

## EXPLORING THE USE OF SMS FEATURES IN THE ENGLISH WRITTEN WORK OF BENINESE POST-BEGINNER EFL LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

Nowadays, because of the widespread and daily use of cellphones, and especially of text-messaging (SMS), one could assume that people's written language may begin to show certain features that are used when writing SMS messages. In particular, there are growing concerns that young people are losing the ability to spell and write "correctly". The present study is a descriptive study that uses 200 samples of post-beginners' writings to explore the impact of SMS speech on the written school work of EFL post-beginners in Benin secondary schools. The results of this study are surprising in that, given the large exposure to SMS speech and the amount of time compiling SMS, samples of composition collected from students did not contain a great number of occurrences of SMS speech features. It seems that the general lack of SMS features in the written work of the learners investigated is a result of their being able to assess when it is and is not appropriate to use a certain variety of language. These learners are proficient in SMS speech and use it when chatting with friends, but they can produce written work that adheres to the formally approved standards of written English. Teachers will have to take all necessary actions to impart knowledge and a sense of responsibility to their students, with regards to appropriate use of language.

**KEYWORDS:** Benin, EFL Post-Beginners, SMS Features, Written Composition

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