The rise of communication technologies has led to a deep modification in several areas of human life. Languages are no exceptions. Since language teachers are first trained and then put in charge of guiding learners towards the mastery of languages for communication, it is important to investigate their views about such changes because they are first individual users who may be confronted with the advantages and drawbacks of these technologies in their professional practice. That is why the main purpose of this study, the second in a series, is to explore the perspectives of Beninese pre-service technical teachers on their reasons to use SMS. The results of this study shed further light on a previous study that indicated that none of these went without sending SMS on a day.

**Keywords:** Benin, pre-service technical teachers, SMS use, motives.

**Problem and Purpose**
Cellphones are, these days, an essential tool for almost everybody. Their use is so well-established that one may ask if there can be a human being without a cellphone. In Benin, the use of cellulars has been noted for more than a decade [1].

And apart from making calls, one of the most prominent and most often used features of such phones is text messaging, commonly called SMS. In fact, Gnonlonfoun [1, 2], Gnonlonfoun and Sakpoliba [3] as well as Hindeme, Egounleti and Gnonlonfoun [4] have shown that the majority of Benin youth send SMS every day. They have indicated that SMS provides users with a convenient service which has taken the Internet revolution to the next level with (…) a unique writing style. An examination of literature available [5-12] confirms this point. Most cellphones are set up in such a way that the average length of an SMS is 160 characters. However, when writing on Internet fora, the features of common SMS speech are used. They help those engaged in the exchange to provide a somewhat literal representation of their speech and concerns through the use of a variety of features such as emoticons to convey emotions, punctuation and capitalization to emphasize words or phrases as well. In such conditions, the focus is put on relational interaction with the speech being extremely interactive, lively and natural [13-20]. And this form of communication is now the most popular form of daily communication.

Therefore, because of the widespread and frequent use of text-messaging (or SMS), one could assume that people’s written language may begin to show certain features that are used when writing SMS messages. Thus, their language does no longer conform to the formally approved standards of written language. Consequently, it is vital to explore the possible relations between the use of SMS speech and the way in which learners use language in their written work. This paper, the second in a series, investigates specifically the motives underlying the daily use of SMS by pre-service technical teachers who are supposed to teach in secondary schools nationwide upon completion of their studies.

**Method**
In this study, a descriptive methodology has been used as recommended by the literature in similar cases [21-23]. Data collection has been carried out by the means of a Likert-scale questionnaire which comprised only one question: the reasons why pre-service teachers use SMS frequently. The questionnaire was administered to 200 participants (100 from First Year and 100 from Third year). These participants were all selected among the 400 student-teachers registered at ENSET-Lokossa in 2017-2018 academic years [24].
They belonged to different fields of study including Agriculture, Mechanical Engineering, Home Economics, Economics, Accountancy, Mechanics and Secretary. They took an average of about five to ten minutes to answer. The study was conducted in the second half of October 2018.

**FINDINGS**

The results of the data collected are presented in table 1 below:

### Table-1: Overall Reasons for Using SMS

| N°   | REASONS                        | PERCENTAGES OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS (N=200) |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Talk to friends                | 80% (160)                                 |
| 2    | Get information                | 60% (120)                                 |
| 3    | Make arrangements              | 40% (80)                                  |
| 4    | Boredom                        | 15% (30)                                  |
| 5    | Low cost                       | 30% (60)                                  |
| 6    | Keeping in touch with family and friends | 38% (76)     |
| 7    | Knowledge improvement          | 06% (12)                                 |
| 8    | Ease of use                    | 11% (22)                                  |
| 9    | Quickness                      | 06% (12)                                  |
| 10   | Emergency                      | 05% (10)                                  |
| 11   | Competition                    | 01% (02)                                  |

### Table-2: Reasons for using SMS per group of pre-service teachers

| N°   | REASONS                        | PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS |
|------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
|      |                                | FIRST YEAR TEACHERS (N=100) | THIRD YEAR TEACHERS (N=100) |
| 1    | Talk to friends                | 75 (75%)              | 60 (60%)                  |
| 2    | Get information                | 60 (60%)              | 45 (45%)                  |
| 3    | Make arrangements              | 45 (45%)              | 42 (42%)                  |
| 4    | Boredom                        | 12 (12%)              | 11 (11%)                  |
| 5    | Low cost                       | 25 (25%)              | 45 (45%)                  |
| 6    | Keeping in touch with family and friends | 65 (65%)     | 45 (45%)                  |
| 7    | Knowledge improvement          | 00 (00%)              | 04 (04%)                  |
| 8    | Ease of use                    | 12 (12%)              | 11 (11%)                  |
| 9    | Quickness                      | 09 (09%)              | 00 (00%)                  |
| 10   | Emergency                      | 14 (14%)              | 00 (00%)                  |
| 11   | Competition                    | 00 (00%)              | 04 (04%)                  |

**DISCUSSIONS**

The data in Table 1 above indicate participants’ reasons for using SMS. Most of them (80%) indicated that talking to their friends was their major motivation for sending SMS. The need to obtain information (on school assignments) was the second most cited reason (60%), which, in most cases, involved obtaining information about homework requirements or group works. Other information that was sought included making arrangements, such as planning weekend activities, as well as keeping in contact with friends and family. These were frequently cited as reasons for using SMS. Furthermore, a significant number of participants (30%) reported that they send SMS because this messaging service is cost effective; cheaper than a phone call and often freely provided under certain conditions by network providers.

As stated above, the participants of this study indicated that talking to friends was their primary reason for using SMS. Adolescent and youth social behaviour is characterised by increasing interest in and involvement with peers [25, 26-28]. Therefore, friendships and friend groups are of utmost importance to these pre-service teachers. They want to be connected to what is happening around them, they want to know where their friends are, what they are doing and they want to be involved in social events. SMSing helps fulfill this fundamental need for constant contact, because it is cost effective, easy to use and readily available across all age groups and language groups. These reasons can explain the frequency of SMS use amongst the participants of this study. The collected data also indicate that participants are highly motivated to use SMS on a regular basis. The data presented in Table 1 supports this hypothesis; as the reasons cited by participants for their frequent use of SMS are substantial and underpin necessary and daily utilization of SMS speech. This is a confirmation of the conclusions in Hindeme, Egounleti and Gnonlonfoun [4].

In Table 2, the two groups of pre-service teacher participants are compared in terms of their self-reported reasons for using SMS. As can be seen from this table, both groups were primarily concerned with using SMSes to talk to their friends (75% and 60%, respectively). Getting information and making arrangements were also rated highly amongst both groups (of the first year pre-service teachers group, 60% and 45%, respectively, cited these reasons, and...
45% and 42% of the third year pre-service teachers group, and keeping in touch with family and friends proved to be a priority (for 65% of the first year pre-service teachers and 45% of the third year pre-service teachers). A considerable number of participants from first year and third year reported that they use SMS because it is cost effective, with more third year participants citing this as a reason (25% vs. 45%). This important differential gap in favour of third year participants could be that third year pre-service teachers are, at this level of their training, more concerned about the cost of SMSing because they carry greater financial responsibilities for payment of cellphone costs than the first year participants who might be more financially dependent on their parents and maybe receive a greater allocation. Therefore, even though table 1 showed that third year participants use SMS more than first year participants do, Table 2 shows that the two groups have very similar motivations for using SMS.

Very few participants stated that they use SMS for emergencies, to enter competitions, to improve their knowledge or because it was a quicker means of communicating. Those who mentioned these reasons were mostly first year participants.

**CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the collected data shows that pre-service technical teachers use SMS to keep in touch with their friends, to get information and make diverse as well as to keep in touch with family and friends. However, more third year participants reported that they use SMS because it is cost effective. This is a good indication of their growing consciousness and sense of responsibility.

**REFERENCE**

1. Gnonlonfoun, J.M. (2009). *The use of the internet in the process of EFL teaching and learning in Beninese secondary schools: rationale, problems and alternatives*. Mémoire de Maîtrise é-Lettres en Didactique Anglaise (TACI), Abomey-Calavi University.

2. Gnonlonfoun, J.M. (2012). *Exploring the Influence of Mobile-phone messaging on EFL Students’ Composition in Beninese Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Post-beginners in CEG Zogbo*. Mémoire de DEA en Didactique Anglaise (TACI), Abomey-Calavi University.

3. Gnonlonfoun, J.M., & Sakpoliba, I. (2016). “Exploring the Use of SMS Features in the English Written Work of Beninese Post-Beginner EFL Learners” in *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature (IMPACT: IJRHAL)*, 4(10), 2321-8878.

4. Hindeme, U., Egouleti, P., and Gnonlonfoun, J.M. (2018) “Exploring Beninese pre-service technical teachers’ frequency of using SMS” in *Lettres d’Ivoire*, N° 028 (V1-Littératures), Décembre 2018, pp215-218, ISSN 1991-8666.

5. Borko, H., & Putnam, R. T. (1996). “Learning to teach”. In D. Berliner & R. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 673–708). New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

6. Boudah, D. J., Logan, K. R., & Greenwood, C. R. (2001). “The research to practice projects: Lessons learned about changing teacher practice” in *Computer mediated communication: Social interaction and the Internet*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

7. Thurlow, C., Lengel, L. and Tomic, A. (2004). *Computer mediated communication: Social interaction and the Internet*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

8. Gilster, P. (1997). *Digital literacy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

9. Barton, D. P. (2001). *Literacy practices in and out of the classroom*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

10. Bouzguiou, H., (2006). “Let’s mix it cheaply, baby” in *Mail and Guardian*, p. 7.

11. Ross, N. (2006). “Writing in the Information Age”. *English Today* 22 (3): 39-46.

12. Bizzellias, C. (2007). “SMS gets message across” in *Financial Mail*, p. 90, 2007.

13. Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social Linguistics and Literacies*. London: Taylor and Francis.

14. Netzsch, P. (2001). *Literacies in the Information age: Theorizing digital literacies*. London: Taylor and Francis.

15. Barton, D. P. (2001). *Literacy practices in and out of the classroom*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

16. Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

17. Bentham, M. (2002). “Mobile phone dictionary that will b gr8 4 txt msgs” in *The Sunday Telegraph*. London, UK: Feb 10, 2002.

18. Grinler, R. and Eldridge, M., (2003). “Wan2tlk?: everyday text messaging” in *Proceedings of the ACM CHI 2003 Human Factors in Computing Systems Conference*, edited by Cockton, Gilbert, Korhonen, Panu, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, USA. 441-448. Available online at: http://www.ics.uci.edu/~jdp/classes/ics105s03/readings/grinler-wan2tlk-chi03.pdf, 2003.

19. Crystal, D. (2001). *Language and the Internet*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

20. Le Bodic, G. (2005). *Mobile Messaging technologies and services: SMS, EMS and MMS*. England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

21. Borko, H, & Putnam, R. T. (1996). “Learning to teach”. In D. Berliner & R. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 673–708). New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

22. Boudah, D. J., Logan, K. R., & Greenwood, C. R. (2001). “The research to practice projects: Lessons learned about changing teacher practice” in
Teacher Education and Special Education, 24, 290–303.

23. Gnonlonfoun, J.M. (2014). Exploring Secondary School EFL Teachers’ attitudes to and Perceptions of Using the Internet in English Language Teaching in Benin. Doctoral Dissertation, Abomey-Calavi University: Doctoral School of the Arts Faculty.

24. Enset L. (2018). Statistics Division Reports. Lokossa: ENSET.

25. Louw, D., & Edwards, D. (1997). Psychology an introduction for student in South Africa. Johannesburg: Henneman.

26. Hounmenou, J.C. (2018). Adolescent Psychology Classnotes. Porto-Novo : ENS Porto-Novo.

27. Crystal, D. (2004). The Language Revolution. United Kingdom: Polity Press Ltd.

28. Merriam, S. B. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.