

Autocorrect Dependency and Its Impact on Spelling and Grammar Skills among Secondary School Students

Dr. Sanam Vaseem Shaikh

Anjuman-I-Islam's Dr. Mohammed Ishaq Jamkhanawala Girls' High School & Jr. College of Science & Commerce, Bandra

Abstract: The title of the paper is "Autocorrect Dependency and its impact on spelling and grammar skills among secondary school students". This paper aims to examine the increasing reliance of secondary school students on autocorrect features and its consequent impact on their spelling and grammar proficiency. The growing dependency on digital correction tools is leading to a noticeable decline in students' vocabulary retention and independent language skills.

Keywords: students, use of social media, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Autocorrect is helpful while having a speedy communication. The tendency to rely on autocorrect has diminished their motivation to actively learn and practice new words. Over time, this reliance has resulted in a noticeable decline in their spelling accuracy. Many students struggle to construct grammatically correct sentences independently. They often avoid writing handwritten essays and prefer to postpone the task until they can type and depend on autocorrect for assistance.

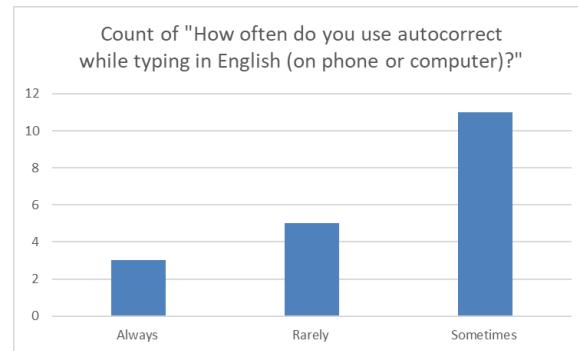
To assess this growing dependency, a set of 7 structured questions was designed and distributed among students to gather data on their usage patterns and the extent to which autocorrect has impeded their vocabulary acquisition and spelling accuracy.

AUTOCORRECT AFFECTS SPELLING ACCURACY AND GRAMMATICAL UNDERSTANDING

This highlights the types of errors students frequently make when tasked with digital assignments. Instead of reading or reviewing the content carefully, they often rely blindly on autocorrect and accept suggestions

without comprehension. As a consequence, vocabulary development and critical thinking skills are gradually diminishing. When students are allowed unrestricted access to digital devices, even for academic tasks, their primary focus shifts to finishing the work quickly—often within minutes—rather than investing time in refining word choices, searching for appropriate synonyms, or applying correct punctuation. This growing dependency on technology undermines the depth and quality of their learning process.

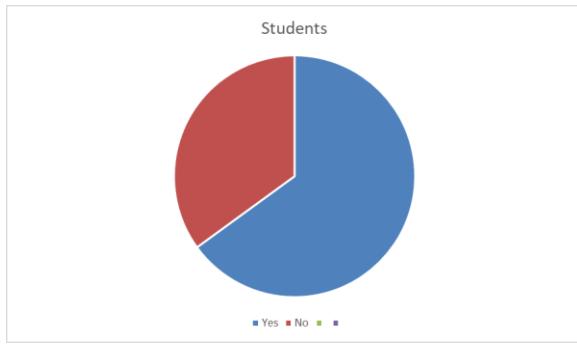
The first question that has been asked to 10 students of Std. IX and ten of std. X was "How often do you use autocorrect while typing in English (on phone or computer)?"



The above graph shows that 14 out of 20 students (70%) reported that they *sometimes* use autocorrect, indicating a moderate dependency. Three students (15%) use autocorrect *always*, showing a high level of reliance on digital tools, which may impact their independent spelling and grammar skills. Another three students (15%) reported using it *rarely*, indicating a lower dependence, possibly preserving their vocabulary and grammar abilities.

This data suggests that while autocorrect is commonly used, the consistent reliance among a few students raises concerns about potential long-term effects on their language development.

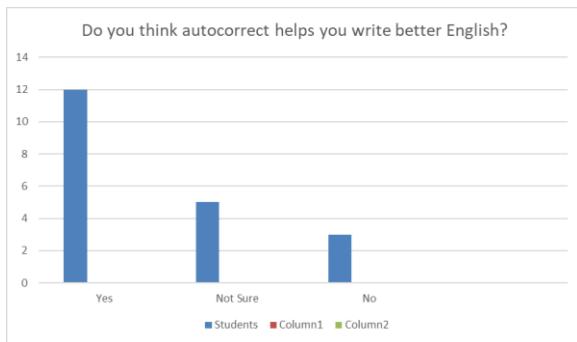
The second question "Have you ever sent a wrong or funny message because of autocorrect?"



The above pie chart illustrates that 65% (13 out of 20) of students have experienced errors due to autocorrect, leading to incorrect or humorous messages. The remaining 35% (7 out of 20) have not encountered such issues, indicating either cautious use or minimal reliance on autocorrect.

These findings support the argument that over-reliance on autocorrect can result in miscommunication. It also indicates a lack of proofreading, as many students trust autocorrect without reviewing the final output.

Third question that was asked "Do you think autocorrect helps you write better English?"

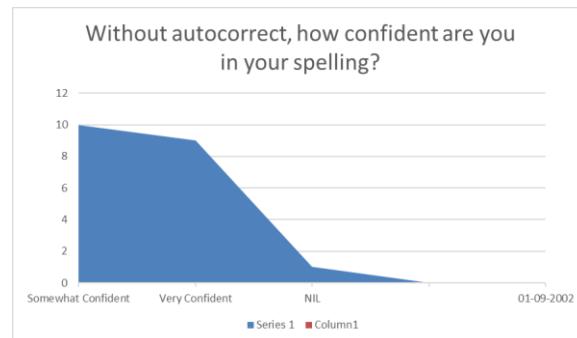


The above bar graph predicts that 60% (12/20) believe autocorrect helps them write better English. 25% (5/20) are uncertain, indicating a lack of awareness about autocorrect's actual impact on their language

development. 15% (3/20) feel that autocorrect does not help, possibly because they recognize its limitations or drawbacks. A majority of students perceive autocorrect as a useful aid in improving their English writing. However, a significant number are either unsure or disagree, which suggests a gap in understanding how autocorrect works—whether it truly enhances learning or just offers temporary fixes.

While most students view autocorrect positively, the presence of uncertainty and disagreement among others signals a need for digital literacy education. Students should be guided on how to use such tools effectively—as a support, not a substitute—for genuine language improvement.

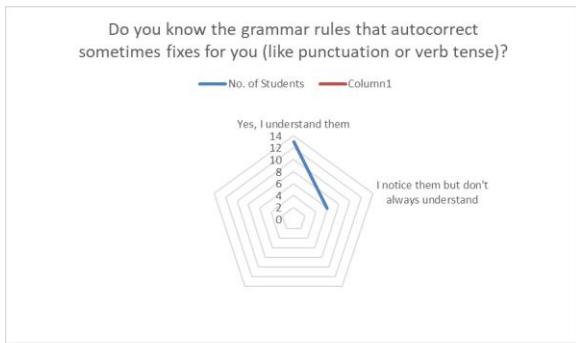
The fourth question that followed was "Without autocorrect, how confident are you in your spelling?"



The bar graph above indicates that 60% (12/20) of students believe autocorrect helps them write better English. However, 25% (5/20) are *not sure*, showing a lack of awareness regarding the tool's actual impact on their learning. Meanwhile, 15% (3/20) feel that autocorrect does *not* help, likely recognizing its limitations.

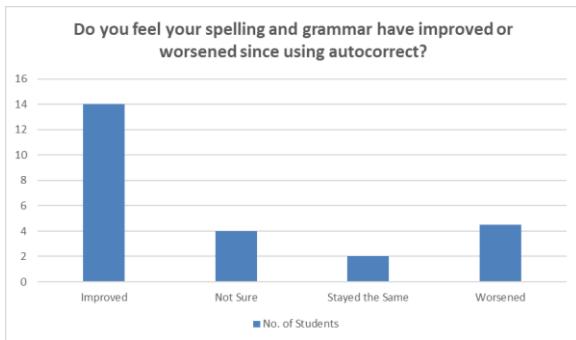
Although the majority view autocorrect positively, the uncertainty and disagreement among others highlight the need for digital literacy education. Students should be guided to use autocorrect as a supportive tool rather than a complete substitute for writing skills.

The question that followed next was "Do you know the grammar rules that autocorrect sometimes fixes for you (like punctuation or verb tense)?"



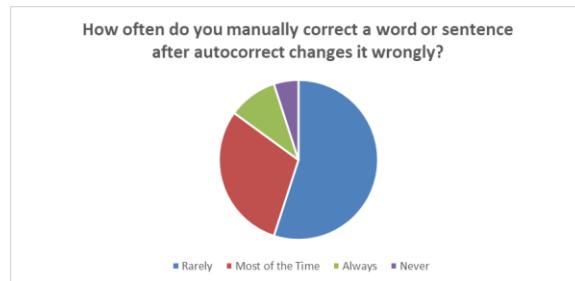
The radar chart above shows that a majority (65%) claim they understand the grammar rules that autocorrect corrects. Meanwhile, 30% state that they *notice* the corrections but *don't fully understand* them, revealing a gap in grammatical comprehension even with exposure.

Student were inquired “Do you feel your spelling and grammar have improved or worsened since using autocorrect?”



The above graph indicates that 70% of the students believe their spelling and grammar have *improved* due to autocorrect. However, 25% either feel unsure or believe there has been no improvement, while one student feels their language skills have *worsened*, pointing to possible misuse or excessive dependence on the tool.

The most important question that was being asked to students was “How often do you manually correct a word or sentence after autocorrect changes it wrongly?”



The pie chart reveals that 55% of students *rarely* correct the mistakes made by autocorrect. Only 10% *always* make manual corrections, suggesting limited critical engagement with their writing. This support concerns that students passively accept errors, leading to a *decline* in proofreading habits and reduced language awareness.

Based on the responses, it is evident that teachers and parents must give greater emphasis to handwritten assignments and language reinforcement activities. A simple strategy like introducing one new or challenging word each morning on the classroom board—monitored daily or weekly—can enhance vocabulary. Teachers could also conduct quick five-minute vocabulary or spelling assessments without disturbing the syllabus schedule. This practice will help students reduce spelling errors and strengthen their command over English vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that while autocorrect is viewed as a helpful tool by most students, it may be creating a *false sense of language proficiency*. Many students lack the habit of actively reviewing and correcting their writing, leading to diminished confidence without technological support. There is a clear need for a balanced instructional approach, where technology aids language learning but does not replace the foundational skills of spelling, grammar, and vocabulary development.

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