL teachers were identified using purposive sampling because teachers. The teachers were split into two groups of "digital natives" and "digital immigrants". This dichotomy in the sampled teachers has a bearing on the perceptions of the teachers in the context of social constructivism. Lastly, written works of 6th Grade EFAL learners from 4 selected schools were identified.

3.5.3 Sample

In line with Mannion and Morrison (2007:56) who claim that a sample represents the population from which it was extracted, the study sampled 3 EFAL teachers from each of the 4 schools identified. This gave a total of 12 research participants from all the shortlisted 4 schools. Furthermore, documentary records in the form of class work

books were also identified from the Grade 6 learners. A total of 12 essay workbooks was sampled from the 4 schools were collected, with each school contributing 3 workbooks. According to Saunders et al. (2016), a small sample like the 12 participants in 4 schools allow the phenomenon of textese to be investigated in detail.

3.5.4 Pilot Study

According to Greef and De Vos (2015:55), a pilot study is a small research conducted before a larger research group to determine if methodology, sampling, measurement, and analysis are appropriate. In this study, two primary schools falling outside the Mutshundudi Circuit's Vhembe East District were singled out to enable the researcher to test the validity of research tools. The pilot study also served to confirm the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the findings and the extent to which these can be generalized to larger studies. It also tested the research procedures and data collection techniques to make sure they work well. The following tools were designed:

- Semi-structured interview for teachers.
- Focus group for teachers.
- A workbook for learners on document analysis.

Because of COVID-19 lockdown regulations, the focus group discussions failed meet in face-to-face settings for fear of spreading or contracting the corona virus pandemic from interactions with the research participants. Instead, telephonic discussions were done. During the telephonic interviews, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and document analysis to answer the case study research questions.

Following the execution of the pilot study, the following errors were tracked and fixed:

- Most of the instrument questions were repeated.
- Some questions were not well represented.
- Some questions were prejudiced, and vague.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The following data collection instruments compatible with qualitative research and interpretivism research paradigm were employed.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The study adopted interviews as a way of trying to understand people and their world by simply asking them about it. As Kvale (1996:3) remarks, if you want to know how people understand their world and life, why not talk to them?

According to Creswell (2010:87), interviews are two-way conversations, where interviewers ask questions to participants and collect data on ideas, beliefs, views, options, and actions. The reason for choosing an interview is to combine knowledge with social reality to obtain a wealth of descriptive data that will help researchers understand the respondents' perceptions.

The researcher used a semi-structured one-on-one interview with 12 Grade 6 EFAL teachers from selected schools. Semi-structured interviews are meetings where interviewers do not strictly follow a formalised list of questions, allowing participants to actively understand the learners' perceptions and experiences of textism in the classroom. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:130). During the semi-structured interview, the researcher asked participants a series of pre-determined open-form questions that were prepared in advance but did not follow a formal list or order. Interviews can be difficult due to the human interaction between the interviewer and the respondent.

The main advantage of semi-structured scheduled interviews is that they allow for relatively systematic data collection while not missing important data. The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee has always been peaceful and warm. The best way to achieve this was for the interviewer to respect and empathise with the dignity of the interviewee.

3.6.2 Detailed Interviews

Detailed interviews allow researchers to harness the inner side of others and better understand their perspectives (Nunkoosing, 2005:698). Kumar (2011:389) explains that an interview plan is a written list of free or informal questions prepared for interviewers to use in face-to-face interactions.

The researcher asked questions, listened to the respondents, collected data and investigated, so the interviewer needed to be prepared. The researcher also interpreted body language because it revealed a lot about the attitudes of the respondents.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

3.7.1 Document Analysis

Corbin and Strauss (2008:49-50) posit that document analysis is a qualitative research method in which a researcher interprets a document to give meaning. Document analysis must be studied and interpreted in order to gain meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. The researcher analysed the written work of sixth-Grade EFAL to detect cases of textualism. A copy has been made for future reference. The learners' names remained anonymous, and their work was used only for this research purpose.

Qualitative analysis is a process that uses a method of investigating social research data without converting it to a numerical format. De Vos et al. (2011:397) describe data analysis in qualitative research as a process that brings order, structure, and meaning to large amounts of data. Almaki (2016:288) hypothesises that a qualitative method is more suitable for examining the meaning of an event or situation. Leedy, Amp and Ormrod (2010:135) further point out that qualitative researchers are trying to construct interpretive stories from data to capture the complexity of the phenomena being studied, and the study is interpretive and narrative. Therefore, the researcher is asked to study the phenomenon. Yin (2009:13) discusses aspects of data analysis in qualitative case studies as a search for meaning by directly interpreting what

researchers have observed and what participants and subjects have experienced and reported.

In qualitative studies, the researcher looks for patterns that appeared over time to establish random relationships between variables (Babbie, 2010:394). Babbie (2010:394) suggested 6 different ways to look for patterns by asking the following questions:

- *Frequency*: How often do incidents occur?
- *Size*: Refers to large, medium, and small sizes.
- *Structure*: What are the different types? Are they somehow related?
- *Process*: Is there any order between the structural elements, or is the order of the elements different?
- *Cause*: What is the cause of the incident? Does it happen more often at a particular time?
- *Result*: How will the incident affect the victims? What changes does it bring to the victims?

In this study, the researcher analysed qualitative data by discovering patterns, concepts, themes, and meanings.

The data collected from the semi-structured interview method and document analysis were analysed using inductive subject analysis, and a structural framework was developed that underlies the experience or process apparent in the raw data. This process involves careful, more targeted rereading and validation of the data. The main purpose of using inductive subject analysis in this study is to extract study results from common, dominant, or important themes specific to raw data and answer key study questions – teachers are social. How do you perceive the impact of media and ICT? To out-of-class textbooks on learner performance in the classroom?

The inductive subject analysis is an appropriate approach for analysing the qualitative data of this study, trying to understand the living experience and the experience of the participants themselves working with the texts of the work written by the learner. It

deals with how to understand. De Vos et al. (2011:342) suggested that identifying prominent themes, recurring ideas and languages, and belief patterns that connect people and the environment can help integrate results.

The researcher then categorized patterns, compared and contrasted them, pondered specific patterns and their complex threads, and sought to understand them. The theme was derived from the transcribed semi-structured interview and document analysis data after the researcher transcribed the recording and read it many times until the saturation point was reached.

Accordingly, research will follow the sequence suggested by the research onion below:

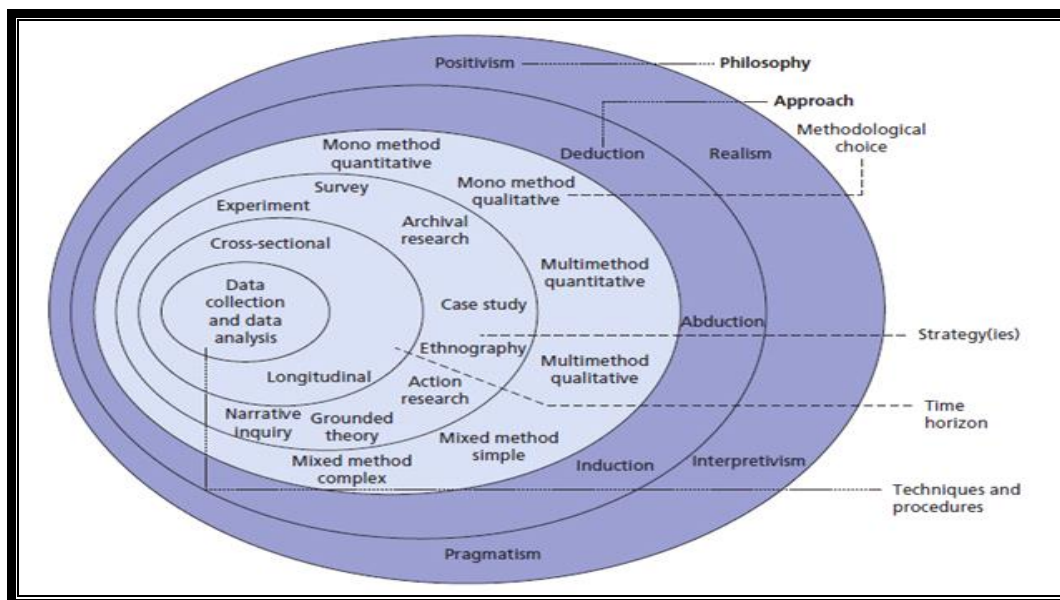


Figure 3.1: Research Onion

Source: Saunders et al., 2016

3.8 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TRUSTWORTHINESS

The term trustworthiness "refers to a way for an interviewer to convince an audience that the results of the study are worth considering and the quality of the research is high" (Johnson & Turner, 2003:298). Qualitative research requires credibility to be considered when conducting the study, as it is necessary to determine if the study is reliable, accurate, and useful to non-participants (Maxwell, 2012:214).

Trustworthiness is a term used in qualitative research as a measure of research quality.

3.8.1 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the adequacy of information from the research question and the protocol of data collection, through the raw data, various stages in the analysis of data to the interpretation of findings. Johnson and Turner (2003:301), claim confirmability can be established by the researcher making provision of an audit of the material used in the study. The researcher provided an audit of how the data was collected from the participants to increase the reliability of the study. Furthermore, the researcher increased the reliability of the data by having intensive engagement with the material and establishing integration between data and the notes taken during interviews.

3.8.2 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is defined as the extent to which data analysis is believable and trustworthy. Credibility, therefore, refers to the degree to which a study's findings represent the meanings assigned by the research participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:15). Credibility is similar to internal validity, which is concerned with how research findings match realities. It is upon the reader to judge the extent of the findings' credibility based on their understanding of the study. Credibility is also used to evaluate whether or not the research findings represent a credible conceptual representation based on the interpretation of the data drawn from the participants. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher went back to the participants to verify what the researcher has discussed with them and establish if that was what they said or meant; this is also known as 'member checking'. Lincoln and Guba (1985:314) consider member checking as one of the most valid techniques for establishing credibility.

3.8.3 Dependability

According to Maxwell (2012:223), dependability is similar to reliability which explains the consistency of observing the same findings under similar contexts. Reliability means that if the research was to be conducted again, then similar results would be produced. In this study, the researcher ensured dependability by aligning the research objectives with the research methodology as well as interviews which were piloted on another group of Grade 6 EFAL teacher who did not participate in the study.

3.8.4 Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which generalisation can be made from the data context of the study to the wider population and settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:70). In other words, this implies that the results of the research can be transferred to other contexts and situations beyond the scope or confines of the actual study context. This concept is like external validity or the extent to which findings can be generalised. Qualitative researchers should focus on two important considerations so that transferability can be increased – look closely at how participants are linked to the context being studied, and the contextual boundaries of the findings. To achieve a high degree of transferability in this study, the researcher provided a detailed description of the context in which the study undertook to provide the reader with sufficient information to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings that they know (Johnson & Turner, 2003:298).

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Maree (2007:298) states that research cannot be easily carried out by anyone, anywhere. For example, researchers must obtain permission from either the Ministry of Education or relevant authorities before conducting any form of research. With this in mind, the following ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process (Carpenter & Krutka, 2014:414).

3.9.1 Permission to Collect Data

The researcher asked the District Senior Manager (DSM) for permission to conduct the survey in the Vhembe east district. In a letter from the district senior manager, the researcher also went to the circuit manager to get permission. The researcher then visited the school board where the research was conducted.

Upon approval from the principal of the identified school, the researcher collected data from selected participants (Castro et al., 2015:46). This is also known as a "member check". In this way, reliability was established in the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985:314) believe that membership verification is one of the most effective ways to establish credibility.

3.9.2 Informed Consent

Prior to data collection, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form confirming their willingness to participate in the study. Participants were well informed about the purpose of the study. Informed consent is one of the ethical principles that are fully adhered to in this study. The researcher also recognised and used this ethical principle by providing informed consent to all participants prior to the interview. To this end, a written agreement was issued containing information on the purpose of the study and the role of participants in the study. Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without results.

3.9.3 Anonymity

As postulated by McMillan & Schumacher (2010) who highlight the importance of anonymity in field research which Yin (2014) and Saunders et al. (2016) corroborate, the 12 respondents in this study were each informed that anonymity was prioritised as the data collected was used only for this survey and no name or Identification (ID) number in any form was used in the report.

3.9.4 Confidentiality

Confidentiality was highly respected in this study as it is an important aspect of any research. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:45) state that "confidentiality" means keeping the information used to link respondents to their answers private. Information about participants may not be disclosed to the general public or other unauthorised persons. In this study, the researcher confirmed that the participants' names were not mentioned in the answers. Instead, a pseudonym was used. Therefore, participants' information is protected, secure, and inaccessible to anyone without their permission.

3.9.5 Harmlessness to Participants

The third essential ethical consideration for research is harmlessness to participants. It means being considerate and avoiding sensitive questions when asking questions and dealing with other issues discussed during the interview session (Babbie, Amp & Mouton, 2010:102).

In this study, the researcher ensured avoidance of harm by ensuring that all participants were informed of the content of the interview before the interview began. Interview sessions were also conducted where participants felt free and comfortable to avoid emotional or physical discomfort.

3.10 DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The study was limited to the Thohoyandou cluster in the Vhembe East District of Mutshundudi Circuit, with the participation of four primary schools in Mutshundudi Circuit and 3 Grade 6 teachers from each school.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the interpretivism research paradigm and to clarify the written experience of the 6th Grade learners in the Vhembe East District and the teachers' perceptions of textualism. This fed into the qualitative research approach involving research instruments of interviews and document analysis. The teachers were

selected through purposive sampling in a random way. The case study research strategy was explained and justified, together with pilot surveys. Ethical considerations in the research process were outlined to ensure credibility of research findings. The data collected and findings from this study are detailed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Using the research strategy of narrative case study, the research looked into the perceptions of eleven Grade 6 EFAL teachers towards the prevalence of Textese in the written work of Grade 6 learners in the four schools in the Mutsundudi Circuit of Vhembe East District. Purposive sampling was used to shortlist the participants from the entire population of teachers of EFAL in Vhembe east district. Drawing from the research paradigm of interpretivism which deals with subjective reality, the study adopted a qualitative approach which relied on the research techniques of interviews and document analysis accompanied by research instruments of questionnaires and interview guides.

This chapter is aimed at analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected through interviews, and document analysis of the written essays of Grade 6 learners. The analysis thereof is presented in the form of tables, graphs and charts and sheds light on the following research questions:

- Can the usage of social media and Information Communication Technology (ICT) outside the classroom impact learners' performance in the classroom?
- What are teachers' perceptions of the ownership and usage of social media by learners?
- How do teachers perceive the learners' use of textese from social media?
- What are teachers' perceptions on the effect of textese on the learners' academic writing?

Ethical considerations were applied in the process of administering the research instruments. The researcher highlighted the principles of anonymity, protection from harm, informed consent and confidentiality before engaging the participants in interviews. The researcher further notified the participants that the interview

discussions were being electronically recorded for subsequent transcription into text which will be availed to them upon request.

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES

After compliance with ethical requirements of getting authorisation from the District Senior Manager (DSM), Circuit Manager (CM) in Mutshundudi Circuit and Principals of the four schools, the researcher administered consent letters to the sampled teachers before engaging them in interview discussions or analysing the written work of their Grade 6 learners.

The following sections presents the responses of the research participants.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF GENDER BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS

Out of the targeted 12 participants, the researcher engaged 11 of them. This shows a participation rate of 91.7% which is acceptable. In terms of gender distribution of the participants, approximately 55% of the teachers were male while 45% of them were female as shown by the pie-chart below.

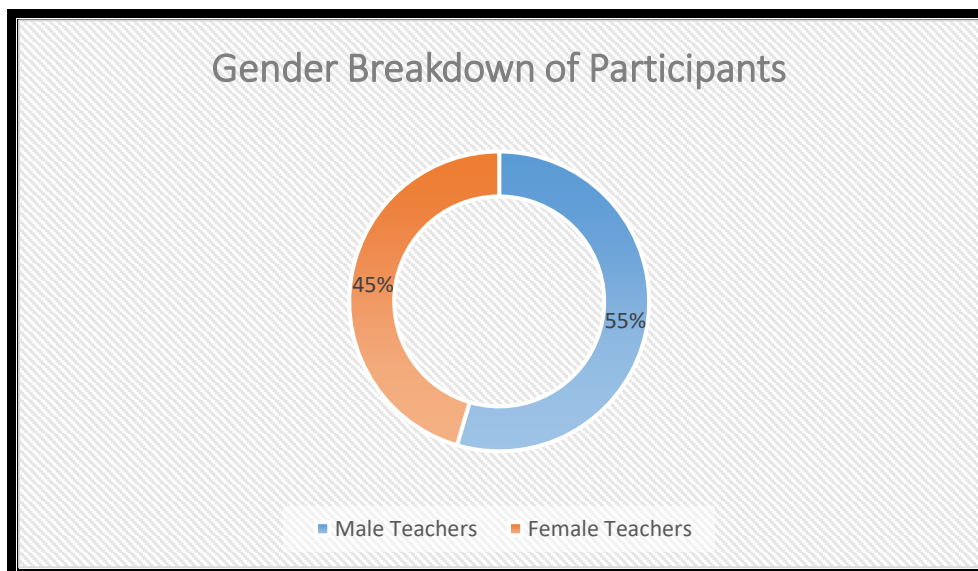


Figure 4.1: Gender Breakdown of Participants

The probing of gender in this research is important because it ensures that the views and perceptions that are obtained from such a study are not gender-biased. It also ensures that the opinions and the perceptions of both genders are also factored in the conclusion of the study and therefore creates completeness of views and perceptions that are derived from the formal interviews.

The majority of the teachers (45%) were baby boomers lying in the 41 – 50 age bracket of the baby boomers which tends to be somewhat indifferent to technology. This was followed by 37% of them in the 51 – 60 age group which is often described as digital immigrants because they were born before the days of modern information and communication technology. Only 18% of the teachers are digital natives in the age group of 30 – 40 years. These teachers are known as millennial teachers and are technologically savvy and know how to use social media both in class and in their personal lives.

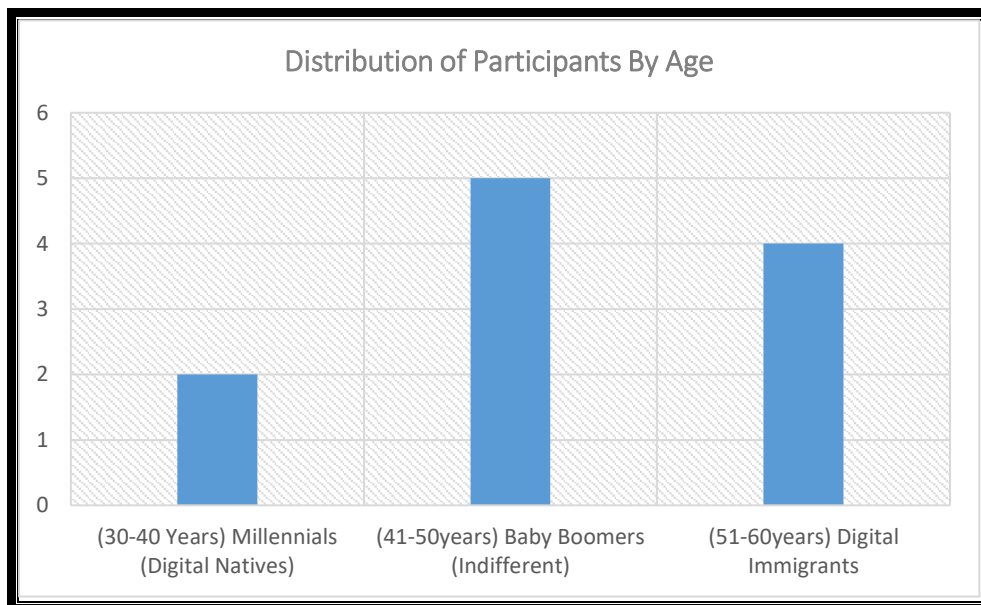


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Participants by Age

The sampled teachers are well educated with 73% having achieved at least a university qualification of a degree. Only 27% of the participants have a diploma qualification.

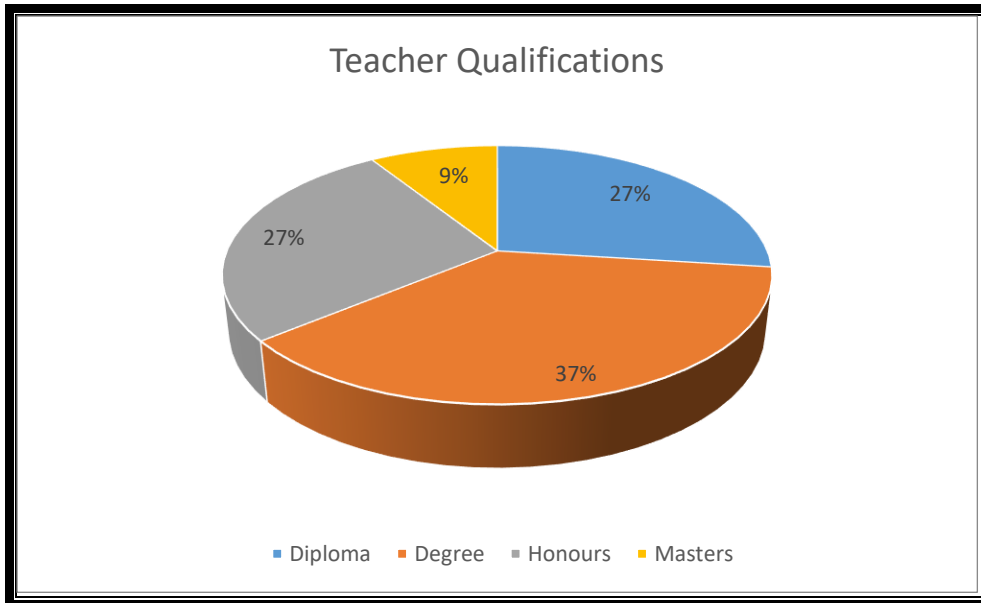


Figure 4.3: Teacher Qualifications

In terms of teaching experience, only 18% of the teachers have less than five years of classroom experience while the majority of 82% have between 5 – 20 years teaching experience as tabulated below.

4.4 THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

Thematic analysis was applied on the data collected resulting in the observation and recurrence of the following themes as tabulated.

Table 4.1: Themes

Questions	Themes
1. What are teachers' perceptions on the ownership and usage of social media by learners?	1.1 Teachers' perceptions towards textese. 1.2 Teachers' perceptions towards ownership and usage of mobile phones
2. How do teachers perceive learners of textese from social media?	2.1 Teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work.

<p>3. What are the teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work of Grade 6 learners?</p>	<p>3.1 Influence of social media regarding textese on learners' performance inside the classroom.</p>
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The themes above are a result of the coding process. As the researcher repeatedly read codes, it allowed for the emerging of the above themes. The researcher kept searching for the importance of data gathered and its relationship to questions, and the relationship between questions, themes and objectives of the study.

4.4.1 Teachers' Perceptions on the Effect of Textese on Learners' Academic Writing

The teachers' perceptions were gathered as audio records which were subsequently transcribed into text which could be translated into graphical representations. The sampled teachers fall in the category of CS1 teachers who are post level 1 and are not on a promotional post from the selected schools in Mutshundudi Circuit of Vhembe East District.

As tabulated below, the participants explained that textese is a universally accepted shortening of words in the communication between a sender and receiver where both understand one another. This qualifies it as a register of slang (Almurashi, 2016:74). When it comes to writing, it is simply the transfer of the spoken words into written words using social media's shortened forms of words.

Table 4.2: Participants' Explanation o Textese

Participants	Comments
PAT-1	Textese is the conveying of messages in short form where the sender and the receiver are able to understand each other
PAT-2	Learners use common words in spoken English which they transfer in formal writing in the form of text language.
PAT-3	The error of text message language use in learners' work is not very common but comes up when learners do not take their time when writing. The use of Facebook and whatsApp together with texting itself makes learners use short forms of words in formal writing.
PAT-4	<p>Effects of Textese are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor spellings Being handicapped in punctuations Distortion of the meaning of some words since they are not standard. Carelessness in sentence construction and poor choice of words Direct translation

Participants stated that textese happens fairly frequently among Grade 6 learners and is more pronounced in Grade 7 essay writing. This confirmed prevalence of textese among Grade 6 learners from field work in Vhembe East District resonates with Watt (2010:143)'s observation that learners increased access to Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and YouTube is shaping their spellings, wording and creation of meaning. Surprisingly, regardless of teachers' imposition of penalties in the form of deduction of marks for textese, the learners continue to commit the same mistakes. Admittedly,

these wrong spellings are influenced not only by the mobile phone but by other media like television as well.

Textese should not be accepted in school work. The responses are tabulated below:

Table 4.3: Response why Textese should not be Accepted in School Work

Participants	Comments
PAT-1and2	The situational habit of textese language used among Grade 6 learners can be rated at most and the situation can be described as serious because marks are lost for using textese language and the final score is also affected.
PAT-4	text language becomes worse in their essay writing but not compared to Grade 7 learners
PAT-5	but it should be made clear that marks are usually subtracted for text message language users in formal work which obviously affects their final score in their essays.
PAT-6	'Y' for why, 'u' for you, 'can't' for cannot, 'den' for then,' b' for be, 'No' for number, 'coz' for because, 'and' instead of and, 'Mon' for Monday, 'Wed' for Wednesday, 'Mom' for mother, 'thats' for that is and many others.
PAT-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exposure to the latest gadgets like cell phones and computers -Text message language use makes Grade 6 learners dilute what their teachers say about the danger of using Text message language words in formal writing. -Exposure to too much television viewing which shows a lot of programmes using textese to make them have poor grammar.
PAT-8	Text message language should not be allowed in formal writing because each language has its own standard and text message language is not part of Standard English.

As a solution to textese, participants recommended that teachers should be creative and look for other teaching materials which discourage textese. This is in line with studies done in Australia and Japan, where Social Network Sites (SNS) are used which encourage correct spellings. As observed by Freelon and Karpf (2016:394) social media can be used to complement the classroom efforts of teachers in a more relaxed environment past the classroom.

Table 4.4: Participants' Recommendations

Participants	Comments
PAT-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Since text language has been a common language to learners, teachers should adapt to text language because the language is here to stay -The Ministry of Education and the Language Board Council to see to it that they agree on the new language that is evolving.
PAT-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teachers of the English language just need to complement what the syllabus provides by using other good sources of teaching materials -Teachers should be taught in colleges and universities how to incorporate emergent skills to learners such as texting as a platform to teach better ways of writing and not just to keep blaming it. -Giving more academic work to learners to practice writing formerly such as dictation and spelling exercises. -Introducing more competitions for spelling, letter and essay writing among learners to boost proficiency in writing

The suggestions to incorporate colleges and universities in the fight against textese through training of teachers echoes the deliberate strategy adopted by the Australian government to invest in virtual schooling as observed by Ciampa (2018:84). At the same time, this is supported by Cardon and Marshall (2016:275) who found out that 90% of Australian learners always online and, according to Chun, Kern and Smith

(2016:68), they rely on social network sites (SNS) which schools, technical and further education (TAFE) institutions adopted.

4.4.2 Teachers' Perceptions Towards Ownership and Usage of Mobile Phones

The participants unanimously agree that mobile phones are the ones which provide the most immediate access to social media where textese is found. However, Hassan, Nadzim and Shiratuddin (2018:263) have a more positive view of social media which they claim is a mere source of information for anyone seeking it. They are supported by Ngai, Kruchen and Chan (2017:1558) who concur that social media facilitates training in a positive way. Furthermore, Amir (2011:56) observe the positive contribution of social media to distance learning through open universities in India, Africa and Thailand.

Regardless of the disjuncture between the positive perception of other researchers towards social media and the participants' view that social media is the cause of textese among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe, the participants are convinced that ownership and usage of mobile phones is directly connected to the prevalence of textese, although some of this textese comes from more traditional media like television. This was summarized comprehensively by Participant 5 as per the table below.

Table 4.5: Teachers' Perceptions Towards Ownership and Usage of Mobile Phones

Participants	Comments
PAT-5	Valid and helpful information which teachers provide adequately to these Grade 6 learners is unfortunately diluted by social media and they are products such as WhatsApp texts, Facebook, SMS, Cell Phones, and other programmes on television which use text message language in communicating mostly.

PAT-1	<p>-Learners communicate in text message language on phones and they also transfer this habit into their written work. This has become a social factor.</p> <p>-This new informal way of writing has found its way into learners' formal writing where some learners are conscious when they use text message language words in academic work while others are not. Learners are always active on social media.</p>
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4.4.3 Teachers' Perceptions Towards the Effect of Textese on the Written Work

Textese is a linguistic handicap among Grade 6 learners as it distorts the meanings of words, causes poor spellings, poor punctuation and causes learners to be careless in their attitude to school written language. These views echo the findings of Saridakis, Benson, Ezingard and Tennakoon (2016:322) who point out that the "language used within the social media may be informal, innovative and non-instructional." According to the research participants, textese happens to be a cause of occupational stress for the teachers who keep on repeating the same things. As learners use textese, it becomes second nature to them as they start writing instinctively at the level of the subconscious where they do not know that they are using the wrong spellings. These perceptions are captured below:

Table 4.6: Teachers' Perceptions Towards the Effect of Textese on the Written Work

Participants	Comments
PAT-3	<p>Distorting meanings of words and sentences,</p> <p>Poor spellings</p> <p>Poor punctuation</p> <p>Carelessness in spellings</p>
PAT-4	<p>Grade 6 learners use text message language very often. We get tired as teachers keep talking about the same thing, so I</p>

	personally penalise learners who use text message language words inappropriately.
PAT-2	Learners use text message language words in their formal work almost all the time consciously as well as unconsciously
PAT-6	Letters use wrong spellings like 'U' for you, 'cause' for because, 'maths' for mathematics, 'Geo' for Geography, 'tcrs' for teachers, 'mdme' for madam, 'dota' for daughter
PAT-5	Learners compromise Standard English rules
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Spending too much time on social media and its gadgets than on schoolwork -Poor English vocabulary due to poor reading culture and poor reading foundation. -Exposure to digital literacy by means of gadgets such as cell phones and computers. -Exposure to too much television viewing which shows a lot of programmes using text message language makes learners use poor grammar.

4.4.4 Influence of Social Media Regarding Textese on Learners' Performance Inside the Classroom

The participants believe that social media has been unteaching the very same language principles which the teachers teach. Therefore, social media only undoes what the teachers have done and is therefore seen as an enemy of teaching, which explains why some participants called for textese to be banned in schools. In the homes, social media has broken down the tradition of letter writing among family members, thus affecting how people relate with one another.

However, other researchers reject the notion that social media is entirely evil when it comes to education. Rather, as observed by Simon, Goldberg and Adini (2017:611), social media is a powerful tool if used correctly in the transformation of the educational

landscape. Indeed, Sowofora (2019:3) reported that social networking sites, particularly Facebook, have positive outcomes for English language pedagogy.

It seems, therefore, that social media is simply a tool which can be correctly used to achieve positive outcomes or wrongly used to produce negative outcomes.

Table 4.7: The Influence of Social Media Regarding Textese on Learners' Performance

Participants	Comments
PAT-8	While the teaching fraternity has been labouring so much in order to impart formal writing skills to learners, technology in the form of textese language as well as WhatsApp and Facebook have also been undoing whatever teachers have been stressing on not to be used by learners while writing in the classroom.
PAT-1	The habit of text message language use is very common among Grade 6 learners' day-to-day conversations and this situation makes it possible for them to transfer this habit to formal wiring. This has made the latest crop of learners become lazy and they have even stopped writing letters to siblings and relatives.

In suggesting how best Text message language can be controlled in formal writing, Participant-9-11 suggested the following:

- Buying more books for reading and also more reference books for teachers.
- Give more spelling and dictation exercises.
- More writing competitions should be introduced for Grade 6 learners.

The apparent battle between classroom teachers who strive to impart correct rules of English grammar and social media which is promoting textese is confirmed by Taniguchi and Hirakawa (2016:480) who observe the failure of learners to desist from

textese despite their conscious knowledge that it is a punishable practice especially in examinations as it costs them marks.

Paradoxically, other researchers like Yemini and Sagie (2015:544) advocate for the incorporation of social networking sites into the classroom to reinforce the role of the English teacher to prepare learners for the global world. They are supported by Wilkins (2015:184) who champion early exposure to social media as a prerequisite for successful integration of learners into the global world in future.

Although critics of textese prefer social media to be entirely distanced from schools while the adherents of social media call for incorporation of SNS into the classroom, a more balanced, middle-of-the-road approach is championed by Hill and James (2017:57) who observed that teachers face practical challenges in trying to infuse Web 2.0 social networking tools into classroom instruction. Learners in the lower grades tend to become addicted to the internet if exposed at a tender age according to Hogue, Goss, Hollis and White (2016:109).

It seems social media as a solution to education tends to create its own problems which require other solutions as well. This explains why research participants claim that social media is undoing what the teachers are teaching in the classroom.

4.3.5 Social Media Language on Grade 6 Learners' Written English

Participants emphasized that social media should be seen as a neutral tool which becomes either good or bad according to the person using it. Thus, on the good side, social media can actually promote learning through collaborative discussion of assignments and projects through debates, chats, among others.

Table 4.8: Social Media Language on Grade 6 Learners' Written English

Participants	Comments
PAT-2	Social media can be a useful tool for educational activities when approached in the right way. Similarly, also submits that social networks are resource centres for the teaching of English language.
PAT-1	There are many social media platforms. Some readily available ones in Vhembe east district include Facebook, Skype, Twitter, MySpace, WhatsApp, 2go, textese. Activities on social media are for socialising, getting and sharing information, discussing assignments and projects, debates, chats, collaborating and networking.
PAT-4	Social media can be used to accommodate both social and educational aspects. They can be tools for supporting teaching/learning on one hand a means of socialising on the other. One of its disadvantages is its impact on the way primary learners spell words and write. Secondly, is the negative influence on learners' time management, study behaviour and copying of wrong concepts.

This result was also supported by Akinjobi (2013:184) who is also of the opinion that social network sites should be explored as supplements to classroom activities while Participant-3 opines that Facebook and WhatsApp pages enable proficiency in learners' use of English.

Furthermore, these findings were supported by Paul and Gelish (2011:52) that the use of mobile phones for sending text messages and accessing social media may and may not result in learners' lower academic performance.

Participant-5:

From classroom observation, text message language is infiltrating learners' formal writing exercises and impacting them negatively. He also indicated that Facebook users must be seen as identity politics of being a learner rather than enhancing learner' engagement with formal studies. During classroom interaction with the learner, one finds that most of the learners write using incorrect spelling, grammar and punctuation marks. Many use abbreviations profusely, while others have formed the habit of using textspeak. This affects the structure of sentences used as well as their spellings.

This in turn does not bode well for learners' vocabulary acquisition. This may result in some learners being unaware of the difference between formal and informal writing. According to Taniguchi and Hirakawa (2016:480), this failure to distinguish informal writing from formal writing tends to happen subconsciously, which is a great danger to the learners. To compound the problem, the majority of the learners struggle with grammar, concord, meaning and comprehension.

Participants-6 shows that social media language is mostly informal and allows non-standard orthography and grammatical errors. This is supported by Russell, Meredith, Childs, Stein and Prine (2017:92) who observe that textese involves the use of non-traditional spellings which, according to Arshad and Akram (2018:247) have been adopted as a norm on the leading social media platforms of WhatsApp and Facebook. Furthermore, Rosen (2012:229) submitted that scholars expressed concern about how social media language is affecting learners' usage in formal contexts, especially in written essays.

Arshad and Akram (2018:247) state that textese is turning into a norm, especially on Facebook and WhatsApp with the implied consequences indicating that teachers understand textese as having a terrible impact on inexperienced learners' written English First Language (EFAL) books. The terrible effect of textese on written language abilities causes inexperienced learners to attain bad grades in English First Language". Russell, Meredith, Childs, Stein and Prine (2017:92) observed that "textese negatively affected the inexperienced learners' written English, figuring out g-

clipping and non-traditional spellings because of the use of textese. Language teachers indicated that teachers both deduct marks for existence of textese in written language or refuse to mark writings that do not conform to the officially authorised requirements that the faculty has set in place”.

Participants 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 further outlined the techniques employed in writing text messages and by extension, social media messages. These include:

- The use of pidgin forms: dem-them, una de-how are you? Waka-go.
- Deletion of last letter: wl-will, stil-still, hav-have, lov-love.
- Spelling in numerals: 2-to, 4-for, 4rm-from, 4get-forget, in2-into, gr8-great.
- Single letter spelling: u-you, c-see, n-and, b-be, r-are, d-the.
- Consonant clusters: gdnt-goodnight, ppl-people, dt-that, bt-but, urs-yours.
- Use of phonemic: evri-every, oda-other, tot-thought, tnx-thanks, sori-sorry, bin-been, beta-better.

Despite the general concern about social media language creeping into learners' academic writing, it is not going away any time soon. That does not mean teachers should turn away from correcting learners and doing the right thing. Learners and adults frequently subscribe to one or more very popular social media platforms. They also spend hours chatting, blogging, posting information and connecting with friends and family. They are therefore continually using social media language.

The tendency of using social media language undermines their writing skills. Daily learners' exposure to informal new ways of writing and language usage works against the traditional writing techniques. Social media writing techniques include constant and consistent which break the traditional writing rules. These writing mistakes easily slip in when average and below average learners write. Learners also stand the risk of becoming lazy at writing as social media encourages abbreviations of words and sentences.

4.3.6 Addictiveness of Social Media by Grade 6 Learners

Social media is addictive. Habits of using shortened spellings easily become translated from the informality of social media to the seriousness of the classroom environment.

Table 4.9: Addictiveness of Social Media by Grade 6 Learners

Participants	Comments
PAT-3	When participants work in groups, they learn wrong spellings easily from their peers on social media. Their failure to change from informal writing in social networks to formal writing required in the classroom shows that they are addicted to the wrong spellings used in social media.
PAT-3	Learners did not realise that they should not use those informal forms in writing because they had seen it often and used it regularly, or they forgot and used the same words of texting in the classroom. -In some instances where learners work in groups, they influence each other to write text language in the classroom.
PAT-4	Internet is significantly and negatively related to learner academic performance, as well as emotional attributes. Using short forms and abbreviations is not a positive learning experience because learners may get used to the habit and then use it in the formal writing tasks in school.

Participant-5-11 pointed out that:

Facebook failed to improve learner writing because learners use informal writing structures rather than formal writing styles.

Research by Rosen (2012:244) found that those learners who used more language based on textese (short cuts such as LOL, 2nite, etc.) in daily writing produced worse formal writing than those learners who used fewer linguistic textese in daily writing.

All participants indicate the common features of informal writing considered inappropriate in a writing class that have been widely used on online chats or social networks sites are as follows:

- Phonetic spelling used for transcription of standard pronunciation such as “nite” for „night”, „guyz” for „guys”, „luv” for „love”, „wanna” for „want to”,
- Emoticons and smileys used for conveying a feeling are such as facing a hard situation -_-! Being happy:), being sad:
- Multiple punctuation marks or letters used for a prosodic effect such as: no more!!!!!, yes!!!!!, aaaaahhhhh, sooooo.
- Capitalization use: all capitals for „shouting” such as „I SAID NO”, asterisks for emphasis such as „the*real*answer”
- Special abbreviations or acronyms used for saving time and making it convenient, such as b4/B4 (before), lol/LOL (laughing out loud), oic/OIC (oh I see).
- Common shortenings used for easy use and convenience are „u” (you). „i” (I), „r” (are), „thx” (thanks), „pls” (please), „tmr” (tomorrow).

4.4.7 Paralinguistic Features of Text Messages

Paralinguistic features refer to the non-verbal features of oral or written communication. These features can add extra semantic information to words or sentences as they can indicate human body language such as gestures, facial expressions, feelings, or the quality of voice, intonation, tone or pitch. Abeysekera and Dawson (2019:7) refer to text-talk which is a hybrid communication whereby a person writes as if they are speaking, and this leads to reliance on symbols which express emotions (emoticons).

The most frequently used paralinguistic features are emoticons. They are considered the basic paralinguistic elements of text speak. They are created by combining numbers and letters with punctuation marks. They can represent the facial expressions of humans. The ‘☺’ emoticon is made up of a colon and parentheses

which form a smiley face that can indicate happiness or intense joy according to Abeysekera and Dawson (2019).

Punctuation marks and emoticons can express different grades of sentiments. The happier smiley face can be formed with a colon and the letter 'D' (:D) and the happiest smiley face can be constructed from a semicolon and parentheses ';)'. The superlative version can show a face with tears of joy. Emoticons expressing the opposite meaning can be formed in a similar way.

Adding more parentheses can intensify the sadness in the case of this emoticon. Emojis are similar in function to emotions. Therefore, emojis are pictures or small digital icons that can represent facial expressions, common objects, animals, places or certain types of weather. Emoticons and emojis are used interchangeably and are to express moods and feelings of a person or simply show what you mean without writing it down.



Figure 4.4: Images and Pictures Representing Facial Expressions

Capitalisation is also used to convey emotions in online based communication. In general terms, written communication applies capitalisation in the case of proper nouns, acronyms, titles and when starting a new sentence. However, electronic communication usually associates different functions with textism such as highlighting important elements or expressing feelings (Armstrong & Lee, 2021). Using upper case letters can indicate anger, dislike and also excitement.

The exclamation mark is a common punctuation symbol at the end of the imperative sentence. It is used to tell somebody what to do, to give a command or an instruction. However, as a paralinguistic element it can also show the sentiment of a person or one's current mood. Three periods that follow each other are a common sentence ending on social media sites. It usually shows that a person is hesitating or pondering

over something. In some cases, it means confusion, surprise, disappointment or disagreement. If we want to interpret this element, it is necessary to analyse its meaning in the context.

Words that imitate or reflect the sounds of humans can also be used to show how a person feels as the previously mentioned *hahaha*, *XD*, *LOL*, can express that someone is happy as it is used to imitate laughing. Other words such as *wow* or *whaaaat* can show excitement or surprise while *muchness* and *soooo* are used to indicate eagerness or exhilaration.

Finally, attaching stickers, images or photos to a Facebook wall can also show also the mood of a person as cited by Abeysekera and Dawson (2019:7). There are numerous stickers in different categories such as weather, animals, and carnivals or cartoon characters that are usually animated and express various activities. These are often used simply as comments and without giving any further opinion about them. Some of the images and stickers can be used to ridicule or destroy communication like the troll face pictures, while other animated memes or stickers can show happiness, sadness, confusion and many different emotions.

4.5 TEXTESE TEXT MESSAGES USED BY GRADE 6 LEARNERS IN THEIR ACADEMIC WRITINGS

This section will provide the analysis on the textese text messages used by Grade 6 learners in their academic writings.

Table 4.10: Grammatical Short Forms Used in Texting

S/N	Textese Text	Full Form/Standard
1.	*btn/ bn/ bwn	Between
2.	*gdmnx/ gmx	Good morning
3.	*btw dem/ bndem, btn	Between them
4.	*by, bai	Bye, buy
5.	may ur dz b gud /me ur dz b gud	May your days be good

6.	plz 2moro /tmoro	Please tomorrow
7.	*im anoi wt u/ am anoi wt u	I'm annoyed with you
8.	tru/ tr	Through, true
9.	cmx nau/ Kamx n	Coming now
10.	*enof	enough
11.	xpln	Explain
12.	*phone	Fone
13.	shld	Should
14.	wld	Would
15.	diff	difficult
16.	*wit	with
17.	*actn	action
18.	*auctn	auction
19.	*situatn	Situation
20.	crwd	crowd
21.	rait	Write
22.	grp	group
23.	fillw	Follow
24.	hafa	How far
25.	tday	today

One area that has seen a lot of wrong usage in textese texting has been grammar. Several words have been distorted to the detriment of young learners who take the spellings for real and automatically transfer them onto their classroom formal work.

The words that are starred on the Table 4.10 above may be some of such words that learners use so regularly that they are penalised for as errors in their classwork and tests. The text form of 'with' which is 'wit' gives a different meaning to the word and also a different context to someone who has knowledge of grammar since both words are correct English words. The use of 'wit' for 'with' is very rampant in Mutshundudi Circuit Vhembe East District. English and the deletion of the 'th' is so common that allowing this usage may only further impede correct usage of the English language.

Learners have a problem with the past tense in regular classroom situations thus there are expressions like “I’m annoyed with you” written as “am anoi wit u” or better still “anoid”. These forms, as can be seen have problems with the personal pronoun ‘I’ and the past tense of the verb ‘annoy’ which is not conjugated. The continuous use of these forms only goes a long way to hamper the correct standard forms of the language. This is corroborated by research evidence from Pruet, Ang and Farzin (2016:1137).

Table 4.11: Abbreviations

S/N	Textese Text	Full Standard Forms
1.	lv u, lv yu	Love you
2.	b/cs, bc	Because
3.	2u, t u	To you
4.	8 et	Ate, eight
5.	rtrn	Return
6.	hs	House/his
7.	schl/sch/skul	School
8.	dat/dt	That
9.	frm	From
10.	nd/n	And
11	tmoro/2morro	Tomorrow
12.	fgiv/4giv	Forgive
13.	hr	Here/hear/hour
14.	gov’t	Government
15.	Bro	Brother
16.	dn’t	Don’t
17.	monx	Morning
18.	s’up	What’s up
19.	Info	Information
20.	y’af	You have
21.	cls	Class

22.	uwc	You're welcome
23.	y'all	You all
24.	sth	Something
25.	prblm	problem

The above table shows how textese is a complete departure from the rules of grammar and punctuation as observed by McEwan (2017:355) who highlights how the language used on Facebook exhibits the same traits. It should be noted that although Table 4.12 is on abbreviations, the contractions do not contain abbreviations like apostrophes that are common in the English language. This shows how textese texting functions. What is important in the message is the meaning and not the form.

Table 4.12: Ambiguities

S/N	Textese Text	Full Standard Forms
1.	cls	Class/clause
2.	fyn	Fine/find
3.	hr	Hear/here/hour
4.	dunno	Do you know/ I don't know
5.	shw	Show/shower
6.	m/l'm	I'm/am
7.	dat/dt	That/dart
8.	n joy	Enjoy/and joy
9.	blv	Believe/beloved
10.	wr	Where/wear/were
11.	grt/gr8t	Great/grate
12.	tym	Time/thyme
13.	wat	What/wart
14.	lv	Live/leave/love
15.	hs	His/house
16.	ld	Lead/load
17.	lk	Look/lock lack

18.	bk	Book/because/bucket
19.	pple	People/pupil
20.	yr	Your/year
21.	rait	Write/right/rite
22.	cld	Could, cold
23.	dr	Dear/doctor
24.	frm	Form/former
25.	den/thn	Den/then

Table 4.13 contains words that have ambiguities that can be recognised as homophones i.e., words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings as explained by Eguchi (2018:62). These occur in the table above and more as the textese text is the same for “here, hear and hour”. Ambiguities occur when an interlocutor does not understand the context in use and may take the one to mean quite the other. Such textese texting will therefore require knowledge of the subject under discussion and as (Baron, 2015:268) states “...as a 21st century phenomenon, texting is distinct in style” and may have just a negligible to the multi-trillion instances of standard orthography in everyday life. Its unique style may therefore be just a necessary evil in this era.

Table 4.13: Categories of Textese Words

Category of Textese Words	Explanation of Meaning of Word as an Textese Category	Examples	Examples
Number Homophones	Mixing words and letters for a single word.	Before written as ‘B4’, ‘Control’ written as ‘Cont2ro’, Today written as	Tonight written as ‘2night’, too written as ‘2’ and for written as ‘4’.

		'2 day'. Tomorrow written as '2moro', Great as 'gr8t'.	
Letter Homophones	Letters standing in for words as a short cut or textese.	You is written As 'U' as a letter homophone and 'See' as 'C.'	Words such as and written as 'n' or and,
Non Conventional Spellings	Between as 'btwn' School as 'Sch', 'msg' for message.	'Application' as applc', 'often' as 'ofn'	'Hpn' for happen, 'den' for then, 'xcool' or 'xcul' for school
Contractions	Deletion of middle letters or final letters.	Understand as 'undstnd'. Next as 'Nxt'	Mathematics written as 'Maths', examinations as 'exams'.
Acronyms	Formed from some initial letters of various words and can be pronounced as a word.	For example, OPEC for Organisation for petroleum countries	Laugh out loud written as 'LOL', Rolling on the floor laughing written as 'ROFL'
Initial Textese	Made up of first letters and cannot be pronounced as words	'DVD', for Digital versatile Disk, 'HTML' for hot mail,	'BTW' as by the way
G- Clippings	Excluding the ending -g letter	'Going' written as 'goin' coming as 'comin'	Morning written as 'Mornin' Cooking as 'cookin'.

Shortenings	Words formed by following the words which are stressed when pronouncing.	'Afternoon' written as 'aftn', after written as 'aft', October written as 'Oct'.	'Adv' for advantage, 'mdme' for madam for advantage,
Symbols/Icons	These are usually symbols with meanings in shortcut.	English words such as and, at, percent, star are usually written in symbol form as shown in the next box.	and, @, %, *

Source: Researcher (2020).

The above Table 4.6 has categorised the identified type of textese words which learners used in composition writing. The explanations of the meaning of each category of textese words have been given in the table side by side with the examples used in practice. In fact, other related studies revealed similar categories of words.

Table 4.14: Exhibits of the Findings of Textese Characteristics in Grade 6 Learners' English Composition Books

Valid	School Identity	Spellings Quality	Use of Textese and Symbols	Use of Punctuation marks	Use of Abbreviations	Formal Language Use	Paragraphing	Grammar
Schools	W	Poor	Common	Good	Common	Good	Good	Good
	X	Poor	Not common	Bad	Common	Poor	Poor	Poor
	Y	Poor	Not common	Bad	Common	Poor	Poor	Poor
	Z	Poor	Common	Bad	Common	Poor	Poor	Good

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 4.15 brings out the textese features which were observed from the 12 Grade 6 learners' books which were purposefully picked for analysis. The researcher sampled 3 books from each school for analysis. The researcher analysed the composition books by looking at marked essays to see whether textese language influenced the learners' compositions at classroom level. It was found that learners' class composition writings in books were highly influenced by textese language just like the composition test results showed.

All 4 schools were badly influenced by textese language and results showed consistence in textese characteristics in the 4 schools. The researcher used the table columns above as a guide to see whether the textese influenced punctuations spellings and other features as shown in Table 4.8. The observed situations were gauged by using words such as Good, Bad, Common or Not Common to explain what the researcher saw in books collectively at school level hence having 4 rows of school composition results in terms of quality.

This was done to compare what the learners wrote in their classrooms, answers given by their teachers in interviews and open-ended questions for triangulation purposes as Table 4.6 columns 4 of this document has displayed. It was found that learners' books from all schools had a lot of poor spellings, poor punctuation, paragraphing and poor grammar as Table 4.6 indicates.

4.6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTESE

Participant-1 defined text message language as:

The conveying of messages in short form where the sender and the receiver are able to understand each other.

When asked to share any information about text message language use Participant-2 said:

Learners use common words in spoken English which they transfer into formal writing in form of text language.

In explaining how often Grade 6 learners used text message language words, Participant-3 revealed that:

The error of text message language use in pupils' work is not very common but comes up when learners do not take their time when writing. The use of Facebook and WhatsApp together with texting itself makes learners to use short forms of words in formal writing.

Participant-4 explained that text message language use influenced learners' writing by:

- *Poor spellings*
- *Being handicapped in punctuations*
- *Distortion of meaning of some words since they are not standard.*
- *Carelessness in sentence construction and poor choice of words*
- *Direct translation*

When asked to indicate how often Grade 6 learners used text message language in their class work, again Participant-4 said:

Grade 6 learners use text message language mostly in their essays and sparingly in language structures.

Concerning how serious the situation of text message language is, Participant-5 said:

The situation is not very common, but it should be made clear that marks are usually subtracted for text message language users in formal work which obviously affects their final score in their essays.

Participant-6 listed the following words as the most commonly used by learners in academic writing be it class work or end of term examinations;

'Y' for why, 'u' for you, 'can't' for cannot, 'den' for then, 'b' for be, 'No' for number, 'coz' for because, 'and' instead of and, 'Mon' for Monday, 'Wed' for Wednesday, 'Mom' for mother, 'thats' for that is and many others.

According to Participant-7, the Grade 6 learners use text message language words because of the following challenges:

- *Exposure to latest gadgets like cell phones and computers*
- *Text message language use makes Grade 6 learners to dilute what their teachers say about the danger of using text message language words in formal writing.*
- *Exposure to too much television viewing which shows a lot of programmes using texteses resulting in poor grammar.*

Participant- 8 made it clear that text message language use influenced conventional and proficiency in academic writing because learners were no longer writing in formal ways like letters for communication due to the coming of cell phones where pupils mainly text and email when communicating. This is confirmed by research evidence from Eguchi (2018:62). CBecause of these negative effects of text message language use, Participant-9 said:

Text message language should not be allowed in formal writing because each language has its own standard and text message language is not part of Standard English.

Having mentioned that the Grade 6 Syllabus was not adequate enough to combat the use of text language in compositions, Participant-10 and 11 also mentioned that:

Teachers of English language just need to complement on what the syllabus provides by using other good sources of teaching materials.

In order to handle this problem, again Participant-10 made the following suggestions to the Ministry of Education:

- *Teachers should be taught in colleges and universities how to incorporate the emergent skills in pupils such as texting as a platform to teach better ways of writing and not just to keep blaming it.*
- *Giving more academic work to learners to practice writing formerly such as dictation and spellings exercises.*

- *Introducing more competitions for spellings, letter and essay writing among learners to boost proficiency in writing.*

4.7 ERROR ANALYSIS IN LEARNERS' WRITINGS

The main objective of this study is to analyse learners' grammatical errors, to investigate the reasons behind their frequent occurrence and find a remedy to minimize committing such errors. In the following section, examples of learners' grammatical errors were collected for the purpose of analysis.

Table 4.15: The Types of Errors Based on Communicative Effect Taxonomy

No.	Types of Errors	Total Errors
1.	Global error	17
2.	Local error	103
Total Errors		120

Table 4.16 shows that the total of global and local errors made by the learners of Grade 6 in their report text writing was 120 errors. *According to Harris and Silva (1993:526), global errors tend to interfere with the reader's understanding of the text and thus affect the meaning thereof whereas the local errors are on a much lower level which does not affect the conveying of the meaning in the sentence as they only affect a part of the sentence and not its entirety. They made 17 global errors (which affect the meaning of the entire sentence) and 103 local errors (which only affect a part of the sentence) according to Eguchi (2018).* The data elicited from the participants indicates that there were 120 errors viewed on the basis of Communicative Effect Taxonomy.

Table 4.16: Total of Interlingual and Intralingual Grammar Errors

No.	Grammatical Errors	Errors
1.	Passive Voice	55
2.	Verb Tense and Form	50
3.	Subject-verb agreement	45
4.	Word Order	60
5.	Prepositions	65
6.	Articles	35
7.	Plurality	90
8.	Auxiliaries	60
	TOTAL	465

According to Saiti (2018:604), textese results in the learning committing a number of grammatical mistakes. In Vhembe East District, the native language of the learners is TshiVenda which is used by learners while at home, as cited in the background to the study. According to Gass and Selinker, (2008) the native language like TshiVenda can actually stand in the way of the learners' attempts to communicate in English as they try to transfer what they know in TshiVenda into the English language. Since two languages of TshiVenda and English are involved, with the native language interfering in the translation or transfer of meaning from vernacular to English, this is known as interlingual error. It is quite different from what Brown (2007) calls intralingual error which simply involves a poor understanding of the second language like English for the TshiVenda speaking learners. According to Richards (1973) the Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District are prone to commit both interlingual errors in transferring Tshivenda to English and intralingual errors in failing to understand English as a First Additional Language (EFAL).

In this study, the researcher detected 465 interlingual and intralingual grammatical errors in free essays written by 12 learners (See Table 4.17). The types of grammatical errors that were analysed for this study were limited to 8 types. There were 185 interlingual grammar errors (See Table 4.10) and 275 intralingual ones (See

Table 4.10). Most of the grammar errors were made in the area of plurality, 90 errors of which 210 were interlingual while 178 were intralingual. The other grammar errors included are passivization; 55 errors were detected rated verb tense 50, word order 60, prepositions 65, articles 35, subject verb agreement 50 and auxiliaries 60.

The results of the study showed that the errors committed by the learners were due to both interlingual and intralingual factors. Based on the findings, it was found that the grammar intralingual errors were more frequent than interlingual ones. This is contrary to many research findings that were reviewed in this study according to Brown (2007), and this provides a negative answer to the fourth research question which says, Can the usage of social media and Information Technology ICT outside the classroom impact learner's performance in the classroom?

4.7.1 Grammatical Errors

It is an undeniable fact that an understanding of a language grammar is essential and as it is said vocabulary is the flesh of the language and grammar is the skeleton. However, most black learners of English as a foreign language view the study of grammar as boring and there are frequent outcries about the difficulty of structures among the learner (Saaristo, 2015:281). English grammatical rules are intricate, primary school learners are weary of taking grammar classes with rote memorization and drills which they find both boring and difficult to understand or appreciate. One of the misconceptions among learners is the belief that without mastering most English grammatical rules, they will not be able to communicate in English particularly in writing.

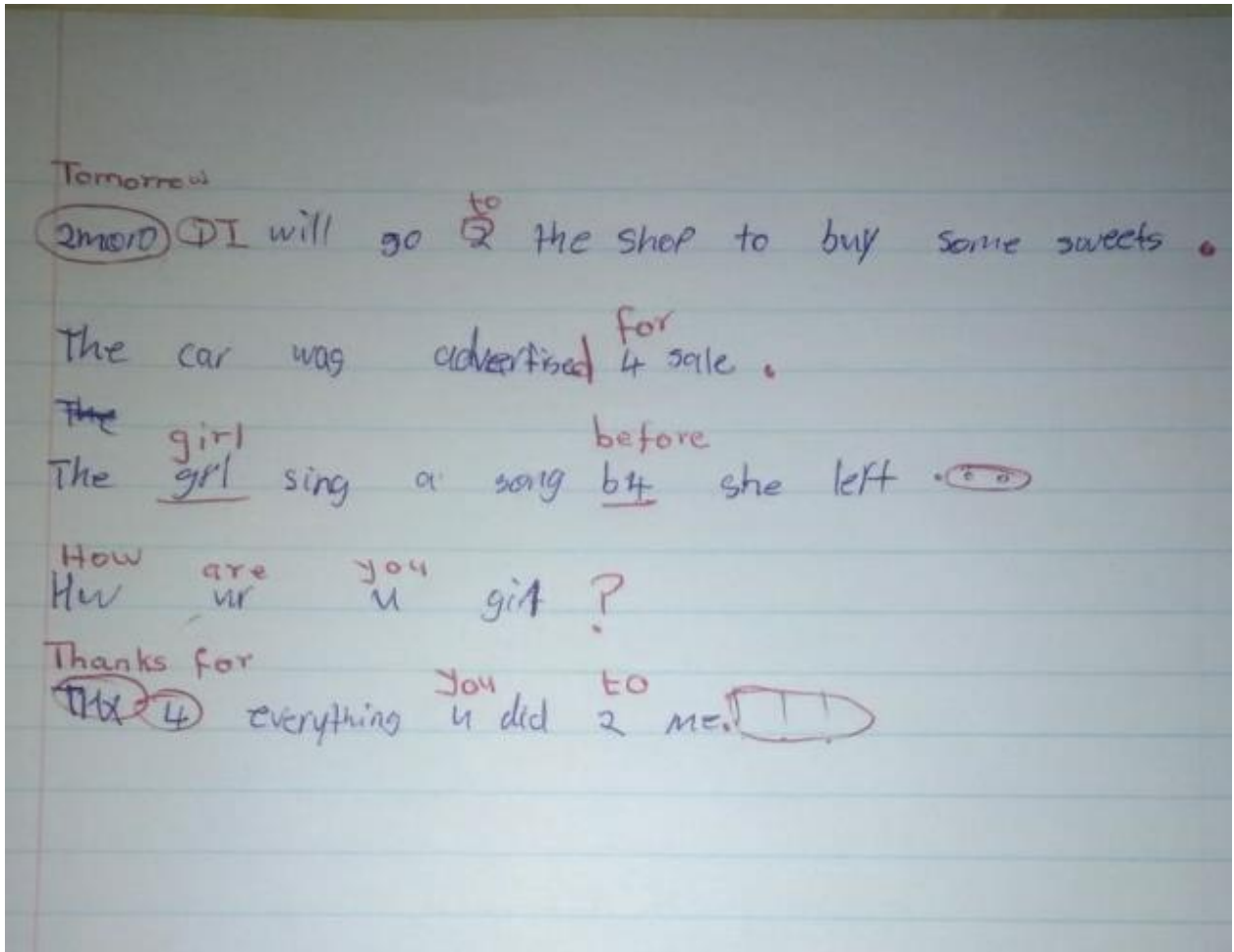


Figure 4.5: Plate 1: Type of Errors

Non-native speakers of English tend to experience more interlingual errors according to Gass and Selinker (2008) than intralingual errors because, according to Richards (1973), they experience the world and acquire meaning in their native tongues of vernacular which they then try to translate into the English language. Examples of the grammatical types of errors all drawn directly from essays in the research corpus are given below and underlined along with the correct word or form immediately following each example (see Fig. 4.1, Plate 1).

4.8 CONTENT ANALYSIS: FEEDBACK PROVIDED ON LEARNERS' WRITTEN WORK

Learners are more exposed and influenced by social media networks (Eguchi, 2010). Social media as a medium of interaction between learners has been part of a debate in the present day, which has affected their academic performance; because of their

addictiveness and exposure to it. The internet has changed numerous things in people's lifestyles, but the largest is the impact it is getting on the way they interact every day according to Kearney, Burden and Rai (2017:53). Most social media are used to transmit one's emotions and ideas, for instance, Facebook users may employ the language freely as they want. When using text language, learners feel relaxed using it, rather than using formal English, which is full of rules and grammar and *syntax* (Griffith, Connelly & Thiel, 2018:156). One can observe that people everywhere around the world have developed a new structure of texting while connecting in social networks. They may use informal and less correct language like dialect, a lot of abbreviations, acronyms, spelling mistakes, and also emoticons in their daily interaction.

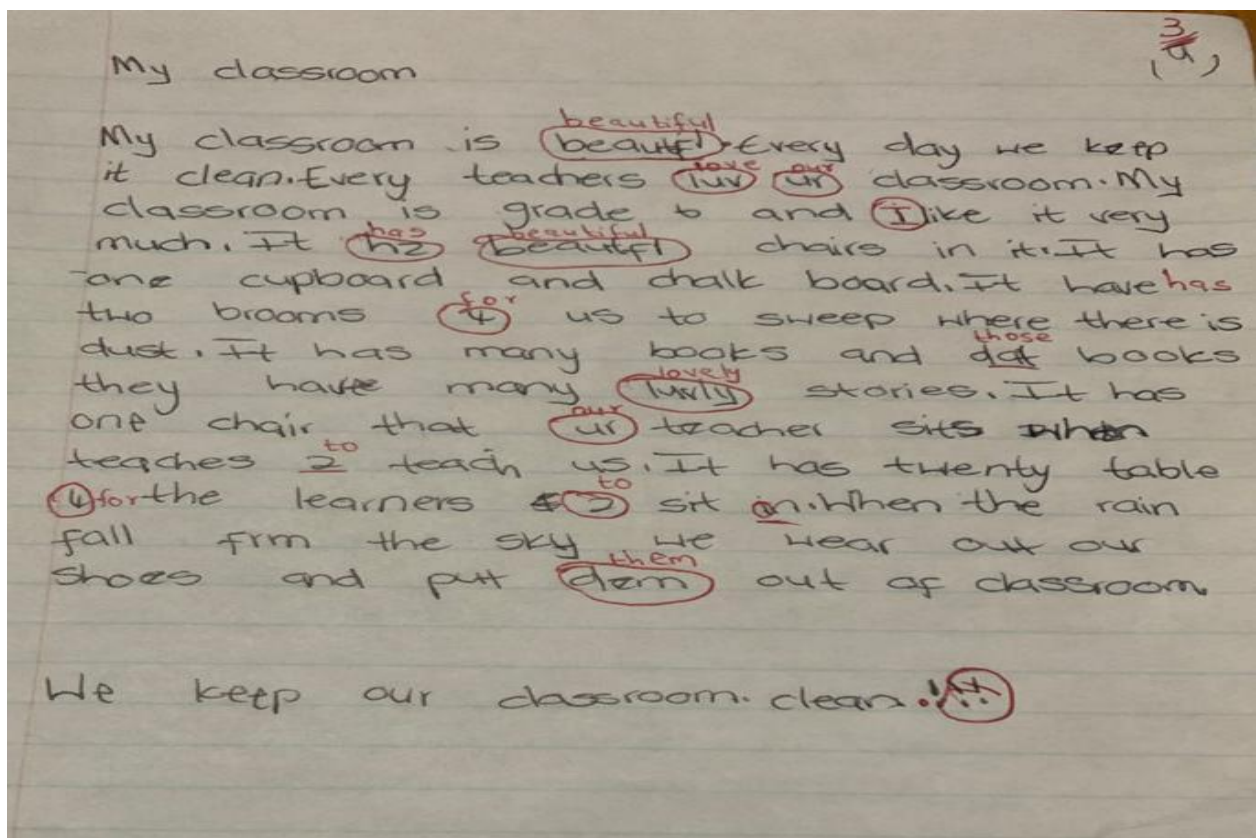


Figure 4.6: Script 1

The abridged spellings displayed in Script 1 above are typical of Twitter norms as observed by Jiyane, Fombad and Mugwisi (2016:46) who acknowledge the record-breaking fame of Twitter as a social media platform. Since Twitter only limits users to

140 characters when texting, such word-shortenings as displayed above are common. According to Hamad (2017:74) such errors are also found on WhatsApp as well as another leading social media platform.

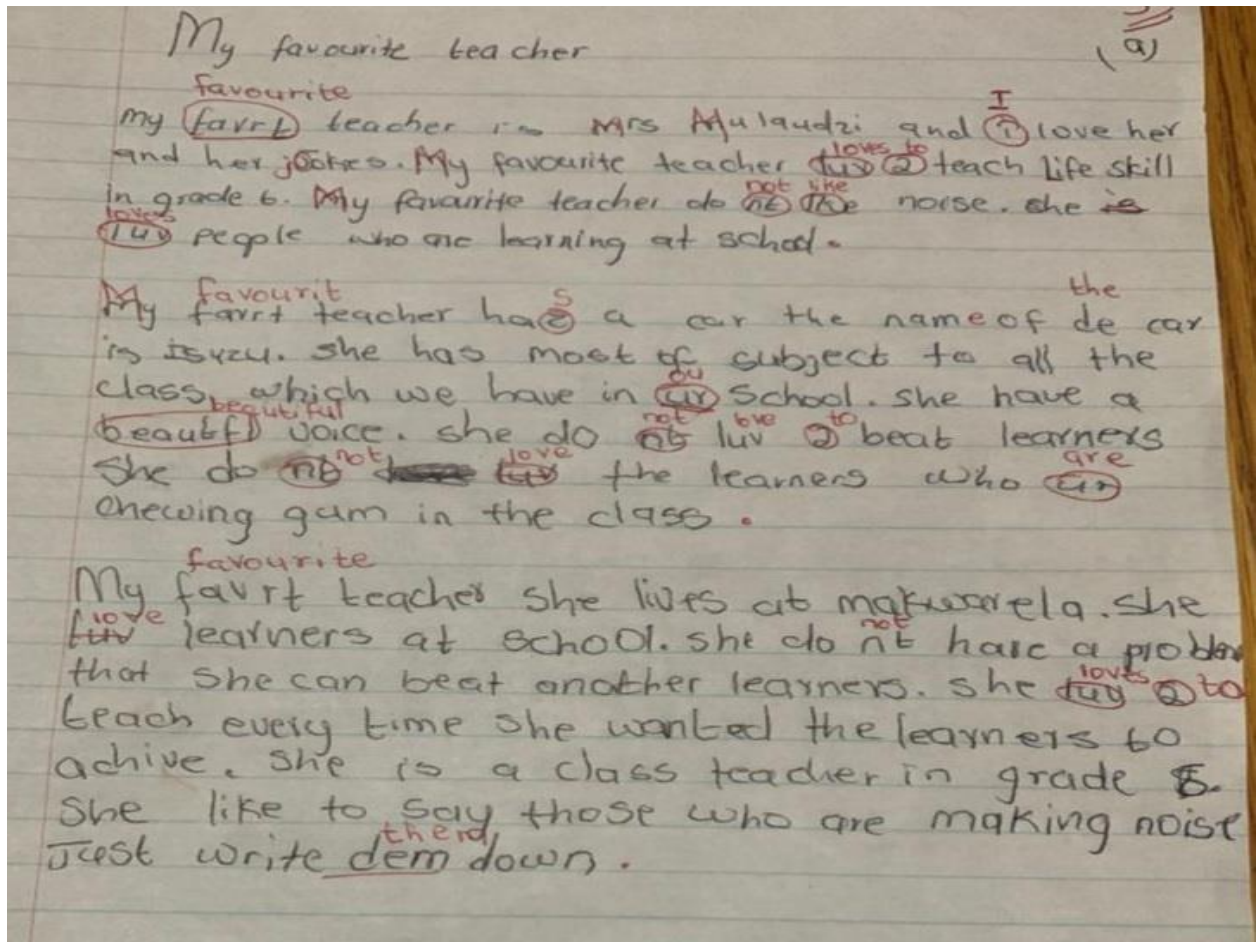


Figure 4.6: Script 2

In script 2, there are intralingual errors according to Brown (2007) and Gass and Selinker (2008) where learners are using the phonic sounds of the letters of the alphabet to spell the words. It is this creativity which amounts to textese according to Adams (2017). However, the learners in Vhembe East District, they commit these errors because their first encounter with the English language is through social media before teachers impart the correct rules of grammar starting from Grade 4.

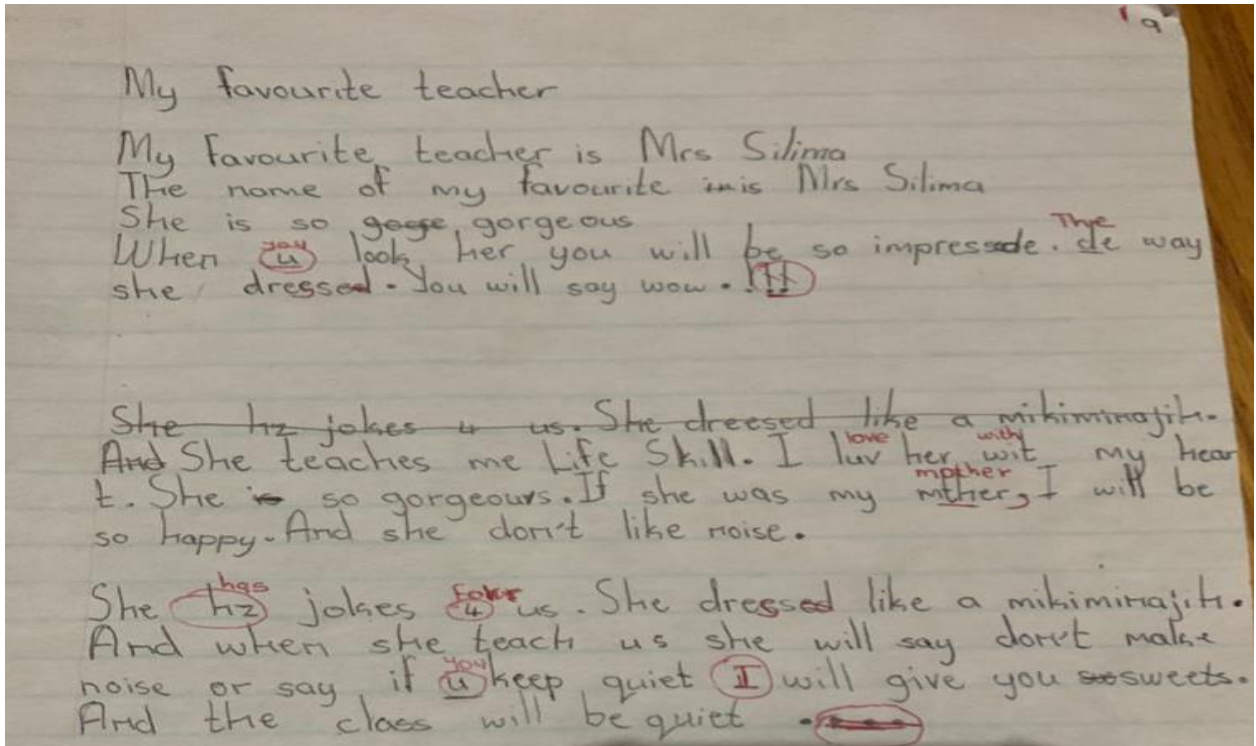


Figure 4.7: Script 3

Script 3 shows the effect of text-speak which, according to Bloom, Liang, Roberts and Ying (2015:167), is an offshoot of the mobile youth culture. The mobile youth culture is the trend whereby young people own or have access to mobile phones and spend approximately 22 hours a week online according to Chun, Kern and Smith (2016:68). Such long exposure to social media ensures that, through social constructivism as postulated by Vygotsky (1978), the behaviours of shortening words in Twitter, for example, are successfully replicated in the classroom through learning by observation (Foster, 2019).

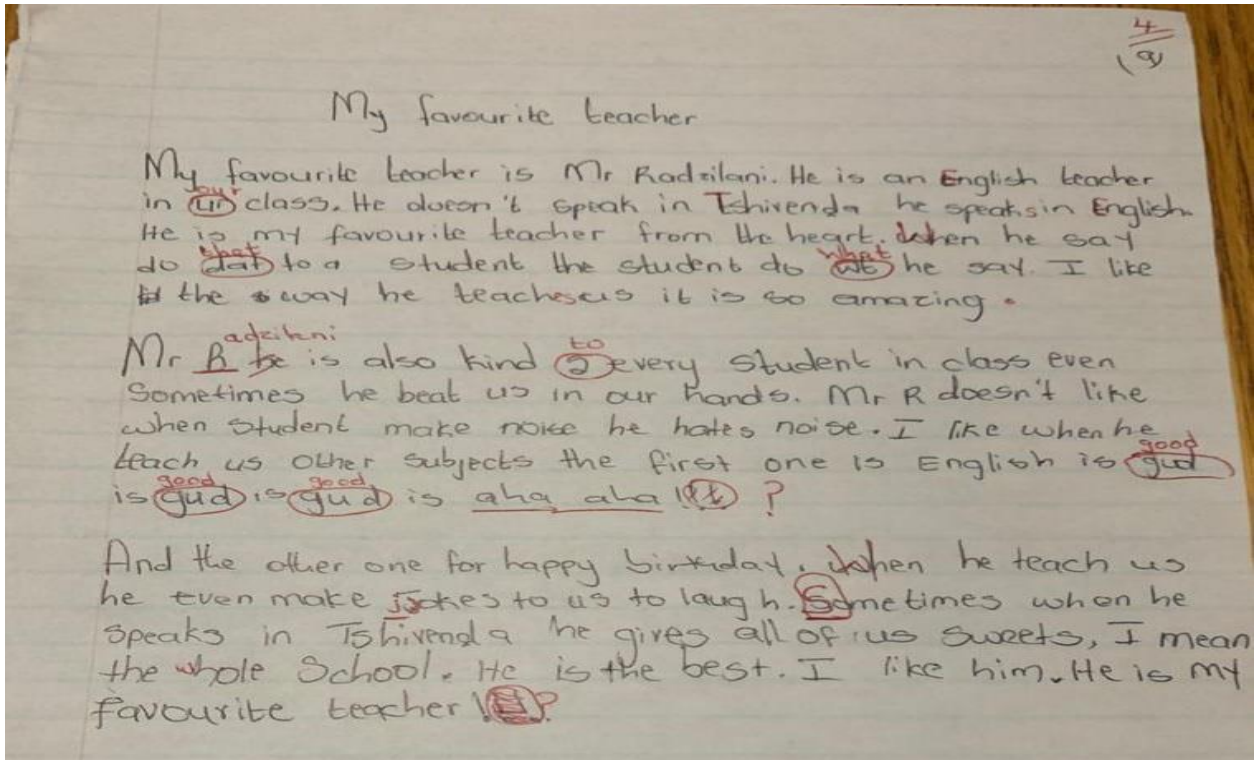


Figure 4.8: Script 4

Apart from using phonic sounds to spell words, script 4 shows how learners tend to shorten even names of people to just the initials while also ignoring punctuation, such as beginning a new sentence with a small letter or using a conjunctive like the word and to begin a sentence. All these are gross errors, including an attempt to explain the emotions represented by Aha, aha...which have a strong link to the use of emoticons as observed by Rosen (2012). Whereas the essay writing must be properly structured into a suitable opening, adequate development of main ideas, good paragraphing, balance, coherence, taking note in spellings and a suitable conclusion according to Akinborewa (2010), script 4 is an example of how not to comply with rules of grammar.

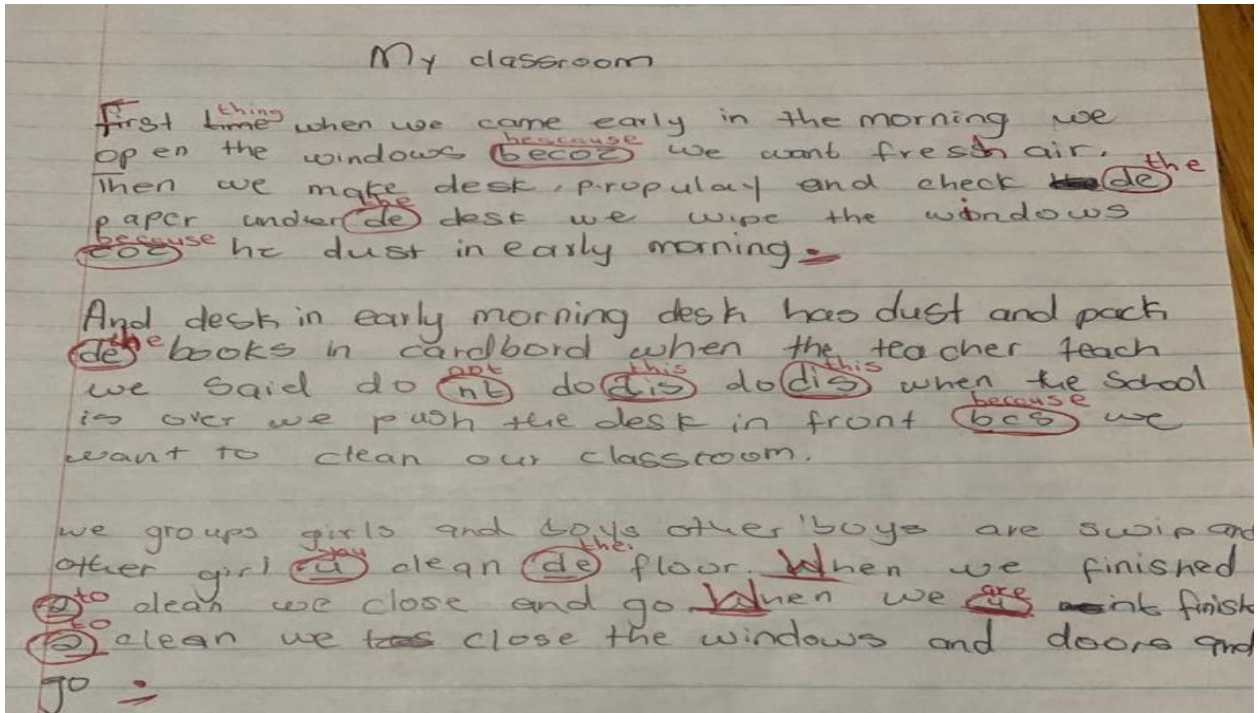


Figure 4.9: Script 5

Script 5 contains the same textese errors as previously highlighted in other samples of Grade 6 essays set aside for document analysis.

4.9 CONCLUSION

The document analysis of Grade 6 essays shows the prevalence of textese among the learners. The role of social media in promoting the spread of textese into the classroom was noted. However, other authorities explained how social media can be harnessed to produce positive outcomes in education, training and development. Like any tool, social media can be wrongly used, resulting in wrong outcomes like addictions to the internet among young learners and the assimilation of improper spellings like textese. On the other hand, if social media is correctly used in a strategic way through deliberate policies set by government departments as was the case in Australia, social media can empower learners and produce positive outcomes in terms of learner achievement. Ultimately, the education system must decide how to incorporate social media into the classroom, despite the challenges of doing so as observed by other researchers in their studies on the practical implementation and



utilization of social media in formal education. The next chapter concludes the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher`s perceptions towards textese in Grade 6 EFAL learners` classroom writings. This was done by polling the opinions of 12 Grade 6 teachers of English teachers drawn from four schools in Mutshundudi Circuit of Vhembe East District using purposive sampling. Each school was represented by three teachers of EFAL who also provided the three essays from their school which were used in documentary analysis. The research techniques of interviews and document analysis were employed while research instruments in the form of questionnaires and interview guides were administered. The interviews were recorded on dictaphone and further transcribed into text which was subjected to inductive thematic analysis. Atlas software was used in the analysis of participant data collected during the study. This chapter presents the findings of the conclusions and recommendations arising out of the data analysis of the previous chapter and the literature review in the second chapter on the basis of the methodology established in Chapter 3.

5.2 SUMMARY

The conclusions and recommendations made by the study were unpacked by aligning and reconciling the research problem of textese, the research objectives of determining the perceptions of teachers towards textese and ownership and use of mobile phones and the research questions raised by the study.

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES CONCLUSION

5.3.1 To Determine the Teacher's Perception Towards Ownership and Usage of Mobile Phones by Grade 6 Learners

The first research objective attempted to ascertain the perception of teachers towards ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District. However, the sample of teachers researched had its own demographic variations which impacted their perceptions towards mobile phones. In line with the Erik Erikson psychosocial developmental model of human beings, the teachers in Vhembe East District were in a continuum of three categories of people with respect to their interaction with technology. On the one extreme is the digital natives, born between 1981-1995, called millennials but correspond to the Erikson age bracket of 18 – 40 in which teachers are native to technology and actually sympathetic to research problem of textese as they grew up with technology and are therefore tech-savvy. Approximately 18.18% of the teachers researched were millennials. These millennial teachers consider mobile phones as an important tool to facilitate collaborative learning through social communities. They believe that those learners who own mobile phones develop wider vocabulary, can write creatively because of access to the internet where creative ideas can be found with relative ease. According to Schunk (2012:241) learners are able to learn from each other through social interaction which reinforces Vygotsky's theory of Social Constructivism. However, they acknowledge the dangers of social media on learner writing.

On the other extreme are teachers from the baby boomer generation of those born between 1946 – 1964 who are closer to retirement and are averse to technology. They have been described as digital immigrants. Teachers occupying the digital immigrants quadrant accounted for 36.36% of the respondents in the study. Ericsson's theory claims that these digital immigrant teachers are characterised by the need to convey all their knowledge and they strive to work well and be productive. Hard work for them means working hard through the help of teachers in a face-to-face environment to promote Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in which learners use support from more experienced people as a scaffold to learn what they cannot learn on their own. They view ownership and usage of mobile phones as a

distraction and a chief cause of textese which contributes to reduced literacy in English among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe East District. The majority of them believe learners should not be given access to mobile phones as they divert attention from the very purpose of learning in the first place.

In between the two extremes of digital natives or millennial teachers and their nemesis known as digital immigrants who are not friendly to technology is found the Generation X age-group of those teachers born between 1965 and 1980 who sit on the technological divide and are therefore somewhat indifferent to technology. In this study, a total of 45.45% of the respondents were from this category. As such, the perceptions of these teachers towards mobile phones and usage thereof are not strongly condemnatory as the digital immigrants while, at the same time, their support for mobile phones is not so outrightly positive as they lack the technological savviness of millennial teachers who are digital natives.

5.3.2 To Ascertain the Teacher's Perception Towards the Actual Usage of the Textese in the Classroom by Grade 6 Learners

Regardless of the generational bracket of the teachers' demography, their perception towards usage of textese in the classroom was the same. They are all experiencing the same challenges in the written work of Grade 6 learners. They confirmed the recurrence of such notations like "b4" instead of the full version of the word "before" and similar abridgements like *2morrow*, *coz*, *b'coz*, *gud* respectively in lieu of *tomorrow*, *because* and *good*. The teachers unanimously agreed that these spellings exactly mirror the same spellings in social media. According to Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the above spellings have become a stand-alone register on its own which can be likened to a social media slang which is acceptable among peers (Halliday, 1997:36). According to Vygotsky (1978:62), the fact that learners can import words acquired from social media in social communities and use them in the classroom proves that some socially-mediated learning has taken place. This is confirmed by Pedwell, Hardy and Rowland (2017:252) as well.

The teachers agree that textese is contributing to poor literacy in Grade 6 EFAL. As noted by Taniguchi and Hirakawa (2016:480), learners continue to use textese even

in examinations when they know full well that it will cause them to lose marks because such slang register has become second nature to them and they write textese subconsciously which means that shows the strong impact of Vygotsky's social constructivism. This is consistent with findings in other developing countries like Nigeria where learners are writing incomprehensible things in class as noted by Farrell (2015:440). Evidence from this study also is in harmony with studies done in Australia, Japan, and India. This shows that textese is a universal phenomenon caused by the information and communicational technological revolution observed by Wellman (2018:3) and supported by Berger (2017:65).

Although not every learner in Grade 6 owns a mobile phone, the prevalence of textese is observed among both owners and users of mobile phones and those who do not own these devices. Halliday's notion of a register is the one which explains this. textese is a register of slang language which has developed and is continuing to affect all those peers within the social group. Those learners without mobile phones are learning textese from those learners with mobile phones through Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development where both millennial teachers as digital natives and peers both equally contribute to this new fashion of writing.

5.3.3 To Find out the Teacher's Perceptions Towards the Effect of Textese on the Written Work of Grade 6 Learners

All the teachers agree that textese violates the rules of language and grammar and contributes to illiteracy in EFAL among the Grade 6 learners. However, the millennial teachers who are native to digitalism believe that learners need to only be exposed to most appropriate websites or social communities where the most appropriate English language is used. According to Bush and Glover (2016:213), such social communities like Class Dojo become an exchange tool which allows creation of chatrooms, boards, tests, homework, among others outside the traditional classroom setting.

Furthermore, they believe that since technology has become an inseparable part of our life, it is best to explore the best social media platforms that encourage proper writing instead of shooting down the entire infrastructure of social media when it does have some positive contributions to the learning of languages. This approach is

supported by Nobles, Glenn, Kowsari and Barnes (2018:413) who studied the impact of social media in Australian education landscape.

According to Berger (2017:61) the rise of social networking sites (SNS) has resulted in applications like Class Dojo which can be harnessed for positive outcomes in education. This is similarly echoed by Wellman (2018:1). Therefore, millennial teachers believe the baby should not throw away with the dirty bath water. Only websites and social communities with greater contribution to collaborative peer-to-peer learning should be deliberately encouraged in order to empower learners as masters of their own learning journey (Berger, 2017).

The teachers belonging to the digital immigrants' cluster view mobile phones and everything that can be accessed using them as the real cause of textese in the classroom and therefore they should be banned among learners especially those in lower grades who need the opportunity to be taught the right spellings during the formative years of their life.

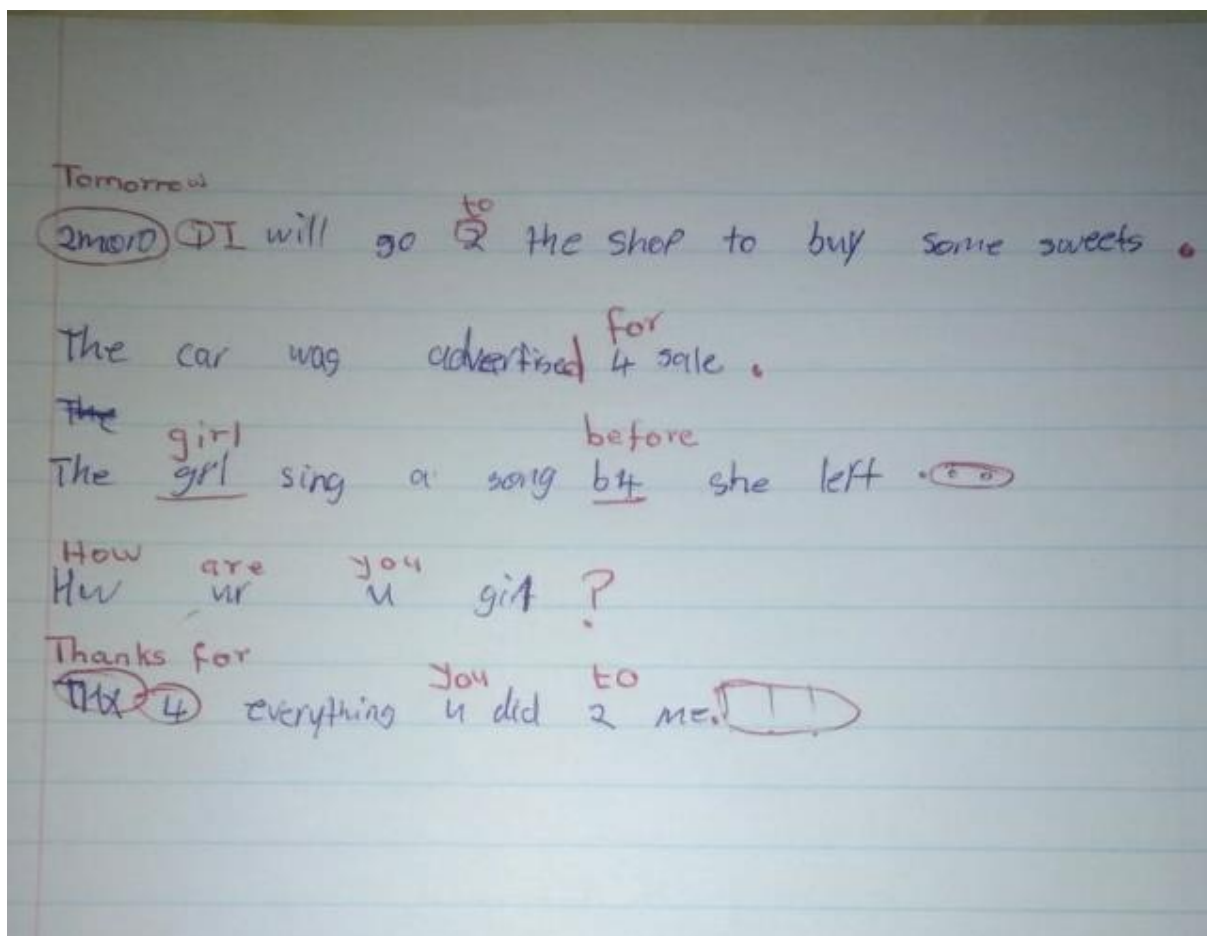
Approximately 45.5% of the teachers have come across the following violations of standard rules of English.

- *The use of pidgin forms: dem-them, una de-how are you? Waka-go.*
- *Deletion of last letter: wl-will, stil-still, hav-have, lov-love.*
- *Spelling in numerals: 2-to, 4-for, 4rm-from, 4get-forget, in2-into, gr8-great.*
- *Single letter spelling: u-you, c-see, n-and, b-be, r-are, d-the.*
- *Consonant clusters: gdnt-goodnight, ppl-people, dt-that, bt-but, urs-yours.*
- *Use of phonemic: evri-every, oda-other, tot-thought, tnx-thanks, sori-sorry, bin-been, beta-better.*
- *Paralinguistic features of written communication. This relies on non-verbal features of written communication like icons which display emotion (known as emoticons) which might involve human facial expressions like (☺ ' ' :) comprising a colon and parentheses which form a smiley face that can indicate happiness or intense joy. Others can take the form of emojis which are interchangeably used with emoticons as per images below:*



- Words that reflect human sounds like *hahaha*, *XD*, *LOL*, *wow* or *whaaaat* to show excitement or surprise.

The above is confirmed by Rosen (2012:227) who found out that learners using textese shortcuts like “lol”, “2nite”, score less than those learners who write more formally. This is confirmed by 70% of the teachers who actually deduct marks as a way of penalising and discouraging learners from using text language in essay writing as shown by the text below:



About 80% of the teachers reported that they are deducting marks when they come across textese regardless of whether it is associated with interlingual errors or intralingual errors (Brown, 2007). The following table sums up the findings of the documentary analysis of the 12 essays from the 4 participating schools in Vhembe East District. A total of 465 interlingual and intralingual grammatical errors as tabulated below.

No.	Grammatical Errors	Errors
1.	Passive Voice	55
2.	Verb Tense and Form	50
3.	Subject-verb agreement	45
4.	Word Order	60
5.	Prepositions	65
6.	Articles	35
7.	Plurality	90
8.	Auxiliaries	60
	TOTAL	465

The interlingual errors accounted for 40% of the total errors while the intralingual ones (grammar) represented the bulk of 60%. These findings are contrary to the majority of literature reviewed in this study and suggest that, after all, social media usage outside the classroom should have limited effect in the classroom.

5.4 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The prevalence of textese is not only attributable to ownership and usage of mobile phones, though that goes without saying. Other mediums like Television are also flighting advertisements with abridged spellings which further reinforce the phenomenon of textese in Grade 6 EFAL written work.

Since technology like mobile phones are here to stay, there is no need to eliminate the use of mobile phones in educational activities. Rather, the mobile phones should be

used as a complementary tool to face-to-face classroom learning. Using social media allows the learners to be at the helm or driving seat of their own learning. Also, social media exposes learners to social communities such as obtain in advanced countries like Australia and Japan. Through such social communities, learners are able to learn collaboratively from their peers thereby substantiating the validity of Vygotsky's Social Constructivism paradigm.

Textese as an emergent language is really a kind of a slang which, according to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is a self-perpetuating language which can stand on its own as a stand-alone register or informal register. Since context affects language according to SFL model by Michael Halliday, social media provides the context in which textese or use of text language develops. In turn, language itself has a causative impact on context. Thus, there is a cause-effect-cause relationship between context and language which actually reflects the validity of the Vygotskian Social Constructivism.

Learners participating in social communities are able to learn from their peers or other more experienced people like teachers. This is possible through educational platforms like Class Dojo which are focused purely on classroom interactions between learners and their teachers. The ability to learn from more experienced people, through the mediation of technology, proves that learners can actually grow cognitively in the Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in which the scaffolding technique is used to facilitate learning by young learners through the help of other more experienced members of the online community.

All studies from developed countries and developing countries like India and Nigeria attest the existence of textese. There is a direct relationship between and among access to, ownership of and actual usage of mobile phones and the tendency by learners to write using slang register of abridged spellings, images and emoticons and emojis. However, since textese qualifies as a register according to Halliday or a slang language used and accepted in given social circles, there is a growing standardization of the terms used. This is also confirmed by the The ISO12620: Management of Terminology Resources – Data Category Specifications, which lists Textese as a slang

register among other registers like informal register, neutral register, technical register, dialect register, taboo register and vulgar register.

Generally, a direct and linear relationship exists between exposure and participation in social media and the linguistic challenges of textese. Social media provides the context of situation, according to Halliday, which address the questions of what, who and how which are behind the trinity of field, tenor and mode in Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

Both literature review and empirical findings from this study confirm that social media has a negative influence on the cognitive development of children. Through the principles of social constructivism, learners get to know the wrong spellings from WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and other platforms where textese prevails before the teachers impart the right kind of knowledge of formal and standard grammar and spellings on the learners. Ultimately, writing wrong spellings becomes a tacit skill which is internalised by the learners. This explains why learners find it difficult to stop from using textese because they tend to use it unconsciously. This point illustrates the fact that human beings are influenced by their immediate environment which shapes them in their interactions with others.

The fact that teachers in Vhembe East District differ by gender and age, the Ericson psychosocial developmental model is validated as some teachers are millennials who are native to the digital world while others are described as digital immigrants on account of their poor grasp of technology as they grew up without it. If the social and cultural background of millennials makes them to view social media and mobile phones more positively than the baby boomers who are also known as digital immigrants, then social context is proven to have an effect on human behaviour. This means social constructivism as a theoretical framework in this study holds.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

5.5.1 Impact on Education

The study viewed textese as a linguistic sickness affecting the health of learners' grammar, punctuation and spellings. The respondents suggested measures which can be taken to address this condition. The measures are at the two levels of micro level which covers the schools themselves and their English teachers and the macro level involving the department of education.

The micro level recommendations at the level of the local school or the local class by a local teacher are summarized below:

- Teachers of English language just need to complement on what the syllabus provides by using other good sources of teaching materials.
- Giving more academic work to learners to practice writing formerly such as dictation.
- Introducing more competitions for spellings, letter and essay writing among learners to boost proficiency in writing.

The macro level recommendations at the level of the Department of Education are highlighted below:

- Teachers should be taught in colleges and universities how to incorporate the emergent skills in learner such as texting as a platform to teach better ways of writing and not just to keep blaming it.

5.5.2 Policy Shift

The Departments of Education, at the macro level, need to formulate strategies that harness social media and technology to create a learning environment for learners that extends from the classroom during contact time to out-of-class interactions and engagements. Countries like Australia deliberately create social networking sites (SNS) to promote learning outside the classroom in a complementary way. Such SNS

should be free of the textese which obtains in other forms of social media like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube, among others.

At a national level, the government can encourage, through the South African Schools Act (SASA) the empowerment of, for example, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to source online teacher-learner applications like Class Dojo which a school can use at a local level. This avoids a one-size-fits-all approach of coming up with a national strategy for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in public schools.

Public schools can then partner with private sector players like telecommunications companies or mobile network operators (MNOs) like Vodacom, MTN, Celcys and Telkom as a way of building their own Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to promote blended learning where technology is used to complement the traditional face-to-face teaching and learning pedagogy.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Activities to promote formal writing need to be increased. The following could help, at a local level of the school itself:
 - a. Instituting spelling competitions
 - b. Commencing regular dictation exercise
 - c. Writing more spelling tests
 - d. Doing essay competitions
 - e. Penalise learners for textese in written essays
- Adapt the Curriculum Development Centre within the Department of Education to address matters of informal writing and differentiate clearly between formal and informal writing
- Workshopping the Heads of Languages under Train-the-Trainer model in order to spread good practice to all English language teachers

5.6.1 Teachers' Recommendations

- Limit use of social media among learners in Grade 6.
- Create and participate in meaningful social communities which enhance good formal writing skills.
- Penalise learners for using Textese by deducting relevant marks.
- Upskill the teachers appropriately to be knowledgeable and become technologically savvy so they can know how to extract maximum benefits from social media.
- Shortlist the beneficial websites which can help improve the literacy of learners.

5.6.2 Recommendations from the Document Analysis

- There is need for further explore why there is a disjuncture between intralingual errors and interlingual ones. In this study the intralingual errors of grammar significantly exceeded interlingual errors.
- Due to the mismatch in the above proportions of error in Grade 6 written work, it seems the study contradicts all other studies and reviewed literature.
- A large sample will need to be used to ensure the findings are representative enough.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further studies are recommended beyond the local circuit of Mutshundudi in Vhembe East District. More respondents will be required in terms of sampled teachers and more work reviewed under documentary analysis. This means that Grade 7 essays have to be included as well, over a longer period of time.

The mismatch between intralingual errors and interlingual errors needs to be investigated as the findings of this study defied all literature reviewed. The implication of this mismatch is that use of social media outside the classroom is not able to translate into poor spellings in class. This was obviously refuted by the research of the Grade 6 teachers done. It also flies against the principles of social constructivism

on the other. Therefore, the variance between research results of teachers' opinions and the actual review of Grade 6 essays requires another study over a longer period of time and involving more participants to determine why such discrepancy exists.

5.8 CONCLUSIONS ON THE STUDY

Textese is prevalent among Grade 6 learners in Vhembe east district. Even those learners who do not own mobile phones tend to write wrong spellings. The reason, partly, is that learners learn from one another. When given group work, for example, it does not matter whether one is exposed to social media or not. As those exposed to social media write wrong spellings, their peers will copy them as well.

After all, it is not only mobile phones which are contributing to textese. Other media like television is a major contributor to textese. A lot of advertisements on national television feature videos with wrong spellings.

5.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are some of the limitations of the study:

- Only one circuit of Mutsundudi was sampled in the Vhembe east district,
- Only 11 teachers were interviewed,
- There was limited time to conduct the study, thus it was not a longitudinal study which is more reliable in terms of establishing reliable patterns,
- Only Grade 6 teachers were interviewed instead of expanding to include Grade 6 learners as well.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

GRADE 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTESE IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

I, **Elelwani Veronicah Makgakga**, a registered Master's student in Educational Management with the University of Venda hereby to conduct interviews with Grade 6 EFAL teachers in Vhembe East District so that they could assist me in collecting data for the study entitled "Grade 6 teachers' perceptions towards textese in English First Additional Language in Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province."

SECTION A: A Biographical Date:

1. What is your position at the school?

Teacher	HOD	DEPUTY PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL
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2. What is your age?

21-30	31-40	41-50	51>60
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3. What is your gender?

M	F
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4. How long have you been teaching?

0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31>40 years
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5. How long have you been teaching English First Additional language?

0-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31>40 years
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6. How many learners do you have in class?

<40	>40
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SECTION B: INTERVIEWS

Hereunder are the Research Questions:

- How do teachers perceive the influence of Social Media and Information Communication Technology regarding textese outside the classroom on the learners' performance inside the classroom?
- What are the teachers' perceptions on the ownership and usage of Social Media by learners?
- How do teachers perceive learners' textese from social media?
- What are teachers' experiences in the use of textese in learners' academic writing?

- To explore teachers' perceptions on the influence of Social Media and Information Communication Technology regarding textese on learners' performance inside the classroom?

○ What is your understanding of the concept "textese" in learners' writings in the classroom?

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○ In your opinion, has the spelling ability deteriorated since learners have been accessing Social Media on their phones?

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○ To which extent do you think Social Media and Information communication Technology influence learners' performance inside the classroom regarding textese?

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- To establish the teachers' perceptions towards ownership and usage of mobile phones by Grade 6 learners.

- How does the spelling ability of the learners who have no cell-phones differ from that of learners with cell-phones?

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- In your view, do learners who do not use cell-phones and Social Media general spell better or worse than those with cell-phones?

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- What is the extent of usage of textese from Social Media by learners in your class?

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- To discover the teachers' perceptions towards the actual usage of textese in the classroom by Grade 6 learners.

- What are the most common problems that you encounter in teaching and learning as far as your learners are concerned regarding textese?

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- In your experience as an English First Additional language teacher would you say the writing of your learners is improving or deteriorating in recent years?

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- What do you think about the influence of Social media and Information Communication Technology on learners' writings?

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- To identify the teachers' perceptions towards the effect of textese on the written work of the grade 6 learners.

- What effect does Social Media and Information Communication Technology have on learners' writings in their class?

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- Do you think the use of Social Media makes learners to be more prone to make textese errors? Motivate your answer.

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- In your opinion, should teachers use mobile phones as well as Social Networking sites as teaching and learning tools in English First Additional Language classroom? Elaborate.

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DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

During Interview the researcher requested teachers to bring along learners' sampled EFAL written exercises/books so that the researcher can establish instances of textism, discover any observable connections between learners' errors using textism and those who do not use mobile phones and identify common errors made by learners using textese in their written work.

ANNEXURE B: THE TEACHER CONSENT FORMS

Consent form for Interviews

I,, consent to completing the interviews by **Makgaka Elelwani Veronicah** for her study on “**Grade 6 Teachers’ Perceptions towards textese in English First Additional Language in Vhembe East District, Limpopo.**”

- Participation is voluntary.
- As a school we may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify the school will be included in the research report and my responses remain confidential.

Signed :

Date :

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 2/212

Enq: Makola MC Tel No: 015 290 9448 E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Makgaka EV
P / Bag 5050
Thohoyand
ou 0950


RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
 2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: "GRADE 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTESE IN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE IN VHEMBE EAST, LIMPOPO PROVINCE"
 3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the School concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
 - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
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4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Mashaba KM

DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES

08/03/2022

Date

cnr 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X 9489,
Polokwane, 0700

Tel:015 290 7600/ 7702 Fax 086 218 0560

APPENDIX D: UNIVERSITY HIGHER DEGREE – RESEARCH ETHICS

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

NAME OF
RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR. • Ms
EV Makgakga
STUDENT NO:
1602350

PROJECT TITLE: Grade 6 Teachers' Perceptions towards textese in English First Additional Language in Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NO: SEDU/21/CSEM/04/2303

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr SK Muthambi	University of Venda	Supervisor
Dr SJM Kaheru	University of Venda	Co - Supervisor
Ms EV Makgakga	University of Venda	Investigator Student

Type: Masters Research

Risk: Straightforward research without ethical problems (Category 1)
Approval Period: March 2021 — March 2023

The Research Ethics Social Sciences Committee (RESSC) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

General Conditions

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
- Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
 - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the REC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made to the REC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the REC retains the right to:

Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project,

- To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process. withdraw or postpone approval if:
- Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
 - It becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
- The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately, - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary

ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Date Considered: February 2021

PRIVATE BAG XSOSO, THOHoyANDOU, 0950, LIMPOPO PROVINCE), SOUTH
AFRICA TELEPHONE (015) 962 8504.8313 FAX (015) 962 9060
"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive university"

Name of the RESSC Chairperson of the Committee: Prof Takalani Mashau

Signature:





APPENDIX E: EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

Editing and Proof Reading Report April 2022

This letter serves to confirm that I, Trenance Khoza, have proofread and edited a Dissertation for a Master of Educational Management Degree titled: **Grade 6 Teachers' Perceptions Towards Textese in English Second Language in Vhembe East District Limpopo Province by Elelwani Veronica Makgakga**

I carefully read through the proposal, focusing on proofreading and editorial issues. The recommended suggestions are clearly highlighted in red ink and can either be accepted or rejected using the Microsoft Word Track Changes System.

Yours Sincerely

Trenance Khoza (PhD Eng)

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