The Effect of Messaging Language on EFL Students' Academic Writing

The Case of First Year English Students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The entire praise is due to Allah alone, the Sustainer of the entire world.

This modest work is dedicated:

To my adorable parents for their patience, tolerance and support,

For the encouragement they provided all the time.

Also, to my brothers "Abd alghani, Moubarek, and Iyad"

And to my lovely sisters "Amina and Omayma"

To my friend "Rima" for being in my life and helping me finishing this work,

To all my relatives for their encouragement as well,

And finally to you dearest reader.

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Abstract

Most of EFL students encounter many challenges to master all aspects of academic writing and to produce well-polished pieces of work. These challenges can be due to several effective factors. Consequently, this research work attempts to investigate one of these factors which is the effect of messaging language on First year EFL students' written production precisely in the English Branch. Our study aims to shed light on the negative influence of this written language of messaging media, and to raise students' awareness about the importance of the formal writing style on their current and future career. We hypothesize that if first year students overexpose to messaging language as a form of writing, it will reflect passively on their academic success and achievement since their output will be informal and unacceptable. Therefore, in order to obtain relevant data about the students' adoption of this new invented language, within their different assignments, that is practiced at university level, a descriptive study inferred from the findings of both questionnaires designed and addressed to eighty eight of first year students and seven teachers of written expression module. Then, we come up to the following conclusion that the findings of this research confirm the hypothesis and prove that the frequent use of such unconventional language has a serious effect on EFL written production.

Key words: EFL students, messaging language, academic writing (formal).

List of Abbreviations

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

CMD: Computer Mediated Discourse

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

E-mail: Electronic Mail

IM: Instant Messaging

ML: messaging language

SMS: Short Messages Service

TL: Target Language

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Pie Charts

Table of Contents

General Introduction

Chapter One: Messaging Language

Chapter Two: The Writing Skill

Chapter Three: Field Work

Appendices

Appendix A: The Students' Questionnaire

Appendix B: The Teachers' Questionnaire

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General

Introduction

Introduction

It is known that language is characterized by its interactional nature between human beings for the sake of communication, which is delivered through the productive skills, mainly the oral and the written one. These two aspects of language have their own significance since language at the first place is oral and the written aspect comes at the second place. However, this latter also still has its important role in delivering the linguistic message, specifically in the formal setting. Therefore, learning a foreign language especially English is a crucial process since it has become widely used in many fields including the educational one. It involves mastering the writing skill acquired from the direct exposure to the language. It means that the more learners are exposed to language orthographic conventions, the better they learn it. In fact, students try to find all the time new ways to learn the language. So, nowadays they prefer to use their developed devices and adopt what is called messaging media to communicate the intended language.

1. Background of the Study

The increase of messaging language traces back to the technological revolution that the world has witnessed from the late of 1990 to1993. With this rise, a new language has been emerged, and it is called "net speak" or more specifically "text speak". This language according to Lee includes two types of computer mediated written communication: text and instant messaging. "Text messaging is otherwise referred to as short messaging service and involves sending and receiving instant messages of less than 160 characters from one cell phone to another" (Lee, 2011, p: 15). "Instant messaging on the other hand involves sending and receiving instant messages via instant messaging software on computers connected to the internet. There are no character limits to messages sent via instant messaging and participants normally participate in real time conversation" (p: 15).

Meanwhile, this language is considered to be a casual language since unconventional standards are used along. Furthermore, text speak is the interchangeable process of sending and receiving written messages between pairs. Therefore, this novel language has become as a major medium for its users to control their communication process to be either in real time such as having a chat or in postponed time such as sending SMSs. For that reason, this type of communication has become the favorable one to many people, particularly students due to its different properties and privileges.

Moreover, messaging language is depicted by its spontaneous and speech-like nature. It means that, during messaging, users use an invented language that has been agreed upon. For instance, texters use abbreviations, acronyms and symbols to deliver and convey their messages without paying attention to the grammatical rules. As a result to the use of these forms, many studies have investigated the effect of messaging language on students' writing style. Many researchers disagreed upon this controversial issue. Some of them, such as David Crystal (2006), claim that messaging has a positive effect on written skill since it provokes the users' social interaction and creativity. However, some researchers, such as, O'Connor (2005), Thurlow, Lengel and Tomic (2004), argue that this modern type of communication has a negative impact on students' written production because its frequent use encourages the use of unusual forms, whereas others demonstrate that it has neither a positive nor a negative effect.

2. Statement of the Problem

Teachers from the early beginning tend to teach and guide students to develop their writing skill as much as possible. Traditionally, they give tasks and home works to practise the intended language in order to develop this productive skill. However, nowadays students have adopted new ways to practise the target language (henceforth TL) as a result to the

available technologies. For example, through their evolved devices, students send and receive short messages (SMS), instant ones (IM), and emails. They learn via engaging in real time communication, which is a useful policy to be borrowed during the learning curve, this is on the one hand. On the other hand, learners during texting tend to shift from the formal standards to non-formal ones due to many reasons. Space saving, time and effort consuming strategies are one of the causes behind the emergence of this invented language. Therefore, students break the grammatical rules while they write as a result to the use of abbreviated and shortened words, and the omission of the punctuation marks. Consequently, these violated rules hinder students' written performance as some researchers have claimed. Since the more the exposure to the language is, the more learners adopt its inaccurate features easily. To sum up, messaging language (ML) has become a real problem that learners must be aware of its harmful consequences on their academic performance.

3. Significance of the Study

Although messaging language has many advantages on students writing skill, it has at the same time considerable disadvantages. These disadvantages affect the learners' linguistic competence that is observed in their homework assignments, tasks and examination papers. As a result, many teachers and scholars become anxious about this serious issue that needs to be solved as soon as possible. Thus, the importance of this study is to shed light on the harmful influence of messaging language on first year English students' writing skill. It attempts to make them aware about the causes and consequences behind their poor level of academic writing. In addition to that, it will make them differentiate between the English formal and informal features in order to use it appropriately and correctly.

4. Aims of the Study

This study aims to investigate the relationship that exists between messaging Language and the writing skill. Thus, the main objectives of this research are the following:

❖ The first objective is to investigate the negative effect of messaging language on students' writing assignments.

❖ It looks for highlighting the importance of distinguishing between formal and informal English language, so that students produce relevant texts.

❖ To find out the main reasons behind the use of this invented language.

❖ To offer some recommendations for both students and teachers in order to reduce its harmful effect.

5. Research Questions

The following questions are the main ones that this study aims to answer:

1- Does the frequent use of messaging language affect negatively the students' academic writing style?

2- What are the main forms of (ML) that students often insert in their written works?

3- Do students differentiate between the standard and non-standard features of English language?

6. Research Hypothesis

This research is based mainly on the following hypothesis:

We hypothesize that if messaging language is used frequently without any guidance, it will affect learners' writing skill negatively.

7. Research Methodology

This research is conducted during the academic year 2017/ 2018. It seeks to investigate the negative influence of messaging language on academic writing style. It is based on the descriptive method that attempts to describe this recent debatable issue in which some researchers claim that it raises students' creativity, whereas others argue that it hinders learners' linguistic competence.

7.1. Population and Sample

The population of this research work is both English teachers and first year LMD students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. Meanwhile, seven (7) teachers of written expression module and eighty eight (88) of first year students have been selected randomly as a sample to represent the whole population. Therefore, the significant reason for choosing this sample is that messaging language does not affect a certain level of proficiency. Besides, students have already learned the basic roles of written English, yet they still produce disordered and incompetent pieces of work.

7.2. Research Tool

In order to obtain objective, relevant, valid and credible data about the area of interest, a survey method will be adopted. In other words, the technique will be used to collect data is mainly questionnaire. This latter is a useful technique since it allows researchers to obtain different types of data from different participants in a shorter period of time. Thus, its role is to obtain a mixture of different perspectives, opinions, and personal experiences concerning the problem of messaging language as a causing factor in impeding students' writing progress.

8. Limitations of the Study

As any other study, this research also has some limitations that should be pointed to. First, it addresses a specific population in a given period of time. Second, it includes only eighty eight (88) participants to represent a large population, which consists of eight hundred and eighty five (885) students. Next, this study is limited to (7) teachers of written expression module. Also, it is specified to only two types of Computer Mediated Communication (text and instant messaging). Then, it is limited to only one type of research tools, which is questionnaire. Finally, the findings of this current study may not match with the ones produced by another study.

CHAPTER ONE

MESSAGING LANGUAGE

Introduction

The main concern of this chapter is investigating all what concerns the messaging language, which consists of two forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC). They are known as text messaging (SMS) and instant messaging (IM). Although they are two different terms, they share various characteristics in common use along the messaging process. This latter is defined simply as the process of sending and receiving different written messages via the use of developed technological devices either synchronously or asynchronously. The delivery of those messages requires a linguistic code. This code is mainly characterized by its non-standard features through which the message is communicated freely without any boundaries. Because this invented language based on the significance of fluency rather than accuracy, the process of messaging recommends communicating the, English, language eloquently. Thus, the prior concern of this modern invented language is delivering the messages based on its meaning and fluency rather than on its grammatical correct structure.

Therefore, this chapter introduces two main types of computer- mediated communication (henceforth CMC), as they are mentioned above. However, some other types will be presented such as, Email in order to have a large overview about the different types of computer –mediated communication and distinguish between them.

1. Distinction between Written and Oral Languages

Before introducing the issue of messaging language along this chapter, distinguishing between written and oral language will help in understanding the nature of the messaging language. Furthermore, Communication is the basis of daily life, and it is dependent on the delivery of the different messages. The transfer of these messages can be done either through written or spoken language. It means that, the language is used in different ways via cell

phones, internet or face- to- face conversations. Hence, the written language differs from the oral language in many ways (Freudenberg, 2009).

First, according to David Crystal, the major difference between the two forms is that the written language is space- bound. It is a permanent and static form of transfer between a writer and reader, who are distant from each other. Writing requires punctuality such as the use of commas, full stops, and question marks to display information in a clear, simple, and legible way. Writing is concrete and visual; it has a structure in a form of pages and lines, whereas the oral language is bound by time. Thus, oral language is temporary and dynamic form of transfer between a speaker and hearer, who have a real time interaction. In addition to that, unlike writing, speech is auditory and requires intonation, rhythm, and tone of voice (2004).

Furthermore, in writing there is time for scrutiny, planning, and organising thoughts. Also, it enlarges the chances to produce accurate pieces of writing since it helps identifying errors and editing them before submitting the final draft. While in oral interaction, communication is instantaneous and spontaneous, so there is no enough time for planning and organization. However, the errors can be corrected immediately while participants having conversation face- to- face. Hence, unlike writing, this type of communication relies on participants hand gestures, facial expressions, and other non- linguistic signs to interpret any interaction (op. Cite.).

Therefore, messaging language combines both characteristics of speech and writing. It is a written language that looks like speech since it is typed on a keypad, and it is speech like because the typed messages are written informally as in a daily conversation. Collot and Belmore explained it in other words stating that participants "use language as if they were having a conversation, yet their message must be written" (1996, p. 14, cited in Freudenberg,

2009, p. 22).It means that messaging language bases on an inventive typology and unconventional use of grammar rules and styles (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004).

2. Messaging Language

Varied terms have been used to describe the language of messaging by many scholars, among them David Crystal who named it "text speak". It is characterised by the wide use of what is technically called "textisms" that is defined by Crystal as "the words or abbreviations invented for use in the medium" (2010, p. 10). Regardless of this definition, "There is no clearly defined standards for creating textisms and many different spellings or patterns of punctuation […] used for the same word or phrase" as it is clearly stated by Kemp (2010, cited in lee, 2011, p. 17). Thus, this language is flexible and does not follow the standards due to its speech- like nature. It is unconventionally used to suit the communicative constrains as texters are socially interacting and spontaneously using it in real- time. Both when having a chat with friends or in postponed manner when someone sends electronic mail (Crystal, 2006). Hence, this "text- based CMC takes a variety of forms […] whose linguistic properties vary depending on the kind of messaging system used and the social and cultural context embedding particular instances of use"(Herring, 2015).

2.1. Definition of Text Messaging

Text messaging or as commonly known as "SMS" is defined by Tomita as "the communications protocol used to deliver short text messages, up to 160 characters via Global Systems for Mobile Communication(GSM) enabled Mobile Phones"(2009, p.186). It means that, the delivery of messages depends on global protocol of mobile phones as a channel for communication in order to enable its users to exchange those limited texts.

Also, Jeremy Harmer has offered a brief and concise perception concerning text messaging as "the biggest growth in mobile phone use in the last […] years. Users send

written messages rather than leaving spoken ones. They use a special kind of language because they want to write quickly" (2004, p. 64).So this definition highlights the significance of short messages service through which users can deliver typed messages rather than oral ones in a fast way via a specific style of writing.

In addition, Thurlow and Poff has defined text messaging as the process of sending brief typed messages depending on a particular service of a mobile phone for person- to-person communication. Although it affords texters with inexpensive medium of communication, but it is restricted to the number of characters sent per message on the other hand (2011). It means that, short message service provides quick and less expensive way of communication. Texters send brief typed messages to each other to offer more privacy to its users.

According to Baron, "The abbreviation "SMS" formally stands for "short messaging system", though it is generally interpreted as meaning "short text messaging". SMS is used on mobile telephones throughout much of the world […]. Messages are generally created by tapping the numbers of the phone keypad one or more times, corresponding to the letter of the Roman alphabet that is intended "(2003, p. 14). This is a general and simple proposed definition that defines the term "SMS" and describes the process through which this latter is transferred.

Although each scholar offers a definition using different terms selected according to each ones' perspectives, still most of them agree on defining texting as one- to- one communication medium. It facilitates the transfer of short and brief typed texts, which are constrained to 160 characters sent privately per a message using mobiles protocol in postponed way (and also can be delivered using computers since it is no longer limited to mobiles only this due to the technological development).

2.1.1. Example of Text Messaging

Some researchers tend to relate text messaging not only to SMS but also to other forms of computer- mediated communication (CMC) such as, Email(s). This divergence is based on the nature of these forms. Thus, Email considered as being asynchronous form of communication because the messages are exchanged and transmitted in off line manner where the participants are unaware about the electronic mail until it is received (as the way SMSs are exchanged).

2.1.1.1. Email

"Email, or electronic mail, is the electronic counterpart of traditional letters. It is an asynchronous form of communication, using writing as a means of expression. Messages are created using an email client […]; the transmission time for email message is reduced to seconds. The mail software automatically adds a header to each message. Giving information about sender, address, time and date of posting […]. Messages are used for both private and business purposes. Messages can be sent from one person to another or from one person to multiple receivers". This definition has been proposed by Ylva Hard af Segerstad as an example of asynchronous CMC (2002, p. 64- 65).

2.2. Definition of Instant Messaging

Unlike texting, instant messaging (IM) is "the exchange of content between a set of participants in near real- time. Generally, the content is short text messages, although that need not to be the case. Generally, the messages that are exchanged are not stored, but this also need to be the case. IM differs from email in common usage in that instant messages are usually grouped together into brief live conversations, consisting of numerous small messages sent back and forth" (Campbell et al., 2002, p. 2). This definition refers to the immediate transfer of generally short messages and sometimes long typed ones. It uses what is named by

Campbell "the Session Initiation Protocol" (SIP) as a service to maintain presence and session- oriented communication so that it facilitates the exchange of those instant messages (*ibid*.).

Next, Amanda O'Connor has defined instant messaging as "a form of computer "chat" that allows one to have a real time, typed "conversations" with one or more "buddies" while connected to the internet. It is an extremely fast- growing communication medium, especially among adolescents" (2005). This definition focuses also on the importance of immediate presence of both "buddies", as Amanda named them, and typed messages in a conversation of course while having an access to the internet. This is considered as the first point. The second one is that this kind of modern communication medium is growing quickly particularly among adolescents.

Also, Spatafora has proposed a similar definition to the one presented by O'Connor. "IM is a form of computer – mediated communication in which two people (or more) engage in real- time conversation through text" (2008, p. 6). Similarly to O'Connor's definition, Spatafora has defined IM as a form of computer chat or communication that requires the presence of internet protocol and the instant involvement of texters in a written conversation.

In addition, as it is defined by Lieke Verheijen, IM is "the online exchange of text messages between two or more individuals using a mobile phone application or an internet application, through a social networking site or within an online game" (2013, P. 583). This definition is a simple and concise one that describes the process of delivering instant written messages. These latter are transferred in a real time manner via both mobile or internet apps, such as social sites like facebook accounts.

Therefore, many scholars and researchers have agreed on some points that characterises instant messaging. Thus to say, having internet access, participants' presence,

and usually short typed messages are crucial in any conversation. On the other hand, when comparing both types of Computer Mediated Communication, some clear similarities are shared in common. For instance, texting and instant messaging are both characterised by the short typed messages, and the distinctive language used along the messaging process to reduce the time of writing for the sake of the quick response, this is concerning the similarities. However, the main difference is that text messaging is asynchronous CMC; that takes place in postponed manner, whereas instant messaging occurring in real time conversations, that is synchronous CMC.

2.2.1. Social Media as an Example of Instant Messaging

Social media is defined according to Antony Mayfield as "a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics: participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness" (2008, P. 5). First, participation means that social media offer free contribution to all users. Second, openness refers to the availability of social media. Since it is easy to get access in, it is opened for participating, commenting, and giving feedback. Then, conversation means that social media nowadays become more dynamic in terms of interaction, rather than being just a tool of transmitting content. Next, community means that social media is the basis for the rising of some communities such as, photography and fashion. Finally, connectedness refers to the fact that social media connect numerous sites, resources, and people. These are the features that distinguish social media; it may have all or just some of them. Thus to say, they facilitate socialization and establish the feeling of belongingness. Of course, after getting access to internet and creating an account, it is possible to take the advantage of these characteristics (*ibid.*).

Moreover, most of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace and Skype have several advantages. One of this latter is providing an immediate chat either with one person or with a group of people. The chat starts when participants are online at the same time. When

getting access to internet, participants can share posts, photos and videos with all their friends or public, from one person to a group of people, or they can exchange their thoughts and ideas privately, from one to one person.

There is a special language used along the process of messaging. It is an invented one, which is recently established as an innovative way of communication; it is an electronic one. It allows its users to express themselves freely in the way they want, for example; by using emoticons, they can express their feelings. In addition to that, most of social media offer a real exposure to the target language, English, for example, through contacting native speakers, the language can be both practised and learnt. Also, it supplies a spontaneous interaction, and an immediate feedback. So, that it maintains a smooth communication via giving quick responses. Consequently, due to its varied advantages, teenagers prefer to adopt such networks and applications. Thus, social media are the main source for the emergence of the synchronous CMC this in one hand. On the other hand, although most of social media afford various advantages, but still have remarkable disadvantages that affect users' academic performance.

3. Types of Messaging

Messaging language in particular is based on two main modes as a part of computer-mediated communication (CMC) or computer mediated discourse (henceforth CMD). It means that messaging discourse differs in terms of synchronicity. It depends on what kind "the type of communication is produced when human beings interact with one another by transmitting messages via networked computers" (Herring, 2015, P. 1).

3.1. Asynchronous

Since it is considered as a flexible mode, this type is characterized by its postponed nature in which texters have enough time to interact and communicate their short typed

messages. For example, it is based on both mobile protocol as a channel to send SMSs and on computer as medium to deliver emails. In addition to that, the system of asynchronous CMD do not necessitate for users to be logged on in order to exchange their messages. However, it has the advantage of storing messages for the addressee's until they can read them as in the case of sending electronic mail (Herring, 2015, P. 3). Thus, asynchronous CMC offers the privilege for communicators to edit their texts before delivering them, like the traditional writing (*ibid.*).

3.2. Synchronous

The second type is the one in which texters have a real time interaction with one- to-one or group communication. This type requires the presence of both participants and internet protocol as the main conditions to enable the exchange of messages or texts in an online and immediate manner. So instant messaging is the main form that includes synchronicity nature. In other words, unlike asynchronous communication, the synchronous CMD requires the presence of both sender and addressee(s) to be logged on at the same time so that to interact. The messages are more ephemeral; as new messages replace the previous ones like what happens in chat rooms (Herring, 2015, P. 3). Hence, synchronous CMC offers more interactive turns, in contrast to the previous type, it is based on the immediate delivery of messages that results in quick responses.

4. The Structure of Messaging Language

The messages are written and sent in two ways. Firstly, the messages are sent as one unit (block) to the recipients who do not know about the transmission of the messages until they are received. Secondly, the messages are chunked into two or more sections, and they are respectively ordered and then sent, as they are typed. The recipients, in this case, are aware about the transmission of the messages. Unlike formal writing, messaging language is a free

form of writing that does not undergo or compel to any conventional rules or structures (Cherny, 1999, cited in Herring, 2015). The following screen shots illustrate the way messaging language is written; they are adopted from a conversation hold between Master two students IMANE GUETTALA and her supervisor Mr. LAMDJED EL HAMEL.

Figure 1. Structure of Messaging Language (Guettala, 2016)
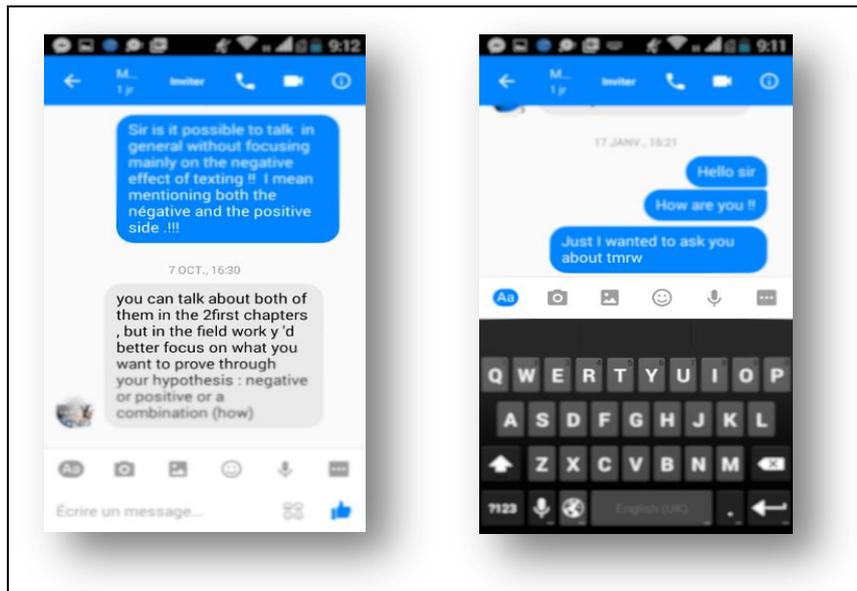
5. Forms and Characteristics of Messaging Language

The linguistic properties of text speaking language include shortcuts, abbreviations, emoticons, omitting both punctuation marks and capitalization and other similar forms. In other words, this language is full of non-standard forms. Due to these non-standard forms, variety of studies consequently have investigated the nature of this language through the analysis of its textisms' different forms, structures and manifestations gathered from various texters' recorded messages. After that, they concluded to classify them into categories (Thurlow, 2003; Varnhagen et al., 2010; Verheijen, 2013). This research will present three main categories that differ in the way of classification and some suggested concepts. The first category concerns the instant messaging language. The second category concerns the texting language. Then, the third category presents both types together.

5.1. The First Category

The first category is presented in a form of table, proposed by Connie Varnhagen and the five of his colleagues (2010, p. 723). This table includes three principal categories consisting of sub-forms followed by examples for clarification.

Table 1. New Language Categories and Examples of New Language (Varnhagen et al., 2010, p. 723)

Category	Example	Example in context
Short cuts		
Insider word	hottie	MAKE OUT WITH THAT HOTTIE.
	fugly	is that like a fuglyslut?
Abbreviation	feelin	how r u feelin?
	prolly	you could prolly look them up on the net.
word combination	wanna	I wanna sign up for the yhl.
	gonna	i am gonna be gone sat and Sunday.
Acronym	bf	SHE HAS A BF.
	omg	omg that is terrible.
Alphabet/ letter	u	what do you wanna talk about?
	2day	did u go to school 2day?
Phonetic	yer	you get yer stuff done tonight?
	wat	what u doin?
Lower case	i	i almost cried.
	elyssa	r u talking to elyssa????
Contraction	im	im so excited.

	that's	thats not cool.

Pragmatic devices

Emotion word	ha hahaha	hahahahaokay.
	sooooo	wowimsoooo glad.
Emotion acronym	lol	lolim not talking to you.
	omg	omg for social we have to do this….
Upper case	THAT	not THAT nervous though.
	WASH	u might have to actualy WASH that sweater.
Emotion punctuation	…….	So i was thinking ……..
	:)	:) doo it hahaha

Errors

Typographical error	crazy	im too crazy.
	frwnch	just finished studying 4 frwnch.
Misspelling	embarrassing	how embarrassing …..
	progect	it's for like a psychology progect.

This table presents three broad categories, which are shortcuts, pragmatic devices, and errors. The first category is called short cuts. It is "the representing modifications of the spelling of specific words and phrases", and it includes eight sub- categories. The second broad category is the pragmatic devices, which refers to "the representing changes that reflect pragmatic aspects of the message" (Varnhagen et al., 2010, p. 725). It has four sub categories. The third category is called Errors; it is sub- categorized as well into three smaller categories.

Concerning shortcuts, researchers classified slang and informal words as insider words, such as the word 'fugly' which means something or someone that is extremely ugly.

Next, they categorized the shortened words that resulted from deleting one or more phonemes or morphemes as abbreviations. In addition, the reduction of multiple words into single phonetically spelled words is classified as word combination. Also, they classified the frequent used acronyms, such as 'omg' that stands for oh my God, as acronyms. Then, concerning the substitution of whole word or just a part of it with either a letter or a number, such as 'u' for you, and '2' for to/ too, can simply classified as alphabetic / number words (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, they categorized the common phonetic spellings (in which words are written depending only on the spelled out letters as showed in the example of 'wat' that is written to express ones' thought instead of the standard form 'what') as the phonetic new language words. After that, they classified, for the seventh sub- category, the words that normally should be capitalized whenever used as the case of proper nouns as lower case. Finally, as contraction, they classified the omission of apostrophes (*ibid.*).

In addition, concerning the pragmatic devices category, they categorized the different words used to express emotion, such as 'ha haha' for laughter, or repeating words to reflect the pragmatic lengthening, such as 'woooooo' for surprise, as emotion words. Then, the acronyms, such as 'lol' are used differently to express ones feeling, mood and emotion, and they are classified as emotion acronyms. After that, they categorized the capitalization of the whole word to present sentiment as upper case. Moreover, the use of punctuation extraneously either as emoticons, (which are smilies or facial expressions made using punctuation (Gavin, p. 160)), or for the sake of emphasis are classified as emotion punctuation (*ibid.*).

Finally, the errors committed while typing letter(s) within a word are classified as typographical errors, such as 'knwo' written in a wrong way. then, the misspelled words as when writing 'hungray' instead of the write one 'hungry' such kind of mistakes are classified as misspelling (*ibid.*).

To sum up, there are two main points that should be highlighted concerning the explanation of these categories. The first one is that Varnhagen stated that none of these two small categories are examples of new language. So, they are classified separately as Errors. The second point is that "some words receive more than one classification […]; for instance, 'lol' can be categorized both as a shortcut acronym and as a pragmatic device emotion acronym. They concluded claiming that "approximately 3% of the words were scored as more than one category" (*ibid.*).

5.2. The Second Category

The second categorization concerns various forms of text messaging language that proposed by Shortis (2001) in a form of table as well. This typology shows non- standard orthographic and typographic forms which characterize texters' messages. Those markers do not follow the linguistic regular norms since they take shortenings, clippings, and acronyms as permanent elements in most of their texts. Those forms are organized as the following:

Table 2. Listing of Non-standard Orthographic Forms (Shortis, 2010)

Form type	*Examples*			
Shortenings	Uni	'University'	sis	'sister'
	Mon	'Monday'	lec	'lecture'
Contractions	Gd	'good'	mesge	'message'
	Nt	'night'	txt	'text'
G clippings	Goin	'going'	leadin	'leading'
	Jumpin	'jumping'	drivin	'driving'
Other clippings	Hav	'have'	alrigh	'alright'
	Wil	'will'	wher	'where'

Acronyms	BFPO ' British Forces Posted Overseas'		
	DI 'Detective Inspector'		
Initialisms	ASAP ' As soon as possible'		
	wbs 'Write back soon'		
	LOL ' laugh out loud' / 'Lots of love'		
Letter/number	B ' be'	2getha	'together'
Homophones	U 'you'	1td	'wanted'
'Misspellings' and typos	Malet 'mallet'	Excellent	'excellent'
	Esay 'essay'	unesespecti	'unsuspecting'
Non- conventional spellings	Tonite 'tonight'	Sumtime	'sometime'
	Cum 'come'	wot	'what'
Accent stylisation	wivout 'without'	ya	'you'
	da/ de 'the'	nethin	'nothing'
	dat 'that'	laf	'laugh'

Shortis has classified those non- standard forms into six categories. The first one includes shortenings, contractions, G- clippings and other clippings, which is characterized by the dropping of letters. The first form is featured by missing the end letters ('proj' written instead of project). Contractions distinguished by missing the middle letters (as the word weekend has been written in this way 'w. end'). The clippings includes both the G- clipping as showed in the word 'thinkin', and comprises other forms of clippings, such as the clipping 'ankl' written instead of the word 'ankle' (2001; Thurlow, 2003).

The second categorization consists of acronyms. They are the first initial letters of each word written together as unit in a capital form, and they are commonly known by all people, such as the acronym SLA. Initialisms are also similar to acronyms in the way of

writing, but there are some exceptions. For example, initialisms are not all the time capitalized, and this latter is used whenever there is a kind of emphasis. Also, they are not commonly known by all people because they are used mainly in the case of messaging, such as the example of 'TB' written instead of text back (*ibid*.).

The third categorization proposed by Shortis is the letter/ number homophones. It presents the way texters replace words or part of words with either a letter or number that are similar in terms of sounds. For example, they tend to write '12' referring to 'want to', and use 'm8' referring to the word 'mate' (*ibid*.).

The fourth classification highlights the misspellings and typos committed by texters. These forms are noticed along their both formal and informal writings due to the frequent use of those unconventional standards this in one hand. On the other hand, are due to the potential of sending brief and quick messages as rapid as possible to maintain an effective communication. So, texters tend to focus on the delivery of their texts eloquently as quick as they can rather than paying attention to its accurate structure (*ibid*.).

The fifth categorization of texting forms presents the various non- conventional spellings. Here most of the standard norms of spellings are violated; as an example, the words love, some, and right are written as the following: 'luv', 'sum', and 'rite'. Texters tend to write the words in the way as they articulate them. So, they omit some vowels and sometimes some consonants following no rules just in the way that suits them. This form adopted as a result of the fastness of the message delivery constrains, or simply because some texters are poor spellers (*ibid*.).

The final one takes into account the accent stylization as a form of texting language. This form is distinguished clearly by the integration of accent along the messaging process. Texters write certain words corresponding to their community pronunciation; for example, the

word without is written 'wivout'. To conclude, all these forms are classified under the type of CMC that is featured by its non-formal properties as well (*ibid*.).

5.3. The Third Category

The final categorization presented by Lieke Verheijen (2013) consists of different types of textisms presented below. Unlike the two previous categories, this category takes into consideration the mechanisms of both types of CMC. Thus, it describes the different forms of the messaging language and presents them together under one group of classification. Then, as a remark, there are two forms that fit instant messaging rather than text messaging, which are the excessive use of punctuation or capitalization for expressing emphasis, and the form of repeating letters to monitor lengthening. However, still these forms are used in the second type depending on the users' intention, and how the length of messages is.

- Orthographic abbreviations/ contractions (e.g. msg used for message, tmrw for tomorrow).

- Phonological abbreviations (thru for through, skool for school and thanx for thanks).

- Acronyms/ initialisms (ttyl for talk to you latter, omg for oh my God).

- Clippings/ shortenings (goin for going, xam for exam).

- Single letter/ number homophones (c for see, u for you, 2 for to).

- Combined letter/ number homophones (NE1 for anyone, 2day for today, l8r for later).

- Emoticons / smileys (:-) for happy; :-(for sad).

- Typographic symbols(x for kiss, <3 for love, & for and, @ for at).

- Omission of punctuation, apostrophes or capitalization (cant for can't, i for I).

- Excessive use of punctuation or capitalization for expressing emphasis (what!!!! for what…, NEVER for never).

- Repeating letters to monitor lengthening (soooo for so, grreeeennn for green).

- Accent stylizations (gonna for going to, anuva for another, dat for that).

- "inanities" (a term coined by David Craig): neologisms or "nonsensical transmogrifications of other words" (Lolz for lol [laughing out loud]) (p. 584).

The above list concerns both text and instant messaging that includes the most used forms. These forms provide a deep view about the used language and its structural conventions that govern the communication styles. First, Verheijen has presented the frequent used textisms followed by examples for each form; then, described their nature as being unconventional since they "do not adhere to the standardized norms of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation" (p. 584). It means that in such language, textisms are used predominantly, for that most of rules, standards, and conventions are disregarded because what matters texters is to pass their messages as rapidly, concisely and successfully as possible .i.e., they give more importance to fluency rather than accuracy. To conclude, Lieke has claimed that even this language has its own rules rather than it follows no rules.

6. Advantages and Disadvantages of Messaging Language

Being one of the most used means of communication, messaging has many advantages as well as various disadvantages. It has offered many privileges to its users; for example, it has become the most reliable medium to contact others as many statistics has shown. Texters also can send their texts when needed regardless to time and space constraints, like sending short messages because they are in much lower cost, or simply having an online chat to save distances and travel expenses. So, it provides a quick and easy way to get immediate and reliable responses directly from the addressee(s). Overall, it reduces distance, space, time, and effort.

This media as some scholars have claimed is a good way to learn a language since it motivates one's creativity. Their performance will be enhanced when they exchange texts

since texters, especially the young ones, practice reading and writing. This kind of practice involves decoding and encoding processes that are considered as the indicator of proficiency and creativity. Hence, the written messages that are full of abbreviations and emoticons reflect the texters' imagination, learn ability and productivity.

Particularly in case of sending SMSs, senders take their time to type the SMS comfortably and privately without being disturbed. Also, its nature of being limited in the number of characters is an advantage because it stimulates their creativity to produce brief, concise, and precise texts via inserting the most necessary information.

IM as well is distinguished by the short typed messages sent in a form of small chunks, and it is another similar form of messaging that provides several benefits for its users. It enlarges the chances to practice the language in near real time with people who have different level of literacy. Also, it is considered as an effective communicative and informative tool to get quick answers; it is regarded as an essential medium for receiving feedback and information as mentioned before (Perey, 2004).

At the same time, there are some negative aspects of messaging language as a medium of communication. For example, SMS limits the choice to express one's ideas and thoughts in details, so it forces them to adopt shortcuts. Although, IM offers the sufficient space to express one's thoughts, but it is constrained to sociolinguistics maxims of messaging which are brevity and speed, paralinguistic restitution, and phonological approximation as well. The adoption of non- standard forms has become conditioned for most of texters. So, it is rather an efficient tool for learning as some scholars have claimed. In addition, the frequent use of these maxims paves the way for the use of the informal language all the time as a result to the reasons mentioned previously. This consequently causes "the collapse of the level of spelling and sometimes also paucity of vocabulary as texting is often full of misspellings" this what Thurlow (2003) has summarised from the work of this scholar (Grice, 1975).

7. Reasons for the Boom of Messaging Language

The emergence of messaging language was by the beginning of the 90's due to certain reasons. The substantial reason is the passion of human beings for creativity and innovation most of the time. These latter led to many changes. One of these changes is the boom of this modernised language (messaging language). This language is used mainly as a medium to facilitate the communication process. In the early beginning, it was used mainly in business field. However, by the course of time, it has been widely speeded to be adopted by all human kind. So, gradually it has become the basis of their daily life. Thus, many technological devices (such as, smart phones, tablets, and laptops) have been invented to foster it.

7.1. The Role of Technology in the Spread of Messaging Language

Due to the technological revolution, many devices have been invented to offer several services. For example, smart phones, tablets and laptops nowadays are highly sophisticated and developed. They offer different privileges that suit their users. Because they are handled, Smartphone users have the advantage of texting others whenever and wherever they go. Sending messages become so easy and enjoyable since SMS as an example are less expensive and quick to be sent and received. Also, messages are typed in an innovative way; for instance, emoticons are used to express one's psychological and emotional state instead of writing a whole sentence.

Furthermore, these evolved devices provide several applications and networks that result in the spread of messaging media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Messenger, and WhatsApp. By offering all these media, messaging language has brought to light. To sum up, the technological revolution simplified the rise of the so called messaging language, and these were only some of the major reasons behind the boom of messaging language.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is clear that technological advancement is changing the world since it affects different fields, specifically the educational one; therefore, this requires the convenient use of language. Hence this chapter has presented some aspects related to messaging language. It has focused on defining the language of messaging based on different researchers' perspectives, and differentiated between two types of the CMC process. Then, it has presented the forms that distinguish such informal language from the academic one. Next, it has highlighted some advantages and disadvantages of this modernised language. Finally, it stated some reasons that led to the emergence of such language. In short, this literature will pave the way for both following chapters to investigate whether messaging language is contemplated to influence passively students' writing productivity as the main purpose of this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WRITING SKILL

Introduction

Students are required to be highly competent because at the university level they should master different skills in order to succeed. Basically, they need to master the four fundamental skills, which are integrated to complete one another. These skills are divided into two major categories: Receptive skills (listening and reading) and Productive skills (speaking and writing). Each of these skills has certain features that make it distinctive. Therefore, this chapter tackles mainly one of the productive skills, which is writing. This latter has a significant role in the academic setting since students most of the times are evaluated based on their written performance. Hence, students are recommended to be effective writers. So, academic writing is different genre of writing due to its substantial standards that should be well mastered. Meanwhile, this present chapter will introduce the second variable of the current study, which is the academic writing, and try to shed light on its most important elements.

1. Distinction Between Print and Online Writing

The way people write in the past decades differs from these current few decades. By the course of time a new form of writing has been emerged called "online or web writing". In this context, Nikitina has offered five properties that distinguish traditional writing from online writing, and they are presented in the below table:

Table 3. Characteristics of Print versus Online Writing (Nikitina, 2012, p. 12)

"Classical" Offline Writing	Online Writing
Linear	Non – linear
Author – driven	Reader – centred
Narrative	Actionable
Enriched with storytelling, anecdotal	Benefits from comprehensive data

examples, word play	
Distributed through publishing houses and advertisement agencies	Distributed through social networks and search engines

1.1. Linear versus Nonlinear Reading

Linear reading means simply to read a published book or a long article within a journal in an offline manner. This kind of reading is basically associated with relaxation and pleasure; there are no time constraints. Thus, readers have enough time to read and reread some statements or paragraphs that are mostly liked. However, nonlinear reading refers to the online reading process. It is associated with finding suitable, useful and relevant information in shortest time. Comparing the two types of reading, it is established that they differ in terms of content's nature and in the way it is read. Generally, linear content is read word by word whereas nonlinear content is read quickly in few seconds to get the main theme and the details can be read later. So, the reading time is no more than scanning and skimming (Nikitina, 2012).

1.2. Author-driven versus Reader- centred

The main difference between offline and online writing lies on the content type and its focus. It means that author- driven content centres its focus on the writer while reader- centred content focuses more on the reader. Moreover, offline writing generally takes the form of a story in order to involve the reader in an emotional journey so that to go through the character's lives and the way the author presents his/ her ideas. Online writing differs in the way that ideas are presented to the reader. Instead of looking for a detailed description of thoughts, readers found and read only what is interest and useful to them (*ibid*.)

1.3. Narrative versus Actionable

One of classical writing characteristics is its narrative nature. So, print writing is full of "storytelling, personal examples, and detailed literary descriptions" (Nikitina, 2012, p: 10) that are supposed to stimulate the readers imagination concerning a given scene. On the other side, web writing is full of actionable content. It means that readers on the web try to look for concise and clear answers to reach their targets. Thus, readers on the web do not look for irrelevant content, but they prefer to "focus on the user's personal story, elaborating vast amounts of generic information into something that specifically meets readers' immediate needs" (*ibid.*).

1.4. Enriched with Storytelling versus Benefits from Comprehensive Data

Since print writing is narrative, it is enriched with word play, well-crafted sentences, and author's personal comments and judgements which make the content more interesting to be read and learnt. However, online writing encourages immediate learning of interesting information and comprehensive data in a simple way (*ibid.*).

1.5. Distributed through Publishing Houses and Advertisement Agencies versus Distributed through Search Engines and Social Networks

The traditional means of communication are the so-called mainstream media (such as TV in particular). So, writers in the ancient time tend to publish their works depending on publishing houses advertisement agencies, essentially the well-known ones, in order to get the customer's attention. However, this latter gradually loses its effectiveness due to the emergence of social media. It provides several means to share the piece of work with larger

audiences. So, nowadays even regular people can have their own chance to share their content easily since all what is needed is "a laptop, internet access and the knowledge on how to write online" (p. 12.).

2. Definition of Writing

Writing as commonly known is the transcription of a spoken language into written symbols. However, writing is more than transcribing symbols; rather it involves the integration of other complex skills. Any written product is a result of this latter; for example, through reading others' texts, writers can simply gather ideas and generate their own texts. Furthermore, the concept of writing has been defined differently by many researchers. Each one offers a definition based on his/her own perspective and point of view, but still agree about certain features that should be included within writing, particularly the academic one.

According to White and Arndt (1996, p. 3) writing is " a form of problem- solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a voice with which to write, planning, goal setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written, and searching with language with which to express exact meaning" (cited in Abouabdelkader & Ahmed, 2016, p. 101).

Oshima and Hogue (1998), in their book "*Writing academic English*", point out that "academic writing, as the name implies, is the kind of writing that you are required to do in college or university. It differs from other kinds of writing such as personal literacy, journalistic, or business writing. Its differences can be explained in part by its special audience, tone and purposes" (p. 2).

Murray and Moore also define writing as "the manifestation of one's professional learning journey and it is (or at least it should be) a continuous process involving reflection,

improvement, development, progress and fulfilment of various types and in varying measures" (2006, p. 5).

Writing in academic settings is a formal style that makes one's piece of work easier to be read and comprehend. It is constrained to certain rules and guidelines that should be followed since they facilitate the writing process including format, style, organization and specific language that should be used (Guide to academic writing, 2014, p. 1).

Abouabdelkader and Ahmed define writing as "a thinking process which involves generating ideas, composing these ideas in sentences and paragraphs, and finally revising the ideas and paragraphs composed. Good writing also requires knowledge of grammatical rules, lexical devices, and logical ties" (2016, p. 101).

Despite the different proposed definitions, most of experts agree that writing has a complex nature and is an important skill to be mastered. Writing is a productive skill that requires the integration of other skills. So, writing is simply "the way or the process to express or to present writer's knowledge into a textual medium by following the linguistic rules" (Emmaryana, 2010, p.11). To conclude, writing involves one's both intellectual and linguistic competences to produces well-formed words, sentences, and paragraphs, and this what make it difficult to be developed for both native and non-native speakers.

3. Types of Writing style

There are two main types of writing, formal and informal style. These styles differ in many aspects. They vary according to the genre, the subject tackled, and the audience addressed. The nature of relationship that exists between the audiences set the tone, vocabulary, syntax, and language should be used. This difference also can be related to the purpose and content the author wants to reach and convey respectively; in addition, to the

context in which the written pieces used in since different situations recommend different uses of the target language.

3.1. Formal Writing

"Formal writing is a complex form of writing that demands formal language and vocabulary, correct English grammar, substantial effort to construct meaningful sentences, paragraphs, sufficient elaboration on a topics, and arguments relevant to a well- defined claim" (Bronowicki ,2014, p. 14).

3.2. Informal Writing

"Informal writing is a style of writing that is more personal and objective, and does not require correct English grammar or English writing guidelines; this style is often accompanied by slang, broken syntax, figures of speech, and simple sentences" (Bronowicki ,2014, p. 14).

It is important to distinguish between the casual and the academic style in order to use them appropriately. The following table presents the main differences between the two styles (Gale, 2013).

Table 4. The Difference between Formal and Informal Writing Styles (Gale, 2013)

Formal Writing Style	Informal Writing Style
The tone is polite, but not impersonal	The tone is more personal
Avoids using contractions and slang	Freely uses contractions and slang
Avoids using abbreviations	Freely uses abbreviations
Maintains a serious tone	May use humour or more casual tone
Uses proper punctuation and capitalization	Uses proper punctuation and capitalization

Avoids using first and second person pronouns (I, you, we and me). Often uses (one or the reader) instead.	Freely uses first and second person pronouns
Sentence structure tends to be varied and includes lengthy and complex sentences.	Sentence structure tends to be shorter; writing approximates the structure and rhythm of spoken English
Word choice tends to be precise and technical	Word choice may be more vague; colloquial phrases may be used
Found most often in scholarly books and articles, technical reports, research papers, and legal documents.	Found most often in personal e- mail and in some business correspondences, nonfiction books of general interest, and mass-circulation magazines.

To conclude, informal language is viewed to be more casual and spontaneous. It suits everyday communication between intimate friends or relatives as family members. It is adopted when writing personal emails or sending text or instant messages, thus; the tone of the voice is more personal. Unlike informal language, the academic formal language is impersonal, and it is adopted for the sack of professional and official purposes, as in the case of writing university assignments.

4. Features of Academic Writing

Academic writing is a unique genre of writing since there are certain standards that should be followed. Consequently, students writing in an academic setting have to be aware about its distinctive features in order to write appropriately. In addition to the properties of formal writing presented in the table above (The Difference between Formal and Informal Writing Styles), Academic texts tend to include as well the following characteristics (8 Characteristics of Academic Writing, 2013):

❖ **Complexity:** is a unique feature of the academic writing. It comes from the fact that the language of standard writing has a distinctive nature from the casual one. Complexity means the vocabularies used are more varied and complicated than the ones used in conversations. Also, it can be noticed in the way grammatical aspects of the written language vary. So that both subordinate and passives clauses should be used. The choice of phrases as well play an important role in making the written style sounds more academic.

❖ **Formality:** this feature is highly related to complexity. Formality refers to the style or the language that tends to be technical and highly selective, such as the use of long phrases and compound structures. So, formality means following the common conventions of standard writing and avoids slang, everyday language and colloquial expressions. Hence, the level of formality is recommended to be pretty high.

❖ **Precision:** is another basic characteristic of a good academic writing. It means that the piece of writing should be clear, precise, and concise so that to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding. Since the main focus lies on the aspect of clarity, it includes the necessary information needed for convincing the readers. Then, wordiness and irrelevant details are avoided in order to diminish readers' misinterpretations. Moreover, to avoid repeating the same words, various synonyms are used and this makes precision as a significant characteristic to be adopted.

❖ **Objectivity:** is another significant feature to write academically. Objectivity means that writers should avoid bias and subjectivity. Thus, judgmental and personal language should be avoided. Also, objectivity refers to the maintenance of one theme to tackle and provide relevant information about it; it means that the focus is to state facts as they are without getting emotional.

❖ **Accuracy:** is a basic characteristic of academic writing. Accuracy refers to the correct use of vocabulary, punctuality, grammar, and structure of English language. Words should be used appropriately in different contexts to reflect the exact meaning writers want to convey. Writers should write correct words without spelling mistakes, wrong punctuality and many other important standards. Also, format, style, and content of a text are very important for academic writing since they make it distinctive from other types of writing; they make it sounds more official, technical and professional. Consequently, accuracy in terms of grammar, punctuation, word choice and other important aspects, make the intended meaning clearer.

❖ **Explicitness:** is more related to precision. Explicitness means that academic writing must be clear in terms of the content and meaning. The organisation and the logical flow of ideas that play an important role in making a given text more comprehensible. The main focus of the writer is to connect all parts of the text to the main theme. Consequently, unity of the written text is important to produce an explicit formalised piece of writing.

❖ **Hedging:** hedging or hedge is a technique applied by writers within their academic performance. It is mainly related to the way writers approach a particular subject and how they can make the claims stronger. This feature means being caution about what is accurate and what is inaccurate. It helps writers to make clear and decisive decisions concerning the arguments that support the writers' stance about the tackled theme.

❖ **Responsibility:** refers to the writers' sense of responsibility towards their written performance in academic settings. Being responsible means that writers should accompany any claim with strong and valid evidence. Hence, in academic writing, arguments should be followed with clarifications and no assumptions are accepted. In addition, the feature of responsibility in academic writing context refers to mentioning

sources and references. For example, whenever writers both produce or borrow from others' works, they should be referred to and cited correctly. So, all writers are responsible for what they perform.

The language of academic texts is highly distinctive due to its properties tackled above. The following table as well presents clearly the fundamental elements that contribute to produce an effective written piece. It is adopted from the study conducted by Newell & Simon (1972) as cited in Jerry, Jan & Samuel (2012, p. 4).

Table 5. Elements that Contribute to Clear Writing in English (Newell and Simon, 1972)

Main Division	Sub-division
Grammar	Grammaticality
Mechanics	spelling punctuation,
Content	clarity, completeness, exemplification, non- English terms' equivalents, avoidance of translation, reasonable length, wordiness
Organisation	central idea of text, development of paragraphs, use of discourse markers, cohesion, coherence,

Vocabulary	choice of words,
	introduction of key terms, concepts, and individuals.

Thus, this table presents the five main elements that writers should adopt and focus on whenever they tend to write an academic piece of work. Writers move from mastering the English grammar rules and its mechanics to focusing on the organisation of content including the appropriate choice of words, well organized sentences and relevant ideas, use of different markers, unity, coherence, and cohesion. Therefore, all these criteria facilitate the writing process.

5. The Process of Writing

Individuals express themselves in different ways following a series of different steps. Therefore, writing is a complex process that lies on various stages. On each stage there are certain constructive activities; they consist of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising. In other words, writing is recursive and overlapping because it is built upon different interactive stages that do not occur in a fixed order. Thus, writers have the opportunity to plan what they want to say, write a first draft, revise and edit the draft, and then rewrite it in order to be well-polished (Hartley, 2008; Panofsky et al., 2005).

5.1. Prewriting

Prewriting, pre-drafting, planning, discovering and invention all these terms share the same meaning. The preceding is the first basic phase that writers should follow before engaging in writing the first draft. It is the stage of setting goals and making plans. It involves collecting information, brainstorming and generating ideas. Peter Elbow asserts that prewriting is a kind of free writing in which writers finds out what is on their mind and write it down on a blank piece of paper (1998). In addition, Elbow continues asserting that along

this stage "so much writing time and energy is spent not writing: wondering, worrying, crossing out, having second, third, and fourth thoughts" (p. 14).

In this context, Toby Fulwiler claims that "the earliest phases of writing are often explorations" (2002, p. 16). "Exploring involves limiting [...] options, locating the best strategy for the occasion at hand, and focusing energy in the most productive direction. [...] what does seem matter is getting the ideas out of [...] one's head in a tangible way" (pp. 16-17). In addition, Leki confirms that writers at the beginning may face some difficulties when start writing since their thoughts are neither clear nor organized yet. Hence, they follow various strategies to generate ideas. These common strategies are free-writing, clustering, questioning, mapping, brainstorming, and outlining (1998).

Moreover, along this phase writers are not interested in the appropriateness of content, style, punctuality, grammar, or structure. However; they are more concerned with choosing and narrowing a topic, determining the purpose, considering the audience and choosing a point of view, discovering ideas to write about (McWhorter, K. T., 2010; Hogue, 2007).

5.2. Drafting

The stage that follows prewriting called drafting. Drafting means moving from the theoretical phase to the practical one. Writers try to put their thoughts and notes into full unified sentences. Hence, drafting stage concerns the process of assembling ideas together and ordering them logically. This has been asserted by the journal of the *Institute for Academic Development*. It claims that drafting means to move notes, thoughts, and plans to a single continuous piece of writing via getting one's main points, reasoning, and ideas that are well organised including the supporting materials whenever needed (Approaches to writing: drafting and revising). In other words, writers write about one theme that have one basic idea (cause or effect), then stretches the idea in one sentence. Next, "this sentence then leads to

another loop". Adopting such technique, "could help students avoid vague statements, the repetition of ideas and help to produce natural flowing text". This technique called "loop writing" which has been suggested by White and Arndt (1991) and Hedge (2005) as it cited in Anabela Reis Alves (2008, p. 10).

Therefore, the drafting stage focuses only on the fluency of writing rather than the accuracy of the draft. In this context, Kate Grenville in Fajariani Emmaryana (2010) also asserts that "drafting is doing a first draft from beginning to end, without going back" (p. 12).

5.3. Revision

Revising is the next phase to drafting. Revision means "reading and changing with the aim of "improving and correcting"" (The writing process, 2009, p. 127); after writers finish drafting, they should commit to reread it for several times. Similarly, McWhorter defines it as "the process of making some changes" to improve both the content of the text and the way it is presented (2010, p. 156). "Revision does not mean editing. Revising is one part of the writing process; editing is another" (op. cite, 2009, p. 127). Revising in simple words means to check out where and how drawbacks should be either enhanced or deleted, so that to modify and refine content and organization and correct stylistic issues as Shannon claims (2011). In other words, the importance of this phase lies on how writers can make the draft achieves the main purpose and how it expresses their ideas effectively to the intended audience (McWhorter, 2010).

Kathleen McWhorter continues clarifying that the revision process "takes time and hard work", but it "pays off and produces results" (2010, p. 156). The idea is explained as the following:

> *The amount of revision you will need to do will depend, in part, on how you*
> *approach the task of writing. Some writers spend more time planning;*
> *others spend more time revising. For example, students who tend to be*

> *pragmatic learners take a highly structured approach to writing. They plan in detail what they will say before they draft. More creative learners, however, may dash off a draft as ideas come to mind. A well-planned draft usually requires less revision than one that was spontaneously written. However, regardless of how carefully planned an essay may be, any first draft will require at least some revision (p. 157)*

Successful writers tend to revise frequently and continuously via using some useful techniques. These techniques are suggested mainly to address college student writers (McWhorter, 2010, p. 157):

➢ **Allow time between drafting and revising.** It helps approaching the draft from a fresh perspective.

➢ **Read your draft aloud.** It helps discovering unclear and weak points.

➢ **Ask a friend to read your draft aloud to you.** The reader gives signs whether the message is clear or clumsy when he/she speeds up, slows down, misreads or hesitates.

➢ **Seek the opinions of classmates (Peer review).** Ask classmates to read and then give feedback.

➢ **Look for consistent problem areas.** It means to look for the repeated problems, such as organization or lack of concrete supporting details that occur along writing, and revising them several times.

➢ **Use a typed and printed copy.**

Therefore, revision is an interactive process that takes place along the varied stages of writing. For instance, when writers finish outlining, they take a given period of time to revise their plan whether it is effective or not. It is significant for making some changes whether to delete, add or edit what is irrelevant. Consequently, making certain decisions, pave the way to move confidently to the next stage.

5.4. Editing

The fourth stage of the writing process called editing. Editing and revision may appear to be synonyms, however; they are two different processes. Revision is the step of pointing out "the biggest problems", and editing is dealing with "the smaller ones" (Writing strategies, p.124). So, it is simply "the polishing step of the writing process" (The writing process, 2009, p. 134). Once writers finish revising their drafts, they can finally start to proof read them in order to correct "errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, and formatting" (p. 134). Also, they tend to improve the way ideas are expressed via changing "words, sentence organization or punctuation" to make the draft "clearer, specific or more direct" (p. 134).

In other words, editing phase is to polish a paper via taking into account specific errors, such as grammar rules, mechanics, punctuality, word choice, and sentence structure. After that, it comes the step of proofreading that refers to the final reading of the paper in order to locate any errors concerning spelling, spacing, duplications, omissions, and formatting problems (Shannon, 2011, p. 24; The writing process, 2009, p. 135). The editing process, as other writing stages, is natural and may occur within different phases as well. For example, writers may edit some parts when they are drafting or revising. Meanwhile, writers should not only engage in self-editing but also attain the assistance of colleagues or professional editors to improve the final draft (Shannon, 2011, p. 24).

In conclusion, writing any academic type, such as short paragraph, essay, report or any other piece of work, may seem to be different and serve different functions, but still writers can go about them in the same way applying the same phases (Emmaryana, 2010, p. 12). Therefore, writing is never a single phase; it is a complex process that has various phases.

6. The Structure of Academic Writing

It is important to define what is meant by structure. According to Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics, "structure is often refers to a sequence of linguistic units that are in a certain relationship to one another" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 563). Furthermore, academic writing as other genres of writing has standard form that should be followed. Following this organised structure is important to convey a comprehensible piece of work which in return plays an effective role in enhancing students' performance. Moreover, in university level, students write different type of assignments following one basic pattern of organization. This latter is based on three parts. First, the introduction is the basic part in which the writer tends to introduce the topic in general. Then, the second part is called the body or development. In this part, writers try to develop the topic in details via presenting the main ideas and support them with examples and further clarifications. Finally, they conclude their piece of work writing the concluding paragraph which is the final summation of the main points. Thus, the external structure of the written piece is as important as the internal content in order to present the ideas clearly in a logical and attractive way. The following figure illustrates all what has been tackled above.

Figure 2. Structure of Academic Writing (Jordan, 1999, p. 09)
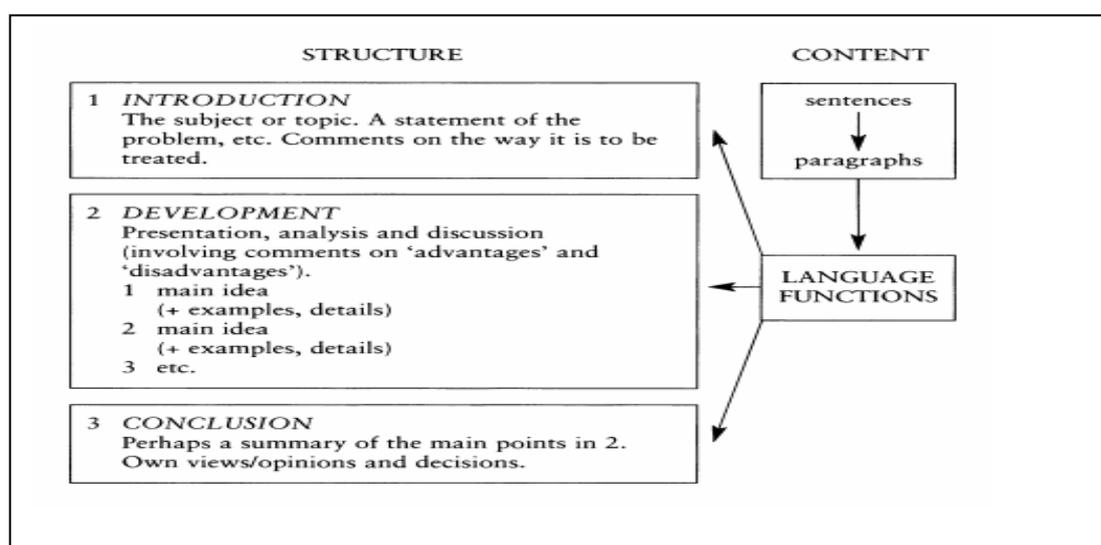
6.1. Introduction

Introduction is one of the most important parts of academic writing. It provides a clear overview of the subject being tackled and its main sections that would be discussed and developed latter. So, introduction has a distinctive structure (inverted triangle); writers initiate with 'broad opening statement". Then, they try to specify the focus in order to set up the bridge between this latter and the thesis statement (also called statement of the problem) that is usually placed at the end of introductory paragraph. A thesis statement is brief, clear, precise sentence; it includes three parts: the topic, the controlling idea, and predictor, which in return includes both number and content of body paragraphs. "A good introduction will not be too long, but its length will vary according to the type of writing" (Jordan, 1999, p: 82). Thus, the introductory paragraph should be clearly structured in order to grab the readers' attention. It is more simplified in the following figure.

Figure 3. Structure of Introductory paragraph (Bowker, 2007, p. 37)
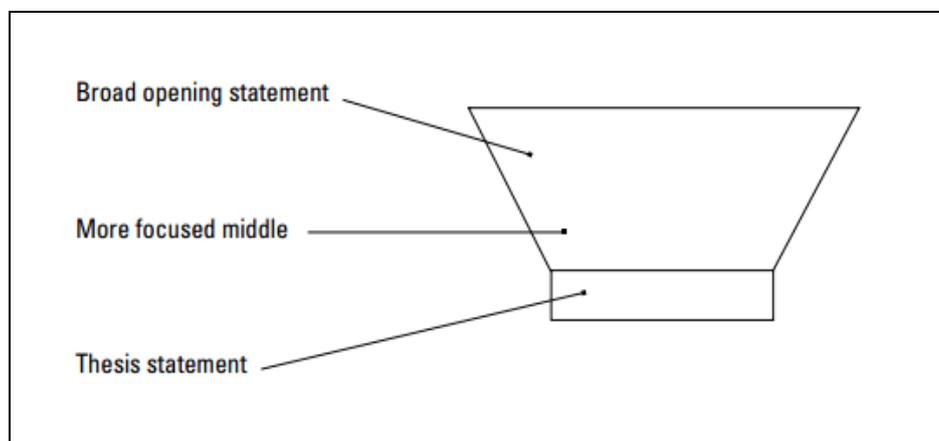
6.2. Body

Unlike the introduction and conclusion, the body may consist of more than one paragraph. Basically, each paragraph develops one main idea. This idea should be clearly stated in one sentence at the beginning of each body paragraph, and it is called a topic

sentence. It depicts the main idea of the paragraph, and it is followed by supporting details. These latter called major supporting sentences and they are supported as well by minor supporting sentences; they can be in a form of examples, definitions, or research data. Moreover, both sentences and paragraphs should be logically arranged and well linked to the thesis statement in order to make the content, main topic, and writers' standing point clear and comprehensive. Finally, one of the most important elements of body paragraph is the concluding sentence; it is a final closing statement which reflects and summarizes the idea being discussed. So, the body paragraph(s) consist(s) of three main parts: topic sentence, supporting sentences, and finally concluding sentence (Bowker, 2007; Jordan, 1999).

6.3. Conclusion

Any piece of writing has a conclusion. It is highly required since it indicates that the writing is finished. The concluding paragraph "involves making a summary of the main points already made. This may include commenting on the implications arising from the main body of the writing: possibly indicating that further research is needed in certain areas or that certain action is needed. In addition, one's own opinion or viewpoint may be added, if it is appropriate to do so" (Jordan, 1999, p82). However, a common mistake should be avoided. It is recommended to avoid introducing new ideas or arguments rather it should be logically related to all what have been written (*ibid.*). Therefore, a conclusion should contain four main parts which are as the following: "a narrow statement relating the conclusion to the preceding paragraph, a restatement of the proposition or thesis statement, a brief summary of the main points made in the essay, and a final, broad statement on the significance of the argument". So, unlike introductory paragraph, the concluding paragraph should be written from the specific to the general (Bowker, 2007, p. 40). The following figure makes its structure simpler to be understood.

Figure 4. Structure of the Concluding paragraph (Bowker, 2007, p. 40)
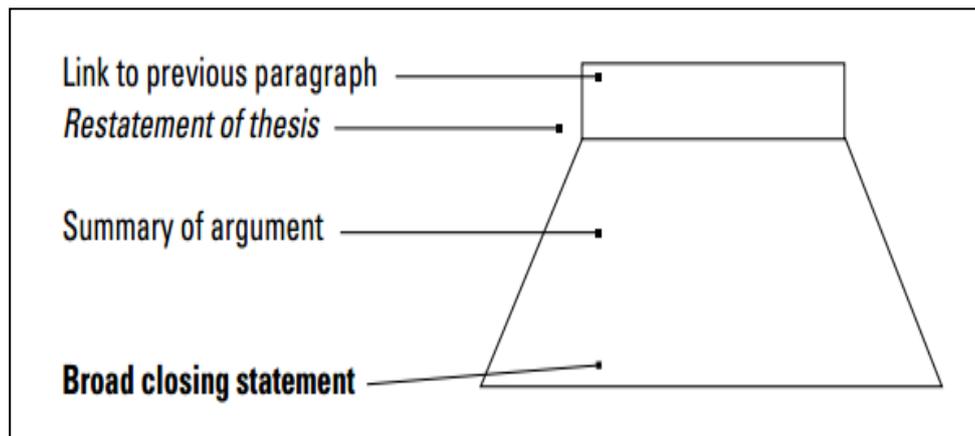
7. The Purpose of Academic Writing

Any piece of writing tends to fulfil certain goals. Generally, the fundamental purpose of all kinds of writing is to exchange and share ideas from one writer to another. Furthermore, According to Rosemary Jones (Academic writing), academic writing has two basic purposes to be achieved. The general purpose is to present information in clear and comprehensible manner. The specific purpose varies according to the assignments' nature. This latter consists of sub purposes. First purpose is to persuade and convince the audience through stating logical and strong arguments about a given subject. The second purpose is exposition; it refers to the way writers' explain, exhibit, and clarify their thoughts concerning specific theme (types of expository writing: cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, description, and process). Next purpose is description, which refers to the way writers describe something or someone (historical figure). Narration is the final purpose, and it is related to narration and storytelling.

8. The Importance of Academic Writing

Academic writing is important genre of writing that students, at university, are required to master it. It has distinct features that should be adopted and learnt. Its goal is to

help students evolve themselves for academic success, and for their future engagement in the field work. For instance, practicing academic writing, teaches them to use appropriate style, structure, format, and many other proper aspects which enhance their competences and level of expertise.

Altiwal (2012) states that the significance of academic writing lies on students "ability to think critically and objectively while conveying ideas in a well- structured, concise format". First, it enables them to think logically in reasonable way in order to analyse, synthesize, evaluate arguments or connect ideas and solve problems. Second, thinking objectively means that students have the ability to state thoughts and present ideas logically without any subjectivity or bias. Then, it teaches them how to convey their messages in well-structured sentences using precise vocabularies and simple language. Therefore, developing academic writing helps students foster their linguistic and communicative capacities.

9. The Impact of Messaging Language on Students' Academic Writing

In the ancient decades writing was primitive. People first used to draw symbols on caves and rocks; then, gradually they have evolved the way they write till this recent decade. By the rise of the current century, a new written language "text speak" has been invented. It has been aroused to cover most of human beings' life not only the social one but also the educational one.

The relationship that exists between traditional writing and electronic one is that both of them are text-based. However, the main difference between them is that classical writing considered being more formal and often used in standard contexts, while electronic (digital) writing claimed being informal and suits to be used in the casual settings. It is a unique genre of languages since it associates between both speech and writing. It is like a verbal conversation hold between pairs in which they write spontaneously as in the way they talk this

in one hand. On the other hand, it is written like since the language is communicated graphically. At the same time, it is important to refer to its distinctive element that makes it different from both speech and writing called "textism(s)" (it is defined in the previous literature, precisely first chapter) (Crystal, 2006; Lee, 2011).

These textisms are certainly informal forms and their use in home works or assignments is rejected because of their ruinous influence. As Rosen et al. (2009) demonstrated that engaging in a communication that is full of textisms' use make it difficult to produce formal works. Since messaging language based on removing letters, inserting acronyms, omitting apostrophes and other textisms as Thurlow (2006, 2003) stated, it destroys the written word and causes its users to lose the ability to write convenient English. Supporting the same idea, Plester et al. (2009) via giving an example of unconventional spelling, they argue that the exposure to misspellings after learning correct spellings is really deleterious for adults. Thus, breaking any grammatical rule or manipulating letters and words will affect passively on students formal production.

In the same context, Thurlow (2006) have analyzed over 100 media articles that tackle computer mediated discourse (CMD) in order to figure out whether messaging language affects positively or negatively students writing skill. The findings revealed that this language impedes students' qualifications which results in poor spelling, grammar and punctuation. These mistakes are committed unintentionally due to the frequent use. It means that because they become so used to it, students are no longer conscious about inserting some of text speak forms (O'connor, 2005). Thus, those who use messaging language in their formal writing are perceived by teachers, instructors, and employers to be poor as Wilson has declared (2010).

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter tackles some of the most important elements that concern the second variable of this problematic, which is academic writing. The main objective is to give a general overview about the characteristics, process and structure of formal writing. Also, to spot light on the importance of writing skill on students' both academic and professional career. In conclusion, it presents some of researchers' works conducted to investigate the effect of messaging language on students' academic writing skill so that to set the bridge for the next part, which is the field work.

CHAPTER THREE

FIELD WORK

Introduction

This chapter seeks to present, analyse and discover how the written style is affected by messaging language. It aims to present the data obtained from two questionnaires designed to address both first year students and teachers of English department at Biskra University. First, it aims to see whether this impact is due to the overuse of this new language. Second, it deems to shed light on the forms of messaging language that students widely insert in their academic assignments. Next, it seeks to check whether students are really aware about the standard features of English language. Then, it attempts to see whether messaging language is one of the main factors behind learners' academic failure. Therefore, this chapter is based on analysing both teachers' and students' questionnaire in order to point out what kind of relationship that exists between messaging language and academic performance. Hence, to see whether it stimulates their creativity, or ruins their performance. In short, this chapter will rely on the questionnaires' final outcomes in order to accept or reject the hypothesis.

1. The Students Questionnaire

1.1. Population and Sample

In the present study, the population is first year LMD students of English Division at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. It consists of (885) students divided into (15) groups. Then, three groups have been chosen randomly as a sample that consists of (88) students to represent (9.94) from the entire population. Many researchers choose different samples to carry out their studies depending on a set of given reasons and perspectives. This sample as well has been chosen depending on certain reasons. First, it has been selected to make students aware about the serious effect of messaging language on their writing style as early as possible. Thus, this may help them foster their learning process at its early stages. Second, since the proceeding does not affect a certain level of proficiency, first year students were

selected to see whether messaging language is one of the factors that hinder their written performance. Furthermore, although first year students have learnt some basic rules of the English language, but they still have a limited insight about the target language. Hence, investigating the present issue and taking first year students as a sample will help reduce the deficiency from the beginning of the learning curve at university level.

1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire has been designed to obtain certain answers, pieces of information, and points of view about the problem under investigation "the effect of messaging language on written performance" as an ultimate purpose. Thus, the questionnaire addresses twenty (20) questions in total. They are divided into three sections, each section aims to achieve certain goals. Although they are different parts and have different objectives to fulfil, yet they are complimentary .i.e. each section facilitates the analysis process of the preceding ones.

The first section is about technology. Its purpose is to have a general insight about students' use of technology. This part consists of three main questions. The first question aims to see whether students use different technological devices to learn such as (smart phones, tablets, and laptops). The second question seeks to figure out the frequency of using technology, whereas the final question is is more specific since it deems to measure the volume of using it per day. Thus, this part provides background information to check whether students are addicted to technology or not.

The second section is about the use of messaging language. Its main goal is to investigate whether students are addicted to messaging. This section includes nine (9) questions; each question has an objective to fulfil. The first question is addressed directly to students in order to see whether they know what is meant by messaging language. The second

one seeks to see whether students use either messaging or constructive language while texting their friends. Third question is about measuring the frequency of using this new language, while the fourth question is about indicating their favourable time and place for messaging. Then, the fifth one seeks to find out the type of messaging they prefer to communicate with the most, and the sixth question is mainly related to the previous one. Its purpose is to figure out the main reasons behind using those types of messaging. The next question is the seventh one; it is about the language used along the messaging process. Moreover, the eighth question highlights the main forms that students often use and the reasons behind utilizing them. The purpose of the final question lies on discovering which aspects (accuracy or fluency) students focus on before exchanging their messages.

The final section is about English language and academic writing. It consists of eight (8) questions. The first question seeks students' views about their level as being English students. The second one investigates students' writing proficiency, while the third question is about how often students write in English. Also, the objective of the fourth question is to shed light on the aspects students take into consideration whenever they write. The fifth question is about to investigate students' awareness about both features of formal and informal language. Then, the next question is the sixth one; it seeks to check whether students are competent and skilful to use the language appropriately. Next, the seventh question aims to point out whether students include some forms of messaging language in their academic home works and assignments. Finally, the eighth question is an important one since the present study depends on it. It is about gathering different views about the influence of messaging language on formal writing.

Furthermore, concerning the process of delivering the questionnaire, it started by the beginning of February. In two weeks, the questionnaires were distributed by teachers at the end of the official sessions. Since they took them at home, students were given enough time to

answer all the questions so as to give honest, helpful and relevant data that serves the analysis. Thus, all students' questionnaires were handed back on 21 February. Even though the instructions were simple, direct and clear, some of participants were not tolerant. First group consists of (33) participants, only (22) students have answered all questions, and concerning the second group which includes (27) students, only (17) of them have provided full answers, while the last group includes (28) students and only (11) of them have answered all the questions.

2. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Section One: General Insight about the Use of Technology

Question 01: Do you use technology to learn?

Table 6. Students' Use of Technology

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	88	0	88
Percentage	100%	0%	100%

Pie chart 1. Students' Use of Technology
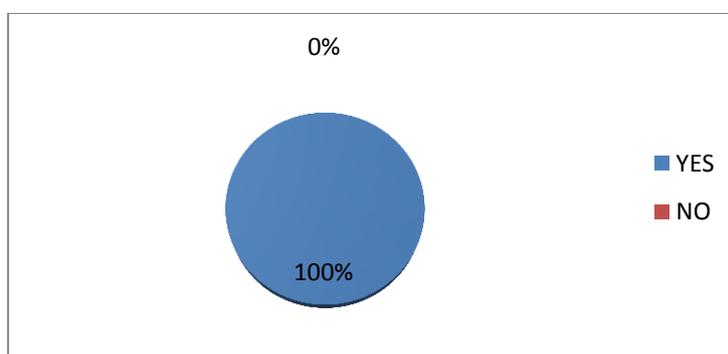
The aim of this question is to check whether students use technology particularly to learn or not. All the eighty eight students have answered "yes" and no-option has been

completely avoided as the table shows. So, the total respondents use different technological devices to learn; this implies that technology has a significant role on their academic achievement. The proceeding question will provide more information about the volume of using it.

Question 02: How often do you use technology?

Table 7. Students' Volume of Using Technology

Options	Everyday	Once a week	More than once a week	Once a month	Total
participants	69	7	11	1	88
percentage	78.40%	7.95%	12.5%	1.13%	100%

Pie chart 2. Students' Volume of Using Technology
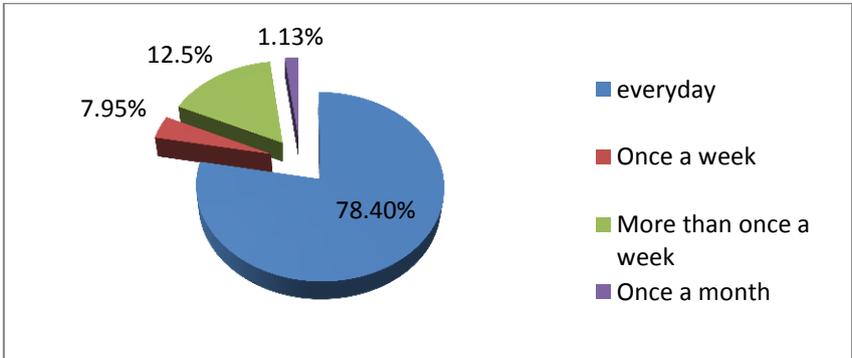
The aim of this question is to quantify to what extent students use technology in their daily life; consequently to see whether it is substantial for them or not. The results show that (78.40%) of the students use technology every day, and (7.95%) of students use it once a week. However, (12.5%) of respondents tend to use it more than once a week, and only (1.13%) of them prefer to use it once a month. Since the majority of students have answered

that they use technology, it is important to figure out the amount of hours they use it per day that will be answered through this next question.

Question 03: How many hours do you use technology?

Table 8. Students' Frequency of Using Technology

Options	From 1-2 hours	2-3 hours	3-4 hours	More than 4 hours a day	Total
Participants	17	21	18	32	88
Percentage	19.31%	23.86%	20.45%	36.36%	100%

Pie chart 3. Students' Frequency of Using Technology
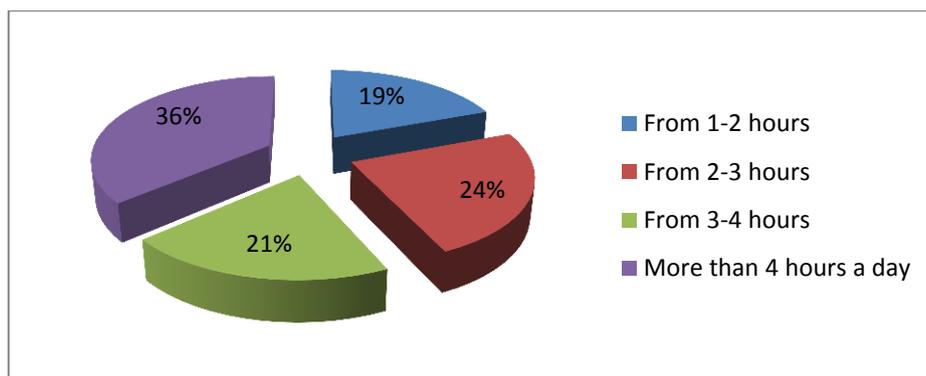
This question aims to check the frequency of using technology in terms of number of hours spent per day. The purpose is to see whether students are addicted to technology, and whether this frequent use of it may have an effect on their style. The results show that (19.31%) of students tend to use it from 1-2 hours a day, while (23.86%) of them use it from 2-3 hours and (20.45%) use it from 3-4 hours a day. However, the majority of the students ensured that they use technology more than 4 hours a day reaching the highest percentage (36.36%).

Section Two: Messaging Language

Question 01: Do you know what messaging language is?

Table 9.The Knowledge of Messaging Language

Options	Yes	No	No option	Total
Participants	68	19	1	87
Percentage	77.27%	21.59%	1.13%	100%

Pie chart 4. The Knowledge of Messaging Language
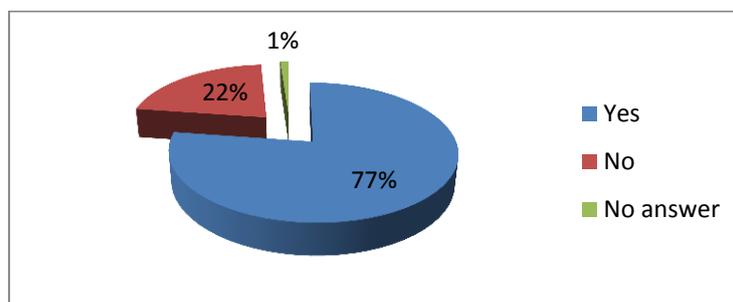
The data presented in the above table indicates that the majority of students (77.27%) know what messaging language is, whereas (21.59%) of them they assume that they do not know what is meant by messaging language, and only one student has chosen the no option.

Question 02: while texting friends, do you use the messaging language?

Table 10. Students' Use of Messaging Language

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	79	9	88
Percentage	89.77%	10.22%	100%

Pie chart 5. Students' Use of Messaging Language
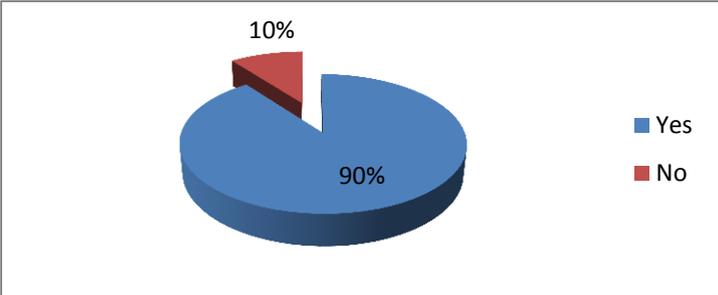
This question aims to figure out whether students use messaging language when they text others or not. The majority have answered "yes" to reach the percentage of (89.77%), while (10.22%) of respondents have chosen the "no" option to indicate that only few of them they do not use this language. Thus, from the percentages drawn in the table, they indicate that messaging language is widely adopted by students. Then, the next question will provide more information about the use of messaging language via analyzing the frequency of using it.

Question 03: How often do you use messaging language?

Table 11. Students' Frequency of Using Messaging Language

Options	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
Participants	29	57	2	88
Percentage	32.95%	64.77%	2.27%	100%

Pie chart 6. Students' Frequency of Using Messaging Language
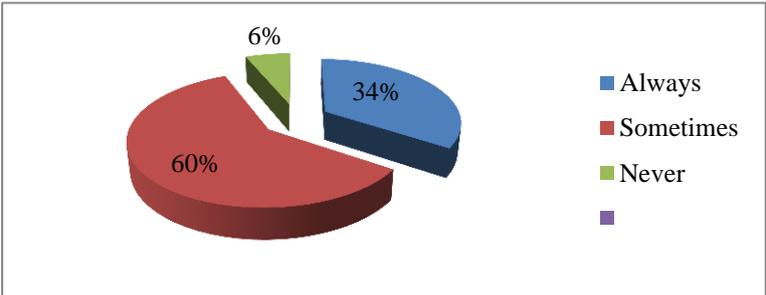
As it is presented in the table (12) above, the results show that 29 of students (32.95%) have chosen the first option (always), while 57 of them (64.77%) have selected the second option (sometimes). Meanwhile, two of the participants (2.27%) have selected the third option (never). This implies that most of them use the messaging language from time to time.

Question 04: Where and when do you prefer to text/chat with others most?

Table 12. Students' Favourable Time and Place for Messaging

Options	At home	At school	At cyber	Wherever and whenever you get a chance	No option	Total
Participants	39	8	15	23	3	88
Percentage	44.31%	9.09%	17.04%	26.13%	3.40%	100%

Pie chart 7. Students' Favourable Time and Place for Messaging
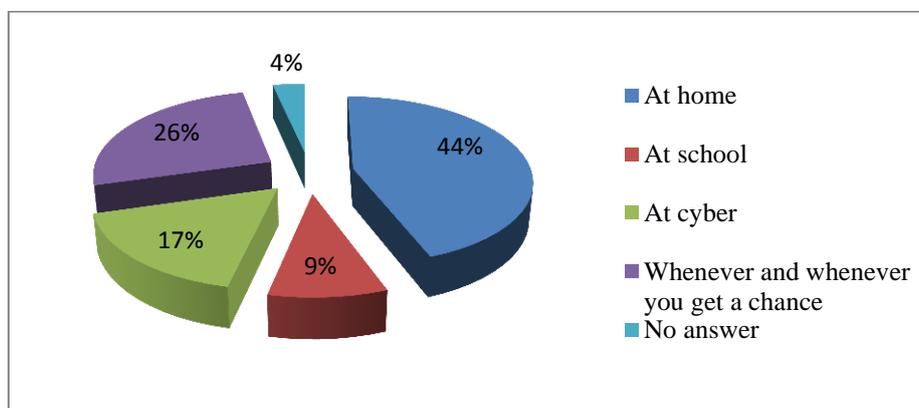
The table demonstrates that most of students (44.31%) prefer home as the suitable place for communication. Only (9.09%) of students tend to text at school and (17.04%) of them prefer to message their friends at cyber, while unconditionally (26.13%) of them favour to text whenever and wherever they have a chance to assume that students may easily get acquainted to messaging language and adopt it.

Question 05: What type of communication do you prefer to use most?

Table 13. Student's Favourable Medium of Communication

Options	SMS	Instant M	Email	SMS-Chat	SMS-Email	All of them	No option	Total
Participants	11	49	4	18	1	3	2	88
Percentage	12.5%	55.68%	4.54%	20.45%	1.13%	3.40%	2.27%	100%

Pie chart 8. Students' Favourable Medium of Communication
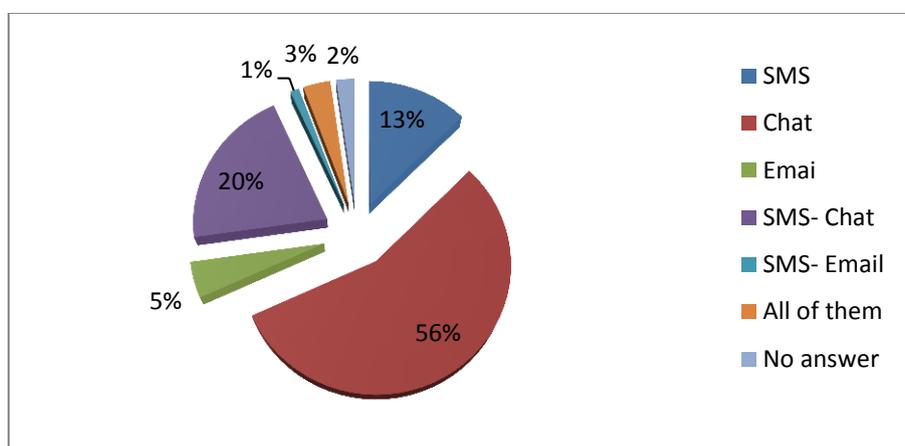
According to the above table, it is noticed that chat and SMS are widely used by students. (12.5%) of students prefer to adopt short messages service (SMS) to communicate with others, and (55.68%) of them prefer to have instant chat. Also, (20.45%) of them like to adopt both types of communication due to their various benefits. Concerning email as another type of CMC, it is noticed that only (4.54%) of the respondents tend to use it. In addition to that, (3.40%) of them favour to use them all (SMS, IM, and email). Moreover, (1.13%) of the respondents like to use SMS and email, whereas (2.27%) of them did not answer the question. In conclusion, although each student favours one type of communication over another, the majority of participants prefer to use SMS and IM because the former is the easiest way to send messages quickly and confirm that it is received, while the latter is considered to be the

best way to practise language. These were the overwhelming answers provided by students

concerning the chosen type of communication.

Question 06: What are the main reasons behind using those types of messaging?

a: For the sake of communication and sharing ideas.

b: For the sake of study.

c: For the sake of entertainment and leisure.

Table 14. The Reasons behind Adopting the Messaging Medium

Options	Participants	Percentage
a	35	39.77%
b	7	7.95%
c	17	19.31%
a-b	12	13.63%
a-c	2	2.27%
b-c	6	6.81%
a-b-c	6	6.81%
No option	3	3.40%
Total	88	100%

Pie chart 9. The Reasons behind Adopting the Messaging Medium
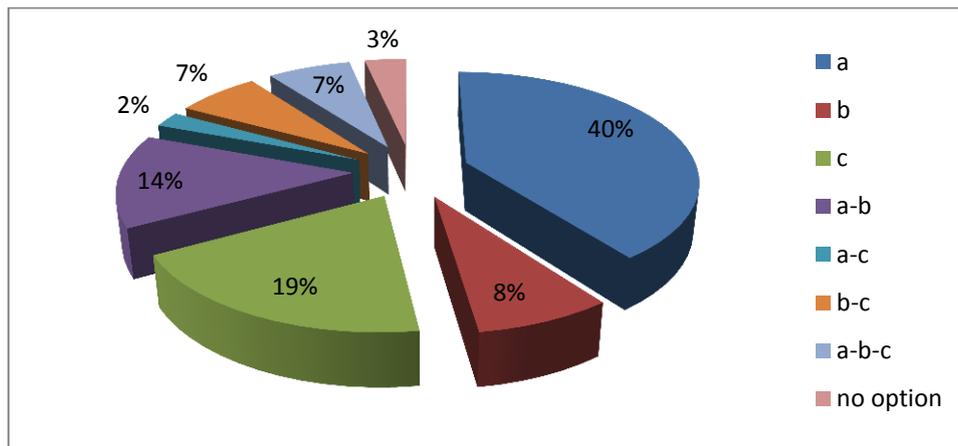
This question seeks to figure out the reasons for using different types of messaging. The majority of students (39.77%) ensure that they text others for the sake of communication, socialization, and sharing ideas. Only (7.95%) of them have selected the second reason which is for the sake of study. In contrast, (19.31%) of students asserted that they tend to text and use different types of CMC for the sake of entertainment and leisure. The other participants' answers vary between the combinations of the choices provided. Twelve (12) students (13.63%) indicate that the reasons behind texting is "to communicate and share ideas" and "to study", and two students (2.27%) assert it is for the sake of "communication and sharing ideas" plus "entertainment and leisure", whereas six students (6.81%) tend to text in order to" study" and "entertain themselves" at the same time. On the other hand, while six other students (6.81%) selected all the options, three of them (3.40%) avoided answering this question. To conclude, students tend to communicate and text others to exchange thoughts and entertain themselves more than studying.

Question 07: Which language do you use along messaging?

A: English   B: French

C: Arabic   D: Others

Table 15. The Language of Messaging

Options	Participants	Percentage
English	15	17.04%
French	11	12.5%
Arabic	26	29.54%
Others	2	2.27%
a-b	7	7.95%
a-c	8	9.09%
a-d	1	1.13%
b-c	3	3.40%
A-b-c	8	9.09%
No option	7	7.95%
Total	88	100%

Pie chart 10. The Language of Messaging
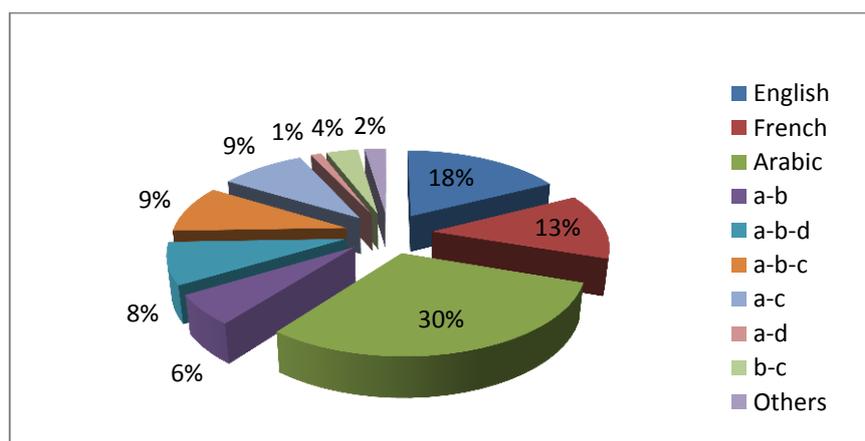
The purpose of this question is to know which language used by students along the messaging process, and whether there is a relationship between the choice of the language and

its effect on writing performance. The results show that (17.04%) of the participants use the English language, and only eleven (11) students (12.5%) use French, while twenty six of them (29.54%) prefer to use the Arabic language, and two of the participants (2.27%) tend to use other languages to transmit their messages. On the other hand, there are some students who mix more than one language. Seven students (7.95%) use English and French, eight students (9.09%) use English and Arabic, only one participant (1.13%) uses English and other languages, then (3.40%) of them use French and Arabic, whereas eight students (9.09%) tend to use the three languages changeably. Meanwhile, seven students (7.95%) have avoided answering this question. In short, students prefer to use their mother language at the first place and use the target language (English) at the second place; this indicates that they may face some difficulties in learning their foreign language due to the interference of the mother tongue.

Question 08: Which forms do you often use when messaging?

Table 16. Common Forms used by Student while Messaging

Options	Participants	Percentage
Abbreviations	56	63.63%
Accronyms and initialisms	47	53.40%
Clippings and shortenings	12	13.63%
Single number and letter homophones	56	63.63%
Combined number and letter homophones	19	21.59%
Emoticons	75	85.22%
Typographic symbols	35	39.77%

Omitting punctuation marks and capitalization	29	32.95%
Excessive use of punctuation marks and capitalization	31	35.22%
Repeating letters	48	54.54%
Accent stylizations	23	26.13%
Inanities	22	25%

This question seeks to point out what are the forms mostly used by students while messaging their friends. The widely used form is emoticons (85.22%), it is assumed that students adopt these smiley faces to express their emotions instead of writing a full sentences. Next, at the second range, come both abbreviations and single number and letter homophones forms reaching (63.63%) used by fifty six students. Also, forty eight (48) students (54.54%) tend to use the technique of repeating letters while texting others in order to put emphasis and get others' attention. Then, forty seven students use the acronyms and shortenings reaching the percentage of (53.40%), and (39.77%) of students adopt typographic symbols, while thirty one students (35.21%) use excessively punctuation marks and capitalization. In contrast, 29 students indicate that they tend to omit some punctuation marks and capitalization, and twenty three of them (26.13%) tend to insert accent-like words within their written conversation. Moreover, (25%) of students use inanities, (21.59%) use combined number and letter homophones, and finally (13.63%) of them use clippings and shortenings along the messaging process. So, the purpose of this question has been reached when the frequently used forms have been ranged basing on their answers that are interpreted in a form of percentages.

Moreover, a sub question has been addressed in order to gain precise answers about the causes that let students use those forms of ML (mentioned above). Most of the answers

were similar; they state that they use them in order to reduce effort and time of writing. They make the process of messaging easy and quick. These forms help them manage their time in order to send as much messages as they can to different recipients, and to make conversation innovative each time rather than being tedious and ordinary. Also they use them to describe their emotions easily using only symbols and smiley faces instead of writing a whole sentence.

Question 09: While messaging others, do you focus on the accuracy of your messages, or do you focus on its fluent delivery in order to maintain smooth interaction?

Table 17. The Aspects of Messaging Language

Options	Accuracy	Fluency	Both of them	No option	Total
Participants	26	54	1	7	88
Percentage	29.54%	61.36%	1.13%	7.95%	100%

Pie chart 11. The Aspects of Messaging Language
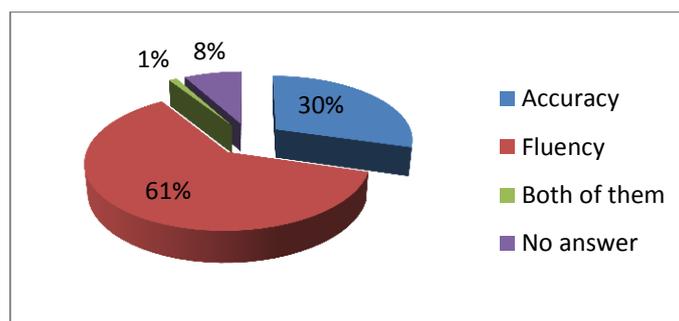
The purpose of this question is to figure out whether students focus more on producing accurate or fluent messages while they text each other. The results show that twenty six students (29.54%) focus on the accuracy of their messages, whereas fifty four students (61.36%) focus more on the aspect of fluency and smoothness of the messages. In this context, only one student has mentioned that he/she focuses on both aspects. However, seven

students did not answer the question. Thus, the focus of messaging language lies on fluency

rather than accuracy.

Section Three: Academic Writing

Question 01: Do you think that you are good and fluent English student?

Table 18. Evaluating Students' Level

Options	Good	Average	Poor	No answer	Total
Participants	22	56	8	2	88
Percentage	25%	63.63%	9.09%	2.27%	100%

Pie chart 12. Evaluating Students' Level
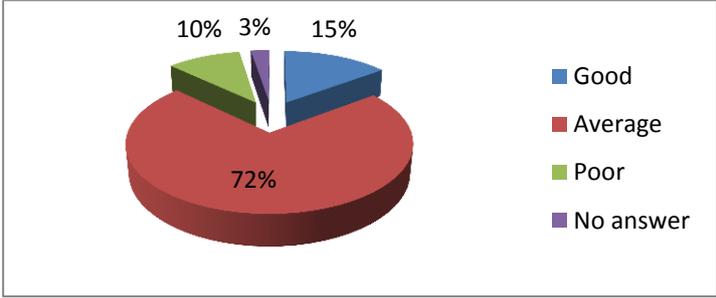
This table presents that (25%) of students evaluate themselves as being good English

students. The majority (63.63%) consider themselves as being average students, and (9.09%)

of them say that they are poor English students, whereas (2.27%) of the participants did not

give their answers. All in all, the evaluation of students' level still relative due to certain

reasons.

Question 02: Do you think that you are a good writer?

Table 19. General Evaluation of Students' Writing

Options	Good	Average	Poor	No answer	Total
Participants	12	54	19	3	85
Percentage	13.63%	61.36%	21.59%	3.40%	97%

Pie chart 13. General Evaluation of Students' Writing
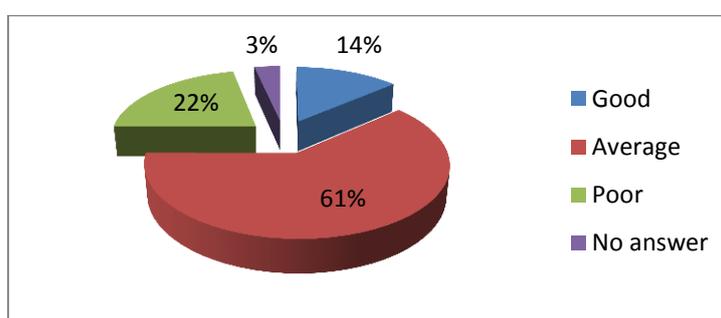
This question seeks to know how students can evaluate themselves as being English writers. Twelve students (13.63%) say that they are good writers, while fifty four students (61.36%) indicate that they are average writers, and nineteen students (21.59%) say that they are poor writers. Meanwhile, only three students (3.40%) did not answer this question. Thus the majority of the students evaluate themselves as being average writers.

Question 03: How often do you write in English?

Table 20. The Frequency of Writing

Options	Everyday	Usually	Rarely	No answer	Total
Participants	15	44	26	3	88
Percentage	17.04%	50%	29.54%	3.40%	96%

Pie chart 14. The Frequency of Writing
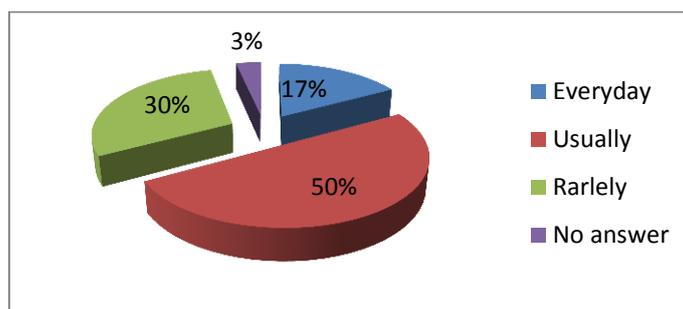
Students should frequently practise the language in order to master it well. This table shows how often students do practice writing in English. Fifteen students (17.04%) ensure that they tend to write every day. However, forty four students (50%) answered that they usually write, while twenty six students (29.54%) indicate that they rarely write. In addition, three students (3.40%) have avoided answering this question. The majority of students do not practise writing; this may lead to their academic failure since within the academic settings they are evaluated more on their written performance.

Question 04: Whenever you write, do you focus more on accuracy or fluency?

Table 21. Evaluating Students' Writing Aspects

Options	Accuracy	Fluency	Both of them	No answer	Total
Participants	39	43	1	5	88
Percentage	44.31%	48.86%	1.13%	5.68%	100%

Pie chart 15. Evaluating Students' Writing Aspects
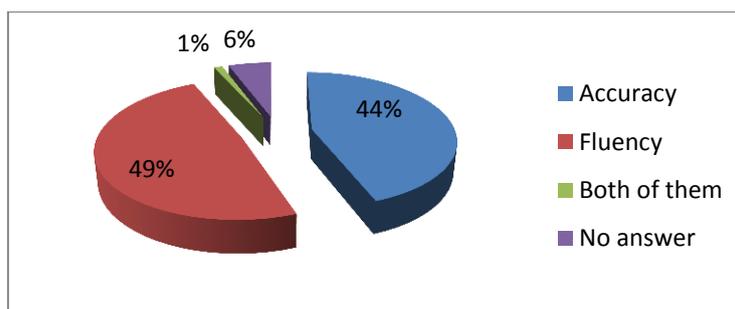
Students whenever they engage in writing, they should focus on certain aspects in order to produce a well-polished composition. In the above table, thirty nine students (44.31%) tend to focus mainly on the correctness of their written pieces, while forty three students (48.86%) focus on the smoothness of their works. Only one student (1.13%) has selected the two options together, and the five rest students (5.68%) did not give their answers. So, the majority of participants focus more on the aspect of fluency which means that their concern is only to deliver their messages no matter how polished they are.

Question 05: Do you really differentiate between standard and non-standard features of English language?

Table 22. Students' Awareness of the standard and nonstandard features of English Language

Options	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Participants	38	45	5%	88
Percentage	43.18%	51.13%	5.68%	100%

Pie chart 16. Students' Awareness of the standard and nonstandard features of English Language
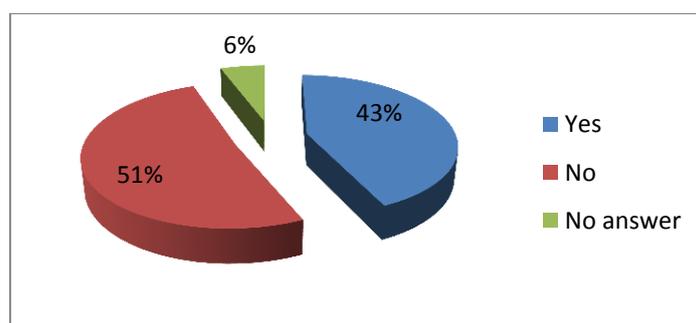
This question aims to check whether students are really aware of the formal and the informal standards of English language. Thirty eight of them (43.18%) have answered that they really differentiate between what is formal and informal, while more than fifty of them

(51.13%) have ensured that they do not differentiate between them, and the five remaining students (5.68%) refrained to answer. Therefore, being aware about what is academic and what is casual will help students write better.

Question 06: Do you think that you are both linguistically and pragmatically competent .i.e., do you have the ability to use the language appropriately according to different contexts?

Table 23. Students' View about their Competencies

Options	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Participants	47	38	3	88
Percentage	53.40%	43.18%	3.40%	100%

Pie chart 17. Students' View about their Competencies
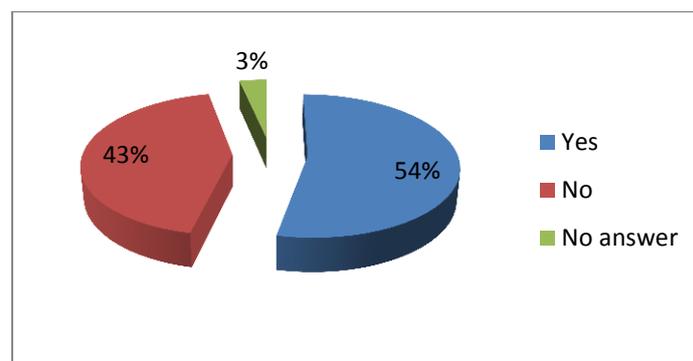
The present question seeks to show whether students are linguistically and pragmatically competent. The majority of students (53.40%) have ensured that they are competent, while (43.18%) they have selected the "No" option to state that they are not competent yet. The other three students (3.40%) did not answer the question. This question aims to see whether students are aware about their abilities and competencies. Also, based on their answers, they may help recognize whether they seek to evolve their abilities to do better or no.

Question 07: Do you tend to write some of messaging language forms in your academic home works and assignments?

Table 24. Students Use of Messaging Language Forms in Their Writings

Options	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Participants	42	43	3	88
Percentage	47.72%	48.86%	3.40%	96%

Pie chart 18. Students Use of Messaging Language Forms in Their Writings
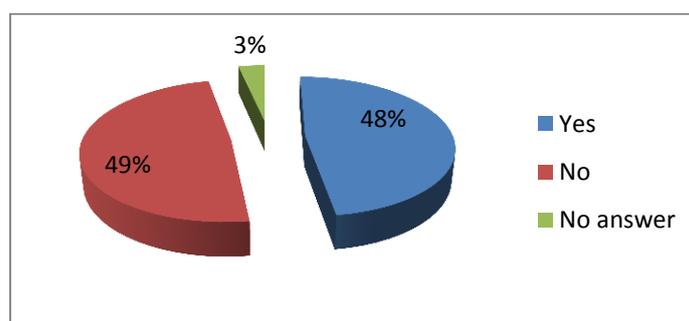
This question is important since it confirms the hypothesis that messaging language may have a serious effect on ruining students' formal writing or vice versa. The table shows that the results are close; forty two students (47.72%) choose "yes" option, which indicates the use of messaging language in their writing. On the other hand, forty three students (43%) have answered that they do not use this language in their writing. However, three of the participants did not answer this question.

Question 7.1: In case you say that you use these forms in your academic home works and assignments, do you use them consciously or unconsciously?

Table 25. Students' Awareness of Messaging Language Use

Options	Consciously	Unconsciously	No option	Total
Participants	23	14	5	42
Percentage	54.76	33.33%	11.90%	100%

Pie chart 19. Students' Awareness of Messaging Language Use
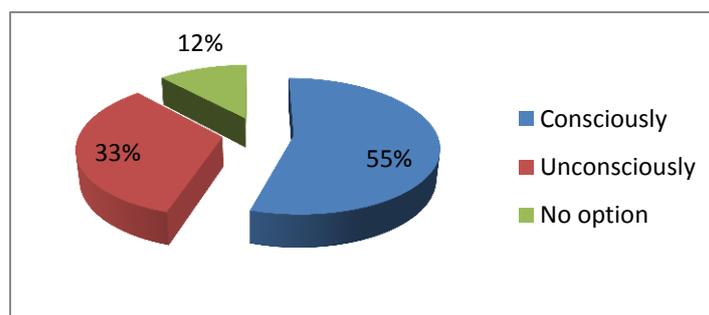
This question is important as a basic question since it proves the assumption that students' writings may be impacted by the frequent use of messaging language. Students who have answered that they insert some forms of messaging language in their writings, they were asked to answer this present question whether they tend to write them intentionally or unintentionally. Twenty three of the participants (54.76%) have chosen the first option "consciously" and fourteen of them (33.33%) have selected the second option which is "unconsciously". Whereas five of the participants did not gave their answers.

Question 08: Do you think that messaging language affects academic writing?

Table 26. Students' View about the Effect of Messaging Language on Writing Skill

Options	Positively	Negatively	No option	Total
Participants	31	52	5	88
Percentage	35.22%	59.09%	7.95%	100%

Pie chart 20. Students' View about the Effect of Messaging Language on Writing Skill
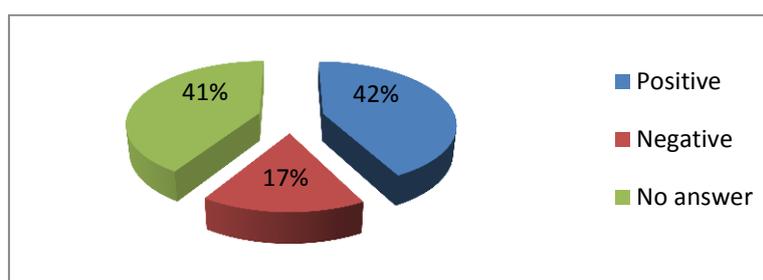
This present study basically depends on this final question, which seeks to prove or reject the hypothesis. It aims to present how students view the language of messaging and whether they are aware about its negative effect on their writing style. (35.22%) of the sample have asserted that messaging language affects positively their writing style because it motivates their creativity to learn effectively. However, (59.09%) of it confirmed that messaging language affects their writing performance. They have demonstrated that it is due to the overuse of messaging, so that they unconsciously insert this new language within academic writing. Meanwhile, some of them tend to include it consciously in their assignments, which reflect that they do not distinguish between formal and informal writing. And five of the participants (7.95%) did not answer this question.

3. The Teachers' Questionnaire

3.1. Population and Sample

In the present study, the population is first year written expression teachers of English Division at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. There are many written expression teachers for the current academic year (2017). However, only seven teachers have been chosen as a sample to represent the whole population. Moreover, they were selected because they are expert enough and familiar with students' assignments. Teachers' points of view and personal experiences are important for diagnosing the problem under investigation which is "the influence of messaging language on students' writing". Each year teachers deal with different generations, so this provides them with the advantage to get deep insights on students' writing abilities aiming to enhance their production and performance. Consequently, teachers become more proficient concerning the evaluation of students' writing styles that is dependent on certain criteria. Hence, Teachers experiences and perceptions are significant

since they will provide reliable feedback to the research, and carry out positive insights to both novice teachers and students to become proficient writers.

3.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' Questionnaire has been designed to obtain relevant data about the problem under study. The questionnaire addresses seventeen (17) questions in total. They are different questions, but they are complementary. Each question has a purpose to achieve. Therefore, the answers offered by teachers are important because they provide deep insight on students' deficiencies and difficulties that face along their writing process. So, their experiences and points of view will add credibility to the research. Moreover, though administration process of the questionnaires took more than two weeks due to different circumstances, all of them were handed back by the end of February.

Moreover, the first question focuses on teachers' teaching years of experience. The second question is about the frequency of asking students to write. The third question as well seeks to see how often teachers ask their students to practise writing. The fourth question aims to see how teachers evaluate their students' writing level, whereas the fifth question deems to figure out whether students commit mistakes in their written assignments, and the sixth one points out how often they commit mistakes concerning grammar, vocabulary, content, and organization of ideas. The next question is the seventh one; it elicits teachers view about the effect of messaging on EFL writing style. Then, the eighth question figures out whether students insert informal aspects within their writings; in addition, the ninth question concerns the frequently used forms of messaging language. Moreover, the tenth question completes the previous one since it aims to see how often they use those nonstandard aspects.

Furthermore, the eleventh question seeks teachers' views about the reasons behind students' poor level, and whether this latter occurs due to their use of informal language forms

along the assignments. Are social media considered to be as the main medium for the boom and then the adoption of messaging language? This was the twelfth question; its purpose is to see whether social media plays a significant role in students' addiction and use of this new language. However, the thirteenth question attempts to figure out whether students' awareness concerning the inconvenience use of text speak, while the fourth one concerns the way teachers correct students mistakes. Then, the objective of the fifth question lies in teachers' perception whether students who adopt such unconventional language are considered to be incompetent or not. The next sixth question aims to confirm whether messaging language is either a sort of creativity or mental laziness. Finally, the last question is an open-ended question that includes proposing some recommendations in order to reduce the negative influence of this informal language based on their teaching proficiency.

4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Question 01: How many years of teaching experience do you have?

Table 27. Teachers' Experience

Options	Under 5	5-9	10-14	15-20	20-25	Over 25	Total
Participants	1	2	2	2	0	0	7
Percentage	14.28%	28.57%	28.57%	28.57%	0%	0%	100%

Pie chart 21.Teachers' Experience
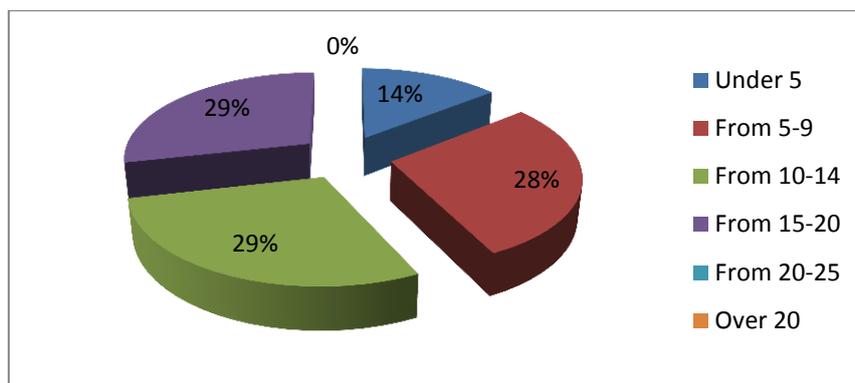
This table presents teachers' teaching proficiency. The table identifies different years of expertise; only one teacher (14.28%) has chosen first option to indicate that he/she still a novice one. Then, two of them have from (5-9) years in teaching, while two other teachers have chosen the third option which is (10-14), and the remaining two ones have between (15-20) years of teaching experience to denote that most of them have a convenient teaching proficiency. These results are significant in the analysis of this questionnaire.

Question 02: How often do you ask your students to practise writing?

Table 28. Students' Frequency of Practicing Writing

Options	Always	Sometimes	Total
Participants	6	1	7
Percentage	85.71%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 22. Students' Frequency of Practicing Writing
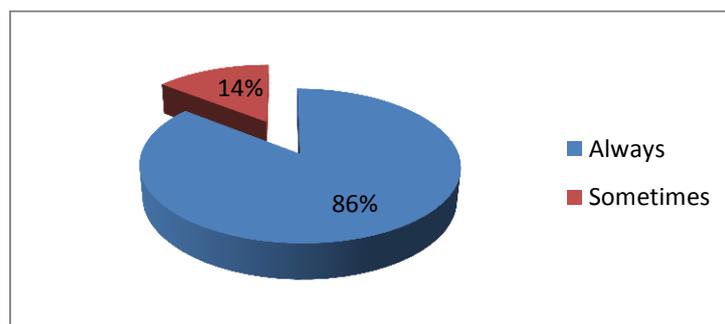
Table 29 shows that the majority of teachers ask their students to practise writing. Six teachers (85.71%) have chosen the first option (always), while only one teacher has chosen the second choice (sometimes). This implies that writing is an important skill that should be mastered effectively.

Question 03: How often do they practise writing in the classroom?

Table 29. The Frequency of Practicing Writing in Classroom

Options	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Participants	4	3	0	0	7
Percentage	57.14%	42.85%	0%	0%	100%

Pie chart 23. The Frequency of Practicing Writing in Classroom
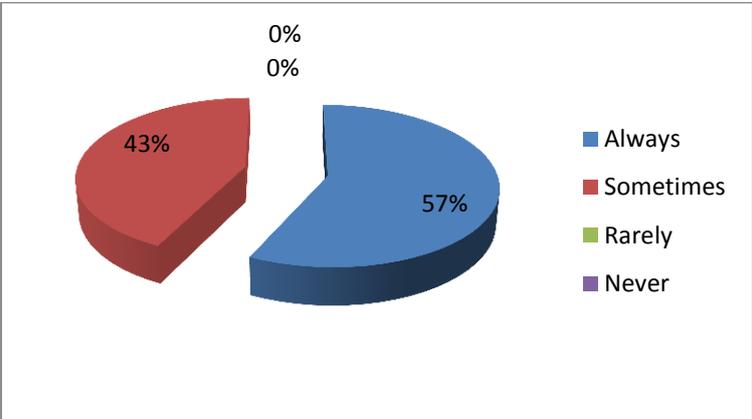
This question aims to point out how often students practise writing in classrooms. The results show that four teachers (57.14%) have reported that their students practise writing all the time, and three of them (42.85%) have denoted that they write from time to time.

Question 04: How would you evaluate your students?

Table 30. Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Writing Level

Options	Non-writers	Poor writers	Average writers	Good writers	Very good writers	Total
Participants	0	6	1	0	0	7
Percentage	0%	85.71%	14.28%	0%	0%	100%

Pie chart 24. Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Writing Level
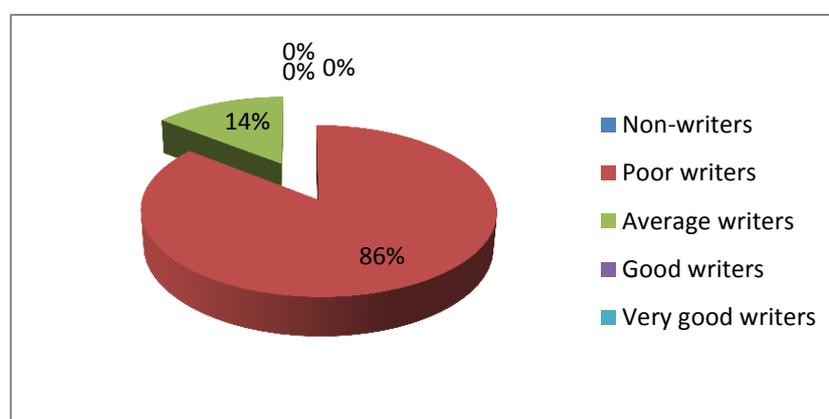
This question deems to seek teachers' evaluation of students' level. The table above presents that the majority of teachers (85.71%) evaluate the level of their students as poor students. whereas only one of the teachers (14.28%) rates them as being average students. They agreed that students are still novice and produce poor written productions. This is due to the lack of practice and reading, that is why students have poor writing mechanics. Consequently, they face many difficulties to produce correct and coherent texts, these were summarized arguments given by teachers to clarify their answers.

Question 05: Do your students commit mistakes in their writing assignments?

Table 31. Teachers' Insight on Students' Writing Mistakes

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	7	0	7
Percentage	100%	0%	100%

Pie chart 25. Teachers' Insight on Students' Writing Mistakes
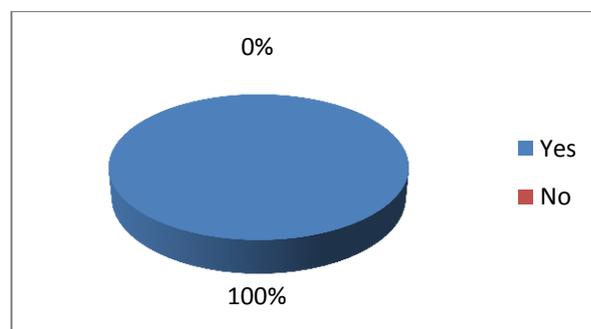
The current table seeks to report whether students commit mistakes when they write or not. All the surveyed teachers (100%) have answered with agreement (yes), which reveals that students are still novice writers and require more practice to improve their written production.

Question 06: How often do they commit mistakes concerning the following?

1. **Grammar**

Table 32. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Grammar

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Participants	0	0	0	4	3	7
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	57.14%	42.85%	100%

Pie chart 26. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Grammar
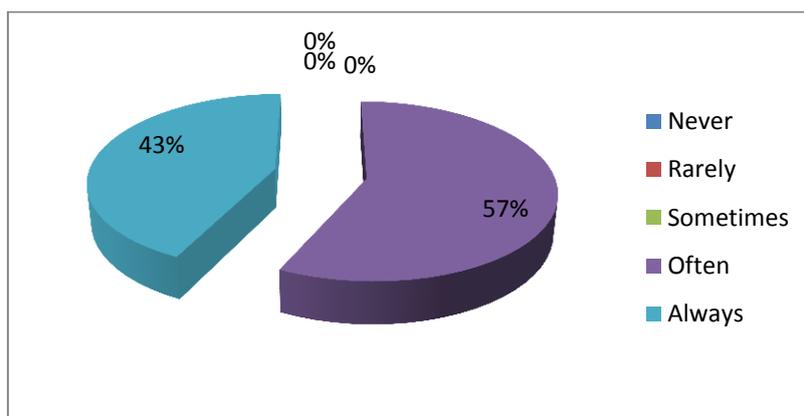
Grammar is one of the most important aspects of writing; it indicates students' level. From the table (33), (57.14%) of teachers indicate that students often commit grammatical mistakes while they write, and (42.85%) of them state that their students always commit grammatical mistakes. So, it is indicated that most of students face difficulties in terms of producing correct grammar.

2. **Vocabulary**

Table 33. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Vocabulary

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Participants	0	0	4	3	0	7
Percentage	0%	0%	57.14%	42.85%	0%	100%

Pie chart 27. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Vocabulary
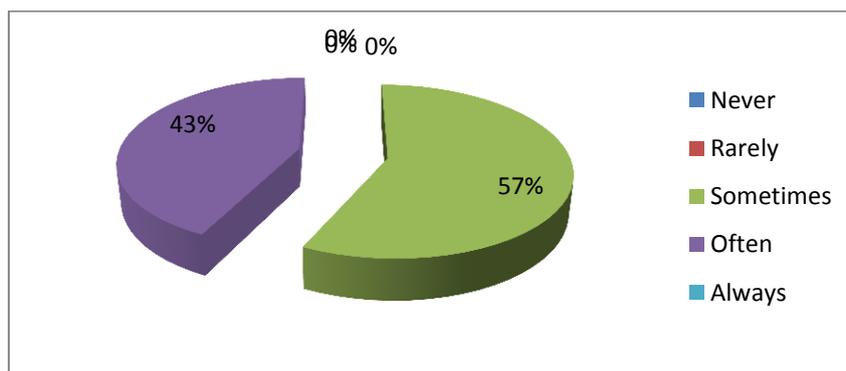
Vocabulary is a significant aspect students should pay attention to when they write. Having a wide range of lexis and being aware about its proper use are needed to improve the writing skill. Meanwhile, this question aims to point out whether students find difficulty concerning vocabulary and its correct use. Therefore, (57.14%) of the teachers ensure that their students sometimes tend to make some mistakes concerning this important aspect of writing, and (42.85%) of teachers demonstrate that students often commit mistakes concerning this latter.

3. Content

Table 34. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Content

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Participants	0	1	4	1	1	7
Percentage	0%	14.28%	57.14%	14.28%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 28. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in Content
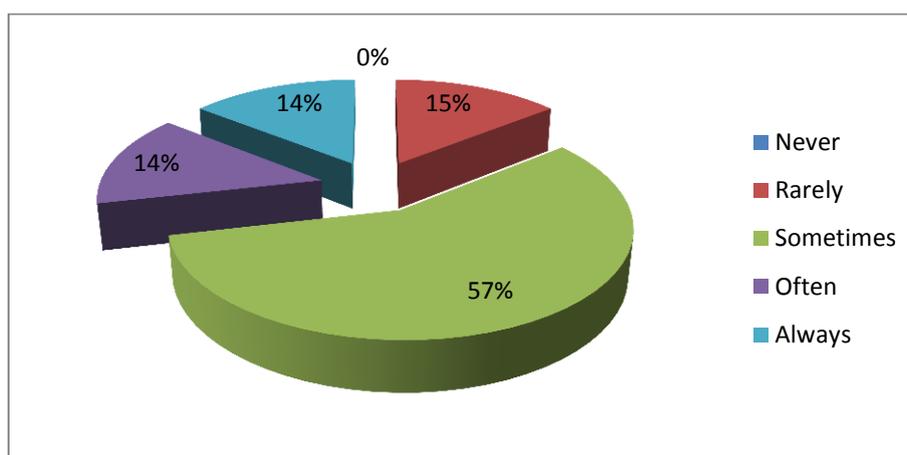
The third aspect of effective writing is content; it is important for students to be cautious about the appropriateness of content chosen in order to be relevant to the theme tended to be written. In order to check whether students face some difficulties concerning the

choice of suitable content, this question has been addressed to written expression module teachers. Most of the teachers have stated that their students from time to time commit mistakes in terms of content. One teacher (14.28%) has stated that students rarely make mistakes, and another teacher (14.28%) has claimed that students often face difficulty including suitable content in their written production. Also, another teacher (14.28%) has confirmed that his/her students always commit mistakes in producing relevant content.

4. Organization of Ideas

Table 35. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in the Organization of Ideas

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Participants	0	1	3	2	1	7
Percentage	0%	14.28%	42.85%	28.57%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 29. Students' Frequency of Committing Mistakes in the Organization of Ideas
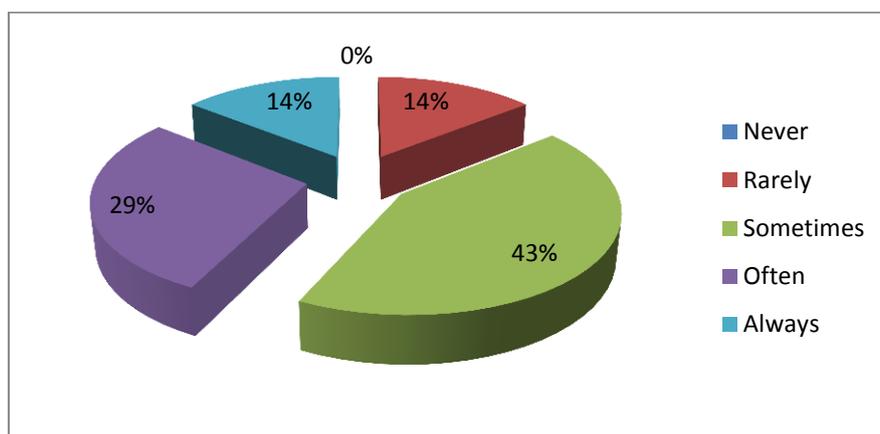
Organization of ideas is one of the most difficult aspects that create challenges for students along the writing process. This question aims to figure out whether students produce ambiguous work. One of the teachers (14.28%) has stated that student rarely produce unorganized content. However, three of them (42.85%) have ensured that their students

sometimes commit mistakes concerning the organization of ideas, and two of them (28.57%) have claimed that students often commit such mistake, whereas only one teacher (14.28%) has demonstrates that students always commit this kind of mistake.

Question 07: What do you think about the effect of messaging language on EFL writing style?

Table 36. Teachers' View on the Effect of Messaging Language on Students Academic Writing

Options	Positive	Negative	Both of them	Total
Participants	0	6	1	7
Percentage	0%	85.71%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 30: Teachers' View on the Effect of Messaging Language on Students Academic Writing
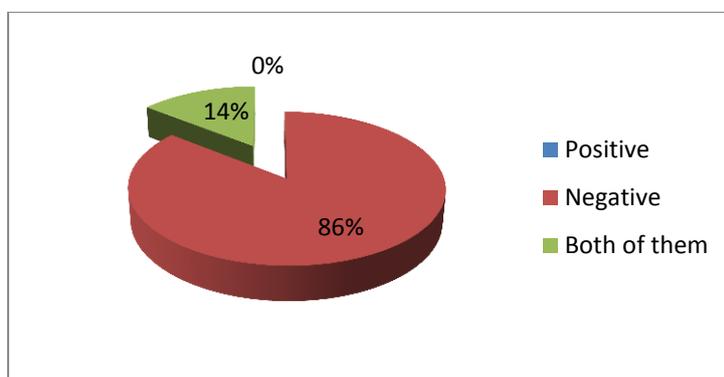
This question is important for this study; six teachers (85.71%) have demonstrated that the effect of messaging language is negative; this is due to the informal nature of this language at the first place. Also, they have demonstrated that using this language make students forget about the correct word spelling, structure, tense, and punctuation. So, they produce unclear piece of writing which is not acceptable in academic writing. Moreover, only one teacher (14.28%) has chosen both options (positive and negative); it is positive since it

enables them to have good vocabulary knowledge. It is negative because most of the time they do not write complete or full words as well as sentences, so they resort to informal writing.

Question 08: Do your students insert abbreviations, shorthand words, and other informal aspects within their writing?

Table 37. Messaging Language Forms observed in Students' writings

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	6	1	7
Percentage	85.71%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 31. Messaging Language Forms observed in Students' writings
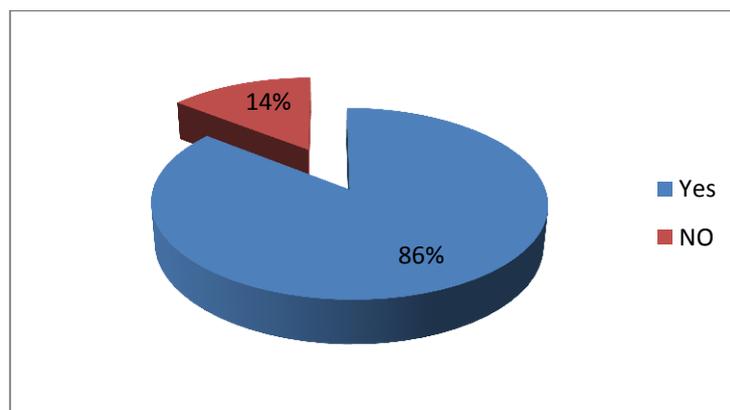
The purpose of this question is to ensure and support the previous question. Out of the seven surveyed teachers, six of them (85.71%) have demonstrated that their students use this new language in their written production. By contrast, only one teacher (14.28) has asserted that none of messaging language aspects is found in their writings.

Question 09: What are the forms mostly used by students?

Table 38. Forms of Messaging Language Students often insert in their Academic writing

Options	Participants	Percentage
Abbreviations	7	100%
Accronyms and initialisms	4	57.14%
Clippings and shortenings	3	42.85%
Single number and letter homophones	3	42.85%
Combined number and letter homophones	1	14.28%
Emoticons	3	42.85%
Typographic symbols	2	28.57%
Omitting punctuation marks and capitalization	7	100%
Excessive use of punctuation marks and capitalization	2	28.57%
Repeating letters	1	14.28%
Accent stylizations	1	14.28%
Inanities	1	14.28%

This table is so important since it answers one of the major questions of this research. It seeks to point out which forms of ML students use frequently in their academic assignments. According to the results above, the forms will be ranged from the most used ones to the rarely used ones. Hence, (100) of teachers have agreed that the mainly used forms are abbreviations and omitting punctuation marks and capitalizations. Then, four of them have

stated that acronyms and initialisms come at the second place reaching the percentage of (57.14%). Next, three of the teachers have indicated that students insert clippings and shortenings, single number and letter homophones. Emoticons in their formal assignments represent the percentage of (42.85%). Moreover, only two teachers have contended that students include typographic symbols and excessive use of punctuation marks and capitalization reaching a medium percentage of (28.57%). Finally, combined numbers and letter homophones, repeating letters, accent stylizations, and inanities have been chosen only by one teacher to reach a low percentage of (14.28%). This implies that they are not widely used in the academic setting.

Question 10: How often do they use those nonstandard aspects in their written assignments?

Table 39. Students' Frequency of using Messaging Language Features in their Academic Writing

Options	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	b-c	Total
Participants	1	2	1	1	0	1	7
Percentage	14.28%	28.57%	14.28%	14.28%	0%	14.28%	100%

Pie chart 32. Students' Frequency of using Messaging Language Features in their Academic Writing
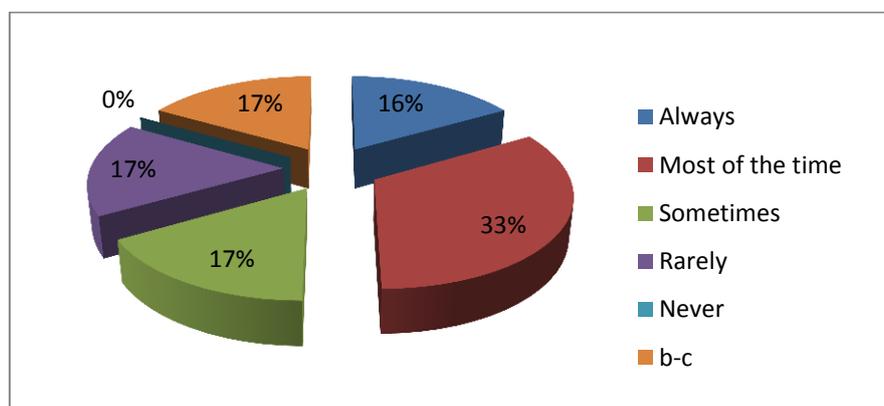
This question is important as other previous questions. It offers more details about students' frequent use of informal feature within their written pieces of work. In this part, teachers have provided different answers; one of them (14.28%) states that students tend to use them all the time, and two of the teachers (28.57%) have confirmed that their students use such informal forms most of the time. Also, one of them (14.28%) has said that students occasionally insert some of these forms, while another teacher (14.28%) has claimed that his/her students rarely include these nonstandard forms in their writing. In addition to that, the sixth last teacher has chosen the two first options (always and most of the time) to confirm that student really use this new language in their academic writing works. Finally, as an exception, one of the teachers did not answer this question.

Question 11: Do you think that students' poor level is one reason behind the use of such informal forms along their written assignments?

<p align="center">**Table 40. Teachers' Assumption about Students' Poor Level**</p>

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	6	1	7
Percentage	85.71%	14.28%	100%

<p align="center">**Pie chart 33. Teachers' Assumption about Students' Poor Level**</p>
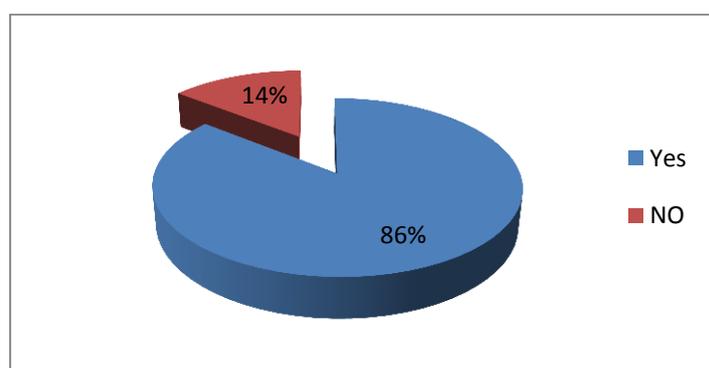
As indicated in the table 38 above, one teacher (14.28%) has chosen the (no) option, whereas most of teachers (85.71%) have revealed that students poor level is one reason behind the adoption of messaging language.

Question 12: Does social media considered as the main medium for the boom and then the adoption of messaging language?

Table 41. Teachers' View about Social Media and the Boom and Adoption of Messaging Language

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	7	0	7
Percentage	100%	0%	100%

Pie chart 34. Teachers' View about Social Media and the Boom and Adoption of Messaging Language
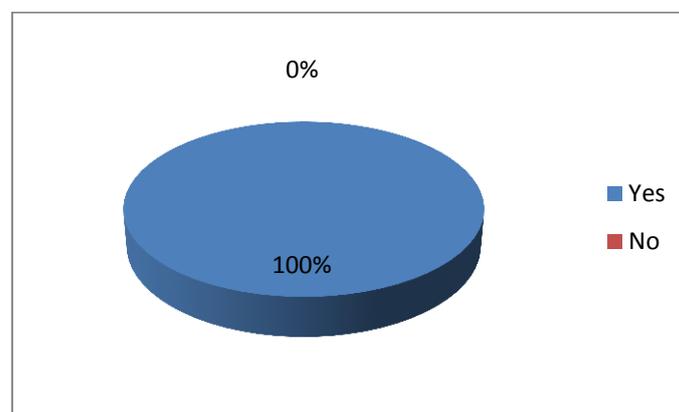
The purpose of this question is to seek teachers' assumptions about the role of social media in the emergence of messaging language. The results show that all teachers (100%) have agreed that social media nowadays is one of the main causes that led to the spread of the ML.

Question 13: Are your students aware of the inconvenience of messaging language?

Table 42. Teachers' Assumption about Students Awareness of the Inconvenience of M L

Options	Yes	No	Total
Participants	2	5	7
Percentage	28.57%	71.42%	100%

Pie chart 35. Teachers' Assumption about Students Awareness of the Inconvenience of Messaging Language
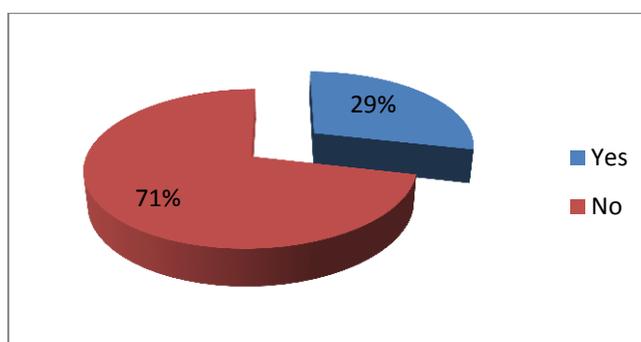
As the table shows, two of the teachers (28.57%) have pointed out that students are aware of the inconvenience of messaging language. However, the majority (71.42%) of teachers have asserted that students are unaware about the inconvenience of this new language.

Question 14: How do you correct some informal aspects of messaging language?

Table 43. Teachers' Way of giving Feedback concerning the Use of Informal Aspects

Options	Teachers feedback	Peer feedback	None of these	Total
Participants	7	0	0	7
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	100%

Pie chart 36. Teachers' Way of giving Feedback concerning the Use of Informal Aspects
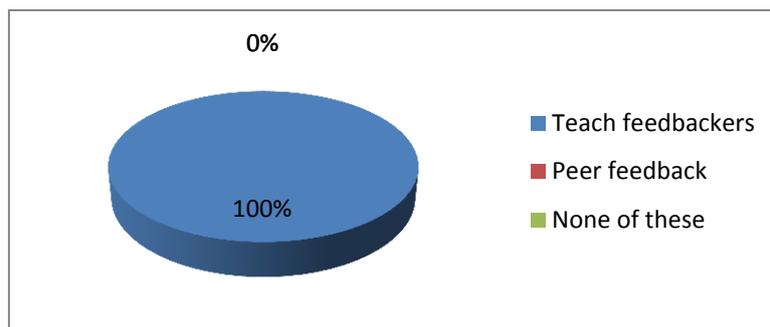
This question aims to figure out how teachers correct students' mistakes. All teachers (100%) have chosen the first option (Teachers Feedback). Therefore, teachers prefer to correct their students' mistakes based on giving their feedback since they are the main source of knowledge.

Question 15: Do you think that most of the students who adopt such unconventional language are both linguistically and pragmatically incompetent?

Table 44. Teachers' perception about Students' Competency

Options	Agree	Disagree	Total
Participants	4	3	7
Percentage	57.14%	42.85%	100%

Pie chart 37. Teachers' perception about Students' Competency
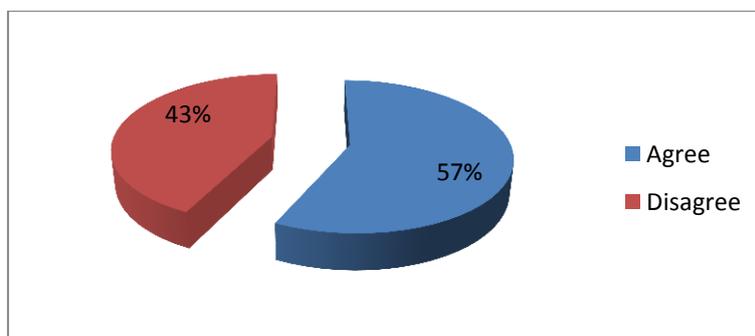
Accordingly, this question investigates teachers' perception about whether their students who adopt such unconventional language (ML) are competent or not. Therefore, the results showed that four teachers (57.14%) have agreed that students who adopt this informal language are incompetent, while three of them (42.85%) have disagreed upon it.

Question 16: Do you think that messaging is a sort of creativity or mental laziness?

Table 45. Teachers' View on the Nature of Messaging Language

Options	Creativity	Mental laziness	Total
Participants	1	6	7
Percentage	14.28%	85.71%	100%

Pie chart 38. Teachers' View on the Nature of Messaging Language
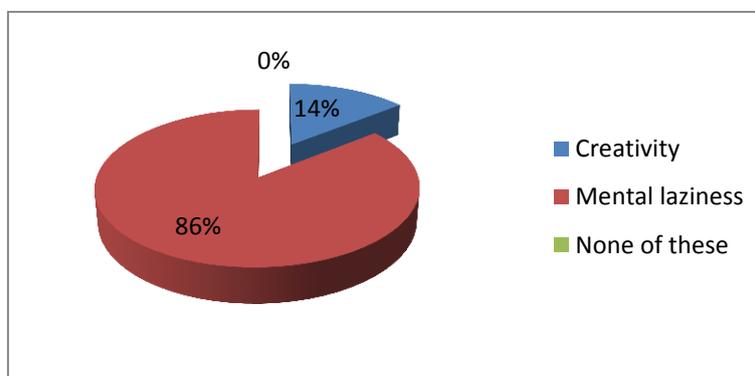
The objective of this table is to point out how teachers perceive the nature of messaging language. Only one teacher (14.28%) has claimed that messaging language is a sort of creativity, whereas the majority (85.71%) have asserted that it is a sort of mental laziness.

Question 17: Are there any additional comments you may propose concerning the use of messaging language in the classrooms?

Concerning the use of messaging language in classrooms, teachers state the following:

❖ Teachers should raise students' awareness that messaging language is totally informal and its overuse may ruin their writing, and make it sounds unclear and ambiguous.

❖ Teachers should explicitly highlight the importance of writing formally following its standard structure and conventional features.

❖ Teachers should provide useful and constructive feedback to students whenever they commit mistakes.

❖ All in all, student should be aware of the difference between formal and informal writing styles.

5. Interpretation of the Findings

To sum up, this chapter interprets the findings of the questionnaires delivered to both students and teachers of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. It tends to check whether messaging language has an effect on the students' writing skill. Also, it aims to know if students tend to use this language in their academic work, and what main forms they tend to include in their communicative language. In addition, it seeks to figure out whether students differentiate between the standard and non-standard features of English Language. Moreover, it aims as well to see whether messaging language is one of the main reasons behind learners' academic failure in terms of linguistic accuracy; thus, to prove whether it is a sort of creativity or mental laziness.

After analyzing both questionnaires, both students and teachers have ensured that messaging language has a negative effect on students' academic writing style. They have stated that when students expose frequently to any kind of language, they simply adopt it and

become addicted to it. Therefore, students write the way they text. So, they mix up the informal aspects with the formal ones. Students overuse abbreviations, acronyms, initialisms, and omit capitalization and punctuation marks besides to some other forms. Thus, they produce incorrect and unclear sentences which are full of mistakes in terms of tense, vocabulary use, structure and coherence. Moreover, it is demonstrated that students do not differentiate between what is formal and what is informal for that they tend to insert these non-standard features and break grammatical rules.

Furthermore, most of the findings reveal that messaging language nowadays is one of the major causes beyond students' writing poor level. Their poor level is due to the lack of practice; students need to read and write constantly in order to improve their level. This is the case with messaging language; students tend to use this invented language most of the times. So, they become acquainted with it, yet this leads to forget about the right word spelling, standard structure, and other rules. Thus, the findings prove that most of students are not aware about the serious effect of this invented language on their academic performance for that they keep using it. In the same context, the results affirm that this language in case is used unconditionally; it results in mental laziness. Since all the time students tend to shorten their writings, words, and sentences as much as possible, it ruins their learning curve and makes them become lazy. Therefore, they do not express their ideas effectively in well-polished, organized, and clear sentences. All in all, it is ensured that messaging language is the reason behind learners' academic failure, consequently; the hypothesis has been successfully proved.

Conclusion

This chapter is an important part in this research, and it is built upon the survey method in order to investigate the problem under investigation. Since it is based on both teachers and students questionnaires, it deems to confirm how messaging language influences

students' academic writing. Thus, as it is mentioned in the above part, the final outcome has been proved that most of students' writing skill is affected negatively by this invented language. Due to its unguided and frequent use, students lack the basis of academic writing. Hence, messaging language affects passively the writing style and it is considered to be one of the main reasons behind their poor level.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, it is substantial to suggest some useful recommendations which may help students and teachers overcome writing difficulties. It is essential to emphasize that:

❖ Both teachers and learners must be aware of the negative influence of messaging language on the formal writing skill.

❖ Students should be "language- caution". Teachers must raise students' awareness concerning the appropriate use of English language in different settings because academic setting requires a refined language that fits it and vice versa concerning the non-academic one.

❖ Students must distinguish between standard and nonstandard English, so that to avoid including unconventional forms within their writings.

❖ Students must practice the English written language properly and consistently. Since any language is learned and acquired via frequent exposure and persistent training.

❖ Also students should acquire the reading habit in order to become more competent and more knowledgeable. Students should not only read online but also offline since this latter still have many privileges on evolving their capacities and enriching their linguistic knowledge.

❖ Teachers should provide direct feedback and be firm in correcting students' mistakes, and try to make them conscious about the importance of the writing process. Since this latter consist of different steps, that guide student to produce a well refined piece of work.

General Conclusion

Due to the emergence of the various technological devices and networking, a new medium of communication called "text speak" has been emerged. This new invented medium has been adopted by most of students in order to practice their (TL) and to improve their skills, essentially the written one. Meanwhile, this new written language has an outstanding influence on English language. This influence can be either positive or negative. It is positive when it is used carefully with guidance in specific contexts. In contrast, in case it is overly used without any guidance, it is considered to be negative. Therefore, the main concern of the present research is investigating the negative influence of such informal language on first year students' academic writing

On this basis, this research is built upon three major chapters. The first chapter is about the language of messaging language. Its ultimate purpose is to figure out the most important elements of messaging media in order to understand its complex nature. It presents two main types of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) mainly SMS and IM, which are both form-focus. They have been chosen substantially because they are widely used and because they share some common features, forms, and structure. Since this language "relies on […] both sides of the speech/writing divide" (Crystal, 2004, p: 28), a distinction between these two latter has been made within this chapter to figure out what written and spoken languages are. Besides, highlighting some advantaged and disadvantages of such media plus presenting some reasons that led to the raise of this latter has been also took a part in this chapter to reach its objectives.

Moreover, the second chapter is about the academic writing in EFL classrooms. Its ultimate goal is to shed light on the importance of this skill for students both academic and future professional career. Since it needs assistance and guidance most of the time, academic

writing is taught in a formal setting by professional tutors. Furthermore, academic writing has its own characteristics, process and structure that make it distinctive from other genres of writing as they are presented in this part. Additionally, writing in general is one of the most convoluted but most important skills that should be well mastered. As it is asserted "writing in English as a foreign language (EFL) is important and multidimensional. Students' writing in the EFL classroom context needs to show their awareness of the communicative goals, the reader, and the writing context" (Abouabdelkader & Ahmed, 2016, pp: 5-6). Furthermore, this chapter seeks to raise both teachers and students attention towards the writing style; hence, it intends to put emphasis on distinguishing between formal and informal style.

Furthermore, the final part of this research is the field work. It is the practical part in which the current problematic would be investigated. It is curried out based on the survey method. Both first year English students and written expression teachers were surveyed in order to obtain relevant data. Students' questionnaire aims to get background information about their use of technology in general and the adoption of messaging language in particular. Then, teachers' questionnaire seeks as well to gain relevant data about students' use of messaging language within their writings. Their teaching experience adds validity and credibility to this study. In conclusion, the findings indicate that students face difficulties to produce well refined works, and it is proved that the overuse of messaging language is the main reason beyond this problem.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

     This questionnaire aims to investigate the impact of messaging language on students' academic writing style as a part of master degree. Messaging language is the process of texting friends, classmates or family members using typed messages that are sent in a postponed manner or in a real time chat. This questionnaire will not exceed more than 30 minutes to be answered. Thus, dear students , it is highly recommended from you to be helpful and provide honest and complete answers that contribute in gathering relevant and reliable data. So please try to be positive and helpful.

<u>Part 1</u>: **General Insight about the Use of Technology**

Put a cross X in front of the right answer you choose:

1. Do you use technology (such as, smart phones and computers…etc.) to learn?

Yes ☐　　No ☐

2. How often do you use technology?

Everyday ☐　　Once a week ☐　　More than once a week ☐　　Once a month ☐

3. How many hours do you use it?

From 1-2 hours ☐　　2-3 hours ☐　　3-4 hours ☐　　More than 4 hours a day ☐

<u>Part 2</u>: **Messaging Language**

1. Do you know what messaging language is?

Yes ☐　　No ☐

2. While texting friends, do you use the messaging language (like abbreviations and shortcuts; such as, u for you, 2 for to or too, tmrw for tomorrow … etc.)?

Yes ☐   No ☐

3. How often do you use messaging language?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   Never ☐

4. Where and when do you use it most?

At home ☐   At school ☐   At cyber ☐

Wherever and whenever you get a chance ☐

5. What type of communication do you prefer to use most?

Sending SMS ☐   Having chat ☐   Sending Email ☐

- State at least one clear reason for each favourable type you choose.

………………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………………….

6. What are the main reasons behind using those types of messaging? (Multiple choice)

- For the sake of communication and sharing ideas   ☐

- For the sake of studying   ☐

- For the sake of entertainment and leisure   ☐

7. Which language do you use along messaging?

English ☐   French ☐   Arabic ☐   Others ☐

8. Which forms do you often use when messaging?

- Abbreviations (such as: msg used for message, thanx for thanks) ☐

- Acronyms and initialisms (e.g: omg for oh my god) ☐

- Clippings and shortenings (goin for going, xam for exam) ☐

- Single number and letter homophones (u for you, and 2 for to) ☐

- Combined number and letter homophones (l8r for later. Ne1 for anyone) ☐

- Emoticons (smiley faces) (☺for happy/ ☹for sad) ☐

- Typographic symbols (<3 for love; @ for at; & for and) ☐

- Omitting punctuation marks and capitalization (cant for can't) ☐

- Excessive use of punctuation marks and capitalization (what !!!!;NEVER) ☐

- Repeating letters (sooooo for so , and grreeennnn for green) ☐

- Accent stylizations (gonna for going to, dat for that) ☐

- Inanities (lolz for lol) ☐

  - State why do you tend to use those forms?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

9. While messaging others, do you focus on the accuracy of your messages, or do you focus

on its fluent delivery in order to maintain smooth interaction?

Accuracy ☐   Fluency ☐

Part 3: English Language and Academic Writing

1. Do you think that you are a good and fluent English student?

Good ☐   Average ☐   Poor ☐

2. Do you think that you are a good writer?

Good ☐   Average ☐   Poor ☐

3. How often do you write in English?

Everyday ☐   Usually ☐   Rarely ☐

4. Whenever you write, do you focus more on accuracy or fluency?

Accuracy ☐   Fluency ☐

5. Do you really differentiate between the standard and non-standard features of English language?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6. Do you think that you are both linguistically and pragmatically competent .i.e., do you have the ability to use the language appropriately according to different contexts?

Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Do you tend to write some of the messaging language forms in your academic home works and assignments?

Yes ☐   No ☐

- If you say "yes", do you use them?

Consciously ☐   Unconsciously ☐

8. Do you think that messaging language affects academic writing?

Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]

- Say why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

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Thank you for your collaboration.

APPENDIX B

Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire tends to investigate the impact of messaging language on EFL learners' academic writing. Thus, the main aim is to elicit teachers' perception of messaging language echoes on the learners' writing skill and performance within the formal setting. Please, mark the appropriate box or give full answer whenever there is a gap.

Instructions:

Put a cross X in front of the right answer:

1. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

Under 5 ☐   5-9 ☐   10-14 ☐

15-20 ☐   20-25 ☐   over 25 ☐

2. How often do you ask your students to write?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐

3. How often do they practise writing?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   Rarely ☐   Never ☐

4. How would you evaluate your students?

- Non-writers ☐
- Poor writers ☐
- Good writers ☐
- Very good writers ☐

- Would you explain:

……………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

5. Do your students commit mistakes in their written assignments?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6. How often do they commit mistakes concerning the following?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Grammar					
Vocabulary					
Content					
Organization of ideas					

7. What do you think about the effect of messaging language on EFL writing style?

Positive ☐   Negative ☐

- Explain:………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

8. Do your students insert abbreviations, shorthand words, and other informal aspects within

their writings?

Yes ☐   No ☐

9. What are the forms mostly used by students?

- Abbreviations ☐
- Acronyms and initialisms ☐
- Clippings and shortenings ☐
- Single number and letter homophones ☐
- Combined number and letter homophones ☐
- Emoticons (smiley faces) ☐
- Typographic symbols ☐
- Omitting punctuation marks and capitalization ☐
- Excessive use of punctuation marks and capitalization ☐
- Repeating letters ☐
- Accent stylizations ☐
- inanities ☐

10. How often do they use those nonstandard aspects in their written assignments?

Always ☐   Most of the time ☐   Sometimes ☐   Rarely ☐   Never ☐

11. Do you think that students' poor level is one reason behind the use of such informal forms along their written assignments?

Yes ☐   No ☐

12. Does social media considered as the main medium for the boom and then the adoption of messaging language?

Yes ☐   No ☐

13. Are your students aware of the inconvenience of messaging language?

Yes ☐   No ☐

14. How do you correct some informal aspects of messaging language?

Teacher's feedback ☐

Peer feedback   ☐

 None of these   ☐

15. Do you think that most of the students who adopt such unconventional language are both linguistically and pragmatically incompetent?

Agree ☐   Disagree ☐

16. Do you think that messaging is a sort of creativity or mental laziness?

 Creativity ☐   Mental laziness ☐   None of them ☐

17. Are there any additional comments or suggestions you may propose concerning the use of messaging language in the classroom?

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Thank you for your collaboration

الملخص

يواجه معظم طلاب اللغات الأجنبية صعوبات في التمكن من الكتابة الأكاديمية وإتقان أساسياتها.هذه الصعوبات هي نتيجة عدة عوامل مختلفة من بينها التأثير السلبي للغة الرسائل. فهذه الأخيرة لها تأثير ملحوظ على القدرة الكتابية للطلبة. ولذلك يسعى هذا البحث لمعالجة واحدة من أهم الصعوبات المتعلقة بالتحكم و إتقان الكتابة الأكاديمية. وبالتالي فان أهمية هذا البحث تكمن في تحديد أثر هذه اللغة على إنتاج الكتابات في الوسط الجامعي. و بناءا على ذلك فان جوهر هذه الدراسة يتمثل في إثبات أو دحض الفرضية القائلة أن الاستخدام المفرط والدائم للغة الرسائل كوسيلة لغوية أساسية خاصة من طرف طلبة اللغات الأجنبية يؤدي إلى التأثير سلبا على أدائهم الأكاديمي. ومن خلال الدراسة الوصفية للإستبيانات التي أجريت والتي تم توزيعها على كلا من طلاب سنة أولى قسم لغة إنجليزية وأساتذة مقياس التعبير الكتابي لجامعة محمد خيضر من الممكن التصريح أن النتائج النهائية تؤكد صحة الفرضية السابقة حيث أنها تدل على أن كثرة استعمال لغة الرسائل يؤثر سلبا على المستوى المعرفي و الدراسي مما يؤدي إلى إنتاج كتابات أقل رسمية وأقل أكاديمية.