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MASTER

<<Applied Linguistics and ICTs>>

**The Effect of Cyber Language on the Academic Writing of EFL
Students**

**Case of Study: First year Master Students of Applied Linguistics at
Mostaganem University**

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Degree in English

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

- *My mother, the dearest person to my heart, thank you for your encouragement, love and devotion.*
- *Also, I would like to dedicate this work to all my Friends without exception.*
- *The staff of the Department of English for their continuous Assistance for the past five years.*

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Abstract

The present dissertation seeks to reveal one of the most relevant issues that the majority of students face in relation to academic writing. The interference of texting and chatting among students has become as a serious problem that affects the way they write. This work presents an overview of the Cyber language that has attracted many Algerian students of English as a foreign language, and has eventually affected the quality of their writing as claimed by many teachers. Based on the research questions put forward to investigate the interference of social media in weakening EFL students' writing style, we hypothesize that if students are not aware about the damage that texting causes mainly in weakening their writing skill, they would adapt a new form of language that apparently would prevail their academic performance. Thus, the hypothesis is tested via a descriptive study using questionnaires that were handed to both Master one students and teachers of written expression of the English department at aAbdelhamid Ibn Badis University to find out their perceptions towards the effects of texting on academic writing. The findings of this research show that students rely more on technological tools in assisting and correcting their poor language items rather than doing efforts by themselves.

Keywords: Academic writing, Texting, Cyber language.

List of Abbreviations

(CMC)Computer Mediated Communication.

(BTW): Be Right Back

(ASAP): As Soon As Possible

(SMS): Short Message Service

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General Introduction

The integration of new technologies in the field of language teaching and learning has become an inevitable necessity. Electronic communication is changing many aspects in the way people use language to interact online, particularly on the level of literacy. In this regard, writing is an essential skill that needs a special attention. Thus, a new form of language has emerged, that is “texting” and/or cyber language; the latter, we assume, affects negatively students’ written production since this new form of language is used extensively. Moreover, cyber language has developed a unique style that needs new terminology which separates it from daily language, in the sense that the different tools of virtual communication are prevailing students’ daily communication, and often is holding them back from becoming proficient writers because of the extensive use of contractions and abbreviations which are the major feature of cyber language. As a way of example, neglecting punctuation and capitalization leads to undermining formal writing.

Moreover, cyber language is being widely used by young netizens. Since it is an era of technology, there was a need of an adaptable channel of communication particularly when it comes to writing. Therefore, the present dissertation investigates the effect of cyber language on students’ academic writing. To understand this effect, we sought to raise the following research questions upon which this research would be built.

- How can online communication interfere negatively in the students’ writing style?
- To what extent does the daily use of social media weaken the writing abilities of students?

We subsequently hypothesize the potential answers for these questions; they are as follow: the first one, perhaps the absence of awareness would lead to having a poor writing style. As far as the second hypothesis is concerned, we assume that in students’ piece of writings, there might be problems concerning language items.

The current research is designed into three chapters; the first one is dedicated to the theoretical background where we highlight the most relevant terms that are essential to this research such as texting, cyber language, academic writing; also, the present research is based on numerous definitions about the effect of texting on students’ written productions. As for

the second chapter, it is about data collection and analysis in which we follow the steps of academic research in addition to highlighting the data collection tools that suit the present research. Additionally, we will present the questionnaires targeting both students and teachers' perceptions. Finally, the third chapter deals with the discussion of the findings and recommendations. Thus, it targets the recommended solutions in order to enhance the writing skills.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background

Introduction

Technology has changed people's life; along with the medium of the internet that include mostly speech styles, communication, inventing new smart cell phones and other devices that effect on the way we use language. Yet, people communicate with each other throughout different technological tools, like electronic mail and instant messaging. This, would reveal the importance of the writing skills. Nevertheless, the language is changing radically throughout the overuse of its users with non-respect to its norms, abbreviations and acronyms which become popular to people. This reveals the fact that standard language is not suitable for every context; the users of this new trend of language might have problems in terms of distinguishing how to use formal language since they are already exposed to this cyber language.

1.1 The Medium of Writing

Writing is one of the main macro skills which in fact needs a special attention by whom? especially in foreign languages learning; nevertheless, it is seen as a difficult skill to be taught. It is considered as a means of communication that essentially can be clarified as using symbols, in which we combine letters that lead to sound when we speak. The letters are combined to form words and words are linked to form sentences. David Crystal (2006, p.257) defines writing as way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface. It is one kind of graphic expression. Furthermore, writing is not limited to the graphic symbols but it goes beyond. For instance, this arrangement of symbols is selected according to specific rules in order to form words, and from the words, we come up with sentences in which the general aim is the production of text in a way of communication or even expressing ideas.

Writing is neither easy nor difficult, but it requires a special language and coherent speech from the person who writes. The first aim of writing is to express thoughts, feelings, arguments in order to convince someone or falsify a fact, etc. Furthermore, writing as one of the four macro skills needs a straightforward attention because writing is not a homogeneous act.

The primary school is quite important because learners need to know how to write in any given language, or they will not be competent writers and even the style will be so poor. In this sense, “writing is not a natural activity” (White,1981; Nunan,1996, p.36).

Writing requires a special mental effort because it is a mechanism where we have to be aware of the following aspects: structure of sentences, word choice punctuation and so on. The scholars Rivers and Temperley clarified in their quote: “to write so that one is really communicating a message isolated in place and time, is an art that requires consciously directed efforts and deliberate choice in language (Rivers & Temperley 1979, p.263).

The aim of writing is to transmit a piece of literature for the reader, also there is a process that most of people are not aware of, which is about translating ideas into a written language with an attention in our minds that the reader is absent and sometimes unknown. This, however, would make it important to pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition to considering sentences as well as the arrangements of ideas.

Writing requires a desire from the writer who is able to express his/her ideas, point of view or feelings to a certain topic. According to Broughton et al (1980), the skill of writing differs from speaking in the sense that writing is one of the four skills which needs to be learned and taught. He said that writing is not a spontaneous skill that is born with the child, but rather a teachable process that a person has to go through with much practice(ibid). Another clarification provided by Dean (2004) is that writing is learned, so it requires a special attention through time; it means that writing is so special that a few writers are capable of doing it, because it requires from the individual to be sure that their piece of literature is clear by the readers.

1.2 The Scope of Academic Writing

Academic writing is a style of writing that facilitates piece of literature and makes it easier to read; in addition, it is governed by rules in which the focus is more on the language and the way we write. Academic writing has the objective to make the work clear and readable to the reader so as the piece of writing sounds well-correct and referenced. Academic writing is a huge process and covers many areas to be accurate at the level of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Moreover, we need to pay attention to sentences and paragraph structure also to the respect of classifications of ideas. The goal of academic writing assignment is thereby to ask good questions and analyze answers.

The scholar Hogue (2007) states that academic writing is seen as one of many types of writings, it is used at universities in order to submit a piece of assignment. Academic writing is somehow a unique type of writing because it has a specific structure and classification of ideas, form and conventions. In addition, these principles which writing is based on, are essential in any piece of literature. The aim is thereby being to be formal in writing by pointing out ideas in a coherent and simple way so as to be understood by the readers.

According to Oshima &Hogue (1998, p.05) in their book of *Academic Writing English* clarified 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”.

Another explanation provided by Gillett, Hammond & Martala (2009) is that academic writing variation is thereby the reader who is going to comment on a certain aspect of the language. These aspects are as follows: the style, implementation of vocabularies like choice of words and the tone of the writer. The goal is to impress the reader by adding these criteria and expanding them; the tone is the style and the way of expressing the ideas, having a clear image on whom the audience is he/she and how to state simple meaning by classifying the choice of words.

A broad definition of academic writing was given by the scholars Monippally and Pawar (2010). It says that writing in an academic form is therefore for communicating scientific knowledge; it can be found in scientific journals in which researchers share their results, contributions with the aim of expanding knowledge in different disciplines, both researchers highlight that writers should be like scientists by being objective, i.e. neglecting personal arguments and insights which means having a critical thinking. Klein(1965, p.02); Monippally and Pawar (2010) mentioned that:

We want “academic” writers who manifest orderly thought process in their writing, who can organize data for analysis, who can be selective, who can distinguish significant detail from just detail, who

can measure length in relation to importance, who can analyze, sort out, discern, discriminate, and discard (p.78).

1.3 Principles of Academic Writing

The features of academic writing are essential for any piece of literature, essays and paragraphs. Thus, for university students, the teacher is no longer being seen as the source of knowledge, where he/she depends on gaining new information from. Therefore, academic writing investigates the state of the issue based on the evidence of the research.

Academic writing is a unique genre of writing; moreover, it has many features in which it has its own features that can differ from other types of writing. The common and essential characteristics of academic writing are as follows:

1.3.1 Logical Organization

Students follow logical well-formed structure in order to produce coherent paragraphs and essays. Dividing the work into sections and respecting the order of ideas “introduction, body and conclusion” following these steps and organization of ideas, choice of words, will lead to having a good production so as to be read later on.

1.3.2 Precise and Concise

The aim behind being precise and concise in academic writing context is that writers emphasize on implementing specific words but using a simple language in order to get the reader’s attention; thus, it is not important to use difficult words and complex vocabularies like: synonyms, opposites and massive explanation aiming to increasing words in a certain piece of writing; obviously, it makes it less academic and more informal.

1.3.3 Writing Style

Writers should use academic writing, choice of vocabularies also select ideas related to the context of use is also important. According to Whitaker (2010) &Mani (2011), academic writing requires a formal language; therefore, English as foreign language henceforth EFL learners have to be careful, and avoid the use of chat language as in slang and the use of abbreviation. However, word choice has to be constructive and precise rather than shortened; moreover, academic writing is needed when writing any piece of literature in order to attract the reader’s attention. Thus, students are required to use their own words.

1.3.4 Implementing Cautious Language

The use of cautious language or ‘‘hedging¹’’ in academic writing is another important element in order to support and backup claims; for instance, the language used in hedging could be modal adjectives ‘‘certain, possible, clear, probable ‘‘, that clauses ‘‘it might be suggested that, it could be the case that’’, certain lexical verbs ‘‘believe, assume, suggest’’. Therefore, these can make the writer more objective in his/her writing.

1.3.5 Being Brief

The way of writing today is different than it used to be before. Now, writers are simple in their writing. By being brief and precise, writers attract the reader’s attention. Therefore, it is crucial to avoid repetition (Yakhontova, 2014)

1.3.6 Highlighting Objectivity

Writers tend to be objective rather than personal in their written language. That is why, in any academic work there are few words that refer to the writer or the reader, which helps focusing on the information rather than the writer him/her self; therefore, in academic writing there is an extensive use of nouns, and adjectives rather than verbs or adverbs.

1.3.7 Focusing on Correct Punctuation and Grammar

Being aware of conventions like correct grammar and punctuation is quite helpful in the sense of avoiding mistakes, and in getting the reader’s attention. In this regard, Murphy(2009) states that the extensive use of punctuation and misuse of grammar may get into the reader’s attention that the writer is careless and unprofessional.

1.4 The Importance of Writing

Writing is viewed as an essential means of communication in transmitting knowledge of the language; this is why most exams require students to provide their answers in writing.

Bacha (2002) stated that writing is crucial in student’s academic course since most examination, reports and research work depend on it. Also, Coffin et al (2003) claim that writing is an essential element since it is used as a means of an assessment; it develops the student’s communicative skill. Moreover, it develops the student’s potentials in becoming future professionals in any given discipline.

¹Hedging is a type of language use in order to ‘protect’ your claims.

The importance of writing is highlighted in the book of *Writing Skill Success 20 Minutes a Day* (2005) the five essential advantages of writing are put as follows:

1. Writing is permanent, which means people cannot ignore it.
2. Writing allows writers to transmit and clarify their thoughts.
3. Throughout the channel of writing, writers can take back what they wrote; it is seen as a careful, important means of communication
4. In contrast to speaking, writing allows the writer to have the opportunity to revise, change and correct their ideas and essays before handling it back to the audience.
5. Another advantage in writing is that writers have the chance to get isolated and write and organize whatever comes in their minds.

1.4.1 Perspectives of Writing Through the Digital Age

Electronic communication has improved the writing activities in being more adaptable to the everyday life interactions. Communicative activities are built upon many forms of electronic communication, and any form of writing that is associated with internet. Now it is accessible throughout computers and mobile phones; thus, they include social networking, e-mail forums in addition to the mobile phones that allow users to make calls and send text messages.

Technology makes writing more visible because written communications are being used more than ever as in; text messages, social posts, e-mails. People comment in forms of communication using words to convey their opinions. People use social networking, texting and e-mail which have substitute the use of phone calls, except in rare occasions. Moreover, the average of blogs or YouTube comments shows that not everyone takes grammar and the style of writing seriously. In fact, they use the quality of a good writing as an opportunity to assess others .(Why Writing Skills Are More Important Than Ever, 2011).

Career communication is being handled online and in text. Applying for jobs in the United State of America, for instance, usually needs types of written communication, starting from filling the application and then moving to writing a cover letter. Additionally, some online job recruitments demand a written content delivered via e-mail, which means a good writing quality may lead to getting the attention of the company or the person who made the job poster.

An online article has been published by Angela Maiers in May 2, 2011 under the title “*The Importance of Writing Well for Social Media Content*”. It says that social media added a new form and ways to receive information, by which writing is based upon. Additionally, there has been a new concern on the quality of writing today. Writing in the digital age evolved much better; people grow up with laptops and other tools of communication, yet many of them do not remember the last time they took a seat with a pen and paper.

1.5 The Field of Cyber Space

Cyber space is a significant domain that is known as “Net speak” i.e. the language of cyber space or the area of electronic communication; moreover, it is used in electronic mails, blogs, chat rooms which permit computer users to communicate with each other and also throughout cellular phones via text messages “SMS” (Short Message Service).

The term cyber space was presented by Gibson (1984, p.51). He defines it as;

Cyberspace: A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts...A graphic representation of data abstracted from the bank of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the monospace of the mind, clusters and constellations of data, like city lights, receding. (1984, p.51)

Gibson has coined the term of cyberspace when having observed children playing with video games. He explains “these kids clearly believed in the space games projected”. Cyber space is basically used to exchange information, by the conjunction of internet. Moreover, it relies more on computer-mediated communication(CMC). In the following section, we will explain further this term.

1.5.1 Computer Mediated Communication

Nowadays, with the ever-increasing use of communication technologies, researchers view computer -mediated communication as being one of the most methods for communication, in fact, scholars describe it as “the process by which people create, exchange

and perceive information using network telecommunication system that facilitate encoding, transmitting and decoding messages” (December,1996)

Similarly, Aldrich states that computer-mediated communication is any communication where the information passes between senders and receivers over a computer network (2008, p.13). Also, Bodoimo (2010) defines “CMC” as

The coding and decoding of linguistic and other symbolic systems between sender and receiver for information processing in multiple formats through the medium of the computer and allied technologies such as PDAs, mobile phones, and blackberries; and through media like the internet, email, chat systems, text messaging, YouTube, Skype, and many more to be invented (p.06).

The clarification behind this definition is that CMC is something tremendous, it is more than decoding messages, simple text, but also it analyzes and send symbolic messages; moreover, what the scholar Bodoimo wants to highlight is that the process of exchanging information between people can be limited to computers, yet it can involve other devices like, “mobile phones.” and so on.

1.5.2 Net Speak

Crystal (2001, p.19) defines “Net Speak” as a style of language “displaying features that are unique to the internet arising out of its character as a medium which is electronic global and interactive”. The linguist David Crystal states that, net speak is a substitution term of ‘Netlish’, “weblish”, “cyber speak”, “electronic language”, “computer-mediated communication”. Clearly, net speak has different terms, and each one of them has its own implication.

1.5.2.1 Some Characteristics of Net Speak

Net speak has lots of features which basically have contributed in the creation of this neologism. Crystal (2006) highlights some of these features that are used; for example: trolling, spoofing, flaming and spamming.

- ♦ **Trolling;** sending short messages to people in the aim of making them angry and in doubt as a form of a word or a question.

- ♦ **Spoofing;** refers to the unpleasant messages sent to a receiver in order to laugh at him/her via internet.
- ♦ **Spamming;** this feature is meant to send many and uncountable messages to the same person like sending advertisement via email that they do not want. (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary 3rd Ed).
- ♦ **Flaming;** “flames” refers to the aggressive messages, always targeting the same topic moreover flaming is very rude messages that is actually informal.

1.6 Does Technology Destroy the Writing Skills?

In fact, when we speak about technology we define it as a helpful tool that can assist students in many ways. However, this is not the case because nowadays most students use technological aids but without developing their personal potentials; they always rely on auto-correction without doing research. Students are now exposed to the technological advancements such as laptops, mobile phones and lot of other forms of technological aids. Sometimes, these prevent them to write in a good formal way; moreover, the extensive dependence on technology is leading students to weaken their writing skills to become good critical thinkers and good writers.

A survey has been conducted by “Common Sense Media²” in the United State of America in (2012), fifty-eight percent of teachers clarified that there are types of technological devices with the integration of social media that affect negatively upon student's writing skills. In addition, only forty-four percent of teachers' state that students' writing is excellent.

Moreover, the report shows that this generation of students that their thinking is limited, which may lead to weakening their writing skills. It may be clear that technology speeds up the process as in completing certain tasks very quickly. However, students nowadays count a lot on technology in writing and doing tasks more than evolving their personal skills without it.

Computer applications, on the other hand, affect tremendously upon students' writing skills and this effect depends on the awareness of users themselves. Learning should be enjoyable and fun. Students are in fact exposed to many massive technological tools that make them hope that learning via technology should be entertaining and easier than the in

²Common Sense is an organization dedicated to enable kids to succeed in the world of media and technology by focusing on the positive aspects of technology.

traditional way. “One of the most pervasive outcomes of technology is that students acquire the belief that learning to write should not be a struggle and that good teaching will make learning easier and more enjoyable” (Olson and Clough.p.9). Obviously, teachers want their students to enjoy the learning process by integrating technology; however, students have to work hard on their learning objectives. If it is always flexible and entertaining, then they need to be challenged. Moreover, motivation is a key element that students must have in the leaning process but not all the learning and comprehension can be done via the technological tools. Writing has to be challenging which means personal learning is required in order to highlight the competencies that many students have but they are not aware of. Cognitive effort is needed extensively for students who want to draw their goals in universities in which they can be examined by their writing styles, grammar and so on. Yet, they cannot depend on technology to solve their exercises. These new applications such as Microsoft word and PowerPoint help the person in writing articles, texts and so on. Moreover, there is what we call “spell check” which students use when they want to write a certain subject. They may encounter words that are in red color which means that they are written improperly, or are false, so this method of “spell check” correct the inappropriate homonym for instance: a student writes the following sentence “Their were several different options available”, automatically the application will highlight a blue color upon the miswritten word when clicking right with the mouse-pad on the mistakes “their”; he will find available substances like “there”. Yet, it makes it clear that spelling and grammar as well as sentence structure are no longer crucial element to be studied and learned, simply because technology contribute in correcting these mistakes automatically.

Different tools are being used for the sake of helping students in finishing tasks quickly and effectively in a short period. But if students do not understand a kind of an important element in the writing process, these technological tools are affecting negatively upon the knowledge of the students. (Purcell, Buchanan, &Friedrich, p.17). For instance, they are not able to clarify why a certain word was correct rather than the original one. In addition, some students do not have the desire to correct words by themselves, simply computers can do it for them. (ibid). Technology continues to be more effective and reliable for the user, yet it goes “so far beyond students’ conceptual understanding that it does not motivate them” to strive to find out the correct way of writing (Olson and Clough, p.10). It means that technological tools do limit students’ writing potentials by reducing their motivation and self-attitude toward

writing, as in fact it is a crucial element during the writing process; moreover, many teachers clarified that students' reliance on technology is stopping them from going deeply in the beauty of writing.

The reliance on technology in completing tasks will lead toward weakening their ability to learn complex writing strategies. For instance, there is an article stating that it is true that technology harms the writing skills of students. The article's title is *The Impact of Digital Tools on student Writing and How writing is Taught in Schools*. It says that the use of word processing programs and spell-check is wonderful, but students rely on it so much that even when it changes their thoughts and words and it does not even make sense anymore because they've put in words that they've substituted words for misspelled words that do not even make sense, it hinders their ability" (Purcell, Buchanan, &Friedrich, p.36).

Teachers of high and middle schools clarified that the present technology is affecting negatively upon students' comprehension of the writing skills. Moreover, their thinking is somehow limited and cannot express ideas by their own. This may lead to the loss of motivation as well as not developing their critical abilities in synthesizing information. Moreover, text messaging is also a tool that harms students' writing skills in completing written tasks; this also may limit their writing potentials.

1.6.1 Texting

The concept of texting has nowadays become well known among today's generation because it is considered as a primary tool in communication among teenagers. In the United States, it is increasing in all ages of people (Purcell, Buchanan, &Friedrich, p.12). Texting has become a crucial tool among students; they always are attached to their cell phones and they are relying on text messaging in everyday communication with others across the globe.

The abbreviation of words is implemented within sentences also integrating alphanumeric forms, which means a set of characters including letters, numbers and often, special characters as punctuation marks, moreover, the misspelling words are being transferred in formal written exercises. When students read these text' messages sent to them by others with these unusual grammatical forms, they simply do not find any ambiguity understanding the intended message because they are exposed to a huge amount of text language. What is problematic is that students are now adapting this way of writing. As a

result, they involve this type of writing in the classroom which is inappropriate, because formal writing is needed there and expected to be. (Dansieh, p.222).

The term shortening is being used instead of abbreviation which means almost the same thing the same. Students shorten words by replacing long words with short ones. Moreover, the scholar Dansieh clarifies this ambiguity by giving examples of words used by readers who use this technique of shortening through the implementation of symbols which replace syllables of words. However, this act invents misspelled words do not exist in the English language. For instance, these are some examples: “4 U” for “for you”, “B4” for “before”, “LOL” for “laugh out loud”, “shud” for “should”, and “Gr8” for “great” (Dansieh, p.224).

The replacements of words and phrases lead to laziness and lack of motivation among students.

The issue is now transferred in students’ perception of writing. Eventually, it will grow up and affect other populations. Obviously, texting is something else and the majority of students would not have problems if they could simply distinguish between formal and informal writing; also, there is a confusion among students when writing quickly in the sense that this can be more productive, i.e. floating of ideas rather than writing with accurate and exact grammar. However, this will direct them to commit mistakes. From the one hand, this will hold their abilities to express their ideas also write long sentences, from the other hand, it will lead them to avoid revision in their writings. Clearly, students do not spend time revising what they have written not even checking the use of punctuations. Teachers have no control over the writing process, because when students leave the classroom, no one can tell whether they are enhancing their writing skill or spending more time texting their friends using different technological tools.

1.6.2 Acronyms

The term “acronyms” is characterized by extracting the first letter of a group of words. Ya-Dong and Kui (2013), it as language patterns “made up from the first letter of the name of an organization” (p.118), relating these initial letters of words together will lead basically to the process of creating acronyms, for example these are the most popular ones:

- ◆ ASAP refers to” As Soon As Possible”.
- ◆ BRB stands for “Be Right Back

- ◆ CU means “See You”
- ◆ OTH stands for “On the Phone”
- ◆ BF refers to “Boy Friend”
- ◆ GF stands for Girl Friend”

1.6.3 Short Forms

Another feature used by students is the use of short forms which indicate that long words are no longer being written as usual. In fact, they are replaced by short expressions; in the chart below, we give the common ones used by chatters who mostly students:

Shortened words	Real meaning	Shortened words	Stands meaning
TMR	Tomorrow	STH	Something
BTW	By the way	C-P	Sleepy
PIC	Picture	CYT	See You Tomorrow
THX	Thanks	W8	Wait
NVR	Never mind	UR	Your/ You are

Table 1: The Common Short Forms in Chat Language (Dong, Cheung Hui & He, 2010, p. 6).

1.6.4 Misspelling

The deterioration of the writing skill and extensive use of texting among students and chat users have revealed on another feature used by them, which is misspelling words which means informal nature of chat text happened virtually, chat users and students are exposed unintentionally or by their desire to misspell words, when a conversation is taking place or even texting their peers. (Dong, Cheung Hui & He, 2010).

1.6.5 Polysemy

Polysemy are words that have different interpretations according to the context and the person to whom you are talking with or texting. Terms are written in original forms or a shorthand form. Again, it has to do with the knowledge that the other person possess in order not to mis-interpret. Some examples of polysemy words or phrases are put as follow:

- Accept -Take willingly, receive as suitable, agree, admit (responsibility), to believe that something is true etc.

- Fix. It has many meanings such as 1. attach, 2. Arrange, 3. Get ready (food or drinks) 4. repair 5. punish, 6. set right (the hair).
- Love – Affection, romantic (fall in love with), Enjoyment, (love of learning), a score in games like tennis, Love-all).
- Count – To say the numbers in the right order, to calculate, include, consider, (n) total, saying numbers, measurement etc.

1.7 The Impact of Texting and Social Media on Students' Academic

Writing

The internet has changed the standard of living, communication, jobs, style of speech and in education, yet with the integration of cell phones, computers and so on which have affected on the way we use language throughout electronic mail and instant messaging. Basically, we are connected better than we used to be before. However, the way students text and communicate with each other using social media and text messaging is spreading tremendously all across the country and in different levels of education.

An article has been published in September 2008 in the United State of America under the title "*Texting, Testing Destroys Kids' Writing Style*" highlighting the most popular effect of texting. It says that according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there are a few students who are proficient writers in high school seniors, i.e. only 25%. The article thereby quotes a former teacher and author as well Jacqui Ream; book entitled *Keep It Short and Simple (KISS)*, a guide for writing better and more effectively. She states: "we have a whole generation being raised without communication skills." According to her, students do not have the power to write well because they lack communication skills. Then, because of the use of acronyms and shorthand in text messages, these are the basics why students are unable to spell and write correctly. Moreover, Ream targeted another side which is related to emotions. Students have problems to show feelings in their writing, because according to her, in text messages "emoticons are always sideways smiley faces." (p.90). The former teacher Jacqui Ream states in her final report that "there's a whole generation that cannot come up with new ideas and even if they did have breakthrough thought or opinion of their own, they couldn't share it with the rest of us".

Many teachers complain, because texting does not focus on the importance of punctuation. Students are texting in their everyday life but are neglecting punctuation in their

formal writing. Teachers clarified that students forget comas, apostrophes also they do not capitalize letters in the beginning of the sentence; if students are constantly texting and fail to use proper grammar as well as writing effectively, then teachers have to make more efforts to eradicate this phenomenon and instruct students to write properly.

Moreover, another major issue is the overuse of computer-mediated communication teenagers which in fact make their potentials weak in the sense of communication in an informal way. Therefore, students start to shorten words in a written communication replacing words like “ur” (your), “IDK” (I don’t know) and other common terms. The extensive use of chat has become extremely popular. As a result, educators are worried about its effects on academic potentials of students; additionally, the use of misspelled words and spelling by adding new forms of words and terms that do not exist in dictionaries would limit the abilities of students to write effectively when writing in academic papers, paragraphs, essays and so on.

Conclusion

Texting and the use of social media’s tools without knowing its impact on the language form and skill can harm students in developing their potentials in becoming good writers. According, to many educators, this chat is affecting upon standard English and is weakening their levels and styles in writing examination. Therefore, the language of the web is continuously evolving and this preferable medium is used in social interaction. On the one hand, it possesses many features that characterize it from the traditional way of communication such as; Acronyms,” LOL” (Laugh Out Loud),“BRB” (Be right Back), the use of “Emoticons”; “:-)” smiley face, “;^)” winking. According to Crystal, it is an effective visual way to add expression to the text by using minimal text. On the other hand, this practice of language is affecting negatively upon students’ academic writing performance in terms of grammar and spelling errors. Moreover, students use this new text language which consist of abbreviations and so on in social medias, moreover, when writing essays. More importantly, these factors were taken as crucial elements for how foreigners and students of English in Algeria interact with each other using this trend of language, texting. Nevertheless, these factors will be explored in the second chapter targeting both students’ and teachers’ perceptions toward the use of texting and its effect on student’s writing.

*Chapter two Data Collection and Analysis***Introduction**

This chapter aims to highlight and to analyze the effects of cyber language on academic writing by pointing out the major effects. It contains also the presentation of the instruments of the research. An interview interpretation and the analysis of the data gathered from the two questionnaires targeting both students of first year Master of English and teachers of English language in the university of Mostaganem are also presented.

The main objective of the first part is to check the effects of cyber language on how students write, or text each other, and check if they are aware of how the extensive use of technology may affect their way of writing whether in a good or a bad way. Questionnaires have been handed for both students and teachers. Twenty students of both genders are selected and asked to answer the eleven questions. As for the ten teachers teaching in different fields of English language, they were selected randomly to answer thirteen questions. The present chapter is divided into two sections; defining the research methodology and section for data analysis.

2.1 Description of the Research Methodology

The suitable method used in this research is quantitative data collection because it is administered through out large amount of surveys using questionnaire and assumed to get the information needed during this research, yet it can be analyzed manually or with the help of the computer. By this instrument of research, i.e. the questionnaire, we could have known the point of view of both students and teachers about the effect of cyber language on the academic writing and how they practice their writings solely via online communication.

The sample consists of twenty students from the English department, the branch of Language and communication Master one at the university of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis-Mostaganem. We have targeted both males and females' students. On another hand, the sample also consists of ten teachers from other master fields. Seeking their answers toward the present issue, the effect of cyber language on students' academic writing skills.

Then, it comes the part of describing and analyzing the questionnaires. The questionnaire consists of a series of questions; most of them are related to the socio-cultural environment of

the students. However, the teachers' questionnaire is about describing their students in terms of level of writing skills: Are they excellent? Or do they have difficulties when it comes to writing? The questionnaire also investigates the common mistakes that students usually do in their formal writing. In addition, it aims at having their perspectives toward the use of texting among students at the university as well as via technological tools.

2.1.1 The Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to shed light on the effects of cyber language on students' academic writing. The case study is master one "language and communication" at the university of Mostaganem. Many objectives can be highlighted. However, we selected the most essential ones which we will list in the following paragraph.

First, we rose the issue of writing and technology in this research because of the new trend of text-lingo that is used by students, such as abbreviations, no respect of punctuations, creating new words that actually does not exists. Second, this practice of language is affecting the students' academic writing. Thus, the aim is to let teachers be aware and advise students to practice their writing in a more formal and academic way. Third, the main objective is to provide strategies and alternative tips that can be used by students so as to develop their writing skill.

2.2 Part One: Data Collection

Data collection means gathering information from different sources using certain or multiple instruments for the sake of conducting a research work. Therefore, in this study, questionnaires have been chosen as an instrument in order to test the credibility of hypothesis. Therefore, a questionnaire was designed and delivered to Master one EFL university students, which targets their prior knowledge since they studied a module that is related to the subject of the research, i.e. the writing skills.

2.2.1 The choice of the Sample

The target population has been selected for three reasons. The first reason is that our selected students are in a specific master field of English language which is "language and communication" in which they have a module entitled "E-Learning" which tackles such terms like technology, chat language and so on. The second reason is that they master the writing skills since they are master students and they were taught academic writing in the past three

years. The third reason can be put as follows: students of master one “language and communication” have been targeted to answer the questionnaire because their learning is somehow hybrid; it is not limited only to real university context, but it is about a mixture of face-to-face and online interaction as they can meet virtually to discuss ideas or even post new information. Here, we can see if they use proper language or not.

The ten selected teachers have different experiences in teaching English so they read various students’ written works and might have a clear idea about the effect of texting whether students write the same as they do when chatting or they use different language.

2.2.2 The Research Instruments

In order to conduct a research, then there must be tools to use; these tools are diverse such as: questionnaires, interviews, observations and others. The instrument used in this research is the questionnaire.

2.2.3 Description of the Questionnaires

The students’ questionnaire is designed to shed light on the extensive use of texting among students in their everyday life virtually. The aim of this research is to focus on the negative influence of cyber language on students’ writing skills, highlighting the most important features of this language like the use of abbreviations, acronyms, lack of punctuation and so on.

The teachers’ questionnaire was distributed along with the students’ questionnaire on the 15th of march 2017 at the department of English in “*Mostaganem university-Faculty of Foreign Languages*”. Also, some teachers belong to «*Polyglot Private School*”. Moreover, the teachers who responded to our questionnaire teach written expression as a module for different levels; they seem aware about the negative impact of texting on students’ academic writing.

The main focus is on the students’ questionnaire. It consists of eleven questions; each question has a purpose. Starting from the section of identifying gender, moving along to the section of personal questions related to the use of texting. Moreover, some questions target the grammatical and lexical aspects of the language. It also deals with how the overuse of text-lingo among students’ effect on their academic written performance.

In this research, the types of questions that were used during this research vary from close-ended to open-ended questions. The types of questions are as follow:

- **Numeric questions:** in the first section of the questionnaire we can find this type of questions which aimed to have information such as; gender, age, level moreover teachers' work experience and so on.
- **Close-ended Questions:** this type of questions is restricted, which means participants are allowed to follow the instructions as it was mentioned by the researcher.
- **Open-ended Questions:** they are questions that permit participants to express their ideas when needed, because the aim thereby is to get their perceptions on the present subject.

2.2.4 Administration of the Questionnaires.

In the section of the analysis we might find that there are questions that both students and teachers answered and some of the questions that may be left unanswered because they have no clue how to state their answers.

From the results that have been realized from students' questionnaires, we can deduce that some students are not sure if technology can help them ameliorate their writing skills. This is what we will argue in the following section.

2.3 Part Two: The Analysis of The Questionnaires

2.3.1 The Analysis of Students 'Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was handed in a good way in fact; they were cooperative and they seemed thoughtful and did not find any difficulties when answering the questionnaire. The analysis of students' questionnaire is as follows;

Learners' gender

Answers	Males	Females	Total
Number of participants	07	13	20
Percentage	35%	65%	100%

Table 2: Learners' gender.

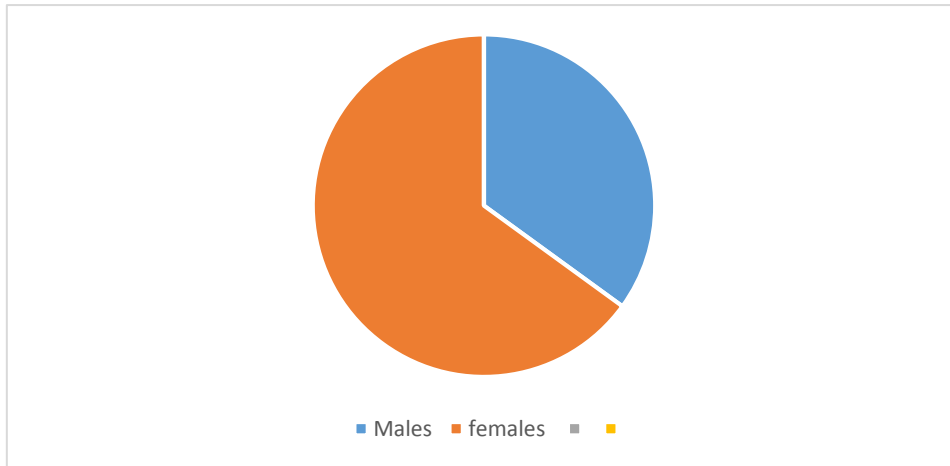


Figure 1: Learners' gender.

The target population is about 13 females and 7 males; they are selected in the sake of answering the questionnaire and so as their answers to be recorded.

Question 01: Do you think that social Media’s use enhances your learning process?

Answers	Yes	No	Total
Number of students	14	06	20
%	70%	30%	100%

Table 3:Integrating Social Media in Learning Process.

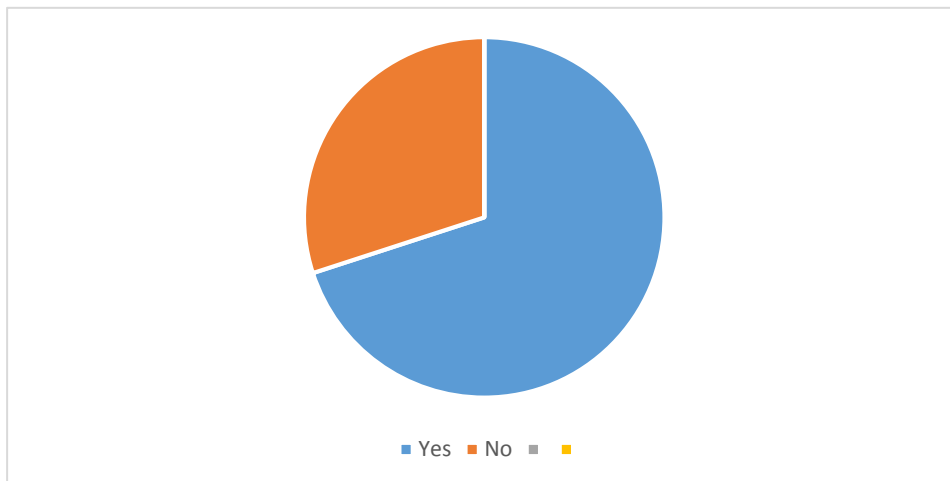


Figure 2: The learning process via social media.

In the table above, we can see that fourteen (14) students have answered yes, and six (06) students said no. The total participants are 20 students. Therefore, we can say that internet and social media tools can help students ameliorate their skills.

Question 02: To what extent does learning via internet help you ameliorate your personal learning?

Answers	Grammar	Vocabulary	Others	Total
Number of students	06	12	02	20
Percentage	30%	60%	10%	100%

Table 4: Learning via Electronic Tools.

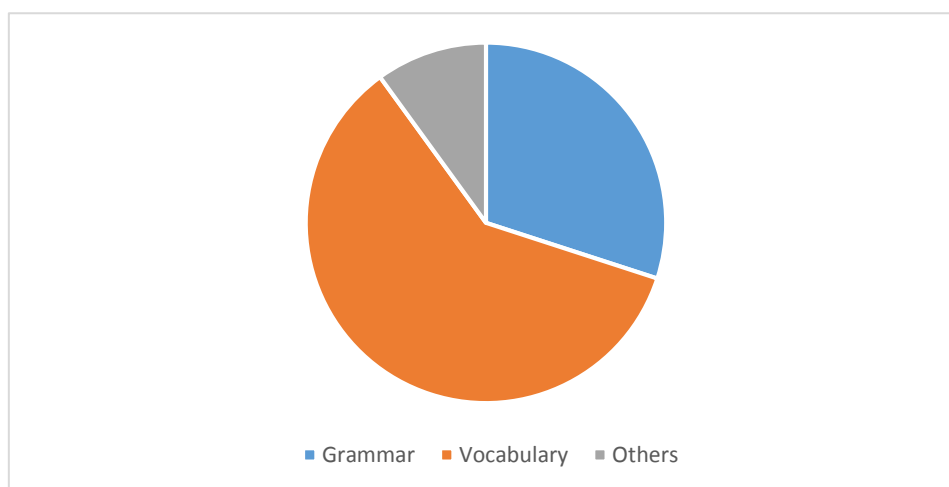


Figure 3: Enhancing learning through internet.

The graph above shows that the majority of students twelve (12) with 60% said that learning through the medium of internet improves their “vocabulary”, whereas six (06) students with 30% chose the option “grammar” which means internet can help them ameliorate their levels in English by focusing on the grammar, yet two (02) students selected the option “other”.

Question 03: Do you use punctuation when writing in social media?

Answers	N	%
Always	08	40%
Never	05	25%
Sometimes	07	35%
Total	20	100%

Table 5: Integrating Punctuation in social Medias.

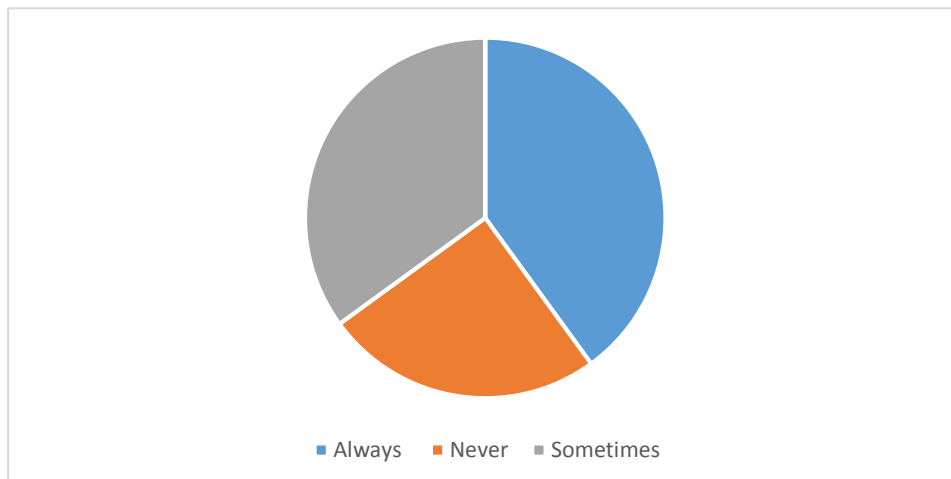


Figure 4:Integrating punctuation in social medias.

It is assumed that spending much time in the internet by students may lead to the lack of using punctuation. The table explains through relative percentages how often students use punctuation. Moreover, the table shows that eight (08) students with (40%) said “always”, while (35%) resembled seven (07) students answered the option “sometimes” yet the five (05) remaining students ticked on the option “never”. We can say that most of the students are aware of when to use punctuation. However, not all of them implement it when texting.

Question 04:Have you ever used contrasted forms of full words like; IDK (I do not know)?

Answers	Number(s)	%
Yes	20	100%
No	0	%
Total	20	100%

Table 6: Texting using contracted words in social media.

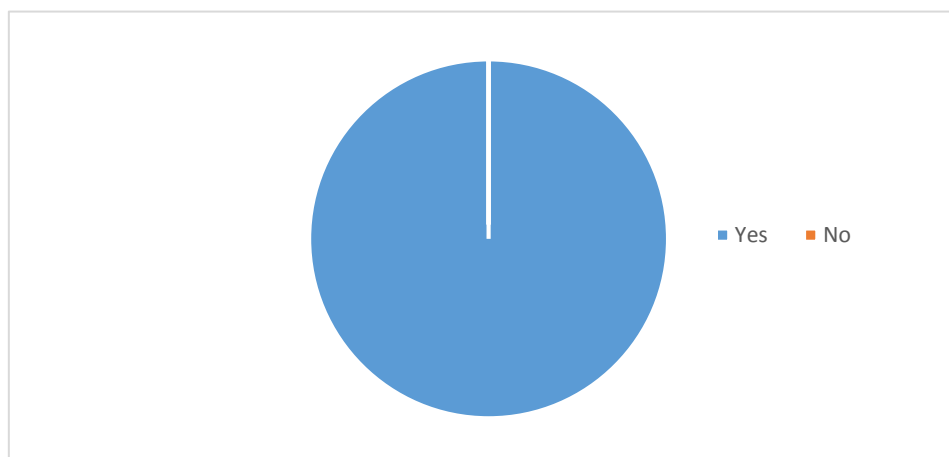


Figure 5: Texting using contracted words in social medias.

From the information gathered from students' responses, we notice that all the students (20) which represent 100% are using contracted words in their virtual communication with their friends.

Question 05: Are you aware that the use of slangs affect your writing skills?

Answers	Number(s)	%
Yes	18	90%
No	02	10%
Total	20	100%

Table 7: Effect of slangs on the writing skills.

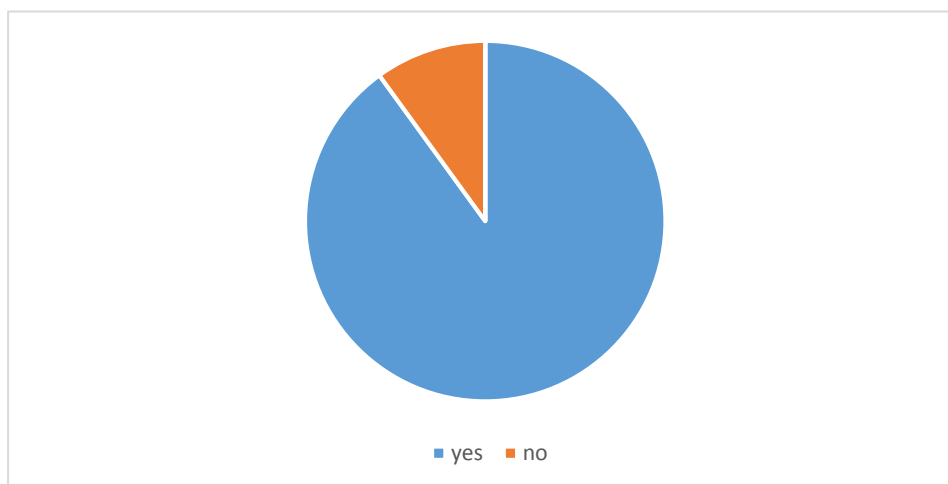


Figure 6: Effects of slangs on the writing skills.

From table 07 we can say that eighteen (18) students know that the use of slang would affect their writing skills. It indicates that (80%) of the students ticked “yes”, however, two (02) students said “no” 10%. It is clear that texting with irrelevant words would affect dramatically the writing skills.

Question 06: do you feel at ease when using slangs among your friends or people you know in social media?

Answers	Number(s)	Percentage
Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Table 8: Feelings about the use of slangs in social media.

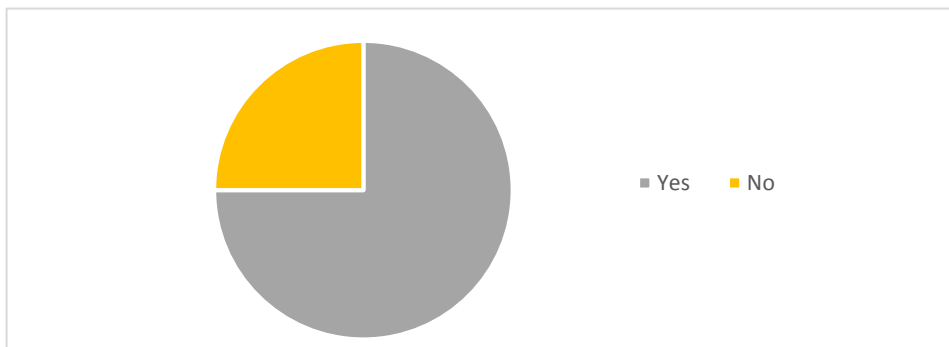


Figure 7: Feelings about the use of slangs in social media.

This question is delivered in order to know students’ point of view, also their mood when using slang and this type of text-lingo. Thus, 15 students (75%) ticked on the option “yes” while the rest 5 students (25%) chose “no”. Clearly, we can say that the majority of students aiming on making the conversation interesting by focusing on the others’ way of writing.

Question 7: How do you explain the use of informal English in your daily life?

Answers	N	%
Influenced by every day interaction	7	35%
Influenced by media (films, songs, TV	12	60%
Personal preferences	1	5%
Others	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Table 9: Effects of informal English.

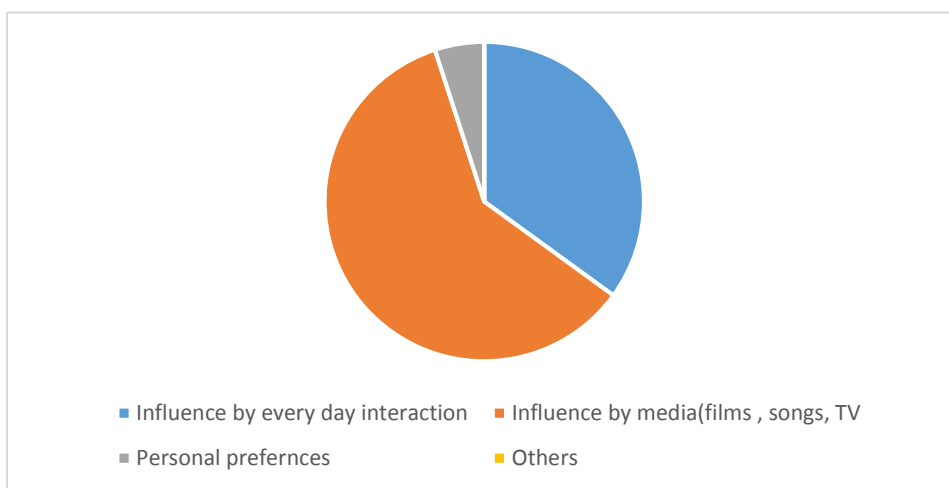


Figure 8: Effects of informal English.

From the result obtained in the table above, we can say that twelve students (60%) said that the influence of informal English came from social media seven students (35%) ticked on the option “influence of everyday interaction”. Clearly, people impose this kind of written

communication. However, only one students (5%) said that the influence of informal English is due to “personal preferences”.

Question 08: Don’t you think that if you are not aware of the use of English outside the context of university, you will be exposed to make many mistakes?

Answers	Number(s)	%
Yes	16	80%
No	04	20%
Total	20	100%

Table 10: The unawareness of using informal English in social medias.

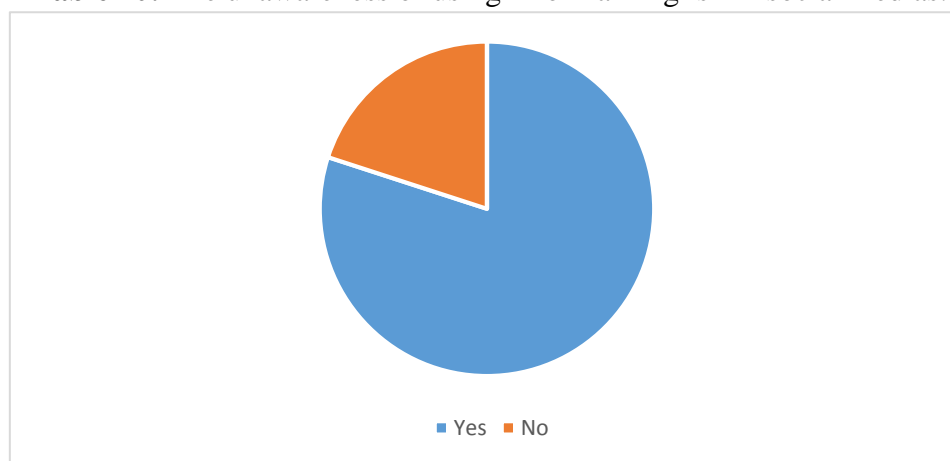


Figure 9: The unawareness of using formal English in social media.

The aim behind this question is to get the students’ perception on the absence of awareness of using a proper and correct English outside the context of university and being exposed to committing mistakes. Thus, sixteen students (80%) ticked on the option “yes” since academic English is used only in universities. Students communicate in less informal way with their peers. However, four students (20%) said “no” which means they know the difference when to use formal and informal English.

Question 09: What are the common difficulties that you encounter while texting your friends via technological services?

Answers	N	%
In the level of spelling	08	40%
Making grammar mistakes	03	15%
Rarely use punctuation	09	45%
Total	20	100%

Table 11:Common difficulties when texting.

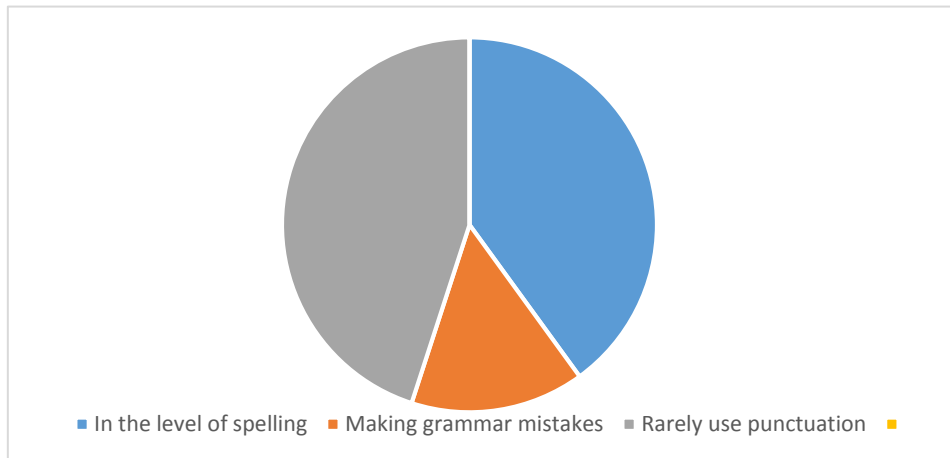


Figure 10: Common difficulties when texting.

Table 11 above shows that the common difficulties that students face during chatting with their friends or teachers. (45%) of students said that they “rarely use punctuation” in texting via social media. (40%) ticked on the option in “the level of spelling” i.e. forgetting a letter that is why they shorten words in order not to commit mistakes, yet (15%) of students said that they “make grammar mistakes”.

Question 10: If such an error was made, how are you going to correct yourself?

Answers	N	%
Use pocket dictionary	03	15%
Rely on the auto-correction in smart phones	08	40%
Do not give attention on what you have written	07	35%
Always relying on peer correction	02	10%
Total	20	100%

Table 12: Evaluating the writing skills.

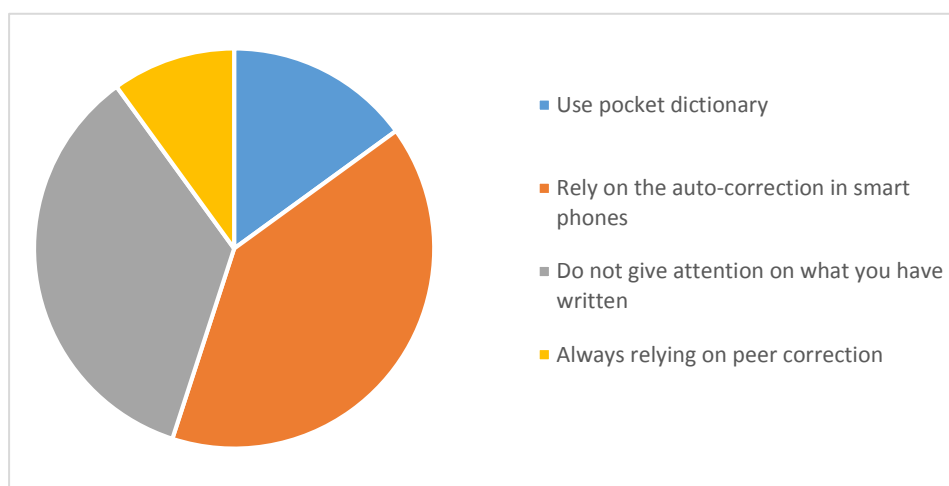


Figure 11: Evaluating the writing skills.

From the data gathered from students' responses, we can identify that the majority of students when committing a mistake in the level of the word structure; they rely on auto correction based on stored options in the social media or smart phones (40%) of students chose this option. Other participants (35%) clarified that they do not check what they have written, (10%) ticked on the option "always relying on peer correction". However, only 3 students (15%) chose to "use pocket dictionary".

Question 11: Does it happen to you that you are not sure of what you have written like missing a letter or forgetting a coma, point, inverted brackets and so on?

Answers	N	%
Sometimes	14	70%
Never	1	5%
Always	5	25%
Total	20	100%

Table 13: Lacks of language items in the writing skills.

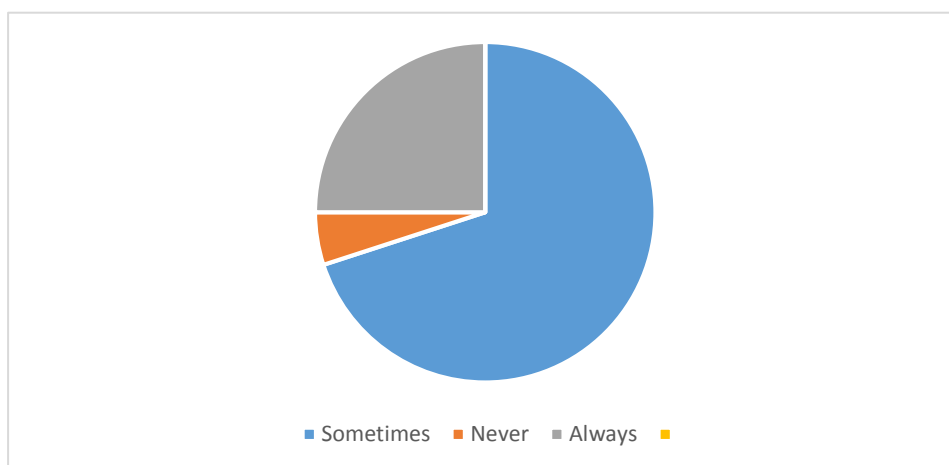


Figure 12: Lacks of language items in students' written production.

The table above shows that most of the students (75%) chose the option "sometimes" which reveals the fact that the use of punctuation is not implemented in every conversation. (5%) said that they do not implement what they know about the language when being in a virtual context, yet (25%) ticked on the option "always" which means they are aware when to use the chunks of the language every time when using social media' tools.

2.3.2 The Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Question 01: Are you satisfied with your learners written production?

Answers	Yes	No	Total
Numbers of students	02	08	10
Percentage	20%	80%	100%

Table 14: Point of views of teachers regarding their learners 'writing performance.

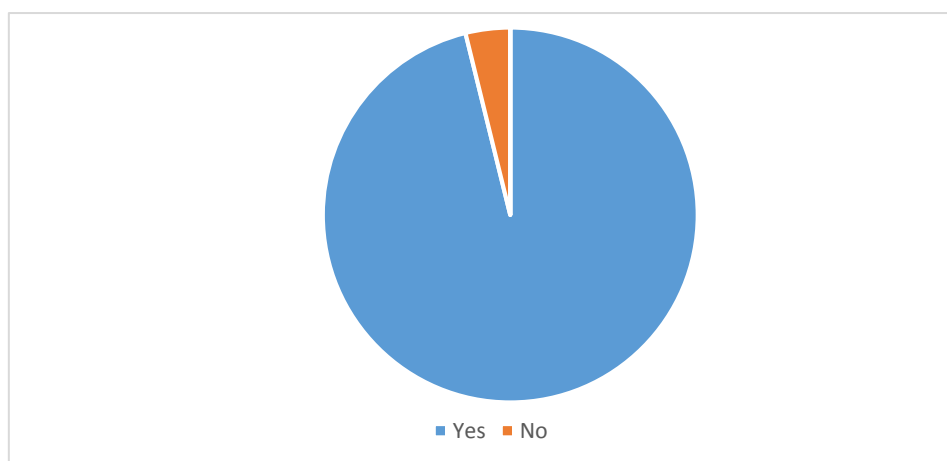


Figure 13: Point of views of teachers' reengaging their learners writing performance.

Table 14 shows the teachers' perceptions on students' written production. Eight teachers (80%) ticked on the option "No" simply, because they see the way their students write in the exams or assignments as mediocre. Two teachers (20%) ticked on the option "yes" they are satisfied with their students written production. Clearly, they know how to help students in developing their writing skills.

Question 02:How would you categorize your students?

Answers	N	Percentage
Non-writers	1	10%
Poor writers	8	80%
Good writers	1	10%
Very good writers	0	0%
Total	10	100%

Table 15: Teachers' rate of their students ' writings.

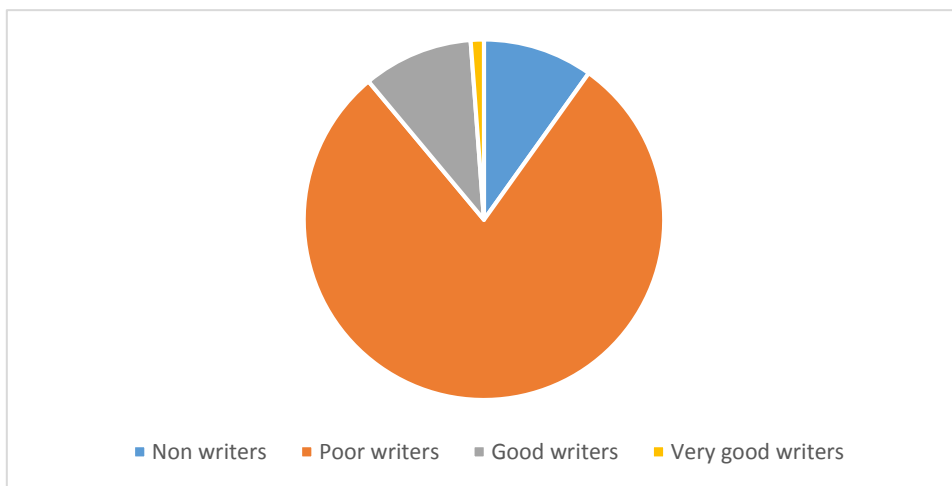


Figure 14: Teachers' rate of their students writing skills.

The aim of this question is related to the previous one; here teachers are required to tick one of the options on how they would classify their students. Eight teachers (80%) clarified that most students write in an incorrect way; their language is poor and their writing skills are not well-developed. Moreover, one teacher (10%) ticked on the option ‘ non-writers’ while no one said that they are ‘ very good writers’’. Only one teacher (10%) ticked on the option ‘good writers’.

Question 03: Do your students make mistakes in their written productions?

Answers	Yes	No	Total
Numbers of answers	10	0	10
Percentage	100%	0%	100%

Table 16:Teacher' views regarding their students' writing.



Figure 15: Teachers' views regarding their students' writing.

100% of the teachers answered “yes” which means that they know that their students commit mistakes. Moreover, we can say that there are obstacles that hinder students in developing their writing skills.

Question 04: Do your students usually engage with you in virtual learning?

Answers	Yes	No	Total
Numbers of answers	6	4	10
Percentage	60%	40%	100%

Table 17: Investigating students' engagements with their teachers' virtual learning process.

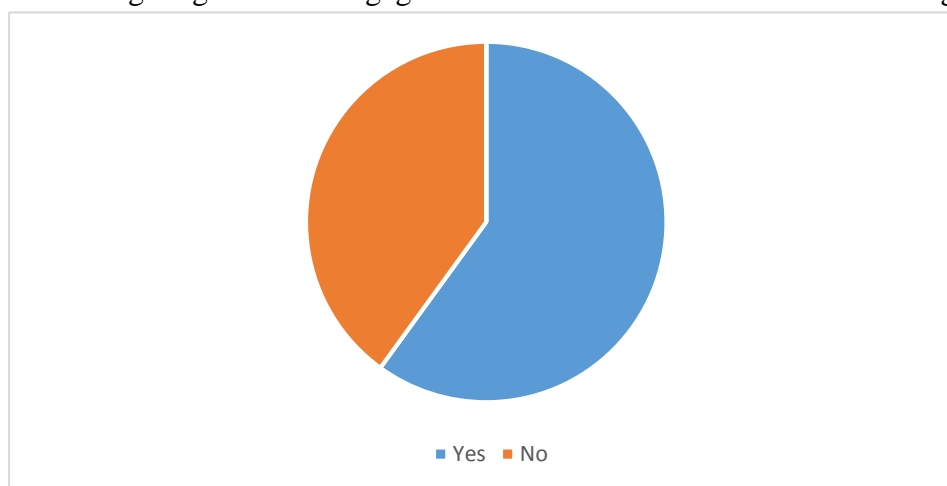


Figure 16: Investigating students' engagements with their teachers' virtual learning process.

Table 17 shows the teachers answers if they engage in virtual communication with their students. (60%) of them chose “yes”. However, 40% ticked on the option “no”. Clearly, academic writing is limited only to the university context.

Question 05: In case they do, how often do your students commit mistakes in the following features of language whether in the context of university or virtually?

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Number of teachers	0	1	2	4	3	10
Percentage	0%	10%	20%	40%	30%	100%

Table 18: Teachers' rate about students' mistakes which occur in the level of language items.

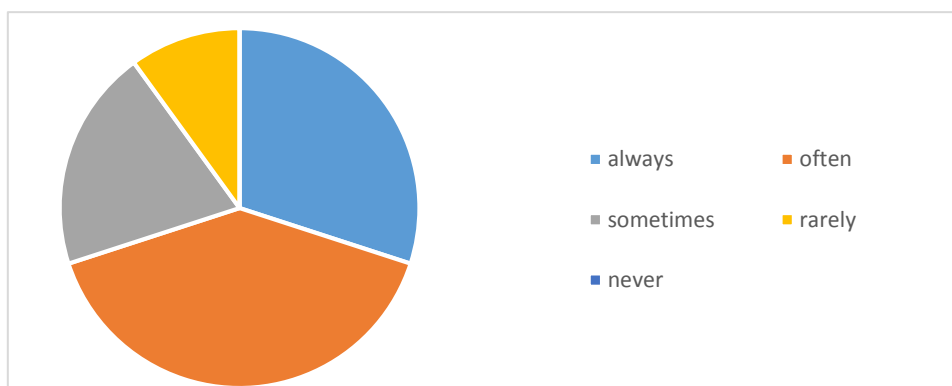


Figure 17: Teachers' rate about students' mistakes in the level of language items.

The Table 18 above shows the teachers ‘rate of students’ mistakes in the language items. Thus, this question targets both vocabulary and grammar of the English language. Four teachers (40%) ticked on the option “often” in relation to “spelling mistakes” that students commit when writing whether virtually or during exams due to texting. Three teachers (30%) chose “always” for the language item lack of “punctuation”, which means that students communicate and write with no-respect to capitalization. Moreover, the remaining teachers (20%) ticked on “sometimes” pointing out on “organization of ideas”. However, one teacher (10%) ticked on “rarely” aiming on shed a light on the extensive use of abbreviation from students in their written productions. No one ticked on the option “never” which means that even though they are practicing writing in English but they still are exposed to make mistakes.

Question 06: What is your point of view regarding the effect of chatting among students in English academic writing?

Answers	N	Percentage
Positive	3	30%
Negative	7	70%
Total	10	100%

Table 19: Effects of chatting and texting in students 'academic writing.

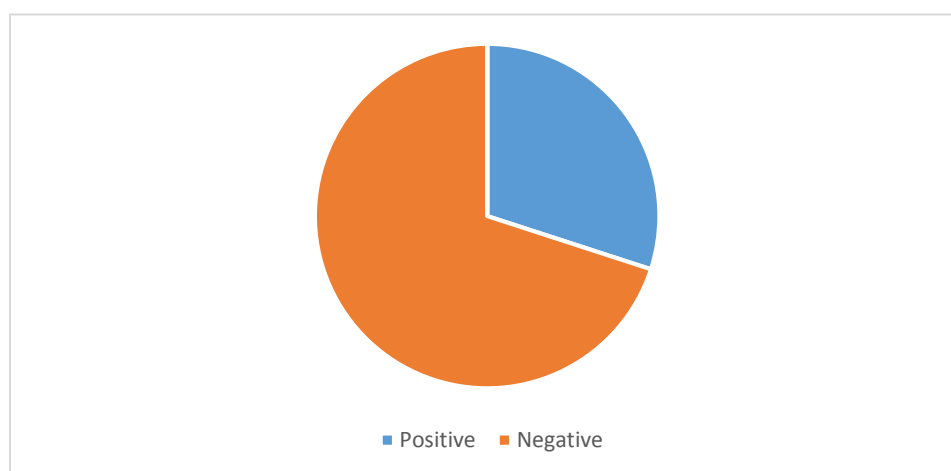


Figure 18: Effects of chatting and texting in students’ academic writings.

In the table 19 the majority of teachers (70%) clarify that chatting has a negative effect on students' academic writing. The others (30%), claim that chatting is positive and can support the writing skills of students. Seven teachers out of ten support their choice by pointing out that students communicate using shortened words, acronyms which permit to construct new words based on the meaning and the context. Moreover, the implementation of conversational rather than academic writing. However, four teachers ticked on the option 'positive' which means chatting could reinforce the writing skills and thereby students would become proficient writers.

Question 07: Do you think that the use of emoticons weakens the writing performance?

Answers	N	Percentage
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 20: The effects of using emoticons in the writing skills.

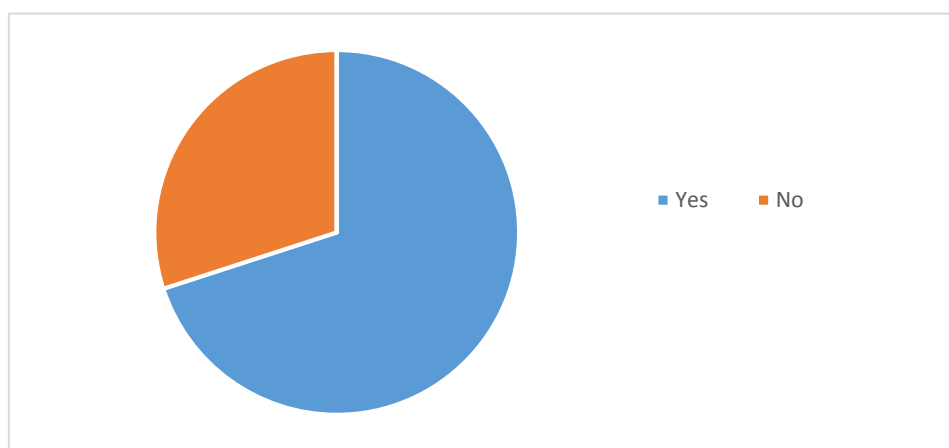


Figure 19: The effects of using emoticons in the writing skills.

The aim behind this question is to see teachers' point of view on the use of emoticons among students. Seven teachers out of ten (70%) ticked on the option "yes»; they backup their claims by stating that emoticons reduce the chance of practicing writing. It also limits their writing skills in which they start neglecting how to form academic texts; one teacher said that users of the emoticons and emojis, if getting used to it in chatting, eventually they will not be able to express themselves in the written form. On the other hand, three teachers (30%) ticked on the option "no" they said that emoticons do not hold back students in improving their writing styles.

Question 08: If you get the chance to communicate with your students virtually, would you advise them to write full sentences with respect to linguistic standardization of language, or instead, following the norms of social media's emoticons and emojis?

Answers	N	Percentage
Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 21: Teachers' perceptions in reviewing the language that their students use virtually.

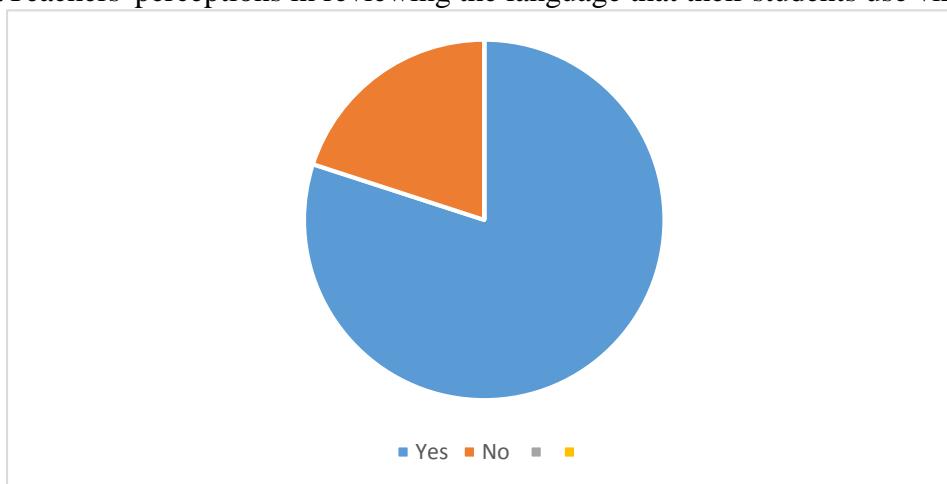


Figure 20: Teachers' point of views about their student' language they use virtually.

Table 21 above shows the teachers' reaction towards the type of language that their students communicate with them virtually. Eight teachers (80%) said that they would advise their students to respect the norms of the English language as well as using formal English. On the other hand, two teachers (20%) clarified that they communicate with their students aiming only to get mutual understating that emoticons are just an extra tool.

Question 09: How do you see the influence of overuse of texting upon students writing performance?

Answers	N	Percentage
Good	0	0%
Bad	10	100%
Total	10	100%

Table 22: The extensive use of texting among students.

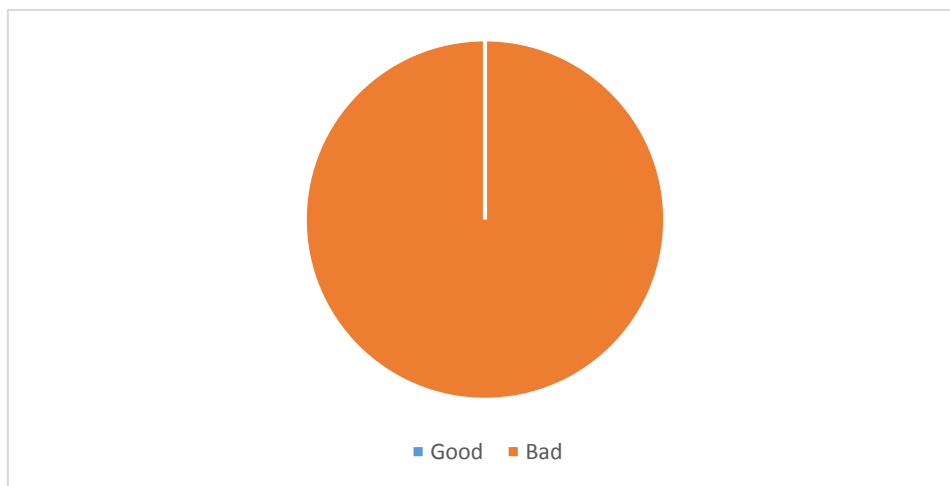


Figure 21: The extensive use of texting among students.

(10/10) teachers agree on the overuse of texting among students would defiantly affect badly on their writing skills and therefore it will be limited.

Question 10: Do you think that applications of Microsoft Office and others that have spell-check option are helpful to students in developing their writing skills?

Answers	N	Percentage
Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 23: The applications that assist students in their writing skills.

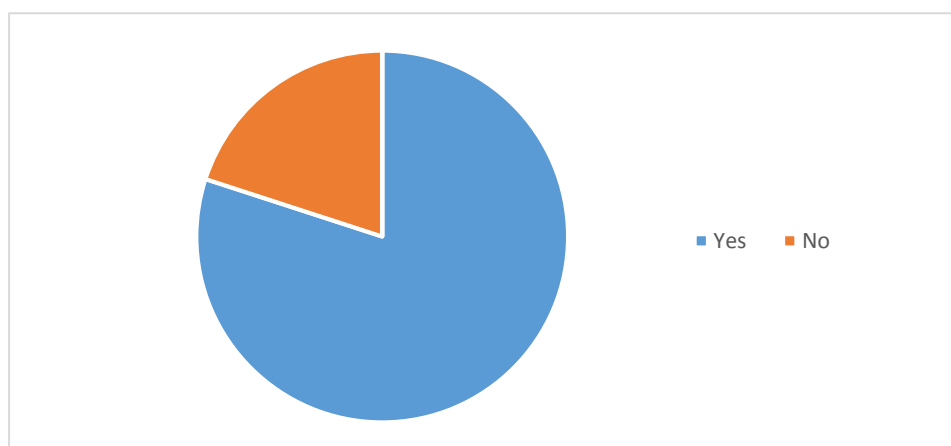


Figure 22: The applications that assist students in their writing skills.

The table 23 above highlights the soft-wares that consist of spell checking option which will correct spelling if the student misspelled word. Thus, (80%) of teachers ticked on the option “yes” which means these tools can just assist students in writing via virtual tools. (20%) of teachers ticked on the option “no”. obviously, they see these applications hold back students in enhancing their writing skills.

Question 11: What kinds of mistakes do the students at the university commit in their academic writing?

The aim behind this question is to get the teachers' point of views in regards with the mistakes that their students commit. In addition, the answers showed that they all agree in that students are having problems of spellings, lack of cohesion, coherence, organization of sentences and ideas and no capitalization. Moreover, they use abbreviations and personal pronouns "I", "we" and so on.

Question 12: What are the features of texting "chat messages" found in the learners' written work?

Answers	N	%
Spelling mistakes	5	50%
Lack of punctuation	4	40%
Over punctuation	0	0%
Leave out function words	0	0%
The of use abbreviation/acronyms	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 24: The effects of texting in students' academic writing.

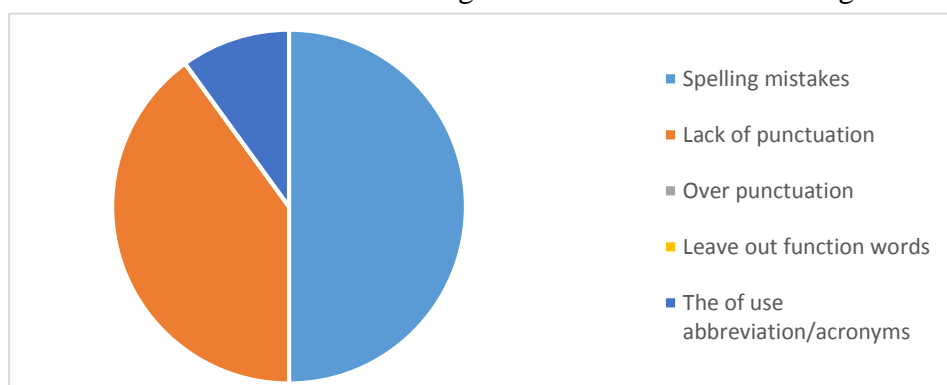


Figure 23: The effects of texting in students' academic writing.

Table 24 above shows the data recorded from teachers' answers on the texting features that were found in students' written works. 5/10 teachers (50%) ticked on "the spelling mistakes" option, while Four teachers (40%) ticked on the option "lack of punctuation". Only one teacher (10%) chose "abbreviations & acronyms" whereas no one ticked on the option "function words". Clearly these are the features that the students are not aware of doing it while writing in universities in which academic writing is needed.

Question 13: Have you ever read something that made you recognize that your students are addicted to chat messaging?

Answers	N	Percentage
Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 25: Teachers' awareness of students use of texting items in their pieces of writings.

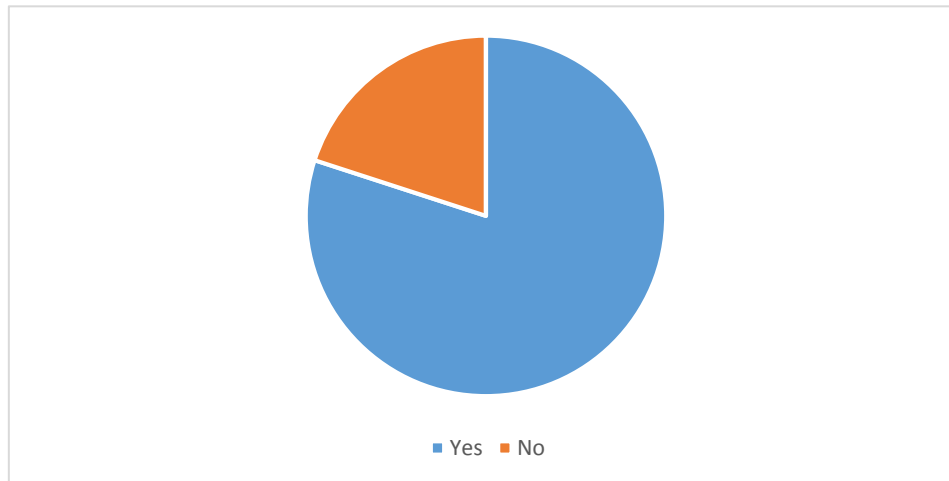


Figure 24: Teachers' awareness of students use of texting items found in their pieces of writings.

Table 25 sums up the results gathered in the twelve question. Eight teachers (80%), answered “yes “. While (20%) have ticked the “no” option which clarify the teachers’ point of view regardless the extensive use of chat among students. The features that teachers found in their analysis of students written work are; PLZ, 4, U, ND. These features are related to cyber language. However, they are used in academic writing and affects negatively on the English language.

Conclusion

The information obtained from both students’ and teachers’ questionnaires are built upon the research questions as well as the hypotheses for the sake of shedding light on the effects of cyber language on students’ academic writing. The data was gathered using the instrument of questionnaire. From analyzing the students’ answers and the teachers’ point of views, we could have found out the outcomes of texting which let students to have poor writing productions such as the absence of punctuations, capitalization, and organizations of ideas whether via virtual communications or in their pieces of writings in the exams. As a

result, we can assert that students are missing the basics of formal writing, because they are addicted to texting without paying attention to the language items.

The results obtained from analyzing the teachers' answers showed that most of them believe that texting has a negative impact on students' written productions. Additionally, teachers seem aware about their students' poor writing skills; this would lead them to advise students to use proper language, i.e. formal language; this is because teachers are not satisfied about their students' written production.

Introduction

This chapter highlights the findings of the investigation on the effect of cyber language on students' academic writing, yet our main concern is to focus on the negative aspects of the overuse of texting among students. Moving along to discuss the findings of both students and teachers' answers. Then to shed light on the recommendations which consist of additional advices and strategies in order to develop the students' writings' skills. In addition to the role of the teacher as a guide and educator after all, the main concern is to empower the students writing skill, so as to get good style and respecting the language items in every conversation via social media, when writing academic essays and so on.

3.1 Discussion of Findings

From analyzing the students and teachers' questionnaires, we come up to the following findings which are related to the main aim of study which is improving the writing skill. Moreover, it sheds light on the effect of cyber language on the academic writing, the awareness of knowing what could harm and limit the written performance, also to check if the ongoing process of texting influences negatively the formal writing of the students. Yet, this analysis is being done for the sake of checking whether students implement the text-lingo in their actual writing i.e. when writing in exams, and whether committing the mistakes of the language form and items are somehow became a habit for them. Furthermore, we can disclose the important results starting with students' responses.

3.2 Findings Related to Students

The analysis of students' questionnaire contributes essentially in obtaining these following results, most of the students (70%) are aware about the importance of developing the writing skill and that the use of social media tools contributes tremendously in developing their writing skills:

- By getting new vocabularies.
- Interact with native English speakers.
- Learning via Social media contribute in practicing the language.
- Facebook and other social interactions sites allow being familiar with different writing styles.

However, only (30%) of the students rejected the idea of learning via social media.

Moreover, the second question targets the students' perceptions toward the benefits of learning via internet what would they accomplish during the learning process. (60%) of the students assert that learning via social media enhances their vocabulary as in knowing new words and lexical terms. (30%) of students focused on learning grammar via social media, whereas (10%) of students choose other which means that there are other skills or strategies the internet or social media might assist them while doing so.

Another point to discuss is the implementation of punctuations as well as language items by students in virtual learning or for communications proposes. Students answers differ from one group to another. Yet, most of them see the importance of respecting the English language norms since they are master students it is important for them to enhance their writing skills, but not all the students are aware of the use of punctuation.

The following questions starting from question 5 till question 9 are interrelated, the aim of these questions is to see whether students use slangs terms while using social media's tools or not. Also, if this usage of shortcutting words would make them feel better, because no one monitors their way of writing since they text with their peers. i.e. the absence of the teachers' role. This, however, would make them commit mistakes in the following language items: spelling mistakes, lack of using of punctuation also committing grammar mistakes. These findings support research's hypotheses.

Focusing on the information obtained from students' responses also from the basic investigation about the negative aspect of texting among students and its relation to the academic writing. Some potential tick answers were given to students in the questionnaire in order to test how they would correct themselves, thus the results show that the majority of students always rely on auto-correction in their smart phones or Facebook. Clearly, the process of checking words is too difficult for students since it takes time to rewrite the correct words that is why this option saved the day but worsen the writing skill later on, limit recalling the exact spelling of words. Moreover, the rest of the students said that they do not give attention to what they have written. Obviously, they are in virtual context, they text with their friends but without a peer's correction. The conversation is not for educational purposes but rather for delivering a message in a quite understandable way by using abbreviations emoticons and so on.

Furthermore, the final question in students' questionnaire meant to be ask in order to raise their confident from now on. It is important to check the language form and items for better transitions of ideas so as the reader can understand what you mean by your style of writing, what do you want to reach. The results obtained from students' responses show that students sometimes do not implement the "coma, inverted brackets, capitalize words" and so on. Because they are in a context and driven by social norms. The cyber language is one reason for that also the habit of people imposes this kind of language lacks. As a result, unintentionally this would make the students lazy and unaware about the actual use of the language.

For further agreement and supports of our assumptions, we rely on teacher's responses and clarifications.

3.3 Findings Related to Teachers

The role of teachers in this research has a great contribution, from the questionnaire that have been given to them. The results obtained reveal the teachers' perceptions about their students' style of writing. The majority of teachers have rated their students as being poor writers and committing unbearable mistakes. Since, they are not satisfied with their learners' written production, they provide us with the adequate answers regardless the present study.

Moreover, due to the ever-increasing role of technology in peoples' life, the drawbacks of texting among students have affected negatively upon their writing skills. From the one hand, teachers clarified that their students are modifying the way they write as consequence of texting. Students do not use academic language while writing also no respect to the structure of writing. From the other hand, teachers confirmed that chatting is good for communication but it is not helpful to improve the writing skills, "it is more negative than positive because it leads to laziness, thereby students rely on auto-correction rather than rely on their own prior knowledge for spelling".

Furthermore, from the results obtained from teachers' clarification about the weak style of their students' writing. We can say that there are difficulties that hold students from improving their writing style. Thus, teachers said that the use of emoticons and emojis weakens the writing skills, clearly, they are adapting this new trend of chat language with more spelling mistakes, lack of punctuation also the overuse of abbreviations and acronyms the most unpleasant thing is that students are exposed to adopting and using web slang.

Moreover, these features of “chat messages” were found in students actual writing style; “wlcom” stands for welcome, “wat” stands for what, “IC” stands for i see, “btw” stands for by the way, and so on.

Neglecting academic writing would lead in being exposed to commit these mistakes as it is mentioned before, it is important to know the rules of the English language and respect its norms. But students from the angle we see, also based on teachers’ perceptions. We can disclose that the majority of the students do not distinguish between formal and informal writing. To conclude, teachers’ view points towards the frequent use of cyber language would damage students’ writing performance. It is essential for students to learn and practice their writing skills in respect to what they have learned in University, because they are using the language surely some outer force will change it.

3.4 Suggestions and Recommendations

Many implications and recommendations can be stated in relation to this study. One major implication is to focus on both students and teachers' awareness on the negative aspects of cyber language on weakening the writing skills thus, solutions are as follow:

Implications for learners:

It is essential to focus on developing learners' cognitive abilities since they are expose to other forms of language in virtual context. Moreover, if we could make them aware and get well controlled of their writing skills, eventually it will lead to harness good results.

1. Students should know about the effect of texting on academic performance.
2. Students should be guided by their teachers as well as parents on how they use websites.
3. Students should join to groups in social media for the sake of developing the writing skills, also there, they can learn how to construct ideas.
4. Students should monitor better their study time and lower virtual interaction at minimum and focus on developing their style of writing.
5. Parents from the one hand should prevent their teenagers to get distracted and consumed by these different technological tools: laptops, mobile phones, TV, games and so on.
6. Websites that aim of teaching and learning should be seen checked by students in order to enhance their skills, there, they can monitor their learning despite the help of the teacher.
7. Students should create a gap between navigating on social media stuffs "Facebook, skype, twitter" and learning academic writing from some of the well-known websites in enhancing the learning process,

8. It is essential for students to be aware about the setting when using formal and informal writing.
9. Students during exams should know the language items when to use them, also avoid using abbreviations in the formal language since they are expose to informal English it in social medias.

Implications for Teachers

The teacher is the center of the learning process because he has the ability to monitor the writing skills of his students, showing them their mistakes and examining their style of writing. Yet, his goal is to let students aware about the negative effect of texting because it would limit their way of writing, becoming less care about implementing language items in their writing.

1. Teachers should deploy strategies that can help students develop their writing skills, why not integrating technology in learning.
2. Teachers should focus on letting students use social media for academic purposes developing a certain skill, rather than navigation for no reason at all.
3. Teachers as well as students should be aware about the negative aspects of chatting also the blind side of these new technologies on the academic English because somehow, we are being controlled by them.
4. Teachers should be not tolerating students when committing mistakes at the level of the language especially when they use some features of chat language in their exam papers.
5. Teachers should create pages in social networking which aim in practice writing beyond the level of university or school. It is obvious that teachers do not insist students on using correct grammar and evaluate their chat messages, but it is important for them to let students distinguish between formal and informal English.

Insisting more on using punctuations and not using abbreviations. This however would permit to students to construct a prior knowledge aiming on being aware of the importance of academic writing.

3.5 Suggestions for Students and Teachers

Single letters	Words
R	Are
U	You
C	See
B	Be
Digits	Words
2	Two, to, too, and word such as today
4	For and word such as forget
8	In word such as hate
Acronyms and abbreviations	Words
PLZ	Please
TQ	Thank you
CU	See you
U2	You too
B4	Before
CUL	See you later
HRU	How are you?
IC	I see
L8R	Later
RUOK	Are you ok ?
IOU	I owe you
FC	Fingers crossed

Table 26:The main text chat features that are prohibited in writing academic texts.

- The table above shows the features of chat messages that the majority of students use them in their writing, thus it is essential to avoid these kind of language chunks.
- Students as well as teachers are responsible for that kind of language that they are using in virtual communication, it would be confused to use these abbreviations along with their essays since it is considered as being low writing.

3.6 Limitation of the Present Study

This study has many limitations that have hold processing data, and quality of good academic research. Thus, these obstacles must be taken into consideration since researchers

while doing their investigation they should be aware about what the problems that an academic research may face. Yet, the results of the research were limited because of its procedures and the sample of the study:

- The limits of this research were based on the target population in a very short time and context because the majority of the students were absent, the questionnaire was delivered only to those who attended the lecture on the 15th of march 2017.
- What was problematic when conducting this research was the miss organization of time because of studies, no time to organize the relevant information.
- Some obstacles were done during the research we found that some students as well as teachers left some of the questions unanswered
- The aim of this research is directed toward the overuse of texting on students written production mainly not focusing on the actual technological devices but rather than on the chat language use.
- Other main limitation of this study is to focus the negative aspects of online communication, but from the questionnaire there were some questions that most of the students did not understand and start answering randomly for the sake of finishing the questionnaire in a very fast way that's effect on completing the research.
- Testing the credibility of the research on the impact of texting on students' academic performance, thus the instrument of the research "questionnaire" did not include students from the whole faculty of the English department.
- Teachers on one hand, did not provide their answers. The questionnaire was hardly being analyzed since some questions were left unanswered, that is what makes the process of the research going so slowly.
- The instrument of the questionnaire from the other hand is not flexible, clearly it can reach a lot of participants as teachers and students, but responses are not taken seriously by them that what make the research has no control over the answers.
- the study select randomly teachers of English not specifically those who teach written expression.
- the limitation targeted the negative effect of texting on the language form no other forms of CMC like e-mail, Facebook, skype. And so on.

Conclusion

This chapter mainly highlight the findings and the implication of this research. Procedures were done order to gather the essential information and highly recommended solutions in order to make learners as well as teachers at the university of Mostaganem know what kind of effect would texting activities harm the writing skills. From one hand, it focuses on the recommendations that both students and teachers should follow as in creating strategies that would enhance the writing skills along with social media interactions like educational web-pages, Facebook groups...etc. From the other hand, rising awareness among students to watch out for their style of writing especially when it comes to the language items as in punctuations, grammar and so on. To conclude, texting affect negatively on students written production and it is teachers' role to guide their students in order to have a good competencies and performance in writing.

General Conclusion

The present research was carried out for the sake of investigating the effect of cyber language or net speak on students' academic writing by focusing on its negative aspects. In fact, the aim of this research was to analyze how written language is used as an act of texting among students. Moreover, it focuses on the effect of texting on formal writing. Yet, by identifying straightly the major effects of the overuse of chatting, students will be able to know what would harm their writing skills on the long run if they continue using these type of language "text-lingo" during their academic process.

The dissertation highlights the main concepts such as principles of academic writings, net speak, texting short forms, and so on. The review of literature, in this research, has contributed very much in building the required information based on several scholars and linguists at the top Crystal's (2008) point of view that texting language and its profuse use of abbreviations and slang can affect negatively on student's language and literacy. The second chapter dealt with data collection and analysis targeting both students and teachers' perceptions by answering the questionnaires. Moreover, the case study in this research was first year master students in the stream of language and communication. The third chapter dealt with the discussion and recommendations of the present work.

In fact, this research highlights the importance of academic writing for university students, and it emphasizes on the various ways of practicing writing with and via technological devices. Additionally, the research investigated the effect of texting on written production of EFL students, focusing on the negative aspects like the use of abbreviations and rely on auto check option in correcting words and many other things.

As the final point concluded from this dissertation, also throughout the obtained analysis from students and teachers' questionnaires, the main research question is being reached and answered; also the hypothesis was tested and therefore has been validated. In this regard, the results proved that students have a poor writing skill; that is why teachers rate them as having poor writing performance for the lack of linguistic packages. In fact, students text each other using English without paying attention to the proper use of language items: inappropriate use of punctuation, shortcutting, using acronyms also misspelling words. These features of net speak exist actually in students written production, and what makes their style of writing poor is the intentional or unintentional influence of texting.

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Appendices

Dear students

This questionnaire is designed to highlight the influence of text messaging among students in their academic writing., more importantly the goal is to clarify the practice of English outside the context of university by pointing out whether texting can be positive or negative on the long run.

Would you please answer the following questions 😊.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please tick (✖) in the corresponding box or give a complete answer when needed.

Are you :

a) Male

b) Female

Age: ()

Level:

1.Do you think that social Media's use enhances your learning process?

a) Yes

b) No

If Yes, how?

.....
.....

2.To what extent does learning via internet help you ameliorate your personal learning?

a) Grammar

b) Vocabulary

c) Others

.....
.....

3.what about punctuation? Do you use it when writing in social medias (Facebook, Twitter, Skype)?

a) Always

b) Never

c) Sometimes

4.Have you ever construct full words like: U (You), IDK (I don't know)?

a) Yes

b) No

5. Are you aware that the use of slangs, affect your writing skills?

a) yes b) no

6. Do you feel at ease when using slang among your friends or people you know in social medias?

a) Yes

b) No

7. How do you explain the use of informal English in your daily life?

- Influence of everyday interaction
- Influence by media (films, songs, TV....)
- Personal preference
- Others

8. Don't you think that if you are not aware of the use of English outside the context of university, you will be exposed to make many mistakes?

a) Yes b) no

9. What are the common difficulties that you encounter while texting your friends via technological services?

a) In the level of spelling

b) Making grammar mistakes

c) Rarely use of punctuation

10. If such an error was made, how are you going to correct yourself?

- Use pocket dictionary
- Rely on the auto-correction in the smart phones or Facebook
- Don't give attention to what you wrote
- Always Relying on peer correction

11. Does it happen to you that you are not sure of what you have written like missing a letter or forgetting a coma, point, inverted brackets and so on.

- Sometimes
- Never
- Always

Dear Teacher

I would be so grateful if you could answer the following questions. The aim of this questionnaire is to get teachers' perceptions of extensive use of chat and its effects on learners' academic writing performance.

Please tick (✗) in the corresponding box or provide with a complete answer when needed.

1. Are you satisfied with your learners written production?

Yes No

2. How would you classify your students?

Non-writers

Poor writers

Good writers

Very good writers

Please explain:

.....
.....

3. Do your students make mistakes in their written productions?

Yes No

4. Do your students usually engage with you in virtual learning

Yes no

5. In case they do, how often do your students commit mistakes in the following features of language whether in the context of university or virtually?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
-Punctuation					
-Spelling					
-Use of abbreviations					
-Organisation of ideas					

6-What is your point of view regarding the effect of chatting among students in English academic writing?

Positive Negative

Please Explain:

.....
.....

7- Do you think that the use of emoticons weakens the writing performance?

Yes No

Why?

.....
.....

8. If you get the chance to communicate with your students virtually, would you advise them to write full sentences with respect to linguistic standardization of language, or instead, following the norms of social media's emoticons and emojis as in; 😊 =I am glad, happy, 😞 =I feel sad, angry. Etc.?

Yes No

9. How do you see the influence of overuse of texting upon students writing performance?

Good Bad

10-Do you think that applications of Microsoft Office and others that have spell-check option are helpful to students in developing their writing skills?

Yes No

11. What kinds of mistakes do the students at the university commit in their academic writing?

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

12. What are the features of texting "chat messages" found in the learners' written work (multiple answers are required) ?

Spelling mistakes

Lack of punctuation

Over punctuation

Leave out function words

The of Use abbreviation/acronyms

13. Have you ever read something that made you recognize that your students are addicted to chat messaging?

Yes No

If yes, please provide with some examples:

.....
.....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire 😊