

**AHMED DRAIA UNIVERSITY – ADRAR**



**FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE**

**A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master's  
Degree in Linguistics and Didactics**

**Entitled:**

**The Impact of Facebook on Students' Writing  
Skills:**

**1st Year LMD and 1<sup>st</sup> Year Master Students of  
English at Adrar University**

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## **Abstract**

Language learning has grown beyond the boundaries of the four walls of the classroom; in fact, most language learning occurs outside and informally. Informal learning through social media like Facebook (FB) is a significant alternative environment for language practice and use. FB is currently considered as the most popular platform for online social networking among university students. The purpose of this study is to find out whether students writing performance is impacted by Facebook or not and the type of impact. The main problem that we found in students' writing is that their writing proficiency is not getting improved through the extended use of FB. On the other hand, it is getting worse because of the non-use of correct grammar. To attain the aim of this study, a questionnaire was delivered to students from the department of English at Ahmed Draia University of Adrar where we investigated our hypothesis. According to the analysis of the results, our research hypothesis has confirmed that FB has a deep impact on students' writing skills', however, it is proved to be a positive impact.

**Keywords:** social media, Facebook, writing skills, Algeria EFL learners

## **Dedication**

To my dear mother and beloved father,

To my brothers and sisters,

To my nieces and nephews,

To all my family and friends,

To all those who prayed for me and besought God to help me

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**FB:** Facebook

**LMD:** Licence-Master-Doctorate

**CMC :** computer mediated communication

**Q :** Question

**N:** Number

**NA:** No Answer

**%:** Percentage

**Opt:** Option

**Fig:** Figure



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# General Introduction

### General Introduction

Social media is one of the highly used internet-based forms of communication. It has offered huge opportunities for users to share information, create conversations and develop their own content of interest conveniently. There are many examples of these platforms for instance blogs (wordpress, blogspot), microblogs (Twitter, Posterous, Tumblr), wikis (Wikipedia, Scholarpedia), Social networking sites (Facebook, Academia, LinkedIn), photosharing sites (Instagram, Cymera), instant messaging (Whatsapp, Wechat, Line), video-sharing sites (Keek, Youtube) and many more. These platforms have benefited billions of users from all over the world either from the individual perspective, professional level, the companies or institutions. From the educational perspective, many scholars have found that these platforms especially the social networking sites have enormous potential that can encourage critical engagement in discussion as well as harness peer feedback throughout the learning process. In EFL classes, where writing is a vital skill, electronic communication technology has [remarkably] revolutionized the composing process and participation in writing activities. Algeria is no exception, especially during the last couple of years where most Algerian EFL learners have become active users of Facebook. For diverse reasons, Facebook has become a solid network among those learners which academic writing is affected by its use.

#### 1. Statement of the Problem

Writing skills can be major criteria towards better academic position and greater educational success. However, this advantage will be lost if students do not believe the importance of writing skills and how Facebook could affect it.

#### 2. Research Questions

In order to facilitate the investigation regarding the impact of FB on EFL learners' writing, the researcher formulated the following research questions:

- Does FB have an impact on the writing efficiency of the student?
- If so, how does this impact occur?

#### 3. Aim of the Study

This work aims at investigating Facebook's influence on the students' writing process, and tries to figure whether the impact is positive or negative.

#### 4. Hypothesis

According to what has been said before, we hypothesise that facebook has an impact on the students' writing proficiency. Hereby, the researcher is also open to investigating how FB might impact the written language and motivation as a whole.

### **5. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present research will be basically divided into two main chapters. Chapter One will be devoted to the literature review and Chapter two will be about the analysis of quantitative data and the results obtained from students questionnaire.

The first chapter examines the importance of writing as a skill and to EFL learners. It also sheds light on social media and discusses its different elements. Additionally, it deals with some aspects of FB and the relation between the two terms, writing and FB. It is in chapter two that we define our sample, describe the questionnaire and analyze it.

*Chapter One*

*From Academic  
Writing to Creative  
Writing*

## Chapter One: From Academic Writing to Creative Writing

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### Introduction

In this chapter, there will be a brief discussion of the nature of writing particularly the academic writing where we will discuss its definition and illustrate its importance to learners. Further, this chapter will review the different social media sites and the writing form on Facebook.

### 1.1. The Nature of Writing

Writing is generally a group of letters or symbols written or marked on a surface as a means of communication (Collins & Genter, 1980, p.16). The ability to write in both second and foreign language becomes more and more significant in our universal society and effective in education. In other words, writing begins to be commonly notable as an essential skill for education, personal and business reasons. As advances in transportation and technology allow people to interact with each other, communication across languages becomes ever more essential (Cushing, 2002).

#### 1.1.1. Academic Writing

Academic writing is either writing assignments that may range from one paragraph to several pages long or, writing answers on tests and exams that may be a few sentences long or a complete essay. These activities are designed for anybody who is studying at English medium colleges and universities (Bailey, 2003).

“Academic writing in English may be different not only from academic writing in your own language, but even from other writing in English” (Zemach & Rumisek, 2003). Bailey also points out that academic writing is a flexible course that legalizes students to operate their work either lonely or with the help of the teacher (2003).

#### 1.1.1.1. Types of Academic Writing

The research that one does means to attempt to find answers to a set of questions that make up a problematic. This research may be a fruit of a personal choice, or interest in a given field; or imposed by some authority or by the necessities of the environment. A historical research paper should be undertaken within a period of time. But before dealing with the components of a research work, we must first tackle some types of academic writing (research paper).

### **a-Thesis**

It is a long piece of writing on a given topic that students do to state an idea or theory, in order to get a University degree (Hornby, 2010,p.1640).

### **b- Document**

A document is an official piece of writing which gives information about a given subject (Hornby, 2010,p.200).

### **c- Paper**

According to Hornby the word paper refers either to examination or to “ A written document that reports scientific or academic research and is usually subjected to peer review before publication in a scientific journal or in the proceedings of a scientific or academic meeting” (2010,p.1040).

#### **1.1.1.2. Writing a Research Paper**

Any scientific production, whether a paper, a thesis or a document, should necessarily abide by conventional rules which are internationally recognised. The evaluation of such a work focuses on its content and its form. Here, we are going to focus on the form which refers to the presentation of the work.

#### **a- Presentation**

International norms for the presentation of papers, thesis, books, etc., have been standardised by international institutions such as: the UNESCO, the International Federation of Documentation (I. F. D) and the International Standardisation Organisation (I. S. O.). A research paper, then, is to be presented as follows:

- The front page/cover (title, researcher' name, supervisor, year..).
- The title page : first page after the cover with title.
- Dedication: not academic but personal and optional.
- Acknowledgments: express gratitude to people who helped in the elaboration of the work.
- Contents.
- List of tables, abbreviations, illustration, maps, figures, etc.
- Introduction.
- Main body of the paper ( development).
- Conclusion.
- Bibliography (Bailey, 2003,p. 106).

#### **1.1.2. The Importance of Writing**

Long ago writing really started, though approximately the majority of human beings grow up speaking their first language, writing should be taught. For a child,

acquiring a spoken language comes naturally as long as he/she is exposed to it. However, this child should get a conscious learning in order to be able to write.

As Harmer states “being able to write is a vital skill for ‘speakers’ of a foreign language as much as for anyone using their own first language”(2004,p.7). Yet, in the context of education, relying on ‘writing proficiency’ is important in a way of measuring the student’s knowledge in most exams of testing foreign language abilities (Harmer, 2004,p. 7).

The word writing which comes from the verb “to write” means being engaged in an activity and process. Thus, writing is the most popular means of communication. In addition, writing is transforming thoughts into statements. It is a production of spoken language on paper. Mayer believes that “writing is speaking to others on paper –or on a computer screen...writing is also an action-a process of discovering and assembling your ideas, putting them on paper...” (2009, p.2).

One of the important reasons that pushes a student to write is communication. The spread of the internet and the subsistence in technological world make connecting with computers desirable. People are exchanging messages faster by sending quick computer messages or by getting in a chat room (Mayer,2009,p.5).

### **1.2. An Overview of Computer Mediated Communication**

Over the last two decades, Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) has seized the spotlight in terms of its effect upon language. In its most basic sense, CMC is a contact between human beings through computer devices. Additionally, Computer-Mediated Communication can be defined as a research field that explores the social, communicative and linguistic impact of communication technologies, which have continually evolved in connection with the use of computer networks (Baron, 2000).

#### **1.2.1. Linguistic Features of CMC**

Language is a means of conveying ideas and human speech through a system of arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols. In writing, Crystal (2004) identifies five distinctive features of written language, summarized as follows:

- ❖ Graphic features: the general presentation and organization of the written language, defined in terms of such factors as distinctive typography, page design, spacing, use of illustrations and color.

- ❖ Orthographic (or graph logical) features: the writing system of an individual language, defined in terms of such factors as distinctive use of the alphabet, capital letters, spelling, punctuation, and ways of expressing emphasis such as italics, boldface; for instance, American and British English are distinguished by many spelling differences (e.g. centre vs. center).
- ❖ Grammatical features: the many possibilities of syntax and morphology, defined in terms of such factors as the distinctive use of sentence structure, word order and word inflections.
- ❖ Lexical features: the vocabulary of a language, defined in terms of the set of words and idioms given distinctive use within a variety.
- ❖ Discourse features: the structural organization of a text, defined in terms of such factors as coherence, relevance, paragraph structure, and the logical progression of ideas.

### 1.2. Social media

As computer technology increases, social media becomes more and more a widely used source of communication. It has become so popular that it changes completely the way people view and respond to society, and open up new ways for people to interact with each other.

Social media sites are web-based sites used to broadcast information and interact with individuals. However, the term is most often used to describe popular social networking websites, which include the following: Facebook, Twitter, Myspace. These sites are small virtual villages. They operate like a bookstore, or a meeting place for orbiting a set of ideas.

#### 1.2.1. MySpace

MySpace.com is a popular social networking web site. It started out as a site where musicians and bands share their music and dates. Then, it has grown into a more complex community where users can create profiles, including photographs, educational background, hobbies, etc (Christensson, 2007). In order to create a “MySpace” account, users- who are at least 14 years old- may be asked to provide personal information such as name, email address or home address or to answer questions. Furthermore, they also need to choose a username and password (Conn, 2011,p.32).

### 1.2.2. YouTube

YouTube is a web site that allows members to post, view, upload and share video clips online. It was launched in 2005. In order to watch videos users are not required to register or to have an account (Mathews, p.5)

### 1.2.3. Twitter

Twitter is a sort of social media online service where registered users are allowed to post text as well as links, photos, and even videos (<http://www.dictionary.com>). It also enables them to send or read short messages called “Tweets”. Many people also use Twitter to share updates with others by answering one simple question: “what are you doing?” (Christensson, 2009, para. 2). The term was fully explained by Oxford dictionary as “Twitter is a social networking service that allows you to send out short regular messages about what you are doing, that people can access on the Internet or on their mobile/ cell phones”(2010, p.1669).

Twitter has become the next preferable social networking site, it is as functional as Facebook or MySpace (Christensson, 2009, para.5).

### 1.2.4. Wikipedia

The word Wikipedia derives from the words wiki-a type of collaborative website- and the word encyclopedia. Wikipedia is a multilingual free encyclopedia which is written by different people around the world. However, the majority of its articles can be edited by anyone who can reach the Internet. Accordingly, sometimes its information can not be reliable (Margret, 2010).

### 1.2.5. LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social networking site designed specifically for the business communities and business professionals. The site was launched in May 2003 and co-founded by Reid Hoffman. It enables its users to keep in touch with past and present colleagues. Like Facebook and MySpace, LinkedIn seeks to the allowance of creating a custom profile. However, this profile is business -oriented rather than personal (Christensson, 2010).

### 1.2.6. Pinterest

Pinterest was founded by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra and Evan Sharp. Its service launched as a closed beta in March 2010 (Margret, 2016, para. 3). This social networking website is used to share and categorize images found online as well as organizing and sharing ideas with others. Pinterest allows its users to create their own “boards” in order to organize their own content. This board that includes different topics such as home decor,

quotes, games and so on can be browsed by other Pinterest. Likewise, they can also “like”, or comment on users’ pins (i.e) individual items (Christensson, 2012).

### **1.2.7. Google+**

Pronounced Google plus. It is a social networking by which people can interact offline than is the case in other social networking services, such as Facebook and Twitter. (Margret, 2011)

### **1.2.8. Email**

E-mail or Electronic mail is a website that gives the space for users to transfer messages among each other by using computer systems. Some of the email clients are: Gmail, Hotmail, Outlook, Yahoo mail, and Eudora (Crystal, 2004, p.10).

### **1.2.9. Instagram**

Instagram is a free online program and social network that enables users to take, edit and share photos with other users via Instagram website, Email, Twitter and even Facebook. (Christensson, 2014)

### **1.2.10. Facebook**

One of the highly used internet-based forms of communication is Facebook (FB). FB is a web-based, interactive network that was created by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. It allows users to share information and thoughts over a wide area. In addition, it is an example of a 2.0 social networking sites (SNSs), which operates as an open platform, but within a defined community of users (Collier & Mafid, 2012,p.2).

FB does not only allow its users to upload photos, discuss different subjects, and update their profiles but also leave messages for other Facebookers whether they are their friends or not; being online or offline (Amasha &Alkhalaf, 2014,p. )

Bodomo (2010) describes FB in the following words:

FB,the new CMC medium, would become one of the most popular websites ...its popularity has increased so much so that not only the youth but some prominent members of older generations...use it to get in touch with customers (316).

In the same stream of thought, Christensson (2008) defines Facebook as “a social networking website that was originally designed for college students, but is now open to anyone 13 years of age or older”.

### 1.2.10.1. Facebook Vocabulary

FB is currently the leading social networking site with more than 500 million active users as of March 2011. Working within and around FB benefits users to encounter various elements of FB vocabulary. The most known ones are mentioned below:

#### 1.2.10.1.1. Profile

It is where FB's users share information about themselves, including their interests, work history, education, religion, date of birth, location (past and present), favorite music, movies, etc. These pieces of information shown on the profile can be updated at any time (Margret,2010) .

#### 1.2.10.1.2. Wall/ Timeline

“Timeline” is a new facebook feature where most recent updates are introduced such as photos, events, friends added and comments. Members can click to specific months and years to see FB activity from that time period. “Timeline” has replaced the “Facebook Wall” (Christensson, 2008).

#### 1.2.10.1.3. Status

This space is used by Facebookers to update their friends with recent news. These updates could be short. Eg: “Home sick”, “Stuck in traffic” or long such as a debate of thousands of characters. Status can take numerous forms and be in different posts, for instance, photos, questions, mentioning what they are doing and so on (Beese,2015, para 23).

#### 1.2.10.1.4. Home Page

Though an FB newbie may not distinguish between profile and home page. There is a slight difference between these two terms. By definition, page refers to the account of brands and celebrities. eg, a company's page. In home page, any FB's participant has a list of recent updates from the individuals and companies that they have chosen to follow (Facebook Vocabulary, 2011).

#### 1.2.10.1.5. Comment

Users write messages by clicking “comment”. These messages occur either as a reply to a status update or to a note on a photograph (Facebook Vocabulary, 2011).

#### 1.2.10.1.6. Tag

Tagging is marking a photo, video, or any post with other Facebook members (Beese, 2015).

### 1.2.10.1.7. Chat

Chat is a type of instant messaging via FB. Additionally, it is the exchange of typed messages between computer users in real time via the Internet (Beese, 2015, para.21).

### 1.2.10.1.8. Messages

Similar to emails, they are messages sent from one facebook account to another. You can message more than one person at a time (Beese, 2015).

## 1.3. Writing and Facebook

Social Media has an impact on the writing skills. Accordingly, frequent exposure to FB has influenced every aspect of our lives and one of the most noticeable aspects is the way we write, and use language. Seeing lots of informal written language in FB is inevitable since people are free to post anything in this site. Therefore, frequency in using Facebook in its first stages means adopting its informal language by its users (Tretenfahn, 2011). In the same vein Tretenfahn says, "Some of the ramifications can be seen on the internet, Email, blogs, chatrooms, MySpace and Facebook seem to be treated as "Trash" forms of communication where good spelling and grammar are irrelevant" (2011).

Such as spelling errors and poor grammar, particularly the confusion of words such as "fourth" and "forth", "bean" and "been", "principle" and "principal", and "formerly" and "formally". And yet millions of users are still active in FB for the attractive linguistics features that are available on the site.

### 1.3.1. Facebook Linguistic Features

Facebook's conversation cannot be free from the use of these three features: abbreviation, acronyms and emoticons. These elements are needed for expressing nuances of meaning (eg. Sarcasm, bemusement, tentativeness, irritation, etc). Thus, the communication between the users is clearly understandable.

#### 1.3.1.1. Emoticons (also known by smiley)

The first appearance of emoticons was in 1982 by Scott Fahlman. Baron (2000) states that "Fahlman wrote at the time: "I propose...the following character sequence for joke markers: :-) . Read it sideways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark things that are NOT jokes, given current trends. For this use :-(" ". The feature emoticons or smiley are generated from the combination of punctuation marks or numerals on the keyboard. She further argues that the most common emoticons are:

:-) happiness, humor

:-o shocked, amazed

:-( sadness, displeased

:'( crying



## Appendix One : Students' Questionnaire

;-) winking

:~] sarcastic

Figure 2 below shows examples of Facebook emoticons

:) happy	:-c call me - New!	:")> blushing	L-) loser
:( sad	:~]] on the phone - New!	:P tongue	:-& sick
;) winking	~X( at wits' end - New!	:-* kiss	:-\$ don't tell anyone
:D big grin	:-h wave - New!	=( broken heart	[-( not talking
::) batting eyelashes	T) :t time out - New!	:-O surprise	:~O clown
>D< big hug	8-> daydreaming - New!	X( angry	8-) silly
:-/ confused	I-) sleepy	:> smug	<-P party
:x love struck	8-  rolling eyes	B-) cool	(  yawn
:-S worried	=P~ drooling	/:) raised eyebrow	:~o liar
#-S whew!	:-? thinking	=)) rolling on the floor	:-w waiting
>:) devil	#-o d'oh	O:-) angel	:-< sigh
:(( crying	=D> applause	:-B nerd	>P phbbbt
:)) laughing	:-SS nailbiting	=; talk to the hand	<~) cowboy

Fig 2: facebook smileys codes and emoticons (adopted from <http://bing.com>)

### 1.3.1.2. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Beside emoticons, abbreviations and acronyms have also been prominent in FB's features. These abbreviations are shorthands for sentences, and phrases such as "BBL" for "Be Back Later", "LOL" "Laugh out Loud", "WG" "Wicked Grin" and "THX" "Thanks"(Mesthrie, 2001, p.288). Other current abbreviations are listed in the table bellow

Abbreviations	The whole sentence (word)	Abbreviations	The whole sentence (word)
LOL	Laugh out loud	BFF	Best friend forever
OMG	Oh my God	OOTD	Outfit of the day
ILY	I love you	FTW	For the win
LMAO	Laughing my a** off	TXT	Text
WTF	What the f***?	HMU	Hit me up
PPL	People	HBD	Happy birthday
IDK	I don't know	TMI	Too much information
TBH	To be honest	NM	Not much
BTW	By the way	GTFO	Get the f*** out
THX	Thanks	NVM	Never mind

## Appendix One : Students' Questionnaire

SMH	Shaking my head	DGAF	Don't give a f***
FFS	For f***'s sake	FBF	Flashback Friday
AMA	Ask me anything	DTF	Down to f***
FML	F*** my life	FOMO	Fear of missing out
TBT	Throwback Thursday	SMFH	Shaking my f*** head
JK	Just kidding	OMW	On my way
IMO	In my opinion	POTD	Photo of the day
YOLO	You only live once	LMS	Like my status
ROFL	Rolling on the floor laughing	GTG	Got to go
MCM	Man crush Monday	ROFLMAO	Rolling on floor laughing my a*** of
IKR	I know right?	TTYL	Talk to you later
FYI	For your information	AFAIK	As far as I know
BRB	Be right back	LMK	Let me know
GG	Good game	PTFO	Passed the f*** out
IDC	I don't care	SFW	Safe for work
TGIF	Thank God it's Friday	HMB	Hit me back
NSFW	Not safe for work	TTYS	Talk to you soon
ICYMI	In case you missed it	FBO	Facebook Official
STFU	Shut the f*** up	TTYN	Talk to you never
WCW	Woman crush Wednesday	IRL	In real life

**Table 1:** Abbreviations and Acronyms (cited from <http://bing.com>)

### Conclusion

This chapter is purely the theoretical phase of the whole work. In brief, it sheds light on two major issues that this research paper aims to unveil. First, it introduces academic writing and its importance to EFL learners. Second, the researcher extended the discussion to thoroughly identify different platforms of social media such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. This chapter is also devoted to summarizing the most known FB vocabulary (timeline, homepage, chat), as well as the writing side on FB and the linguistics features that affect it.

*Chapter Two*

*Practical Framework*

## Chapter Two: Practical Framework

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### Introduction

For knowing the impact of social media on EFL students' writing skills, a questionnaire is given to first year LMD and first year master students in the department of foreign languages, University of Adrar.

This chapter deals foremost with the answers provided by those students as users of social media. The findings of this questionnaire are analysed starting by giving the characteristics of the sample, the description of the questionnaire, and analyzing the data. The questionnaire aims at analyzing the opinions of English department's students towards the use of internet, precisely facebook and its impact on their writing skills. Thus, from this questionnaire we can get the right answers to how FB impacts on the students' academic writing and why.

### 2.1. The sample

The sample consists of thirty nine (39) students of English department from two levels; first year LMD and first year Master at Ahmed Draia University of Adrar.

Because we could not work with the whole population (as 174 students, 100 LMD, 74 Master) we selected a sample from a large population consisting of a hundred seventy four (174) students. The sample was selected from about 39 students. First year EFL learners of BA at the University of Adrar during the academic year 2015/2016 are (4) four groups. Each group contains about (25) students. We chose (27) students from different groups. While, first-year Master EFL learners are two branches which means two groups. Each group contains (37) students.

We administrated this questionnaire in March 2016, exactly in the last week before having the Spring vacation when most of the students were absent.

### 2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of seventeen (17) yes /no and multiple choice questions divided into two sections as follows

#### Section One: (Q1-Q2)

This section is structured to obtain general information about the learner's gender, and how long he/she has been learning English.

#### Section Two: (Q3-Q10)

This section focuses on the use of the internet and how students access it.

### Section Three: (Q11-Q17)

The third section deals with the impact of Facebook on students' academic writing. It aims at finding out if FB motivates them to write or not. This section also seeks to know the students' opinion about the use of Facebook as a tool for formal teaching.

### 2.3. Analysis of the Results

#### Section one: Learner's Gender and Period of Studying English at the University

##### Q1: Gender Distribution

Gender	N	Percentages
Female	26	67%
Male	13	33%
Total	39	100%

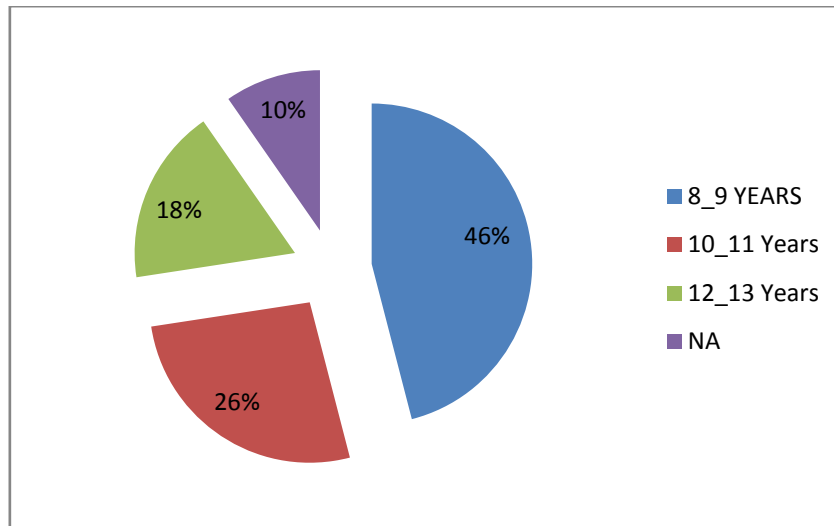
**Table 02: Participants' Gender**

As it is shown in Table 01, more than half of the questioned students are females (67%) whereas the rest (33%) are males.

##### Q2: How long have you been learning English?

Years of studying	N	Percentages
8-9	18	46%
10-11	10	26%
12-13	7	18%
NA	4	10%
Total	39	100%

**Table 03: Years of Studying English**



**Fig 03: Years of Studying English**

From the Table 03, we can see that 46 % of the students have been learning English for 8 to 9 years. 26 % of them spend 10 to 11 years studying English. While 18 % of them have learnt English for 12 to 13 and 10 % of the students do not answer the question.

**Section Two: Students' Access and Use of the Internet**

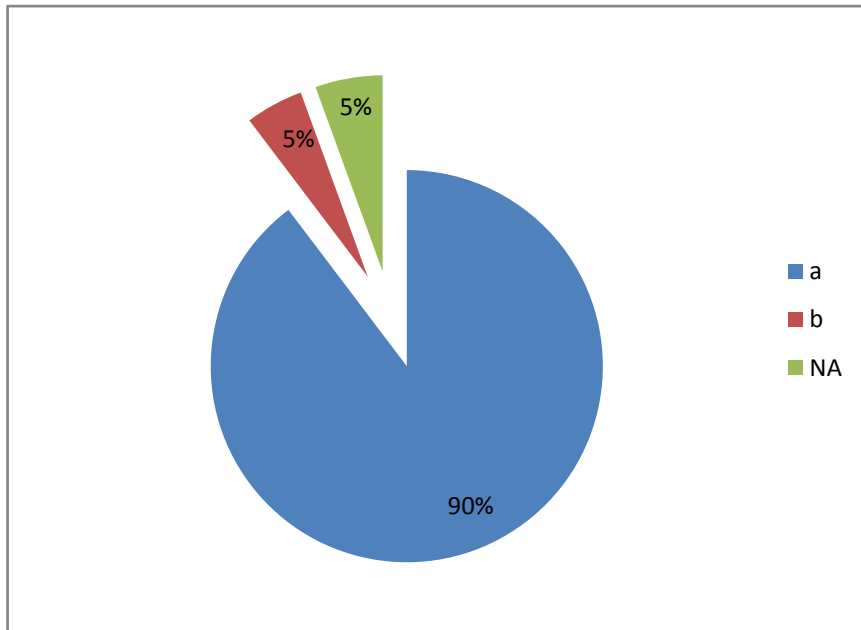
**Q3: Do you use the Internet?**

**a- Yes**

**b- No**

Option	N	Percentages
a	35	90%
b	2	5%
NA	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 04: Students' Opinion about the Use of the Internet**



**Table 04; Fig 04: Students' Opinion about the Use of Internet**

Nowadays the use of the Internet spreads among the university students and becomes as an important reference in learning and checking courses. From Table 04 we notice that 90% of the students use the internet. 5% of them do not access internet at all. While 5% of the students do not answer.

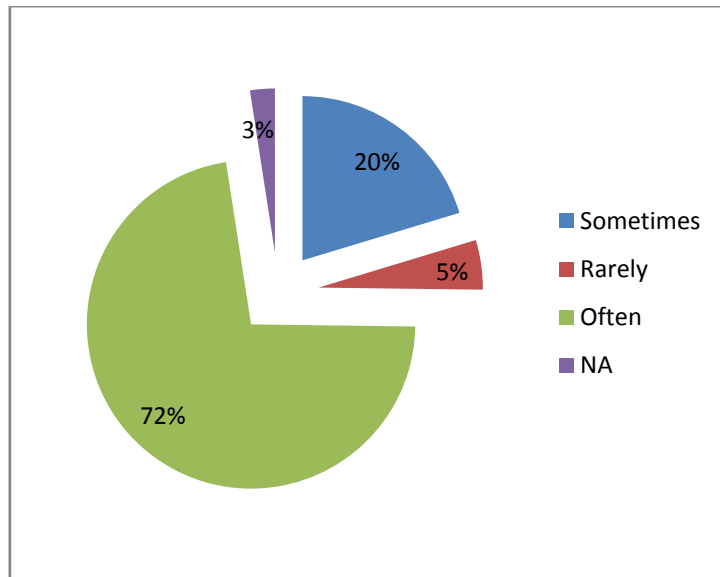
**Q4: How much time?**

**a-often          b-sometimes          c- rarely**

Time	N	Percentages
Often	8	20%
Sometimes	28	72%
Rarely	2	5%
NA	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 05: Frequency of Using the Internet**





**Fig 05: Frequency of Using the Internet**

72 % of the learners claim that they often use the internet, while 20 % of them admit using it sometimes. Only 5 % of the learners said that they rarely access the net. 3 % do not reply.

**Q5: On what device?**

**a- Smartphone**

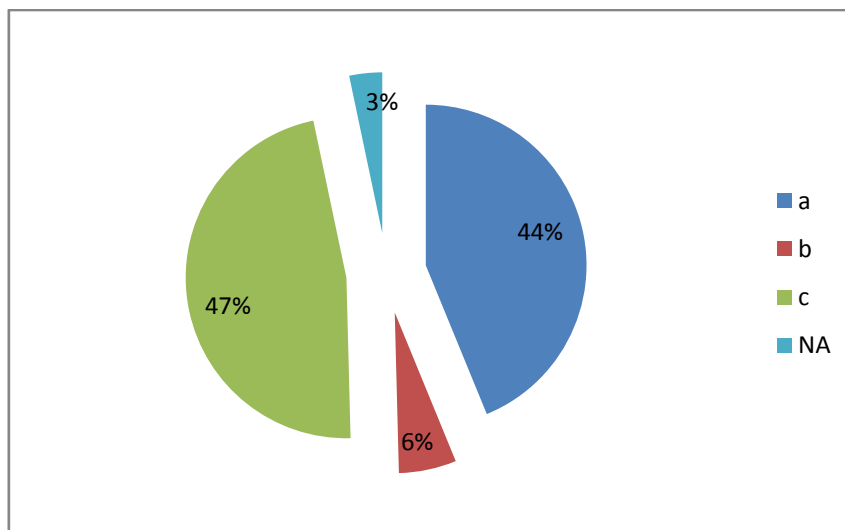
**b- Tablet**

**C- Laptop**

**d- Others**

Opt	a	b	c	d	NA
Percentages	44%	6%	47%	0%	3%

**Table 06: Kinds of Devices Used for Accessing the Internet**



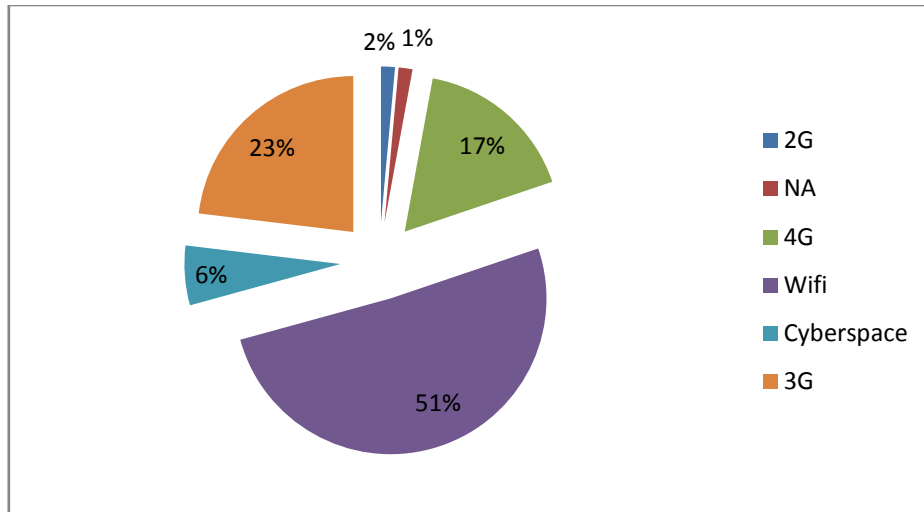
**Fig 06: kinds of Devices Used for Accessing the Internet**

figure 06 shows clearly that 44% of the students utilize smart phones to access the net. In comparison, 47 % stated that a laptop is their preferable device for using the internet. While 6 % said that they use the tablet and about 3 % do not say anything.

**Q6: How do you access the Internet?**

	a-2G	b-3G	c-4G	d-Wifi	e-Cyberspace	NA	Total
<b>Opt</b>	<b>2G</b>	<b>3G</b>	<b>4G</b>	<b>Wifi</b>	<b>Cyberspace</b>	<b>NA</b>	
<b>Percentages</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 07: Internet Access**

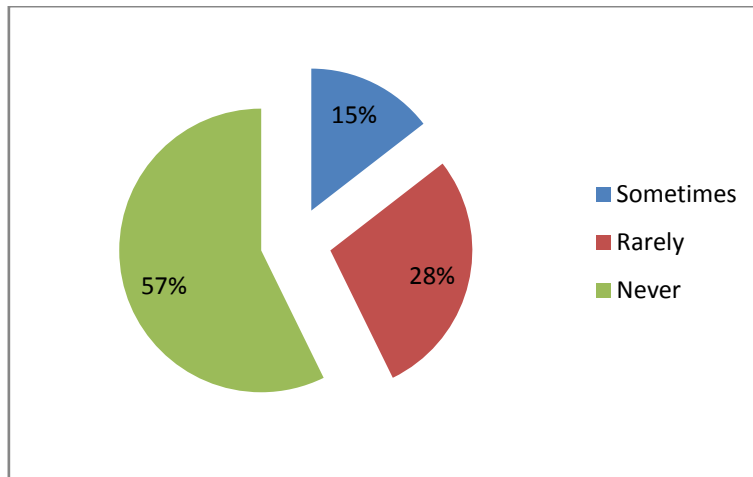


**Fig 07: Internet Access**

**Q7: How frequently do you go to cyberspace?**

Answer	N	Percentages
Sometimes	06	15%
Rarely	11	28%
Never	22	57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 08: Frequency of going to Cyberspace**



**Fig 08: Frequency of going to cyberspace**

Those who admit their going to cyberspace provide us with different answers and some reasons. 15% of the students said that they go sometimes to cyberspace just when they have researches to do or to print. However, 28 % of them have indicated that they rarely enter it unless they have no Internet at home. 57% never go to it.

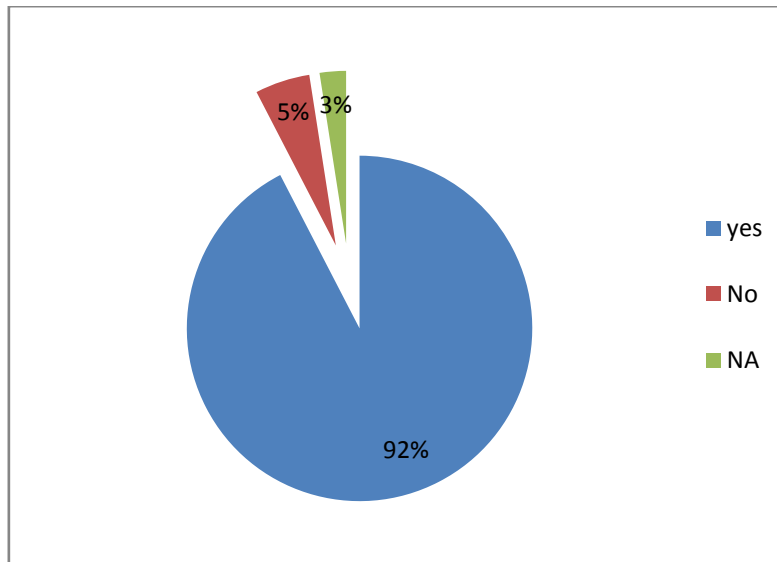
**Q8: Are you interested in using social media?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

opt	N	Percentages
Yes	36	92%
No	2	5%
NA	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 09: Students' Interests about the Use of Social Media**



**Fig 09: Students' Interests About the Use of Social Media**

The data indicated above show that 92 % say “Yes” they are interested in using social media. However, 5 % of the students respond by “No” they have no interest in social media. 3 % did not answer.

**Q9: What are the sites that you frequently use?**

The majority of students said that they always use Facebook and Youtube. Whereas the rest of them split their answers between Email, Instagram, Viber, Twitter, Wikipedia and MSN.

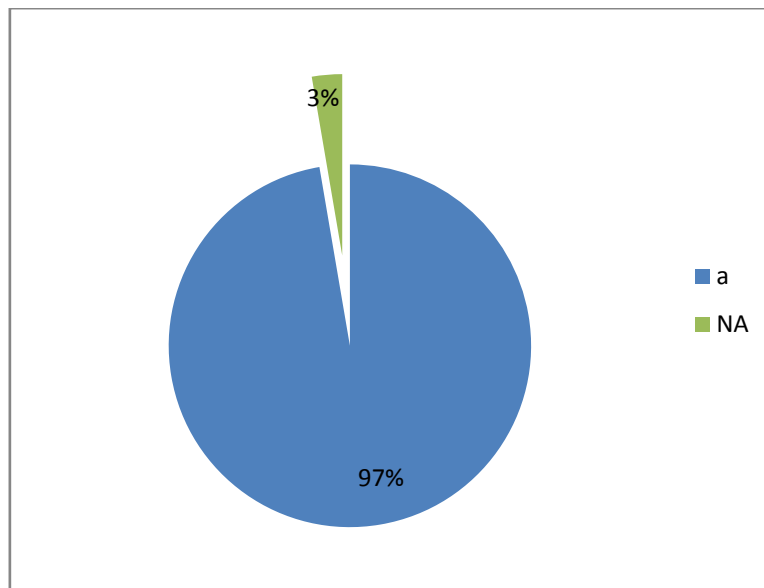
**Q10: Is Facebook one of them?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

Opt	N	Percentages
a	38	97%
b	0	0%
NA	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 10: Students' Point of View Towards FB**



**Fig 10: Students' Point of View Towards FB**

This item of information sheds light on subjects' viewpoint toward FB. Most students 97% said that they have an Facebook account. While 3% did not answer.

**Q11: You use FB for:**

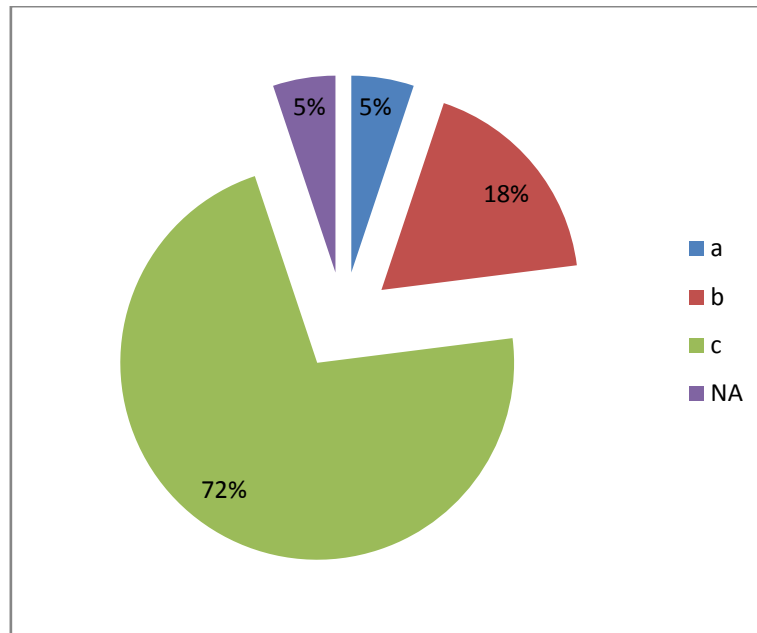
**a- learning**

**b-entertainment**

**c-both**

Opt	N	Percentages
a	2	5%
B	7	18%
C	28	72%
NA	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 11: Students' Reasons behind the Use of FB**



**Fig 11: Students' Reasons behind the Use of FB**

A quick glance at Table 11 reveals that the majority of the students (72 %) use FB for both learning and entertainment. The learning purpose for its own is not that much of a concern to them (ie) just 5% of them connect to FB for learning. However, 18% use it for just having fun (entertainment). 5% do not answer.

**Q12: In which language do you chat?**

Students were given the complete freedom to say which language they chat with. However, various languages were mentioned. The most common one is Arabic. Most of EFL learners suggested that their favorite language for chatting is Arabic or as they call it in their answers “Local Language” and “Algerian Dialect”. Then comes English. French is classified as the third option. However, few indicated the use of classical Arabic, Hindu, Kurdish, and even Bambara.

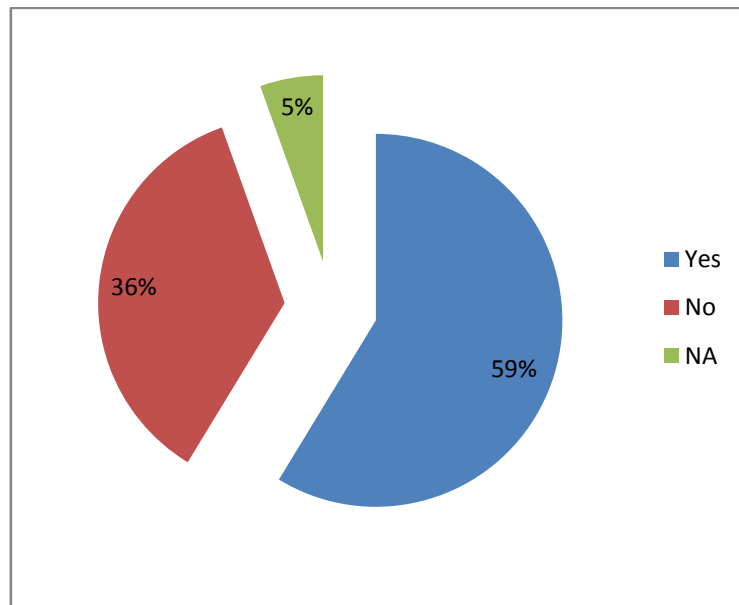
**Q13: Do you think that FB motivates you to write?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

Opt	N	Percentages
Yes	17	36%
No	20	59%
NA	2	5%
Total	39	100%

**Table 12: Students' Viewpoint about FB's Motivation to Writing**



**Fig 12: Students' Viewpoint about FB's Motivation to Writing**

Turning now to motivation, two aspects will be discussed here. The first point is whether or not FB is motivating students to write. More than half (59%) of the students have indicated that FB motivates them to write, while (36%) of them said that FB does not motivate them. 5 % do not answer.

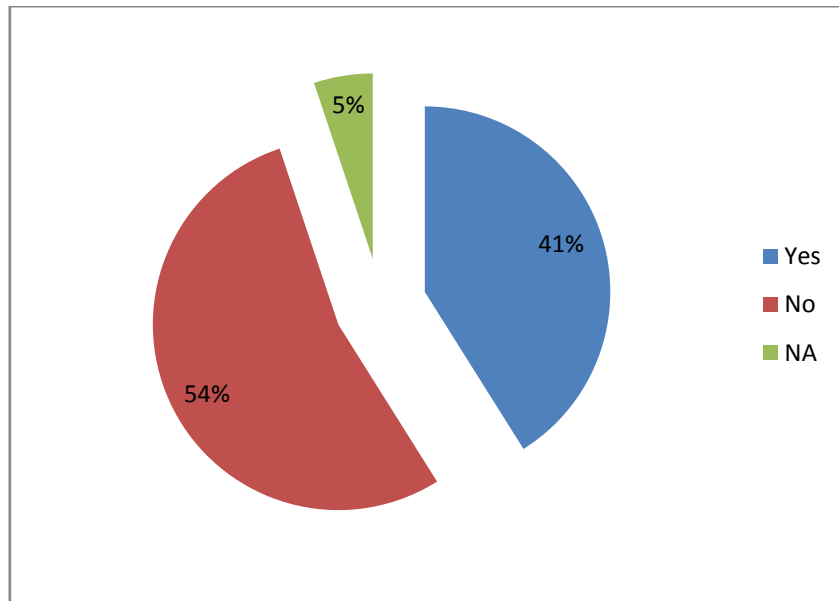
**Q14: Do you think your writing skills will be better improved via FB?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

Opt	N	Percentages
Yes	16	41%
No	21	54%
NA	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 13: Students' Point of View about the Writing Skill and its Improvement via FB**



**Fig 13: Students' Point of View about the Writing Skills and its Improvement via FB**

This question aims at determining students' viewpoint about their writing proficiency and whether FB improves it or not. 41% of the subjects answer with "Yes", that FB helps them improve their writing proficiency. 54% of the students have opted for the reverse situation that their writing skill is not improved via FB. While 5 % do not answer.

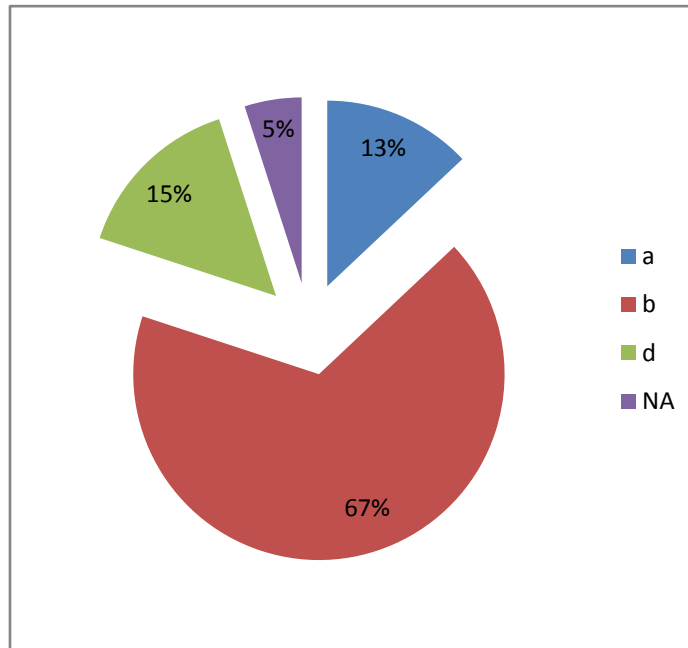
**Q15: How do you find writing on FB?**

- a-Pleasurable    b-Easy    c-Different    d-Boring**

Opt	Percentages
a	13%
b	67%
c	0%
d	15%
NA	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 14: Students' Attitude Towards Writing on FB**





**Fig 14: Students' Attitude Towards Writing on FB**

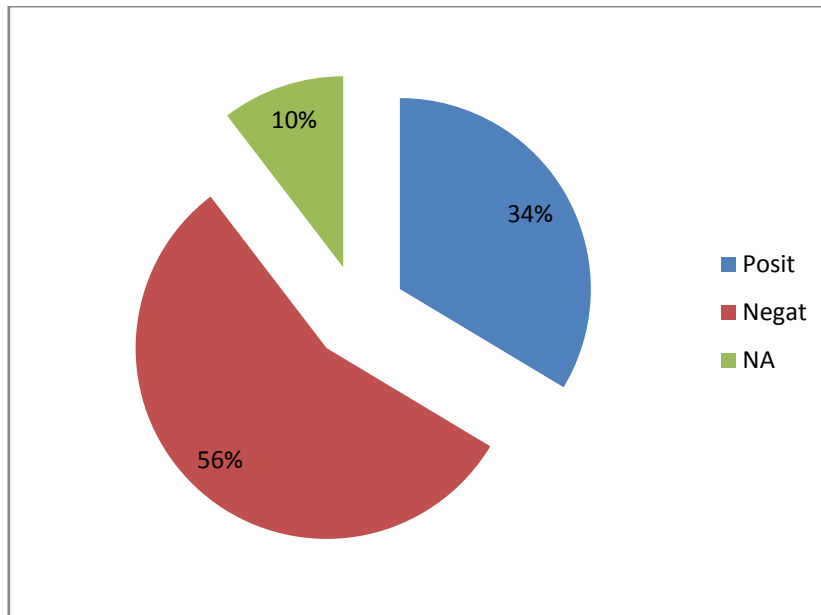
The statistics related to this item show that 67% of the subjects find writing on FB easy. On the other hand, only 13% who said it is pleasurable and 15% find this task boring. However, 5% did not say anything.

**Q16: How does FB impact on your academic writing? Why?**

In this question two options were named, positively and negatively, and the students were asked to justify their answer.

Opt	N	Percentages
Positively	13	34%
Negatively	22	56%
NA	4	10%
Total	39	100%

**Table 15: The Impact of FB on Students' Academic Writing**



**Fig 15: The Impact of FB on Students' Academic Writing**

As Table 14 shows, more than half (56 %) of the students believe that FB has a negative outcome on their academic writing. Whilst, 33% claim that FB affects their skills in a positive way. 10% do not answer this question.

**Because**

The students who said that FB impacts on their writing negatively justify their answers as follows:

- Guessing that FB is just a waste of time.
- They do not respect rules of writing like punctuation, conjugation in the right form, and the like.
- The increasing use of acronyms and abbreviations.
- Using the informal language and the artificial one.

Those who agreed that their writing proficiency progressed on FB justify their answers as follows:

- FB gives them the chance to learn new words
- FB makes them avoid committing the same mistakes that they have already fallen in.
- It gives them the chance to be corrected by others particularly their peers that are English native speakers.

**Q17: Do you think that FB can be used as a tool for formal teaching?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

Opt	N	Percentages
Yes	17	44%
No	20	51%
NA	2	5%
Total	39	100%

Table 16: Students' Opinion about Using FB for Formal Teaching

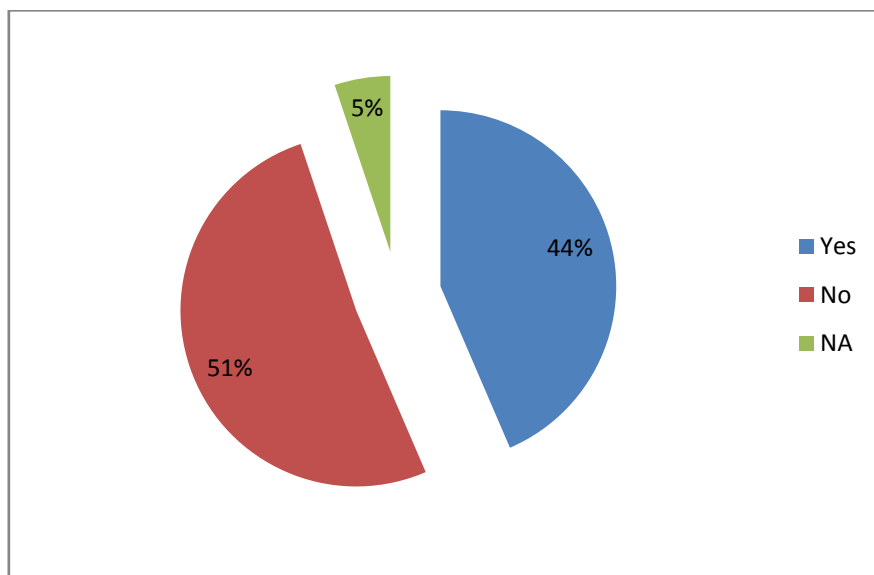


Fig 16: Students' Opinion about Using FB for Formal Teaching

To answer the above question, 44% of the EFL learners agreed on using FB as one of the formal teaching tools. In comparison, 51% opted for “No”. They do not consider FB as a tool for this kind of teaching. While, 5% do not give their opinion.

#### 2.4. Findings and Discussion

The findings are presented in three sections. First, the general information is presented which is then followed by the respondents' attitude about the use of the Internet and FB. The next section is about the writing process, the impact of FB on students writing performance and its motivation to writing.

##### a- General Information

There are 26 female (67%) and 13 male (33%) respondents who use Facebook and responded to the questionnaire. The gender table is the most representative of the descriptions of the general population of university students, in terms of the years spending in studying English at the university.

### **b-The Use of the Internet and Facebook**

The data collection is useful to give an idea that the majority of respondents are Internet users', furthermore they are interested in using social media sites (see Table 08). It is seen also that the majority of EFL students have an FB account (Table 09) and spend most of their time online. This was effective to test the validity of our assumption. Because there is different speed of access for the Internet, students prefer to reach these sites using Wifi in order not to face the slow Internet connection that distracts them.

### **c-The Process of Writing on FB**

The analysis of the last section reveals that students' negative views and responses regarding FB motivating the students to write can be explained by the fact that students do not take FB as a serious form for learning, in which they see it as a form of entertainment and fun. Acknowledging the concept of motivating, the researcher agrees that every student has his or her own style of learning and preferences.

However, in terms of improvement, most students think that FB does not improve their writing. This could be due to the excessive use of Arabic in chatting. When it comes to writing improvement, the researcher feels that it depends on the students to be more careful about the language used in texting and chatting though it is something optional.

This section also demonstrates that the majority of students (56 %) are not satisfied about the impact of FB on their academic writing. According to them, it has a negative effect because of the reasons that follow:

- The use of ungrammatical language
- Lacking in standard punctuation
- Minimal to no use of the right spelling and capitalization
- The use of abbreviation and acronyms

When the experiences of the respondents are taken into account, the data collected based on their perspectives can be valid because they are responding according to their experience of using FB.

## 2.5. The Statistical Results of Students' Questionnaire

### 2.5.1. Summary Statistics, Using the Observations 1 - 38 (missing values were skipped)

Variable	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Answers	2.05263	2.00000	0.000000	5.00000
Q2	3.23684	3.00000	1.00000	9.00000
Q3	2.63158	2.00000	0.000000	6.00000
Q4	2.31579	2.00000	0.000000	5.00000
Q5	2.78947	3.00000	0.000000	6.00000
Q6	2.97222	2.50000	0.000000	7.00000
Q7	2.64865	2.00000	0.000000	6.00000
Q8	2.72973	2.00000	0.000000	8.00000
Q9	3.52778	3.00000	0.000000	8.00000
Q10	3.36842	3.50000	0.000000	9.00000
Variable	Std. Dev.	C.V.	Skewness	Ex. kurtosis
Answers	1.31411	0.640207	0.409231	-0.358411
Q2	2.07213	0.640172	1.00855	0.380121
Q3	1.47815	0.561696	0.553388	-0.374064
Q4	1.43518	0.619737	0.0982503	-0.980755
Q5	1.80327	0.646455	0.319231	-0.911815
Q6	1.84369	0.620308	0.512830	-0.805640
Q7	1.84415	0.696262	0.339700	-1.02018
Q8	2.25646	0.826622	0.635701	-0.592817
Q9	2.26130	0.640999	0.406803	-0.949558
Q10	2.36439	0.701927	0.446529	-0.643375

**Table 17: The Statistical Calculation of Results**

Source: The Researcher Based on Gretl Software (Statistics)

### 2.5.2. Interpretation of the Results

**Standard Deviation (Std.Dev):** The standard deviation is a numerical value used to indicate how widely individuals in a group vary. If individual observations vary greatly from the group mean, the standard deviation is big; and vice versa. Standard Deviation from Table 17 shows that there is an agreement between the individuals that there is positive impact of Facebook on writing skill.

**Coefficient of Variation (C.V):** Is a statistical measure of the dispersion of data points in a data series around the mean. From Table 17 we can see that the CV is 0.640207 > 0.5 means that there is a relationship between the independent variable “Facebook” and the dependent one “writing skill”.

**Skewness:** The graph representing the causality between the variables is balanced (there is a specific and well determined general trend).

**Kurtosis:** is negative means that the variation with small value of the independent variables leads inevitably to greater values of the dependent one. That is to say, any use of Facebook has a considerable impact on writing skill.

**2.5.3. Analysis of Variance:**

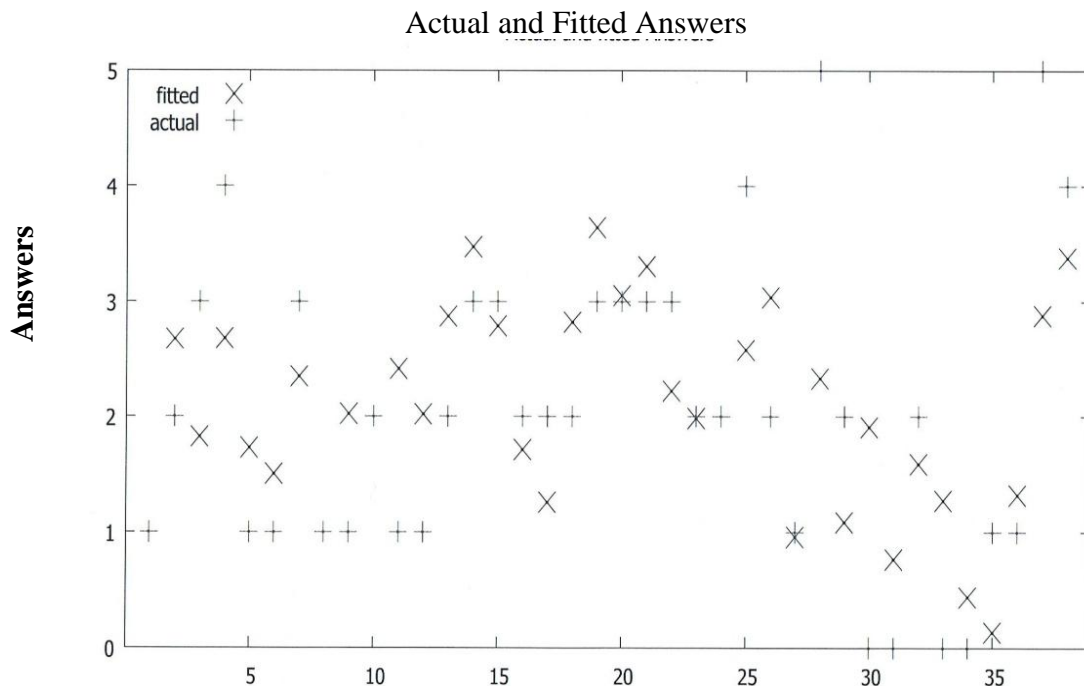
	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square
Regression	33.4149	9	3.71277
Residual	112.82	24	4.70085
Total	146.235	33	4.43137

**Table 18: The Analysis of Variance**

$$R^2 = 33.4149 / 146.235 = 0.228501$$

$$F(9, 24) = 3.71277 / 4.70085 = 0.789809 \text{ [p-value } 0.6284]$$

**2.5.4. The Graphical Representation of the Result**



**Fig 17: Facebook and Writing Skills Curve**  
**Source: The Researcher Based on Amoss 24**

### 2.5.5. Interpretation of the Curve:

The curve shows that there is a difference between R and F value .i.e. there is a relationship between the variables of the study ( Facebook and Writing skill). This statistical issue confirms that Facebook has a positive impact on the writing skills.

### Conclusion

All in all, there is a positive impact of Facebook on writing skill according to the statistical results of the students' questionnaire obtained in this study. Hence, the study hypothesis is confirmed. Moreover, the findings also demonstrate that FB does improve the students' writing skill and increases their motivation to accomplish this important task. Still, more ambitious gains concerning the relationship between the standard writing and FBs' written forms could be attained in future research.

# General Conclusion



### General Conclusion

Social media offers many benefits. It is now easier than ever to keep in contact with old friends and colleagues and to get to know the use of the language. Facebook as such, is a popular online platform that enables people to communicate and share information. Having contact among FB users is successfully achieved through the writing process. Therefore, Facebook has a very positive effect on foreign language learners. It can be a great help for the learner to develop his writing skill faster and with more fluency, especially for EFL students.

This research paper investigates the effect of FB on written proficiency and the way it impacts Algerian EFL learners. The results of this study prove that FB has a positive impact on the students' written form because of the spontaneity in writing. In addition, the variety used in FB is another code and people are already accustomed to switching from one code to another depending on context such as 'formal' vs. 'informal'. Likewise, the findings demonstrate that students strongly believe that Facebook does not neither motivate them nor improve their writing skills because of various reasons among which the use of abbreviations and acronyms. Furthermore, they think that FB cannot be used as a tool for formal teaching.

### Limitation

The limitation that the researcher faced in this study work is that not much research has been done regarding the impact of Facebook on the writing performance of the Algerian EFL learners. It was difficult to find a starting point to build on.

### Pedagogical Implementations

Web 2.0 or social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook,...etc have become part of learners' daily lives. A phenomenon that makes the call to suggest some useful tips for raising learners' awareness in using FB for developing their writing skills. For that, we suggest the following remarks:

- ❖ While no one can judge the learners' tendency to be informal in FB, it is recommended that EFL learners have to be aware of the considerable damage caused by FB in terms of written proficiency.
- ❖ Learners should differentiate between academic settings and informal settings and how any mixture between them could result in serious consequences.
- ❖ EFL instructors should forbid learners to use any type of non standard writing in academic settings, especially those errors and mistakes related to e-language.

## Appendix One : Students' Questionnaire

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❖ As learners were found to be Facebook-addicted in this research, it is also suggested that educators would promote activities with regards to FB but in a more formal use, in order to increase their motivation to writing.

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# Appendices

## **Appendix 1 : Students' Questionnaire**

## Appendix One : Students' Questionnaire

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### Dear friends

I am carrying out a survey for my Master Dissertation entitled: The Impact of Social Media on Developing Students' Writing Skills. And I call for your help, please answer the following questions. Sometimes two answers are possible.

➤ Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

### Section One

1. Gender                      Female                       Male
2. How long have you been learning English?                      - ..... years.

### Section Two

3. Do you use the Internet?                      Yes                       No
4. How much time?                      Often                       sometimes                       rarely
5. On what device?
- Smartphone                       Tablet                       Laptop                       Others

If you use other devices, precise .....

6. How do you access the Internet?
- 2G                       3G                       4G                       Wifi                       Cyberspace
7. How frequently do you go to Cyberspace?
- .....
8. Are you interested in using social media?                      Yes                       No
9. What are the sites that you frequently use?
- .....
10. Is Facebook one of them?                      Yes                       No

### Section Three

11. You use FB for:
- Learning                       entertainment                       both
12. In which language do you Chat?
- .....
13. Do you think that FB motivates you to write?                      Yes                       No
14. Do you think your writing skills will be better improved via FB?                      Yes                       No

## Appendix One : Students' Questionnaire

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15. How do you find writing on FB?

Pleasurable       easy       difficult       boring

16. How does FB impact on your academic writing?    Positive       Negative

• Why? .....

17. At the end, do you think that FB can be used as a tool for formal teaching?

Yes       No



## ملخص

لم يعد تعلم اللغة منحصرا بين جدران التدريس فقط، بل أضحى يمتد خارج هذا النطاق و بشكل غير رسمي و مثال ذلك التعلم عن طريق مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي كالفيسبوك . هذا الأخير يمثل الوسيط البديل لممارسة و استخدام اللغة ، كما يعتبر الأكثر شعبية بين مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بين طلبة الجامعة. تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة إذا كان الاداء الكتابي للطلبة متأثرا بهذا الموقع وما هو نوع هذا التأثير. يكمن المشكل الرئيسي في أن كتابات الطلبة زادت من ناحية الكمية من خلال الاستعمال الواسع للفيسبوك . اما من جهة اخرى ساءت كتابتهم بسبب عدم تطبيق الطلبة للقواعد النحوية الصحيحة. للوصول الى الهدف المنشود تم توزيع استمارة على طلبة قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة العقيد احمد دراية بأدرار للتأكد من صحة الفرضية. ووفقا للنتائج المحصل عليها ، تم تأكيد هذه الفرضية التي تقول ان للفيسبوك تأثير إيجابي على المهارات الكتابية للطلبة.