

Texting and Literacy

Exam-Type Questions!!



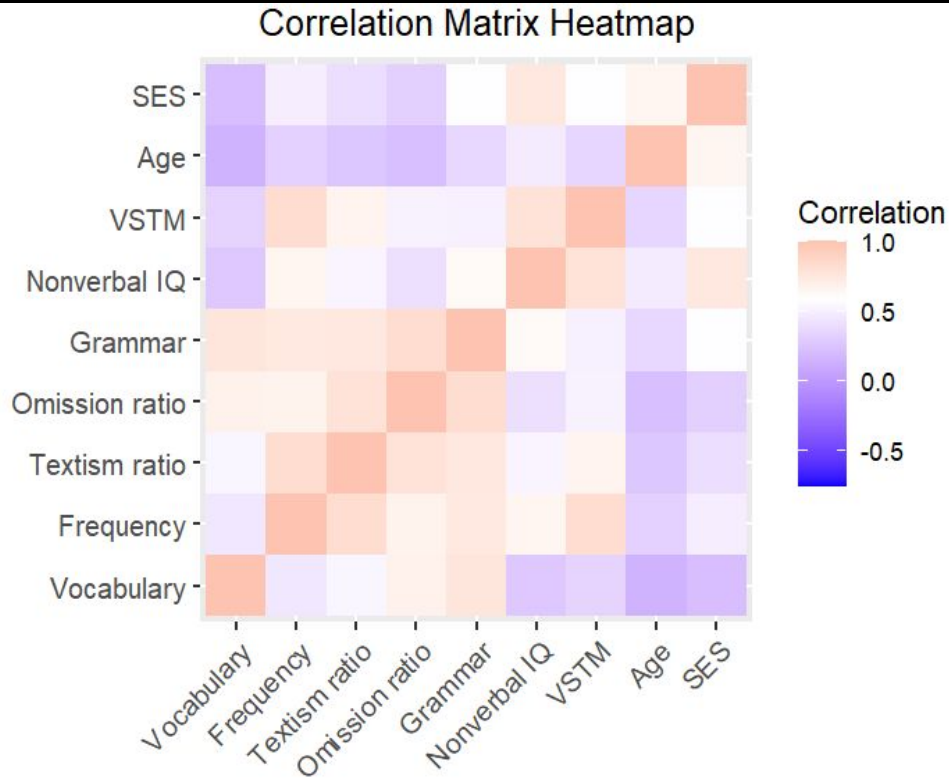
Recap:

Myth- "Texting makes you illiterate" (Kaplan 190)

Big-Picture Research Question- Does the use of "textese" influence children's grammar performance? And is this effect specific to grammar, or language in general? (Van Dijk, Chantal N., et al 2016)

Measurable Research Question- Can use of textisms have a significant impact on grammar or language?

Data Graphic



Explanation and Parsing:

- Each box compares 2 variables
- Color tells you correlation

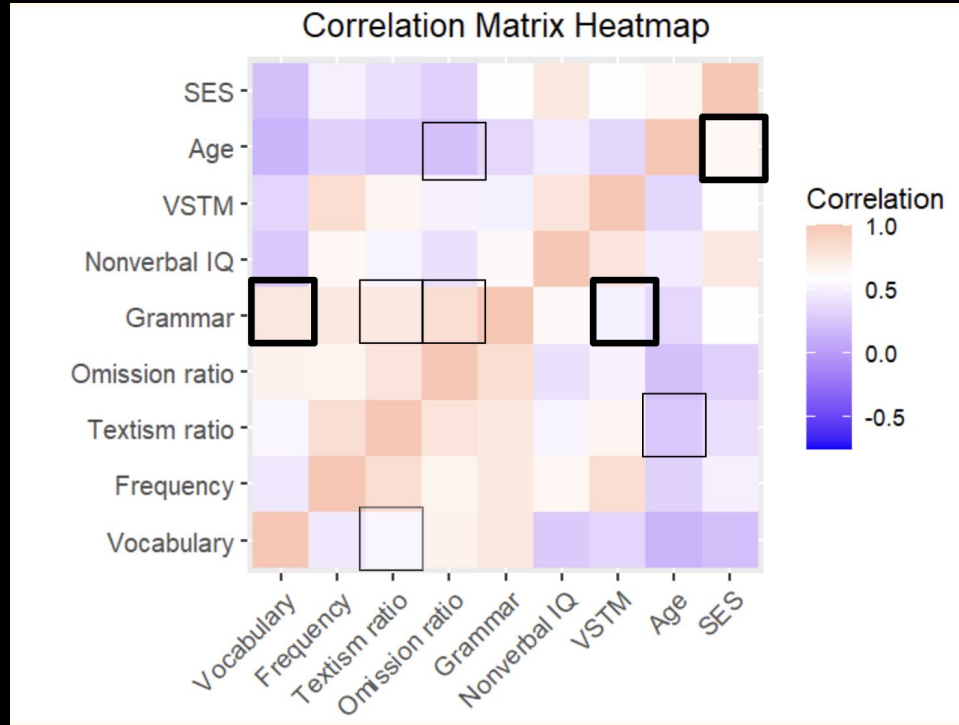
(White/Orange= Positive Correlation)

*As one increases, so does the other.

(Purple/Blue= Negative Correlation)

*As one increases, the other decreases

- There are two levels of significance:
 - 1) $p < .05$: means the result is likely real (less than 5% chance it's random)
 - 2) $p < .01$: even stronger evidence (less than 1% chance it's random)



Significant correlation findings $p < .05$:

Age - Omission ratio

Omission ratio - Grammar

Age - Textism ratio

Textism ratio - Grammar

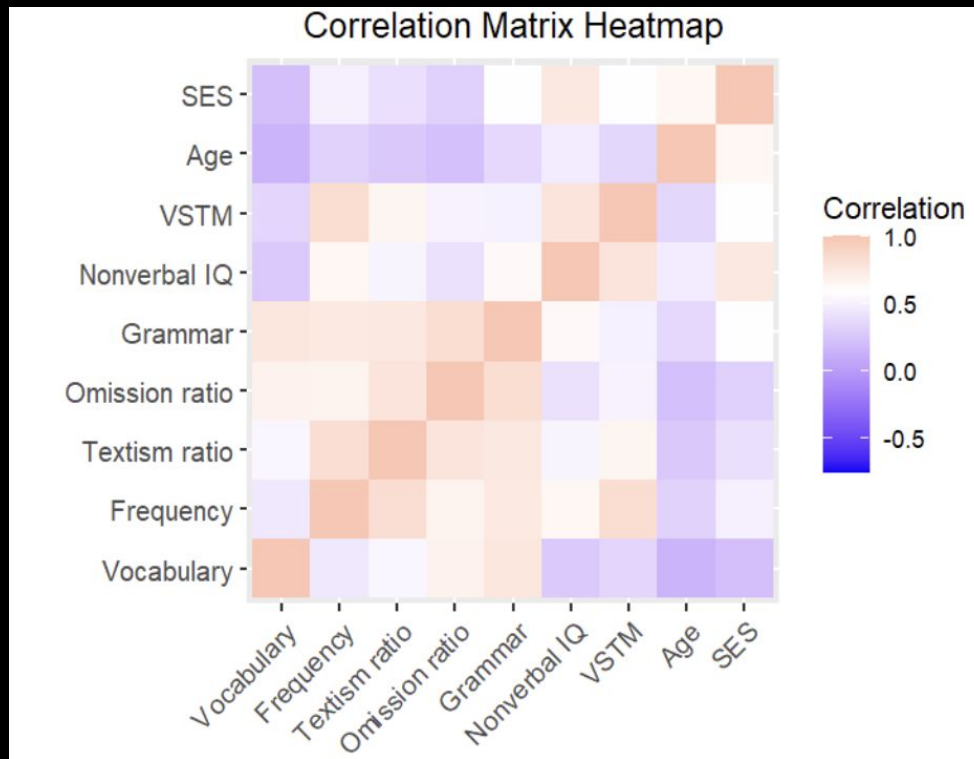
Textism ratio - Vocabulary

Findings of $p < .01$ (bolded boxes):

Age - SES

VSTM - Grammar

Vocabulary - Grammar



Interpretation Question

If texting really made kids “illiterate,” what pattern would we expect to see between textism use and grammar in this heatmap? And is that what we actually find?

Answer:

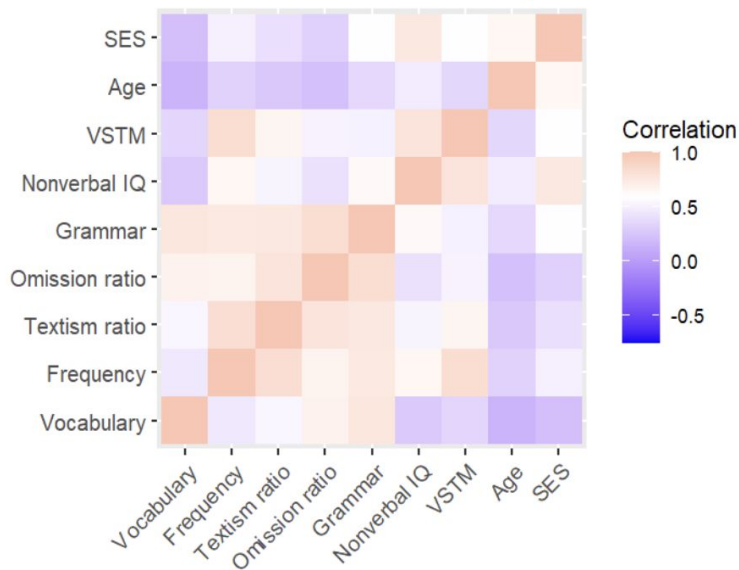
If texting really made kids illiterate, we'd expect a **strong negative correlation** between textism use and grammar. (meaning the more textisms someone used, the worse their grammar would be.)

But the data **don't** show that pattern!!

While there is a correlation between textism ratio and grammar, **it's not strongly negative**, and textism use also relates to vocabulary and age.

This suggests that texting habits might be connected to language experience and development, not grammatical decline.

Correlation Matrix Heatmap



**Myth- "Texting makes you illiterate."
(Kaplan 190)**

Discussion Question

Given that textism use is linked to grammar and vocabulary (but not in the direction the myth predicts) what might this suggest about how texting influences language learning and awareness, rather than just harming it?

Answer

The data don't support the myth that texting makes kids illiterate.

If the myth were true, we'd see a strong negative link between textism use and grammar, but research doesn't show that.

Instead, textism use is positively related to both grammar and vocabulary. In other words, kids who frequently use textisms often have a strong grasp of how language works. They know when and how to switch between informal texting language and formal written English.

This shows that texting isn't damaging language skills, it's actually highlighting linguistic flexibility and the ability to "play around with language".

Kids who understand grammar can creatively bend, shorten, or modify words while texting, showing control rather than confusion over language rules.

Overall: Texting doesn't destroy language; it demonstrates how young people skillfully adapt and reshape language for new, fast-paced forms of communication.