a correlation between findings related to structural analysis of written language in SMSs and psychological analysis of the process of SMS written language production.

II/ Literature Review

1-Mode mixing in SMS communication

The popular media were quick to accentuate the novelty of SMS language (Herring, 2001). There was story after story about abbreviations, acronyms, and emoticons peppering text messaging, with the implication that a whole new linguistic code emerged. However, the general assumption was that outside the use of neography, the flow of the '*written messages'* was speech-like (Baron, 2008). This point is supported by the fact that SMS users tended to describe SMS language as a written version of casual speech. But are they right? The answer is important. If this language embodies relevant features of more formal written language, then we need not to worry that the medium is 'destroying' writing conventions[11].

In fact, the relationship between speech and writing in text-based CMC has been one of the very first topics in CMC research (e.g, Baron,1998,2000,2003,2004,2008;Crystal,2001;Danet,2001;Murray,1988a;Herring,2002;Goody&Watt,1968;Ong,1982;Yates,1996). However, more needs to be done for the study of such relationship in SMS texts .To do so, we need at first have a glimpse at some 'general'[12] claims about the features of speech[13] and writing.

In the following lines, I shall explore research that has questioned the relationship between spoken and written language, with special interest in the speech-versus-writing question in SMS communication

2-Speech versus Writing

2-1Writing and Speech as Objects of Analysis

Although there were many calls[14], Linguists have been late[15] to realize that both written and spoken languages are worth their attention (Chafe&Tannen, 1987). The place of written and spoken language in the field of linguistics is somewhat controversial. For more than two thousand years, linguistics has taken written language as its essential object of study because "Language in its written form can be collected, stored, examined, manufactured, and analyzed"(Chafe&Tannen,1987:383)

However, with the coming of modern descriptive linguistics, the picture was completely reversed. Some of the influential linguists of the first half of the 20th century, including Bloomfield (1933), Tespersen (1922), and Saussure (1916), emphasize the primacy of spoken language over the written one. Bloomfield writes: *"Writing is not language but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks"* (Bloomfield, 1933:21)[16].

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[11] See Zitouni (2009: 59) : *Why SMS language is destroying standards of traditional written language.*

[12] Conventional characteristics shared by most users of language in the world, including Algeria.

[13] In this study speech refers to the spontaneous language use in everyday conversations. According to Chafe& Tannen (1987:390) *"ordinary conversation is the prototypical form of language, the baseline against which all other genres, spoken or written, should be compared. Conversation is, after all, the one kind of language that all normal people produce naturally most of the time; all other kinds, whether spoken or written, require special skill or training"*.

[14] More than eighty years ago, Woolbert (1922:269) called attention to a linguistic problem: *"Speaking and writing are alike-and different. Just how like and how different has never been adequately stated"*

[15] Scholars outside of linguistics were the first to pay attention to the fact that speaking and writing both have their own validity. The first comparisons were undertaken by people in speech departments, who traced their interest to a statement by Aristotle:" it should be observed that each kind of rhetoric has its own appropriate style. The style of written prose is not that of spoken oratory " (qtd in Chafe& Tannen, 1987:384)

[16] Written language is, in that sense, not to be counted as « real » language. Both European and American structuralists resorted to the written word essentially because they viewed it as useful only to the extent that

However, over the past few decades , a growing number of scholars (e.g., Baron,1981;Biber,1988;Chafe&Tannen,1987;Chafe&Danielewicz,1987;Chafe,1994; Crystal,1995;Halliday,1985;Harris,2000;Linell,2001;Olson,1994; Taylor&Olson,1995) provided a substantial body of literature on the topic. Most of them conclude that speech and writing are alternative forms of language in their own right and that both of them are viable objects of analysis.

2-2 General features of speech and writing

The relationship between 'stereotypical'[17] speech and writing is intuitively understood but not always transparent. Is writing simply a transcription of speech? No. Is writing always formal and speech necessarily informal? Obviously not. Are there conventional distinctions between speech and writing that most people can agree upon? Yes. Conventionally, writing tends to be more formal and speech more informal. In school, for instance, people are taught not to use contractions in writing.

According to Linell (2001), speech and writing are two different ways of representing our experience. He believes that we can define basis parameters in terms of which written and spoken language generally differ from one another.

Here are some of the main differences between speaking and writing shared by most languages of the world provided by Baron (2008:47).
(This list draws upon Baron's own previous work (Baron, 2000, 2003), along with studies by Chafe& Danielewicz (1987) and Crystal (2001))

	Speech	**Writing**
STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES		
number of participants	dialogue	monologue
durability	ephemeral (real-time)	durable (time-independent)
level of specificity	more vague	more precise
Structural accoutrements	prosodic and kinesic cues	document formatting
SENTENCE CHARACTERISTICS		
sentence length	shorter units of expression	longer units of expression
one-word sentences	very common	very few
initial coordinate conjunctions	frequent	generally avoided
structural complexity	simpler	more complex
verb tense	present simple	varied (esp. past and future)
VOCABULARY CHARACTERISTICS		
use of contractions	common	less common
abbreviations, acronyms	infrequent	common
scope of vocabulary	more concrete	more abstract

they are tools used to transcribe contemporary speech for use in analysis. For Chomsky- transformational school and its derivatives- who restrict his inquiry to the linguistic competence of the ideal speaker-hearer, written texts are irrelevant.

[17] Biber (1988) uses the notion of 'stereotypical' speech and writing to refer to the most frequent types of speech and writing, which are face-to-face conversation and written exposition respectively.

	more colloquial narrower lexical choices more slang and obscenity	more literary wider lexical choices less slang or obscenity
pronouns	many 1st and 2nd person	fewer 1st and 2nd person (except in letters)
deictics (e.g., here, now)	use (since have situational context)	avoid (since have no situational context).

Table 1: Differences between Speaking and Writing
(Source: Baron, 2008:47)

2-3 Speech versus writing in CMC

Accustomed to dealing with two basic modalities of language-speech and writing-linguists classifying CMC language first asked: Is computer mediated communication a form of writing or speech?

By surveying the relevant literature on email, bulletin boards, and computer conferencing, I found that as of the late 1990's, CMC was essentially a mixed modality[18], characterized by both oral and written-like language features.

"The global growth of computer-mediated communication (CMC) has led to changes in how language is used, including faster position and reading of texts (Baron, 2002) and diffusion of oral discourse features into written language (Werry, 1996; Yates, 1996)"

(Palfreyman& Al Khalil, 2007:43)

Baron (1998) argues that CMC language is mixed as such because it resembles speech in that it is largely unedited; it is generally informal; and CMC language can be rude and obscene. At the same time, it looks like writing because the medium is durable, and participants commonly use a wide range of vocabulary choices and complex syntax.

Howèver, the situation is different for Crystal. In 2001, Crystal wrote a book entitled Language and the Internet. In this book Crystal investigated many types of CMC (among others are email and chat) and compared these platforms against his own analysis of spoken versus written language. Coining the term' Netspeak' to refer to language used in CMC as a whole, Crystal concludes that:

"Netspeak has far more properties linking it to writing than to speech...netspeak is better seen as written language which has been pulled some way in the direction of speech than as spoken language which has been written down"

(Crystal, 2001:47)

Crystal's (2001) conclusions were based upon data drawn from his own and other researchers' empirical studies on the different CMC modes, but none of these studies analyzed SMS samples. It is time, for this research and others, to try addressing this deficit.

2-4 Speech versus Writing in SMS communication

The mingling of speech and writing in text messaging is an observable phenomenon (Habluetzel, 2006).In fact, of the very few studies that have been published on the topic, researchers questioned what kind of linguistic beast is SMS

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[18] Ferrara et al. (1991) examined electronic discourse and described it as an emergent register called interactive written discourse (IWD) with unique feature. Ferrara et al. view IWD as a "hybrid" language variety which displays characteristics of both oral and written language, resembling speech and writing, but which is neither. This language arises out of a new social context in which a new appropriate form of expression is needed.

language? Is it 100% written; or may be 100% oral; or is it simply 50% oral and 50% written; or is it something neither written language nor spoken language can explain.

By surveying the burgeoning literature on how to characterize SMS linguistically, a variety of views are discerned. These views fall mainly into the following categories[19]:

- SMS as a form of writing (Letters by phone)
- SMS as a form of speech (Speech by other means).
- SMS as a combination of spoken and written elements (Mix and match.
- SMS as a distinct style (e-style).
- SMS as a still –evolving language style (Contact system).

Figure 1: Linguistic Views.

2-4-1 SMS as a form of writing

This approach describes SMS as being essentially a written message conveyed by a new electronic medium (mobile phone). Taylor and Harper (2005) define SMS as follows:

> *"Letter, email, SMS are all written communication media which operate under the conditions of a temporal phase delay"*
> (Taylor& Harper, 2005:11)

Similar to letter writing, the distance between caller and receiver can be used strategically to convey such resemblance. In relation to that, literature has shown that text messaging has been compared to letter writing, postcard writing or classic epistolary (Habluetzel, 2006; Hjorth, 2005. Kessler &Bergs, 2003)

A question was raised: what is the nature of the relationship between SMS writing and other forms of "classic writing"? Can text messaging be considered as "writing" at all?

Hjorth (2005) argues that SMS messages, like letters, find their application in rather specific situations love letters as a classic situation for both letters and text messages. She stipulates also that SMS messages *"continue a tradition founded by the role of the visiting card"* (Hjorth, 2005: 02).

Further, in the context of love messages, however, Kessler & Bergs (2003) observe that, except for frequent use of graphical signs (e.g., emoticons) and phonetic spelling, most SMS messages resemble other forms of written language: "Although users of email and SMS tend to use a more "simple style", many love mails still contain some images, of the nineteenth century" (Kessler & Bergs, 2003: 81). They stipulate also that, while spelling and punctuation might differ, in terms of content, text messages might not be so different from classic texts and letters after all. Habluetzel (2006:08) supports the latter idea and argues that letter writing and text messaging share at least the following six characteristics.

- Are based on absence;
- Are personal (as opposed to public and collective and thus predisposed towards 'love plots';
- Are asynchronous;
- Offer the capacity to manipulate distance and proximity;
- Can foster feelings of presence
- Both expect reciprocity

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[19] See Baron, 2001

She adds that most of these characteristics are closely interrelated and that despite the linguistic innovations and challenges, text messaging can also be seen as continuing a long tradition of personal letter writing.

On the same line of thought, Koritti (1999) claims that the resourceful use of abbreviations, words, and lack of punctuation appears to be a personal stylistic choice rather than an identification of speech-like characteristic in this language. Herring (2001) is of this opinion suggesting a continuum along which asynchronous CMD occupies a position closed to writing (as is the case with SMS and email), and synchronous CMD occupies a position closer to speaking (as is the case for IM and chat)

Baron (2001: 05), on the other hand, is disagreeing with the above arguments. She points out that "There are aspects of asynchronous CMC (email, SMS) that remind us more of written language, but that don't neatly fit into conventional molds".

2-4-2SMS as a form of speech

In this approach, Baron (2001) together with Ling (2004) argue that SMS messages appear more like spoken than written language. Baron concludes this through a study she has undertaken to explore some of the linguistic attributes of asynchronous CMC. In her investigation, she tries to measure up asynchronous CMC characteristics against spoken language or non spoken language characteristics. She identifies the following similarities and differences:

Linguistic Parameters	Characteristics Generally Shared with Face-To-Face Speech		Characteristics Not Generally Shared with Face-To-Face Speech
Language Style	Informal Often avoid salutations Use contractions, slang	**HOWEVER**	Often *more* informal than face-to-face speech
Responses	Fast response time assumed	**HOWEVER**	Often don't get acknowledgement for assistance rendered
Audience Identity	Intended for limited, specified audience	**HOWEVER**	Can be forwarded to others without original sender's knowledge
Durability Assumptions	Senders act as if ephemeral (and often don't edit)	**HOWEVER**	Can print out Can edit Can reply with history

Figure 2: Comparison of asynchronous CMC characteristics with characteristics of face-to-face speech.
(Baron, 2001:04)

After extracting the differences and similarities, Baron uses the following arguments : (i) the inconvenience of writing a text on a small keypad, (ii) the massive use of reduced forms in SMS, (iii)the overall high degree of informality; (iv) the use of dialect[20]; and more importantly the speediness of SMS exchanges[21] - *"text messaging converts the monologue of writing into the dialogue of spoken give-and-take"* (Baron, 2002:410)-to stipulate that text messages formally differ from other types of writing and by consequence should be considered as a speech that happens to be written down for transmission purposes (speech by other means).

2-4-3 SMS as a combination of spoken and written language (Mix and match)

Language and media specialists have now moved to more complex models. The "mix and match approach" lines up the speech like qualities of SMS in one column and qualities that are more like writing in another (e.g., Baron, 1998;Schlobinski,2001; Yates,1996;) . Habluetzel (2006: 06) argues:

> *"Inline with many scholars, I argue that, rather than upholding a posited distinction, in a general sense the stylistic characteristics unique to text messages can be located on a continuum between writing and speech. I would propose, then, that orality and literacy compose a coherent whole within which we can compare and contrast SMS with other types of communication"*

Habluetzel observes that SMS writers operate with a hybrid between writing and speech. On the one hand , their texts are full of semiotic characteristics representing the style of speech , but on the other hand, the phonetic writing in their SMSs is still a type of writing that is composed by hand (typed on the keypad of the mobile phone) rather than mouth and received by eyes (reading) rather than ears.

Schlobinski (2001) also regards language use in SMS corpus as a hybridization of written language and spoken language, judging from the texters' use of colloquial expressions, syntactical reductions and assimilations.

2-4-4 SMS as a distinct style (e-style).

A number of analyses (e.g., Collot & Belmore, 1996; Ferrara et al, 1991; Herring 2002; Maynor, 1994) speak of "e- style"[22] as neither speech nor writing .It is different from writing in its immediacy and changeability (a traditional written text stays in place and remains the same. This is not true for SMS texts in which language can be changed or reused, cut and pasted to create a new one), and different from speech in its inability to provide pitch, rhythm, loudness and other voice cues. Netspeak has far more properties linking it to writing than to speech

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[20] Informal data from SMS users in Switzerland indicates that local dialect have been increasingly used in writing text messages over the last few years (See Hard af Segerstad (2005) for data from Sweden) the same phenomenon occurs among English – speaking text us: Mark Warshawer "LANGUAGES.COM: The internet and linguistic pluralism" in silicon literacy: communication innovation and education in the electronic age 26-74(London: rout ledge, 2002). For a general description of the process of dialect acquisition in (physically and technologically) mobile populations, see J.K. chambers "Dialect Acquisition" language 68, no 4 (1992) : 673-705)

[21] " Text messaging converts the monologue of writing into the dialogue of spoken give-and-take" (Baron, 2002:410)

[22] Electronic style is abbreviated as e-style

Crystal (2001), on the other hand, supports the genius of what he calls "Net speak" or "trans – linguistic drag queen"[23]. He concludes his analysis of the spoken and written-like features of CMC in his work Language and the Internet by arguing that CMC is fundamentally different from speaking and writing; it shares in their properties, but it does neither speech nor writing can do[24]. It is rather "a genuine third medium" which may evolve as a novel variety of language, provided that it brings its own principles and standards which should be distinct from other media.

2-4-5 SMS as a still evolving language style (Contact System)

"Contact system" approach argues that the unfolding of SMS is very much like the development of a pidgin or Creole. While the system has an identifiable grammar, there is also broad variation across users and usages. Since the system is still undergoing considerable transformation, there is no certainty how it will end up. Seen through this model, it is too soon to tell if SMS will eventually look, more speech-like or more like writing, or become a distinct genre (Baron 2000). Thurlow (2004) believes that:

> "Many would acknowledge that, to some extent, we are dealing with the "unknowable", since the impact of the new media "revolution" remains immeasurable and hard to define "
>
> (Thurlow, 2004:09)

III/ Methodology

1-The Sample

Data is collected from a sample of about 100 young Algerian participants

Age	**18**		**19**		**20**		**21**		**22**	
Out of 100 informants	19		14		29		21		17	
Gender	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**
	15	4	3	11	11	18	8	13	8	9
Out of 100 informants	**F**						**M**			
	55						45			

NB: M: male ; **F**: female

---

[23] Crystal and ling, cited in hard af Segerstad, p 35.

[24] He exemplifies this by claiming that in chat you can communicate with up to 20 people simultaneously, "something not even the most adroit person could accomplish at a cocktail party" (crystal 2001: 47-48)

Table 2 : Demographic Matters
(*Source* : The questionnaire)

	Languages in Algeria						
	Classical Arabic (CA)		French (Fr)		Berber (Br)		Algerian Spoken Arabic (ORSA)
Out of 100 informants	written	spoken	written	spoken	written	spoken	100
	86	86	86	77	00	14	

Table 3: Linguistic Matters (Degree of Competence in Languages)
(Source: The questionnaire)

2- Methods of Data collection

2-1 The Questionnaire (Langage Perception Among SMS Users)

The purpose of designing a questionnaire was to investigate language perception among SMS young users in Algeria. However, the design of questions followed aimed at examining young Algerians SMS users' perception of the language used in their SMSs in relation to written versus oral language standards. Following these objectives, we planned the questionnaire by referring to the following research models:

2-1-1 The Mix Psycho/Structural Model

As reported in section II, the question of the relationship between spoken and written language in SMS communication is not yet settled. The most important reason for this state of affairs is the diversity of views observed among the scholarly community: (i) there are researchers who claim that text messaging is purely a written medium; (ii) others believe In the supremacy of orality in SMS language; (iii) some others argue that this language is a mixture between oral-like and written-like properties of language; (iv) and the final position was adopted by those who claim the uniqueness of the language style.

In attempting to find out about the nature of language in SMS, most researchers tried to study the textual characteristics of text messaging and compare them with samples of speech and writing at both syntactical and grammatical level.

However, I believe that investigating the nature of language in SMS through the sole analysis of the structural features is not sufficient because of a number of reasons. The first reason is that the problem of distinguishing between speech and writing is not yet solved. Different views are depicted. Some scholars (e.g.Ong, 1982) believe that there are absolute differences between speech and writing. Some others (e.g., Tannen, 1982) stipulate that the differences lie along one continuum (in which academic writing and conversations are positioned at the two end of a continuum).There are also those (e.g., Biber, 1988) who claim that there is no absolute difference at all. And the final view stipulates that there is an intermingling relationship between speech and writing (e.g. Heath, 1983; Baynham, 1993): Studies (e.g., Tannen, 1987) showed that strategies associated with writing could be found in

spoken language; and studies proposed by, for example, Gumperz et al, (1997:112) suggested that strategies associated with orality could be found in writing.

In the case of the present research, we believe that there should be a psychological dimension supporting structural analysis of text messaging to better investigate the nature of language in Algerian text messaging.

This model proposes the typology of language in text messaging by investigating on the one hand the structural properties of SMS and on the other hand by focusing on the psychological dimension of the SMS production and end up with data that support or reject the written-like and/or oral-like language features in SMS.

In fact, at the heart of the psychological model is the following statement: "Every deed is based on everyone's will". we used this to argue that the tasters' role – their perception of what they are writing- should not be neglected. In other words, in writing a message one can express orality or non-orality through the focus of the message. This means that if the SMS user's focus is on trying to convey information rather than any emotional factors that may surround it, the language of the SMS is, in this sense, '*Message-centered*' and by consequence is a written language. But if the texter is more concerned with expressing their feelings towards the subject matter, the language of the SMS, by consequence, is '*Person-centered*' and can be, as a result, qualified as being oral. More details on the model will be presented in Figure 2

The Psycho/Structural Model

Psychological model			**Structural model**	
Written language	Oral language	COMPARISON	Written language	Oral language
If	**If**		**If**	**If**
Message - Centered	*Person-Centered*		*+ Written-Like Language Features*	*+Oral-Like Language Features*

Figure 3: The Psycho/Structural Model

Following this model, the Questionnaire will look up at the type of language (written and/oral) in text messaging by asking participants 6 questions which will be outlined later.

IV/ Data Analysis and Findings

We shall now proceed to the analysis of the results obtained in each questionnaire. This will be done on the basis of the graphs below which give us various percentages of the findings.

The questionnaire first asked two questions which were destined to trace the path and set the 'terrain' for further questions which were of more relevance to the research question. The first question' aim, for instance', was to set an identity for our respondents as being users or non- users of SMS communication. Answers to Question 1 are presented below in figure 3*: Do you use SMS communication to send messages?*

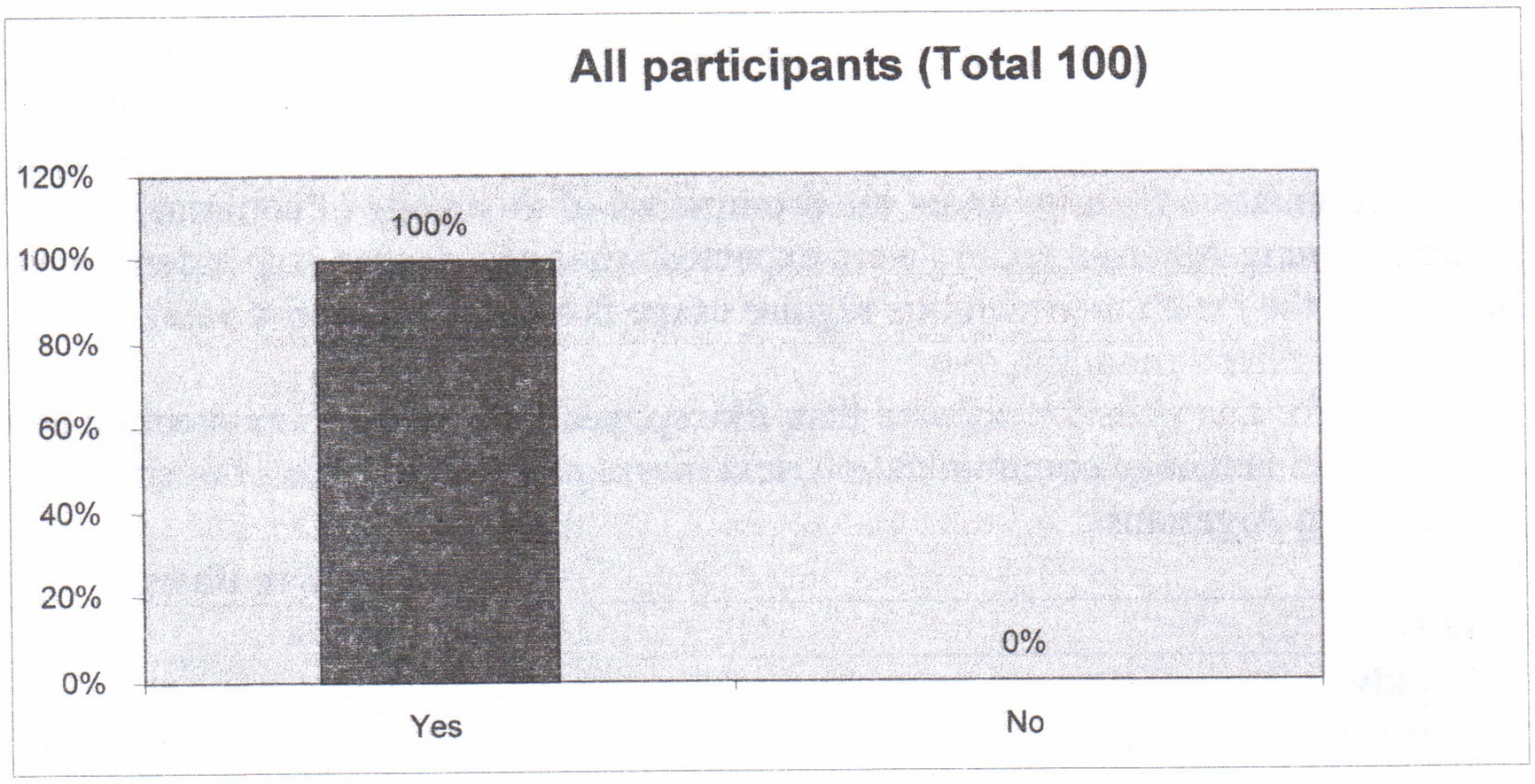


Figure 4: Use of SMS communication
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

The graph for Question1 indicates that text messaging is used by all of my respondents (100%) in their daily interactions. This may be explained by a number of reasons.

In fact, most young Algerians need to cope with the technology because of the linguistic construction of modernity SMS language is offering. "If you are not 'branché' (up-to-date) with the Internet and SMS, this means that you are 'out'" (informant n.38). Another reason which may explain the important usage of text messaging is the private social environment SMS provides for this rather young population. It offers opportunities for experiencing psychological nearness between text author and text reader, and so sustaining love relationships among its users.

The second question' aim was to obtain data about the respondents' habit of using SMS communication; they were asked how often you use SMS communication. Results are summarised in figure 5:

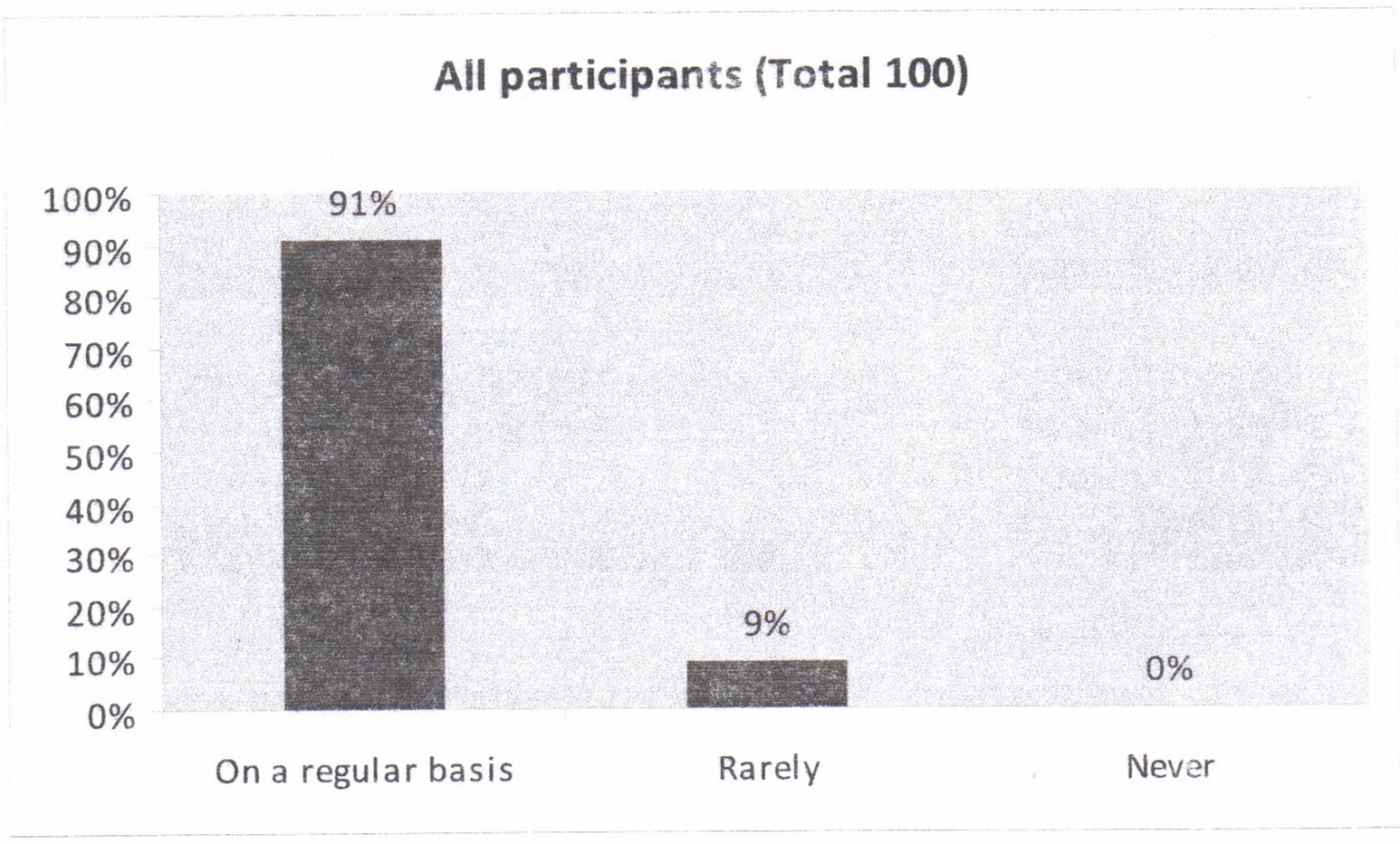


Figure 5: Habit of Performing SMS Communication
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

As can be seen from the graph above, almost all respondents (91%) claimed to have a regular habit of using SMS communication, and no one has never used the medium. With this significant number of respondents who are regular users of text messaging, more representative findings about the prominence of this mode of communication in the life of young Algerian texters were expected when the regular respondents were asked about the extent to which this regular usage is a daily practice, a weekly practice, or rather a monthly one.

Answers for that question showed that, like spoken language communication and unlike written language communication, text messaging is a practice of everyday among young Algerians.

	On a Regular Basis
Daily	83%
Weekly	8%
Monthly	0%

Table 4: Habit of Regular Use of SMS Communication
(Source: The Questionnaire)

I will in the following section try apply the psycho-structural model on the three media: oral language, written language, and SMS language

The Structural Analysis of Speech and Writing in SMS Communication

To investigate the structural model, I will compare results of Question 3, and Question 4:

Question 3: If you are asked to re-write the two messages that you provided for this research, in the form of a traditional letter, will you write them the same?

O Yes

O No Not the same With : O Many Changes O Few Changes

What are these changes? Please describe the changes below

Question 4: If the person(s) to whom you sent these two messages is now in front of you - in a face-to-face situation- will you re-produce the SMSs the same?

O Yes

O No Not the same With : O Many Changes O Few Changes

What are these changes? Please describe the changes below

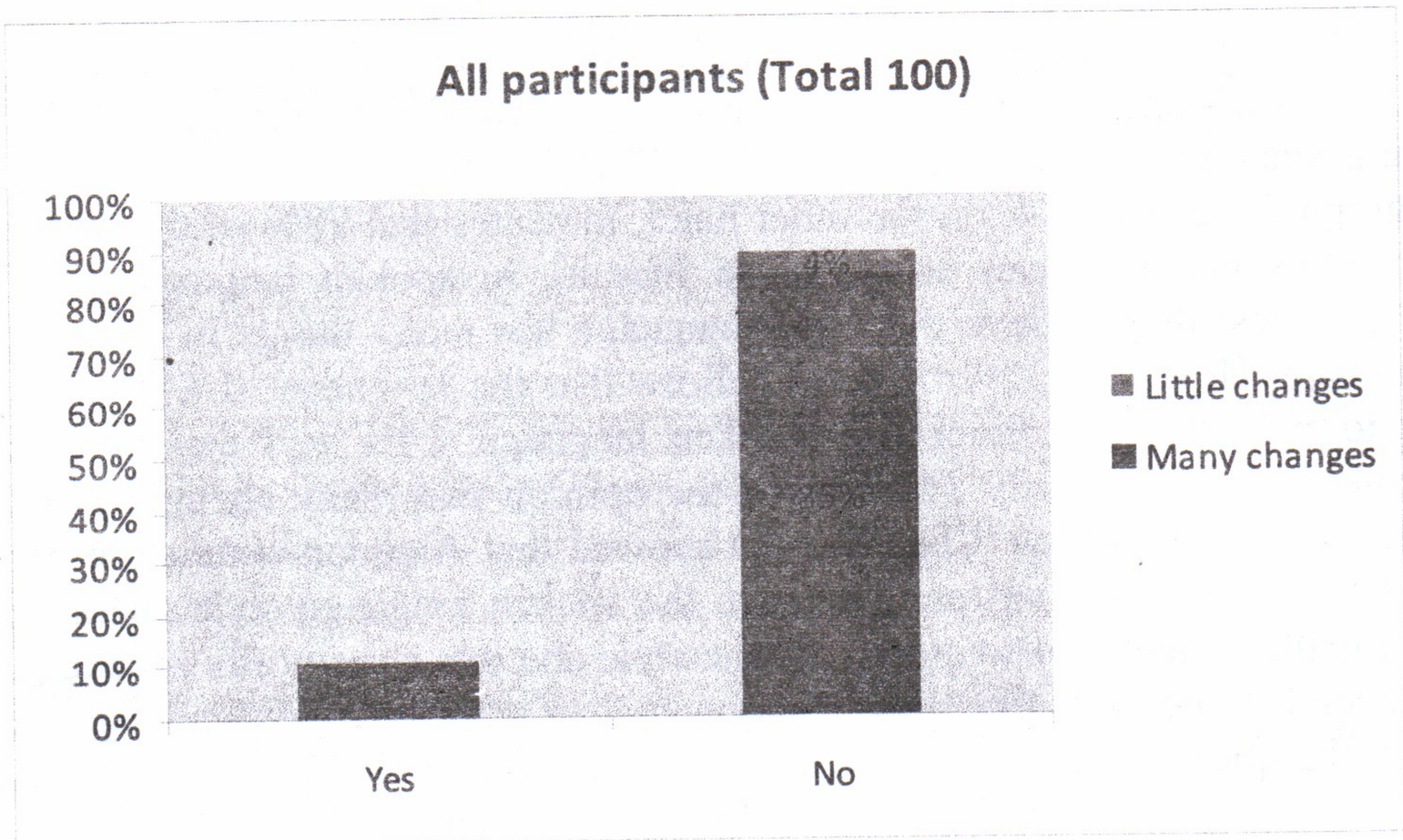


Figure 6: Testing The Structural Model
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

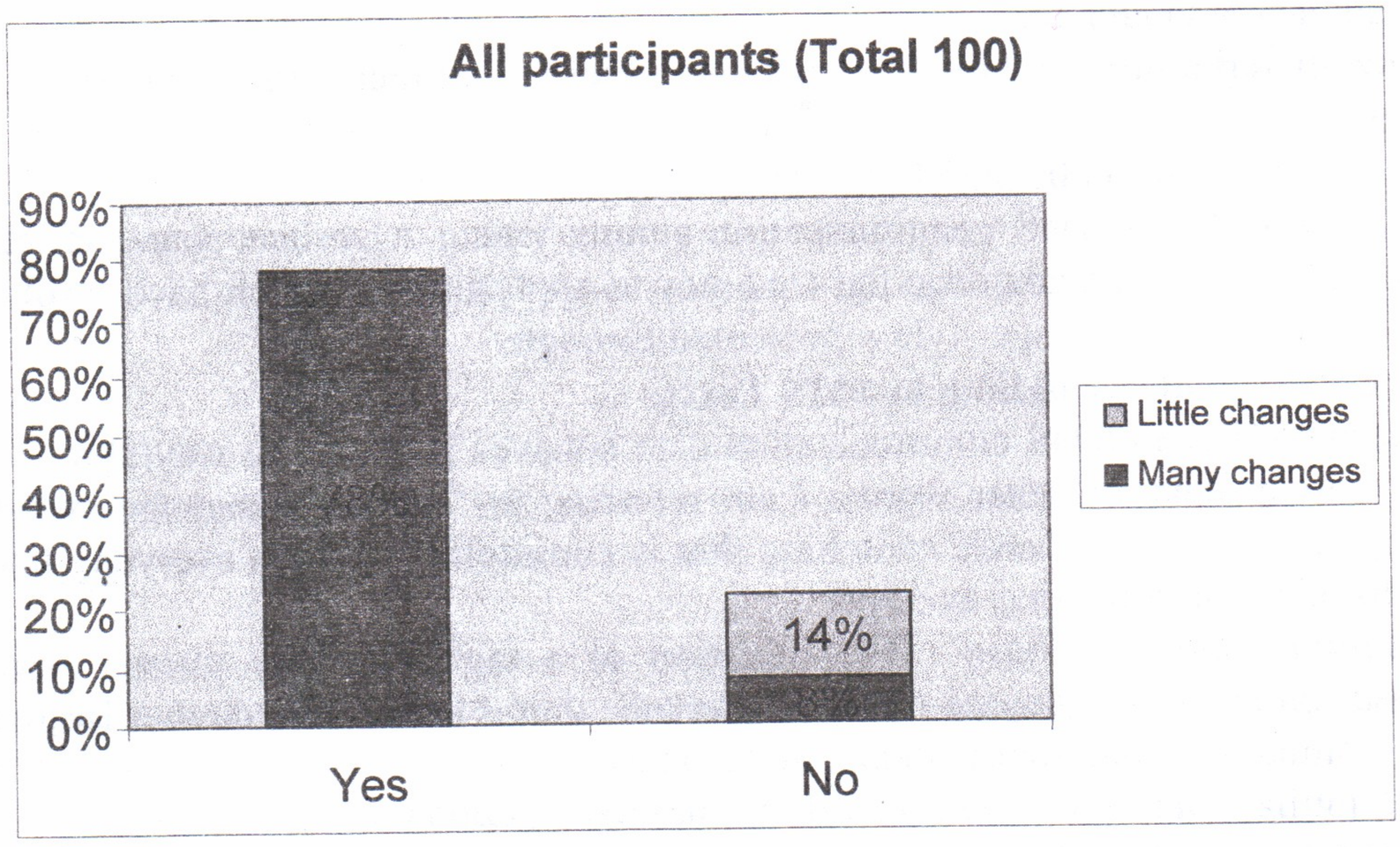


Figure 7: Testing The Structural Model
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

The graph for question3 shows a high score for a 'No' answer (89%) in comparison to a 'Yes' answer. Informants indicate that SMS language has little in common with written language: 85% argued that they will make many changes if they write their SMSs in a traditional written-like manner, only 4% sought to keep their SMSs and make some little changes.

As for the many changes, participants proposed the following:

* Respecting rules of grammar which they learnt at school
* Reconsidering vocabulary and orthography
* Reformulating ideas
* Writing words without abbreviations i.e. in their full forms
* Writing forms of salutations, closings, and greetings

* Writing more details about the topics discussed within the messages

These results showed that Algerian texters are capable to differentiate between what is standard and non-standard in their SMS language.

The graph for question 4, on the other hand, indicates that 78% of the participants see that SMS language can be produced literally in spoken language interaction without changes: they believe that SMS language has many things in common with oral language. However, 22% of them believe that the language of SMS should be adapted to suit the circumstances of spoken language. 14% said that they have to make little changes and only 8% were of the opinion that many changes have to be exercised on SMS language. These results showed that Algerian texters are perfectly aware of the differences between what are the spoken language style characteristics and what is the structure of written language style and that structurally speaking, SMS language tends to be more like spoken language than traditional written language.

In fact, the questionnaire survey regarding the structural analysis of SMS language which investigated the extent to which SMS language is more like spoken language or written language was not seen as being sufficient to confirm the spoken like nature of SMS language.we sought to verify those findings by addressing the linguistic features of SMS texts en rapport with what is regarded as being prototypically written language or oral language.

From the material provided by the language diaries[25], I extracted the following textual features:

- **More of 'Talk' inside the text**

It is observed that SMS communication among young Algerians shares discourse conditions with spoken language the tendency to approximate speech have resulted in a highly colloquial language style represented through:

- **Natural' Switching in SMS Texts:**

Code switching in SMS communication data behaves in the same way(s) as it is in natural speech data. In other words, I am referring to 'Natural' language switching which means the kind of code switching that is commonly heard in everyday talk, as exemplified in the following excerpts

Extra-sential code switching : The insertion of a tag[26], such as phrase markers, exclamations from one language into an utterance that is entirely in another language.

E.g.35 : yadra khdamt mlih fi l'examen ta3 stat

(What's up, did you work well the statistics exam?)

Intra-sentential code switching: where switch occurs between an NP in Fr (le chef de département) and VP in AA [bəkri] (came early)

E.g.36 le chef de département ja bekri

(The manager of the department came early)

Inter-sentential code switching : where switch occurs at clause or sentence boundary, one clause being in a language, the other being in an another language.

E.g.37 rouhi lalbirou ta3 safae tu leur demande mes notes.

(Go to the office of Safae, and ask them to give yous my grades)

According to my native intuition, the above code mixed lines are considered to be 'natural' and 'acceptable' to the extent that it is very likely to hear these excerpts in real-life conversations among Algerian people.

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[25] The language diaries is a research tool which was used to investigate the textual properties of our informants 'SMSs (SMSSs were provided by the same informants who answered the questionnaire)

[26] Following the Cambridge definition (1995:1485) of the word 'tag', it is: "A phrase added on to a sentence for emphasis, to get agreement or to make it into a question".

- **Informal language**

Interestingly, results from the textual data collected through the language diaries show that language use in mobile text messaging among young Algerian users shares many characteristics with spontaneous, informal spoken language (ORSA).in their text-messages, young Algerians 'write their SMSs as if they are saying them'. Features that are characteristic of spoken language such as dialectal words (e.g., Manich (I cannot), chui (I am), chai pa (I do not know), bessah (But),a + (see you Later), pasque (because)) are spelled out in SMS. Moreover, it is easy to neutralize in this form of language the spoken-language accent structure of Algerian Arabic dialects mainly through vocabulary (e.g., the word spelled **'Kiraki'** is typically the spoken form of How are you ? in ORSA which will be spelled out **'Washraki'** in Algerian Arabic spoken , for example, in Algiers.

- **Use of Short Forms**

It seems that that short forms of SMS language utilized by young Algerian texters are not part of written language. The use of these forms enhances the feeling of directness, effortlessness and natural spontaneity typical to spoken communication.

- **Interactivity**

Text messages use the medium of sight, like writers; however, their context of communication, though not face-to-face, is interactive rather than isolated, like speaking

- **More of 'Writing' Inside the Text**

SMS communication among young Algerians shares discourse conditions with traditional writing because of:

The Lack of visual representations:

SMS communication is different from face-to-face communication in so far as I did not find any visual or acoustic manifestation. In fact, non-verbal and paralinguistic signals, such as facial expressions, gestures, body position, eye contact, prosody, talking speed, pauses, voice pitch and so on, which are normally used in order to structure and interpret the flow of utterances, are not part of Algerian texting .

In Algeria, Writing in SMS communication is a mono-modal means of expression like all other traditional written means (such as newspapers, books, and letters), and the interlocutors have to rely on what can be conveyed by the visual system of writing

Openings and Closings

Another measure of the written-like nature of SMS language in Algeria is the degree to which young texters followed the form of traditional letter writing in their SMSs[27], i.e., including salutations (e.g., Salam, Salut (Hi); Asalam alikum (peace be upon you)) and closings (e.g., bisous (kisses); a+ (à plus)).

Here is a comparison between writing, speaking, and SMS communication at the structural and linguistic levels. The main frame of the comparison draws upon Baron's own previous works on the differences between Speaking and Writing (2008) and her comparison of asynchronous CMC characteristics with characteristics of face-to-face speech along with the present research findings

[27] Despite the fact that a small percentage of SMSs contained forms of salutations and greetings.

	Speech	Writing	SMS Communication		
			Characteristics	Speech-like	Written-like
STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES					
number of participants	dialogue	**monologue**	**monologue**		+
durability	ephemeral (real-time)	**durable (time-independent)**	**durable (time-independent**		+
level of specificity	more vague	**more precise**	**more precise**		+
SENTENCE CHARACTERISTICS					
sentence length	**shorter units of expression**	longer units of expression	**shorter units of expression**	+	
one-word sentences	**very common**	very few	**very common**	+	
structural complexity	**Simpler**	more complex	**simpler**	+	
verb tense	present simple	**varied (esp. past and future)**	**varied (esp. past and future)**	+	
VOCABULARY CHARACTERISTICS					
use of contractions	**common**	less common	**common**	+	
abbreviations, acronyms	infrequent	**common**	**common**		+
scope of vocabulary	**more concrete more colloquial narrower lexical choices more slang and obscenity**	more abstract more literary wider lexical choices less slang or obscenity	**more concrete more colloquial narrower lexical choices more slang and obscenity**	+	
pronouns	**many 1 st and 2 nd person**	fewer 1 st and 2 nd person (except in letters)	**many 1 st and 2 nd person**	+	
deictics (e.g., here, now)	**use (since have situational context)**	avoid (since have no situational context).	**use (since have situational context)**	+	
LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS					
Language Style	**Informal**	Formal	**Informal**	+	

	Often avoid salutations **Use contractions, slang**		**Often avoid salutations** **Use contractions, slang**		
Responses	**Fast response time assumed**	Time-constrained response	**Fast response time assumed**	+	
Audience Identity	**Intended for limited, specified audience**	Can be forwarded to multiple audience	**Intended for limited, specified audience**	+	
			SCORES	**11**	**04**

As for the structural and linguistic properties of SMS language, the above table results shows that texting in Algeria bears far more resemblance to oral language than to its written counterpart and that it is , accordingly, a written version of oral language.More to be said on this concern in the following analysis (mainly results of question 6).

The Psychological Analysis of Speech and Writing in SMS Communication

Q5: When you write SMSs, you do concentrate more on...

O The message : Its structure (Do you pay attention to the correctness of your grammar and style?)

O The person : What you are going to say to that person ? (ideas, attitudes, emotions, feelings…etc)

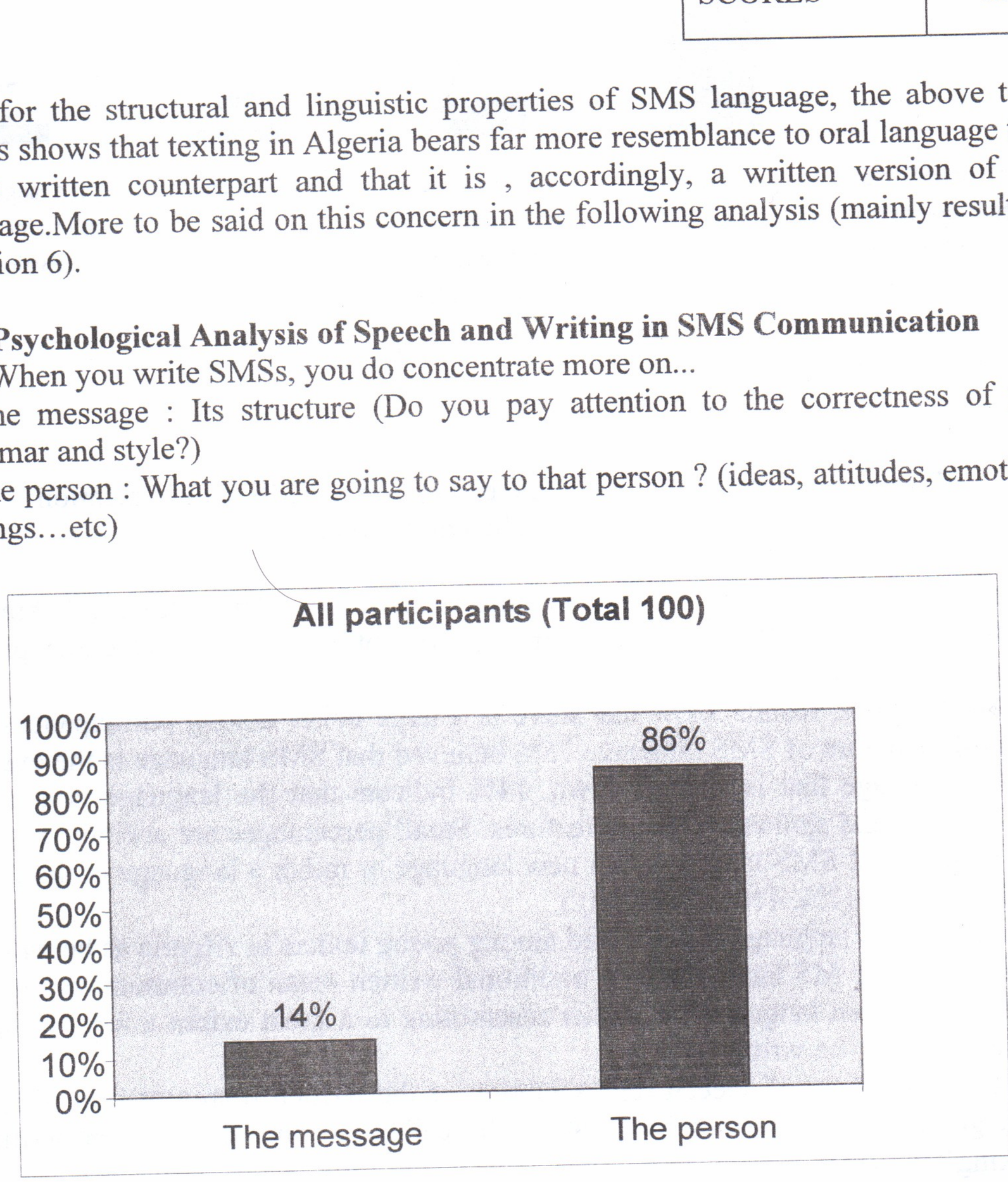


Figure 8 : Testing The Psychological Model
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

Question 5 sought to test The Psychological Model designed to search the written or spoken nature of SMS language. The results show that only 14% of the respondents said they concentrate more on *the message* when writing their SMSs. But much more than the half of the respondents (86%) said that they pay more attention to *the person* to whom the SMS will be sent to. This may imply that young Algerian texters are indeed aware of the psychological issue of SMS exchanges and that, according to the psychological model, SMS writing is an oral-like mode of communication.

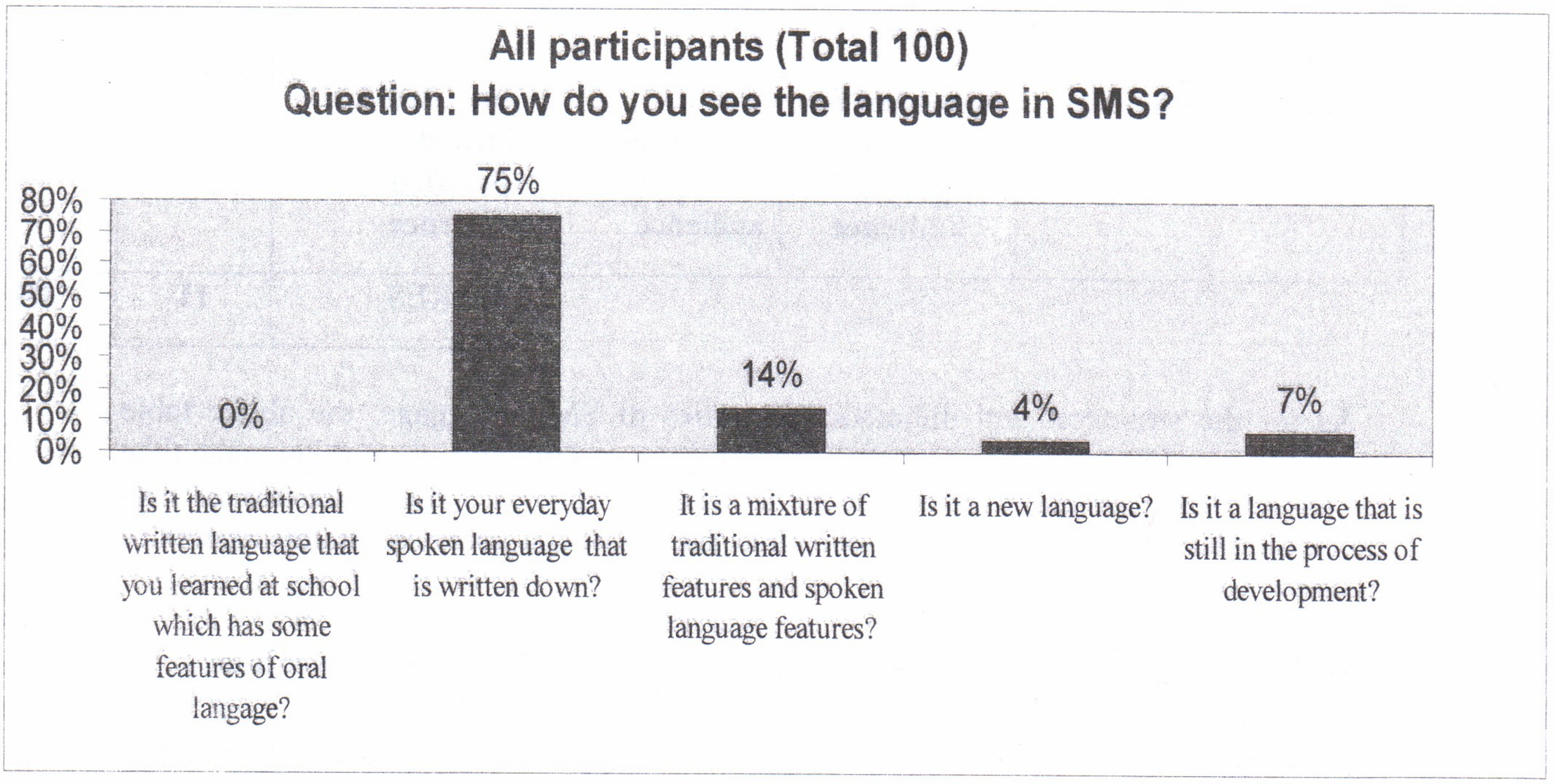


Figure 9 : Participants' language perception in SMS communication
(*Source*: The Questionnaire)

Question 6 is the final question in questionnaire one. The rationale behind this question is to survey directly the participants' perception of the language they produce in text messaging.

From Graph 9, results show that there is a large belief among participants on the spoken-like nature of SMS language.75% believed that SMS language is the everyday spoken language that is written down. 14% indicate that the language is a mixture between oral and spoken language features. Small percentages are attributed to those who believe that SMS language is a new language or rather a language in the process of development (7%, 4% respectively).

In fact, SMS language is perceived among young texters in Algeria as being totally different (0%for MS language as a traditional written mean of communication) from traditional written language but rather resembling to a great extent a form of speech that happened to be written down.

The phenomenon of speech representation or the written representation of spoken language has been described by Preston who called the phenomenon 'the writing of speaking'[28] (1985:328).

[28] Mishler calls the phenomenon a "re-presentation" of speech (1991:261)

The characteristics of this normal, casual speech (AA language switching between AA and Fr) are not provided for by the conventions of standard written AA as they are inexistent. The process of encoding casual speech in the writing of SMS is one of strange-making. Four ways of encoding casual speech are recognized in SMS language :

* **'Slangy' Speech**

This type of respelling attempts "to capture through the use of non-standard spellings the fact that the speech is casual, not carefully monitored, relaxed-perhaps slangy" (Preston,1985:328) :

E.g 1.: [**rouhi tabgui**] je ne ve plu te voir
"Go way, I do not want to see you any more."

E.g 2. : [**nkar3ou chouia radi**] yji aziz [**bach nrouhou**] esnbl
"We have to wait a little bit. Aziz will come in order to go together."

* **Word Repetition**

One characteristic of normal, casual speech is word repetition that is used, like spoken language, to represent emphasis

E.g 1.: hada bessah problem, problem kbir
"It is really a problem, a big one."

* **Discourse Markers**

Another characteristic of casual speech is the use of discourse markers like 'wya' (Oh)., '3labalek(i)' (you know), 'Saha' (ok), and interjections like 'wya rabi' (oh my god). The following examples contain the use of discourse markers in SMS language:

E.g 1.: **wya** ki kunt lbareh,3jabtni bezzaf
"Oh, you were very handsome yesterday. I appreciated that very much"

E.g 2. : **3labalki**, g pa trouvé le chef de dept
"you know! I did not find the head of the department."

* **Dialect**

Algerians' use of non-standard dialect can be represented in different ways. Preston calls the representation of dialect 'dialect respelling', and says that this type of respelling attempts "to capture regional and social features of pronunciation" (Preston,1985:328). The variant /gu:lilha/ is used by texters living Oran (see the following example) whereas the variant /qu:lilha/ index a different variety of Algerian Arabic spoken that may be used by Algerian texters living, for instance, in Algiers.

E.g .: goulilha c pa la péne
"Tell her, there is no need"

IIV/ Conclusion

This work is based on the assumption that when a contemporary language technology is in contact with language users, there are observable contact phenomena which are typical to both technology and its users. In respect to SMS communication, one can not deny but recognize the novelty of a whole new set of linguistic practices characterizing this new technology.

This work has raised the issue of the complex relationship between speech and writing in Algerian text messaging. The results showed that *SMS language is seen by its users as a spoken language that is constrained by the medium*. It has been suggested that a psychological dimension of SMS texts' production together with a structural analysis of these texts played a very prominent role in identifying the nature of language in SMS among young Algerian users.

Accordingly, findings clearly demonstrated through the psycho-structural model that it is difficult to deny the supremacy of spoken language-like features over written language-like features in Algerian texting. The resulting language from SMS communication showed many features associated with spoken language: The tone of the SMSs was relatively informal; there were vast amount of code switching of Algerian Arabic and French; most expressions were dialectal representations; more concentration was reserved to the ideas and feelings conveyed to the SMS's receiver rather than to the correctness of the grammatical structure of the language. These features were, to a great extent, clear evidences on the point that language in Algerian text messaging produced by young texters is an oral language which was written because the medium was a written one.

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