



Effects of Social Media on Students' Writing: The Case Study of Mount Mary College of Education

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Abstract

The study aimed to determine the impact of social media language (also known as net language) on the formal writing skills of Mount Mary College of Education students. This study involved a total of 150 students, 60 of whom were males and 90 of whom were females, who were studying English language and French at the time of the study. The study employed a phenomenological research design, and a purposive sample technique was used to choose the thirty (30) participants that took part in it. The responses were mark quiz papers and group tasks, and the results were analysed. The study concluded that when people write individually, social media does have an impact on their formal writing. Students who work in groups, on the other hand, are not affected by this. Another finding of the survey was that respondents employ a wide range of social media lingo, including clipping, abbreviation, alphanumeric homophony, vowel deletion, grapheme, and other slang terms, among other things. According to the results of the survey, most people type in social media or internet language when they communicate on social media to make it easier for them to communicate.

Keywords social media, formal writing, Internet Language, WhatsApp, Mount Mary College

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century world is thrilled about advances in communication technology. A new generation of social networking sites emerged with the advent of the internet in the 1990s, according to Kolan and Dzandza (2018). The internet's proliferation has made it the best medium for communication, with two-thirds (2/3) of the internet's population using social networking sites to connect. These sites are collectively known as "social media" (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Six Degrees.com, launched in 1997, was the first social network. Then came Asian Avenue, Black Avenue, Blackplanet, MiGente, Ryze.com, and Friendster between 1998 and 2001. (Cohen, 2003). Between 2003 and 2011, new social media platforms emerged. Examples include Facebook (2004), Twitter (2006), Whatsapp (2007), and Instagram (2007). Interestingly, all these websites were created in America. They soon spread over the world, even to Ghana.



It is undeniable that social media plays an important role in many people's lives by bringing people together. A new trend is adopted and imitated by the younger generation (students). Young people nowadays are inspired by what others do on social media and what they enjoy doing. Younger generations like observing, imitating, and learning from their elders' actions. Bandura (1997) states that people learn via watching, imitating, and modelling. It is clear that most people connect on social media platforms through writing, and students commonly copy their friends' or peers' netspeak vocabulary. A single post now reaches millions.

People nowadays easily connect via social media, and most prefer written communication. The writing styles of today's youth and pupils are constantly evolving. They use social media to communicate in short bursts, affecting their academic writing. Besides writing, it affects youngsters' relationships with friends and family.

Social technologies' simplicity, utility, and flexibility have made adoption relatively easy. Some academics claim that writing affects conventional writing, spelling, and grammar (Siraj & Ullah, 2007). A study by the Jackson City Patriot and Jamie Perkins found that social networking does not encourage good grammar. For example, Twitter allows users to post 140-character tweets, which often result in run-on statements and fragments. Perkins (2014) contends that limiting character count reduces attention span when writing, affecting daily phrases. This leads to poor word choice. Students regularly use abbreviations to condense material, which they use in essays, quizzes, assignments, and even tests. Students everywhere, notably at Mount Mary College of Education, are writing in shorter formats. The internet and devices that can connect to the internet, like cellphones, laptops, desktop computers, and iPads, give people access to social networking networks.

According to the NCA, Ghana was one of the first countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to connect to the internet in August 1995. This link is the product of collaboration between Network Computer System, Pipex International, Ghana Telecom, and British Telecom (NCA, 2008). In 2010, 5% of Ghana's population was online. A year later, it was 10%. A million Ghanaians used the web in 2009. (Graphic.com.gh). Ghanaians use the internet in large numbers, according to a 2017 annual report by major digital companies, including We Are Social and Hoot Suite. According to Internet Live Stats by the ITU, World Bank, and UN Population Division (2016), the number of internet users in Ghana has increased dramatically since 1995, when the internet was introduced.

The growing dimensions of the use of social media by students cannot be underestimated (Kolan & Dzandza, 2018). Students from the basic schools, second cycle and tertiary levels have been using social media for different purposes. This clearly indicates that social media is causing harm to students. Some scholars have found that social media sites have negative influence on the writing of students. Amofa-Serwaah and Dadzie (2015) researched on social media in basic schools. Mahama (2016) also conducted research on the use of social media among Senior High Schools. This study is essential to fill the gap that has been created in Colleges of Education. Students are using shorthand or netspeak in their quizzes, assignments, examinations, and it is affecting their spellings and their academic



performance. It is imperative for the student teachers to have good written communication devoid of errors and netspeak.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Positive Effects of social media on Students'

Research conducted by Wheeler (2007), Rifkin, Longnecker, Leach, and Ortia (2009) indicated four (4) major advantages that social media brings to students. These include: enhancing relationships, improving learning motivation, offering personalised course material, and developing collaborative abilities. Social media enhances relationships because, through social media, a lot of former schoolmates have reunited. A lot of people nowadays communicate with their friends every now and then on Facebook, whatsapp, and viber, among others. Social media in recent times has improved learning motivation since most students nowadays learn using social media. Students, through social media in recent times, exchange course materials. Most of these students download materials on the internet and send them to their friends.

Researchers have found positive outcomes in online community engagement among students. Tienne (2000, p.89) proved that "written communication in cyberspace enables students to take part in discussions at a time convenient to them and articulate their ideas in more carefully, thorough, and structured ways." Deng and Tavares (2013) also posit that "Web-based discussions among students can contribute to the students' reflective ability and critical thinking skills." The authors added that with relative face-to-face communication, "students are more willing to voice their views (agreements or disagreements) and more attuned to others' opinions in online discussions.

Appeanti and Danso (2014) showed that students think that it is more fun for their teachers to use social media. The authors also note that children think their academic performance would be better if they could contact their colleagues and teachers on social media. This gives an indication that most students see social media as helpful if they use it to collaborate with their friends and teachers.

Ito et al. (2009) showed that students use social media for positive activities such as going into interest-driven communities and participating in various activities. Ahn (2011, p.237) adds that "Social Media provides a platform for youth or students to participate in communities that help them to learn and also practise skills within a particular knowledge area." Similar research by Fishman et al. (2005) also indicated that students produce a great volume of writing through various social tools such as blogs, emails, and other social media tools such as blogs, e-mails, and other social media environments. This shows that through social media, students can carry a task and taking initiatives by themselves. Social media offers students the opportunity to communicate, get in touch, access information, research, and chat (Abdulahi et al., 2014, Ahn, 2011).

Of the reviewed literature on the positive effects of social media on students, Appeanti and Danso's study was the only study identified from Ghana. However, it was conducted at the university level, so it is likely that this work, which was carried out at the college level, may generate new outcomes.



Social Media's Negative Impact on Students

Several studies and research have indicated that social media harms students. They observed a negative correlation between social media and student academic achievement. The study found that social media users had worse GPAs than non-users. According to Malaney (2005), the internet and social media networks have a negative impact on pupils' grades. According to Banquil et al. (2009), students' grades have been declining due to their use of social media. These studies show that social media has an academic impact on kids.

Amofah-Serwaa and Dadzie (2015) studied the impact of social media on some elementary school students. They found that all participants knew about social media and utilised it to interact with friends. Concerning the effects on kids, 23.3% reported they couldn't concentrate. The survey found that most students utilised jargon or Pidgin English, and that their parents admitted their children were distracted by social media. According to Amofa-Serwaa and Dadzie's research, most students are distracted by social media.

Mingle and Adams (2015) examined the impact of social media on academic achievement in some chosen senior high schools (St. Johns S.H.S, Action S.H.S, Tema S.H.S, and Ideal College). The study found that the majority of students (57.4%) from these institutions were negatively impacted by their peers' use of English. Most students said it was difficult to concentrate on studies when they could play games and speak with friends.

Yeboah and Ewur (2014) studied the impact of WhatsApp usage on students' performance in Ghanaian higher institutions. Excessive use of social media, such as WhatsApp, diverts students' attention away from their studies and impairs their ability to concentrate in class.

Several students in Oman stated that their linguistic patterns had changed due to regular communication on their social networks, according to Mehmood and Taswir (2013). This highlights how damaging social media can be to a student's ability to communicate.

According to Stollak et al. (2011), using social media can harm students' GPA. According to the study's questionnaire, 63 percent of pupils receive good grades because they spend less time online. Stollak et al. Thus, kids who spend more time on social media appear to score lower.

Studies by Choney (2010), Miguel (2009), and Enriquez (2010) found that students' use of social media sites negatively impacted their academic performance. Miguel (2009) examined the link between Facebook time and student academic achievement. Overall, "more Facebook time equals slightly poorer grades." Facebook users had a GPA of 3.0–3.5, whereas non-Facebook users had a GPA of 3.0–4.0. The average Facebook user studies 1–5 hours each week, while non-Facebook users study 11–15 hours. Enriquez (2010) found that students who multitask between social networking sites and assignments get 20% poorer grades than students who don't. According to Choney (2010), a Facebook user has an average GPA of 3.06, while non-users have an average GPA of 3.82. This reveals that students' usage of Facebook and other social media has a negative impact on their grades. Englander et al. (2010) summarise the debate on the negative effects of social media by finding that they are more significant than its benefits.



A 2009 Ohio Dominican University study indicated that students who use social media have lower GPAs than those who do not. They blamed Facebook for the current generation's demise. Finally, Khan (2009) claims that social media users often perform poorly academically. This research shows that social media might be harmful to students.

Davies and Cranson (2008) identified certain hazards linked with social networking, including identity theft, phoney contacts, sexual abuse or harassment, and inappropriate advertising. According to O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011), these include cyberbullying, online harassment, privacy problems, and identity theft, among others. Students from senior high schools and universities in Ghana generally do this.

When comparing the positive and negative consequences of social media, the negative effects tend to outnumber the positive. Thus, social media may be a good servant but a horrible master.

Negative Effects of social media on Students' Writing

The impact of texting on writing, spelling, and grammar is being debated (Siraj and Ullah, 2007). Jovanovix (2013) investigated netspeak in the ESL classroom. The study found many teachers were aware of netspeak in the ESL classroom. In addition to using NetSpeak in the classroom, most students utilised NetSpeak in their academic work, changing their writing skills.

According to Hussein and Lingwood (2012), netspeak has three implications for the written English language. First, netspeak is a relaxed approach to normal English. They claim pupils who use netspeak in their writing are illiterate. Second, they say, is the rising use of symbols like ellipses, abbreviations without capital letters, and punctuation in student writing, which negatively impacts pupils intellectually. Finally, they believe that students' off-line writing incorporates the new netspeak lexicon.

Internet slang and other linguistic aberrations from English are generally frowned upon in exam conditions. They do so by severely penalising pupils who utilise net language in their formal work, including reducing their grades (Awoyemi 2013, Ugot 2010, Oluga and Babalola 2013).

Students who frequently use netspeak in online writing prefer to use it in classroom writing as well. (55) O'Connor Netspeak also breaks English grammar norms regarding capitalization, punctuation, and sentence construction. Because many children are used to spelling words incorrectly and using abbreviated forms of words on social media, learning the correct orthography can be difficult.

According to Ishmael Arhin's post, most students failed the 2014 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BEC) and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in Ghana due to social media. The majority of pupils who failed both English language exams utilised abbreviations such as "bcus" for because, "u" for you, "dat" for that, "der" for there, etc. Students' writing can be influenced by social media.

Mingle and Adams (2015) studied the consequences of social media addiction on various Ghanaian high schools. The majority of these students (57.4%) were negatively influenced in their use of English during peer conversation. In their tests, they were not



paying attention to grammar and spelling due to the regular use of shorthand on social media. As a result, most of them failed their English language exams.

In an interview with the Ghanaian Chronicle, the Kumasi Polytechnic Teachers Association (POTAG) chairman appealed to the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to address the rising use of social media. The Chairman bemoaned the use of shortened words in exams. The circumstances had impacted the children's spelling, he said. Research by Horton, Alloway, and Dawson (2012) found that using social media had an impact on some students' spelling. It turns out that texting and writing on social media hurts kids. Wood et al. (2014) found this out.

Mehmood and Taswir (2013) found that students' use of social media influences their writing. The study found that most respondents (323/62) had poor grammar and spelling as a result of using social media. They were addicted to shorthand (343, 48.9%) and shorthand writing (287, 40.9%).

Social media, say Harris and Dilts (2014), is transforming student writing. They found that most of the mistakes teachers find in students' papers aren't just limited to a few students, but happen all the time in most of them.

American researchers, J Patriot and Perkins (2013) found that social networking sites do not promote correct language and writing. Twitter, for example, only allows 140-character messages, resulting in run-ons and fragments. Perkins feels the small character count is harming reading and writing attention spans and the capacity to create coherent sentences. Poor word choice results. Students tend to use acronyms and online lingo to make messages short. As a result, some pupils use this style in formal writing.

The usage of shorthand appears to be impacting students both in Ghana and abroad. These writing styles, or shorthand, affect students' spelling, grammar, and other skills.

Except for Mingle and Adams and Arhin's pieces, most research on the harmful effects of social media on students' writing has not been done in Ghana. Arhins' paper was not based on any empirical research. The Mingle and Adams studies were done in high school, whereas this study was done in the College of Education.

To summarise, some experts have found that netspeak has a negative impact on students' writing skills and that it is a threat to Standard English.

Positive Effects of Social Media on Students' Writing

The impact of netspeak on student writing is hotly debated. Crystal, Baron, Russell, and other people say that social media doesn't influence student writing.

Crystal (2008) claims that netspeak improves students' writing rather than harms it. Crystal emphasises that pupils improve their writing skills by writing more. Crystal argued against netspeak's harmful influence on pupils' writing. He had six reasons for arguing.

His first explanation was that roughly 10% of pupils use netspeak when writing on social media. He claims that approximately 90% of the terms are not shortened or written correctly, so this should not be a major concern.



Second, Crystal asserts that the use of netspeak is not new to the world. He thinks netspeak has been around for a long time and hasn't ruined writing. So netspeak does not threaten language use.

Third, both children and adults use net language. So Crystal was saying that netspeak isn't only for students; it's for everyone.

Crystal asserts that pupils rarely use abbreviations or net language in homework or assignments. He thinks researchers who make such claims do so based on assumptions rather than facts. Crystal's claim that some students use netspeak in their schoolwork isn't entirely true, though. Several researchers have shown that some students use netspeak in their work.

Crystal's sixth explanation was that people might have known how to spell it before they could use social media. Because social media users are literate and can spell words, using abbreviations does not mean they do not know the spelling of a term. So, social media messaging cannot cause poor spelling.

Finally, Crystal argues that texting allows people to read and write in English. Crystal believes that the more individuals text, the more they learn English.

Russell is one of the researchers who believes netspeak has little impact on students' work. According to Russell (2010), Netspeak is a new language. He thinks students should be enabled to learn basic English. Only after learning the basics will students be able to discern between grammatical and non-grammatical uses of the language. According to Russell, texting can impact students' grasp of English grammar. This is an erroneous conclusion because learning a new language does not affect students' ability to use English grammar.

Baron (2011) claims that using netspeak reflects ingenuity. She feels that using letters, punctuation, and numerals creatively promotes children's phonetic knowledge. Texting styles vary from individual to individual. Messages utilise varied patterns and styles depending on their communication role.

On the role of social media technologies in writing, Clark (2009) surveyed 3,001 British primary and secondary school children (Wen and Huachuan, 2015). Writing a blog or having a profile on a social networking site was associated with greater enjoyment of writing in general, greater confidence in writing, and greater creativity in producing texts. This assumes that kids gain confidence in developing writing skills and creativity through social media.

According to Crystal (2008), it has been virtually completely overlooked. The capacity of children to write is not harmed by texting or writing on social media. It helps pupils write better. Recent research (from Coventry University) found significant positive relationships between writing (text) use and success in standard English. The more abbreviations they use, the better their vocabulary scores. The children who were better at spelling and writing used texting the most, and the younger they got their first phone, the better.

Texting on social media can help struggling readers and spellers who avoid books (Crystal, 2008). To write and experiment with abbreviated forms, one must first understand how a language's sounds are related to its letters. Alternative spellings must be known. If one is conscious that one's texting behaviour is unique, one must know that abbreviations



like "LoL" (Laughing out Loud) and "brb" ("be right back") are One must have established a sense of SMS language communication. Good visual memory and motor abilities are required.

Baron (2008) contends that pupils' writing is unaffected by social media messaging. Baron cites a recent British Journal of Developmental Psychology study that revealed routinely texted pupils had a broader vocabulary, which may have benefited their reading development. According to Baron (2008), if kids can tell formal from informal language, netspeak has little effect on their writing.

Most research concludes that texting does not jeopardise standard English learning. Despite occasionally incorporating netspeak techniques into "formal" writing (e.g., schoolwork), experts say message senders understand that language is context-specific (Durscheid 2002; Chiluwa 2008). They do not consider computer-mediated communication to be writing (Lenhart, 2007).

In summary, Crystal, Baron, and Russell's thesis that netspeak is not a threat to the English language looks convincing. It could be because they interviewed native speakers of the language in the UK and the US. That's why netspeak doesn't affect student writing, but it might affect Ghanaian students who speak English as a second language.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study was phenomenological in nature. The participants in this study included one hundred and fifty (150) level one hundred pupils. This group consisted of sixty (60) men and ninety (90) women that were active on social media platforms. All of the participants are language students, both in French and in English. These participants were chosen because the researcher teaches them, and as a result, they have access to information through their smartphones, making it simple to conduct interviews with them. The purposive sample technique was employed to pick the thirty (30) participants from among French and English language students. The reason for this is that all the people who took part in the study were on social media, so the people who took part were chosen for the study specifically.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

What are the effects of the trends of social media writing on students?

This question is aimed at exploring whether the trends of writings identified earlier in research question one such as graphemes, vowel deletion, alphanumeric homophony among others affect students formal writing such as quizzes and assignments.

When were students asked the question "*Do you use shorthand or abbreviation when chatting or typing on social media?*" most of the students responded in the affirmative but went ahead to say that the abbreviations and shorthand are used based on formality. The respondents affirmed that they use abbreviations and shorthand when they are chatting with their friends, but they do not use shorthand and abbreviations when they are chatting with older people or people in authority. Some of the responses from the respondents include the following:



“I use shorthand or the abbreviated words because the people you are chatting with already know the meaning of the shorthand but in terms of exams for instance, if I write “4” instead of “for” the examiner might not understand”. Another respondent also indicated that “I use shorthand or abbreviation for my friends but elderly people I type the right words for them, for example, teachers, pastors, I type the correct words but for friends I use the shorthand”. One respondent also reiterated that “I use the shorthand or abbreviated one for my friends, but I use the proper one (formal writing) for elderly people. So, when it comes to examination I do not make such mistakes because the typing is like different from the writing. Immediately I go there all that is written on the paper are the proper ones”.

One of the respondents also said, *“When I am writing, I am fully aware of the formalities for example during examination I know I am writing for marks so I write with care and it is for an elderly person that person may not understand the shorthand that I have used and even if that person knows it, it is not the right thing to do”.*

The responses from the respondents agree with Baron (2008) study which showed that when students can distinguish between formal and informal language, SMS language does not affect their writing. Baron (2011) concluded that teenagers and students in general seem to be able to distinguish between formal and informal writing and that netspeak or internet language seemingly does not influence teenagers’ literacy. Baron in his study made a proposition that most students are always conscious of their writing. He averred that student could distinguish between formal and informal writing. According to Baron, students know when to use internet language such as abbreviations and shorthand. With this study, when the respondents were interviewed on whether they use internet language or shorthand, they did admit that they use it but they posited that they know when to use those abbreviations and shorthand. In their view, they use the abbreviations and the shorthand when they are chatting on social media with their friends and peers, but then, when the people involved in the conversation are elderly people or in formal situations, they do not use the internet language (netspeak), abbreviation or shorthand. So the researcher collated and compared screenshot messages of respondents’ conversation on whatsapp, quiz papers in English literature and HIV AIDS subjects as well as respondents’ group assignment papers to ascertain if students writing on social media affected their writing.



The following are samples of respondents' quizzes and assignments.

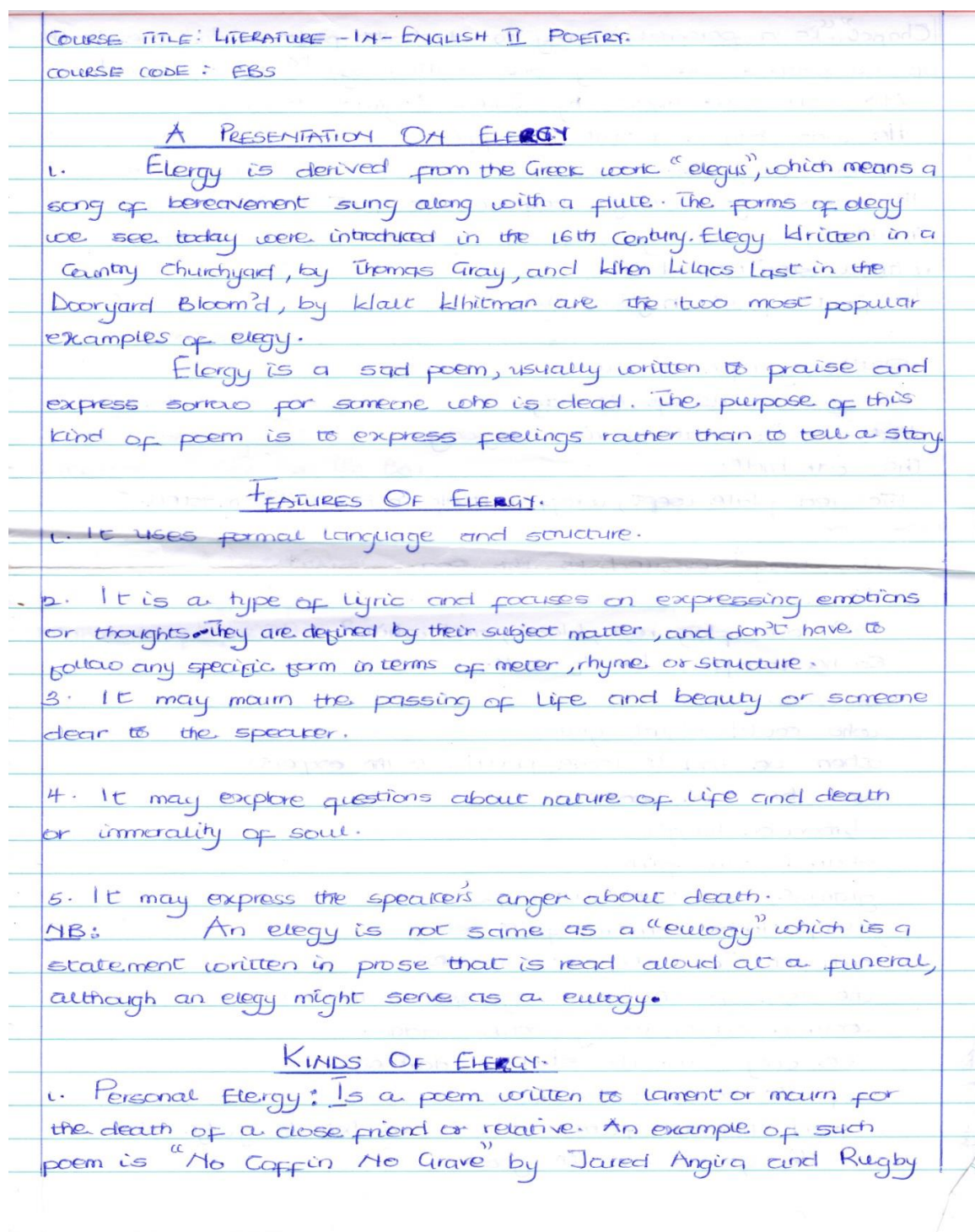


Figure 1: A document showing a sample of respondents' group assignment

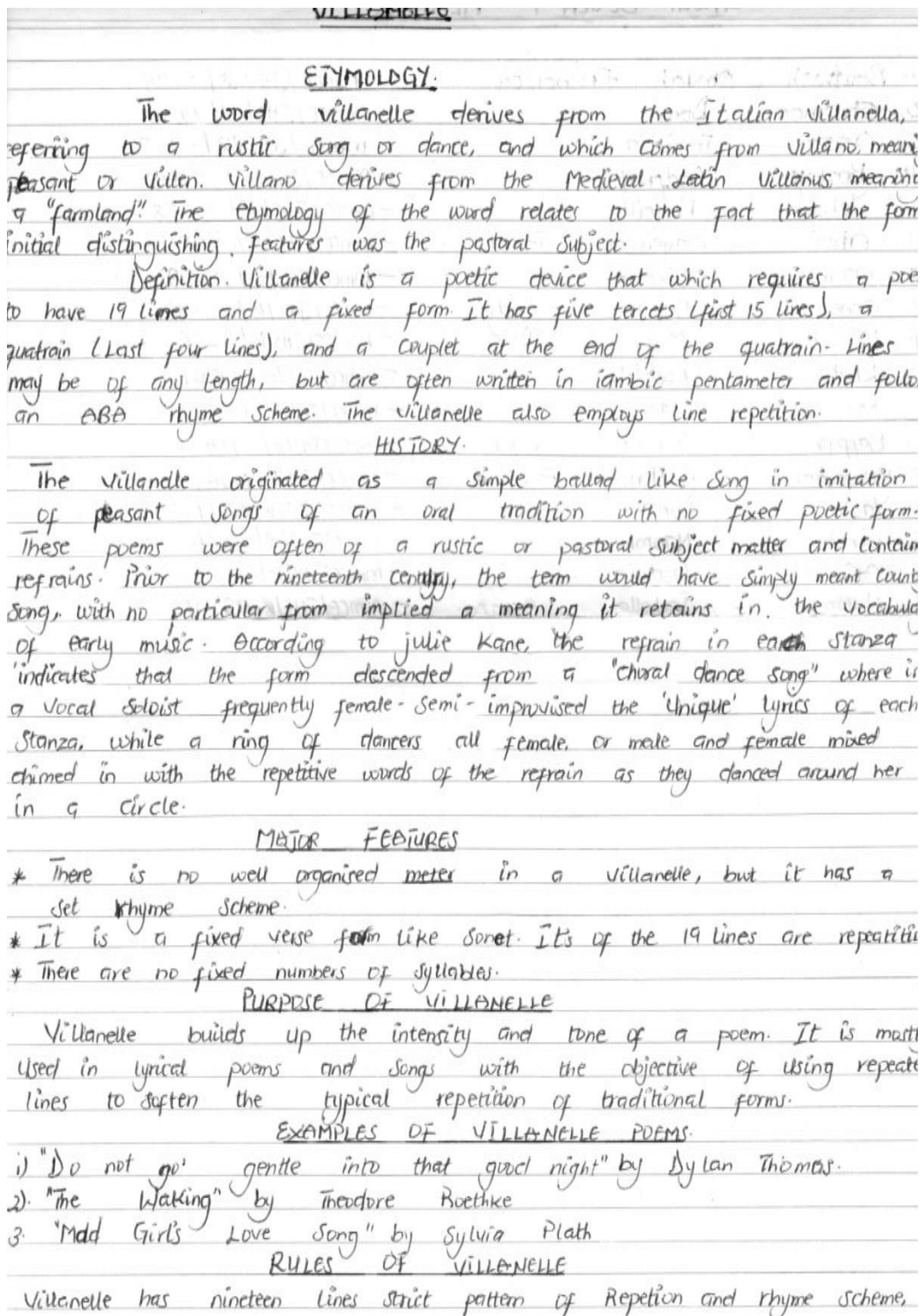


Figure 2: A document showing respondents group assignment

Looking closely at the group assignments in figure 1 and 2 closely, it is observed that the students did not use netspeak. This became possible because they collaborated or came together to do the assignment.



Collaborative learning is defined as “a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together” (Dillenbourg 1999, p. 113). This definition means that in collaborative learning the participants must be more than one who must come together to share ideas. Haring-Smith (1994) also averred that collaborative writing involves more than one person who contributes to the creation of a text so that “sharing responsibility” becomes essential. With this study, the Respondents were given an assignment in literature- in-English for them to work in groups to ascertain whether the respondents use shorthand or abbreviations in the assignments or otherwise. When their documents or assignments were carefully analysed there were no traces of those abbreviations or shorthand (refer to figure 1 and 2). This confirms Blau and Caspi’s (2008) study which indicated that when students produce a document that was written collaboratively the document might have higher quality than a document written alone. When the group assignments were analysed, it was realized that there were no traces of shorthand or abbreviation. This was because all the respondents participated and contributed to produce the document. This means that collaborative revisions can improve language defects such as vocabulary which include the use of abbreviations and shorthand, organization, and content (Blau and Caspi, 2008).

In this contemporary world, one outcome of the students’ learning process is the ability to engage in active learning as a member of a group (Dillenbourg, 1999; Baker, 2013). Dillenbourg and Baker were of the view that peer learning is the solution to effecting learning in modern times. During peer-support, students receive support or benefit from each other (Ertmer et al., 2014). Peer-support promotes students learning and has been found beneficial for the learning process (Christiansen, 2009). Through peer support, students may help each other by providing constructive comments on an assignment.

During peer review of students work, both the person doing the review and the person whose work is being reviewed all attain some benefits. Sims (1989) had said that the student whose work is reviewed may benefit from external perspective on ways in which their work may be improved, thus stimulating their thinking. On the part of the student doing the review, that person also benefit because of having to process and analyse the work of a peer (Wessa and De Rycker, 2010) and the reviewer may also get ideas for improving their own work (Sims,1989).

Figures 3 to 10 are samples of respondents’ quiz papers in both literature-in-English and HIV/AIDS. Seven respondents quiz papers in both subjects (Literature-in-English and HIV/AIDS) were sampled and compared. Figures 6 and 7 refer to the same respondent, the same as figures 8 and 9 in that order. For more samples of students’ quiz papers that were compared, refer to Appendix B.



Name: P

Index number: 0233

1. What does the term "Window Period" of HIV infection explain?
Window period: ^{period} refer is the point of infection and when the body detected the present of the virus but the antibodies are not enough to be detected
2. What is vertical transmission in HIV/AIDS
Vertical transmission in HIV/AIDS is mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS
3. State all the major signs of HIV/AIDS
Persistent fever
Pers. diarrhoea more than 1 month
Loss of weight abt 10%
4. Differentiate between sexual harassment and sexual abuse.
Sexual harassment is ~~un~~ sexual advancement to some without the person's consent or which make the person feel victimized while sexual abuse is a forceful sexual intercourse with some
5. Give three theories of HIV/AIDS
The Conspiracy Theory
The Hunter's Theory
The Colonialism

Figure 3: A document showing a respondent's quiz paper in HIV/AIDS

- For items 1 to 9, write appropriate responses in the spaces provided.
1. In two sentences, state the most striking difference between Sam and Chris in *Anthills of the Savanna*. [2 marks]
Sam is a powerful, an autocratic leader while Chris is not.
Sam is greedy and mean while Chris is selfless.
 2. What benefit is derived from the narrative technique(s) the writer employs in *Anthills of the Savanna*? [2 marks]
It gives us vivid picture on what the writer wants to put across.
 3. a. Which character could be described as "the protector of the future"? [1 mark]
Them
 - b. Give a reason to justify your answer for question 3a. [2 marks]
He seeks the good of the ppl.
- Page 1 of 2

Figure 4: A document showing a respondent's literature in English quiz paper



Name:

Index number: mmce/hs/18/0169

1. What does the term "Window Period" of HIV infection explain?
Window period is the period whereby an ~~individual~~ individual is infected by the HIV/AIDS disease but does not show any sign or symptoms. (2)
2. What is vertical transmission in HIV/AIDS
It's the mother-child transmission. (2)
3. State all the major signs of HIV/AIDS
Persistent fever more than one month.
Persistent diarrhoea more than one month.
Loss of weight (2)
4. Differentiate between sexual harassment and sexual abuse.
Sexual harassment is when a young girl is threatened by someone's sexual advances but sexual abuse is when a young girl is abused by a persisten having of sex by an elder person she knows. (2)
5. Give three theories of HIV/AIDS
Hunters theory
Colonialism theory
Conspiracy theory (2)

Figure 5: A document showing a respondent's quiz paper in HIV/AIDS



JULY 2019
EBS 158
PROSE FICTION
30 MINUTES

Candidate's Index Number
M NICE 10711/18/1969
Signature:

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION
FOUR-YEAR BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (B. ED)
FIRST YEAR, SECOND SEMESTER QUIZ II, JULY 2019

JULY 2, 2019

PROSE FICTION

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Answer ALL the questions.
[20 Marks]

For items 1 to 9, write appropriate responses in the spaces provided.

1. In two sentences, state the most striking difference between Sam and Chris in *Anthills of the Savanna*. [2 marks]

Sam is irresponsible
Chris is self-less

2. What benefit is derived from the narrative technique(s) the writer employs in *Anthills of the Savanna*? [2 marks]

It helps the writer to reader to understand very well.

3. a. Which character could be described as "the protector of the future"? [1 mark]

I Fem

- b. Give a reason to justify your answer for question 3a. [2 marks]

Always seek views of his ppl.

2 1/2
1 1/2

Page 1 of 2

Figure 6: A document showing a respondent's literature in English quiz



1. What does the term "Window Period" of HIV infection explain?

It is the Period between point of infection and the body's detection of the virus (2)

2. What is vertical transmission in HIV/AIDS

It is transferring the virus vertically (2)

3. State all the major signs of HIV/AIDS

i. Diorexia for one month
ii. Persistence fever for one month or more
iii. rapid body weight loss more than 10% (2)

4. Differentiate between sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

Sexual harassment includes remarks, physical gestures, touches of the body while sexual abuse done by somebody usually done by somebody known by the victim (1)

5. Give three theories of HIV/AIDS

i. hunter theory (2)
ii. Contaminated needle theory
iii. Colonialism theory (2)

Figure 7: A sample of a respondent's quiz paper in HIV/AIDS



1. In two sentences, state the most striking difference between Sam and Chris in *Anthills of the Savanna*. [2 marks]

Sam was a dictator while Chris was democratic

02

2. What benefit is derived from the narrative technique(s) the writer employs in *Anthills of the Savanna*? [2 marks]

first and Sekend Person

2(1/2) 1 1/2

3. a. Which character could be described as "the protector of the future"? [1 mark]

Ikem

01

- b. Give a reason to justify your answer for question 3a. [2 marks]

He save a community by his publication in the "gazette" newspaper.

2(1/2) 1 1/2

Figure 8: A document showing a respondent's quiz paper in Literature in English



1. What does the term "Window.Period" of HIV infection explain?

Window period is the second stage of infection where the body doesn't show sign of the infection but infect others. (2)

2. What is vertical transmission in HIV/AIDS

Mother - to - child transmission of HIV/AIDS (2)

3. State all the major signs of HIV/AIDS

- (i) Dementia More than one week.
- (ii) Continuous fever for more than one month
- (iii) Body weight loss 10% (2)

4. Differentiate between sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

5. Give three theories of HIV/AIDS

- (i) hunter theory
- (ii) conspiracy theory (2)

Figure 9: A document showing a respondent's quiz paper in HIV/AIDS



1. In two sentences, state the most striking difference between Sam and Chris in *Anthills of the Savanna*. [2 marks]
 Sam is autocratic leader while Chris was democratic

2. What benefit is derived from the narrative technique(s) the writer employs in *Anthills of the Savanna*? [2 marks]
 The writer employed all the narrative techniques that is both the first person and the third person narrative to make the story real.

3. a. Which character could be described as "the protector of the future"? [1 mark]
 Sam

- b. Give a reason to justify your answer for question 3a. [2 marks]
 He was intelligent.

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Figure 10: A sample of a respondent's quiz paper in Literature in English

From the study of the documents, it was revealed that participants trend of writing on social media affected their writings. From the samples, the respondents produced various trends of writing in their quizzes.

In figure 6, the following netspeak were produced; *btw*, *ē*, *pers*, *1month*, *sml*, *advancem't*. In figure 7, *ppl* was produced. Figure 8 had *ē*, *wen*. Figure 9 had *ē*, *ppl*. In figure 10, the respondent produce *dictesion*, *viktim*, . In figure 11, *sekend* was produced. In 12, *bodi*, *bat*, *daaria*, *dan*, *feva*, *teori* and *consperasi*. In figure 13, *de* and *techniks* were produced in the respondent's quiz paper. In appendix B also contained the following



netspeak. *Thru, 10%, 1st, 2nd, gov't, blad and 1, writa, kud, everybodi, lusing, and mani.* The trends identified in respondents' quizzes include alphanumeric homophony, shortening or contraction in both the literature-in- English and HIV/AIDS quiz papers.

Table 1: A tabulation of social media words and their English equivalents used by the respondents in their HIV/AIDS and Literature in English quiz papers

Netspeak	English Words	Texting process/trend
Btw	Between	shortening/reducing
Pers	Persistence	shortening/reducing
Advancem't	Advancement	shortening/reducing
Some 1	Someone	alphanumeric
1 month	one month	alpha numeric /shortening
Pple	People	shortening/ reducing
ē/de	The	shortening/reducing
wen	When	shortening/reducing
persisten	Persistence	shortening/reducing
dictesion	Detection	graphone
viktim	Victim	graphone
thiorry/teory	Theory	graphone
sekend	Second	graphone
bodi	Body	graphone
bat	But	graphone
daaria	Diarrhoea	graphone
dan	Than	graphone
feva	Fever	graphone
consperasi	Conspiracy	graphone
techniks	Techniques	graphone
Thru	Through	shortening/ reducing
10%	ten percent	shortening/ reducing
Hanters	hunter's	graphone
1 st	First	shortening /reducing
2 nd	Second	shortening/ reducing
Gov't	Government	shortening/ reducing
Blad	Blood	graphone
1	One	shortening/ reducing
Writa	Writer	graphone
Kud	Could	shortening
Everybodi	Everybody	Graphone
Lusing	Losing	Graphone
Mani	Money	Graphone

As shown above, some words in the respondents' quizzes have been shortened, alphanumeric homophonized, or graphoned. The most common texting processes utilised by



respondents in their surveys were shortening and graphoning. These tendencies align with the first research question, which demonstrated that students' major texting processes on social media are graphone and shortening. According to Flower and Hayes (1981), writing is a goal-driven activity, and every piece should be understandable to the reader, in this case, the instructor. However, evaluating student tests' language proves different.

The data 3–10 show that the HIV/AIDS question in the English quiz reflected social media language more than literature. The reason is that respondents are aware that using social media lingo in subjects other than English will not result in a penalty. In exams, most schools combat netspeak and all linguistic departures from the English language. These schools, through their teachers, severely penalise students (Awoyemi, 2013; Ugot, 2010; Ologa & Babalola, 2013). The researchers claim that students in English language classes are penalised for using social media terminology, but not in non-English classes. That's why HIV/AIDS has more netlanguage than English literature. This tendency echoes worries expressed by Niedzielski and Preston (1999) and Cameron (1995) about challenges to standard variety and traditional communication patterns, attributed to youth and modern technologies. When writing officially, students may blur the distinctions between academic English and internet slang. This causes students to make many spelling and grammatical errors in their assignments and tests, making it difficult for professors to understand them.

Examiners emphasised the shorthand but did not subtract any points from the respondents' HIV/AIDS questions. Examiners who do not deduct marks for misspellings and shorthand suggest they mark only content and not response faults. According to Crystal (2008), texting has brought a new dimension to language use, although its long-term impact is modest. It is not a tragedy and will not impair linguistic norms. Crystal thinks shorthand and abbreviations have minimal impact on kids' writing. Baron (2008) agrees with Crystal that netspeak has little impact on pupils' work. Baron claims netlanguage is beneficial to students' vocabulary and reading skills. Thurlow (2011) asserts that young people's orthographic and typographic choices are socio-linguistically and communicatively comprehensible. In this case, Thurlow is implying that one can read and understand social media jargon. According to O'Connor (2005), netspeak violates conventional English usage in capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure. According to O'Connor, netspeak influences all areas of the English language, including spelling.

The examiners penalised respondents who utilised shorthand or had grammatical errors because they believed the faults or social media terminology employed were improper or distorted the meaning of the respondent's answers. The shorthand utilised in the respondent's literature-in-English quiz was limited due to student penalties. According to Oluga and Babalola (2013), it is difficult for texters to get the correct orthography of words because they are used to spelling words incorrectly and using abbreviated forms of words in text messaging. They claim that most schools in Nigeria prohibit the use of SMS and other non-English languages in examinations. They achieve this in part by penalising such use, notably by reducing marks. According to O'Connor (2005), Netspeak breaks conventional English grammar rules in capitalization, punctuation, and sentence construction. Due to misuse, classroom written work is not always up to formal English standards.



According to Starowicz (2007), kids don't notice they're using Netspeak when writing on social media since they're more concerned about getting the idea across than spelling, so it'll be used in the classroom as well. In fact, students are frequently reminded throughout exams of the importance of good language usage for successful communication and grammatical construction of replies. In this regard, improper language usage is frequently penalised, most notably by lower grades. Despite these linguistic and exam requirements, students frequently breach language standards, sometimes due to heavy use of communication technologies, particularly social media jargon (Awoyemi 2013, Ugot 2010, Oluga and Babalola 2013). Even though there were indications of social media jargon in the student quizzes, the responders had misspelt terms. The respondent typed "while" instead of "meanwhile" in Figure 3, which is a word separation error.

CLOSING

Conclusion

This study concludes that students adopt different trends of writing on social media platforms and these trends are clear departure from the conventional spelling in English language. This research work concludes that the use of social media language has both negative and positive impacts on the writings of students. The impact is positive when students work in groups. However, the impact is negative when respondents write individually.

Recommendation

The following are recommended based on the findings of this study which may be useful to parents, teachers and students concerning the effects of social media language on students' writing which are stated below:

1. The students should use the mobile phone dictionary while writing on social media so that they can easily communicate with each other through correct spelling. It can be controlled through parents, teachers, and the elderly by encouraging students to use mobile phone dictionary while chatting with each other.
2. Parents, teachers and the elderly should give the awareness of using the proper and correct language to the students while communicating with each other and tell them the differences between non-standard and standard language so they can avoid using these social media language in formal writings such as quizzes and assignments.
3. The teacher should not encourage and appreciate students who use social media language in their writings. In fact, they must take to an immediate action to stop and tell them that it is not correct language to use. Through this, the students will be aware, and it will prevent them from using this non-standard language.

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