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The Use of Social Networking Sites in Education: The Impact of Facebook Language on Foreign Language Learners' Writing Skill: The Case of First Year Master Degree Students at the University 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's degree in Anglophone Language, Literature, and Civilization.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the memory of my deceased grandmother, whom I lost the previous year. I dedicate the work for her, as she raised me up from my first days, she embraced me when I need help and support, I would like to thank her for her infinite care she gave me. She contributed a lot in making me who I am now.

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Dedication

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Abstract

The present dissertation deals with the use of social media in education, the study aims at investigating namely the impact of Facebook language on foreign language learners' writing skill; case study of first year Master students of the English department at the University of Guelma. By examining this impact, it has been hypothesized that if the students overuse the Facebook language, this would have a negative impact on their writing skill. This study has been carried out through a qualitative data from students' corpora that have been collected, and another quantitative data from students' questionnaire, which was addressed to 97 students. Hence, the findings of the present dissertation demonstrate that students are highly addicted to Facebook, they use improper language within the academia, and that was mainly due to their overuse of the net language. A further finding reveals that students' writings at the morphological level are affected by net language, especially the use of incorrect spelling, informal language (contractions), and abbreviations. Hence, we advocate that the students should be aware of the technologies harms, they should use proper language everywhere and avoid the use of informal language and abbreviations, which might affect their writing system later on. We also believe that teachers should severely react towards such improper usage of language for instance by mark reduction whenever they find such inclusion of informal language.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIM: Aol Instant Messenger.

CMC: Computer-Mediated Communication.

E- : Electronic

FB: Facebook.

ICQ: I Seek You.

ICT's: Information Communication Technologies.

IM: Instant Messaging.

SCMC: Synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication.

SMS: Short Message Service.

SNS's: Social Networking Site.

URL: Uniform Resource Locator.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Statement of the Problem

2. Aims of the Study

3. Research Questions

4. Research Hypothesis

5. Research Methodology and Design

5.1. Choice of the Method

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6. Structure of the Dissertation

General Introduction

As the world develops by shifting from what is physical to what is digital, the technological advance becomes something inevitable. Information communication technologies (ICT's) have changed the way of life and paved the way for people to interact in an online environment with one another as well as with the world around them. The globe is totally revolutionized by the use of those technologies; they are integrated almost if not entirely in every domain. Since we are living in a digital era or as it is labeled "the digital world", the use of technological tools becomes crucial as it does not only improve the lives of people, but education too.

As time goes on, learners find themselves in an increasingly numerical world; hence the sophisticated and compensatory nature of technologies offers ample opportunities to improve the learning process. Since the emergence of ICT, students' affinity with its various forms was remarkable, however, during the last decade their orientation moved towards Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), and later towards Social Networking Sites. In fact, Social Networking Sites become almost an integral part in everyday communication. Most of students assume communicating using those web-based sites; as a result they are now producing digital content.

Social Networks like Twitter, Ebay, Myspace, and Facebook provide a means of communication that is highly accessible to users across the globe. In addition, they allow users to participate in a collaborative form of knowledge construction because they provide tools for creating and sharing information with others. Moreover, they allow their users to interact and communicate easily by exchanging data. Users can upload, download, send

instant messages (IM), write texts, and create web pages and groups to improve peer-to-peer interaction as well as teacher-student interaction. Thus they allow the extension of learning discussions outside the formal classroom setting.

In fact, Facebook is the most popular Social Network among young people. More than ever, students today use Facebook as a medium to communicate with one another through the exchange of profiles, conversations, photos, and videos. Thus, with the recent appearance of multiple genres of language through the internet and other forms of technologically mediated communication such as text messaging through Facebook, students' written English is bound to be 'defiled'. Their online writing extends beyond merely socializing. Therefore, these new communication technologies such as the Facebook written conversations do not only engender new ways of using language, but also new forms of literacy which are associated with the introduction and uses of the new technologies. As a case, Master one students at the English department use Facebook beyond the boundaries of social communication, they use Facebook groups and pages to learn English and to exchange information. Therefore, these new forms of language use are likely to affect the students' writing skill.

1. Statement of the Problem

As the world becomes more and more developed, it is generally believed that Information Communication Technologies can empower teachers and learners, promote change and foster the development of 21st century learning skills. Thus, learners are increasingly depending on the use of technologies. The internet has become one of primary sources that students bring out information from. However, to be more precise learners devote much time to social communication rather than education, assuming that what really improves

their learning skills is the contact with natives or the use of the language itself not only within formal settings, but outside the classrooms too. In fact, the use of Social Networks especially the Facebook by teachers or learners witnessed high scores as a virtual environment that allows such contacts. Though in a way it is useful, as it provides learners with the necessary intercultural exchange which they need to develop their language, as well as real contacts with natives gives students the chance to practice the language outdoors, but teachers complain that learners unconsciously use informal language in their academic writings. Due to the overuse of Facebook accounts. Besides, students commit many grammar and spelling mistakes in their writings; teachers remarked that Learners -as the case of master one students of English at the university of Guelma- do not capitalize words or use punctuation anymore, even in E-mails to teachers or [on] writing assignments, any word longer than one syllable is now abbreviated to just one syllable. As a result, the way students communicate with one another through social media and text messaging is creeping into classrooms; hence, slang terms and text-speak have become a common sight on their writings.

2. Aims of the Study

The current study aims at figuring out the impact of overusing Facebook language on the learners' writing. It also seeks to identify what particular properties of formal language are affected by the use of Facebook as a Social Networking Site. The study represents a lens by which the reasons behind students' addiction towards the Facebook on particular will be apparent.

3. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

- Does Facebook language impact Master one students' writing skill?

- What properties of formal language does the Facebook affect?
- Are learners aware of the impact of chat language in general, and Facebook language in particular on their writings?
- How do students at 8 Mai 1945 University perceive using Facebook in education, and for what reasons do they use it?

4. Research Hypothesis

Nowadays, learners tend to use different media to communicate and share thoughts and ideas; thus the use of technologies can have an influence be it positive or negative on learners. The overuse of Social Networks may play a crucial role in here. So, we assume that: If the students overuse the Facebook language, their writing skill would be affected.

5. Research Methodology and Design

On the ground of what has been previously said, the methodology on which the present dissertation is based, runs as follow:

5.1. Choice of the Method

The research method to be used and followed is a mixture between the qualitative and the quantitative methods because the theme is about language use, which is a phenomenon that does not require experimental manipulation, but rather a collection of data to be analyzed.

5.2. Population of the Study

The population of the study will consist of 97 first year Master students at the English department, University of Guelma. The students' age is between 22 and 35, and they are from both sexes males and females. We choose to work with first year Master students because

they are supposed to have a high level of writing proficiency. Further, they are greatly addicted to the use of Facebook not only as a social communicative tool, but as a mean to facilitate their process of learning too.

5.3. Data Gathering Tools

The data of the study will be collected through two means: first, a questionnaire will be administered to first year Master students. The students' questionnaire aims at investigating what impact Facebook has on learners' writing, as well as to figure out to what extent students at higher education are influenced by its use. In addition, a test is going to be administered to the sampled population in order to see the impact of Facebook language on their academic writings, as well as, to detect what aspects of their languages are highly affected.

6. The Structure of the Dissertation

This study will comprise two parts; a theoretical and a practical one. The theoretical part includes chapters one and two. Chapter one will be devoted to the writing skill. Issues related to this skill will be discussed such as the Purpose behind writing, a Contrast between spoken and written Language, how to teach the writing skill and what techniques to be used. It will also deal with the free and the academic writing productions, as well as the old and new ways of writing.

The second chapter is going to be devoted to the Facebook language. The chapter will tackle the use of such a tool in education as a means of exchanging information. Also, many aspects of Facebook are going to be discussed, such as formal and informal language, verbal

and non-verbal language. The chapter has dealt with the impact of Facebook as a social network on learners' academic achievement.

The practical part comprises chapter three, which will deal with all the aspects related to the purpose of the test, its components, administration, analysis and discussion of the results. As well as, it has addressed issues related to the students' questionnaire administration, analysis and discussion of the findings. Finally, the chapter concludes with some pedagogical implementations.

Chapter One

Chapter One: The Writing Skill

Introduction

1.1. Definitions of the Writing skill

1.2. The Process of Writing

1.2.1. Planning

1.2.2. Drafting

1.2.3. Revising

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1.3. The Writing Styles

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Conclusion

Introduction

Writing is one of the four basic skills of language. It is the most challenging and complex task for foreign language learners, as it is composed of several steps. Its importance is inevitable, it lays mainly in its expressive nature and the way it conveys ideas and thoughts and consequently improves communication. However, we know that writing or learning to write is not that simple matter because to achieve a certain level of fluency in writing requires a lot of efforts from the learner's part. The following chapter functions as a synopsis of the writing skill; in terms of its vague definitions, which are given by many scholars and linguists, it deals also with the processes and steps of the writing skill and its various aspects, including spelling, punctuation among others. Furthermore, the chapter tackles another type of writing which is labeled as digital writing.

1.1. Definition of the Writing Skill

Thousands years ago, writing appeared and it has been increasingly having more and more importance. Starting from clay tablets to digital writing on computers, written communication is gaining more prominence over the oral one. Since writing helps humans to develop their critical thinking, it gives them the chance to control their own future (Coulmas, 2003, p.1). Writing can be widely defined from several perspectives, Sampson (1985) defined writing as follows: "to 'write' might be defined, at a first approximation, as: to communicate relatively specific ideas by means of permanent, visible marks." (p.26)

On the other hand, Widdowson (1978) stated that: "writing is the act of making up correct sentences and transmitting them through the visual medium as mark on paper." (p. 62). From the same angle, Harmer (2004) argued that Writing is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling through written form (p. 79). He further argued that:

“writing is unlike speaking; writing is a conscious process that can be taught and learned” (p.3). He added that writing is a process that is composed of planning, drafting, editing (reflecting and revising), and final version or draft (p. 4-5). On his behalf, Byrne (1988) claimed that writing is far beyond being the production of graphics only, but it is a process that involves arranging those graphics to produce and convey meaningful messages, which are easy to be decoded (p. 1).

Jonah (2006) argues that: “writing is a series of activities going on and involve several phases, the preparatory phase, the content development and review; and that “writing can be used as an indirect means of communication to others to convey information”(Jonah, 2006; as cited in Sipayung, 2016, p. 90). It is not easy to write since the task requires an ability to produce something new and provide the reader with an idea or ideas through writing.

Another attempt to define what is writing, Nation (2009) stated that: “writing is an activity that can usefully be prepared for by work in other skills of listening, speaking, and reading. This preparation can make it possible for words that have been used receptively to come into productive use.” (p.113). In the same vein, Fowler (2006) pointed to the mutual relationship that exists between the writing and the reading skills as he explained that the reading and writing modalities depend on each other; in other words the more one reads the more he becomes good, and to read does not necessary means reading the others works, but it also means one’s reading of his/her own production (p.2).

According to Bell and Burnaby (1984), producing and putting together any piece of writing of a good quality implies going through several steps, as well as possessing some cognitive variables at both the sentence level and beyond it; this means that good writers

should employ appropriate grammar, content, format, terminology, spelling, and punctuation in relation to the topic, as well as writers should bound those variable with good organization of ideas and thoughts in a cohesive and coherent form. (Bell and Burnaby, 1984; as cited in Nunan, 1989, p.36).

As writing is regarded to be one of the most difficult skills to acquire and as to be a good writer means being fluent and expressive, Nunan (1989) argued that: “learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of the macroskills for all language users regardless whether the language in question is a first, second or foreign language” (p.35). Unlike the spoken language, the written one should be taught, it is not a natural capacity that mankind have from birth, however, it is teachable; it follows certain steps and procedures (White, 1981; as cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36).

From the previous definitions, writing as a skill can be considered as putting down words together in a coherent, as well as cohesive manner, which is grammatically and semantically correct. Yet, the act of writing does not come out of the blue, however, a bunch of steps are set to be followed; it requires efforts from the writer’s part.

1.2. The Process of Writing

Writing is much more than just putting words on paper. By its nature, writing is a series of forward and backward steps as writers think, reflect, revise, detour, start over, and repeat earlier steps. Writing must be explicitly taught and given time. Writing cannot be just a few minutes here and there, students may write quickly and freely in a quick write; but they also need to be deliberate and thoughtful as they produce an effective finished product. Usually the writing process is a recursive one that is described in several different stages. In

this regard, Tyner (2008) described the writing process as being blend and mixture of different steps including a series of stages: Planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (pp. 2-3).

In addition, Elbow (1981) perceived writing as growing process. It must move through stages where the writer, in the very first stage, generates words before continuing to “grow” a piece of writing and moving through the subsequent stages. He defined the process through an attempt to explain the “magic” of “authentic voice” as context—of being able to situate a selection of words within sufficient meaning to convey that “juice” that infuses powerful language; asserting that: “The writer, then, writes well by putting magic into words just as the blind person sees well by putting herself into the cane” (p. 368).

Hogue (2008) claimed that the writing process is more than just one process, it encompasses many other sub-processes and procedures like thinking, brainstorming, planning, and revising and so on. Good writing needs efforts from the writer’s side; consequently he will write and re-write many times to get out with a good written composition. (p. 28). Below is a discussion of the different steps of writing.

1.2.1. Planning

This step is mainly about deciding what to write, it is often known as prepare for writing, or pre-writing stage. As you would not jump into a pool without knowing its depth, you are not supposed to start writing without a plan; it is a crucial step forwards the organization of what is going to be written next. Generally, prewriting enables the writer to answer questions of a given topic; it enables him to plan for the organization of thoughts and ideas.

As stated by Tyner (2008):

Most writers don't just sit down and begin writing. They spend time deciding what to write about and what they want to say. That may start with a rough outline; jot down a list of ideas, talk to other people, or plan in their minds. Whatever writers do to help themselves get started is called prewriting, and most writers do some form of it (p. 2).

Just like cooking, which needs spices to add flavor to the dish, planning as well is the outpost of the writing process to get a polished piece of writing. In line with this statement, Harmer (2004) claimed that any writer put a plan for his/her writing before the act of writing itself, he or she first selects what is going to be written. The experienced writer selects the content to be displayed, as well as he/she selects the tool to convey it (p. 4).

Moreover, Hacker and Sommers (2011) argued that planning is the first step where the writer decides about the subject he will tackle later on in his writing, as well as it is the stage where he should choose about his readers, means to whom he is writing, and most importantly planning is considered as the stage where the writer decides about the purposes and aims behind his act of writing (p. 3). Hacker and Sommers (2011) claimed also that brainstorming is an important procedure that helps in the planning stage as it mainly serves to decide about the topic and about what should be written. Brainstorming, as it occurs both in spoken and auditory forms, can be useful to the writing process and more precisely to the planning phase since it helps to widen and deepen the writers' knowledge about his audience and consequently confines his ideas so that he can make a good piece of writing (p.4). Reading as well represents a good method to widen and deepen the writer's knowledge; so that he can stand up with his own ideas, as well as, he can see things from different angles and hence he develops his writing skill (p. 7).

For Harmer (2004), the planning phase encompasses three main issues, which are as follows:

- Writing is purposeful: writers should put some purposes to be achieved; they can easily attain those purposes, which may influence the selection of the input, including language and information, and the way in which it should be delivered.
- Writing is directed towards a target audience: who are the readers the writer is inscribing for; the audience is at the center of the writer's thinking, whatever the writer is writing; he is trying to deliver something to his readers, either to inform them, to convince them, or whatever his purpose is.
- Writing is structured: writers should know perfectly how to relate between the content they are writing about, their purpose of writing, and their audience. All this goes together in order to have a good piece of writing (pp. 4-5).

Planning is used sometimes mutually with the term free-writing or pre-writing. Dorn and Soffos (2001) claimed that:

The writer begins by identifying the purpose and audience for her writing. For instance, if she wants to write a letter to a friend inviting him to a birthday party, she will plan her writing based on a specific need to communicate this particular message. Basically, the prewriting stage is about planning, gathering, and organizing ideas for writing. This can occur as oral discussion or as written organizing with tools such as an outline, map, or notes (p. 32).

Peha (2002) suggested that planning is about picking ideas and thoughts; it is the stage that just precedes the drafting phase (p. 1). Here, it sounds like planning is thinking about a trip, deciding to go somewhere, before doing it. So, here writers should deeply think about

their topic and put an organized plan just before putting their ideas and thoughts into graphic symbols.

For Hogue (2008), the planning phase is known as pre-writing or free-writing, which is the phase where the writer put his ideas in a sequence with total ignorance of miss-spelling or grammar mistakes, within this stage the writer just put down ideas in his mind as they are (pp. 28-29). Planning is considered as a part of the prewriting stage, it comes just before the actual writing, and it can be messy and non-stopping processes until all the ideas are written down on a piece of paper.

1.2.2. Drafting

While Prewriting is like getting ready for a trip, drafting is the actual journey. The writing that takes place in the drafting stage is like free-writing in that the student should not yet be focusing on spelling errors and so forth. Rather, it is the stage where the writer begins to put the paper in a paragraph form as to keep referring back to the notes determined in the first stage and diving in, remembering that the first draft is rarely the last. Fowler (2006) stated that: “Draft is merely a selection from reading, notes and points that the reader has still to decide about; in which wording needn’t be final” (p. 19). Considering the importance of this stage, he pointed out that while drafting, the writer can easily detect the ideas and their development and how should they be presented to a specific audience (p. 19). Drafting the ideas and emphasizing mainly on the content can be used as an important tool for good writers to organize, re-organize and reflect on the quality of their compositions. Thus, drafts can be numerous and messy (Dorn, J. L, & Soffos, C, 2001, p. 33). For Peha (2002) to draft means when ideas come into the writer’s mind, he just holds the pen and starts writing down his thoughts, and for this he claimed that: “As soon as you’ve decided what to write about,

you grab a pencil and just start writing” (p.3). Moreover, Peha (2002) regarded drafting as the first copy of the writing, it is not the last, along this phase many drafts might appear, many changes occur; the writer will read and reread, he will write and rewrite to modify and produce a coherent and cohesive written composition (p. 3).

Drafting is a crucial step in the writing process, it cannot be ignored because it is the base for good written papers, whatever the nature of those written forms is, or whoever writes it; either the writer have low writing level or advanced one, first draft at least should be done to guarantee the success of what is going to be written next. Though writers may go beyond one draft, towards what is called rough drafts, means they may do two or three or even more drafts, yet many published writings can be revised again and again. In this regard, Kane (1988) stated that: “A draft is an early version of a piece of writing. Most of us cannot compose anything well at the first try. We must write and rewrite” (p. 34), drafting then is among the first steps of the writing process, it might include mistakes and messed up ideas that need to be polished while re-writing other drafts until the piece becomes almost perfect.

To know how the best way of drafting should be, Galko (2001) suggested:

There are many ways to begin drafting a paper into paragraphs. One way is to translate the main points of your outline into topic sentences, and then to develop each topic sentence into a paragraph. Or, you can draft a paragraph by paragraph, beginning with a topic sentence and then supporting it (p.52).

Based on this statement, to draft means to follow the order of the first plan’ ideas and thoughts, as it means to enlarge those ideas into paragraphs through the use of arguments, examples, and other supporting sentences. Drafting is by no mean confined, during the drafting phase any note-taking procedure and technique can be used, Fowler (2006) argued that:

In drafts, wording needn't be final: you can use a provisional word, even if you suspect it probably won't, in the end, quite work. (You can add a memo to replace the word later; I use wavy underlining for this.) Private symbols are fine at this stage, even vague ones such as '→', which might mean 'becomes', or 'changes to', or 'develops into', or 'leads to', or 'causes' (p. 19).

Hence, the writer does not need to worry about misspelling words, or their choice.

Mckensie and Tomkins (1984) said that: "Students do not begin writing their first drafts with the composition complete in their mind. They begin, instead, with preliminary ideas which they develop through the rehearsal activities." (p. 204). They assumed that during drafting ideas only are central issues, matters like punctuation and spelling are totally neglected (p. 204).

Though drafting is the first step of putting words on papers, it differs totally from the final product. At this stage, writers ignore the mechanics of writing including punctuation, spelling, grammar, or choice of the words. However, all what matters at this level is the gist. At this phase, a piece of writing might look messy, and writers tend to write all the ideas that come to their minds and changeable ideas occur frequently, **and they are clear within each line the writers put down in the paper. Explain it**

1.2.3. Revising

Revising stage is usually defined as having a glance and looking again at your written Form. To revise means to lay the ground for the coming stages of editing and publishing, the three steps together are known and labeled as the polishing phase. To revise, many tips should be followed. Starkey (2004) stated them as follow:

-Do not read the first drafts just after finishing it, but rather keep it away for couple of days then have a look on it.

-Put yourself in the reader's place and try to imagine that you are reading it for the first time.

-Ask questions to see whether you achieved your intended goals of writing a specific paper or not.

- Add and remove and modify points that are not necessary (pp. 56-57).

Dorn and Soffos (2001) considered revising as a rereading step, they stated:

Here, the writer rereads the message for clarity and best choice of words. He uses techniques such as carets (to add words or phrases), lines and crosses (to delete unnecessary information), circles with connecting lines (to move pieces of text to a new position), and cut and paste (to rearrange larger chunks of passage within the text) (p. 33).

While revising, Stark (2003) claimed that writers should go within a check list, verifying many things at once, and at different levels. Writers should check the structure and the stylistic features of their compositions, they have also to take a look on the word choice and tone, as well as, whether they respected the order and sequencing of ideas or not. Finally, good writers should pay attention to the meaning and the content to see whether they go with the purpose of their writing or not (p. 78). For him, after checking the elements mentioned previously, the writer can easily decide about the parts of his writing that needs more attention and work, and consequently he modifies it either by adding ideas or deleting some. This step of revising is also included in what is named as polishing process (pp. 78-79).

Peha (2002) regarded the concept of revision as follows: "The word 'revision' literally means 'to see again' this is what revising is all about. Having received comments about your

piece during the Responding stage, you can better see your writing now from the reader's point of view." (p. 4). For him, what makes revision complex is its nature, the revision phase includes four steps; while revising, the first step can encompass only the addition of some words as well as moving them, the second step might occur at the same time of the first, where the writer may delete some unnecessary words, which are not working, and the third option while revising may be doing nothing, means leaving some ideas as they are with no modifications, the last step while revising is when the writer's role becomes a reader's one (p. 4). From the same perspective, Brown and Hood (1989) argued that during the revision process, the writer might change some things, such as the sequence of ideas presented within his written composition, he might also add parts and delete others, as well as, the writer can paraphrase, assimilate, and substitute (pp. 20-21).

1.2.4. Editing

The pre-final step in completing a piece of writing is editing. Editing is the checking of one's written work for various faults in making last-minutes changes. While revising focuses mainly on making the content clear, editing makes the documents meet the conventions of standard written English. During this stage, grammar, sentence structure, word punctuation, capitalization, spelling, citation and document format must be checked. When editing, it is important to take a look, make the final check and fix mechanical or technical flaws. Therefore, sometimes four eyes are better than two.

According to Peha (2002), Editing means taking care of any problem with writing conventions and thus, changes can take place at the level of words or phrases in your piece; he claimed that: "Editing is a hard stage where there are a lot of things a writer has to know as he is supposed to mark the things he's unsure of and try to correct them." (p. 8). Dorn and Soffos

(2001) argued that to edit a writer should have certain knowledge and skills of the language in which the written composition is done, their use enable the writer to depict and fix any misspelled words, any misused punctuation, or any mistakes at the grammatical level (p. 33).

1.2.5. Publishing

As the final step in the writing process, publishing presents the most exciting part. Once the writers went throughout the above stages (planning, drafting, revising, and editing), they obviously tend to share and publish their written compositions, and this is the purpose they made it for. Harmer (2004) called it “*the final version*”. In the same vein, Peha (2002) defined publishing as the final stage of writing where the writer shares his composition with others, either the latter is the public, or his students, or teachers. Publishing is optional, so it is up to the writer to publish his work or not, and just before doing that step, any writer should have a look on other published works so that he can be inspired by them (N.P).

Becky and Spivey (2006) stated that publishing means writing down the piece of written work on papers in an organized manner, or by typing it on the computer, they pointed out that children can share their compositions with each other as they may organize a portfolio for the whole class writings, as they can publish their works in journals and magazines.

Children publish their writing by making a copy in their neatest handwriting or using a word processor. This is a time for students to celebrate. They may share their pieces with the class during story time, make a class book or a personal portfolio, or send their work to local newspapers or children’s magazines for publication!” (N.P).

Besides, Dorn and Soffos (2001) argued that before publishing the work for the public, writers should decide and put into consideration many features. In this regard, they claimed

that: “If the piece is designed for a book, the writer must consider important organizational aspects, such as how much text to put on each page...and how to bind the book in the most appropriate form” (p. 33).

Moreover, Elbow (1981) considered publishing as the core of the writing process; “The essential human act at the heart of writing is the act of giving” (p. 20). According to him, when sharing a written composition, writer displayed the value of his piece.

1.3. The Writing Styles

It is the style of writing, or the way we use words to say what we want to say. Different situations call for different ways of putting words together. The way we write in academic and scientific settings differs greatly from the way we write to a friend or close one. The tone, vocabulary, and syntax, all change as the occasion changes. This difference of writing styles lies in the difference between formality and informality, or the difference between formal and informal writing.

1.3.1. Formal writing

Formality in writing does not come from deliberately writing easy, simple sentences, or using colloquial words where more complex and sophisticated ones would serve the same purpose better. It comes from making sure that no inappropriate informal language, like “slang”, is used. This also reinforces the sense of “objectivity”. Formal writing style tends to cover the use of longer and more complex sentences.

Therefore, formal writing is less personal, and can be used when writing for professional or academic purposes like university assignments, examinations...etc. Formal writing occurs in situations that are serious or that involve people who are not close enough. It avoids the use of colloquialisms, contractions or first person pronouns such as 'I' or 'We'.

1.3.2. Informal writing

The informal use of language can occur in casual situations, as the case of oral performance of language, informal language may occur within writing process, especially when it comes to the diction of words. Currin and Tracy (2003) argued that: "the informal can give a chance to see one's own ability before writing a formal paper." (p.16), here it means that the informal language use might occur before writing down any formal written composition. Thus, Currin and Tracy (2003) pointed out that at a certain level: "students must master unfamiliar vocabulary before they can comprehend difficult ideas."(p. 05). So, as it tends to be more casual and spontaneous, the informal style made it easier for students to write using abbreviations, and colloquial words and expressions to form short and simple sentences. Such writing style "avoids word clutter and gets directly to the point", (Navickienė, V., Kavaliauskienė, D., & Pevcevičiūtė, S, 2010).

The latter, is appropriate when communicating with friends and other close ones, using more personal tone. It is used when writing personal e-mails, letters, text messages or IMs or in "net-speak" through the different Social Network Websites such as making Facebook/Twitter posts. In such writing style, making use of "shorthand" such as texting, using contractions and/or abbreviations in addition to slang, clichés, passive and/or imperative voice can be acceptable.

In fact, formal and informal writing serve different purposes. The tone, the choice of words and the way the words are put together vary between the two styles. It is social rather than any other codes to determine which style to adopt in a given situation. Thus, what determines whether your writing is informal or formal includes: what type of writing it is (letter, report, e-mail ...etc.), and who the audience is (friend, boss, family member...etc.). Obviously, formal and informal writing styles differ at certain levels. Yet, the main thing to remember is that both are correct, it is just a matter of tone and setting. State from where u get the info

1.4. A Shift to the Digital age

As the world developed and opted for the use of technologies in all domains, writers as well shifted towards technology-based writing tools in order to write and polish their written compositions, and thus the digital writing emerged as a new way to write.

Merchant (2006) stated that nowadays, Digital tools are considered to be a feature of everyday life in the 21st century, with emerging technology devices constantly reconfiguring possibilities for communication and for knowledge flows. As these technologies gain momentum, they are profoundly changing the context of almost every aspect in life including education, where students – now became screen addicted practicing reading and writing using computers and/or mobile devices (p. 85).

1.4.1. Re-Shaping Writing in the Digital Age

In today's complex, high-technology world, the importance of writing as a fundamental organizing objective of education is no less valid or practical. Writing, properly understood, is thought on paper. Increasingly, in the information age, it is also thought on

screen and much has changed in the landscape of what it means to “write” and to “be a writer”. Social Networking and collaborative writing technologies have taken hold, if not always in Education, certainly among students.

Surely, the Internet has changed the way of writing. Today, there are more people writing every day e-mails, text messages, blog posts and more self-published authors than ever before. Written communication is popular in a way it has not been in a century, and everyone is doing it. But unlike when writing between two people was private, much of today’s writing is loud and public, connected through a web of hyperlinks to every other piece of writing out there.

So, digital writing is more than just a skill; it is a mean of interfacing with ideas and with the world, a mode of thinking and expressing in all grades and disciplines, and what is written does not just say a lot about people, it says a lot about their communities, their societies, their cultures. Before, writing has never been more influential, more dispersed, and more abundant than right now.

For Merchant (2006), what critically defines digital writing makes it necessary to bind between the act of “writing” and “technology”. Particularly, the digital writing is a singular product of computer age (p. 86). Whereby, the text becomes more immediate, more fragmented and fluid, and the medium offers greater capacity for individual participation and interactivity. So, books will move to a new version due to the fact that technology made a shift in the way information are presented today, as it was a turning point from papers to digital screens. Therefore, plenty of writings nowadays take place over electronic screens.

In this regard, Gnanadesikan (2009):

The move to word processing brought a change from writing that is either physiologically produced (in handwriting) or mechanically produced (in type) to writing that is electronically produced and digitally stored ... This digital writing is not fixed in any location: it moves automatically up the screen as new writing appears below it. It can also be erased with convenient but occasionally disastrous ease. Its chief attraction is the ease by which it can be revised. Nowadays we all must be typists. But no matter how poorly we type, the backspace is there to provide us with orthographic forgiveness ... Electronic writing is so easy and so fast that one can be fooled into thinking that there is a direct transfer of thought into text – though this may not be either true or good thing. Writers spend less time planning to write and more time writing, though they often then fritter away the saved time by fiddling with the resulted text.” (N.P). paraphrase this or select the most important

Digital writing can be anything. It can be a blog post, an e-mail, a text message. It can be a tweet, or a Facebook update, or a conversation on Tumblr. It can be comments on blog posts, responses to news articles, book reviews shared on GoodReads, or fan fiction. It can also look a lot more traditional: poems posted on the web, self-published novels on Amazon and iBooks, or short stories uploaded to an online ‘zone. Hypertext allows linking what one writes to what others have written. Google Docs allow for simultaneous collaborative writing. Multi-site blogs allow many authors to work together toward a common goal. The internet allows communication through texts in new ways; it frees the writer to join his/her words with others’, to innovate, and to let their words become their actions. Living spontaneously, or vicariously, or cooperatively through words, which can form communities, can take a stand, and at the same time can create as they were created.

For that reason, many scholars emphasized the importance of e-writing or what is labeled as online or digital writing. Gerson and Gerson (2006) argued that: “More and more, technical writing is online. One component of this growth is the Internet, which has generated a variety of occupations related to design, development, and maintenance of websites” (p. 58). That is to say; online writing is what is written on Web pages, those written composition fulfill the purposes and aims of the sites it was dedicated to.

Moreover, e-writing or the typed written works and composition became more polished and much more organized and readable on screens. Kent (2002) asserted that: “good page and screen design not only enhances the visual appeal of your writing, but improves its legibility- readers will be able to locate information on the page faster..., will read the text faster” (p. 89).

1.5. Mechanics of Writing

Mechanics of writing are important elements that go hand in hand with grammar, they are generally concerned with how written compositions look like on the surface. According to Kane (1988), mechanics mean: “the appearance of words, to how they are spelled or arranged on paper” (p 15). In other words, mechanics are meant to be the apparent language and black graphs seen on papers including punctuation and spelling. These involve the following:

1.5.1. Abbreviations

Bailey (2006), defined abbreviation as: “an important and expanding feature of contemporary English” (p. 132). He identified three types of abbreviations, which are used in academic writing; the first type is labeled as *shortened words*, that is to say some abbreviations are used naturally, without the writer awareness of their origins. The second sort

is acronyms and as it is known, they mean taking the first letters of each word and make up new word with them, acronyms are read as a word and they are usually written in capitals. The last type is known as *others*, they are the commonly used type, readers and writers may not know the meaning of each letter, and however, they know what they mean as a whole. Further, in this kind of abbreviation, each letter is read on its own. In fact, abbreviations are used mainly to save time, to know that a particular word is abbreviated, you may find a point just after it, and this type is called *standard abbreviations*. Yet, abbreviations are said to be confused, two identical abbreviations might have two meaning (pp. 121-122).

Fenton (2003) explained that Writers should never use abbreviations when they get lazy, however, when a word or expression is too long and used more than once; in this case the first appearance of the word should be followed by its initials between brackets, later on throughout the written composition, this long title or expression is abbreviated to its acronym, which was used between brackets (p. 19). This implies that the use of some abbreviations can be misleading if the writer does not refer to the acronym next to its correspondence before, so writer should pay attention whenever he uses the different types of abbreviations.

Kent (2002) stated: “Abbreviations are just code to those who don’t know them, so use them with care” (p. 72). Here, it means that abbreviations are easy to be interpreted by those who know them, hence communicating using those abbreviations and shortenings becomes easier and faster. However, abbreviations present an area of difficulty, as they might create ambiguity to those who do not know them and consequently might hinder communication among those people. He also suggested few advices for using abbreviations, among them; abbreviation should be only used when necessary, it is preferable to use the equivalents of

foreign abbreviations, as well as, writers should never create ones (abbreviations) of their own (p. 72).

Abbreviation	Latin	English meaning
c. or ca	circa	approximately, about (for dates)
cf.	confer	compare
e.g.	exempli gratia	for example, for instance
<i>et al.</i>	et alii, et alia	and other people/things
etc.	et cetera	and so on, and the rest
<i>et seq.</i>	et sequens	and the following pages
<i>ibid.</i>	ibidem	in the same place (usually referring to a reference)
i.e.	id est	that is, in other words
inter alia	inter alia	among other things
<i>loc. cit.</i>	loco citato	in the place mentioned
NB	nota bene	note well or carefully (for an important point)
<i>op. cit.</i>	opere citato	in the work mentioned before
passim	passim	at many points, recurrent
viz.	videlicet	namely (naming someone/something you have just referred to)

Figure1. List of Latin abbreviations and words commonly used in academic writing. Adopted from Study Skills for Academic Writing: Student’s Book (p. 115), by Trzeciak and E.Mackay, 1994.

1.5.2. Punctuation

Fenton (2003) defined Punctuation as an umbrella term that covers capital letters, apostrophes, commas, and exclamation marks (p. 19). A year before, Kent (2002) declared: “PUNCTUATION matters. Omitting a singular comma can reverse the meaning of a sentence” (p. 75), omitting marks of punctuation, or using it inappropriately may lead to ambiguity of meaning; the reader might not understand the intended message of the writer just because of one misuse of a single punctuation mark.

McLean (2011) suggested that reading (oral performance) written composition out loud rapidly because it lacks punctuation makes hearers confused. Punctuation marks located

on papers help the reader to know where he should stop for a long time and where he should stop for short time; punctuation is regarded as a visual aid for readers that clarifies the intended meaning, which the writer wanted to convey (p. 130). For the previous reason, Fowler (2006) emphasized the importance of punctuation by defining it as a crucial part that serves for language clarity by eliminating ambiguity that might appear within language structures, for him punctuation is not a matter of decoration; it is not an accessory that can be added anywhere, however, it is a vital part of any written composition that should receive more attention (p. 82).

1.5.3. Capitals

Bailey (2006) argued that there are no clear rules for using capitals; they are used in the usual common cases. Capitals are generally put at the beginning of words in sentences, they are used in months, days, and nationalities, as well as, capitals are used in common names of people and organizations, and also in titles (p. 158).

Not everything writers thought to be important should be capitalized, capitals have rules and conventions. In this sense, Kent (2002) said: “capitalize proper nouns only- names of people, objects, and entities. Don’t capitalize a word because you think it’s important or you want it to stand out” (p. 71).

McLean (2011) stated that one apparent feature of daily life e-mail and an instant message is the ignorance of capitalization, whereas in formal and academic writing, people tend to choose their diction and capitalization carefully to convey their messages in a proper way (p. 93). So, the importance of capitalization can never be denied as it makes written compositions clear, the use of capitalization is a matter of consciousness, the more writers are

conscious about their writing' purposes, the more their use of capitals, the use of uppercases should be at the beginning of first words in new sentences, proper nouns, nationalities, races, and religions (pp. 93-94).

1.5.4. Apostrophes

Bailey (2006) stated that there are two situations, in which apostrophes are used. They are used to show possession, or in contractions, and this is mainly what makes their use confusing sometimes (p. 158).

Kent (2002) explained where and how the apostrophe is used. He claimed that apostrophe is used in two cases; contractions and possessive cases. In case the apostrophe is used in contraction, it mainly replaces an omitted letter in the word. Whereas, the use of apostrophe in possessive cases; here the apostrophe is used with both singular and plural possessives. In case the word is singular and ends with "s", not to create awkwardness in sound system, the only option used is the apostrophe; with plural possessives, "s" is not added with words already end with the plural sign "s", however, words in the plural that do not end with "s" take both the apostrophe and the "s" of possessive case (p. 81).

1.5.5. Contractions

As a punctuation mark and element, contractions might potentially create ambiguity and confuse both readers and writers; for that before using it the writer should know perfectly what are they and when they are used, Kane (1988) defined contractions as follow: "A contraction is the coming together of two or more words with the omission of intervening sounds (in writing, of course, the letters)". Usually, Contractions are used in informal writing, contradictions should always be preceded by an apostrophe, they occur mainly in negation, in possessives, and in auxiliary verbs (p. 420).

From the same point of view, Blakesley and Hoogeveen (2012) claimed that the apostrophe as a sign for contraction, it can be first used in two cases, one of them is contractions where is the other is the possessive case. In contraction, the apostrophe mainly replaces omitted letters, for those contractions are the shortenings of two words coming together, the two words can be either a pronoun and a verb, or verb in the negative form. Besides, contractions are mainly used and accepted in informal writing such as personal letters, e-mails, and messages (p. 516).

1.5.6. Spelling

One important feature of a good writing is the correct spelling of words, digital checkers might not always depict errors, they may cause other errors just because the writer chooses the correct form of the misspelled word but not the intended one from the list that appears, which results in the confusion of the confusion of the reader as well as the ambiguity of the written composition, or the sentence in which the error appears. Mclean (2011) argued that the best way to write correctly spelled words is to know and understand the rules of spelling and their limitations, for instance “i” is always used before “e” except in some cases (p.185). The most common misspelled words are homophones like “piece” and “peace” “were” and “where”...etc. (pp. 191-195).

1.5.7. Vocabulary

Kane (1988) suggested that the best way to learn vocabulary and improve it is reading, remembering and memorizing words out of their context might harden the task, however, learning words occurs successfully when they are related to a specific context. It is a necessity to keep a dictionary just around in case unknown words occur, yet if the dictionary is

unavailable, a piece of paper can solve the problem; the reader should only write down the term not to forget and to check it later on. As the writing process might be lengthy, writers may come across doubtful and unknown words; they should not use them or continue unless they check them (p. 336). It means that acquiring vocabulary is a process in itself; it needs efforts from the writer, and as building needs solid materials, writing as well needs sophisticated and accurate language and use of terminology. Consequently, reading is the best method to grasp more and more vocabulary items; bearing in mind that learning those terms shall occur in a context in order not to confuse or forget about them.

1.5.8. Word choice

As the word choice while writing is a crucial step, and as diction has a great impact, selecting the appropriate form and words for the appropriate context becomes something vital. In this regard, McLean (2011) stated that: “You should switch between different ways of speaking and writing depending on whether the context is formal or informal” (p. 287).

After thinking about the topic, trying some free-writing, putting an outline, here comes the time for writing the first draft. McLean (2011) indicated that just as writers start to write their first drafts, they are likely to be busy choosing the appropriate diction to deliver their ideas and thoughts. In the language productive skills, the choice of words is the most important factor that leads to a good understanding. For better choices of words, it has been stated that the use of dictionary would be of great help to the writers, no matter what level of writing proficiency do they have, dictionaries do not only provide meaning of words but also their pronunciation, spelling, and use. Thesaurus are no exception, they are of great help as well, as the writer might search for perfect word to put it instead of another. They can also be of great utility when it comes to antonyms. He argues that for better choice of words, writers

should pay attention to words' connotations as the same word's use might differ from one context to another. Another important thing that should be avoided during the choice of diction is the slangs, which are any informal words or expressions that particular persons use outside academic settings. Writers should also avoid the use of clichés that might cause the loss of their writing value. In addition, the use of general words might affect the piece of writing; it is preferable to make the writing vivid, and providing details is one way of doing that (pp. 198-205).

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be clearly said that writing as a part of the language system is the medium of communication; it involves both graphical and grammatical language systems. Writing as a process is not that easy task; however, to write means the necessity to go through particular stages. Those phases enable the writer to produce well-organized written forms.

Writing is regarded as the most difficult skill to be performed; it is a highly complex task that needs a bunch of stages and steps to pass by. In order to construct, organize, and express the thoughts and ideas in a fluent manner, the writer needs particular recursive stages like planning, drafting, writing, revising, editing, and publishing. Furthermore, writing does not only mean correct grammar, but it involves some mechanics that should be respected; aspects like punctuation and spelling are sensitive areas of the writing skill, hence great attention should be paid to them while writing, as they play a crucial role in language semantics. Moreover, as the world becomes more and more digital, and as technology touches every domain, the inclusion of those technological tool resulted in the emergence of a new type of writing that is labeled differently; it can be called either digital writing, e-writing, or online writing, which means the use of technology-based tools to generate and produce

written compositions, and how the former might have an effect on the writing system. So, as the technologies now become integrated in every single domain, writing becomes no exception.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Facebook as a Social Networking Site

Introduction

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2.1.1. Definitions of Social Networking Sites

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2.2. Facebook

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Conclusion

Introduction

The adoption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) has changed and transformed the way people interact, react, think, learn...etc. The rapid development of those ICT's and the worldwide use of those technologies paved the way for new trends in every single domain. Some educational areas are witnessing a dramatically changing nature of their landscape; consequently, more and more students tend to engage in e-learning courses and platforms. Unconsciously, students are heavily immersed in Web2.0 technology; as a result higher educational institutions opt for those technologies as the e-learning styles of the 21st century. Furthermore, people now are living in a digital age, where social networking sites (SNS's) become an innovative way for individuals to communicate, and which Recently have had a tremendous impact on people's cultures, businesses, lives and on the world-at-large. They have revolutionized the way people communicate and socialize on the Web. Since their emergence, Online Networks attracted the attention of people whom the majority was youth; then students are not an exception, they use those web-based services to interact, communicate, and exchange data easily as they become the prominent e-communication tools.

Hence, the present chapter is going to be basically devoted to the Facebook as a Social Networking Site. At first, a bunch of definitions for Social Networks Sites will be stated, then the adoption of those online services as an educational tool is going to be highlighted along with some features of SNS's language like e-communication and chat. Yet, the emphasis will be particularly on Facebook issues as to definitions for this online platform along with its emergence will be discussed. Also, there will be a review of that online service as an educational platform. Features of Facebook like profile, groups, instant messaging...etc. will be tackled too.

2.1. Social Networking Sites

As the new emerging phenomenon of the century, Social Networks are the medium, which connects people together overseas. In what follows, we will try to provide definitions of the concept. Then, we will spot the light on the language used in those Web 2.0 tools, and how those Social Networking Sites (SNS's) can stand as educational platforms in the academia and how scholars perceive their roles. Furthermore, the emphasis will be on the Facebook as the new mode of SNS's, its features and how can it be used as educational base for learners.

2.1.1. Definition of Social Networking sites

Before the coming of information age, Social Networks used to exist within real world, they used to be composed of entities, including people and companies, and nevertheless. In recent years, those entities shift into a digital world and become known as Online Social Networks. So, as a common definition, Social Networks are believed to be any kind of connection or communication, which occurs among a group of people, who share the same interests. Being a part of Social Media tools, Page, Barton, W.Unger, Zappavinga (2014) defined Social Networking Sites as the kind of online services that come under the umbrella term 'Social Media' (p. 5). Additionally, Reyan (2011) defined Social Networking as follows: "social network is a cluster of people connected for a specific reason" (p. 4). However, Reyan was talking about real life communication and reality-based Social Networks, yet he declared the current Social Networks, means the web-based ones, to be a good way for communicating and exchanging data. Social Networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace promote rich conversations, thus Reyan (2011) claimed that: "the social networks we speak of today, such as Facebook or MySpace, provide incredibly rich communication" (p. 6).

Moreover, defining such Web2.0 tools according to their nature entails describing them as simple software or applications that we find either in our computers, or in our smartphones. Social Networks are divided into two types; they can be either web-based application, which means the user needs to log-in from a browser, or they can be installed as a separate program on computer or mobile, and the latter are labeled as client-based applications. From that perspective, Reyan (2011) claimed that:

A social network is a simple application that lives within our desktop or Web browser. It consists of a log-in page, a user account, a profile, and a bunch of games and tools to make the time we spend with our friends fun (p. 7).

Now, one may wonder about the reasons that made such sites so famous; Charlton (2013) claimed that in the recent years, Web2.0 witnessed an unbelievable progress due mainly to their low costs and demands. Worldwide, the mass consumption of those technologies is represented as new occurrence; hence Social Media is regarded as the link of communication all over the world (p. 14). Another factor that might contribute to the familiarity of those sites is having the advantage of updating status, “status update” feature is one of the primary attractions of most social networking services” (p. 15); people tend to write down status and share them with their friends.

2.1.2. The Language of Social Networks (Netspeak)

Since it is sometimes very difficult to determine the tone of voice used by someone communicating through text; a new way to communicate was required that would be faster to type and could also be manipulated to include feeling to the words. The new language being “Net Speak”.

Moreover, Netspeak is a phrase coined by David Crystal (Crystal, 2001). It is the name given to the type of communication used in chatrooms and in messaging software such as msn messenger. As Crystal (2001) claims, “ The term ‘Netspeak’ is an alternative to ‘Netlish’, ‘Weblish’, ‘Internet language’, ‘Cyberspeak’, ‘electronic discourse’, ‘electronic language’, ‘interactive written discourse’, ‘computer mediated communication’ (CMC), and other more cumbersome locutions” (p.17). The word itself is a coinage of two words – “internet” and “speak” that involves writing as well as speaking.

This language of the internet or what is referred to as ‘Netspeak’, rose to global prominence as a result of the digital revolution and the subsequent wave of computer mediated communication (CMC) technologies that have been incorporated into society and our daily lives. It is a constantly shape-shifting language, volatile, vibrant and in many ways completely unstructured that also incorporates a variety of time-tested elements from traditional written and spoken language. It is a peculiar hybrid of a language the likes of which has never been used before on such a massive scale.

This language used while having discussion on social networks is said to be a mixture between proper language and the informal one. In this introspective, Salmon (2003) argued that: “the discursive style of the typical participant lies somewhere between the formality of the written word and the informality of the spoken” (p. 19). Linguistic items used in Web2.0 services are generally informal, however, no escape from the formal language. Users might use informal forms such as abbreviations and capitals for the emphasis as well as they might use correct and accurate forms.

Furthermore, Netspeak is utilized due to the nature of text taking longer to type than say. In addition, it is the name that has been given to the long list of acronyms and smiley faces that have evolved with the Internet. This can be perceived as being the language or lingo of the Internet. Many of these acronyms have evolved over time. One of the main reasons that this has become so prolific is due to the use of SMS which is a very restrictive (limited to 160 characters per message) and awkward form of communication. Hence, this language uses a combination of abbreviations (including words created using digits as well as alphabetic characters), acronyms and emoticons that are used to speed up the typing of messages.

2.1.3. Social Networking Sites as Educational Platforms

For Charlton (2013), social networks are regarded as an educational base from a constructivist point of view, they are online communities where people with common interests meet and communicate; Gunawardena (1995) suggested that: “constructivist learning can only take place when students are able to share a sense of community and a common goal” (as cited in Charlton, 2013, p. 15). Furthermore, according to Haythornthwaite (2002): “knowledge is not created in an individual vacuum but in the myriad interaction that occur via one’s network of connections” (as cited in Charlton, 2013, p. 15). In other words, learning must occur in collaboration, to learn means to interact and exchange information within communities of common interests, and this is what the social networking sites aim at.

Moreover, Salmon (2003) suggested that “learning-online” is a new trend, which is seen as a novice way that enables distance communication, or what is called as computer-mediated communication; it means that users effortlessly interact via those networks at anytime and anywhere. Communication via those online services is performed through e-writing, or what is labeled as “typed word”, not to forget the audio-visual aids provided by

Web2.0 sites. All these factors and unique features help users to collaborate; by responding to each other (p. 18). Salmon (2003) also said that: “these technologies allow for real-time communication: users are online together at the same time and speaking or writing to one another immediately” (p.68).

The widespread of social networks led to the adoption of such technologies outside the educational boundaries for educational purposes. From that perspective, Mason and Renie (2008) claimed that social networks became widely used, and youth engagement within those Web2.0 means became increasingly inevitable. Hence, course designers and educators thought of integrating such online services into education (p. 1). However, there is always a perspective from which people judge such tools and underestimate them; which might hinder their utility in daily life communication as well as in educational domain.

Nowadays, there is no ignorance towards Web2.0 tools like social networks, but rather they capture higher numbers of users. Social Networking sites as technological tools might offer better opportunities for better education. Taking into consideration this point of view; Mason and Renie (2008) argued that: “educational hype has a long and resilient history of jumping on the latest technology as the means of making education better, cheaper, more available or more responsive” (p. 2), this means that there is no escape from adopting new technologies in education as they opt for fostering learning and teaching processes.

Additionally, as Web2.0 tools imply an upgrade, it seems to be a better version of what has come before. It includes innovations in the ways we use and think about the internet. Based on that, Mason and Renie (2008) argued that just like the growth of Web 1.0 before it, this new incarnation of the Net is set to make a change in education when it is used wisely.

Furthermore, they pointed out to the advantages of using those social networking sites in education as they allow students to: clarify concepts, establish meaningful links and relationships, and test their mental models as they provide a public forum in which the cumulative process of concept formation, refinement, application and revision is fully visible to students' peers and teachers. By providing a comprehensive record of how concepts take form through multiple clusters of knowledge, such media can promote more complex and lasting retention of course ideas among students (Boettcher, 2007 as cited in Mason and Renie, 2008, p. 6).

Likewise, the adoption of online services such as social networks cannot be only confined to socializing factors; the possibility of opting for such technologies within education is of great value for some scholars and researchers. Greenhow and Robelia (2010) claimed that SNS's are not only used as a tool for personal and social relationships, the data shared through online social networks can maintain educational purposes as well (p. 190). Although some argued that web-based services can foster education, some went against the use of such facilities for educational purposes as they might contain inappropriate data. Mason and Renie (2008) summarized the critical point of views towards the use of SNS's: "the web contained a plethora of unauthenticated, unfiltered information and most students lack the critical skills to penetrate this mass of undifferentiated material" (p. 6).

Social Networks as a kind of media, which lay under the umbrella term ICT's have a crucial role in intensifying the learners' motivation; social networks as synchronous computer-mediated communication tools (SCMC) along with other Information and Communication Technologies, both for sure foster and enhance the quality of learning. Salmon (2003) quoted: "synchronous applications of ICT are sometimes combined with other

media for educational purposes in order to get the motivating impact of e-event but with the potential for some deeper learning” (p. 68). Now, how users communicate using those technologies is quite obvious, they interact with each other through social networks easily by posting, commenting, or responding by any available option. Pullen, Scott and Eisenstadt (1998) claimed that such modalities enable those who post and share things to interact and communicate with those who commented on the tags; this means that two or more users can exchange, and use language to communicate via answering each other’s questions, commenting on posts for instance, and so on and so forth; this means that users of such Networking Sites can form a kind of communication, and more precisely a written one, by just commenting on tags where they were identified, some comments therefore might come as questions that need to be answered.(Pullen, Scott and Eisenstadt, 1998. As Cited in Salmon, 2003,p. 68).

Moreover, Tripp (2008) argued that as Social Networks are witnessing a worldwide use especially by youth, they can be used as educational tools; schools which opt for traditional ways of teaching have dis-activated the use of such Web2.0 means, yet schools with new trends in teaching tend to embrace the new technologies but with a condition, which is educating the youth on how to use such high technology for their own good, and how to benefit from the advantages of using technologies. In other words, youth should receive some instructions on how to use SNS’s properly in their studies, and this aims at ensuring a sense of responsibility, however, a spot light on the disadvantages of technologies as any other technological tool should be taken into consideration (p. 45).

2.2. Facebook

Facebook (FB) as the most popular social network is inherently integrated in every aspect of people's lives; it is the world phenomenon that witnessed an increasing addiction over the years, the following are some definitions given to the concept.

2.2.1. Definitions of Facebook

Although Facebook has become a popular networking website all over the world, but for some people who are new to this Social Network, it might seem a little confusing to know what are the purposes behind this social networking site. Abram and Pearlman (2010) defined Facebook as “the mean of connection by which people have contact with persons they know; relatives, or friends” (p. 1). Facebook as an online social network paves the way for users to share common points of interest between them. In this regard, Abram and Pearlman (2010) pointed out that: “Facebook connects you with the people you know around content that is important to you” (p. 1). From the same angle, Charlton (2013), considered Facebook to be the Web2.0 tool, which enables the connection of homogenous members, and users who share the same interests and backgrounds and tend to co-interact via Facebook (p. 14).

Besides, Carroll and Romano (2011) defined Facebook as a tool used for e-communication between users. Facebook as a prominent online platform is characterized by high rates of users; Facebook, an online communication tool encompasses the highest number of users in comparison to other social networking sites. To emphasize the previous point, Carroll and Romano (2011) claimed that: “Facebook, the largest social network, has added functionally to allow you to facet your online communications” (p. 49). They also claimed that social networks like Facebook and Twitter would compete with other Web2.0 tools such

as E-mails; the increasing probability of using such social networks instead of E-mails is apparent (p. 137).

Besides, just like any other social network, Facebook is regarded as an application that allows e-communication within a group of members, who are called users. It contains information that belongs to users. Therefore, Facebook is a social networking website whereby its users can create and customize their own profiles with photos, videos, and information about themselves. It allows friends to browse each other's' profiles, write messages on their pages, and chat with each other. From that perspective, Kirkpatrick (2010) claimed that: "Facebook had no content of its own. It was merely a piece of software platform for content created by its users" (p. 31).

As the emerging phenomenon of the decade, social networking sites are the most visited webs on the Internet. Carroll and Romano (2011) suggested that social networks sites, or what is known as Web 2.0 are an integrated part in our daily life activities, there is no doubt that they have changed both: the way of communication between people, and the way of thinking. One of the most popular Websites is Facebook as it encompasses the largest number of users in comparison to other social networking sites; with over 500 million users, Facebook is regarded as a virtual world, the authors in here declared that if it was a country, it would be the third largest one in terms of population (p. 134).

To sum up, Facebook is a place to communicate with friends and family, to share photographs or funny links one may find on the Web, to play social games, search for long-lost friends or even chat interactively with buddies. It sprung from its roots as a school-based

social network to become the most popular social network in the world; in short, it is one's home on the web.

2.2.2. The Emergence of Facebook

Facebook at its beginning was nothing more than just a kid's creation; it was launched by 19- years' old child "Mark Zuckerberg", who was a computer science student at Harvard University. Sutherland (2012) said that the Facebook' idea was just a reaction against the university' refusal to release the students' list, thus at that time Mark got access to the University site and hacked students' personal data and photographs and lunched what was called "Facemash" where students compete on whom picture gets more likes. Once the site was discovered, Zuckerberg was obliged to block it; and from that point Mark was convinced that his creativity would allow him to create something like drugs and chocolate, with irresistible nature, which attracts people attention and makes them addicted to it. And this was the start of "Facebook" as an idea (p. 6).

Despite its modest beginning as a project for a college, and since its invention in 2004, year after year Facebook has become something inevitable and daily life ritual as it has an unprecedented influence up on people, especially the youth. Facebook creator' Mark Zuckerberg wanted to make online software that people use all the time, and become addicted to. Kirkpatrick (2010) claimed that: "Zuckerberg has a knack for making software people couldn't stop using" (p. 25). For him, Facebook or what was called online Facebook, was first generated by Mark Zuckerberg on the afternoon of Wednesday, February 4th, 2004. This Web2.0 medium was originally directed to the students at Harvard University. On the home screen that day, it was written as follows: "the Facebook is an online directory that connects people through social networks at colleges" (p. 30). Hence, the use of Facebook at the

beginning was confined to searching for people at the school, knowing classmates, looking for mutual friends. He claimed that the first day Facebook was created, there were only three accounts that had been used for testing the social network, consequently Mark's account was the fourth, and his roommate Hughes was the fifth, and Moskovitz was the sixth user of Facebook (p. 30). After, the number of users started to increase; one feature in Facebook platform that has led to its widespread from the departure was the option of inviting other friends through the use of e-mails, this motivated many students to join and create Facebook accounts. And there happened the exploitation day after day users increase in numbers, " by Sunday- four days after lunch- more than 650 students had registered" (p. 31). And the number kept dramatically increasing day after day until Facebook has become an integrated part of the daily life routine of millions.

Hence, Facebook has become one of the noticeable online social services, people from all over the world and who have internet access have Facebook accounts. According to Sutherland (2012), the popularity of that site had extended even into movie' adaption; in 2010 a movie entitled "the Social Networks" was released tackling the Facebook' story and its founders (p. 4)

2.2.3. Advantages of Facebook

Just like any other social networking site, Facebook shortens distances and saves time. Nowadays, there is no need to travel overseas, or for long hours to meet people; Facebook not only makes it easier but also funnier, as it enables users to maintain as well as to build new connections. Abram and Pearlman (2010) stated that: "Like an air plane, an oven or an elevator, Facebook is a toll that can make life's To-Dos fun and easy", this means that the

immersion within this web2.0 medium facilitates daily life tasks and activities as it makes the glob like a small village where people all together have real-time connections (p. 9).

In addition, as an online social service or site, Facebook provides a quick way to find persons of common interests or people Facebook' users might know, so as a socializing tool, Facebook plays a crucial role in its users' lives. Abram and Pearlman (2010) claimed that Facebook helps its users to find old friends just by typing their names, as they can find their numbers; users can also see their contacts' status updates. Facebook is very helpful in real life situations, for instance if a user is trying to get into another city, hence having a contact with users from that city might be of a great help. With using Facebook, users can get loads of suggestions about different things like friends, books, movies, pages and groups with different purposes that might be of great importance to a specific user (p. 9).

2.2.4. Facebook's Features

They are some specific characteristics related to the FB as any other social network; the following are the main important features according to the standards of the present dissertation. Mainly Facebook' profile, Facebook groups, and Facebook instant messages as they have a role in education.

2.2.4.1. Facebook' Profile

To have a Facebook account, users should build a personal profile, where they can upload a profile picture and other documents. Having a profile means having the ability to insert personal information; like name, age, sex, e-mail, relationship status, phone number, educational degrees, occupation, political as well as religious affiliation and other contact' information. In this regard, Kirkpatrick (2010) stated that: "To sign up, you created a profile

with single picture of yourself, along with a bit of personal information” (p. 31). This means that Facebook as a web2.0 service affords to its users various facilities and options. In this regard, Page et. Al (2014) claimed that:

Facebook is primary a social network site, but it also allows its members to set up private profiles and to join public groups. They can also post semi-public or public updates, comments or ranking seen by a wider audience of a friend list’ or everyone who uses the application, and send private email message or chat online to single person (p. 6).

Simply, a Facebook Profile is a personal account on Facebook; this is a place where the user can add friends and family’ members to communicate on a personal level, and share photos, videos, and life updates. Everyone who joins Facebook gets a Profile, and any user can only ever have one under your name. The following figure demonstrates what a Facebook profile is.

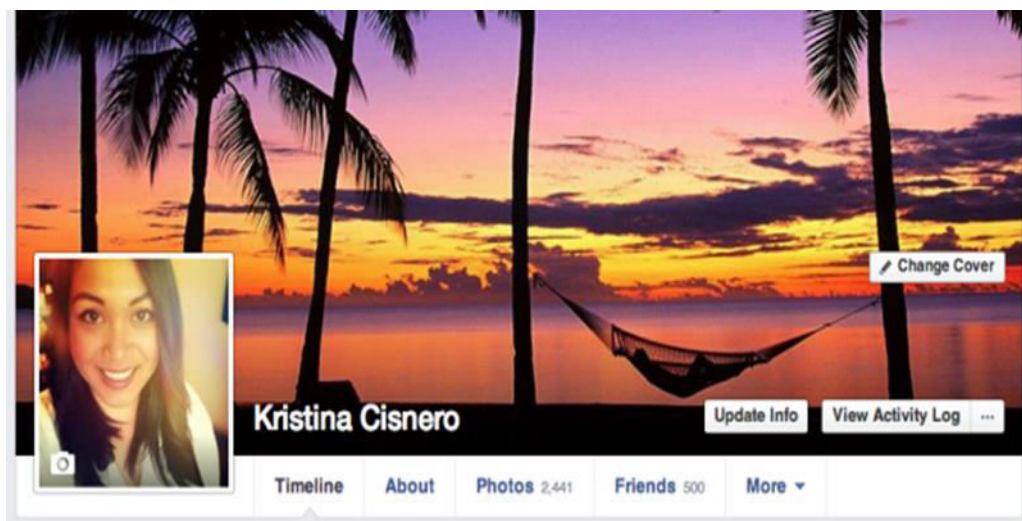


Figure2. Example of a Facebook Profile.

2.2.4.2. Facebook' Groups

Besides providing a ground for connecting and exchanging information, one apparent and recent feature of Facebook is “groups”. The obvious substitution for a group is a cluster of members, who hold the same interests. From the same angle, a Facebook group’ consist of a number of users with the same interests; whatever the latter are. Veer (2010) claimed that through those groups, participants are able to interchange information as they can maintain e-communication and keep in touch. She asserted that there are public groups, in which all Facebook users can apply in and join; and there are some closed groups, which their content is only visible for their members. In fact, groups allow their members to exchange ideas through posting and uploading documents, pictures, videos; or through creating and attending events shared on a specific group (P. 108). On the other hand, she argued that Facebook’ groups are beneficial for expressing one’s self, as well as for expressing his/her political stands. When a user is willing to join a particular group, there are two ways of doing so; the first one is to have a look at what groups the user’s friends have joined, there might be a group, which satisfies his interests than the user has only to apply for it and wait for the admin approval; the second option, and the quickest one is when the user has only to type the group’s name he is interested in the searching bare on the Facebook’ wall, or he needs only to scroll up and down to find out what suits his needs (p. 109). Besides, the importance of groups can never be overwhelmed, as they are a good place where users share common interest, and they are a perfect place where ideas and thoughts can be exchanged, whatever the subject of a certain group, it is without doubts beneficial way to learn new things. Recently, Gunter (2012) stated that:

Groups are the perfect venue for sharing ideas, passions, social and political issues, or just creating a place to connect. You can learn a lot from specialty subject groups, or find an avenue to post questions to others about a topic you want to know more about (p. 13).

Facebook' groups, although recently appeared but they are said to be a crucial feature in the FB platform, they can be either virtual ones, where members never meet in real world, or they can be just a way to keep in touch with real world members.

In sum, Facebook offers its users with a service called "groups", so that users can come together around a common cause, issue or activity to organize, express objectives, discuss issues, post photos and share related content. These groups range widely according to the "purpose" they were created for. They can be publicly available for anyone to join, require administrator approval for members to join or can be kept private and by invitation only.

2.2.4.3. Facebook Chat

Chat is a way of communicating by sending text messages to people in the same chatroom. Crystal (2001) asserted that: "this process takes place in a synchronous setting [where] users join an ongoing conversation in the same chatroom, in a real time" (p. 130). A Facebook chat is a service provided by Facebook. Typically, most chat rooms now use both text and voice simultaneously. Therefore, Facebook chat supports both video/audio chat, which was recently launched, and the oldest form of chat, Text-based instant messaging chat, and a synchronous mode that allows friends to communicate by typing typically written messages which are transmitted instantly by pressing the key "OK".

Besides, Gordon (2010) defined chat as an asynchronous mode of communication requires two or more online users, as a text-based tool, chat takes place in online chatrooms usually [where] users gather to interact and communicate (p. 42). Applications and web-based tools like Skype, Facebook, Messenger and others opted for extra features that go behind text' level within their chat system; the options of video and audio records as messaging modes are

recently added, allowing for a mixture between 3 elements (text, sound, and video) at the same time. Gordon (2010) claimed the chat system to be a crucial option for language classrooms, as learners may improve their skills easily, he also pointed out that:

While chatting can be challenging for lower-level students, it has great potential for students at higher level. The fact that they can use voice, video, and text makes it possible to integrate skills in one place at one time quite naturally (p. 42).

So here, he emphasized the role that chat can play in the enhancement of language skills, for Gordon (2010) chat can be used as a tool to brainstorm, debate, ask questions...etc.

2.2.4.4. Instant Messaging (IM)

On Facebook chat, users, or friends as they are known within the scope of Facebook, are able to communicate instantly at the same time; however, Facebook chat can also be asynchronous as text-based chat sessions can be stored for a long time in messages when users are offline, including the time and the date of chat. Moreover, Facebook is a private application whereby interlocutors, or friends, can manage their own contact list and authorize the partner with whom they choose to chat with.

Like any IM program, Facebook chat makes it possible for its users to chat with more than one friend in the same dialogue window by adding them, as they can engage in several dialogues separately with more than one friend simultaneously. Moreover, instant messaging is defined by Farmer (2005) as follows:

One of the simplest forms of synchronous online communications available. It allows two, and sometimes more, computer users to communicate across a network connection. For the most part, the communication is text-based, although many IM networks

currently provide facilities to allow for audio and even video (p 50).

Furthermore, Gordon (2010) pointed to text messaging as new digital mode for communication that encompasses a new language, a language that is characterized by the use of abbreviations like LOL, CU in addition to other aspects, as well as, a language that is characterized by emoticons, which are a small stable and moving pictures that can compensate the lack of non-verbal language within e-communication, their use is mainly to express feelings and gestures, :D is used to express laughing, :) for smiling and so on. For him, the previous features are only specific to the chat language. He also claimed their use to be regarded as negative as they might impact the learners' language, however, their use inside the classroom cannot be ignored, and a way to use abbreviation inside the classroom can be manifested through translation where students are given a series of chat abbreviations to identify (pp. 43-44).

From another perspective, just like e-mail and maybe with more ease and fun; FB messages inbox enables its users to have both private and instant messages. Although both messages on Facebook and real time conversation seem to be similar, there is a slight difference between the two. Veer (2010) claimed that while using FB, the user can say a simple hello to any member there just by sending him or her a poke, users can also send emoticons, virtual messages and gifts (p. 65). However, chat language lacks many aspects of real world conversations and discussions; it lacks a very crucial feature of any oral performance, which is the non-verbal language.

From the same perspective, Veer (2010) pointed out that: "Facebook built in chat feature lets you send messages to friends who are online when you are" (p. 71). Here, she

explained that there is a difference even at the Facebook level, there is a difference between what is called instant messages and regular ones; instant communications appear immediately once the user sends them to a particular member either in his friends' online list, or a stranger whom he does not know, however, regular ones are sent when the receiver is offline (p. 71).

2.2.5. Facebook as an Educational Platform

Recently, and for many, Facebook can stand as an educational platform, Kirkpatrick (2010) suggested that using Facebook groups for learning purposes might be obscure, and it is not that obvious idea than everyone can catch. He argued that Facebook allowed for self-expression, it has nothing that belongs to it. Yet, the content there is the users' own production, thus he said: "many people, on the other hand found practical and wholesome uses for the Facebook- creating study groups for classes..." (p. 32).

In recent times, Facebook (FB) gains a worldwide popularity; people all over the world tend to use Facebook both as a social and educational platform. Regarding this inquiry, many researchers and authors had tackled the integration of FB both in formal and informal language learning.

Reinhardt and Chen (2013) argued that:

SNS like Facebook have boomed in popularity in recent years- according to the Facebook Newsroom Key Facts page in November 2012, over 1 billion of people around the world use the service, with over 580 million using it daily and 81 percent of its users outside North America. Observing this ubiquity, Applied Linguists have claimed that social networking holds great potential for second language L2 learning... (p. 11).

Due to the rising popularity of Facebook, its use extended to the educational areas, the possible integration of FB either in formal settings or informal ones become inevitable as it encourages learners to interact and hence it raises their motivation. Reviews from different researchers' works confirmed the utility of Facebook in foreign language classes. Dogoriti and Pange (2014) stated that in the study conducted by Blattner and Fiori in 2009, on how social media affect ESL and how the Facebook is used in language classroom; the results showed the Facebook' utility in raising and improving students' communicative skills through authentic exchange of data via FB. Hence, Facebook is seen as a tool for fostering peers; online interaction. McBride (2009) stated that: "Facebook provided beneficial educational results and direct interaction and collaboration with peers and their foreign language (FL) instructor" (McBride, 2009; as cited in Dogoriti and Pange 2014, p. 155). Regarding this review, and along with providing a kind of semi-authentic environment for interaction and development of communicative competences, Facebook is seen as a useful Web2.0 tool in foreign language learning.

Conducting research on the use of Facebook both in formal and informal settings indicates that the latter can be used as a tool to foster education and learning in a formal way when learners collaborate with their instructors using Facebook. As a result, Dogoriti and Pange (2014) suggested that Facebook can be used as a kind of education-based web, FB can be used effectively as an e-learning tool to improve both communication and education as well as to increase learners' motivation and their engagement in the learning process (p. 161).

Based up on an examination of the Facebook as an educational tool, and from the results of the study conducted by Grossek, Bran, and Tiru (2011); it was pointed out that Facebook can be a suitable and successful tool for educational purposes, students feel it is

more natural and authentic educational environment. The majority prefer receiving their home works and assignments through messages or through posts on an already created class' group. It was argued that Facebook raises students' motivation as they feel more comfortable while using it, some of them thought that Facebook is a great communication medium for improving their English language (p. 1428). As students become active online users of FB- thinking it is a good way for fostering the learning process, teachers ought to develop some of their online skills and competences. Although educational groups seemed to be important but based up on the results, (26, 7%) of the sample supported their use. Finally, time management issues might occur even if Facebook signifies a good educational platform. In this regard, Blattner and Fiori (2009) noted that: "Facebook is a powerful learning tool that is not only built off of the synchronous and asynchronous technologies that has transformed learning but has also extended the reach of those communicative tools" (p. 19).

Having Facebook account means having access to a bunch of features, those structures might serve as a social infrastructure, as well as educational platform. Facebook allows its users to engage in different applications, taking into consideration the educational corner, applications such as courses, groups, and video-conferencing can work for the enhancement of education as they are embedded within the Facebook platform. Starting by the first application, on Facebook there are some courses oriented to higher education students. Blattner and Fiori (2009) pointed out that: "Facebook also offers application named courses that directly targets university students" (p. 19), hence, fostering collaboration and exchanging information between the course members. The second and the third applications are beneficial; groups are useful for both learners and instructors, as they bond the two together in the sense that learners get informed by their instructors about official data, as well as, their ability to sign up for video conferencing might help fostering their learning as it

facilitates their e-communication with each other or with their instructors. Blattner and Fiori (2009) claimed that: “students can set up video conferences, sign up for educational groups, instructors can list a variety of official data such as the place and time of the class, office hours, e-mail, assignments, announcements, can post documents and discussion topics” (p. 19).

As nowadays teacher-student interaction via Facebook is increasing more and more, the adoption of Facebook as a new medium for communication between the two becomes something inevitable, therefore the wide use of such an online service is remarkable. The vast majority, which is using Facebook, is higher education learners. Teclehaimanot and Hickman (2011) pointed out that most of Facebook users are higher education students, and as the Facebook popularity is widely increasing, students-teachers interactions are more and more occurring within this real-time communication tool (p. 20).

Accordingly, as student-teacher interaction is rising within the Facebook platform, the only way to enhance and improve the relation between the two is creating a class group, where both can exchange information and work collaboratively, class groups are beneficial stands for language learners, as they can be guided constructively and provided with the necessary materials to improve their language levels. Blattner and Fiori (2009) stated that: “group application can be utilized in language classes in varieties of constructive manners” (pp. 19-20).

2.2.6. The Effect of Facebook Language on the Writing Skill

Undoubtedly, there is a lot of writing out there about the tremendous impact of social media on business, on culture, on the social life, on the world-at-large. But within this part, an

emphasis on how social media communications are impacting written communications or even education as far as students' writing skill is concerned will be reviewed from different works.

In view of this, many studies have shown that the growth of blogs, Twitter and Facebook with Tumblr and other social Software that enable posting and tagging accounts 'creates an environment of continuous partial production'. Therefore, many researchers have looked at social media sites as platforms for catching mistakes. Bani-Hani, Al-Sobh, Abu-Melhim (2014), in an attempt to utilize Facebook groups in teaching writing, argued that, in order to improve standards we need to encourage students to write more and to enjoy writing, which could be supported by celebrating forms of writing they enjoy as they create Facebook groups and share common interests, themes and ideas freely (pp. 30-33).

As part of this emphasis on Facebook as a social networking tool that can be used to enhance teaching and learning, Baker (1999) stated: "Facebook is a network that connects students with other students, indirectly creating a learning community – a vital component of student education" (as cited in Muñoz, L., C. and Towner, L., T., 2009, p. 5). Obviously, Facebook is used by the majority of students on a daily basis. Accordingly, Muñoz and Towner (2009) asserted that it can provide a platform for learning and allow students to collaborate and communicate with each other as well as with teachers (p.4-6). Moreover, Facebook can be used as a medium to keep in touch between lecturers and students in teaching and learning process, which cannot be done entirely in the classroom. Muñoz and Towner (2009) argued that Facebook helps instructors connect with their students about assignments, upcoming events, useful links, and samples of work outside of the classroom (p. 5).

So, as students –nowadays- are all familiar with Facebook and have an account, they found it a useful way to start a conversation, to debate and to inform each other about current issues that are ongoing, to communicate and share ideas with each other too. This can then influence the overall learning experience that they have.

Additionally, as Facebook usage would develop students' satisfaction with friends and family, it can enhance students' scholar achievements and their academic performance too. For Salvation and Adzharuddin (2014), Students with multitasking skills and students with initial interest for the university might experience a positive effect of Facebook usage on their studies, as they keep control over their activity and make it a beneficial leisure activity (p. 135). Besides, in the writing case, Facebook has become as a potential medium in teaching writing.

Moreover, most of universities have already internet wireless connection which allows students to access Facebook anywhere and anytime. In addition, Facebook provides a wall where students can write status, everything about what they think and feel. There is also chat box that permits students share everything to their friends or lecturers directly outside classroom. As a result, White (1995) claimed that this social networking site can be regarded as a good first solution to motivate and encourage students in learning the writing skill besides traditional teaching and learning writing in the classroom. Thus, lecturers can utilize Facebook to increase students' interest in writing by creating a discussion groups in Facebook; where learners can interact with each other's as well as with other native speakers. Whereby, they can show very positive improvements in vocabulary, grammar and spelling as well grammatical complexity (pp.28-30).

Then, when students begin likely to write in the wall of group Facebook, they are also expected to be motivated to develop their academic writing ability. Consequently, it will be great and challenging if Facebook, that students have high interest in and usually use it only for updating status, share pictures and ideas, build networks, etc. can be used and expanded by educators for writing outside classroom learning.

Briefly, Language is always evolving, and Facebook, in some ways, is considered to be a healthy part of that evolution. Aside from helping students to make new friends, social networking sites such as Facebook seemed to facilitate learning.

However, while many still speculate over whether text messaging, social networking sites and blogs are a new form of literature that will soon be studied in schools in the way that books, plays and poetry are now, there is a growing evidence that social networking sites also can be seen as platforms for making mistakes. Obviously, in this digital age, most people have turned to text messaging instead of the writing of letters to convey messages and information together. For instance, instead of writing "What is happening", "Good Morning", "See you" "Good Night", one will write "Xup", "GM", "Cya", "Gud 9t".

Consequently, if the student uses such words in certain situations he/she might get used to such strange vocabularies; and definitely, day by day the student writing skills will be affected. Thus, the question that results from this new trend of communicating is as to whether the continuous use of this texting language has the potential of affecting the writing and communication skills of students.

Conclusion

In the present world dubbed as the world of communications, the spread of mass media has led to the expansion and diversity of social interactions.

Nowadays media experts and researchers offer new ways for interaction which are based on media particularly the Internet. The modern media have managed, via creating a new world particularly in the field of social relations, to create considerable changes in human communications. It can be said that the latest type of human relations have been shaped in the Internet 'social networks.' By sharing the private world of their users and minimizing the distance among them, these networks provide an easier impact. In the social networks, all users are apparently at the same level and by taking advantage of the Internet capacities; they will be able to experience the widespread human communications irrespective of political and geographical borders. The users' increasing tendency to social networks shows that the cyber world has been very much affected by the networks. In view of this, the social Facebook network has been the pioneer and in fact it is considered as the largest site of the world.

Not that long ago, we used to sit down and write letters. Of course, most of us these days do not bother. Instead, we send status updates on Facebook and Twitter, or write to each other in short texts. As a result, the words that surround us every day influence the words we use. Since so much of the written language we see is now on the screens of our computers, tablets, and smartphones, evolves partly through our interaction with technology. And because the language we use to communicate with each other tends to be more malleable than formal writing, the combination of informal, personal communication and the mass audience afforded by social media is a recipe for rapid change. Thus, An alphabet soup of acronyms such as "LOL" (laughing out loud), abbreviations such as "LGE" (for 'language'), informal

neologisms, and Emoticons such as ;-) has grown up around to replace almost every other way of expressing feelings or writing appropriately.

Chapter Three

CHAPTER THREE: FIELD INVESTIGATION

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Introduction

The following chapter represents the practical part of the dissertation; it involves two data collection procedures: corpus analysis, and students' questionnaire. The aim of the first is to find out students' mistakes, while the second aims at finding out the effect of Facebook language on the learners' writing skill.

3.1. Corpus Analysis

The corpus analysis aims at analyzing students' written compositions to find out their mistakes (spelling, punctuation) and what form of language they use. Master one' students were asked to write in an organized paragraph about the following statement: “ the world nowadays is witnessing a phenomenal addiction towards the use of ICT's, and towards the use of Internet, hence users of those technological tools tend to spend much time on social networks, which may affect different aspects of their lives”.

3.1.1. Sample of the Study

The presented study is carried out at the University 8 Mai 1945-Guelma- Faculty of letters and languages, Department of English. The sampled population consists of 97 first year Master students for the academic year 2015-2016, as they are supposed to master the writing skill perfectly, but we chose this population in particular because they are using Facebook (as a social network) for educational purposes. The sample was asked before conducting the study about the impact of Facebook on their learning process, and some of them declared that Facebook does not only affect their learning, but also the way they write. Teachers also were complaining about their academic writings, saying that they remarked students' errors at the morphological level. Another reason for choosing this particular population is the fact that

both teachers and learners at our department shifted from emails and tended to use Facebook as a way to communicate.

Note: the distributed papers are (97), however, (76) papers were returned back.

3.1.2. Corpus Analysis

The analysis of students' written composition will be based up on the procedures of errors analysis:

- Data collection: The gathering of the first year Master students' written compositions.
- Identification of errors: At this level, we circled and underlined the errors.
- Description of the errors: We explained how students produce them.
- Correction of errors: We provided the correct form of the erroneous words, which our sample had committed.

However, within the current study, and based upon its aims only two stages of Error Analysis are taken into consideration. The first one is error identification and the second one is error correction. And the analysis will detect only the errors that appear at the morphological level. Hence, data analysis is basically adopted from a table of errors within a Ph.D. thesis by Wakkad, 1980.

Table 1 demonstrates the total number of spelling mistakes, which are categorized as follow: doubling consonant, consonant omission, consonant confusion, consonant addition, vowel addition, vowel confusion, vowel omission, phonic spelling. In addition to informal language (words, and non-academic abbreviation), the table provides the occurrence of those errors and their corrections.

Table 1

Frequency of spelling mistakes and informal language use

Errors Classification	Number	Errors Identification	Errors Correction
-Spelling	113		
Doubling consonant	03	to use it appropriatty	to use it appropriatly
Consonant omission	18	the abreviations are used in my formal writings	the abbreviations are used in my formal writings
Consonant confusion	07	eye canser	eye cancer
Consonant addition	04	informations	information
Vowel addition	08	they are a sworde with 2 edges	they are sword with two edges
Vowel confusion	45	for defferent reasons	for different reasons
Vowel omission	26	mens of Ict's	means of ICT's
Phonicspelling	02	the effects of ICT's are quiet ovious	the effects of ICT's are quiet obvious
Informal language	24	I wanna to say that everyone is...	I want to say that everyone is...
Total	137		

3.2. Results and Findings

3.2.1. Spelling

The process of writing down words and letters conventionally and accurately is known as the spelling system of language, the percentage of spelling errors within this study is highly occurring (113 errors). First year Master students tend to commit certain spelling features on some words.

- **Doubling a Single Consonant:** Only 3 students (2, 65%) tend to double consonants in inappropriate cases, in words like:

 - *Humman: Human
 - *Famillies: Families
 - *Interraction: Interaction

- **Consonant Omission:** Some of the sampled population, 18 students (15, 92%) tend to omit some consonant in words like:

 - *Adiction: Addiction
 - *Chating: Chatting
 - *Comenting: Commenting
 - *Abbreviations: Abbreviation

- **Consonant Confusion:** Spelling errors of that kind were committed by 7 students (6, 19%) in words such as:

 - *Sence: Sense
 - *Canser: Cancer
 - *Lasy: Lazy
 - *Lighly: Highly
 - *Lifes: Lives
 - *Our: Own

- **Consonant Addition:** Another problem with first year Master was the tendency to add some consonants in cases where it does not fit, such errors including the addition

of the plural marker “s” to uncountable nouns; erroneous words of such kind were as follows:

*Informations: Information

*Lotte: Lot

*Differents: Different

*Overtuse: Overuse

*Peoples: People

- **Vowel Addition:** Some students tend to use some additional vowels, a probable reason their speed of writing and lack of concentration, vowel additions were committed by 8 students, and they were as follows:

*Relaying: Relying

*Fore: For

*Computere: Computer

*Sworde: Sword

*Prefere: Prefer

*Whiche: Which

*Lote: Lot

- **Vowel Confusion:** most of the students usually confuse the graphic forms with their corresponding sounds, 45 students, which means (39, 82%) tend to mix between vowels during their writings.

*Existance: Existence

*Affect: Effect

*Degetal: Digital

*Leave: Live

*Vertual: Virtual

*Consequances: Consequences

*Defferent: Different

*Prifer: Prefer

- **Vowel Omission:** Some students tend to omit some vowels in familiar words, this might be the result of the rush while writing, students' carelessness when writing might result in the omission of "e", those errors are mainly performance ones. Some of those spelling mistakes are as follows:

*Facilitat: Facilitate

*Wast: Waste

*Whol: Whole

*Indicats: Indicates

*Culturs: Cultures

*Bondries: Boundaries

*Worldwid: Worldwide

- **Phonic Spelling:** only few students commit such kind of errors, they misspell the word in case they write it the way they hear it, in this study only 2 students committed such mistakes in two words, which are:

*Atcheevement: Achievement

*Ovious: Obvious

To sum up, we claim that, the sampled population of our study seems to have serious spelling problems.

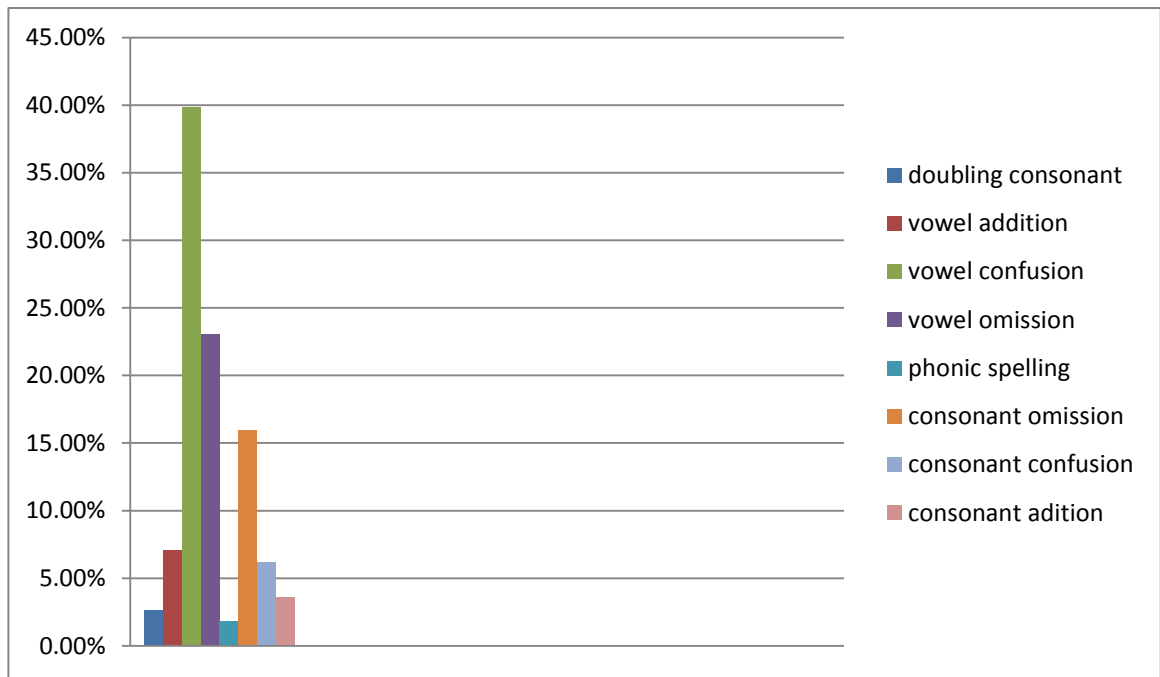


Figure3. Spelling errors' categories

3.2.2. Informal language

Our sampled population tends to use informal language a lot, all of them use contractions such as: I'm, it's, can't and so on. Only few tend to include informal contractions like wanna, gonna, dunno in their writing assignment. Some abbreviations and signs like "lge", "sth", "bcz", "ei", "α" are to be found in the students' writings.

*It is a fact that **can't** be denied: It is a fact that **cannot** be denied.

*Social networks **can not** always: Social networks **cannot** always.

*ICT's **don't** just exist: ICT's **do not** just exist.

***Sth** very essential: **Something** very essential.

*I **dunno** why people spend: I **do not know** why people spend.

*It may improve their **lge**: It may improve their **language**.

*I **wanna** to say that: I **want to** say that.

*The world **gonna** be empty: The world **is going to** be empty.

*Different forms **a** shapes: Different forms **and** shapes.

*Spend one night with each other **bcz**: Spend one night with each other **because**.

The above deviant expressions are used in informal English; **wanna** for instance is used to express I **want to**, **gonna** is used instead of future form of **going to**. Informal contractions like the ones above are mainly used in the informal speaking form but can never be used in formal writings. That is to say, these forms that occurred in students' writings might be the results of their use of informal language inside the classroom atmosphere, as another possibility of this error might be thinking of those concepts as a formal language.

3.2.3. Mechanic of Writing

3.2.3.1. Capitalization

Words with upper-cases are known as capitalized, so, in fact capitalization is writing the first letter of a word in capitals, whereas the rest of the letters are just small (lower-case letters). In fact, our sampled population does not only suffer from spelling errors but also from capitalization problems (188 errors). Most of the capitalization errors involve proper concepts that are not written in upper-cases, or either necessarily/ unnecessarily capitalized words at the beginning and the middle of utterances.

Such as:

***hence**, people should be careful: **Hence**, people should be careful.

***therefore**, the overuse of ...: **Therefore**, the overuse of...

*Yes, **It** changes: Yes, **it** changes.

***facebook**, **twitter**, **skype**: **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **Skype**.

*Actually, **The** Internet: Actually, **the** Internet.

*the use of **Ict's**: the use **ICT's**.

Actually, the errors of capitalization above might be the result of students' carelessness while writing. Students tend to write rapidly, especially when they type on their computers, e-writing on Social Networks is no exception, the test was conducted in 15 minutes in order to impose a kind of pressure on students so that they write quickly just like the way they write on their PC's.

3.2.3.2. Punctuation

Another error committed by our sampled population is punctuation faults, one of the most misused mechanics by foreign language learners is punctuation, students misuse the comma, semicolon and period, as well as, they tend to produce long sentences with total absence of punctuation marks. While analyzing students' composition (190), errors were detected.

Students' misuse of the comma resulted either in its absence, or in its inappropriate use. Starting by the inappropriate use of this punctuation mark, students produced sentences like:

*ICT's have become an integral part in our lives, you may find someone, who is ready...: ICT's have become an integral part in our lives; you may find someone, who is ready...

*leads to addiction and other problems, psychological like...: leads to addiction and other problems; psychological ones like ...

Some forgot using the comma, thus they produced somehow long sentences. They generated sentences like:

*they spend hours in front of their computers which may affect their health and affect their eyes: they spend hours in front of their computers, which may affect their health, and affect their eyes.

*..., however users...: ..., however, users...

*today family members are...: today, family members are...

*...to an electronic world which dominated: ...to an electronic world, which dominated.

*hence people should be careful: hence, people should be careful.

Students sometimes do not use punctuation marks at all, for instance they do not put periods when necessary, and they forget to put it at the end of some sentences. Some erroneous sentences produced by the sampled population are as follow:

*yes, it is right today, we find ...: yes, it is right. Today, we find...

*... we want like education internet helps us to...: ...we want like education. Internet helps us to ...

*... causes eye diseases and also for the other tools: ...causes eye diseases and also for the other tools.

*it is a serious problem that we face nowadays: it is a serious problem that we face nowadays.

*knowing about others' cultures and contacting people from the entire world: knowing about others' cultures and contacting people from the entire world.

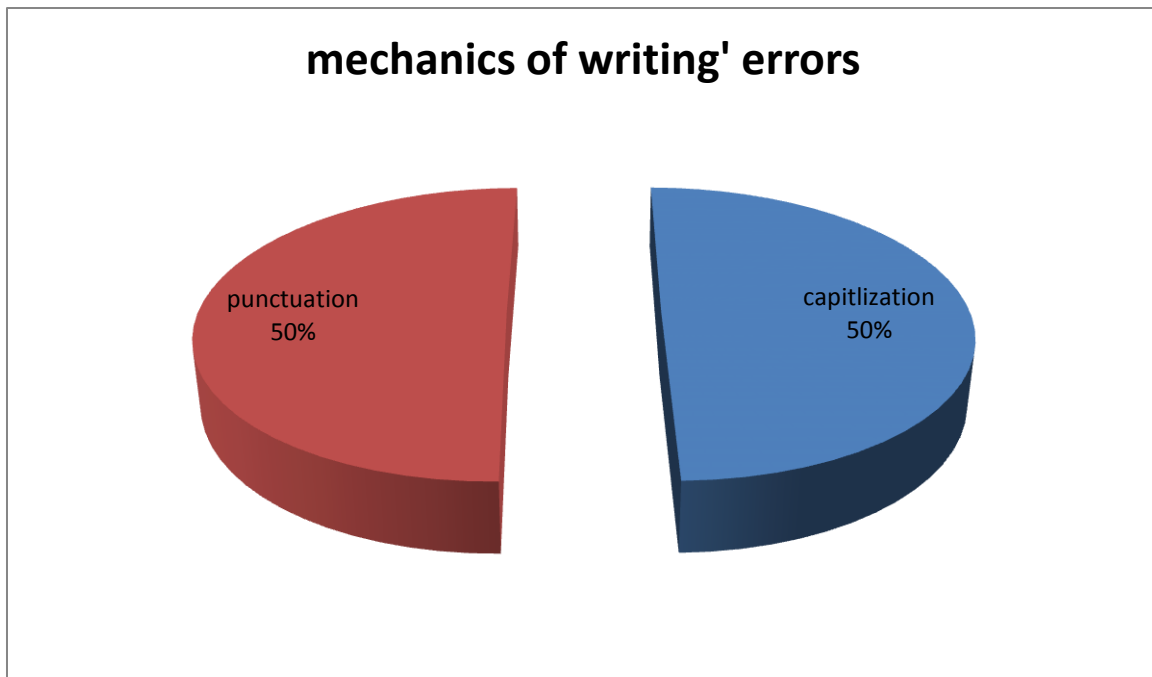


Figure 4. Students' errors in mechanics of writing

3.3. Summary of Results and Findings from Corpus Analysis

The results gathered from the corpora demonstrate that students' use of the writing mechanics is not appropriate for qualified piece of writing, their written compositions lack the accurate spelling, as well as, punctuation and capitalization patterns, thus it can be seen that students' low level in writing is apparent at the morphological level.

The errors committed by students were mainly classified into 2 types; spelling errors (vowel omission, addition, confusion, and consonant omission, addition and confusion, the use of informal language and phonic spelling), and mechanics errors (punctuation+ capitalization). Results indicated that the sampled population made almost the same spelling errors; vowel confusion represented the most frequent kind of errors, they confused some vowels especially "a" and "e", for instance they wrote "existance" rather than "existence", students also omitted some vowels and left the consonant on their own , for instance "lge" for "language". Students tended as well to add some vowels but when we take vowels into

consideration, vowel confusion is the recurrent error made by those students. As vowels are not the only letters of the English alphabet, students also made some errors at the level of consonants, but in comparison with errors at the level of vowels, the sampled population did not make many errors at that level, consonant omission is higher than consonant confusion and addition. Furthermore, students made some phonic spelling believing that they are writing the word accurately, phonic spelling category was the least occurring errors only few students commit it. However, what was really surprising is the use of some abbreviations, the use of informal language was not only about using contractions or the informal vocabulary, but it extended to include abbreviations, which are not the conventional ones in the English language. Another type of errors made by the sampled population was at the level of writing mechanics, students tended to commit punctuation errors either by inappropriate use of punctuation marks or by not using them at all (ignorance of punctuation), which created ambiguity in meaning, respondents also forget to capitalize proper nouns and words when necessary. So, as a result of the SMS and the social web era, the written word has changed in a couple of key ways and since the learners are living in a new world of communication, obviously they will have to learn the new language and tend to assimilate this ‘social speak’ into their lives and studies in turn. Hence, another data collection tool was carried out to figure out to what extent Facebook can affect the students’ writing skill.

3.4. Students' Questionnaire

It is the second data collection procedure used in the current study; the questionnaire allows the students to express their views and opinions concerning the effect that Facebook, as a Social Networking site, has on their writing skill. Thus, the questionnaire has been handed to first year Master students, our sampled population, of the English department at the University of Guelma. In particular, the questionnaire aims at finding whether the Facebook

has negative effects on the writing skill or not, and if yes; what aspects of the written system are affected. Moreover, our choice of the topic and the sample was based upon the supposition that first year Master students use Facebook as a mean of communication either with their classmates and teachers, or with strangers. In addition, through Facebook writings; either in the instant messages bars, or writing status, be them in their own walls, others' walls, groups, or pages. So, the mean of communication used within this Web 2.0 tool is writing mainly, here it means when students communicated using Facebook they tend to write, they write messages for their friends, they write status either on their walls, or others' walls; so here, the mean of communication used within Facebook is writing and more precisely the digital writing.

3.4.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of (28) questions that are organized into 3 sections. Each of the questionnaire's section is related to a specific aspect of the present study (appendix two). The sections are divided as follow:

Section One: General Information

This section represents an introductory part that is meant to draw the portraits of the learners. In this section, the sampled population is required to give us some personal information and the section consists of only one question. **(Q1)** is about the age.

Section Two: The Writing Skill

This section encompasses twelve questions **(12)** about the writing skill; the questions' aims are to elicit the sampled population views about the writing skill and also the e-writing. **(Q2)** aims at finding out whether students like the writing skill or not, and they were asked to

justify their answers. (Q3) asks whether the sample students consider writing as an easy task or not, and again they were requested to justify. (Q4) aims to know how often the sampled population is asked to write per week. (Q5) tries to find out the importance of writing in free times. (Q6) is about the writing process stages (i.e.; Planning, Drafting, Writing, Revising, Editing, and Publishing) and which one represents a great difficulty for them and why. (Q7) is posed to know the students' first step immediately after reading the required topic. (Q8) aims to find out the students' opinions concerning the difficulty of the writing skill. (Q9) is posed to know which aspects identify the writing skill. (Q10) tries to depict whether students prefer the e-writing over the handwriting or not, and they were requested to state why. (Q11) is put to know which delivery form students used to be asked to give, whether the handwriting form, or the e-written version form. (Q12) is asked to know whether the e-writing has any influence on the writing skill or not, and the sampled population here is requested to explain how. (Q13) as the last question within this section, the question aims at finding out the importance of e-writing.

Section Three: the Impact of Facebook Language on Learners' Writing skill

This section involves fifteen questions (15), and it aims at discovering how Facebook as a Social Networking Site can influence the learners' writings. Thus, (Q14) attempts to find out what is the most frequent Social Network Site used by the sampled population. (Q15) aims to find out whether the students have Facebook accounts or not. (Q16) aims at knowing how long the students have Facebook accounts, to see their familiarity with this Social Network. (Q17) aims to find how much the sampled population do log into their Facebook accounts. (Q18) aims at finding what language students use while using Facebook. (Q19) aims to figure out what form of language the sampled population use on Facebook, is it the formal language or the informal language. (Q20) is posed to know the real purposes behind

students' use of Facebook. (Q21) aims to figure out whether the sampled population considers Facebook as an educational tool or not, and they were requested to give their opinions on how it can be used as an educational platform. (Q22) tries to figure out to what extent students agree that Facebook as a Social Networking Site can have a negative effect on their learning process in general. (Q23) aims to know if students commit spelling mistakes while typing or not. (Q24) is a closed-ended question with multiple choices to figure out what writing features students employ while writing instant messages on Facebook. (Q25) is an open question, where students are asked to cite the abbreviations they use while chatting on Facebook. (Q26) is posed to detect whether students think that the overuse of abbreviations and informal language while chatting will negatively affect their writing skill, and they were politely invited to justify their responses. (Q27) it is an open-ended question with multiple choices to elicit the relation between Facebook and the writing skill. (Q28) The final question is an open ended one that gives opportunities to learners to add their comments, views and opinions in relation to the topic.

3.4.2. Administration

On the 26th April 2016, learners' questionnaire has been handed to first year Master students of English department at the University of Guelma. It seems worth mentioning that almost questionnaire' papers were returned back, we administrated 97 papers and we received back only 87 ones, which means that (89, 69%) of the sampled population has answered the questionnaire.

3.5. Results of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Learners' Profile

1. Age

Table 2

Learners' distribution according to age.

Age category (years)	Number	Percentage %
21 – 25	83	95%
26 – 28	01	01%
More than 28	03	04%
Total	87	100%

From the table above, it is indicated that almost all the sample under investigation belong to the age category of (21-25), which means 95% of the population are youth. However, only 4% of the population age is above 28 years, and only one (1%) belongs to the age category between (26 - 28). This holds that our sampled population consists of youth persons, who have almost the same way of thinking and same tendencies.

Section Two: The Writing Skill

2. Do you like writing?

Table 3

Students' attitudes towards writing.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	69	79%
No	18	21%
Total	87	100%

The results above show that the majority of students enjoy writing and they are motivated to write. (79%) of them like the writing skill and they gave some justifications, among which; writing can be a comfortable way for the introverts and shy students to express themselves since they feel at ease to write what they cannot tell without fearing failure, or

getting embarrassed for mistaking in front of others. However, 18 students said that they do not like writing and this might implies that they are not motivated to write or express themselves or they might lack the necessary skills and potentials for this craft. So, they tick for “No” as an answer justifying their choice by saying that the writing skill is a complicated skill that requires a mastery of grammar as well as vocabulary. In addition, some of them choose not to worry about punctuation or capitalization and prefer to speak freely.

3. Do you find writing an easy task?

Table 4

Difficulty of writing.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	10	11%
No	77	89%
Total	87	100%

As it is noticed from the table above, only 11% of the students claimed that writing is an easy task, though their answers were “yes” claiming that writing is an easy task, as they have been practicing it since their first year at university if not before. On the contrary, the majority of the sampled population claimed the writing task to be a difficult one, and they justified their answers by saying that writing is one of the complex tasks to acquire and that a good writing means a good style which can be accomplished and developed through considering all the aspects of writing including vocabulary (choice of words), coherence and cohesion, accurate spelling as well as the appropriate use of punctuation.

4. How often do you like written tasks per week?

Table 5

Frequency of written tasks

	Number	Percentage %
Always	06	07%
Usually	13	15%
Often	19	22%
Sometimes	35	40%
Rarely	03	15%
Never	01	01%
Total	87	100%

As it can be grasped from the table number 5, (40%) of the surveyed students claimed having written tasks sometimes, whereas (22%), which means 19 of them claimed that they often have written tasks. Whereas, 13 students rarely have those written compositions per week, and 13 others said they usually have them. (7%) of the surveyed population said they always have written expression and only 1 student declared they never have written compositions per week.

5. How important do you consider writing in free time?

Table 6

Importance of writing in free time

	Number	Percentage %
Extremely important	14	16%
Very important	27	31%
Moderately important	27	31%
Slightly important	17	20%
Not at all	02	02%
Total	87	100%

Based upon the results in the table above, the importance of writing in free times varies, (31%) of the surveyed population considered writing in free time as a very important thing, as well as, the same percentage indicated that writing in spare time is moderately important, which may entail that students practice some writing during their free times, maybe

to express themselves only and not for academic purposes. However, 17 students said that writing in free time is to some extent important, and here it might be seen that the writing is marginalized and seen as something additional, and may be those students do not write at all in their free times and they do that only for academic purposes (exams for instance); hence, they are either lazy or just ignoring the importance of writing. Whereas, only (16%), which means only 14 students considered writing in spare time as an extremely important factor, which might entail that this portion of the sample are creative writers who produce free writing all the time.

6. Which stage of writing process worries you more?

Table 7

The most difficult stage of the writing process according to students.

Stages of writing	Number	Percentage %
a- planning	20	23%
b- drafting	05	06%
c- writing	06	07%
d- revising	02	02%
e- editing	02	02%
f- publishing	00	00%
a+c	02	02%
a+d	03	03%
a+e	04	05%
c+e	03	03%
a+c+e	04	05%
c+d+e	06	07%
all of them	30	35%
Total	87	100%

From the table above, we can claim that the majority of students (35%) have a severe problem with all the stages of the writing process, the respondents justified their answers assuming that writing stages are not easy and all of them related to each other, and if they ever face a problem with one particular stage, they would for sure face problems with the others. (23%) of the sample opted for the planning stage, claiming it is the most difficult one, they

assumed that they get confused in terms of what to include and exclude and struggle in finding ideas relevant to the topic. For them, planning takes time and it is the most important stage. (7%) of the students opted for the writing process, they claimed they have serious problem with their handwriting, and this might entail that this minority prefer typing. Moreover, (7%) of the students claimed that they have serious problem with 3 stages, which are writing, revising, and editing, those students hence have a serious problem with mechanics of writing. They clarified their selections saying that they have a lack in the mechanics of writing including checking spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Taking the drafting stage into consideration, only few (5%) have problems with this phase, the respondents claimed that though they know the importance of drafting as a pre-writing stage, they do not use drafts at all and hence when it comes to writing they mixed up things. Other (5%) of the students claimed they have problems in planning, writing, and editing. 6 students said that they have serious problem with planning, writing, revising, and editing. 2 of them (2%) opted for the revising and editing and this might be clear that they do have problems within writing mechanics mainly. Finally, none of the surveyed population opted for the publication stage, and this might entail that students lack the sense of sharing, they do not opt for peer or teacher' assessment, publication is not that big problem as well maybe because in our context we do have the tendency to share or publish our piece of writings.

7. When you are asked to write about a given subject, what do you generally do?

Table 8

What generally students do after reading the topic of the written assignment.

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- start to write immediately	07	08%
b- think for a while about the topic	33	38%
c- make a plan for your writing	20	23%
d- write down sentences	16	18%
e- make the first draft	11	13%
f- others	00	00%

Total	87	100%
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Table 8 above demonstrates what students do generally after reading the topic of the written composition, the majority of the sample (38%) think for a while about the topic, thus, our sample is aware of the importance of brainstorming and generation of ideas. Then, (23%) of the students opted for making a plan, hence this entails the importance of planning in the writing process. (18%) of the respondents claimed that they write down sentences related to the topic, here it means that they jot down ideas that will guide them while writing their compositions. Only (13%) of the sampled population opted for making drafts, here it might be seen as a good step. However, plan should be put first. In addition, only 7 students (8%) start writing immediately, this entails that their written composition might lack organization and precision. Finally, none of the respondents (00%) added other suggestions.

8. According to you, what does good writing represent?

Table 9

Learners' opinions about what is a good writing.

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- correct grammar	00	00%
b- rich vocabulary	00	00%
c- coherent and cohesive sentences	00	00%
d- correct spelling	00	00%
e- correct pronunciation	00	00%
a+b	07	08%
a+b+d+e	08	09%
a+b+e	10	11%
b+c	05	06%
b+c+d+e	13	15%
b+c+e	02	02%
c+d+e	11	13%
f- all the above	31	36%
Total	87	100%

In the table above, it is shown that students' choices are integrative; they chose more than one option. However, the majority (36%) picked the option "all the above", (15%) of

them saw correct writing as rich vocabulary, coherent and cohesive ideas, correct spelling, and correct pronunciation. Then,(13%) chose (c+d+e), which means cohesive and coherent ideas, correct spelling and correct punctuation, thus their choices entail the importance of writing' mechanics mainly, which are spelling and punctuation. Moreover, (11%) of them claimed that correct grammar, rich vocabulary, and correct punctuation summarize what a good writing means. Finally, what can be regarded is none of the respondents chose one particular option but they selected more than one to define what is meant by good writing. Thus, we may notice an apparent and frequent repetition of the choices. On that basis, the students' selection is basically related to the mechanics of writing and their importance for making appropriate and good productions.

9. How do you consider e-writing?

Table 10

The importance of e-writing.

Appreciation	Number	Percentage %
Very important	23	26%
Important	59	86%
Unimportant	05	06%
Not important at all	00	00%
Total	87	100%

The table 10 above shows the importance of e-writing, where the majority including(86%) of the students asserted e-writing to be important, in addition to 23 others who said that “ e-writing” is very important claiming that it is much more easier and legible than the handwriting. While, only (06%) of the respondents denied the importance of electronic writing opting for “unimportant” as an answer, however, none of them opted for its “absolute unimportance”.

10. Do you prefer e-writing over the handwriting.

Table 11

Learners' preferences

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	55	63%
No	32	37%
Total	87	100%

The table above demonstrates students' preferences concerning the way they like to write. The majority (63%), means 55 out of 87 respondents claimed they prefer e-writing over the handwriting and they clarified their answers by assuming that typing on screen is a time saving and much more easier where the students do not bother themselves anymore with checking punctuation, capitalization or even spelling mistakes due to the use of E-Dictionaries and Spelling-Checkers . However, the others (37%) asserted that they like the handwriting and justified their answers by saying that pens and papers are considered to be more comfortable elements for faster writing than the key boards as they can be a booster for a more motivation and a better creativity as well.

11. When you are given written assignment, do you generally:

Table 12

Mode of written assignment delivery

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- deliver it with your handwriting	20	23%
b- deliver its e-version	67	77%
Total	87	100%

The results in the table12 show the mode of written assignment delivery, it means whether students are asked to deliver the handwriting version or the electronic one. Hence, (77%) of the students claimed that they are always asked to deliver the e-version of their written compositions, however, only (23%) are asked to deliver the handwriting version,

maybe this can be done on a purpose that is to check the students' level or their needs and lacks concerning the writing techniques and mechanisms.

12. When you type, you find yourself producing:

Table 13

Types of errors committed by learners when they type

Types of errors	Number	Percentage %
a- spelling errors	22	25%
b- punctuation	07	08%
c- capitalization	04	05%
d- contractions and informal language	10	11%
e- others	00	00%
a+b	08	09%
a+b+c	03	03%
a+b+c+d	12	14%
a+b+c+d+e	06	07%
a+b+d	02	02%
a+c	04	05%
a+d	05	06%
Total	87	100%

In the table above, the results show what errors do the respondents commit while typing, thus the answers were integrative, and many options were selected. The majority (25%) claimed that they find themselves committing spelling mistakes, others (14%) find themselves committing the four errors indicated in the table, this might be related to their carelessness while typing, as spelling checkers are there to correct their mistakes, 10 students, which means (11%) said they find themselves using contractions and informal language. and Few of them (8%) opted for the punctuation errors, and (7%) opted for the four errors' types and suggested other errors like grammatical ones in addition to abbreviations.

13. Do you think that typing (e-writing) influences your writing?

Table 14

Students' opinions concerning the effects of typing on the writing

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	69	79%
No	18	21%
Total	87	100%

The table above indicates the students' point of views on whether typing affects their writing or not, 69 of the respondents (79%) claimed that typing influences their writing and they clarified their answers saying that they found themselves committing more or less errors related to the morphological level of language. As a result, if the students are not aware about the mistakes they may commit while typing, the immediate interference of the E-Dictionaries and Spelling-checkers to correct the inappropriate punctuation, capitalization and spelling mistakes may lead to the loss of the latter's appropriate use. On the other hand, (21%) of them claimed that typing is just an easy way to write and that it makes their texts more readable, but it has no negative effects on the way they write.

14. Select the Social Networking Site that is mostly used by you:

Table 15

The most used social networks by learners

Social Networks	Number	Percentage %
a- Facebook	41	47%
b- Linkdin	00	00%
c- Myspace	00	00%
d- Twitter	00	00%
e- Instagram	00	00%
f- Others	00	00%
a+b	07	08%
a+b+e	02	02%
a+b+e+f	05	06%
a+c	04	05%
a+d	10	11%
a+d+e	06	07%
a+e	05	06%

a+e+f	01	01%
a+f	06	07%
Total	87	100%

Table 15 above demonstrates the social networks use by students. It seems that almost all the respondents are familiar with Facebook accounts, since the majority of them (47%) opted for Facebook as a single option and others for Facebook in addition to other Networking Sites. Thus, it has been found that (8%) of the respondents use Facebook in addition to Linkdin, and only (2%) opted for the latter in addition to Instagram (a+b+e). Also, (6%) of the respondents opted for (a+e) as well as for (a+b+e+f) mentioning mainly Skype as another option among the Social Networking sites that they are familiar with. While, (11%) students opted for (a+d), which means that they are users of Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, (7%) of them chose (a+d+e) which means that they are users of Facebook, Instagram as well as Twitter in addition to (a+f) as another option where Skype is added as another familiar account. However, only one student from the sampled population seemed to opt for (a+e+f) mentioning Skype also as an additional account.

15. Do you have Facebook account?

Table 16

Access to Facebook.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	87	100%
No	00	00%
Total	87	100%

Results from the table 16 above show the access of learners to Facebook, all the respondents with no exceptions have Facebook' accounts, this can be related to the widespread of this social networking site, as well as, the results stands for the youth generation' engagement within web.2 tools, in other words, young people tend to use

Facebook and other social networking sites more than elder people do, addiction to those social networks sites is mainly related to the youth

16. How long have you been a Facebook user?

Table 17

Students' membership as Facebook users

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- less than a month	01	01%
b- more than a month	02	02%
c- more than a year but less than than 3 years	27	31%
d- more than 3 years	57	66%
Total	87	100%

It is shown in the table above that the majority of students have membership in Facebook that exceeds three years, (31%) have Facebook accounts for more than a year but less than three years. (02%) have it for more than month and only 1 has it for less than this period. So, from here it is visible that the majority of our sample are familiar with Facebook and its uses, as well as, what features and option does it include.

17. How often do you log into Facebook?

Table 18

Frequency in logging into Facebook.

Collège	Number	Percentage %
a- several times aday	58	67%
b- weekly	07	08%
c- less than monthly	02	02%
d- daily	18	21%
e- monthly	02	02%
Total	87	100%

From the table above, the results show that (67%) of the surveyed sample, which means the majority use Facebook several times a day, thus they are considered to be highly

addicted to this social network, (21%) of them use it daily, and (08%) use it weekly, but only (02%) use it monthly or less than monthly.

18. What language do you use in Facebook?

Table 19

Language used in Facebook

Languages	Number	Percentage %
a- Arabic	06	07%
b- french	01	01%
c- english	10	11%
d- codeswitching	04	05%
e- others	00	00%
a+b	01	01%
a+b+c	05	06%
a+b+c+d	13	15%
a+b+c+d+e	02	02%
a+c	17	20%
a+c+d	17	20%
b+c	02	02%
b+c+d	03	03%
b+d	02	02%
c+d	04	05%
Total	87	100 %

Table 19 demonstrates the language used in Facebook, based upon the results, it is shown that the majority (15%) use codeswitching to deliver their message, this might be either to make fun , or due to the lack of vocabulary in particular language so they tend to codeswitch to ensure the full message delivery. (11%) of the respondents assume to use only the English language on Facebook, the other answers were a kind of integrative, they include more than one option, (20%) of the sampled population tend to use a mixture of Arabic, English, and codeswitching patterns. The same percentage, which means (20%) were for Arabic and English options, few use the Arabic language only, and just one use entirely the French one. Also, (6%) of students are users of Arabic, French and English on face book. While, only (2%) opted for all the options (a+b+c+d+e) mentioning mainly Spanish and

Italian language as other languages used while chatting. The same percentage, (2%) is for using French and English (b+c) and for (b+d) as another option as well. In addition, (5%) was marked for those who tend to code-switch only (d), and for those who code-switch and use the English language (c+d) entirely in their Facebook conversations as well. Moreover, (3%) of the sampled population seemed to use French, English and to cod-switch when using Facebook. However, only (1%) was marked as a percentage for both; the French users only, and for the French and the Arabic users also (a+b). While, (7%) of the respondents tend to use only our Arabic language while “facebooking”.

19. On Facebook, you use:

Table 20

Form of language used on Facebook

Language Forms	Number	Percentage %
Formal	06	07%
Informal	81	93%
Total	87	100%

The table above shows what form of language is used by the respondents as Facebook members, results show that (93%) of the language used there is informal, this might entail and demonstrate the non-confined features of Facebook, which means that Facebook is the place where students feel more relaxed as its nature is informal so they can use any sort of language they wish to. On the contrary, only (07%) opted for the formal sort of language, maybe those respondents use Facebook only for academic purposes, or they may believe that the informal use of language might influence the formal usage as long as they get used of it.

20. What is your purpose for using Facebook?

Table 21

Purposes for using Facebook.

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- communicating with existing friends	07	08%
b- meeting new people online	00	00%
c- educational purposes	00	00%
d- posting status	04	05%
e- others	00	00%
a+b+c+d	12	14%
a+b+d+e	12	14%
a+c+d	03	03%
a+d	27	31%
a+d+e	22	25%
Total	87	100%

The table above shows the purposes behind using Facebook; the students' choices were opted either for one option, or for more than one. The majority (31%) claimed they use Facebook for two major reasons, which are: (a) which refers to communicating with existing friends, the second purpose is (d) which is positing status of their owns, moreover, (25%) of them added to the previous two reasons another one which is (e) that refers to "others" option and hence, here some students added some purposes like: the utility of Facebook for them to express themselves either through writing freely or through posting and sharing videos and pictures. None of them use Facebook for meeting new people nor use it entirely for educational purposes, however, (14%) of the respondents included the option (c), which refers to educational purposes.

21. Do you think that Facebook can be used as an educational tool?

Table 22

Students' perspectives on Facebook as an educational tool.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	76	87%

No	11	13%
Total	87	100%

results in the table above show that the majority (87%) of respondents claimed that Facebook can be used as an educational tool, this may entail that those students feel motivated and amused while using Facebook, this web 2.0 tool for them is the easiest way to get information and instructions. Only (13%) contradicted the idea of using Facebook as an educational tool, assuming that this social network is put mainly for social communications and not for academic ones.

22. Do you agree that Facebook has negative effects on your studies in general?

Table 23

Students' perspectives towards the impact of Facebook on their studies.

	Number	Percentage %
Strongly agree	27	31%
Partially agree	17	20%
Agree	24	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	09	10%
Disagree	08	09%
Partially disagree	02	02%
Totally disagree	00	00%
Total	87	100%

The table above shows students' perception of Facebook as a tool that might influence negatively their studies in general. Hence, the majority (31%) strongly agree that Facebook has an impact on their studies, maybe those students are addicted to Facebook and waste their time on it rather than taking care of their studies, (10%) of the surveyed population stood apart, they neither agreed nor disagreed for the statement, maybe they do not see any of this negative impacts, or their studies are negatively affected but they are not sure whether Facebook has to do with this or not. So; (20%) of them opted for a partial agreement and (28%) just agreed upon the impact of Facebook on their studies. by contrast, (09%) of them disagree, and only (02%) partially disagree, however none of them totally disagree.

23. While you type, do you commit spelling mistakes?

Table 24

Students' commitment of spelling mistakes.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	78	90%
No	09	10%
Total	87	100%

The table 24 shows that the majority of the sample, which represents (90 %) said yes, they commit spelling mistakes, however, 9 of them opted for “No” as an answer claiming for an entirely correct and appropriate production when typing.

24. While you write instant messages, do you?

Table 25

What students use while writing instant messages.

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- use punctuation	00	00%
b- use abbreviations	14	16%
c- use informal language	20	23%
d- use formal language	02	02%
e- accurate spelling	00	00%
f- all the above	05	06%
a+b+c	04	05%
a+b+c+d	03	03%
b+c	34	39%
b+c+d	01	01%
b+c+e	04	05%
Total	87	100%

The table above demonstrates what patterns of language students use while writing instant messages on Facebook. (39%) of the respondents, which means the majority stated that they use both abbreviations and informal language, hence this can be related to saving time, as those abbreviations and informal language are a quick ways for communication, 20 students claimed that they use informal language, and (16%) of them use only abbreviations.

None of them (00%) use accurate spelling or punctuation. However, respondents use a variety of patterns; those patterns are used frequently within net-language.(10%) claimed not to commit spelling mistakes.

25. What are the abbreviations you use while chatting? (Put slashes between each).

Students answered this question by adding the English abbreviations they use while chatting on Facebook, they provided many examples like abbreviations consisting of ‘vowel deletion’ where the consonants are maintained to represent the whole word. Examples down from the sample include: ‘pls’/’plz’, ‘nt’, ‘gd’, ‘wt’/’wot’, ‘msg’, ‘txt’, ‘frm’, ‘kw’, ‘abt’, ‘QT’, ‘fwd’, ‘wlcm’, ‘nd’/’&’, ‘srsly’, ‘wtvr’, ‘lge’, ‘r’ for ‘are’, ‘u’, ‘y’, ‘k’/’ok’, ‘thnx’, ‘ppl’, ‘cmnt’, ‘grp’, ‘ya’, ‘bcz’/’bcs’ ‘sth’, and ‘sb’.

In addition, some of the respondents provided other examples of abbreviations where initials of a word or words are used to refer to the whole word or a phrase like: ‘LOL’ for ‘laughing out loud’, ‘ASAP’ for ‘as soon as possible’, ‘LIT’, ‘CIV’, ‘LUV U’, ‘GM’, ‘GB’, ‘TTYL’, ‘C Ya’/’C U’, ‘BTW’, ‘HRU ?’, ‘BF’, ‘GF’, ‘BFF’, ‘Fac’, ‘Univ’, ‘OMG’, ‘r U SRS!’, ‘R U K!’, ‘Bro’, ‘Sis’, ‘JK!’, ‘BBL’, ‘BRB’, ‘Grats’, ‘IDK’, ‘IDC’, ‘TK CR’, ‘GTG’, ‘XO XO’ and ‘FB’.

what can be seen also from other examples of abbreviations is the use of alphanumeric spelling or blending letters with numbers to represent a word, phrase or clauses such as: ‘b4’, ‘2’, ‘4ever’, ‘w8’, ‘l8r’, ‘c ya/u l8r’, ‘2mrw’, ‘2day’, ‘4’ and ‘alr8’ for, ‘2n8’ for ‘tonight’, ‘n8’, and ‘gd9t’. (appendix three)

26. Do you think that the overuse of abbreviations and informal language while chatting will affect your writing skill?

Table 26

The effect of abbreviations, and informal language on students' writing skill.

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	75	86%
No	12	14%
Total	87	100%

The table above demonstrates the effect of using abbreviations and informal language while chatting on the writing skill, the wide majority claimed that the use of such patterns in chat may have negative effects on the writing skill on the long run, but (14%) stated that patterns of chat language have nothing to do with the writing skill, thus they have not a negative effects.

27. Do you think that Facebook:

Table 27

Facebook and its relation with the writing skill.

Choices	Number	Percentage %
a- increases chances to write	05	06%
b- decreases the quality of writing	06	07%
c- familiarizes you with English writings	00	00%
d- Helps you use English spelling and punctuation correctly	00	00%
e- helps to improve your writing to be more effective in communication	06	07%
f- Has a negative impact on your writing skill	04	05%
g- Does not improve writing at all	01	01%
a+b+f	01	01%
a+c	02	02%
a+c+d	02	02%
a+c+e	08	09%
a+d+e	01	01%
b+f	18	21%
b+f+g	17	20%
b+g	03	03%
f+g	07	08%

Total	87	100%
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Results in the table above show the link between Facebook and the writing skill, the majority of the respondents (21%) claimed that Facebook decreases the quality of writing and it has a negative impact on their writing skill, (20%) said that Facebook does not improve writing at all, and that it decreases the quality of their writing as it has a negative impact on it. On the contrary (09%) of them assumed Facebook to be a good thing that ensures the chance to write, as well as they believed that it familiarizes its users with the English writings and helps them improve it. some (08%) asserted that it has a negative effect on writing as well as it does not improve writing at all. Only few respondents (06%) asserted that Facebook has a positive effect on their writings, and that it increases them maybe this category sees Facebook as a way to write and publish their compositions, furthermore, maybe they feel motivated whenever they write something and get many likes and comments. None of the respondents claimed Facebook as a way to use accurate spelling or accurate punctuation, here it can be said that within Facebook, spelling and punctuation errors are inevitable.

28. If you would like to add anything about this subject, your further comments are welcome.

Concerning the students' further comments only (13%) out of 87 respondents gave answers claiming that Facebook sometimes can be used as a helpful means of education since its users are allowed to share information, ideas and log into different cultural and educational groups where they can develop their critical thinking, learn new things and even get in touch with native speakers and hence enriching vocabulary and improving communication in turn. Only (5%) out of (13%) stated the advantages of Facebook and asserted the possibility of using it as an educational platform. However the majority (8%) regarded Facebook as a

“threat” to their studies in general and the quality of their writings in particular since it is associated only and mainly with the informal language where the learners speak themselves and write freely using conventional symbols and abbreviations for saving time and efforts. As a result, this can turn into a habit and students may start write with the informal language even in formal and academic contexts which may affect negatively their academic achievements and their writing skill as such.

3.6. Summary and Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaire

Results revealed by the analysis of the students’ questionnaire can contribute and add value to the current study. First of all, the sampled population represents a young generation, who all has Facebook accounts with no exceptions. Results also indicated that the writing skill is the most important, but also the most difficult skill to master, as it needs a full mastery not only of grammar but also of mechanics. Moreover, the results gathered from the students’ questionnaire shed the light on the importance of e-writing; students prefer e-writing as they feel secure while typing, they are sure that their compositions will be pure from spelling and punctuation mistakes, teachers as well ask their students to deliver the e-versions, which may lead to many problems. The most important thing here is that the majority, who prefer the e-writing, assume they have spelling, punctuation mistakes, which they commit while typing. Furthermore, as Facebook embraces the e-writing feature, results from the questionnaire revealed also its impact as a social networking site on the students’ writing skill, the majority of respondents assume Facebook to have a negative impact on their studies on general and their writing skill in particular, students claimed that while chatting they use many abbreviations, and some claimed that the most important thing is to deliver the meaning, they do not care whether they chat using the accurate spelling or the right writing mechanics, since they are sure that the receiver of the message will get it. Thus, the findings showed that while

chatting via Facebook, students tend to use abbreviation, informal language, no punctuation or capitalization, and the most important thing is that they found themselves committing spelling mistakes and totally forget about the accurate spelling of some words. Hence, Facebook here is seen to affect some aspects of the formal language used in the formal situations like exams, Net language used within this Web2.0 has a negative impact on learners' academic writing, especially at the morphological level; the students said that they found themselves unconsciously using chat language within their academic essays.

Moreover, results from the questionnaire showed the students' perspectives of Facebook as an educational tool, the majority said that Facebook can be used an educational tool, where they can exchange information with each other or with their teachers, however, this majority use Facebook for a bunch of reasons not only educational ones, some like to chat with natives, some prefer posting videos and pictures, some others prefer joining leisure groups, and others prefer publishing their creative writing. As a result and based up on all the previous gathered data, our hypothesis is confirmed, both the corpus collected and results from the students questionnaire confirmed that the overuse of Net language in Facebook would impact the learners writing skill negatively, especially at the morphological level.

Genral Conclusion

3.7. The Pedagogical Implications

As spelling and punctuation are the most affected aspects of formal language within the current study, many suggestions and recommendations are set for both teachers and students.

Teachers should stress the importance of writing mechanically accurate compositions. Thus, teachers should ask their students to deliver their compositions written manually and not electronically, they should also correct the compositions and provide their students with feedback. Another suggestion is that if students are not aware of the impact of technologies, teachers should make it clear for them that technology is just a sword with two edges, and that they should use it only for their own good. Moreover, we suggest that writing should be a module for first year license' students, and we advocate that the teachers should give the learners full explanations as well as provide them with tasks to master the writing mechanics in English. Furthermore, and in relation to the writing process, teachers should work on each writing stage, for instance they can organize workshops for writing modules, and they should give each session an ample of information for each writing stage and work on it through tasks, and at the end of each workshop, teachers should provide their students with the needed feedback. Another suggestion in relation to evaluation, teachers should be severe in putting marks, especially when it comes to spelling and punctuation errors, this way students will never commit such errors.

As far as students are concerned, we recommend that they should write full words while using Facebook, especially for the words they use in everyday writing. They should

practice writing as much as they can, and a final recommendation is about giving extra time for the writing part especially in examinations, as students tend to use abbreviations when they are in rush just to earn some extra time to finish their compositions.

General Conclusion

The current dissertation has primarily tried to figure out the impact of Net language used in Facebook on foreign language learners' writing skill. Thus, it takes first year Master students at 8 Mai 1945 University- Guelma- as a case study, it investigates their writings compositions to find out what aspects of their formal, and academic writings are affected by Net language use. Furthermore, another data collection procedure, which is questionnaire, was conducted to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis of this MA thesis.

Therefore, as an attempt to clear up things and provide a holistic picture of the impact of Facebook language on the learners writing skill, three chapters were set down to deal with the problematic. Thus, the first chapter was a theoretical base of the dissertation. It worked as a lens to clarify many notions starting by the writing skill, its processes, its styles and forms including the formal and informal writings, as well as, within the first chapter the shift towards the digital age and more precisely digital writing or as it is labeled "e-writing" was emphasized, the chapter also includes the mechanics of writing skill as a big title that includes many other subtitles.

The second chapter was a mere attempt to give a brief theoretical account on the Facebook as a social networking site, thus the chapter gave at first a brief definitions of the social networking sites and their language, as it depicted how SNS's can be used as an educational platform, then w clear move towards Facebook was apparent, the chapter

provided the definition of the term and how did it emerge, its advantages and some of its features, and how can this Web 2.0 tool can be perceived as an educational platform, and finally the chapter ends with the effect of the Facebook on the writing skill. Within this chapter, we assumed that Facebook has a negative impact on learners' writing skill, nevertheless, this assumption required investigation through different data collection procedures.

The third chapter stood as the empirical platform of the dissertation it is a mere analysis of the results carried out via triangulation; which means that the results were gathered through two tools, which are corpus analysis and students' questionnaires. The findings then showed that the overuse of Net language, and more precisely that of Facebook affects negatively the mechanics of learners' writing skill and more specifically at the morphological level (spelling, punctuation, capitalization among others). Hence, the results confirmed the hypothesis. Chapter three includes as well as some recommendations and suggestions regarding the use of Facebook and some recommendations for teachers to teach the writing skill. Willing that those pedagogical implications would be fruitful on the long run, thus, the writing module is recommended to be taught at the first year license, and teachers are requested to explain and emphasize the accuracy of writing' mechanics especially spelling and punctuation, as they are requested to ask students to deliver the handwriting versions and besides that teachers were asked to be severe when putting marks, especially when it comes to spelling errors, which may reduce such errors later on. Finally, learners therefore are asked to always the accurate spelling and punctuations even when they are on Facebook.

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APPENDICES

Appendix Two

Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at investigating the impact of Facebook language on the writing skill. The findings would help us provide information to confirm or reject our Master research hypothesis. The questionnaire will not take long and it is completely anonymous and confidential. Your answers are very important then for the validity of the research we are undertaking, as such, we hope you will give us your full attention and interest.

You are kindly requested to respond to the following questions; either by ticking the appropriate box (s), rating order, giving a full answer(s) or leaving the answers blank whenever necessary.

We thank you for your cooperation and we appreciate the time devoted to answer this questionnaire.

Thank you

-Miss. BENZDIRA Halima

-Miss. SOUSSI Aicha

Department of English

University of 08 Mai 1945-Guelma-

University year: 2015/2016

Section One: General Information

1: To which age category do you belong?

21-25

26-28

More than 28

Section Two: The Writing Skill

2: Do you like writing?

Yes No

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

3: Do you find writing an easy task?

Yes No

Please, explain and justify your answer

.....
.....
.....

4: How often do you have written tasks per week?

Always	
Usually	
Often	
Sometimes	
Rarely	
Never	

5: How important do you consider writing in free time?

Extremely	
very	
Moderately	
Slightly	
Not at all	

6: Which stage of writing process worries you more?

Planning	
Drafting	
Writing	
Revising	
Editing	
Publishing	
All of them	

Please, justify.

.....
.....
7: When you are asked to write about a given subject, what do you generally do?

a- Start to write immediately

b- Think for a while about which ideas to include

c- Make a plan for your writing

d- Write down sentences and phrases related to the topic

e- Make the first draft

f- Others

.....

8: According to you, what does good writing represent? (You can tick more than one option).

a- Correct grammar

b- Rich vocabulary

c- Coherent and cohesive ideas

d- Accurate spelling

e- Correct punctuation

f- All the above

9: How do you consider e-writing?

a- Very important

b- Important

c- Unimportant

d- Not important at all

10: Do you prefer e-writing over the handwriting?

Yes

No

Please, justify your answer

.....
.....

11: When you are given assignment, do you generally?

- Deliver it with your handwriting

- Deliver its e-version

12: When you type, you find yourself producing:

- Spelling errors

- Punctuation errors

- Capitalization errors

- contractions and informal language

- Others

.....
13: Do you think that typing (e-writing) influences your writing?

Yes	
No	

Please, explain how?

.....
.....

Section Three: the Impact of Facebook Language on Learners' Writing Skill

14: Select the social networking site that is mostly used by you.

- Facebook

- Linked in

- Myspace

- Twitter

- Instagram

- Others

.....

15: Do you have a Facebook account?

Yes No

16: How long have you been a Facebook user?

- Less than a month
- More than a month
- More than a year but less than three years
- More than 3 years

17: How frequently do you log into Facebook

- Several times a day
- Weekly
- Less than monthly
- Daily
- Monthly

18: What language do you use on Facebook?

- Arabic
- French

- English
- Codeswitching
- Others

.....

19: On Facebook you use:

- Formal language Informal language

20: What is your purpose for using Facebook? (You can pick up more than one option).

- Communicating and connecting with existing friends
- Meeting new people online
- For educational purposes
- posting status
- Others

.....

21: Do you think that Facebook can be used as an educational tool?

- Yes No

Please, if yes mention how

.....
.....
22: Do you agree that Facebook (or other SNS's) has negative effects on your studies in general?

Strongly agree	
Partially agree	
agree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
disagree	
Partially disagree	
Totally disagree	

23: While you type, do you commit spelling mistakes?

Yes No

24: While you write Instant Messages, do you?

- Use punctuation
- Use abbreviations
- Use informal language
- Use formal language
- Use accurate spelling

- All the above

- None of the above

25: What are the abbreviations you use while chatting? (Put slashes between each).

.....
.....
.....

26: Do you think that the overuse of abbreviations and informal language while chatting will affect your writing skill?

Yes

No

Please, justify your response.

.....
.....

27: Do you think Facebook? (You can tick more than one option)

- Increases the chance to write
- Decrease the quality of your writing
- Familiarizes you with English writing
- Helps you use English spelling and punctuation correctly
- Helps to improve your writing to be more effective in communication

- Has a negative impact on your writing skill

- Does not improve writing at all

28: If you would like to add anything about this subject, your further comments are welcome.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you a lot for your cooperation

ملخص

تتناول الأطروحة الحالية موضوع استعمال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في المجال الأكاديمي، و تهدف الدراسة الى التحقيق في التأثير الذي من المحتمل ان تشكله اللغة المستعملة في الفايسبوك على مهارة الكتابة لدى الطلبة. العينة كانت طلبة سنة اولى ماستر بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة 8 ماي 1945 -قائمة -، و لدراسة هذا التأثير افترضنا ان الافراط في استعمال لغة الفايسبوك من قبل الطلبة سيؤثر سلبا على المهارات الكتابية للطلاب. و من اجل الوصول للأهداف المرجوة من الدراسة قمنا بالاعتماد على البيانات النوعية التي جمعت اعتمادا على تحليل مدونات كتابات انشائية، كما تم الاعتماد على البيانات الكمية التي جمعت من خلال توزيع استبيان خاص بالطلبة و الذي وزع على 97 طالب. النتائج وضحت ان العينة المدروسة مدمنة بشدة على الفايسبوك، كما لوحظ انهم يستعملون لغة غير ملائمة في الاكاديمية و هذا راجع الى الافراط في استعمال لغة الانترنت. كما تبين ان كتابتهم متأثرة بهذه اللغة خاصة على المستوى الشكلي وذلك من خلال الاخطاء الاملائية و استعمال لغة غير رسمية كالتقليص و الاختصارات. لذلك اقترحنا مجموعة من التوصيات التي من ضمنها رفع وعي الطلاب في ما يخص مساوئ و اخطار التكنولوجيا، كما اقترحنا الاستعمال المناسب للغة و تجنب اي استعمال غير رسمي لها او استعمال الاختصارات التي من شأنها ان تضر بالنظام الكتابي لاحقا. كما اقترحنا ان الاساتذة من موجبهم التعامل بصرامة و جدية مع الاستعمال الغير مناسب للغة من خلال تخفيض العلامات اينما وجد استعمال غير رسمي لها