

Critical Review: Does text messaging lead to better literacy outcomes in adolescents?

Kennedy, K.

M.Cl.Sc (SLP) Candidate

University of Western Ontario: School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

This critical review examines the evidence on the relationship between text messaging and literacy skills. A database search yielded six articles that met inclusion criteria. The studies used clinical trial designs, one mixed randomized controlled trial design, one quasi-experimental design, and two single group designs. The evidence shows a positive relationship between text messaging and literacy skills in adolescents. The clinical implications of this research suggest that text messaging with future recommendations.

Therefore, there is a positive relationship between texting and literacy skills.

Text messaging is a common form of communication that not only adults have adapted to, but it is also becoming increasingly common among children and adolescents (Coe & Oakhill, 2011). When mobile phones were initially used for text messaging and the technology was not as advanced as it is today, there was a character limit for the size of text message you could send, which resulted in people heavily abbreviating words to fit within the 160 character limit (Thurlow, 2003). Over time, this became a linguistic trend that continues to be seen in text messaging today regardless of no character limit. These abbreviations, often phonological forms of spelling that are non-conventional (Plester et al., 2009). Due to the prevalence of texting, along with the use of textisms occurring within the younger generations, there have been concerns raised regarding the impact it may be having on literacy skills (Coe & Oakhill, 2011). The media has been a contributor to proposing this negative effect through the speculation and concern raised in the media, which is not supported by empirical evidence (Thurlow, 2006). Studies indicate that children as young as 5 years old are owners of mobile phones, with many owning a mobile phone (Coe et al., 2011). There are concerns that are reported in the media that are increasing concern about children's literacy skills at a young age.

Although recent research surrounding this topic is limited, it is important to consider the research that

Contrary to media reports (Thurlow, 2006), the use of text messaging is in fact increasing children's exposure to print which may prove to be a benefit to literacy development (Coe & Oakhill, 2011). Text messaging is also increasing phonological awareness skills through the use of abbreviations, which has a positive impact on reading and spelling ability (Plester et al., 2009).

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conventional English and one in textese) into a mobile phone

completed at the beginning of a school year and then again at the end of the academic year. To investigate texting behav

vocabulary, verbal working memory capacity,
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not have adverse effects on literacy skill development in adolescents. They can inform them that evidence suggests that any relationships that have been found are positive. Further research is still warranted to display compelling evidence for text messaging leading to better literacy outcomes in adolescents.

It is important to present this information to parents or teachers in a way that uses gentle language and is not suggestive of increased screen time or increased cell phone use. The information can be presented in a way that highlights no detrimental effects are seen between texting and literacy development, however, it is important that children and adolescents are continuing to practice and develop their literacy skills through physical book reading and writing.

Conclusion

Overall, the literature reviewed suggests a positive relationship between textism use in text messaging and literacy skills however, it more confidently highlights that there are no adverse effects of texting on literacy skills. Future research can build on the existing literature by completing more longitudinal studies, along with more randomized control trials where there is a