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Investigating the Influence of Texting trough Social Media on EFL Learners' Grammar Skills

The Case of First and Second Year Students of Master at Bejaia University, English Department

Master's Dissertation

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated:

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Abstract

The number of social media and internet users has been increased in the last years among learners; they use social media for different aims and one of these aims is texting. This study aims at exploring the impact of texting through social media on grammar among EFL learners and the extent to which text messaging affects EFL learners' grammar skills ,whether it affects their grammar skills positively or negatively, the investigation was conducted among the first and second year LMD master students of English department at Bejaia university, in total of around 250 students, 22 agreed to participate in this study, the research was conducted within the spring semester 2021_2022, it was based on the use of the descriptive research where data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively through an online based questionnaire use which consists of both closed-ended items and open-ended items, that was administered to the participants EFL learners of master 1 and master 2, the study focused on learners' texting through social media and also on grammar, the descriptive statistical method was used to analyze the questionnaire. The research findings indicate that most of the participants according to their answers to the questionnaire are influenced by texting habits, and it does affect their academic English.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Text Messages, Texting Language, Grammatical Competence.

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List of abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

Txt: Text

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

SMS: Short Messages Service

SNS: Social Networking Sites

SMNS: Social Media Networking Sites

General Introduction

1-Statement of Purpose

Nowadays, digital technology dominates learning and communication which created a new variety of language; EFL learners are influenced with this online language.This new language variety referred to by several different terms like texting language, internet language, SMS language or textspeak,While this use of e- technology has enriched our life and made it easier and faster, it has also genuily affected EFL learners' language,due to the heavy use of the net in texting andSMN such as facebook ,instagram ,whatsapp.

Texting has become the most popular mean of communication worldwide, and in texting, users including EFL learners tends to create their own language that is different from the formal one, thus the introduction of mobile phones and texting has impacted the way in which people communicate in a great way.

According to a 2009 University of Alabama study, "Text messaging has surely given our society a quick means through which to communicate, taking out the need for capitalization, punctuation, the use and knowledge of sentence" (cited in Javed & Mahmmod, 2016p.80).

Thurlow gave example of texting language such as use of abbreviations (e.g. ASAP), letter number homophones (e.g. gr8 instead of great , b4 instead of before), and non-standard spelling (e.g. luv, nite) (Thurlow2010, p.5).In foreign language acquisition ,accurate understanding of the language structures is the key part for learning the target language which means that teaching and knowing grammar rules is very important for EFL learners, but this great change of language use led to change grammar also, that's why researchers and scholars such as Thurlow and Crystal, decided to study and examine the affect of the language of texting on learners grammatical competence and writing skills in their academic learning, which is the main problematic in this investigation.

Researchers have been divided into two groups, the first group criticized the use of txting language and hold a common belief that it is damaging students writing skills and grammatical competence ,and it makes them unable to distinguish between the formal and informal language and writing, which is the theory that this study will adapt to answer the research question, However, even though there have been earlier assumption about the negative impact of texting on language, the second group was opposed to this assumption and they believe that texting is actually not posing any serious threat to the English language and it does not damage learner linguistics and grammar competences.

2-The Background and Scope of the Study

Since English grammar plays an important role for learning English language, and in the light of the development of technology and the spread of online language and txtspeak among EFL learners; the need for studying the affect of this language change on academic language and grammatical competence is increasing.

Students' writing is an ancient problem; there are old complains that students writing is terrible in 1975 Newsweek published "Why Johnny Can't Write," alerting its readers about the nationwide bad writing of "your children" and zeroing in on a few culprits, which included emphasis on "'creativity' in the English classrooms" (Warnock, 2021) Lately, in the modern age and with the spread of texting language, the focus has been on how is digital language (textspeak) is ruining EFL learners' grammar.

British Broadcasting Company (March 4, 2003) reports that text messaging has long been blamed for declining standards of spelling and grammar, particularly in paper and pencil writing(cited in Aziz ,Shamin, Aziz ,and Avais,2013), according to Kemp and colleagues, grammar rules of conventional written language are often transgressed in textese ,as a result ,this lack of grammatical conventions might leak into registers other than textese (cited in Van

djik et al ,2016),which is why studying the effect of texting on EFL students' grammatical competence is important since texting violate the standards English grammar rules.

Dansieh (2005) in his research about the impact of SMS language on the writing skill of students of Wa Polytechnic in Ghana (cited inSaha et al, 2021, p.28), concluded that students struggle with grammar, lexis and structure because of texting language. Therefore, he wrote that "*text messaging which encourages abbreviating and non-conformity with grammatical rules could worsen students' written communication skills rather than improve them*".

Cingel (cited in Science Daily 2012) did a study with a group of researchers on the effect of texting on middle school students in a central Pennsylvania school, which is the study and theory that we adapt in this investigation. Cingel gave students a grammar test and a survey in which they were asked to describe their texting habits, including how many texts they send and receive, as well as their thoughts on the importance of texting. Cingel said after evaluating the findings that overall, there is evidence of a reduction in grammar scores based on the number of participants who texts a lot (who send and receive text messages frequently), as they did badly on the test.

Thurlow's critical review of a on CMC and its language (cited in Verheigen, 2013) also confirms that media views on young people's language use in texting are "overwhelmingly pessimistic". He reports that

"Textese has been described as aberrant, apocalyptic, criminal, depraved, execrable, frightening, jarring and abrasive, pointless and reprehensible and is constantly put in negative opposition to "proper" language. Many articles express "an overriding sense of moral panic about declining standards of literacy".

3- Problem Statement

Students' writing is an ancient problem; there are old complains that students writing is terrible. Lately, in the modern age and with the spread of texting language, the focus has been on how is digital language (textspeak) is ruining EFL learners' grammatical competence and writing skills.

As we know with the emerge of social media , learners attempts to text their colleagues and teachers a lot using facebook ,messenger, instagram and other SMNS because it facilitates the interaction and it is an easier alternative of the action of interacting with them face to face.

As a result, learners and particularly EFL learners that are the main concern in this study are influenced by texting through social media ,and since we live in the era of speed and technology , learners don't pay attentions to the grammar errors that they make while texting ,which will negatively affect their grammar in academic writing when they write essays or research papers , so this research attempts to address EFL learners at Bejaia's university to be aware of grammar mistakes that may occur as a result of the influence of texting using social media.

4- Research Questions

This research aims to investigate the influence of text messaging through social media on EFL learners' grammar skills in bejaia's university context. The following research questions and hypothesis will be answered in this research:

1- Is proper grammar important in text messaging through social media?

2- What are the most grammatical errors learners make while texting through social media?

5- Research Aim

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1- To explore the extent to which texting through social media influence EFL learners grammar skills in academic writing.

2- To recognize the most grammatical errors made by EFL learners in texting through social media, and if these mistakes interfere with their academic writing and oral performance.

6- Research Methodology

This study aims to investigate the impact of text messaging through social media on EFL learners' grammar skills among EFL learners' of Bejaia University.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are adopted in this investigation since we are testing casual relationship among the variables under study which are texting through social media and EFL learners' grammatical competence, and analyze numerical answers via a questionnaire then develop statistical results to answer the research question which is whether texting through social media affect learners 'grammar positively or negatively. This is chiefly driven by some existing theories and the limited knowledge we have about of language use in text messaging and language use in texting among EFL learners.

Furthermore, the sample population in this study is first and second year Master students (females and males) in the department of Lettres and English language, Faculty of letters and language, Bejaia university, which were selected randomly to participate in this study.

7- Significant of the Study

This study is significant and worthy to be conducted because it attempts to highlight the idea that with the development with technology and the arise of texting language ,EFL learners' standard English grammar can be greatly affected by this new way of communication, which most of teachers and learners ignore in the present day. For that reason, this study attempts to bring awareness towards this issue and about the importance of grammar on EFL learners' linguistics competence and writing /oral skills since grammar is essential for accurate speaking in communication with other speakers of English , Moreover, it is important in writing, e.g. academic essays.

In other words, this research is beneficial for EFL learners, since it attempts to make them aware of their grammar mistakes in academic writings and learning which are influenced by texting habits.

Part One

Texting through Social Media, EFL Learners 'Grammar Skills

Introduction

In this dissertation, we aim to explore to what extent texting through social media influences learners' grammar skills, the first part of it deals with the literature review about the subject under study, which consists of three chapters.

In the first chapter, we attempt to give an overview about social media communication and text messaging language. Next we move to grammatical competence when we will give an overview about grammar rules and types and some of the most common EFL learners' grammar mistakes.Finally, in the third and last chapter of the first part, we attempt to merge the two variables under study, and in the end we will review some already existing studies and theories.

Chapter One

A Brief Overview of Grammar Skills

1-1-1 Definition of Grammar

Grammar is essential when we want to speak, write or learn any language. Communication, specially written communication, requires at least some understanding of the essential principles of grammar or syntax. Canale and Swain (1980) (cited in Mashudiet al 2021) proposed that "*grammar knowledge is a basic component of our competencies that helps us to communicate properly and successfully*" So what is grammar?

According to most modern-day linguists such as Chomsky, we can divide the outline of any language into three major areas: grammar (which contains two subfields that are morphology and syntax), phonology and lexicon. Grammar, regarding the subfield of morphology, deals with the analysis of the shape and structure of words and parts of words such as prefixes and suffixes, while within the subfield of syntax it deals with the arrangement of words in a particular order to form sentences for example: subject +verb +object which is the most common word order in English sentence (cited Collins & Hollo, p.3).

Another definition of grammar by Leech & Deuchar & Hoogenradd (1982,p.4) as follow : "*Grammar is a mechanism for putting words together, we can think of grammar as being a central part of language which relates sounds and meaning.*"

According to this definition, grammar is an essential part of any language; it set the rules of the arrangement of words, phrases, and clauses in the sentence to form meaningful and coherent phrases and sentences for better understanding, which means that the grammatical meaning is dependent on this structural organization or syntactic structure which is the part of linguistics that studies and explains how words are arranged to form correct sentences, for example, it enables people to know that the adjective come before the noun they describe (e.g. tall women) (cited in ToughtCo,2020).

Conventionally, grammaris defined as the study of syntax (how words and morphemes are combined to form phrases and sentences) and morphology (word form). In another word, it is the study of linguistic chains and slots, as (Thornbury, 1999) (cited in Hoadjli and Lahlouhi ,2018, p.93) explained by writing :*"it is the study of the way words are chained together in a particular order, and also of what kinds of words can slot into any one link in the chain"*.

From the previous definitions, we can conclude that grammar is a set of rules of a language , these rules govern the sounds, words, sentences, and other elements, as it shows us how words are combined and chained together to form well structured sentences.

1-1-2 Grammar Types

Linguists are quick to remind us that there are different varieties of grammar and different ways of describing and analyzing the structures and functions of language. According to linguists such as (Odlin, 1994),), (Quirk 1985), (Greenbaum, 1996), (yin, 1990), (cited in Pediaa, 2018), there are four types of grammar: traditional grammar, descriptive or reference grammar, prescriptive grammar and pedagogical grammar:

1-1-2-1 Traditional Grammar

In traditional grammar, the rule is that the sentence is the main unit of analysis, and it focuses on correctness, that is to say, the learners' ability to form correct sentences, moreover, the grammar rules are used deductively ; they are explained by teachers or textbooks and they are studied in school . (Though Co, 2022)

Historically, traditional grammar appeared long time ago, it was originated from ancient Greece and Rome grammar s' theories , also it dominated grammar and language teaching in school in Europe for long time , hence, it considers old language model as more

valuable, and focuses on written language and neglect the oral one ,which means that it deals with only formal and correct grammar only, this is why it was adopted by most schools in their language and grammar class, and it is referred to as school grammar. (Yin, 1990) (Cited in Yanhua Xia, nd).

1-1-2-2 Descriptive Grammar

Descriptive grammar is a study of a language, its structure, and its rules as they are used in daily life by its speakers from all walks of life, including standard and nonstandard varieties. (Greenbrae& Quirk 1990) (cited in Pediaa, 2018). According to the linguists' definition, descriptive grammar is a set of rules about language based on how it is actually used, therefore; it just describes the grammar of the language. In a descriptive grammar there is no right or wrong language. For example, in descriptive grammar we can refer to "He said" with the expression "He goes" in a conversation or text and it will still be considered correct (cited in British Council, nd).

Additionally, according toLeech, Deuchar, and Hoogenraad (cited in Hinkel, nd), descriptive grammar takes into consideration, cultural and social variables, which means speakers of all different groups understands and produce their sentences according to these variables, and each one is considered correct in the perspective of descriptive grammar, that's to say, academically, descriptive grammar explains how each particular language works, without the restriction of a general rule.

In our study we may consider the grammar of texting descriptive grammar since it is daily used by texters and doesn't respect standard grammar rules, and it is restricted to texters and social media community.

1-1-2-3 Prescriptive Grammar

Unlike descriptive grammar, prescriptive grammar focus on what is grammatically correct and explain how language and sentences should be used by the speaker, as it is described by (Greenbaum cited in Pediaa, 2018):

"*Prescriptivist view of language implies a distinction between "good grammar" and "bad grammar," and its primary focus is on standard forms of grammar and syntactic constructions. Among native speakers of practically any language, a prescriptivist approach to grammar often encompasses many ideas, opinions, and judgments about how and when grammar rules should be used*".

Tamasi and Antieau (cited in Writing Center,nd) also considered prescriptive grammar as very important by saying that prescriptive grammar is essential as it helps people use formal English speech and writing.

Moreover, the study of formal language and what is correct and what is incorrect in grammar led prescriptive grammar to be taught in schools to provide people knowledge of standard grammar rules and a common standard of usage.

In conclusion, prescriptive grammar follows strict rules in opposition to the descriptive grammar. For example if a person says; "He and me were arguing about the presentation", descriptive grammarian will say this sentence correct while a prescriptive grammarian will say this sentence is incorrect since it has violated the standard grammar rules with the incorrect usage of "me" with "He" (where it should be He and I). Therefore, prescriptive grammar attempts to establish the standard in grammar language. (Cited in Pediaa, 2018)

1-1-2-4Pedagogical Grammar

Pedagogical grammar can be viewed as the version of grammar that seeks to find, and describe criteria for language education and rules of language use. It provides a description of how to use the grammar of a language to communicate for the purpose of teaching and learning L2 in the classroom classroom (Ellis, Westney) (cited in Almazloum, 2018).For example: the use of pedagogic grammar books, as they help learners use the grammar of English for communication.(cited in British Council, nd)

In conclusion, pedagogical grammar describes grammar and provides materials and activities in school to facilitate learning grammar rules for learners who study foreign language.

1-1-3TheGrammar of Spoken Language vs. the Grammar of Standard Language

Nowadays, writing is an indispensable means of communication for people in life as well as school .Parallel to writing, speaking has also taken an important place in our daily life and become more adequate and perfect day by day ;As a result, researches have been addressed by linguists concerning both spoken and written language such as grammar in English.

Townend and Walke(cited in Thanh, 2015)suppose that both spoken and written language depend on each others. They emphasize that since the invention of language, spoken language was a mean to express thoughts and information while written language was a symbol system that consists of alphabet letters representing the spoken language.

Although, there are some similarities of the systems of speech and writing, there are many differences. And the same goes with written grammar and spoken grammar. Written language is commonly connected with language of books that we find in schools. Moreover

written language is formal, academic, and planned; it is based on the past and recreated in such a way that it may be processed by a wide range of audiences in the future.(cited in Thanh, 2015) . So basically, in grammar books, the concentration is on written grammar, and students are usually taught this rather than spoken grammar. And that's due to the fact that written grammar is more correct and formal because when people speak, they often do not pay much attention to the words, sentences, structures or conjunctions which means that in spoken language, the participants usually do not pay much attention to lexical content and meaning, which are strictly used in written language, Moreover, Crystal (2003)(cited in Semakdji, 2015)explains that when writing, we usually have time to make notes, plan our words, pause and reflect our thoughts , change our thoughts, start again, revise, and generally polish the language until meets our satisfaction. Thus, grammar in spoken language is usually not strict; it is less rigid and more flexible than in writing.

The concept of spoken grammar is new, it has been around since the mid-1990s, according to Paterson spoken grammar is a set of grammatical items restricted to or particularly common in spoken English and some types of writing that imitate the spoken style. An example of spoken grammar was given by (Thornbury p.21 cited in Semakdji, 2015) as followed

A: Coffee?

B: Thanks.

 A: Milk?

B: Please

As we can see in this example, "A" is requesting for coffee using only one word followed by a question mark without following the syntax rules, which shows lack of formality, and make the use of complex language unnecessary, which is the general concept of spoken grammar and that's why Popular conceptions of spoken language are often that it is "corrupt" in relation to "correct" English grammar. We can assume that the grammar that learners use in texting is likely to be spoken grammar, as they do not respect the grammar rules in texting and use informal language.

1-1-4- **Importance of Teaching Grammar and Effective Communication**

Being a student requires having good writing skills ,hence ,learning grammar rules is very important for EFL learners .

It is known that grammar is important because it following grammatical structure helps to convey precise meaning from the writer to the audience. Which means that teaching grammar is important for EFL learner; accurate teaching of grammar guides learners through how to use the language correctly.

Azar (cited in Mart, 2013, p.125) highlights the significance of teaching grammar by writing:

"One important aspect of grammar teaching is that it helps learners discover the nature of language, i.e. that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear and write intelligible. Without grammar, we would have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and body expressions to communicate meaning. Grammar is the weaving that creates the fabric"

The LinkedInprofile of MacMillan said with a good knowledge of grammar, the relationship between grammatical concepts gets clear. Being aware of this relationship

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facilitates understanding the language. Let take punctuation as an example, punctuation helps convey the precise meaning of a sentence and in fact can even change the meaning, as in this well-known example:

- *A woman, without her man, is nothing.*

- *A woman: without her, man is nothing.*

Both sentences contain same words in the same order but convey different meaning due to different use of punctuation.

Clauses with subjects and predicates have always been and will continue to exist in sentences, as will words that fall into the categories of verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Learners who have been taught this have a distinct edge over others when it comes to the use of language. (Mulroy cited in Mart, 2013, p. 125)

In the light of the fast-developing technology which is encouraging spontaneous global communication ,learners found themselves facing new way of communicating with their classmates , friends or family which is texting ,where proper grammar does not really matter. When sending text messages on their mobile phone or laptops to friends, learners often use a specialtype of register, which is called textese. This register allows the of non-standard written language, this change in language caused learners' to be less aware of the standard grammar rules , and this shows us that nowadays teaching formal grammar and explaining grammar rules is very important for learners , so they don't fall into the incorrect use of these rules due to texting habit interference.

Chapter Two

Texting through Social Media

1-2-1 Definition of Social Media

Social media takes a big space in our lives nowadays, for its powerful role in our society as it is a main tool of communication, and it has been defined in various ways by authors and experts. Social media according to (Kaplan &Haenlein cited in Kaplan2015, p. 197) is defined as : *"A group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content"*.

In the other hand Wankel (cited Kasturi, 2014, p.2) has defined social media as followed: *"Activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation…micro blogs, and more."*

Topper wrote in her book (Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Social Media 2009) that building a community is the basis for all social media ,the goal is to gather people who have similar interests or ideals and bring them together to communicate and form a community . That's to say, social media is a tool that people communicate or interact with involving the actions or input of a user, like the internet or SMNS such as facebook, twitter, telegrame, linkedin, for example, social media communications were a key element in Barack Obama's presidential campaign, which led to his first election in 2008. Many states and public administrations make use of Facebook, Twitter, and similar platforms, including the European Union, which aims to create a feeling of European identity among its citizens through social media (Kaplan, 2015).

Carr and hayes (cited in Page &Berrios & Wilkinson &Wisniewski, nd) provided an excellent explanation and discussion of social media as followed *"Social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others"*.

1-2-2-Types of Social Media

Social media can be used for several purposes; hence, there are many types of social media networks and channels on the world wide web, that serve each one's interests.So here are some of the most popular types of social media:

1-2-2-1 Social Networks：

Social networking sites help people to connect with each other and offer a multitude of ways for different brands to attract individuals. Users can share their thoughts, form groups based on their interests, create content, upload photos and videos and participate in group discussions (Indeed, 2021).

Examples of the most used social networking platforms:

Facebook (Meta nowadays): It is one of the most famous online social networking, it was invented on February 2004 , it allows people from around the world to create their personnel profiles , plus sharing pictures , videos, thought and ideals (Indeed,2021).

Messenger: it is a messaging app and platform developed by facebook, it was invented in 2008, basically it allows people to connect with each other by texting each other , in addition to sharing pictures, videos and attachments (Indeed,2021).

Twitter: is a popular micro blogging and social networking site, which was launched in 2006; people use twitter to interact with each other with messages known as tweets plus to check on the news (Indeed, 2021).

1-2-2-2 Discussion Forums:

Discussion forums encourage people to answer each other's questions and share ideas and news. Many of these social media sites focus on posing questions to solicit the best answer (Indeed,2021).

The most used discussion forums:

Reddit: It is a discussion website and social news aggregation that people use to discuss about different interests and thoughts by texting or posting links, images or videos which are voted up or down later by members (Indeed,2021).

Digg: It is a social networking website that features links to update members viral news and popular stories from around the world.

1-2-2-3 Bookmarking Networks:

Bookmarking networks are platforms where users save different ideas, articles, posts and other content for later use. Many people also share links to lists of online resources. The purpose of these websites is to discover new content based on shared interests and to discuss trends.

Here are some of the most used bookmarking networks:

Feedly: It is an app that allows their members to collect, read and share all the contents from their favorite websites, blogs and feeds.

Flipboard: It is a news aggregator and social networks, it focus on generating world's stories to their members so they will stay informed and keep up with current world news (indeed,2021).

1-2-3 Social Media Language and CMC

Nowadays, technology and the internet are quickly expanding which has revolutionized virtually all aspects of life; hence, it has affected our language and the way we communicate and led to introducing a new language called the language of social media or Netspeak. Crystal was interested in studying how the internet is changing language today ,He mentioned in his book " Language and the Internet",It quickly became clear that the internet was exhibiting more than a new stylistic variation of English, and he argued that it gave us a new channel through which human connection might occur. Crystal also believes that the Internet is moderately changing language through the creation of new lexical items, and he refers to social media language as the new alternative. Because it is new, there is no widely accepted name for it, so he agreed to use the terms "Netspeak" and "computer-mediated communication" or "CMC."

Crystal(cited in Tayebiniki and Puteh, 2012, p.98) provideda definition of CMC as followed:*"CMC refers to any written messages sent via the Internet across a distance. This includes both email and computer conferencing and short text messaging (SMS) which is normally transmitted through mobile phones devices."*

Likewise, Baron Cited in (Tayebiniki and Puteh, 2012) considered email and chat as CMC variations, they believed also that they can be considered as language of the Internet.

CMC language according to (herring cited in Tayebiniki and Puteh, 2012) is informal language and normally contains non standard features of standard written language, hence, it is considered as form of spoken language as users imitate the features of spoken language (spoken grammar) when they text , to be more clear here are some example of the language used in CMC are :

language used in CMC	Example
The short forms of words	I don kno , I luv u
lack of capitalization	i instead of I
omission of vowels	r u there ?
incorrect spellings	nite, owt
replacement of numbers for words	gr8 ,me 2 , ,@ for at
simplified contractions	cuz
subject drop	am going , u there ?
Initials	Lol for laughing out loud
typing letters for homophone word	C U
Abbreviation	Tq, ok ,n
Ungrammatical structures	ive for I have

1-2-4-Text Messaging Definition

"The terms 'text messaging' or just 'texting' refer to the brief typed messages sent using the SMS ('short message service') of mobile/cell phones, PDAs ('personal digital assistants'), smartphones or web browsers."(Thurlow and Poff, 2011)

The short messaging service (SMS) is a widely recognized wireless service that allows alpha numeric messages to be sent between mobile users and external systems such as e-mail and voice mail... (ADC telecommunications 1999) (Cited in Frehner, 2008, p.82)

The concept of short messaging service (or SMS) was first proposed in the mid-1980s as part of the creation of the Global System for Mobile Communications (or GSM) network (crystal,2008).

The SMS concept was initially conceived in the Franco-German GMS collaboration in 1984 by Friedhelm Hillebrand and Bernard Ghillebaret, and it was first used in the 1990s. Years later, on December 3rd, 1992, Neil Papworth, a former developer at Sema Group Telecoms, sent the first text message (cited in Mobivity, 2012).

A text can only be 160 characters long, this is why SMS (short message service) is referred to as "short" (consisting of letters, numbers, symbols, emoticons). SMS's communicating capabilities are defined by its technological qualities.(Crystal, 2008). But nowadays text messages also includes photos ,videos ,vocal recodes ,music and attachments , Apart from basic text, text messages may also include binary images, which are images with just two degrees of brightness: black and white, and newer mobile phones even allow you to insert animations or tunes (Frehner, 2008).

Hagen and Rice(cited in Heidi Hemmer, 2009)believed that text messaging was mostly used for coordinating, which means that texting messaging is a tool that allows people or groups to chat or to integrate and work together properly and well by texting each other, that's to say ,it can be prevalent in user's personal lives or their educational , professional and commercial interactions ....,for example a family group chat ,students from a specific branch group chat ... etc.

1-2-5- Text (SMS) Language

Change in language is unstoppable; language is like an organism, constantly evolving to meet the demands and requirements of the era. If a language did not evolve, it would soon be rendered obsolete, and would no longer be the most effective form of communication. (Guardian,2008).

In the same vein, new technology is one factor that has greatly influenced human language and the emergence of texting led to the creation of new language called "textism" or

"txtspeak" or "SMS language ".As technology develops, a whole new domain of restricted language emerges as people adopt their texts to fit the screen and the new social media language (Crystal). Crystal further observes that despite the fact that it may damages English rules; the SMS is credited for the creativity of its new words. Crystal (cited in Mtallo and Marley,2016) explains that with the introduction of texting, a new language known as text language emerges. It's more like decoding or interpreting a message; both require a unique and in-depth knowledge of the language. There is a new way of thinking about language when we text that has never been used before, and it uses symbols and punctuation in a manner that formal language does not Cited in (Javed and Mahmood,2016).

According to Doring (cited in Montasri, 2018), SMS communication is characterized by brief and sometimes shortened syntactic and lexical forms, which save character space and keystrokes as compared to employing complete forms of words. Because SMS adapts language in this way, SMS users' vocabulary often differs from normal language, and SMS communication has been referred to as a hidden code of youth or a reaction to sentences that contain more words that necessary in formal language. Texting language has acquired its own distinct style, a bizarre world of abbreviations, digits, and graphic iconography. SMS language is full with new textual representations of sounds and compressions of conventional orthographies. For compression, letters and numbers are frequently mixed (or used alone), so that in English, for example, 'See you' can be texted as 'CU', "later' can be texted as "L8r "...etc.

Chapter Three

Grammatical Competence and

Texting through Social Media

1-3-1 Grammar in Foreign Language Classroom

Grammar instruction in the classroom should not be ignored. Efficient language use needs grammar knowledge and awareness of its rules.

Azar (2007) emphasizes the importance grammar instruction by stating that grammar teaching makes learners aware of the nature of language and that language is made of predictable patterns that make what we speak, read, listen and write understandable. Without grammar, there would have been only words or sounds, images, and body movements to convey and understand meaning. Grammar weaves the words to create the final product (cited in Mart, 2013).

Since grammar constitutes the system or structure of language, teaching grammar means teaching the system of the given language, and learning it means 'knowing' the system. As Ur (1996) (cited in Poudel, 2018) puts it, while we are teaching grammar we should be getting our students to learn to organize, identify, produce and understand quite a large number of the bits of language knowledge and skills: form and meaning, in both spoken and written forms. He added that using a language does not simply mean using the words in that language. Rather it means being able to organize words into meaningful sentences and expressions. Therefore, either grammar is taught explicitly or implicitly to enable the learner to "express him or herself in what would be considered acceptable language forms. Hence, grammar teaching in the classroom using a number of aspects and considerations (whats and hows)- in teaching grammar is needed for appropriate communication.

1-3-2 The Grammar of Text Messaging

English Grammar rules are very important to speak or learn English, since they show how words and sentences are put together to convey a specific meaning and ideas, facts,

messages ...etc. With the rising popularity of technology and texting using social media language such as abbreviations, slangs, emoticons, and shorthand phrases like "tmrw", it seems that grammar has changed with it, Thus EFL learners are influenced by this changing.

Haegeman (cited in Van Dijk et al , 2016) wrote that It is known that informal written registers allow the omission of words , it is considered acceptable unlike in the formal one ,and this is applied on the boundaries of the grammar and syntactic rules of the target L2 as well .in formal English grammar, subjects are usually not left out .But in the daily register as the one that we us in texting ,subjects of sentences may be dropped as long as it functions in the conversation, for example am instead of I am ,or omitting the stem as well and starting the sentence with a verb.

 Grammar also includes punctuation, so it's not just about the words used in a text message ,in a recent opinion piece in the New York Time , English professor and author Ben Yagoda (cited in Klosowski , 2012) pointed to the way punctuation has changed the meaning of text messages when he wrote:

> *My 21-year-old daughter once criticized my habit of ending text-message sentences with a period. For a piece of information delivered without prejudice, she said, you don't need any punctuation at the end ("Movie starts at 6"). An exclamation point is minimally acceptable enthusiasm ("See you there!"). But a period just comes off as sarcastic ("Good job on the dishes.").*

Punctuation in texting are neglected by texters ,they are not something that they think about when they send or receive messages despite knowing the fact that punctuation might have a subtle impact on meaning, as a results, this may lead the neglect of punctuation in formal writing.

1-3-3 EFL Learners' Common Grammar Mistakes

Everyone texts nowadays using cell phones; texting has become the alternative of phone calls. Most people prefer texting their family, friends, teachers, bosses ...etc instead of calling them, and among these people there are EFL learners. But all this writing includes plenty of mistakes in texting, and it is more important for EFL learners to be aware of those mistakes since their field of study is language and using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling can make a difference in more formal writing.

In texting , EFL learners uses spoken language (spoken grammar) often rather than formal written langauge and in and according to Biber (cited in Thanh, 2015) spoken language, the participants usually do not pay much attention to lexical content and meaning, which are strictly used in written language.

1.3.3.1 Punctuations:

Learners and users in texting tend to neglect punctuations rules, and the most commonly omitted punctuation marks according to Nordstromare commas and apostrophes. Their absence may not make much difference in most text messages. However, they are absolutely necessary to making meaning clear and coherent in formal writing. They often used example of "Let's eat, Granpa" vs. "Let's eat Grandpa" is a perfect demonstration for the difference that punctuations can make. In texting conversation, several types of punctuation have nearly vanished. And that's acceptable when the message is intended to be brief and casual. Commas and apostrophes, on the other hand, should always be used appropriately in formal writing. Additionally, at the conclusion of each phrase, there should always be a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point which is totally neglected in texting by the majority of learners. (Nordstrom, nd)

1.3.3.2 Homophones:

Homophones are a tricky part of correct grammar; they are words that sound or spelled the same but are different in meaning. So they can be spelled correctly but incorrectly. Probably the most common is "to" and "too" (and sometimes even "two").When texting, homophones are intentionally employed to save the amount of keystrokes for example "wud" for "would". These types of substitutes aren't necessary because a basic understanding of what you intend to convey is generally sufficient. However, they might make you appear sloppy formal academic writing, so learners should make sure to use the right form of a term. (Nordstrom, nd)

1.3.3.3 Misplacing or Omitted Apostrophes:

Apostrophes indicate something belongs to something or is owned by someone else .In texting apostrophes is mostly neglected or misplaces, Texters don't usually add the apostrophes where it should be added, because most of them find apostrophes a little tricky or unnecessary, but once they follow the rules, it will become easy. Misplacing apostrophe is a common mistake in texting for example: when we want to show that something belongs to only one person, we need to place the apostrophe before the letter "S" but learner may put it after the "S", e.g. writing "the girls' sheep" instead of "the girl's sheep"(Oxford International English School). These are some common grammar mistakes that we assume EFL learners make in texting, In this study we explore the opinion of learners on the most grammar mistake that they neglect or what are the most grammar mistake they commit when they text.

1.3.4 Theories of the Impact of Texting on EFL Learners' Language and Grammar

The impact of social media language and texting (textspeak) on grammar and language has raised different and conflicted viewpoint, the debate is weather texting language has a negative effect on English language and grammar.

According to Mark McCrindle cited in (Javed and Mahmood, 2016) in the 21st century, technology has an impact on language, and the English language in no exception to this strong impact.

There are two opposing views about the impact of texting on language, the first one is positive and the second one is negative. David Crystal belongs to the first group; he denoted that texting has a positive impact on language in his book "Txtng the Gr8 Dd8", he wrote: "*All the popular beliefs about texting are wrong, or at least debatable. Its graphic distinctiveness is not a totally new phenomenon. Nor is its use restricted to the young generation. There is increasing evidence that it helps rather than hinders literacy.*" (Crystal, 2008, p.9) he further continued to write "*Texting has added a new dimension to language use, indeed, but its long-term impact on the already existing varieties of language is likely to be negligible. It is not a bad thing*" (crystal, 2008, p.10), Crystal explained in his book that in text messages, only few words are shortened which is not a big deal. However, the common fear is that the abbreviated language, alternative words and lack of punctuation used on the net and texting will be used in our more formal language and might eventually even replace it, but he wrote that texters are aware of this abbreviation and there is nothing to worry about.

The same was echoed by Ling 2010 (cited in Al Salman and Saeed, 2017) who believes that "intense use of SMS is a life-phase phenomenon and not a one."

Although some linguists such as David crystal and Lingtend to prove the claims against the negative effects of texting on language and grammar skills, many of the previous studies and theories are based on the concept that texting language has destroyed English and students writing skills which is the theory that we adapted in this research study.

Available findings on student's perception on textism highlighted the negative effect of textism use in formal writing. Rosen et al (cited in Tayebinik and Puteh 2012) in their study on seven hundred and eighteen young adults aged 18 to 25 years about the impact of texting on their writing, discovered a negative relationship between the texting behaviour and writing skills.

Uthus (cited in Crystal, 2008) also believed that texting language does not respect grammar rules and will lead to the end of standard grammar, he wrote:

> *"Cell phone are evil ,well ,grammatically speaking , i knew this was coming ,from the first time one of my friends sent me the message "i've got 2 go ,talk to U later", I knew the end was near: The English language as we once knew it is out the window , and replacing it is this hip and cool slang-induced language ,obsess with taking the vowels out of words and spelling fonetikally."*

Humphrys also exploded in the Daily mail In an article headed " I h8 txt msgs ": How texting is our language" ,he described described SMS as absurd and a barrier in the communication and even described texters as vandals who are trying to do to the language what Genghis Khan did to his neighbours eight hundred years ago and that they will come to dominate our written language , and lead to the disappear of formal written language as we

know it and will be replaced with series of ridiculous emoticons , shortened words and ever changing abbreviations and slangs , he wrote:

> *"It is the relentless onward march of the texters, the SMS (Short*
>
> *Message Service) vandals who are doing to our language what*
>
> *Genghis Khan did to his neighbours eight hundred years ago.*
>
> *They are destroying it: pillaging our punctuation; savaging our*
>
> *sentences; raping our vocabulary. And they must be stopped."*

Dawson in the other hand wrote in his article " text message and the death of the English language" that CNN .com reported on an Irish study demonstrating that text messaging has a negative impact on written language skills in teens. Researchers discovered a link between rising SMS and instant messaging usage and an increase in punctuation and grammar errors. (Dawson)

Odey et al (cited in L Salman & Saeed, 2017) list the linguistic features of the SMS language which include "truncation, vowel deletion, alphanumeric, homophony, graphones (letter homophony), initialization, lack of inter-word space, logographic emotions, onomatopoetic expressions and punctuations." such features and similar others have ruined language and taken the language to a state of decline in terms of grammar and spelling.They further stated that it is this unauthorized entry of texting language into standard language that creates this state of concern over the future of standard usage and made researchers concern about the replacement of this language with the language of texting.

In this study we focused on Cingel's study who is currently a doctoral candidate in media, technology and society, Northwestern University (cited in Science Daily, 2012). Cingel decided to do a study on learners about the impact of texting on their formal language ,he provided a grammar test to learners who text frequently and discovered that learners who

use language adaptations which is refered to as "techspeak" when they text performed poorly on a grammar test , he further continued to write When texterswrite in techspeak, they often use in their writing shortcuts, such as homophones, omissions of non-essential letters and initials, to quickly and efficiently compose a text message. He wrote: They *may use a homophone, such as gr8 for great, or an initial, like, LOL for laugh out loud,».*Cingel indicates that the use of these shortcuts may hinder a texter's ability to switch between techspeak and the normal rules of grammar, as a resulte they will be using it in their academic writing unconsciously.

Furthermore, Cingel in his study with a group of researchersgave middle school students in a central Pennsylvania school district a grammar assessment test and passed out a survey that asked students to detail their texting habits, such as how many texts they send and receive, as well as their opinion on the importance of texting. after reviewing the study results Cingel said Overall, there is evidence of a decline in grammar scores based on the number of both sending and receiving participants (who use texting messages frequently), as they performed poorly on the test, he explained that in other words by writing:*"if you send your kid a lot of texts with word adaptations, then he or she will probably imitate it"*.So texting could affect learners' off-line language skills that are important to academic writing development and grammar skills as well.

Another study was examined by Tayebinik and Puteh about the impact of texting on language competence, they employed in their study the use of semi structured interviews that relies on asking learners questions that related tothe topic under study, The participants were forty undergraduate students comprising of 29 females and 11 males from University Teknologi Malaysia who studied a range of different courses. An interview protocol was developed for the qualitative study. Specific questions based on the research questions were prepared prior to the interviews. The study shows that some students reported they

unconsciously use abbreviated words in formal writing or during, despite admitting that texting is inappropriate for formal writing.

Tayebinik and Puteh wrote that:

Even though, the participants of this study were highly aware of the impact of textism on their English language proficiency. Textism has affected their formal writing,

speaking, grammatical skills and spelling aptitudes. Moreover; overuse of shorten words has affected the students' formal writing style.

Conclusion

Text messaging offers learners a quick way to send notes to friends and family; there have been opposite points of views on its impact on their grammar and writing skills in academic writing. It could lead to declining language and grammar skills.

In this part of this investigation we provided a review of literature to support our theory that Text messaging may lead to poor grammar skills. Although texting may offer learners a quick way to send notes to friends and family; there have been assumptions on its negative impact on their grammar and writing skills in academic writing. It could lead to declining language and grammar skills, and this is what we will examine in the next part of this study.

Part Two

Methodology and Research Design, Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have presented a brief review of literature related to learners' texting through social media and grammatical competence. Moving to the next step which is more practical ,In this part; we will focus on introducing the overall approach to the research which poses the problem of the influence of texting through social media on EFL learners' grammar skills, then we will collect data and analyze the results obtained through investigating the opinion of EFL learners of Bejaia university on texting through social media and how it influences their grammar skills in academic writing and oral performance in the classroom.   The procedure that is used to collect data in this investigation is creating an online questionnaire on Google forms and publishing it to Master 1 and Master 2 EFL learners of the English department of Bejaia university since they are the main population for this investigation ,and their opinions and answers helps me to solve the problematic of this study.

The previous theoretical framework gave me insights and data that helped me to create a students' questionnaire. The latter aims toexplore the extent to which texting through social media influence EFL learners grammar skills in their academic performance in university.

This part of the study consists of data collected from the questionnaire which contains relevant questions to the research topic given to EFL students in order to have their opinion and attitude that will help to gather information about how is texting through social media effecting their grammar skills , it also deals with the data analysis and interpretation of the findings of the research questionnaire ,after gathering results, I will be able to provide a general discussion of those results and then relate it to the problem statement.

Finally, in the end of this part I will be able to answer the research questions based on the questionnaire results which will enable me to give suggested solutions to learners to

separate texting through social media from academic writing and to be more aware of their

grammar skills in their academic writing in the future.

Chapter One

Research Methodology and

Design and Data Analysis

2.1.1 Research Variables

There are two types of variables in this research which are dependent and independent variables. The independent variable is the antecedent while the dependent variable is the consequent. If the independent variable is an active variable then we manipulate the values of the variable to study its affect on another variable (Kaur,2013 p.36), from the definition above the independent variable in this research is social media communication (the cause),while the dependent variable is the grammatical competence (the effect).

2.1.2 Sample and Population

Participants of this study that will help in collecting data are first and second year master EFL students (both female and male) in the department of language and English literature, in the faculty of cultures and languages, university of Bejaia.

The choice of this particular population depends on the fact that master students are more concerned with academic writings since they write more researches and essays and they are concerned also with writing their graduation project in the final semester.

Twenty two students accepted to participate in this study and answer the online questionnaire, which represent approximately 10% of the whole population in Bejaia University which is 250 students.

2.1.3 Research Methodology

This research adopts the descriptive approach, this choice is regulated by the nature of the subject as it describes the characteristics of the phenomena studied in this investigation through which the data are collected and analyzed quantitatively. The descriptive method is an appropriate choice for the context of this study because the aim of this investigation is to define to what extent does texting through social media influence master EFL learners'

grammar skills in Bejaia university , so basically it is used because the study aims to answer a "what" question (what is the effect of texting on EFL learners' grammatical competence) rather than answering a "why" question, and the two variables in this research (texting through social media and grammatical competence) are observed and measured then described unlike the experimental method where the variables are manipulated which is why the descriptive method is adopted in this last.

A mixed method was adapted to analyse data in order to answer research question, qualitative method was adapted to analyse open-ended questions, whereas, the quantitative method was adapted to analyse close-ended questions.

2.1.4 Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool used in this study is an online questionnaire that consists of twelve close ended items that provide multiple choices for learners to choose from, and four open ended questions that require students to give free answers in the form of short paragraphs ,an online questionnaire was published in master EFL students' facebook groups , and also shared to their facebook groups in order to capture and gather data about if they make grammar mistakes while texting through social media as well as their attitude toward the influence of texting through social media on their grammar skills (in academic writing and oral performance), the descriptive statistical method was used to analyze the data that are collected from the questionnaire ,the data are analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program also the findings from this study are represented by using percentage, tables, figures and descriptive statistics.

2.1.5 Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

This study investigates the effect of texting through social media on EFL learners grammar skills from the perspective of EFL learners of Bejaia university, after gathering information from the students questionnaire about the subject that is under study which were shared with 22 students, the data are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the descriptive statistical method is adapted in this study.

The findings from this study are represented by using percentage, figures and descriptive statistics, to be more specific, the data obtained from the instrument (questionnaire) are analyzed, organized and illustrated in tables and charts using "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (SPSS) program.

2.1.6 Analysis of the Questionnaire:

The whole questionnaire consists of (16) items, among these items, twelve are close-ended items which were multiple choice items, and four are open-ended, in two of them the learners has to explain their choice, and in the remaining two which were the last two items, the students were free to give their own answer and opinion in the form of a small paragraph.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections; the first section is about learners' background and personal information, the second section is about learners 'communication through social media which will give us insight about the usage of social media and especially texting through social media by learners, the third and last section is about learners' grammatical skills.

2.1.6.1 Section One: Background / Personal information

The section aims at exploring the participants' personal information:

- Q 1: What is your gender?

Gender	Number	Percentage %
Male	6	27.2
Female	16	72.8
Total	22	100

Table 1: Students' gender

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are females, which represent 72.8% from the total sample, the rest are males which represent only 27.2%.

We suppose the females are the majority of students in the faculty and the groups where we shared our questionnaire, that 's why the female respondents are more than males respondents, we also believe that the females are more cooperative and opened to same gender for sharing information and answering the questionnaire.

- **Q2: What is your age?**

Mean of Age	24.2727

Table 2: Students' age

Tables 2 show that the mean of age of participants is 24 to 27.

- **Q3: What is your level of instruction?**

Level	Number	Percentage %
Master 1	2	9
Master 2	19	86.5
Not Answered	1	4.5
Total	22	100

Table 3: Students' level of instruction

Table 3 shows the majority of respondents are Master 2 student, which resembles 86.5% from the total sample, 9% are Master 2student and 4.5% (represents 1 student) didn't' t answer this question. We believe that Master 2 students are more understanding to the

importance of answering the questionnaires as they are also in the same task of finding

respondents to their own questionnaires, so we see that the majority of participants belong to

master 2levels.

- **Q4 : Please specify your speciality ?**
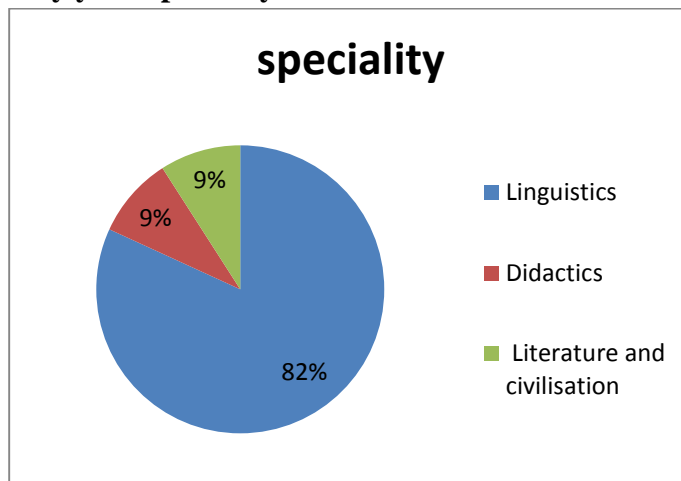
Graph   1: Students' speciality

We notice from graph 1 that the majority of respondents are from Linguistic specialty,

which represents 82% from the total sample, the graph also shows same percentage of

respondents from other 2specialties (Didactics and Literature and civilization) which

represent 9% from the total sample. Maybe because the researchers are from the Linguistics

specialty, they has more connections with their colleagues, so they were more understanding

and more helpful by answering the questionnaire, also we suppose that they were more

interested in the theme of this study.

2.1.6.2 Section Two: Social Media Communication

The section aims at exploring learners' communication using social media

- **Q 5** :**Do you use social media networking sites?**
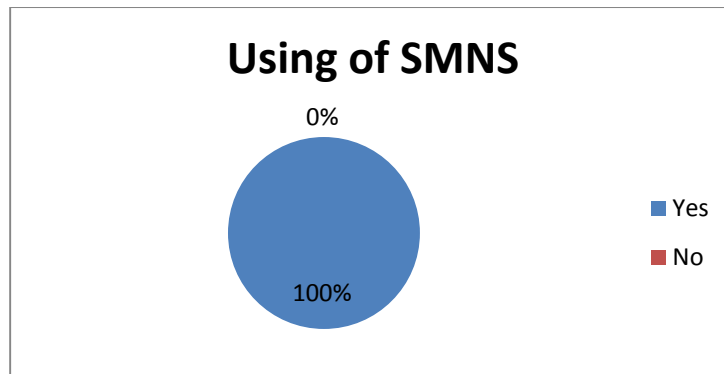
Graph 2: Students' use of SMNS

Graph 2 shows that the entire sample use social media networking sites (100%), we can say that the statistics of this question are logical, due to the high level of utilization of the internet and social media in the world and specially teenagers and students.

- **Q 6: What do you use social media for?**

Reasons of using social media	Number	Percentage %
To connect with friends and family	7	31.8
To connect with your classmates and teachers	4	18.2
To meet new people	0	0
News and information	0	0
Entertainment	5	22.7
To engage in local activism	5	22.7
Other	1	4.5
Total	22	100

Table 4: students' reasons for using social media

Table 4 shows that the majority of students use the social media to connect with friends and family which represent 31.8% of the whole sample, following by Entertainment and to engage in local activism which represent 22.7% for each.To connect with classmates

represent 18.2% of the respondents, no one of sample use social media for meeting people

and for news and information, and 4.5% of respondents use social media for other reasons.

- **Q 7: Do you text on social media networking sites?**

Texting on SMNS	Number	Percentage %
Yes	22	100
No	0	0
Total	22	100

Table 5: Students' Texting on SMNS

Table 5 shows that all students use texting on social media networking site which

represent 100% of the sample, we suppose it is because using online communication is very

popular and very useful for students that's why we see that total of sample answered by

" Yes".

- **Q 8: What communication tool do you use the most in texting?**
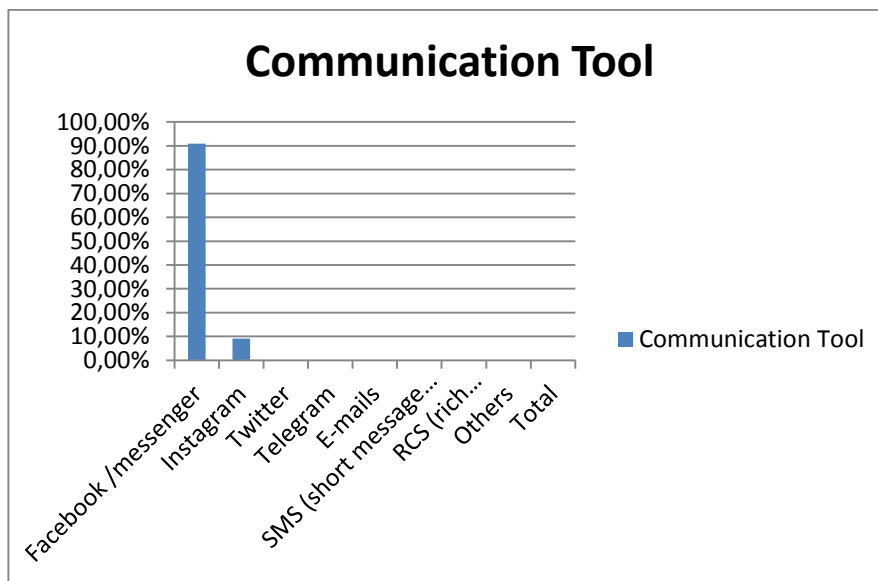
Graph 3: Students' most used communication tool

Graph 3 shows that the majority of students use Facebook/messenger for texting;

which resembles 90.9% from total sample, other 9.1% use Instagram, and we remark that no

one of the sample use other communication tool mentioned in the answer.

- **Q 9 : How often do you text using social networking sites?**

Oftentimes using SNS
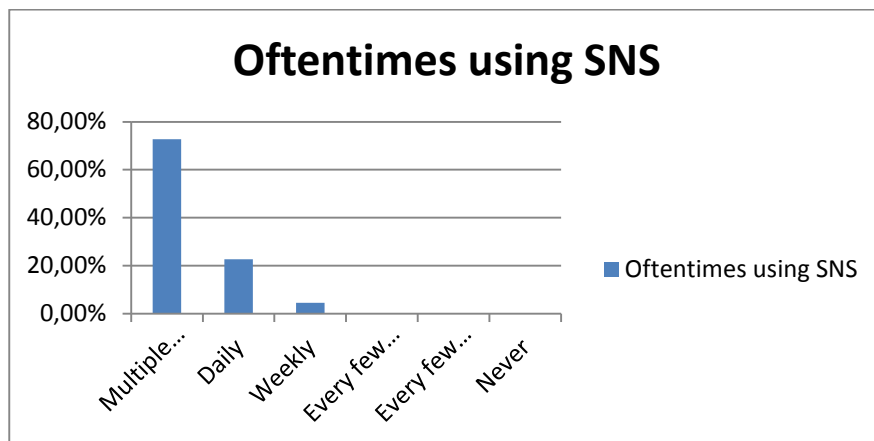
Graph 4 : Students' oftentimes using SNS

Graph 4 reveals that (72,7%) of the sample use social networking sites multiple times a day, and 22.7% total sample use it daily, few respondents use the social networking sites weekly, which represent 4.5% of the total students, other choices were not selected, so we can see that the students are very attached to internet and social media.

- **Q 10 : Do you agree that texting using social networking sites is better than meeting people face to face?**

Agree	Number	Percentage%
Yes	8	36.4
No	14	63.6
Total	22	100

Table 6 : Students' agreement (Comparison between using SNS or Meeting face to face)

Table 6 shows that students who agree that using social networking sites is better than meeting people face to face represent 63.6%, of the whole sample. On the other hand, 36.4% of total sample believe that texting on social networking sites is better, maybe it isdue to their lack of non virtual communication skills with strangers and it is an obstacle for them to interact with people, also they feel that texting is more conformable and can avoid some psychological social issues such as shyness.

- **If yes why ?**

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Some students responded as follow:

- I am introvert, I don't love to meet people
- Because its very easy for it better for not wasting time
- Meeting people is great way to know them better
- less self revealing + texting reduces the "spontaneous replies"+ you can end the conversation whenever you want
- Berceuse it is raster ans easier and i am kind of an introverti
- Becauseitis more comfortable
- parce que je suis un peu timide

2.1.6.3 Section Three: Grammatical Competence

- **Q 11 : Do you think that using correct grammar in texting is important for understanding the message's meaning and intent clearly?**
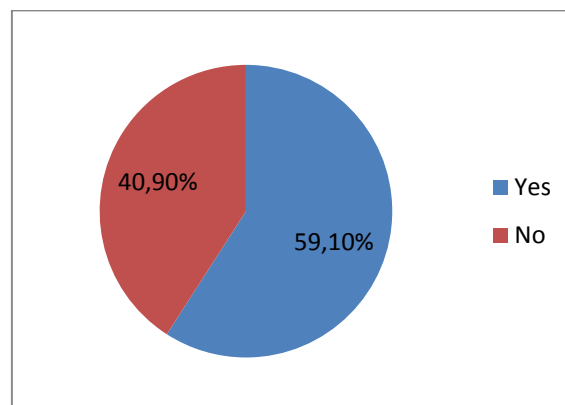
Graph 5 :Students's opinion about using correct grammar in texting

Graph 5 shows that the majority of students believe that using correct grammar in texting is important for understanding the message meaning, which represents 59.10%, of the sample but we can say that an important part of students too think that using correct grammar is not a big problem, as we can see 40.9% are against or do avoid using correct grammar in texting on social media sites.

-Please explain why?

The participant here gave a brief explanation about their answers on that item as followed:

- Bettergrammarbetterexplanation
- I understand them they understand me
- Sometimes meanings can be misinterpreted if one didn't use the appropriate word or sentence pattern , which would create a semantic ambiguity in the sentence or even the whole conversation
- Using correct grammar helps in understang other more effectively
- it actually depends on the context of texting...no don't need to pay attention to the grammar if it's a casual conversation with close people they will get the meaning anyway. but with strangers and in formal communications we have to look organized and polite.
- It is necessary to know what a person wants to convey
- To avoidmisunderstanding
- Because grammar effect the chronological order of events when you say i am doing something or i was doing something the meaning of the conversation changes
- Grammar is important and has a role in giving more sense and meaning to the sentences. Adding to that, grammarisobligatorywhiletexting
- Basically, not everyone has the accessibility to an great amount of vocabulary nor good use of grammar ant spelling, everybody has his own way of communicating, besides there are emojis.ei; non verbal communication, and grammar has nothing to do with meaning so far
- Because it is not formal chatting and the texting language has its own form
- Sometimes people are confused it is important to make things clear
- Because de van understand théabréviations de are user to it
- on peut comprendre avec la sonorité des lettres

From the participants answers we notice that most of them answered that in texting respecting grammar is not important since it is informal. Also we notice when they answered online, that in each answerthe majority of their sentences does not respect grammar rules, take this sentence for example:

- it actually depends on the context of texting...no don't need to pay attention to the grammar if it's a casual conversation with close people they will get the meaning anyway. but with strangers and in formal communications we have to look organized and polite.

As we notice here, the participant did not use capital letters,in addition, there is a lack in punctuations, which assure us that grammar is not important in online language.

- **Q 12: What are the most grammar rules that you neglect or consider as not importantin texting through social media?**
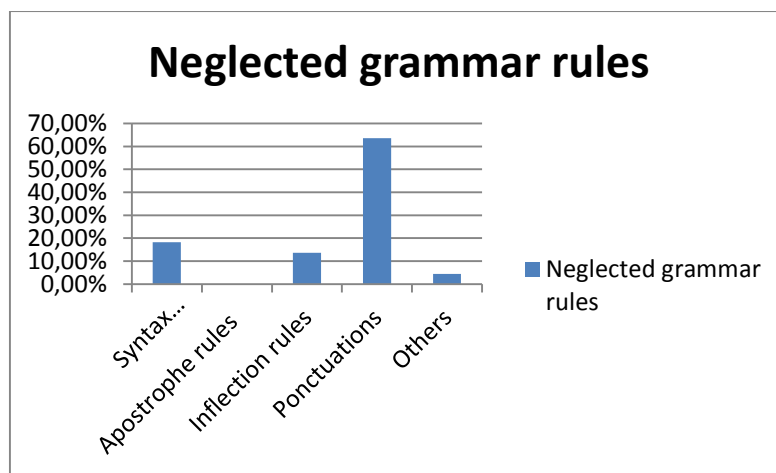
Graph 6: Neglected grammar rules

Graph 6 gives us an idea about the most grammar rules that students neglect or consider as not important in texting through social media, it shows that 63.6% answered that punctuations are not important, whereas 18.2% of students think that syntax and inflection rules are not really important in texting , one student answered with other grammar rules and no one considered Apostrophe rules.

- **Q 13: Do you make grammar mistakes during oral communication because of text-speak habits interference (such as :prepositions ,tense ,modals ,verb form , word forms ,plurals , articles…ect) ?**

	Number	Percentage %

Yes	**12**	**54.5**
No	**10**	**45.5**
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 7: Students grammar mistakes

Table 7 shows us that almost same number of students agree or disagree regarding making grammar mistakes during the oral communication because text-speak habits, 54.5% of students agree and the rest 45.5% disagree.

- **Q 14: Do you find yourself using the language of texting in exams or academic writing automatically without thinking (such as "gonna"instead of "going to", "Dont" instead of "don't" , Abbreviations, lack of punctuation .. .ect)**

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	**17**	**77.3**
No	**5**	**22.7**
Total	**22**	**100**

Table 8: Student s' using of language texting during the exams or in academic writing

Table 8 shows that they majority of students use texting language in academic writings which represents 77,30% of the sample , whereas only 22,7% respond with "No" ,this answers will help us to answer the research question since the main theme of this study is how does texting affect efl learners' grammar skill in academic learning.

- **Q15: What do your teachers tell you about your grammatical skills and competence and do they give you remarks about your texting habits interference with your oral and writing performance?**

    The participants'answers for this item was as followed:

- They say that my grammatical skills in oral are good but they often ask me to be more vigilent in writing
- Yesefcourse.they said that grammar is very important in any language you master.
- Remarks like : the use of colloquial expression in academic writings and lack of punctuation
- Yes they sometimes give me good feedback
- No, they do not give remarks

- most of the time i realize my mistakes before handing my work, so i've never really got any remarks except for "lack of ponctuation" which is a problem i've had even before knowing "the social media speech".
- No never
- Yes they do, when I abbreviate words such as (r u free)
- Need to work on it
- Non
- Not reallly
- Theysaynothing
- Yes in academic writings for exeemplei use weak forms ex (cant) instead of can not

- **Q16To what extent does texting affect your grammar skills in your academic writings?Explain please**

  The participant's answers for this item were as followed:

- I tend to use some phrasal verbs which are not appropriate to academic writing
- Grammar is important because its helps for better understanding the reader what you..have been already said
- Doesn'teffect
- Yes , There is an observable interference of texting habits when writing academically since we are used to texting more than. Academicwriting
- Grammar can affect negatively and positively at same time because it's an essential element in writing that can not be ignored
- Texting does not affect my academic writing. When writing something academic, I pay attention to the correctness of my grammar
- i think i did in the previos question+ that i'm used to not write vowels in words so i can shorten them (e.gcmnt, rsrv, pnctuatn...etc). I often find myself shortening words even when i'm using th pen.
- Not really, it does not affect however teachers notice my mistakes
- Not much. I would say it effects me but i can control myself and do my best to avoid such mistakes
- It doesn'treally affect
- No toomuch
- It does not affect my grammar skills

- Not that much because i know that academic writing is formal so i try to pay attention
- rien car le langage sms reste dans son domaine

- Not that much because i know that academic writing is formal so i try to pay

Chapter Two

Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

Grammar rules provide to learners a description of the essential structural elements of any writing, which means that not respecting those rules will cause the meaning or the message of the text to be incorrect or lost for the reader, and will cause bad writing skills and a deduction of learners' marks and grades.

Since academic writing and oral performance are more formal than the daily language that we use in texting through social media to communicate with our family, friends or classmates....etc, learners and specially foreign languages learners (EFL learners in this study) are influenced with the informal language of texting which may lead to have an effect on their language and grammar in a negative way, that is why they are supposed to be aware of this point which is one of the main objectives of this study.

Grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves, The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we and other use language ,It can help foster precision ,detect ambiguity , and exploit the richness of expression available in English (crystal 2004 cited in Ontario Tech University).

In this chapter, we attempt to provide a discussion about the answerswe obtained from the questionnaire after providing a brief analysis in the previous one.We made sure that the items in the questionnaire were designed and administered to first and second master efl students of Bejaia university to collect data because the subject of study is very important for them since their field of study and their level of instruction require them to have good writing skills, hence; have a good knowledge of grammar rules.

The items were simple and clear and served the purpose of this study which is highlighting the influence of texting through social media on EFL learners' grammar, and the importance of grammar in academic writing.

2.2.2 Discussion of the Findings

In this part of research, we attempt to provide a discussion about each section :

2.2.2.1   Discussion   of   section   one: Background   and PersonalInformation

Twenty two students agreed to participate in this study.From the statistic results we can see that females represent the majority of the population, 16 students out 22 of were females that represent (72,8%), where males represent only (27,2%), this is may be because females are more cooperative than males or because of the lack of interest of males in the theme of this investigation, also we suppose that since we have shared an online questionnaire in master 1 and 2 face book groups of Bejaia, the majority of members of those groups are females.

The mean age of participants in this study is 24 to 27, which is logical since the population are master 1 and master 2 students, and also 19 student out of 22 answered that their level of instruction is Master 2 and only 2 students said that their level of instruction is Master 1 where 1 student did not answer that question.

Finally, 18 student said that their speciality is linguistics, which represent the majority of the population (82%), where the other specialities (literature and civilisation, and didactics) represent only (9%) of the participants for each, we assume that this is because linguistics students were more interested in this study since the research theme is about language, moreover, most of linguistics students who answered the questionnaire were the researchers' colleagues and classmates which is why they were more cooperative.

2.2.2.2 Discussion of Section Two: Social Media Communication

Q5: Do you use social media networking sites?

Social media is spreading faster than ever and becoming the most popular mean of communication in the world, since it facilitates communication and engagement with others no matter their location, this is why all of the participants' answered with ''Yes'' on this item which represents 100% of the population, which means that all of them use SNS.

Q6: **What do you use social media for?**

Seven students answered that they use social media to connect with friends and family, and five of them answered that they use it for entertainment, also five others answered that they use it to engage with local activism ,whereas only four of them answered that they use it to connect with their teachers and classmates, we can see from the results above that learners use social media to interact with their friends and family more than with their teachers and classmates, which is the main objective of this item, we assume that this is because the participants are more close with their friends and family which means that they are able to use informal language (such as slangs abbreviations ,lack or absence of punctuation....etc); which indicate that it is more comfortable and less time consuming for them.

Q7: Do you text on social media networking sites?

In this question, we want to know whether learners use texting in communication or not, which is very important for this study since the research problem is about the effect of texting through social media on learners' grammar.All of the participants answered with ''Yes'' on this item, which means that all participants use texting, we suppose that this is because texting gives a kind of freedom to people that calling doesn't or because of shyness

or introversion....ect , also it gives them time to think about their answers before sending them, in order to convey more clear and appropriate messages.

Q10: Do you agree that texting using social networking sites is better than meeting people face- to- face?

Texting has made communication easier and faster since it increases the frequency of small talk and one sentence thoughts and abbreviations; it became the preferred method of communication among a lot of people.

Even though texting is spreading worldwide, a lot of people see that this style of communication is not conducive to face- to -face communication , as fourteen respondents answered this question with "No", and eight respondents answered with "Yes", this is maybe because when we communicate face-to-face ,we are much likely to have more meaningful conversations and long talk , and the message we are trying to convey is clearer unlike texting communication and we can see that in a participant answer : "Meeting people is great way to know them better".

The respondents who answered with "Yes" explained their answer as follow:

Theme	Quotation from the participants
introversion	am introvert, I don't love to meet people parce que je suis un peu timide less self revealing + texting reduces the "spontaneous replies"+ you can end the conversation whenever you want
comfort	Because it is more comfortable
Duration	Berceuse it is faster and easier and i am kind of an introvert Because its very easy for it better for not wasting time

Table 9 Categories of answers about face-to-face communication

2.2.2.3 Discussion of Section Three: Grammatical Competence

Q11: Do you think that using correct grammar in texting is important for understanding the message's meaning and intent clearly?

It is known that grammar rules are necessary in academic writing to convey correct meaning, and any violation in these rules may lead to ambiguity and bad interpretation of the meaning of the sentence.

This item aimsto explore the importance of using correct grammar in texting among EFL learner, thirteen respondents answered with "Yes" and considered grammar rules important for correctness, on the other hand, eight students answered with "No" and said that grammar rules does not affect the meaning of the messages in texting.

We provided the participant an open-ended item where they can explain their answer and opinion (explain why), and their answers were as follow:

Theme	Quotations from the participants
Grammar is important in texting	Better grammar better explanation
	Sometimes meanings can be misinterpreted if one didn't use the appropriate word or sentence pattern , which would create a semantic ambiguity in the sentence or even the whole conversation
	It is necessary to know what a person wants to convey
	To avoid misunderstanding
	Using correct grammar helps in understang other more effectively
	Because grammar
	effect the chronological order of events when you say i am doing something or i was doing something the meaning of the conversation changes
	Grammar is important and has a role in giving more sense and meaning to the sentences. Adding to that, grammar is obligatory while texting
	Sometimes people are confused it is important to make things clear
Grammar is not important in texting	I understand them they understand me
	it actually depends on the context of texting...no don't need to pay attention to the grammar if it's a casual conversation with close people

	they will get the meaning anyway. but with strangers and in formal communications we have to look organized and polite.
	Basically, not everyone has the accessibility to an great amount of vocabulary nor good use of grammar and spelling, everybody has his own way of communicating, besides there are emojis.ei; non verbal communication, and grammar has nothing to do with meaning so far
	Because it is not formal chatting and the texting language has its own form
	Because de van understand théabréviations de are user to it
	on peut comprendre avec la sonorité des lettres

Table 10 Categories of answers on the importance of grammar in texting

Q 12: What are the most grammar rules that you neglect or consider as not importantin texting through social media?

In order to know the most grammar mistakes that EFL learners make in texting,we asked the participants to choose the grammar rule that they neglect the most in texting by providing multiple choice of some grammar rules and the option "others" if they did not find their answer among the multiple choices that we have provided in this item, most of the participant which represents (63,6%) answered that the most grammar rule that they neglect in texting is punctuations, even though in academic writing neglecting punctuations rules or using punctuations in the wrong place can completely change the meaning of the sentence.However, it seems that learners do not give an importance to this fact, we suppose that this is because learners are not very aware of the importance that punctuations carry in writing ,also punctuations can be so tricky and confusing since there are so many rules concerning them.

Q 13: Do you make grammar mistakes during oral communication because of text-speak habits interference (such as :prepositions ,tense ,modals ,verb form , word forms ,plurals , articles…ect) ?andQ 14: Do you find yourself using the language of texting in exams or academic writing automatically without thinking (such as "gonna"instead of "going to", "Dont" instead of "don't" , Abbreviations, lack of punctuation .. .ect

Regarding making grammar mistakes because of the interference of text habits in oral communication among EFL learners, almost same percentage of learners who agreed and disagreed. However, the majority of respondents which represent (77,3%) agreed that they find themselves using the language of texting such as abbreviation, omitting apostrophe, lack of punctuations...etc in their academic writing. These results are very important for answering our research question on how does texting affect EFL learners grammar in academic writing, we can assume that texting affects EFL learners' grammar in a negative way since the majority of participants answered that they make grammar mistakes in their academic writing because of text habits interference which serve to confirm the theory of this study somehow.

Q15: What do your teachers tell you about your grammatical skills and competence and do they give you remarks about your texting habits interference with your oral and writing performance?

This item is an open-ended question where students were free to give their answer in the   form of small paragraph on teachers' remarks about their grammatical skills; the next table consists of their answers:

Theme	Quotations from the participants
Remarks about punctuation	most of the time i realize my mistakes before handing my work, so i've never really got any remarks except for "lack of ponctuation" which is a problem i've had even before knowing "the social media speech". Remarks like : the use of colloquial expression in academic writings and lack of punctuation
remarks about abbreviation	Yes they do, when I abbreviate words such as (r u free)

Remarks about apostrophe	Yes in academic writings for exeemplei use weak forms ex (cant) instead of can not
Remarks about grammar and writings	They say that my grammatical skills in oral are good but they often ask me to be more vigilent in writing Yesefcourse.they said that grammar is very important in any language you master. Yes they sometimes give me good feedback
No remarks	No, they do not give remarks No never Non Not reallly They say nothing

Table 11 categories answers about teachers

Table 11 shows that most of the participants receive remarks from their teachers about their grammar mistakes during oral performance and especially in their academic writing, remarks such as punctuations, apostrophe and abbreviation. And they believe that it is because of texting habits and getting used to using texting language on social media which lead them to use the same language in their academic writings unconsciously and without paying attention.

Q16To what extent does texting affect your grammar skills in your academic writings?Explain please

This item is an open-ended question where students were free to give their answer and opinion in the form of small paragraph on the effect of texting on their grammar skills; the next table consists of their answers:

Theme	Quotations from the participants
Affect	I tend to use some phrasal verbs which are not appropriate to academic writing Yes , There is an observable interference of texting habits when writing academically since we are used to texting more than. Academic writin

	i think i did in the previos question+ that i'm used to not write vowels in words so i can shorten them (e.gcmnt, rsrv, pnctuatn...etc). I often find myself shortening words even when i'm using th pen
Slightly affect	Not really, it does not affect very much however teachers notice my mistakes Not much. I would say it effects me but i can control myself and do my best to avoid such mistakes No too much Not that much because i know that academic writing is formal so i try to pay attention
Does not affect	Texting does not affect my academic writing. When writing something academic, I pay attention to the correctness of my grammar rien car le langage sms reste dans son domaine

Table 12Categories of answers about to what extent does texting affect grammar

Table12shows that the majority of the students who participated in this investigation viewed that texting habits interfere with their academic writing and affect their grammar.

The data indicate that even though some students reported that texting does not affect their academic writing and grammar, most of the students reported that they usually use the informal language of texting unconsciously and without paying attention in their academic writing like shortened words, omitting apostrophes and mostly lack of punctuation,which is the most common mistake that the participants make according to the collected data on the questionnaire ,as mentioned by some of them :

A :Yes , There is an observable interference of texting habits when writing academically since we are used to texting more than. Academic writing

B: i think i did in the previos question+ that i'm used to not write vowels in words so i can shorten them (e.gcmnt, rsrv, pnctuatn...etc). I often find myself shortening words even when i'm using th pen

The findings of this study also show that teachers give remarks to the learners about this grammar mistakes that are caused by text habits interference in their oral performance and especially in their academic writings.

Thus, Texting at some level is negatively related to learners' grammar performance since it could lead to a decline in EFL learners' grammar skills because of the imitation of texting s' informal language in academic writing. Hence, it will affect their language development.Thuslearners should be aware of this bad influence of texting habits and try to have a good knowledge of grammar rules to improve their writing skills and linguistic competence.

Chapter Three

Limitation and Implication of the Study

2.3.1 Implication of the Study

Several important insights and implications can be drawn from this study. The implications of these results and findings are very important within the field of education.

Poor grammar is a common issue among learners, since grammar rules may be considered as difficult and challenging, this does not change the fact that grammar rules are the essential element for good writing, and not respecting those rules will lead to poor writing skills and oral performance.

Since we are in the age of technology, this study shed the lights of the influence of the modern language of texting on learners 'grammatical competence in academic writing and performance, and the importance of grammar in academic learning.

From the findings obtained in this study, we cannot generalize that texting effect EFL learners 'grammar negatively, however, it is shown that most of learners' are affected by texting language and it interferes with their academic writing and oral performance, this is why this study is important as it aims to spread awareness among EFL learners about the importance of respecting grammar rules and avoiding the interference of text habits in formal writing.

2.3.2 Limitation of the Study

This study has several limitations, as we conducted a questionnaire to obtain our research results, we should have aimed for a larger sample (participants) size, one of the reasons that came in the way of that is that we created an online questionnaire and published it in master 1 and master 2 EFL learners' facebook groups instead of distributing written questionnaires at learners' classrooms since we had limited time to meet the deadline, so we suppose that not all the member learners of the groups viewed the questionnaire , thus only 22 learners accepted to participate in answering the online questionnaire.

Additionally, like any other study, it is predicted that it might be difficult to get accurate data from the part of all participants, In addition   not all the sample answered the open-ended items, and only a number of learners out of 22 answered it, so we did not have all the participants' opinions and views on the open-ended questions.

Furthermore, the topic that we have chosen does not have many prior research studies since it treats the influence of texting on EFL learners' grammar which is a modern issue, this has created an obstacle in finding available data and theories to form the basis of the literature review.

Finally, after completing the analysis of the findings, we find out that the instruments that we have applied in this research are not enough; we should have added interviews and grammar tests to understand better the relationship between texting and grammar mistakes in academic learning which was not possible due to the shortage of time plus with the study was conducted during the time of Covid-19 so it was difficult to interact with the students.

2.3.3 Recommendation for Future Research

Future research should go for a larger sample size,this will allow for greater statistical precision and generalizations to be made.

Additionally, time frame should be long enough to collect enough data and explore the findings in detail, for this purpose it is recommended to make interviews with EFL learners and teachers. Finally future research should use grammar tests for participants after dividing them into two groups (a group of participants who text frequently and another group of learners who text from time to time) and compare between the results and mistakes of the participants from the two groups to understand better to what extent does texting affect learners' grammar skills.

2.3.4 Recommendation for Teachers

Teachers should give an importance to learners' grammar mistakes and provide them with remarks and feedback about their writing and oral performance, they should also refer to learners' interference of texting language with academic language such us abbreviation, lack of punctuation, not following the syntax structure of sentences…etc to help students avoid this interference of text habits on formal writing and oral performance.

Conclusion

The second part of this dissertation presented the research design and methodology including research variables, population and sample, data gathering tools used in this study (i.e. questionnaire), and procedures of data collection and analysis description, and discussion of the findings obtained from the questionnaire, which was developed to know the students' views and attitude about to what extent does texting influence their grammar.

Also, some limitations, implications and suggestions for future research are presented in this part.

General Conclusion

For the sake of conducting an exploratory study about the effects of Texting habits through social media on EFL learners' grammatical skills, descriptive method is adopted in which the data are collected and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Sample of this study were twenty two learners from master1 and master 2 at Abderrahmane Mira Bejaia University.

One of the main issues that face EFL learners, especially university learners, is poor grammatical skills and bad writing, besides, nowadays with the spread of social media communication, language of texting has become a habit among learners, some scholars found out that texting habits may interfere with the academic writing and lead to bad grammar.

The present study had been undertaken to investigate the most common grammar mistakes that EFL learners make in their writing, and also the most neglected grammar rules. It also aimed to investigate the impact of texting through social media on EFL learners 'grammatical skills, that is to say, it tried to study if texting can affect grammar skills negatively, which is the theory and hypothesis that we have adapted for answering the research problem of this investigation.

In general, the main conclusion that can be reached after an analysis of the obtained data is that this research confirms our hypothesis that texting habits and the informal language of texting may interfere in academic formal writing and oral performance and lead to violate grammar rules.Accordingly, we recommended that EFL learners should be aware of their grammar mistakes and try to have a good and inclusive knowledge of grammar rules to avoid bad writing skills, it recommended also that teachers should be conscious about these mistakes and give feedback and remarks for learners' in order to pay more attention to the grammar rules and correct their mistakes for writing skills and oral performance improvement aim.

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Appendices

Learners' Questionnaire

Grammar and Texting Questionnaire

Thisfollowing questionnaire aims to collect data about the influence of texting through social media on learners 'grammar competence.

It consist of three section , the first one contains items about learners' background /personal information ,the second section contains items about learners 'social media communication and the last section contains items about learners' grammatical competences .

Please, do put a tick ✓ on one of the options listed below.

Section One: Background / Personal information

    1- Whatisyourgender ?

      a-Female   b- Male

    2- Whatisyourage ? ……………

    3- What is your level of instruction?
       a- Master 1
       b- Master 2

    4- Pleasespecifyyourspeciality
       a- Linguistics
       b- Didactics
       c- Literature and civilisation

Section Two: Social Media Communication

    5- Do you use social media networking sites?
      a-Yes   b- No

6- What do you use social media for?
      a- To connect with friends and family
      b- To connect with your classmates and teachers
      c- To meet new people
      d- News and information
      e- Entertainment
      f- To engage in local activism
      g- Other, please specify …………………………………………

7- Do you text on social media networking sites?

                  a-Yes   b -No

8- What communication tool do you use the most in texting?

    a- Facebook /messenger
    b- Instgrame
    c- Twitter
    d- Telegram
    e- E-mails
    f- SMS (short message service)
    g- RCS (rich communication services
    h- Others, please specify …………………………………………

9- How often do you text using social networking sites?

    a- Multiple times a day
    b- Daily
    c- Weekly
    d- Every few weeks
    e- Every few months
    f- Never

10- Do you agree that texting using social networking sites is better than meeting people face to face?

          a-Yes   b- No

Please specify why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Section Three: Grammatical Competence

11-Do you think that using correct grammar in texting is important for understanding the message's meaning and intent clearly?

a-Yes   b-No

Please specify why
?…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

12- What are the most grammar rules that you neglect or consider as not important in texting through social media ?

  a- Syntax (sentence structure)
  b- Apostrophe rules (e.g,Apostrophe S to indicate possession)
11- Inflection rules (e.g,adding the letter "s"to the verb if the subject is third-person singular)
  c- Ponctuations

Others specify please

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

12-Do you make grammar mistakes during oral communication because of text-speak habits interference (such as :prepositions ,tense ,modals ,verb form , word forms ,plurals ,articles…etc) ?

a-yes   b- No

13- Do you find yourself using the language of texting in exams or academic writing automatically without thinking (such as "gonna"instead of "going to", "Dont" instead of "don't" , Abbreviations, lack of punctuation .. .etc)

      a- Strongly agree
      b- Agree
      c- Neutral
      d- Disagree
      e- Strongly disagree

14- What do your teachers tell you about your grammatical skills and competence and do they give you remarks about your texting habits interference with your oral and writing performance?

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

15- To what extent does texting affect your grammar skills in your academic writings?

    Explain please

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

 Thank you for your collaborations