

The linguistic features of texting and their utilization in a WhatsApp group of English major students

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the linguistic features present in text messaging among students enrolled in an English literature program. The study specifically examines the WhatsApp group "Elite Students Assemble," utilizing the classification of linguistic features developed by Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2021) and exploring the factors that influence the use of textese. This research employs a qualitative design to analyze linguistic characteristics in digital communication, particularly on WhatsApp. The analysis encompasses morpho-syntactic and phonological features, revealing a complex phenomenon of language adaptation. A detailed examination of WhatsApp texts highlights the occurrence of each linguistic feature, providing insights into the observed patterns and tendencies. The study identifies key influences on texting styles, including informality, speed, efficiency, and creative expression. Interviews with five active participants elucidate the reasons behind their textese choices, demonstrating that individuals adjust their texting styles based on considerations of formality, efficiency, and creative expression. The results illustrate the dynamic nature of language within the WhatsApp context among English literature students. An understanding of these linguistic features and their influences offers valuable insights for educators, researchers, and language enthusiasts, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of contemporary communication practices.

Keywords: texting, textese, linguistic features, morpho-syntactic features, phonological features

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Introduction

Text messaging, or texting, is a popular and modern method of communication that involves sending brief electronic messages between mobile phones and other devices over telephone networks (Dolzich & Dmitrichenkova, 2019; Mathias, 2023). It can be done via mobile phone, personal computers, or smartphones, with various apps like Facebook Messenger, Line, and WhatsApp supporting this feature. Texting has become a major development in mobile communication, offering convenience, ease of use, and real-time interaction without physical presence (Vnućec, 2019). It also allows multitasking, message revision, and maintaining social connections in a non-intrusive manner.

Texting is characterized by unique language features such as abbreviations (e.g., "tmrrw" for "tomorrow"), symbols (e.g., ":)" for a smile), and non-standard spelling (e.g., "gudnite"). This form of language, known as "textese" or "SMS language," involves acronyms, emoticons, and omissions of certain words or punctuation (Drouin & Driver, 2014). While some view textese as harmful to language, others consider it a natural linguistic evolution (Crystal, 2008). Critics like Humphrys (2007) argue that textese negatively impacts literacy and traditional language use, but Crystal (2008) contends that its effects are minimal and that textese features are not new to linguistics.

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Crystal (2008) identified several distinctive features of texting, such as pictograms, logograms, initialisms, omitted letters, nonstandard spellings, and shortenings. Furthermore, Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2021) categorized linguistic features in texting into morphosyntactic, pragma-semantic, phonological, and sociolinguistic (code-mixing) features. In particular, their categorization of the linguistic features of texting is based on their study of texting patterns among Indian ESL speakers, aiming to understand how language is used in the era of electronic and social media. They argue that, despite the complexity, randomness, and variability of texting on social media—reflecting users' individual styles and preferences—there are still specific linguistic patterns that it follows. Due to their comprehensiveness and relevance, the present research adopts the linguistic categories from Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2021).

Texting styles are influenced by several factors, including informality, speed and efficiency, creative expression, and social media culture (Grace & Kemp, 2015). Textese is commonly used in informal settings, such as conversations between friends and family, where a casual tone is more appropriate (Carman, 2018; Kang & Hovy, 2021). Speed and efficiency also play a significant role, as texters often use abbreviations to communicate quickly, especially when on the go (Adhikary, Berger, & Vertanen, 2021). Crystal (2008) and Tat and Azuma (2016) highlights how texters instinctively shorten words to simplify communication. Additionally, textese allows for creative expression and experimentation with language, enabling users to develop unique abbreviations and symbols to personalize their messages (Adhikary et al., 2021; Carman, 2018). Social media and online culture further influence texting styles, with platforms like Twitter and Instagram encouraging abbreviations and shorthand due to character limits (Fadil, 2021; Raghavan &

Lourdhu Mary, 2023; Shen, 2024). Online trends, memes, and slang also shape how people text, contributing to the evolution of digital communication styles.

This study examines the texting behavior and reasons behind its use among English Literature students at a private university in Malang Indonesia, focusing on their WhatsApp group chats. The researchers chose WhatsApp as the object of research because it is one of the most popular message platforms in Indonesia, with 83% of the 171 million internet users are using the platform. The group chat of bilingual English students is analyzed to explore language variation and how texting features like textese are used. Understanding these features provides insights into evolving language habits, which can inform language education strategies and recognize texting as both a communication style and a language variation.

Previous studies have explored different aspects of language use in WhatsApp communication, particularly in Indonesian context. Kholisya (2018) examined the variety of language used in WhatsApp groups by classifying it into aspects of the speaker (dialect and sociolect) and manner (business, casual, intimate). The study found that casual or colloquial language was prevalent, with most language being abbreviated or derived from regional features. Isrofi (2018) investigated language variations in WhatsApp, attributing them to factors like interference, integration, code-mixing, and slang. The study limited its classification to code-mixing and slang words and pointed out inaccuracies when word selections did not match their intended meanings. Prandika (2019) focused on the characteristics of language in WhatsApp groups, identifying five types of abbreviations, such as capital initials, fragments, and vowel or consonant removal. The study also found that gender influenced

language use, affecting themes, terminology, and politeness.

However, the present study takes a different approach from the previous studies by delving deeper into the linguistic features observed in texting behavior. The researchers aim to analyze these features and understand the factors influencing texters' language choices. By focusing on morpho-syntactic and phonological aspects, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of language variety in WhatsApp communication. Moreover, this study also intends to reveal the reasons that influence

texters to use a certain texting styles. The importance of this study lies in understanding how people's language habits evolve and adapt to different communication modes. By examining texting language features, educators and researchers can develop effective teaching strategies that integrate these variations into educational settings. Additionally, given the widespread use of texting, particularly among young students, the study underscores its significance as both a communication style and a form of language variation.

Method

The research design used for this study is qualitative method. The qualitative method fits in with the purpose of the study in which the researchers try to provide a detail description of linguistic features that are found in texts. The data in this study are the text messages from the English Literature Students WhatsApp group and interview transcription of the group participants. The researchers collected the data through documentation and interviews. Data in research are empirical facts used to solve problems or address research concerns, as described by Siyoto and Sodik (2015). These data can be gathered in various forms, such as events, pictures, sounds, or symbols. In this study, data were collected using documentation and interview techniques.

The first set of data consists of text messages from the English Literature students' WhatsApp group, "Elite Students Assemble," at a private university in Malang, Indonesia. The first researcher is also a member of this WhatsApp group. The messages were collected over four months, from November 2022 to February 2023. The researchers focused on conversations (mostly conducted in Indonesia, although English words and expressions were occasionally used), documenting text messages that displayed linguistic features or "textese" characteristics.

The second set of data is from interviews with the most active participants in the group, who were selected based on their

regular weekly participation during the study period. A semi-structured interview was conducted to explore the participants' reasons for using specific texting styles and to gain insight into their unique texting habits.

This study employed two primary data collection techniques: documentation and interviews. In this study, the researchers used documentation by capturing text conversations from the WhatsApp group of English Literature students between November 2022 and February 2023. Only text messages directly typed by group participants were included; other content like voice notes, pictures, stickers, and videos was excluded.

The researchers also conducted interviews with 20% of the frequent texters in the "Elite Students Assemble" WhatsApp group. The number of interviewees was determined based on active participation, with candidates who appeared weekly from November 2022 to February 2023. A semi-structured interview format was used, allowing specific questions and flexibility to explore additional topics. The interviews aimed to uncover participants' perspectives on their texting styles and the factors influencing them. Interviews were conducted individually, either face-to-face or online, recorded on a smartphone, and later transcribed.

To analyze the data, the researchers employed the qualitative data analysis framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which includes three main

steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

The researchers utilized expert validation process to ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the data collected. An English lecturer at a private university in Malang who specializes in English Semantics, was chosen as the validator. His expertise in linguistic features made him a suitable candidate to review the data. The researchers presented the data to the

validator in table format to facilitate easy review. During the validation process, the validator examined the data and provided corrections, particularly on some linguistic features and codes used. The researchers then revised the data according to his feedback and resubmitted it for further review. This iterative process ensured that the final data were accurate and aligned with the expert's insights.

Results and Discussion

Linguistic Features Found in the WhatsApp Group Chat of English Literature Students

Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2021) categorized linguistic features into four aspects: morpho-syntactic, pragma-semantic, phonological, and sociolinguistic (code-mixing) features. In this study, the researchers only focused on two categories; morpho-syntactic structure analysis and phonological items. Upon completion of data analysis, the researchers found five kinds of morpho-syntactic structure and four kinds of phonological items from a total of 42 data that had been collected from WhatsApp group of English Literature Students. The following are the explanation of kinds of linguistic features that were found in the WhatsApp group chat of English literature students. Please note that texts or expression printed italic below are the Indonesian versions of the messages, and those in parentheses are the English translation of the messages. Words or phrases printed in bold are the ones categorized as linguistic features of texting.

A. Morpho-syntactic Analysis

The researchers found five types of morpho-syntactic structure including (1) clipping, (2) deletion of punctuation, (3) deletion of subject, (4) mechanics of capitalization (words with upper case), and (5) contraction. In this section, the researchers explained the five types of morpho-syntactic structures along with examples of the data found.

Clipping

A clipped word, also known as a clipping, is a linguistic phenomenon where a

word is shortened by removing one or more syllables. This is often done informally or in casual language, and it's a common way that languages evolve over time. Clipped words are usually created for convenience, brevity, or simply to fit the rhythm of spoken language. Here are some examples of clipped words found in the data.

1. "*Kamu **nanya**?*"
(are you asking?)
2. "***Nggak kak**, jam 10 udh tutup*"
(no sis, it's already closed at 10)
3. "*ini ada speaker nya mas rian di sekret klo boleh di pinjem **kakk***"
(There is rian's speaker in secretary room if it is allowed to be borrowed)
4. "*Rafli wa nya ke log out **kak** dan mau masuk lagi **gak** bisa dan Rafli katanya bikin wa baru sih kak.*"
(Rafli's WA was logged out, and although he attempted to log back in, it was still not possible. Rafli stated that he intended to create a new one.)
5. "*ini ya link buat daftar job nya, di pilihan yg tau **kerjaan** ini dari mana nanti kakak pilih yg tau dari teman yaa trus isi nama nya "Fach***** Hu****"*"
(Here is the link for the job application, in the option where you know this job from, you can choose you know from a friend and filled the name with "Fach**** Hu****")

Example number 1 contains a clipped word that is "nanya" where the actual form of the word is "bertanya" which means "asking" in English. The texts from number 2 to number 4 were found to have the word "kak" which is a clipped form of the word "kakak" that has meaning as "brother/sister" in English. The text number 5 contains word "kerjaan" which

is clipped from the word “pekerjaan” meanings “job” in English.

Deletion of Punctuation

The deletion of punctuation is when the texters exclude the needed punctuation in their text. Texters often found eliminating the punctuations like question marks (?), commas (,), or full stop (.). Here are some examples of Deletion of Punctuation found in the data:

1. “Hahahaha enggaaa Aing telat udah ijin tapi”
(Hahahaha no I am late but already confirmed)
2. “ini ada speaker nya mas rian di sekret klo boleh di pinjem kakk”
(There is rian’s speaker in secretary room if it is allowed to be borrowed)
3. “With sending this holy sticker I have now clarify myself as an official full-time student of uum”
4. “Saranku jgn dulu deh siapa tau pas hujan deres nanti pak teguh nyaranin online class wkwk”
(I suggest to do not go yet, who knows when it rains heavily Mr. Teguh might suggest online class)
5. “Aku mau ke kampus kan tpi liat notif grup dr pak Andy eh gk jadi ke kmpus deh”
(I was going to the campus, but I decided against it after seeing Mr. Andy’s group announcement.)

The researchers found that most of the sentences in the text above were lack of punctuation especially commas. Commas are important for indicating pauses, separating items in a list, and clarifying the structure of a sentence.

Deletion of Subject

The deletion of subject is the act where the texters remove the needed subject in their text. Here the examples of Deletion of Subjects the researcher found in the data:

1. “Guys, nanti pinjem speaker”
(Guys, will borrow the speaker later)
2. “Baiq sekali mengingatkan”
(So nice for reminding)
3. “hope u can’t go back, amen”
4. “Blm tau ketuanya sp kak”
(still do not know yet who is the leader)

In the example above (1-4), the subjects of the sentences were removed, yet the phrases were still comprehended. It was noted that most instances of the first, second, and third person pronouns were removed.

The example number (1) is a directive statement. The implied subject is the speaker (the person making the request). The sentence can be expanded to “Guys, nanti saya pinjem speaker” (Guys, I will borrow the speaker later) where “saya” or “I” is the implied subject. The example number (2) is a positive statement expressing approval or agreement. The subject is not explicitly stated, but it can be understood as the second person (the person who is expressing approval). The sentence can be expanded to “Kamu baik sekali mengingatkan” (So nice of you for reminding) where “kamu” or “you” is the implied subject.

The example number (3) is expressing a hope or wish. The subject is not explicitly mentioned, but it can be inferred as the person who is expressing the hope, which could be the speaker. The sentence can be expanded to “I hope you can’t go back, amen” where “I” is the implied subject. Lastly, the example number (4) is a statement. The subject is not explicitly stated, but it can be understood as the stated something. The sentence can be expanded to “Saya belum tahu ketuanya siapa kak” (I do not know yet who is the leader) where “saya” or “I” is the implied subject of the statement.

Mechanics of Capitalization: Words with Upper Case

It was found that texting users sometimes used words with upper case. It seems that texters frequently utilize capital letters to emphasize points, convey astonishment, convey intense emotions, etc. Here are some uppercased words found in the data.

1. “Tp GPP seruu”
(but it is okay, it is fun)
2. “Gak ada mas, minggu depan bru UAS”
(none bro, the final examination is next week)
3. “HBD, istri Na Jaemin @Desi semoga cepat dapat momongan”
(HBD Na Jaemin’s wife @desi hope you got baby soon)

4. "WEEEE NGERIIII insyaallah amin"
(Terrific, insyaallah amen)

In the first example, the word with uppercase is "GPP". "GPP" is an abbreviation of "*enggak apa-apa*" meaning "no problem" or "it's okay." The use of uppercase for "GPP" is common in informal communication, particularly in texting or online messaging. It adds emphasize to the abbreviation, indicating a casual and conversational style. Moving to example number 2, "UAS" is written in uppercase. This is likely an acronym for "*Ujian Akhir Semester*" (Final Examination) or a similar term, and it is common to write acronyms in uppercase to distinguish them from regular words.

In the example number 3, "HBD" is written in uppercase. "HBD" is an acronym for "Happy Birthday," and it is written in uppercase to convey its celebratory nature. The use of uppercase in this context is for emphasis and recognition. Lastly in the example number 4, the use of uppercase letters, particularly "WEEEE" and "NGERIIII" (terrifying) suggests a heightened emotional tone. Uppercase letters in this context may indicate excitement, emphasize, or intensity in expressing feelings.

Contraction

A contraction is a linguistic phenomenon in which two words are combined by omitting one or more letters, often to create a more informal or colloquial expression. Contractions are typically formed by combining a pronoun, verb, or auxiliary verb with another word, such as a negation or auxiliary verb. The omission of letters is replaced by an apostrophe. Here are the contractions that the researchers found in the data.

1. "Don't forget yg Semantics"
(Do not forget semantic class)
2. "hope u can't go back, amen"
3. "Congratulation kak El semoga besok lancar. maaf Kak El jam 10.20 ada kels jdi nda bsa hadir but, I'll be there if I can"
(Congratulation kak El may tomorrow goes well, sorry I have class at 10.10 so I cannot come but, I'll be there if I can)

Example number 1 shows the utilization of a contraction specifically in the

word "don't" This contraction ingeniously condenses the two words "do not" into a single, more compact expression. In the example number 2, the contraction found in word "can't," which represents the longer form "cannot" This contraction, characterized by the merge of "can" and "not" serves as a linguistic shortcut. Moving to example number 3, the researcher encountered the contraction "I'll" an abbreviation from the phrase "I will." This contraction not only efficiently shortens the expression but also introduces an element of informality into the text.

In conclusion, the exploration of morpho-syntactic structure in this study delved into clipping, deletion of punctuation, deletion of subjects, the mechanics of capitalization, particularly words with uppercase, and contraction. These features shed light on the intricate ways in which language is manipulated in digital communication. As we transition to the next segment, our focus will shift to phonological items, uncovering further insights into how sound elements play a role in shaping the linguistic landscape of the analyzed text.

B. Phonological feature Analysis

The researchers found four types of phonological features including (1) the deletion of consonant and vowel, (2) overuse of sound, (3) substitution of equivalent sound, and (4) words represented by single letter. In this section, the researchers explained the four types of phonological features along with examples of the data found.

Deletion of Consonants and Deletion of Vowel

Sometimes texters are found eliminating the consonants and vowel in the text they sent. This is one of their ways of shortening words to make them send the message more efficient and faster. Here are the deletion of consonant and vowel found in the data:

1. "Saranku jgn dulu deh siapa tau pas hujan deres nanti pak teguh nyaranin online class wkwk"
(I suggest to do not go yet, who knows when it rains heavily Mr. Teguh might suggest online class)
2. "Heh bukan aku aja", "Tp GPP seruu"
(It is not just me. It is okay, it is fun)

3. "Nggak kak, jam 10 udh tutup"
(no sis, it's already closed at 10)
4. "Klian msh hidup?", "Sapa tau ada yg bertemu sama yg diatas"
(Do you guys still alive? Who knows, someone may have met the creator"
5. "Aku mau ke kampus kan tpi liat notif grup dr pak Andy eh gk jadi ke kmpus deh"
(I was going to the campus, but I decided against it after seeing Mr. Andy's group announcement.)

Deletion of vowels and consonants is observed in several instances. In example number 1, words like "jgn" and "tau" exhibit the removal of vowels and consonants from their full forms, "jangan" (do not) and "tahu" (know). In example number 2, the word "Tp" undergoes a deletion of vowels, removing the letters 'a' and 'i' from the original word "tapi" (but). Additionally, the word "aja" demonstrates the deletion of the consonant 's,' stemming from "saja" (just). Example number 3 presents the deletion of vowels and consonants in the word "udh" where the consonant 's' and vowel 'a' are omitted from the original term "sudah" (already). In example number 4, words like "klian", "msh", and "sapa" have undergone the deletion of vowels, altering their full forms "kalian" (you (plural)), "masih" (still) and "siapa" (who). Moving on to example number 5, words like "tpi," "dr," and "kmpus" show the deletion of vowels from their actual forms "tapi" (but), "dari" (from) and "kampus" (campus).

Overuse of Sound

The overuse of sounds, such as repeated letters or extended vowels, is often employed in informal writing to convey a specific tone, emotion, or emphasize. Here are the overuses of sound found in the data:

1. "Hahahaha enggaaa Aing telat udah ijin tapi"
(Hahahaha no I am late but already confirmed)
2. "Ayo guys kls britisshhhhhh"
(Come on guys, british class)
3. "Okeyy", "Kaget aku masih make up soal nya"
(okay, I am shocked I have not finished my make up)
4. "ini ada speaker nya mas rian di sekret klo boleh di pinjem kakk"

(There is rian's speaker in secretary room if it is allowed to be borrowed)

5. "Ya Allah thank youuuu rek"
(Oh my god thank you guys)

In each of the provided examples, the overuse of sound elements contributes to a nuanced expression of emotions and tones in digital communication. Beginning with example number 1, the elongation of the word "enggaaa" (no) suggests a prolonged and exaggerated negation, resembling a drawn-out "Nooo" and intensifying the expression of denial. Moving on to example number 2, the repetition of "shhhhhh" in "britisshhhhhh" conveys a playful or exaggerated pronunciation, injecting enthusiasm into the sentence. Example number 3 showcases the overuse of sound in "okeyy," where the additional "y" introduces a playful variation of "Okay," contributing to a more informal and friendly tone. In example number 4, the elongation of "kakk" with double letters implies a sense of friendliness or informality, akin to expressing "kak" (bro/sis) with a friendly or affectionate tone. Example number 5 features the extended "uuuu" in "thank youuuu," enhancing the expression of gratitude with heightened enthusiasm and warmth.

Substitution of Equivalent Sounds

The Substitution of Equivalent Sound is where the texters replace some letters or sounds in a word with other letters that has similar sound as the actual spell. Here are the data of texts that found to have the substitution of equivalent sound:

1. "Hahahaha enggaaa Aing telat udah ijin tapi"
(Hahahaha no I am late but already confirmed)
2. "Baiq sekali mengingatkan"
(So nice for reminding)
3. "Happy New Year 2023 bwt kita smua... Tetap sehat, sukses slalu buat kita semua"
(Happy New Year 2023 for all of us. Keep healthy and success for all of us)
4. "Gaes, ad yg ngikut matkul interpreting gak?"
(Guys, is there any of you join the interpreting course?)
5. "Thanks inpo nya gan"
(thanks for the info, boss)

Substitution of equivalent sounds is evident in various instances. In example number 1, the word "*ijin*" showcases the texter's substitution of the letter 'z' in "*izin*" (permission) with the letter 'j' due to the similar sound they produce in Indonesian. Moving on to example number 2, the word "*Baiq*" demonstrates the use of a similar sound, 'q,' as a replacement for the letter 'k' in "*baik*" (nice). Similarly, in example number 3, the word "*bwt*" features the substitution of the letter 'w' for the letters 'u' and 'a' in "*buat*" (for). Example number 4 displays the term "*gaes*" where the texter substitutes the similar sound of 'ae' for the letters 'u' and 'y' in "guys." Additionally, example number 5 reveals the word "*info*" where the texter employs the similar sound of 'p' to replace the letter 'f' in "info".

Words Represented by Single Letter

The use of single letters or abbreviations is common in informal communication, especially in texting, social media, or online messaging, where there's a need for brevity and quick expression. Here are the texts which contain the words that represented in single letter:

1. "hope **u** can't go back, amen"
2. "**HBD** istri Na Jaemin @Desi semoga cepet dapat momongan"
(HBD Na Jaemin's wife @desi hope you got baby soon)
3. "*Gak ada mas, minggu depan bru* **UAS**"
(None bro, the final examination is next week)
4. "*nanti kalau g* **meetnya** *mati pindah ke sini*"
(if the g meet got shut down move here)
5. "*tolong besok yang punya* **pdh** *dua kasih pinjam saya ya,kasian pdh sy kebakar*"
(Please whoever has two pdh (uniform) to lend me one, poor things mine was burnt).

In each of the provided examples, specific letters or combinations of letters serve as concise representations for more extensive terms, contributing to the brevity and efficiency of digital communication. In example number 1, the letter 'u' is utilized to symbolize the pronoun "you," streamlining the expression of this common term. Moving on to example number 2, the combination of letters "*HBD*" is employed, where each letter serves

as a shorthand representation for the phrase "Happy Birthday," facilitating quick and efficient conveyance of celebratory wishes. Example number 3 features the use of the word "*UAS*" where each letter is a condensed representation of the term "*Ujian Akhir Semester*" (final examination). This abbreviation aids in swiftly communicating the context of academic assessments. In example number 4, the letter 'g' is utilized to signify the multinational technology company "Google," showcasing how a single letter can encapsulate a well-known entity, enhancing communication efficiency. Lastly, example number 5 introduces the term "*pdh*" where each letter serves as a succinct representation for "*Pakaian Dinas Harian*" or Daily Work Attire. This abbreviation exemplifies how condensed expressions are employed to efficiently communicate specific concepts, particularly in contexts where brevity is valued, such as digital messaging.

The exploration of phonological items in texting styles has unraveled various linguistic features, encompassing the deletion of consonants and vowels, substitution of equivalent sounds, representation of words by single letters, and the phenomenon of overusing certain sounds.

As we delve into the intricacies of texting practices, the examination of morpho-syntactic structures, including features like the deletion of subjects, punctuation, clipping, contractions, and the use of uppercase letters, has revealed the nuanced ways individuals shape their messages. Moreover, the exploration of phonological items, involving the deletion of consonants and vowels, substitution of equivalent sounds, representation of words by single letters, and the overuse of certain sounds, provides a comprehensive understanding of linguistic choices in texting.

The Reasons of Using Particular Textese or Linguistic Features among the Students of English Literature in their WhatsApp Group

This study also investigates the reasons behind the use of textese or linguistic features among English literature students in their WhatsApp group. The researchers identified informality, speed and efficiency, creative expression, and social media and online culture as key influencers on texting

styles. Interviews with five texters from the Elite Students Assemble WhatsApp group provide insights into these influences. Below, the researchers include several quotes from interviews with participants about the reasons that influence the use of textese along with the explanations.

Interview quotes *a* and *b* illustrate how people's texting varies depending on the situation. When communicating with older individuals or teachers, they tend to be polite and use formal language. However, with friends, they adopt a more casual tone, using abbreviations and unique expressions. This demonstrates that the level of formality in a situation influences how people text.

- a. "Yeah, I think it is very important to differentiate chat between older people and our friends. Uhhh... maybe if we are chat [texting] with uhh, older people more than we [us], it's more polite and formal. But with friends, it might be able to use casual language, like uh abbreviation or language style that you only understand with your friend."
- b. "Oh yes *kak* [brother/sister/to addressed someone older], I think uh, my texting style is influenced by formality and informality situation and if I like to chat whomever, I will see the contexts and situations first. If it's formal, it's usually with lecturers, parents, and people who are older than me or people I haven't known for long. Meanwhile, if it's informal, it's usually with friends."

Quotes *c* and *d* indicate that when in a hurry, people prefer to send shorter messages to save time, often using abbreviations for quick communication. This suggests that being quick and efficient is a conscious choice for most people when texting. However, there are also those who dislike abbreviating words because it's not their style.

- c. "Time efficiency uhm, affect my texting style depending of what situation when I texting to this people. For example, when I'm in a hurry, I will *sebisanya nyingkat kata* [abbreviated the word as possible]. If I just uh in my home or maybe just chilling I will use more *apa ya* [what is it?] more

longe-longer texting style than in a hurry situation."

- d. "I prefer to chat normally without abbreviation because it's not my style."

Quotes *e* and *f* indicate that people have different ways of being creative in their texts. Some use stickers, emojis, or elongate words to express excitement. Others have specific creative styles for their close friends, such as using different words for fun. However, not everyone adds creativity to his or her texts; some prefer to keep it simple.

- e. "I do make some certain texting style like adding more alphabet at the last word, uhh such as *okaii* [okay] with double "I" to express that I answer the text gently."
- f. "Uhh I think I don't use uh what? A creative expression when texting to people. I just text as simple as texting to everyone, *kak* [brother/sister/to addressed someone older]"

Furthermore, quotes *g* and *h* show that social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram also influence how people text. Some adopt new words or trends from social media in their messages. While many feel a strong influence from social media on their texting, others are cautious and avoid using these trends to prevent misunderstandings.

- g. "I think that's (social media) almost 100% influence how uhh, how I type [texting] to other people. Like I got it from Twitter, mostly like from Twitter. Or maybe from Tiktok or Instagram like uhh they have a jargon or jokes, yeah, I like to use it in entertainment purpose to text other people."
- h. "I think I never use trends from social media. I know some but I not use it, uhh because I am afraid some of my friend will not understand it *kak* [brother/sister/to addressed someone older]"

In conclusion, the interview quotes above show how formal or quick, how creative, and how influenced by social media people shape the way they text. Each person has a unique style, influenced by personal choices, the situation he or she is in, and what he or she sees on social media.

The findings reveal a consistent pattern of informal language use, characterized by the simplification of sentence structure and the omission of standard linguistic features, contributing to a more casual and efficient style of communication. For instance, subject deletion often appeared in imperative statements, while the omission of punctuation altered sentence order, reflecting a conversational tone typical of online texting environments. Furthermore, the frequent use of contractions, clipped words, and the substitution of equivalent sounds in words emphasizes the students' focus on brevity and informality in their communication. The overuse of sound, such as the elongation of letters to express emotion, is another key finding, contributing to a distinctive digital communication style that is shared within this student group.

The study's findings suggest that the linguistic features used by the English Literature students in their WhatsApp group are largely shaped by an intention for informality, efficiency, and creative expression. The deletion of subjects and punctuation, as well as the widespread use of contractions, allows students to convey messages concisely, reflecting the need for quick communication in digital spaces. This mirrors broader trends in online communication, where users prioritize speed and simplicity over adherence to formal linguistic conventions (Adhikary et al., 2021; Shulman, Markowitz, & Rogers, 2024). Clipped words, abbreviations, and phonological alterations further illustrate a trend toward linguistic economy, with students opting for shorter forms of communication that reduce cognitive load and typing time. This reflects a key characteristic of textese, which thrives in environments that demand fast, casual exchanges, such as social media and messaging platforms. These choices highlight not only the influence of technology on language use but also the adaptability of students in navigating different communication contexts. The findings indicate that students are fully aware of the informal nature of their communication on WhatsApp and use linguistic shortcuts to foster a sense of connection, shared understanding, and friendship among peers.

The findings of this study align well with existing theories on digital communication and informal language use. The prevalence of contractions, subject deletion, and clipped words is consistent with the theoretical framework provided by Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2021), who emphasize that these linguistic features are typical of digital communication spaces where informality is encouraged. Furthermore, Kholisya's (2018) research on digital language practices highlights how the omission of punctuation and subjects in casual texts reflects the sociolect of the group, reinforcing the idea that users adjust their language to fit the norms of the platform and the relationship dynamics within the group. This phenomenon is also supported by the work of Crystal (2008), who describes the use of textese as a response to the constraints and expectations of digital media, where brevity and speed are key priorities. By applying these theoretical insights, the study demonstrates that the students' use of language in WhatsApp is not random but a calculated adjustment to the informal and fast-paced nature of online communication. It also suggests that the linguistic strategies employed in WhatsApp group chats contribute to the development of unique digital subcultures and social bonds, where participants create a shared language that fosters inclusivity and solidarity (Menggo, Pramesti, & Krismayani, 2023; Pratginestós & Masats, 2024; Sari, 2024).

In addition to aligning with theoretical perspectives, the findings of this study are consistent with previous empirical research on language use in WhatsApp group chats. Studies by Kholisya (2018) and Prandika (2019) found that texters in WhatsApp groups prioritize casual, informal communication over strict grammatical correctness, frequently utilizing abbreviations, contractions, and subject deletion. Both studies emphasize that informal language practices are a hallmark of digital communication, driven by the need for efficiency and immediacy. The current study builds on this body of research by examining these linguistic trends within the specific context of an English Literature WhatsApp group, where the students' educational background might be expected to influence their language use. Despite their academic training, the students in this group embrace

the same informal linguistic patterns identified in previous studies, suggesting that the norms of digital communication often override academic conventions in informal settings. The results also align with Carman's (2018) views that social relationships play a critical role in shaping linguistic choices in group chats, as individuals adjust their language to fit the dynamics of the group and the nature of their relationships with other participants.

This study makes several important contributions, both to linguistic theory and to practical understanding of communication in digital spaces. Theoretically, the research advances our understanding of how digital communication platforms shape language use, particularly in educational contexts where informal group chats coexist alongside formal academic writing (cf. Muslimawati, 2022). By documenting the specific linguistic features employed by English Literature students in their WhatsApp group, the study highlights the flexibility and adaptability of language in response to different communication environments. It also adds to the growing body of literature on textese and digital language practices, offering new insights into the ways in which students negotiate between formal and informal language norms.

Practically, this research has implications for educators and academic institutions. Understanding the informal

linguistic habits of students can help educators better comprehend the digital literacy skills that students develop outside of the classroom. While students may adhere to formal linguistic conventions in academic writing, their informal communication practices in group chats reflect a different set of competencies, such as adaptability, creativity, and social awareness. By recognizing these skills, educators can better bridge the gap between formal and informal language use, potentially incorporating lessons on digital literacy into the curriculum. Moreover, the study's findings could inform the design of educational tools and platforms that accommodate students' preference for informal, efficient communication, fostering better engagement and collaboration in online academic settings.

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the linguistic behaviors of English Literature students in their WhatsApp group. It highlights the influence of informality, speed, and creativity on their language use, while also aligning with existing theories and previous studies on digital communication. Despite its limitations, such as the narrow focus on a single group, the study offers a significant contribution to our understanding of how students navigate the intersection of language, technology, and culture in their daily interactions.

Conclusion

The researchers made discoveries while analyzing the linguistic features present in the WhatsApp group chat of English literature students, as well as the factors influencing their usage. The analysis identified two primary categories of linguistic features in the WhatsApp group chat: morpho-syntactic structure and phonological items. These categories were further dissected to reveal specific findings. Morpho-syntactic features were subcategorized into subject deletion, punctuation deletion, clipping, contraction, and capitalization. On the other hand, phonological items were subdivided into consonant and vowel deletion, sound substitution, words represented by a single letter, and sound overuse.

Among the identified features, students commonly utilized clipping and abbreviation in their WhatsApp group chats.

This choice was driven by the need to convey information quickly and efficiently. However, this rapid communication approach often led to typographical errors. Beyond speed and efficiency, the prevalent use of clipping and other linguistic features in the students' WhatsApp conversations stemmed from a desire for informality. Students opted for an informal tone to communicate with peers, emphasizing a sense of friendship and mutual understanding.

While this study provides valuable insights into the linguistic features and their influences within the WhatsApp group chat of English literature students, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations and propose suggestions for future research. The study primarily focused on WhatsApp, which is just one of many digital communication platforms. Exploring linguistic features across various

platforms such as Telegram, Facebook Messenger, and others could provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital communication norms. Thus, expanding the scope of investigation to include diverse platforms would contribute to a more nuanced comprehension of how linguistic dynamics vary in different online environments.

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