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Investigating the impact of social media (platforms) on EFL learners' academic writing skill at the tertiary level:

The Case of Master one students at the department of English in the University of Biskra

A Thesis submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in partial fulfilment of the Requirements for the degree of Masters in Sciences of the Language

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Dedication

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: He who does not thank the people is not thankful to Allah. This modest study is dedicated to my dear father, who has been a wonderful supporter, and to my beloved mother, who has been encouraging me for months. To my beloved sister Nadjeh, my backbone, and my brothers for their love, endless support, and encouragement. To all my friends, classmates, and all my teachers.

Declaration

I, Ammari Wiam Sara, do hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work and has not previously been submitted for any institution or university for a degree. I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources of the cited and quoted information. This work was certified and completed at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

The current study aims to investigate the influence of using Social media on EFL learners' Academic writing skill for Master one students at the department of English language in the University of Mohamed khider Biskra. In order to confirm the relationship, we hypothesised that that EFL learners' academic writing skill is influenced by social media; also, EFL learners are unable to separate texting from formal writing. The hypothesis is evaluated by a mixed methods approach deduced from the results of the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. Hence, the results revealed that the use of Social media have an impact on students' academic writing skill. Furthermore, according to the obtained results the majority of English' teachers agree that Social media have a huge impact on EFL learners academic writing Skill. Therefore, from the obtained results and the conclusions we attained, our hypotheses are tested.

Key Terms: EFL learners, Social media, writing skill, Academic writing.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

COVID-19: Corona Virus Disease 2019

SM: Social Media

Q: Question

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General Introduction

Social media have a vital role in people's lives. They have greatly impacted communication reducing the world to a global village by enabling individuals to communicate quickly, effectively and, most importantly, efficiently. Students from different levels use social media platforms as they are considered the easiest and quickest means to keep up with the news, look for information and learn many things, and nowadays these platforms have given opportunities for EFL learners and teachers as well by offering them the ability to cross-cultural communicate with native speakers and EFL learners around the world. All of this granted language learners a chance to practice their language and learn new vocabulary through interaction. In addition, social media platforms can be a helpful tool for foreign language learners to enhance their language skills such as writing; however, this raised a great concern about the way the use of SM might affect the English language skills, namely, the writing skill in general and the academic writing skill in particular since users of social media tend to use cyber language or texting that is about short forms, emoticons, contractions, and abbreviations deliberately and willingly, or unintentionally and reluctantly, as on Twitter there's a 140 character limit, so even if the user is not against the clock, he/ she is quite literally forced to make the statement brief. Therefore, hypotheses were made about how social media can affect directly or indirectly the process of writing academically among EFL students.

1. Statement of the problem

Writing is an essential skill that every language learner needs to master. It is a complex and an on-going task that learners may find it intimidating, particularly,

students who are required to write academically. Usually, when EFL learners try to write academically, they are likely to encounter many problems such as poor essay structure, plagiarism, poor grammar and vocabulary choice, inability to order and express ideas properly, etc. All these problems are seen to result from the exposure and the use of informal writing on social media platforms, because it allows using abbreviations, acronyms, facilitating the process of communication, etc. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of using social media on English Master one Sciences of the Language students at the University of Biskra.

2. Significance of the study:

Both teachers and students will benefit from this study. It will highlight the problems that students encounter during the process of writing. The study will make students raise awareness about the advantages and disadvantages of using social media on their academic writing skill. Also, this study will provide relevant material in the future for students and researchers conducting the same research.

3. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does the use of social media among EFL students affect their English writing?
2. For what reason do students use informal expressions in their formal writing i.e. academic writing?

4. Hypotheses

On the basis of our research questions, we suggest the following hypotheses:

1. We hypothesize that EFL learners' academic writing skill is influenced by social media.
2. We also hypothesize that EFL learners are unable to distinguish between texting and formal writing.

5. Aims

This study aims to:

1. Investigate the influence of social media and how they affect the learner's academic writing skill.
2. Distinguish between texting and formal writing.
3. Examine the influence of using social media on English Master sciences of the language students in the University of Biskra.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research method

This present study is mainly built on a descriptive type of research to supply the way that SM influences the EFL learners' academic writing skill. It is based on the mixed methods approach to collect data.

6.2 Data gathering tools

Concerning data collection we will administer an interview for teachers of

Academic writing and written expression modules and a questionnaire for Master one Sciences of the Language students at the English division of Biskra University.

7. Sample of the study

The population in this research will be selected from a total number of Master one sciences of the language students at the University of Biskra. The sample is about 37 students who are randomly chosen. A sample of 6 academic writing and written expression teachers will be also chosen, for the sake of obtaining their opinions concerning the influence of social media platforms on EFL learners' academic writing skill.

8. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into three chapters.

Chapter One is an overview of the social media, mainly its definitions, development, as well as types and some examples. More specifically, it focuses on social media and education, language teaching and English learning. Finally, some advantages and disadvantages. **Chapter Two** provides a description and an overview of the writing skill and academic writing, including definition of writing and academic writing, writing process, along with approaches to developing writing, difficulties in academic writing, and genres. **Chapter Three** intends to portray the set of methodological aspects the current inquiry will be based on, along with the procedures through which the treatment will be implemented and the data will be collected. It also seeks not only to display, describe, and classify the mass of obtained data, but also to analyse, as well as

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interpret the quantitative and qualitative findings to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1. Chapter one: Social Media

Introduction

“Social media is a honeycomb of seven functional building blocks: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, and groups” (Kietzman Hermkens & McCarthy, 2011) meaning that there are various social media platforms used by almost more than half of the world’s population, those platforms have direct and indirect influence not only on individuals’ social lives but also on practical life, affecting domains like politics, economics, business, and most importantly education. Students have become influenced by social media and are using it as a means of communication among their colleagues; consequently, the use of social media among students especially EFL students affects their productive skills mainly the Writing skill.

. In this chapter, we will define social media, its development, categories and mention some common platforms. Also, we will try to discuss social media and its relation to education. Finally, the chapter finishes with the advantages and disadvantages related to social media.

1.1. Definition of Social Media

Social media has made people able to communicate across continents, cultures, and communities, creating an interconnected community. It has completely changed how people interact. Social media is a group of Internet-based applications that builds on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p.10).By the same token, social media is a digital space that is created by the people

for the people (Kapoor., Tamilmani, Rana, 2018). It is a helpful environment for interactions and networking at different levels; for example, personal, professional, business, marketing, political, and societal.

Carr and Hayes (2015) state that social media are disentangled, persistent Internet-based channels of mass-personal interaction which promote perceptions of interactions among individuals, and derive value primarily from user-generated material. Users can express themselves and their thoughts on what other users publish or post in their profiles.

1.1.1. Web 0.2

According to Kenton, (2022) Web 2.0 describes the current state of the internet, which has more user-generated content and usability for end-users compared to its earlier incarnation, Web 1.0. In other words, the term "Web 2.0" proposed by Tim O'Reilly in 2005 means all technical, features and uses of the World Wide Web that follow the original form of the web, especially interfaces that allow users with little technical knowledge to adopt new functionality of the web. (Sfetcu, 2017)

Furthermore, the term "social media" tends to replace the term Web 2.0 covering the various activities that integrate social interaction, and content creation. Also, it uses collective intelligence in a spirit of online collaboration. Social media uses a lot of techniques, such as blogs, wikis, photo and video sharing, podcasts, social networks collaborative bookmarking, virtual worlds or micro blogs.(Sfetcu,2017)

1.2. Development of social-media platforms

Social media has become an indispensable part in people's daily life. It has shaped the way people interact throughout the past 25 years. People before that were

used to traditional media such as Television, Newspaper and Radio, etc. However, this has changed by the emergence of digital devices and the new media specifically social media. It has become very popular after the development of blogging. Boyd & Ellison (2008) proposed a timeline (Figure 2) indicating that the first social network site to be acknowledged was created in 1997. SixDegrees.com enabled users to create profiles, list their Friends and, beginning in 1998, surf the Friends lists.

From 1997 to 2001, a number of community tools began supporting various combinations of profiles and publicly articulated Friends. AsianAvenue, BlackPlanet, and MiGente allowed users to create personal, professional, and dating profiles—users could identify Friends on their personal profiles without seeking approval for those connections (O.Wasow, personal communication, August 16, 2007) Cited in Boyd and Ellison(2008)

In the early 2000s, many sites increased in popularity like MySpace and LinkedIn. While Photobucket and Flickr provided online photo sharing. YouTube registered on February 14, 2005 (Hosch, 2022), introducing in a completely new way to interact and exchange information over long distances. By 2006, Facebook and Twitter became available to individuals all around the world. These social networking services are still among the most popular on the internet. Today, there are plenty of social networking sites to choose from, and many of them may be linked together to enable users to cross-post offering a collaborative environment.

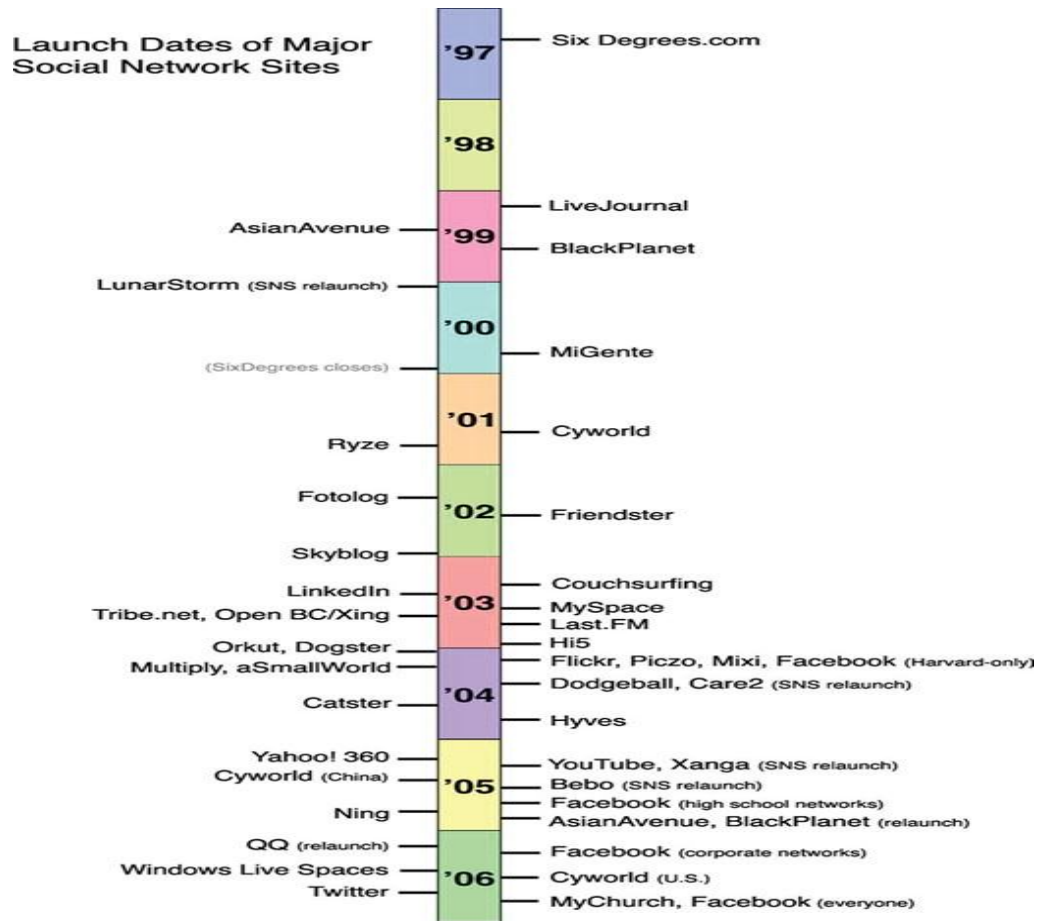


Figure 01: Launch dates of major Social Network sites (Boyd & Ellison, 2008)

1.2 Types of social media

Social media sites are classified into 6 types. The classification encompasses three levels each level with two types. (Dao, 2015) Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) identified six different types of social media: (a) Collaborative projects, (b) blogs and micro blogs, (c) content communities, (d) social networking sites, (e) virtual game worlds, and (f) virtual communities.

1.2.1. Collaborative projects

People create online content by working together in groups. This type is also divided into two types, wikis and social bookmarking. Wikis are websites that allow

collaborative editing such as Wikipedia where anybody can add, remove or change pictures, texts, or links. On the other hand, social bookmarking enables users to discover, collect, organize and share online resources.

1.2.2. Blogs

According to Dao (2015) Blogs and forums are considered to be the earliest form of social media sites. A blog is a frequently updated website consisting of dated entries called posts (including text, images, media objects, and data) arranged in reverse chronological order so the most recent entry appears first. Each post can have three basic attributes: title, link, and description (Walker 2005; Brownstein et al. 2005) cited in M. Brownstein, 2006.

A blog is a kind of personal web page where only one person manages the blog with the ability of communicating with other users through comments' section.

1.2.3. Content communities

The third type of social media. Dao (2015) indicates that the main function of Content Communities is sharing media contents between users. It allows users to upload media content to the sites, and share the media content with one another. The simplest way to share media content is to send a link to others or to post a link to the personal blog. Internet users can access media content by clicking on the link leading to the content page (e.g.: YouTube).

1.2.4. Social networking sites

Social networking sites are the fourth type of social media. They are sites that enable people to create personal profiles, invite friends, have access to profiles; these

profiles contain any type of information including photographs, videos, audio files, blogs, etc... (e.g.: Facebook).

1.2.5. Virtual game worlds

Virtual game worlds are the fifth type of social media. They are online platforms where users can virtually participate in games via personalized avatars in virtual worlds. They are considered to be the first form of virtual worlds where users personalise their avatars and interact according to games' rules. These applications have become popular with the support of digital devices such as Smartphones, Xbox and PlayStation.

1.2.6. Virtual social worlds

This type allows Internet users to choose personalized avatars, their behaviours, their lives, and their acts in their virtual lives that are similar to their real lives. The users can meet each other at a certain place in the virtual world to do certain things together as they do in real life.... The only difference is that the users can do whatever they like in their virtual lives that they cannot do in their real lives. (Dao, 2015, p.86)

In other words, Virtual social worlds are similar to Virtual game worlds in enabling the users to create avatars and interact in virtual environment without any rules.

1.4 Social Media platforms

According to Datareportal (2021) there are 4.48 billion social media users around the world, which is equal to almost 57 percent of the world's total population

active on various social media platforms, we will attempt to define the most common ones.

1.4.1 Meta

Clevinger and Roback (2021) have stated that in October 2021, Facebook announced that they were rebranding. Zuckerberg then announced Facebook's new name "Meta," inspired by the Greek word meaning "beyond". It is a social technology company that owns platforms like owns the most popular sites and applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Facebook, and Instagram.

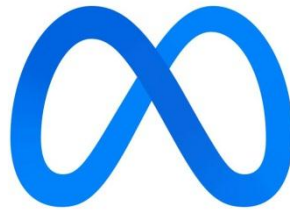


Figure 02: Meta Logo, 2022 (n.d)

1.4.2 Facebook

Hall (2021) defines Facebook as an American online social network service. It is part of the company Meta Platforms. Facebook began in early 2004 as a Harvard-only SNS. To join, a user had to have a harvard.edu email address. (Cassidy, 2006) as cited in Boyd and Ellison (2008). Facebook has become the largest social network in the world, with nearly three billion users as of 2021. It enables users to create profiles, upload photos, join groups, start new ones it also allows users to post status to tell their friends about their current location or situation.

Users can send each other private messages as well as signal their approval of content on Facebook with the Like button, a feature that also appears on many other websites.



Figure 03: Facebook Logo and like button (n.d)

1.4.3 Instagram

“Instagram is a free photo and video sharing. People can upload photos or videos to our service and share them with their followers or with a selected group of friends. They can also view, comment and like posts shared by their friends on Instagram.”
(Instagram, n.d.)



Figure 04: Instagram Logo (n.d)

1.4.4 Whatsapp

According to McLaughlin (2013), WhatsApp Messenger is a cross-platform instant messaging application that allows users to exchange text, image, video and audio messages for free. In addition to basic messaging, it provides group chat and location sharing options. WhatsApp Inc. was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both veterans of Yahoo!



Figure 05: Whatsapp Logo (n.d)

1.4.5 YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing social media website. It enables people to post and share videos. It launched in 2005 and was acquired by Google in 2006(Hosch,2022). YouTube allows its users to share videos using a link on various platforms. People used you tube to create content videos about sport, business, music, travel, and teaching etc...



Figure 06: Youtube Logo (n.d)

To sum up, when we refer to social media, applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Instagram often come to mind. These applications are driven by user-generated content, and are highly influential (Greenwood and Gopal, 2015) as cited in Kapoor et al. 2018. Meaning that these websites are the ones that come to mind when we say social media the most common applications in the 21st century.

1.5 Social Media and education

The arrival of Web 2.0 tools, which encourage users to generate content and share experiences and opinions, has provided foreign language teachers with a unique opportunity to tap into an authentic environment for their students. Higher Education has seen a marked increase in the use of social media as a teaching tool (Bax 2011, Gouseti 2010, Blankenship 2011) as cited in (G, McDermott, 2013 p. 141-157)

Furthermore, Sariah, and Hassan (2013) claims that implementing social media, Facebook, and internet is very important for future learning and teaching as cited in (Mardiana, 2016).

Consequently, integrating social media in education have become a necessity especially with the last two years when academic institutions have been suspended due to the pandemic; online teaching have become a new normal and is incorporated in schools and universities all around the world by not only using social media platforms that are considered formal such as Google+, Zoom, and Gmail..etc, but also, popular social media sites that are being checked regularly by students and teachers such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and others where they created a link between students and their

institution's administration. To conclude, Social networking sites need to be considered as a real tool for learning and teaching.

1.6 Social Media and Language Teaching

As claimed by Aharul (2019), the use of social networking sites have switched the way knowledge can readily be acquired online and teachers are very motivated to incorporate using such technology in the process of teaching and learning. Furthermore, this would bridge the gap between the learner and the teacher and is probably going to break the ice as well as help the language teacher create a comfortable learning environment. In addition, modern teaching is either to keep up or perish, for it is ever changing and there are always new teaching techniques to take advantage of and use in the classroom.

1.7 Social Media and English Learning

Cotton (2008) declares that the significant number of University students who use social media either for personal or academic purposes has become rampant each day. (as cited in Aharul, 2019) Hence, creating a fitting learning environment; for example, through using social media, EFL learners have the ability to freely interact and communicate with native speakers or EFL learners from different nationalities. Additionally, Siddig, (2020) states that learners get to access formal concepts through the formal setting of the classroom, while virtually they can interact in a more informal fashion with their teachers and classmates allowing the process of learning to be more strengthened through implementing social media. Moreover, social media would afford development of learner autonomy if it is used wisely (Reinhardt, 2019), and would likely help hasten and improve the process of learning a language. In the same vein, Learners would be able to learn in class and also use social media platforms to apply

their language skills practically, besides developing their competencies and enrich their vocabulary.

1.8 Advantages of social media:

Social media sites have become highly valued. They have taken an important part in the modern life owing to what they serve to all sectors of society, and how is the world benefiting from them. Social media have changed not only the mind-set of individuals but also how they communicate as well as how their perception to the world. Among the various advantages of social media sites we will focus on mentioning the ones related to education and language learning and teaching:

1.8.1 Provide greater interaction and collaboration:

Siddig, (2020) found that teaching learners with social media platforms, and allowing them to interact with their peers virtually, would be of great importance to improve learning based on the fact that social media platforms let learners interact with each other; thus, assess their own competencies of the English language. Additionally, collaboration is an important factor for language learning because a language learner needs practice and exposure to the language.

1.8.2 Support blended Learning

Using social media platforms to achieve the blended learning environment would provide learners with access to multimedia tools (text, audio, and video) through which they can learn languages better by listening to audio clips and learn non-verbal language of the people of the target language by watching videos on YouTube.

1.8.3 Develop learner autonomy

Social media permit learners to take charge of their learning process. The most effective formats of learning new languages is through the ability to take charge of such process (Zafar, 2016) as cited in Siddig, (2020). Similarly, Hyland, & Hyland, (2019) state learners interact with English speaking individuals outside of the classroom through the cyber sphere, and by doing so learners use what they learn in the classroom (Kitchakarn, 2016) hencefore, learners would gain the opportunity to learn for themselves apart from the formal setting i.e. classroom.

1.8.4 Information can be shared easily

The days when the school administration used to announce (exams schedule, teachers' absence, students' averages ...etc) using the noticeboard are history. All of this is now replaced with the official page of the school on Facebook, whatsapp groups, and blogs.

Information sharing has become accessible with the help of social media. Students nowadays create groups where they share lessons, news and other things related to their studies. Also, parents can easily contact the administration or teachers.

Implementing social media in education helps students, teachers, professors, and parents to keep in touch and coordinate.

1.9 Disadvantages of social media

It is indisputable that social media have affected people's social life in a positive way; however, researchers admit that social media can have its downsides. Among these downsides:

1.9.1 Information overload

As stated in Eliyana, et al. (2020), people receive great amount of information shared on social media that surpasses their ability of to handle it; thus, making them uncertain about their decisions, and face a difficulty to recall background knowledge. Also, when conducting a research, the act of looking for a reliable and trusted source among all of these shared information, is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

1.9.2 A source of distraction

Social media sites are a major source of distraction. It is difficult for users to fulfil a certain task without using social media from time to time creating what we call monkey mind i.e. an uncanny metaphor to imagine the ordinary human mind as a distracted, constantly moving and flustered monkey (Palmer,2016). People spend hours and hours scrolling through social media(Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat) letting their mind receive so many images, videos and jump to so many different subjects and without focusing and settling on one thing, this would make it difficult for the mind to keep control and process information.

1.9.3 Promote poor grammar, usage, and spelling

Social media are promoting bad grammar and spelling by giving less time to think. That results in people writing too fast and while doing so, they commit errors.

They also use common abbreviations and short forms when they write messages or share posts. These abbreviations make them forget the original spelling of the word.

1.9.3.1 Example of abbreviations and short forms

Abbreviations and Short forms	Meaning
U	You
ISTG	I SWEAR TO GOD
LOL	LAUGHING OUT LOUD
NGL	NOT GOING TO LIE
IKR	I KNOW RIGHT
GOAT	THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME
IDC	I DO NOT CARE
TBH	TO BE HONEST

Table 01: Example of abbreviations and short forms

1.9.4 Addiction

“There are only two industries that call their customers “users”: illegal drugs and software” (Tufte, 2020) as cited in P, Vanderslice (2020, October 14) moreover, people are spending so much time on social networking sites and are constantly logging in to have a look on the news of other people; therefore, people have become addicted to social media and dependent on them.

Conclusion

We discussed in this chapter Social media in general. We defined Social media. Also, we talked about the development of these sites and their evolution. We mentioned the six types of social media (Collaborative projects, blogs and micro blogs, content

communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual communities). Additionally, we defined some popular sites. Finally, we discussed the use of social media in education and social media in relation to learning and teaching. We concluded this chapter with some advantages and disadvantages concerning social media. Subsequently, we will discuss in the second chapter the writing skill and how it could be affected by social media platforms.

2. Chapter Two: Academic Writing

Introduction

Writing is considered as the most challenging aspect of language learning. It is a complex process, it requires the efficiency, or ability to visualize ideas, and depict them in correct letters, words and grammatically correct sentence structure in order to present those ideas clearly in a way that calls for more thinking. Most of EFL learners find it an intimidating and demanding task because of the aforementioned requirements. In view of the above, the present chapter aims at defining the Writing skill and academic writing, and attempts to shed light on its difficulties. Additionally, it endeavours to identify the different categories of academic writing. Accordingly, it will tackle characteristics of academic writing

2.1 Definition of the Writing skill

Writing is an on-going complex process that EFL students find it a demanding task as Byrne (1991) states that writing is a difficult task for learners because it requires conscious mental effort and takes time to learn it. He classifies the difficulties into three types. The first is a psychological problem where the writer faces the problem of lack of interaction and feedback between the writer and the reader. The second is a linguistic problem because writers have to express their ideas in a grammatical sense. The third is a cognitive problem in that writing has to be taught over formal instructions where the writer masters the organization of his or her ideas in written communication. It requires good grammar level and well developed sentences as Widdowson (1978) sees writing as an act that involves producing correct sentences which then can be transmitted on paper using correct grammar. Also, Nunan (1989) considers writing as an activity where the

writer is required to show control of a number of variables simultaneously, in addition; he claims that writing is an extremely complex, cognitive activity. Moreover, Hedge (2000: 302) claims that writing is a process that involves establishing goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, making drafts, reading and reviewing then revising and editing them.

In conclusion, these definitions highlight the fact that writing is the activity of being able to communicate with language via graphic representation of ideas. However, writing is much more than the production of graphic symbols; these symbols have to be arranged according to some conventions to form words and to combine them to form sentences. It is also a difficult, sophisticated, prestigious social activity of communication and an important skill for language learners and native speakers.

2.2 Writing Process

Learning to write is deemed as an on-going process that enables students to produce an effective piece of writing, choose favourite topics and genres, and write according to their own perspectives and experiences.

According to Brown & hood (1989) the writing process has three main stages, yet they are flexible during practice and are recursive in which the writer is able to move from one step to another and go back to the previous step without having to start over.

Moreover, Brown & Hood (1989) divided the writing process into three main stages: preparing, drafting, and revising.

2.2.1 Preparing

The writer according to Brown & hood (1989) all types of writing require preparation in which the writer gathers ideas, generates information and organise them. This stage includes brainstorming, free writing, clustering, mapping or listing ideas. By doing this, students will have a clear vision of what they are going to write and also write with confidence. This stage will guarantee organization, clarity and coherence as it acts as a guide to the writer.

2.2.2 Drafting

Drafting is the actual act of writing. Galko (2002: 49) states that Drafting means writing a rough, or scratch, form of your paper. It is a time when the writer pours the ideas that he/ she want to get across the paper. When drafting, students do not need to worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. They will have time to proofread and edit these mechanical parts in the last stage. Drafting should be repeated until the writer reaches a successful draft.

2.2.3 Revising

Reviewing always comes after drafting as it is stated by Grenville (2001,p.153) that while the writer revises he/she will change or fix some points to help readers get the idea easily or convince them.

Brown & Hood (1989) see that reviewing is the stage where writers check that: -
They have said what they wanted to say

- They have said it in a clear and appropriate way.

Moreover, they stress that reviewing includes more than only checking spelling, grammar and punctuation, it also includes checking that content and purpose are clear and appropriate for the reader in the particular writing situation and finally make sure that the piece of writing is accepted and worth reading and make sure that appropriate grammar, punctuation and spelling, and paragraphing are used

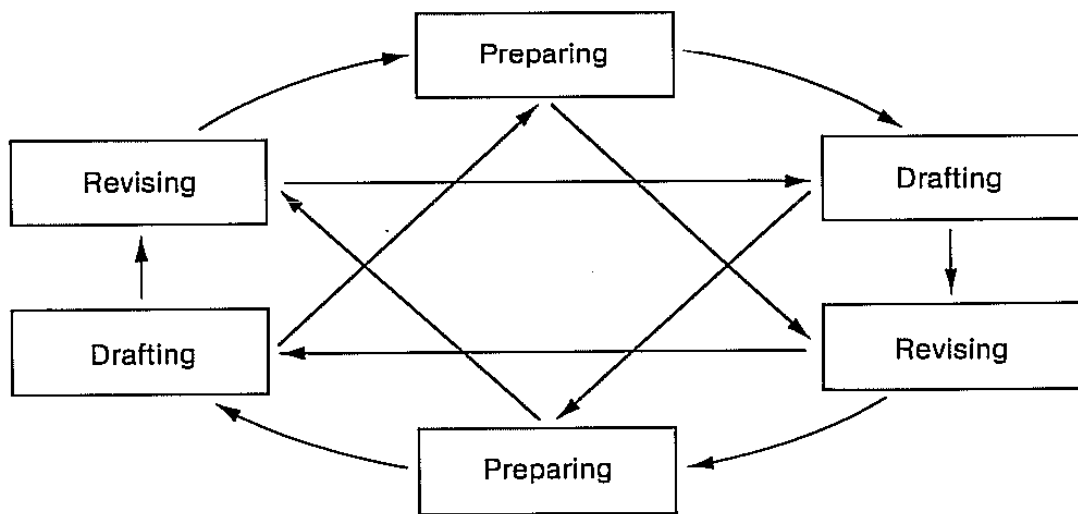


Figure 06: Stages involved in writing process (Brown & Hood, 1989)

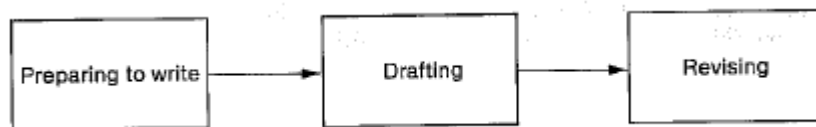


Figure 07: Three main stages of the writing process (Brown & Hood, 1989)

2.2 Approaches to developing writing skill

Dragomir and Niculescu (2020) defined in their article six approaches to develop the writing skill.

Starting with

The Controlled to Free Approach

According to Dragomir and Niculescu (2020) Raimes was the first to introduce it in 1983. This approach is based on the audio lingual approach. It involves copying, manipulating or changing texts. Students start to practice with words and sentences, and then to paragraphs as well as longer compositions. This approach focuses on grammar, syntax, and mechanics, and emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency. It is all about imitating, modelling and adapting previous samples.

The Free Writing Approach

It focuses on quantity rather than quality. It is as stated in Dragomir and Niculescu (2020) based on a principle that states that all topics are able to come up with large numbers of writing, that need to proceed freely and with less error correction. However, this kind of writing may be seen as a waste.

The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

The third approach in the article written by Dragomir and Niculescu (2020). It puts emphasis on organization and its significance. This approach focuses on organizational patterns by copying the paragraphs or model passages. It is based on the principle that people build and organise communication with each other in different ways according to cultures and according to different contexts.

The Grammar-Syntax Approach

It stresses on taking into account the three following elements: grammar, syntax and organization. Students are required to pay attention to organization while focusing on grammar accuracy in their writing tasks. (ibid)

The Communicative Approach and the Process Approach

Nunan (1991) states that the process approach demands time and positive feedback and deals with writing as creative skill and work. It focuses on the process rather than the product. The process approach enables students to revise their work and edit it along the the process.(ibid). Moreover, the communicative approach encourages students to be confident communicators for different real-life contexts. It gives priority to meanings and rules of use rather than to grammar and rules of structure in contrast with the grammar-syntax approach.

2.3 Definition of academic writing

Academic writing is a formal writing style which focuses on evidence-based arguments and logical reasoning. Oshima & Hogue (2007) define academic writing as a kind of writing used in high school and college classes. They also distinguished it from from creative writing and personal writing in which the writer is able to use slang, abbreviations, and short forms whereas academic writing is formal. Moreover, Oshima & Hogue (2007) highlighted the fact that academic writing in English is probably different from academic writing in other languages because there may be a difference in words, grammar and the way of organizing ideas.

2.4 Characteristics of academic writing

Samigoullina (2018) highlighted four key characteristics of academic writing, namely, responsibility, complexity, formality, objectivity.

Responsibility means that the author is required to justify his/her position, and provide evidence for the claims he/she made. It involves citing relative to what a

particular community prefers such as direct quotation, summarizing, or paraphrasing. (ibid) to avoid plagiarism, show credibility and status.

Lexical complexity might imply a higher degree of lexical density, for example, by means of utilizing collocations, academic- and discipline-specific vocabulary, specialised or technical vocabulary and metaphors. To achieve a higher grammatical complexity, the author may make use of noun-based phrases, employ subordinate clauses and/or passive structures.

To achieve objectivity a writer has to make little reference to him/herself, emphasizing the facts or evidence instead, thus avoiding personal bias.

Formality, means using register of academic writing, colloquialisms, overly idiomatic language, slang or argot, ellipsis or contractions.

All in all, formality, objectivity, lexical complexity, and responsibility are what characterises academic writing.

2.4 Difficulties in academic writing

According to Assassi (2021) academic writing is one of the writing styles that demand a skilled writer, and a special lexicography related to the field of study. That is why students find it a challenging task where they face some difficulties.

2.4.1 Lexical difficulties

To properly link words and phrases can be a difficult task for students who are asked to write essays, reports, labs, etc. that require linking ideas and develop coherence. (ibid)

2.4.2 Grammar and punctuation

Grammar and punctuation the main reasons why students lose marks in academic papers. This is a great problem for EFL learners who may use wrong jargon, misuse prepositions and conjunctions, or may not be familiar with punctuation rules. (Assassi,2021)

2.4.3 Plagiarism

Some students find it hard to start writing their paper; others don't know how to properly include quotations into sentences. Trying to do the assignment, they simply borrow passages from articles, books and even websites without identifying them; hence fall in the trap of plagiarism. (Assassi,2021)

2.4.4 Text structure

Thesis, essay or article – each of them has a certain structure. They are based on three main components: introduction, main body and conclusion. Many students face problems with structuring their works for a variety of reasons. (ibid)

2.4 Genres of academic writing

According to Smith (2019) students are expected to write different genres throughout there years in college. Some of these genres are as follows:

- Reports
- Articles
- Annotated bibliography
- Research proposals
- Theses/Dissertations

- Abstract

2.4.1 Abstract

Hoang (2008) defines the abstract as usually one paragraph brief summary of one's research that gets the reader to be tempted to read more. It discusses the following: What is the research topic, and what does the discipline already know about this topic? What is the writer's research question, and how will this build on existing knowledge? And how will the writer go about answering that research question?

2.4.2 Research article

An article presents one's research in a persuasive manner. It will typically introduce research questions, provide a rationale for why the project is needed (often based on past research) describe the methods used to answer the question, present and analyse data, and conclude with the significance of the project. (Hoang, 2008)

2.4.3 Reports

A report is a very structured form of writing which presents and analyses information clearly and briefly for a particular audience. They are common not only at university, but also in industry and government. There are many types of report, though the type you write at university depends on your course. Each report will have a different format and writing conventions, though the structure and language are broadly similar for all reports. (Smith, 2019)

2.4.4 Annotated bibliography

An annotated bibliography is an analytic guide to academic resources on a research topic. For each resource (book, article, documentary, etc.), it includes a citation and a brief (2-4 sentence) description and evaluation, or annotation. The annotation is intended to assess the relevance and quality of each resource.(Schonberg,2022)

An annotated bibliography is a list of sources on a topic that includes brief descriptions or evaluations of each source. It is directed to readers to get the general context

2.4.5 Thesis/Dissertation

A dissertation is the culmination of the graduate student's research and may amount to several hundred pages. While the structure of a dissertation can vary widely, the writer will usually follow through on the questions initiated by the proposal.(Hoang, 2008)

A thesis, sometimes known as a dissertation, is a requirement for graduation at the end of the academic year.

2.4.6 Proposal

A proposal according to Hoang (2008) is considered as an expanded abstract. The writer will include these following points in his/her research proposal:

- Introduce research question.
- Provide a rationale for why the project is needed (often based on past research).
- Describe the methods used to answer the question.

- Discuss practical matters like a timeline or budget (especially if applying for funds).
- Conclude with the significance of the project.

Conclusion

This chapter has described writing in general and academic writing in particular as a crucial but sophisticated skill for EFL learners. We discussed in this chapter writing skill in general, also; we highlighted the writing process. Additionally, we defined some teaching writing approaches; moreover, we also defined academic writing, its difficulties, some of its genres and its features. Subsequently, we will discuss in the third and last chapter the findings.

3. Chapter three: Findings and discussion

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter represents the practical part of the research. It explains the research methodology, research instrument, the students' questionnaire, teachers' interview, and its analysis which helped presenting this study. This chapter ends with the findings and discussion of the results that we obtained from this research work.

3.2 Research approach:

Dörnyei (2007) states that a research approach is a theoretical plan that underlines a study. It is divided into three types:

- **Quantitative research:** It involves data collection procedures that result in numerical data which is then analysed by statistical methods.
- **Qualitative research:** involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analysed primarily by non-statistical methods.
- **Mixed methods research:** A combination of qualitative and quantitative research either at the data collection or at the analysis levels.

3.1.3 Data collection methods:

3.1.3.1 Observation:

The distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social

situations. Observation, too, can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. (Chelli, 2022)

3.1.3.2 Focus group:

Focus groups - as the name suggests- involve a group format whereby the researcher records the responses of a small group (usually 6-12 members). The focus group is based on the collective experience of brainstorming, that is, participants thinking together, inspiring and challenging each other, and reacting to the emerging issues (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 144).

3.1.3.3 Questionnaires:

The main attraction of questionnaires is their efficiency in terms of researcher time and effort and financial resources: by administering questionnaires to a group of people, one can collect a huge amount of information in less than an hour (Dörnyei, 2007, p.115). Questionnaires are usually used because they save time and efforts and they include different types of questions that are: likert scales, semantic differential scales, true-false items, multiple-choice items, rank order items, open-ended questions.

3.1.4 Research Sampling:

The sample is the group of participants whom the researcher actually examines in an empirical investigation and the population is the group of people whom the study is about. For example, the population in a study might be EFL learners in Algeria secondary schools and the actual sample might include three secondary classes. That is, the target population of a study consists of all the people to whom the survey's findings are to be applied or generalized.

3.1.4.1 Sampling procedures:

1. Probability sampling (Representative):

A type of sampling where all of the participants of the population have an equal chance of being selected in the sample. (Cited in Amrate, 2021)

Probability sampling includes: random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, and cluster sampling.

➤ **Random sampling:**

Each unit in the population has an equal probability of being selected in the sample. Using random sampling protects against bias being introduced in the sampling process, and hence, it helps in obtaining a representative sample. (ibid)

➤ **Stratified random sampling:**

In stratified random sampling, independent samples are randomly drawn from each group. (ibid)

➤ **Systematic sampling:**

Systematic sampling is similar to random sampling, but it is usually slightly easier to conduct. Every member of the population is listed with a number, but instead of randomly selecting participants, individuals are chosen according to some systematic rule. (Cited in Amrate, 2021)

➤ **Cluster sampling:**

Is a probability sampling method in which a population is divided into clusters, such as districts, schools or classrooms, and then randomly select some of these clusters i.e. groups as the sample. (Amrate,2022)

2. Non-probability sampling:

A type of sampling where the participants do not have an equal chance of being selected in the sample. (ibid) It includes: convenience sampling, voluntary sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling, and purposive sampling. (ibid)

➤ **Quota sampling and dimensional sampling:**

Researchers create a sample involving individuals that represent a population with its various subgroups (e.g. age, gender, education, race, or religion). However, unlike Stratified Random Sampling, participants are chosen through a non-random sample selection (i.e. only available/ volunteering participants). (ibid)

➤ **Snowball sampling:**

When there is a very small population size. the researcher asks the initial participant to identify another potential participant who also meets the criteria of the research (ibid)

➤ **Convenience sampling:**

This sampling method involves getting participants who are not very far from the researcher. (ibid)

➤ **Purposive sampling:**

Subjects are chosen to be part of the sample with specific purpose in mind. The researcher believes that some subjects are fit for the research compared to other individuals. cher wherever convenient.(Amrate,2022)

3.2 Research Methodology:

3.2.1 Research Design:

This study aims to point out social media effects on EFL learners' academic writing skill in either a positive or a negative way, and how do social media help EFL learners' improve this skill.

A mixed method is used to carry out this study. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007,p.4) (as cited in Doyle et al. 2009,p.15) define mixed methods as research where the researcher collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study. Qualitative approach according to Shank (2002, p.5) is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning. By this definition qualitative approach is planned and ordered approach in which researchers try to understand how others comprehend their experience. Whereas, quantitative approach according to Babbie and Earl (2010) focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. These two methodologies are seen to be fit for this study.

A Case study was selected as it involves the opportunity to investigate a small scale of inquiry. Moreover, the obtained results are not generalized.

3.2.2 Research Instruments:

We opted to use a quantitative research tool that is a questionnaire and the interview for qualitative data for the purpose of collecting and analysing more reliable data that will help answer the questions of our thesis. The questionnaire was submitted to thirty seven (37) randomly chosen Master one sciences of the language English

students at Biskra University, while the interview was done by interviewing six (6) teachers who teach in Biskra University.

3.2.3 The Sample:

This study is carried out in the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University. The population used in our study is consisted of Master one English students and some written expression and Academic writing teachers at the English language department. The population of the students is (167) from which we randomly received forty three (37) students to be our sample. The reason behind choosing Master one student is the fact that they are asked to write more essays and paragraphs than the other levels, and are also expected to write a dissertation. As for the interview, we interviewed 6 teachers who teach academic writing and written expression modules.

3.2.4 Research limitations

The research will deliberately focus on:

1. Examining the effect of social lmedia on students' English writing
2. Finding and providing solutions to cater for better students' writing on the part of students
3. Encouraging students to use the necessary and appropriate material and methods to enhance their academic writing.

3.2.5 Students' questionnaire:

3.2.5.1 Questionnaire's Description:

Students' questionnaire consists of eleven (11) questions distributed between males and females from different ages.

The questionnaire is composed of eleven mixed questions, open-ended, close-ended questions and multiple choice questions that are divided into three sections. Section one consists of background information (Q1-Q2) for the purpose of providing us with some of the personal information about the participant such as gender and age. Moreover, Section two touched on EFL students' use of social media (Q3-Q8). This section aims to gather general information about the EFL students' use of social media in order to understand student's experience with social media platforms, time spent using it, social media platforms they use, their use of English language in these platforms. Finally, section three is about EFL Learners writing skill (Q8- Q11) that is our main concern in the study that aims to find out whether the EFL learners think that social media platforms affect their writing skill in either a positive or a negative way.

3.2.5.2 Administration of the Students' Questionnaire:

The students' questionnaire administration was done online using Google forms and was shared in the Facebook group of Master one in order to gain time; it took about a week to gather the answers needed.

3.2.5.2.1 Google forms:

Google Forms is a survey administration software included as part of the free, web-based Google Docs Editors suite offered by Google. (Wikipedia, n.d)

3.2.5.3 Pilot testing the questionnaire:

In order to identify problems before implementing the full survey, an undeclared pilot testing was done to examine the validity of each question. We tested the questionnaire on a sample size that is representative of the target population (35) students. We issued this questionnaire as if it were real. As a result, we re-examined the

wording of our questions and made sure the students understood our questions. Also, by pilot testing the questionnaire we made sure to steer clear of issuing too many questions that do not make sense to participants, or distribute a questionnaire that results in biased answers.

3.2.6 Description of the Teachers' Interview:

The teachers' interview contains ten (10) questions most of them are open-ended except for one multiple-choice question. The first question is for background information; how long they have been teaching Writing at University. The second question is about what the teachers emphasise more about when they correct students' productions. The third ones aim to know if the impact of social media is obvious in Master one students' academic writings, and if this happens regularly. The fourth question focuses on knowing how the impact of social media is displayed in students' writings. The fifth question sheds light on the teachers' opinions about why their students commit such errors. The sixth question tackles teachers' opinions about how social media affect students' academic writing. The last four questions focus on how do teachers address this issue to their students' and how they deal with it and lastly the teachers' are asked to suggest solutions to help mitigate and control this phenomenon.

3.2.6.1 Administration of the teachers' interview:

The teachers' interview administration was done online by sending the interview to teachers' via email in order to gain time; it took about a fortnight to gather the answers needed.

3.2.6.1.1 Further expertise support:

We asked a small group of teachers (3 teachers) with more detailed expertise to review our interview. The teachers provided some useful initial feedback by pointing out some problems with our interview questions that needed some editing.

3.2.6.2 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire:

Question 01:

1-How old are you?

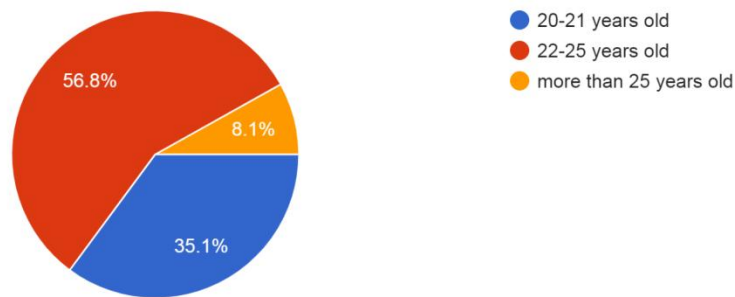
The age of the sample is crucial to this study. It enables our study to observe the familiarity of students with social media according to their age.

Age	Number	Percentage
20-21	12	35.1%
22-25	21	56.8%
More than 25	4	8.1%
Total	37	100%

Table 02 : Students' age

The table above shows the age of the participants. The largest category of age is between 22 and 25 years old and it represents 56.8% from the whole sample. The second largest category is the age between 20 and 21 representing 35.1% of the sample .Whereas the smallest category is for the students whose age is more than 25 years old.

1-How old are you?
37 responses



Graph 01: Students' age

Question 02:

2-What is your gender?

Knowing the gender of our sample will let us deduce familiarity of both genders with social media and whether they have similar aims behind using social media.

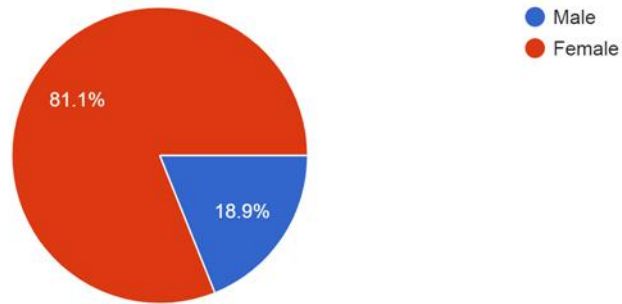
Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	7	18.9%
Female	30	81.1%
Total	37	100%

Table 03: Students' gender

Thirty seven (37) students participated in this study. From the table above, we observe that they were 30 females which represent 75.7% of the whole sample and 7 males which represent 24.3% from the whole sample.

2-What is your gender?

37 responses



Graph 02: Students' gender

Question 3:

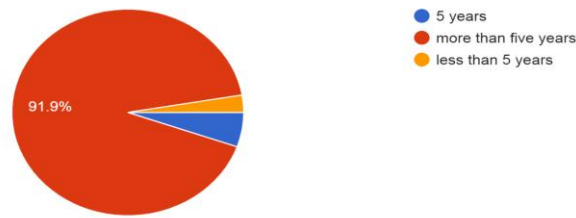
3- For how long have you been on social media?

The third question aims to see if all the students are familiar with social media and for how long they have been active on social media platforms.

Option	Number	percentage
5 years	2	5.4%
More than 5 years	34	91.9%
Less than 5 years	1	2.7%
Total	37	100%

Table 04: Students' familiarity with social media

3- For how long have you been on social media?
37 responses



Graph 2: Students' use of social media

Results showed that almost all the participants (91.9%) have been using social media for more than 5 years, which means that social media is strongly present in the students' daily life.

Question 4:

How much time do you spend on social media?

As of 2022, the average daily social media usage of internet users worldwide amounted to 147 minutes per day, up from 145 minutes in the previous year (Statista,2022)

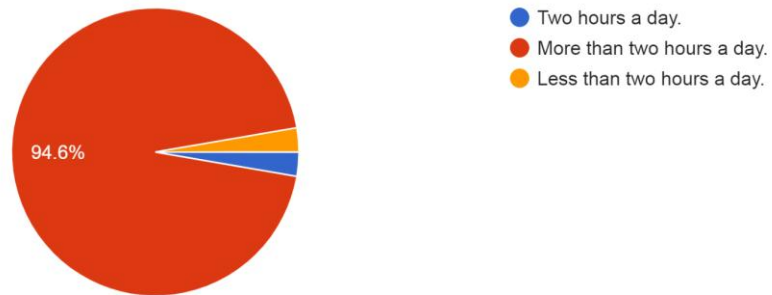
According to the information above, we asked this question that aims to see how much students at Biskra University are attached to social media and how much time they spend using these sites or platforms.

The results showed that 94.6% of the participants use social media for more than two hours a day indicating that they are addicted to social media.

Frequency	Number	percentage
2 hours a day	2	5.4%
More than 2 hours a day	34	94.6%
Less than 2 hours a day	1	2.7%
Total	43	100%

Table 05: students' time spent on social media.

4- How much time do you spend on social media?
37 responses



Graph 3: students' time spent on social media.

Question 5:

Which social media do you use more?

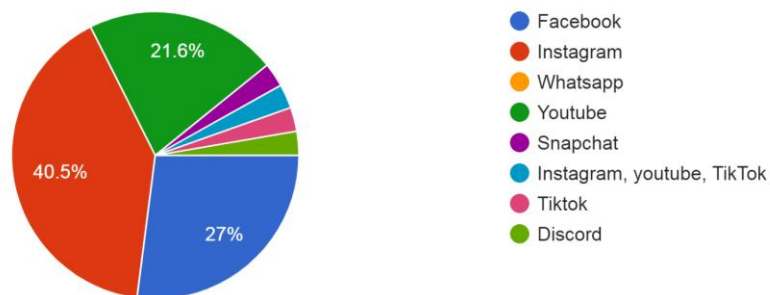
This question gave the participants the opportunity to provide other answers, we aimed to know all the social networks that are used by the students regularly to find out the ones that are used more than the others and to know other platforms that are not popular or we did not include in the question like Discord, Tik tok and Snapchat.

Option	Number	Percentage
Facebook	10	27%
Instagram	15	40.5%
Whatsapp	0	0%
Youtube	8	21.6%
others	4	10.8%
Total	37	100%

Table 06: Social media platforms used by students

5-Which social media platform do you use more?

37 responses



Graph 4: Social media platforms used by students

The results showed that most of the participants use Instagram with 46.5%. After that, 30.2% of students use Facebook. Also, 2.3% use twitter, While the rest of students use different platforms; thus, Instagram comes first as the most popular social media platform among students' and it outstands Facebook.

Question 6:

Do you use English while texting on social media?

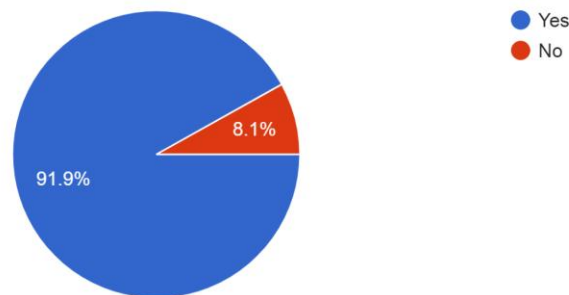
THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE ACADEMIC WRITING SKILL 47

Through this question we intended to find out whether students write in English language when communicating using social media or not. We also aimed to know how they are using them to develop their writing skill.

Option	Number	percentage
Yes	34	91.9%
No	3	8.1%
Total	37	100%

Table 07: Students' use of English language on social media

6- Do you use English while texting on social media?
37 responses



Graph 5: Students' use of English language on social media

The answers of the participants showed that 93% of the students use English language while writing on social media whereas the rest 7% said that they do not use English when the write on social media. Therefore, this proves that the use of the English language in social media has increased among EFL learners meaning that social media provides a good environment to put into practise their English language skills and test their proficiency.

Question 7:

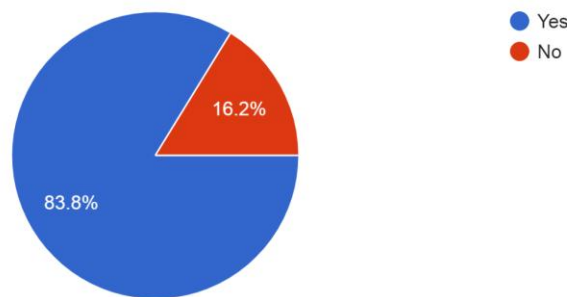
7- If yes, do you use slang words, abbreviations and acronymss when you chat with your friends?

The aim of this question was to know if the students use some of the informal forms of abbreviations while writing in social media to help us later find out the influence of that use on their academic writing skill.

Option	Number	Percentage
yes	31	83.8%
No	6	16.2%
Total	37	100%

Table08: Students’ use of abbreviations, slang words and acronyms on social media

7- If yes, do you use slang words, abbreviations and acronymss when you chat with your friends?
37 responses



Graph 6: Students’ use of abbreviations, slang words and acronyms on social media by students

Question 8:

Please, give some examples of slang words or sentences and provide some abbreviations and acronyms.

The following Table shows examples of abbreviation and acronyms provided by the participants with the explanations of each one.

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Example	Explanation
LMK	Let me know
Lit	Exciting
On fleek	Perfectly done
Snatched	Excellent
Cap	Lie
Slay	to impress strongly
Civ	Civilisation
Lit	Literature
Lge	Language
FYI	For your information
AFAIK	As far as I know
Gn/Gm	Good night/ good morning
Jk	Joking
Nvm	Never mind
ain't	I am not
WDYM	What do you mean
Gl hf	good luck have fun
Istg	i swear to god
Brb	Be right back
Yk / Ikr	you know/ I know right
bro or bruh	Brother
Lol	Laugh out loud
TBH	To be honest

Table 09: Common slang words, sentences, abbreviations and acronyms used by students.

Question 9:

9- Do you think that the way you write in social media has an impact on your academic writing skill?

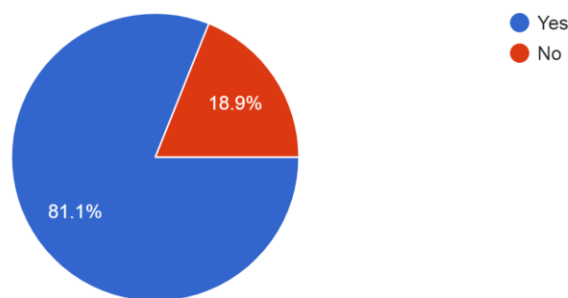
Our aim through asking this question is to see the participants' attitude about the social media and their academic writing skill and whether they think that social media have an influence on their writing skill or not.

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	81.1%
No	7	18.9%
Total	37	100%

Table 10: Students' attitude towards social media influence on writing skill.

9- Do you think that the way you write in social media has an impact on your academic writing skill?

37 responses



Graph 7: Students' attitude towards social media influence on writing skill.

81.1% of participants said " yes "social media has an impact on their writing skill. However, 18.9% of participants said " no" it does not have an impact on their writing skill.

Question 10:

10- If yes, is it a positive or a negative influence?

This question is the main focus of our study, we asked the question to see the attitude of the students' towards the social media and whether they influence their writing skill positively or negatively.

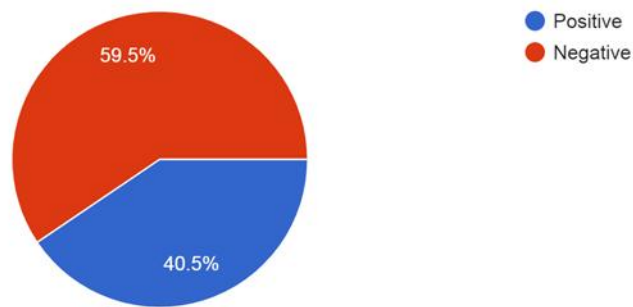
Option	Number	percentage
Positive	15	40.5%
Negative	22	59.5%
Total	37	100%

Table 11: Students' attitude towards social media influence on academic writing skill

22 out of 37 students said that social media affect their writing skill negatively.

Therefore, social media has a negative impact on EFL learners' academic writing skill.

10- If yes, is it a positive or a negative influence?
37 responses



Graph 8: Students' attitude towards social media influence on academic writing skill

Please, justify your answer.

This is a sub- question for question eleven 10. We opted to ask this question to see the students' opinion and the reason behind their answer.

According to 22 out of 37 of the students who answered "Negative" 59.5% have justified their answer by these answers:

- I face difficulties in being totally formal in academic writing and also finding the appropriate academic expressions.
- Social media makes me use informal language, the non-academic; I use many abbreviations and acronyms. It is not helpful to me or even my level.
- When we write on social media we think in Arabic so it impacted our ideas in our academic productions.
- Sometimes I use those slangs and abbreviation in academic writing which is wrong.

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- Using abbreviations, short forms and writing too fast negatively impacts my academic writing skill in terms of accuracy, formality etc.
- It makes us so far from academic words as we only use slang.
- It makes you get used to certain words and terms that are difficult to dispense in certain situations.
- Because the English of the internet is far from being helpful in writing let alone Academic writing. It is full of mistakes and the more I am exposed to these mistakes the more i need to be careful in the writing process.
- Because in social media we use only the informal language, so we are getting used to it more than the formal one.
- I just write without paying attention to the words spelling.
- Because my keyboard has " auto correct " so when I am in the classroom trying to write a word I might write it wrong, since I am not writing much I forget how the full word should be written.
- Because when I start writing an essay I find myself using slangs and acronyms.

However, students who answered “Positive” 40.5% have justified their answer by these arguments:

- Using social media is useful when it comes to improving the writing skill through practising writing while on social media and learning new words then writing them spontaneously.
- Provide an opportunity to practise writing and receive peer feedback.
- Sometimes we express ourselves in English on social media, and writing long paragraphs activates our brain when searching for the appropriate words , so this helps in a way or another to develop our writing skills.

- Social media help me discover new vocabulary and have corrected a lot of mistakes I have done before through writing online.
- Social media help me know more words and expressions that I didn't know about before at the same time I practise writing.

Question 12:

What would you suggest as tips or solutions to improve and enhance your academic writing skill?

The most repeated suggestion was to read; mainly, articles and academic works to help improve their academic writing style as well as gain new academic terms that they will later apply in their essay writing. Also, they suggested practising writing academically, for practice makes perfect. Another suggestion was to restrain the use of short forms and abbreviations while using social media and make sure to write words in their complete form and avoid using slang words; hence, this would help lessen the use of informal words when writing academically.

3.2.6.3 Analysis of the teachers' interview:

Question 01:

How long have you been teaching Academic Writing in Biskra University?

This question aims to know the familiarity of the teacher with the academic writing of the students throughout their experience of teaching Academic Writing.

The average of teaching is between 5 to 10 years. Two teachers said that they have been teaching for more than ten years. Only one teacher has been teaching at University for 5 years.

Question02:

What do you emphasise on most: the ideas or grammar when you correct student's productions? Why?

This question aims to understand what teachers want to receive from their students' writings.

The answers obtained show that 2 out of 6 teachers argued that they put more emphasis on grammar and structure, while 1 of the teachers focuses on ideas by backing up the answer with the fact that writing represents first the creation of ideas and how to think critically and logically more than the other formalities. The other three teachers declared that they consider all aspects of writing for an effective and fair evaluation of student's piece of writing.

Question 03:

Do you notice any impact of cyber language and texting on social media on EFL master students' academic writing?

The question's aim is to see if the teachers have dealt with this issue throughout their years of teaching Academic writing, to know if the students of the teacher are influenced by their use of internet, and whether this influence can be found in their academic writings.

All teachers stated that it is noticeable throughout their language skills especially writing.

Question 04:

Could you provide a set of actual examples from your students' academic writing productions that show that their writing is being affected by the use of social media?

The question's aim is to know how is this influence displayed on student's writings.

The teachers provided the following examples:

- ✓ Students use informal language and unstructured long sentences.
- ✓ Students write the way they speak using short forms and informal vocabulary.
- ✓ Students use informal contractions and abbreviations.
- ✓ Poor spelling and orthographic mistakes.
- ✓ Social media-related jargon (lexicon).
- ✓ Grammar mistakes, slangs, informal style.

Question 05:

Can you explain why do you think students use words and/or phrases that they use in social media while writing an academic assignment?

This question aims to understand the reason behind mixing such writing with the formal writing or the academic writing of the student.

All teachers mentioned factors like stress during the exam, the time allotted, the fact that students do not read and especially the immoderate use of social media.

Question 06:

To what extent do you think the use of the social media is affecting EFL Master Students' academic writing?

The question aims to explore the outcomes of this use.

All teachers agreed on the point that social media affect students writing to a considerably far extent as they are often connected to the Internet in which a massive input (language and content) is received and eventually retrieved and used in their written productions.

Question 07:

How do you deal with students' use of social media language in their academic writing?

This question explores the mechanisms used by the teacher to control this use. Teachers stated that they try to help students keep their formal English intact by using the following strategies:

- ✓ Provide samples of academic essays to students which they read and analyse in pairs or collectively. Then, ask them to do parallel writing and follow the same writing style.
- ✓ Assign some readings to see how academic writers do.
- ✓ Teach them lessons on how to avoid informality when writing and test them on this feature.
- ✓ Tolerate some aspects of social media-related writing if it is not severely affecting the quality of the requirement of a good academic essay.
- ✓ Try to make students' pay attention to the difference between academic and non-academic writing.
- ✓ Raise student's awareness about odd forms of language, informal words, phrases and constructions that they may use in academic writing.
- ✓ Feedback is critical, try to correct the mistakes and pinpoint the mistakes for further tasks.

Question 08:

Do you think that the excessive use of cyber language in social media is ruining EFL students' academic writing skills? How?

This question is the core of our study. It aims to understand in what way this use affects the writing skill of EFL learners'.

All six teachers agreed that the excessive use of social media has an impact on EFL students' writing skill. They backed up their answers by stating that social media affect the students' accuracy and fluency. Moreover, student's writings can never be academic if they did not make difference between writing and speaking, as well as the difference between formal writing and texting as one of the teachers asserted that it ruined the concise writing as there are learners who use informal language and write long sentences that mostly do not convey the intended meaning. Additionally, some teachers claimed that excessive use of social media may have negative effects on students' academic writing especially if the students do not consider the features and qualities of college writing in his/her productions.

Question 09:

Do you discuss this issue with your students? If yes, how do you do that?

The question aims to see how the teachers spread awareness about this phenomenon.

All teachers discuss the issue with their students. They do that by:

- ✓ Familiarizing students with the requirements of academic writing and the difference between writing for an assignment and writing for pleasure or reflection.
- ✓ Giving feedback and remedial work on the use of non-academic writing

- ✓ Showing models of good models of academic essays.
- ✓ Recommend to develop a daily writing practice and good writing habits.
- ✓ Encourage them to assume responsibility for their own learning by reducing the use of informal style when texting and chatting.

Question 10:

Could you suggest tips to help EFL students minimize the use of social media language in their academic writing?

Teachers agreed on the following tips and recommendations that are directed for both teachers and their students:

- ✓ Teachers of writing can create face book discussion groups with their classes in which they can provide prompt feedback on their students' writings and discuss many issues related to writing
- ✓ Teachers can make use of social media to brainstorm and generate ideas for writing; however, they need to pay students' attention to the inappropriate use of language (informal, slang, abbreviations, etc.) in academic writing.
- ✓ Teachers should encourage students to read authentic texts to be familiar with both language and style of academic writing.

3.2.7 Discussion and Interpretation of the Main Findings:

Significant facts were disclosed through analysing the results we gathered using the students' questionnaire and teachers' interview about the impact of social media on students' academic writing skill. We came to the conclusion that EFL students also practise their English language on social media (abbreviations, short forms, slang words, as well as acronyms), and that resulted in mixing between the language used in

academic writing and the language they use to communicate virtually with their friends. The teachers' interview analysis was compatible with the students' questionnaire. To sum up, both students and teachers agree on the fact that social media affect students' writing skill negatively and undermine their ability to write academically as well as their ability to improve their writing skill. This makes us confirm our hypotheses.

3.2.8 Conclusion:

This chapter analysed and discussed the findings we collected from students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. Furthermore, it tackled the research methodology used in this study including the research design, the data collection instruments used to gather the data, and the sample. Also, the chapter talked about the administration of the questionnaire as well as the administration of the interview and presented a detailed description of both the questionnaire and the interview. Finally, we discussed and interpreted thoroughly the research findings.

In conclusion, social media have become a necessity in students' life. It offered so much help for students in both educational and social life. Nevertheless, this study came to conclusion that social media can have an effect on students' academic writing.

3.2.9 Recommendations:

After gathering data using students' questionnaire and teachers' interview and analysing them, we opted to suggest some recommendations for both teachers and students:

For teachers:

- ✓ Teachers are advised to take advantage of social media and interact with their students.
- ✓ Teachers should encourage their students to read formal content on social media.
- ✓ Teachers should focus more on writing practices in tests and exams.
- ✓ Teachers should give writing assignments to their students often so that they get used to writing academically.

For students:

- ✓ Students should know how to distinguish between formal writing and texting.
- ✓ Students should practise writing and writing academically more.
- ✓ Students should read scientific articles, and works related to their field of study because they will help them in learning the techniques of academic writing.
- ✓ Students should benefit from using social media by following contents that write in a formal way.

3.3 General Conclusion:

Due to the excessive use of social media and the exposure to the informal writing found on these sites, EFL learners find that mastering academic writing skill is a bit difficult. It requires practise and extensive reading in order to be able to produce a well-structured and coherent essay free of misspelling and grammar errors. Teachers advise their students to read more and practise writing academically outside the classroom because the more they are exposed to this type of writing the more they write it well.

Our study focused on the impact of Social media on EFL learners' academic writing skill. The study consisted of two main sections; the first is theoretical, and the second is practical. The theoretical section was divided into two chapters. The first chapter was a general view on Social media their development, types, relation to teaching and learning, in addition to advantages and disadvantages. The second chapter was concerned with writing, characteristics of writing, elements of writing and approaches to teaching writing. The practical section consisted of one chapter. It aimed to confirm the results we obtained from Master one students' questionnaire and teachers' interview analysis. The findings answered our research questions that sought to know if the writing practices on social media are transferred to their academic writing and whether social media sites affect the EFL writing skill positively or negatively.

The analysis also confirmed our hypothesis that claim that EFL learners' academic writing skill is influenced by social media and that EFL learners are unable to distinguish between texting and formal writing. The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of social media on learner's academic writing skill, and examine the influence of using social media on English Master Sciences of the language students in the University of Biskra.

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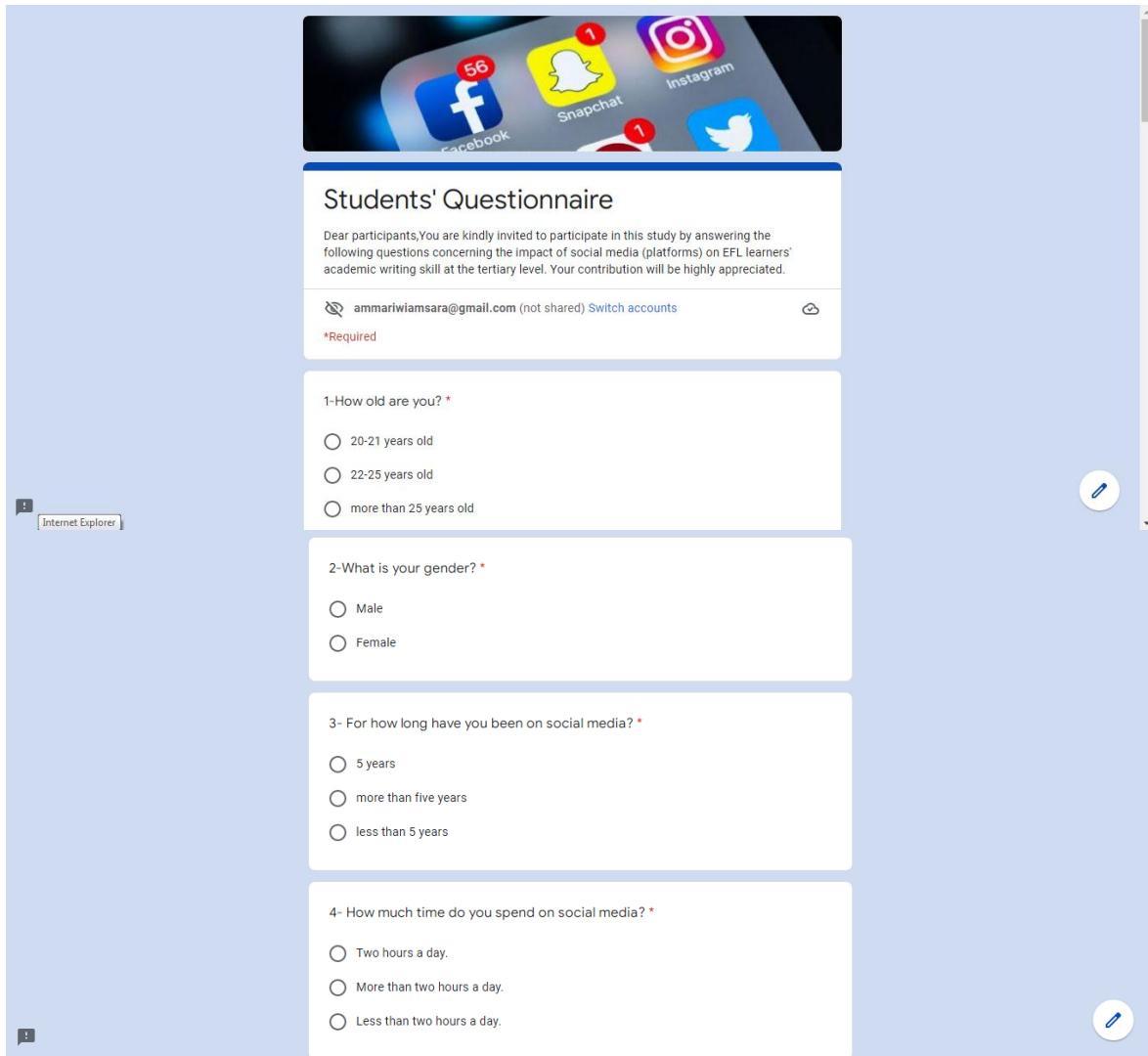
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Appendices

Appendix A:

Students' Questionnaire



The image shows a screenshot of a Google Forms questionnaire. At the top, there is a header image featuring social media icons for Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram. Below the image, the title 'Students' Questionnaire' is displayed. The introductory text reads: 'Dear participants, You are kindly invited to participate in this study by answering the following questions concerning the impact of social media (platforms) on EFL learners' academic writing skill at the tertiary level. Your contribution will be highly appreciated.' The form is set to be sent to 'ammariwiamsara@gmail.com (not shared)'. There are four required questions, each with radio button options:

1-How old are you? *

- 20-21 years old
- 22-25 years old
- more than 25 years old

2-What is your gender? *

- Male
- Female

3- For how long have you been on social media? *

- 5 years
- more than five years
- less than 5 years

4- How much time do you spend on social media? *

- Two hours a day.
- More than two hours a day.
- Less than two hours a day.

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5- Which social media platform do you use more? *

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Whatsapp
- Youtube
- Other: _____

6- Do you use English while texting on social media? *

- Yes
- No

7- If yes, do you use slang words, abbreviations and acronymss when you chat with your friends? *

- Yes

Yes

No

8- Please, give some examples of slang words or sentences and provide some abbreviations and acronyms. *

Your answer _____

9- Do you think that the way you write in social media has an impact on your academic writing skill? *

- Yes
- No

10- If yes, is it a positive or a negative influence? *

Positive

Negative

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Positive

Negative

Please, justify your answer. *

Your answer

11-Are there any tips you can suggest to improve and enhance academic writing skills? *

Your answer

Submit

Clear form

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. [Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

Google Forms



Appendix B:

Teachers' interview

The Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

You are kindly asked to answer the following interview in order to complete our dissertation that is about the impact of social media (platforms) on EFL learners' academic writing skill. The interview aims to collect information about how using social media affects their academic writing skill.

Q1- How long have you been teaching Academic Writing in Biskra University?

.....

Q2- What do you emphasise on the most: the ideas or grammar when you correct student's productions? Why?

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

Q3- Do you notice any impact of cyber language and texting on social media on EFL master students' academic writing?

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

Q4- Could you provide a set of actual examples from your students' academic writing productions that show that their writing is being affected by the use of social media?

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

Q5- Can you explain why do you think students use words and/or phrases that they use in social media while writing an academic assignment?

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

Q6- To what extent do you think the use of the social media is affecting EFL Master Students' academic writing?

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Q7- How do you deal with students' use of social media language in their academic writing?

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.....

Q8- Do you think that the excessive use of social media is ruining EFL students' academic writing skills? How?

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Q9- Do you discuss this issue with your students? If yes, how do you do that?

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Q10- Could you suggest tips to help EFL students minimize the use of social media language in their academic writing?

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Thank you for your cooperation and precious time.

المخلص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقيق في تأثير استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على مهارة الكتابة الأكاديمية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لطلاب الماستر سنة أولى في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة و من أجل تأكيد العلاقة افتراضنا أن مهارة الكتابة الأكاديمية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تتأثر بوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كما أن متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية غير قادرين على الفصل بين الرسائل النصية و الكتابة الرسمية. تم تقييم الفرضية من خلال منهج مختلط حيث تم استخدام نتائج استبيان الطلاب ومقابلة المعلمين اظهرت النتائج أن استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي له تأثير على مهارة الكتابة الأكاديمية للطلاب. علاوة على ذلك و وفقاً للنتائج التي تم الحصول عليها ، اتفق غالبية معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية الذين تم استجوابهم عن طريق المقابلة على أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لها تأثير كبير على مهارات الكتابة الأكاديمية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وعليه ، من خلال النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها والاستنتاجات التي توصلنا إليها ، تم تأكيد فرضياتنا.