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# The impact of online chatting on student's academic writing

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for a Master Degree in Language Sciences

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*Dedication*

*This work is dedicated:*

*To my lovely family" my Mom - my Dad - my*

*Sister - my Brother " whose support and*

*encouragement were always pushing me up.*

*Last but not least a word of deep love goes to the*

*candles that lighten my whole life my friends.*

## *Acknowledgement*

*I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Ounís salím  
for his continuous support and endless cooperation  
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*Thanks are also extended to the teachers of English  
department.*

*I gratefully acknowledge the help of my friends.*

*I would like to offer my gratitude and respect for my  
Mom -Dad - who helped pushing me up all the time  
my sister and brother for their limitless  
encouragement.*

## **Abstract**

This study aims to find out whether online chatting can affect students writing performance. It focuses on the written language of chat communication of English student's productions in order to enable English learners to understand the importance of academic writing, and to be aware of the negative impact of the online chatting. The research findings state that the frequent use of chat affects positively student's written production. The study suggests online chat can be used as a supplementary learning tool in higher education classrooms as it brings positive effect not only on student's learning.

**Keyword:** writing performance- online chatting- written production

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# **General introduction**

## **Introduction**

### **1. Background of the study**

Over the past few years, the internet has emerged as a notable new technology which has spread all over the sectors of education, business, economics and other disciplines. Due to this new means of communication people are easily able to communicate and exchange thoughts and ideas with others. Several studies were done to investigate the effect of online chatting on students' writing skills. For example M. I.GHALEB (2013) investigated the effect of using online chatting to develop writing skill in English for some student from Latin private school. The researcher obtained positive result highlighting the importance of chatting in the development of writing. Selami (2017) also stated that online chatting group discussion makes it possible for students to edit or rephrase sentence many times before actually sending it. Thus, this study aims to find out whether online chatting can affect students writing performance.

## **2. Statement of the problem**

In globalization era, technology brings lots of effects in education specially language learning. language learning has to grow beyond the four walls of the classroom; it occurs outside and informally through many tools including social networking service which is an online platform used to establish social networking or relations among individuals who share their opinions, interests, activities. Communication through online chatting among students of English may lead to great impact on student's academic writing. Online chatting is seen as a bridge between social media and academic content. However, educators believe in the idea that learning cannot take place outside of a classroom and online chatting will not help in the improvement of the writing skills. The present study aims to find out whether online chatting can affect students writing performance among master two students.

## **3. Research questions**

The main research questions of the study are:

- 1-Does online chatting have impact on student's academic writing?
- 2-Does online chatting improver or impede students' writing skill?

## **4. Research methodology and design**

### **4.1 Choice of the method**

As it has been indicated earlier, the main purpose of this research is to assess the impact of online chatting on students' academic writing, to attain the intended objectives, mixed approach was used. It is believed that mixed methods provide better information to understand a particular phenomenon under investigation than a single method.

#### **4.2 Sample of the study**

As stated above, the target population for this study were master two student. They were chosen because they have more experience with the social media. Sixty (60) students were chosen using random selection to give an equal chance to all participants to be selected

#### **4.3 Data gathering Tools**

To gather information regarding the effects of online chatting on students' writing skills, we administered a questionnaire to the sample of the study. The questionnaire consists of two sections each section consists of number of questions, section one is about online chatting and section two is about the impact of online chatting on student's academic writing.

## **5. Definition of terms**

### **What is writing?**

Writing provides for students to precede new information in their own words .it is particularly effective in large classrooms where breaking students into pairs or groups may be prohibitive. it also appeals to individuals who prefer to learn independently.

Writing is a medium of human communication that involves the representation of a language with written symbols. Writing systems are not themselves human languages; they are means of rendering a language into a form that can be reconstructed by other humans separated by time and/or space.

### **What is online chatting?**

May refer to any kind of communication over the internet that offers a real time transmission of text messages from sender to receiver. Chat messages are generally short in order to enable other participants to respond quickly. Thereby, a feeling similar to a spoken conversation is created, which distinguishes chatting from other text-based online communication forms such as internet forums and email. Online chat may address point-to-point communications as well as multicast communications from one sender to many receivers and voice and video chat, or may be a feature of a web according to O'Hagan & Achworth (2002); Chat is an early discovery which is becoming widely spread in the world.

## **Academic writing:**

Academic writing is a formal style of writing used in universities and scholarly publications. You'll encounter it in journal articles and books on academic topics, and you'll be expected to write your essays, research papers and dissertation in academic style.

Academic writing refers to a style of expression that researchers use to define the intellectual boundaries of their disciplines and specific areas of expertise. Characteristics of academic writing include a formal tone, use of the third-person rather than first-person perspective (usually), a clear focus on the research problem under investigation, and precise word choice. Like specialist languages adopted in other professions, such as, law or medicine, academic writing is designed to convey agreed meaning about complex ideas or concepts for a group of scholarly experts.

## **What is writing?**

Writing was defined in relation to writing system by Daniels and Bright (1996;3) as follows "Rather, writing is defined as a system of more or less permanent marks used to represent an utterance in such a way that it can be recovered more or less exactly without the intervention of the utterer. By this definition, writing is bound up with language". For many years, writing was ignored and not given importance as other skills especially speaking, which has

the feature as the only way of communication. Byrne (1988) sees writing as only seen as using graphic symbols or reproducing what has been.

Writing is a basic acquirement for learners need like taking notes, writing productions, exams. Harmer (2007) states, " the writing skill is important as the other skills (speaking, listening, and reading). It is needed for students to know to reflect their knowledge, emotions, or ideas on a paper (how to write letters, how to reply advertisements, and how to summarize a text...)

## **6 .limitations of the study**

Limitation in terms of skills: because of the limited scope, this study sheds light only on writing skill not the other skills.

Limitation in terms of students: This study was applied to master two students, thus results are not generalised to other levels.

## **7. Structure of the study**

This study is divided into two chapters theoretical and practical. The first chapter sheds light on the previous studies related to the effects of online chatting on students' writing skills. The second chapter is devoted to data analysis and interpretation as well as discussion and suggestions and recommendation.

**chapter one**  
**“online chatting”**

## **Chapter one : Online chatting**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter we define online chatting from different views, we explain the effectiveness of online chatting on writing, and we try and cite previous studies on the topic.

#### **I.1 What is online chatting?**

Online chat may refer to any kind of communication over the Internet that offers a real-time transmission of text messages from sender to receiver. Chat messages are generally short in order to enable other participants to respond quickly. Thereby, a feeling similar to a spoken conversation is created, which distinguishes chatting from other text-based online communication forms such as Internet forums and email. Online chat may address point-to-point communications as well as multicast communications from one sender to many receivers, or may be a feature of a web conferencing service. Online chat in a less stringent definition may be primarily any direct text-based one-on-one chat or one-to-many group chat, using tools such as instant messengers, Internet Relay Chat, talkers and possibly MUDs. The expression online chat comes from the word chat which means "informal conversation". Online chat includes web-based applications that allow communication –often directly addressed, but anonymous between users in a multi-user environment. Web conferencing is a

more specific online service that is often sold as a service, hosted on a web server controlled by the vendor.

## **I.2. The effectiveness of online chatting on writing**

Online learning provides major benefits to both students and teachers. For example, Hussein and Al (2020) point out that, the overall findings revealed that the online learning was an effective and efficient system of learning to fulfill the educational needs of learners at distant locations.

Thus, with the rapid development in information and communication technologies (ICTs), various changes have been made in terms of the methods in the teaching and learning process.

Online chat has become one of the most prominent tools among students and has potential for teaching and learning .Students can improve their English writing skills and knowledge not only from the in-class instruction but also from cooperative learning. In addition, online chatting integrated instruction can significantly enhance students' interest and motivation".

### **I.3. Previous studies**

English students often find some difficulties in mastering writing skills. This situation has led the researcher to attempt to find techniques to facilitate and develop writing skills assigned to be taught to English writing curriculum. By revising the literature related to teaching and learning techniques, the researcher chose the online chat to assist the target students' writing skills. In which the students may work individually, in pairs or in groups of two or more students. It is a useful and an interesting technique because it gives every student an opportunity to write. Without this knowledge, students may be able to construct grammatical sentences correctly, but still unable to produce pieces of writing rich in ideas and in consistence with the writing conventions. Thus, by adopting online chatting as a modern technique for developing writing skills, the teacher is able to improve the students' writing ability because it is an effective technique to be applied in classroom . The students become comfortable to write everything.

Mariam Ibrahim ghaleb (2013) examined the effectiveness of using online chat strategy on developing writing skills. In order to achieve the aims of the study; the researcher adopted the quasi experimental research design. The sample of the study consisted of 82 female students who were equally divided into 41 students for the experimental group and 41 students for the control one. They were randomly chosen from the experimental group received training on using online chat strategy to improve the intended writing skills, while the

ordinary method was used in teaching the control. To check for the effectiveness of the target strategy, the researcher constructed two tools; pre/post achievement test and a focus group interview. The data collected was statistically analysed by using T-test paired sample to measure the differences of the experimental group in the pre and the post achievement test, on one hand, and the differences between the experimental group and the control group in the pre and the post achievement test, on the other hand. The study findings revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the scores of the experimental group in the pre and post achievement test in favour of the post test and another difference was attained between the scores of the post test of the experimental group and scores of the post test of the control group in favour of the experimental group. The researcher attributed these considerable results to the effectiveness of the online chat.

Louis Roelfse (2013) also Investigated the impact of Facebook-Speak on the written academic work of learners in a Western Cape high school. He examined the effect of language typically used on social network sites such as Facebook (referred to here as "Facebook-speak") on the written academic work of a selected group of high school learners. The specific features the study anticipated were spelling errors, unconventional punctuation features, over-punctuation, the exclusion of functional words, the excessive use of abbreviations and acronyms, and the incorporation of emoticons in written

academic work. Additional features identified were the nonconventional use of tenses and sentence structure.

## **Conclusion**

In the previous chapter we have discussed online chatting, the next chapter will be devoted to data analysis and interpretation.

## **chapter two**

# **Data analysis and Interpretation**

## **Introduction**

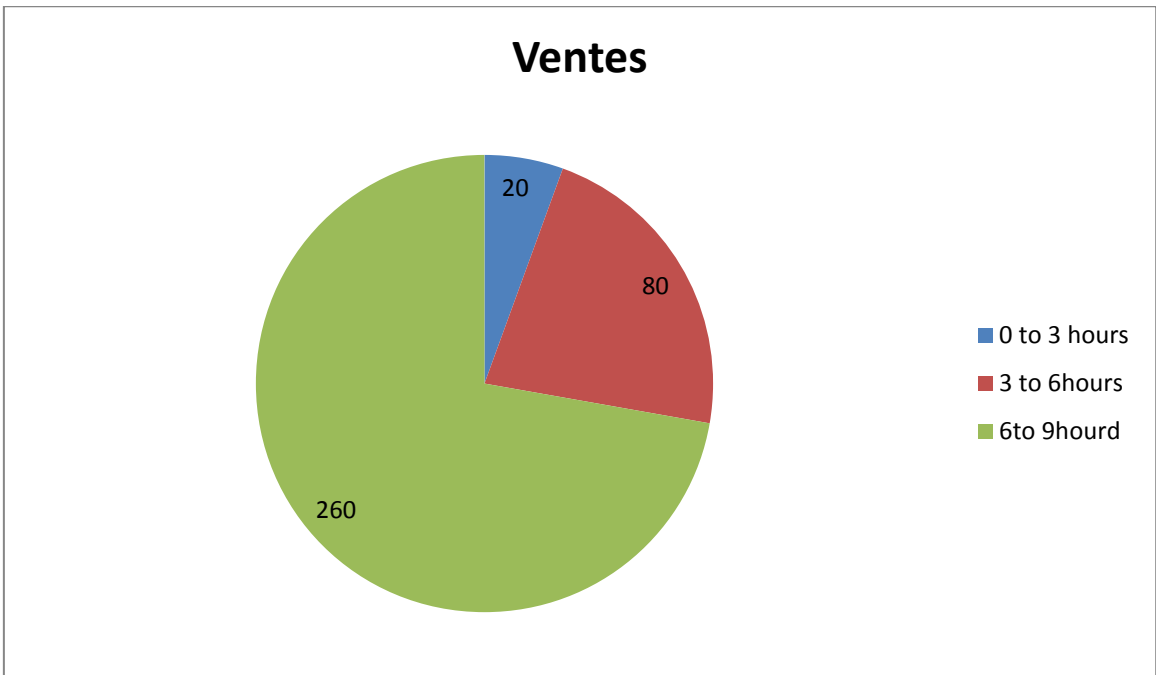
This chapter is devoted to analyses the data gathered from different questionnaire and interviews are addressed to teachers. The purpose is to investigate teachers and students views about the impact of online chatting on student's writing.

## **Results related to questions of the study**

### **Q01- How many hours do you spend using media?**

The aim of this question is to know the frequency of students using the internet, how many hours do they spend online per a day

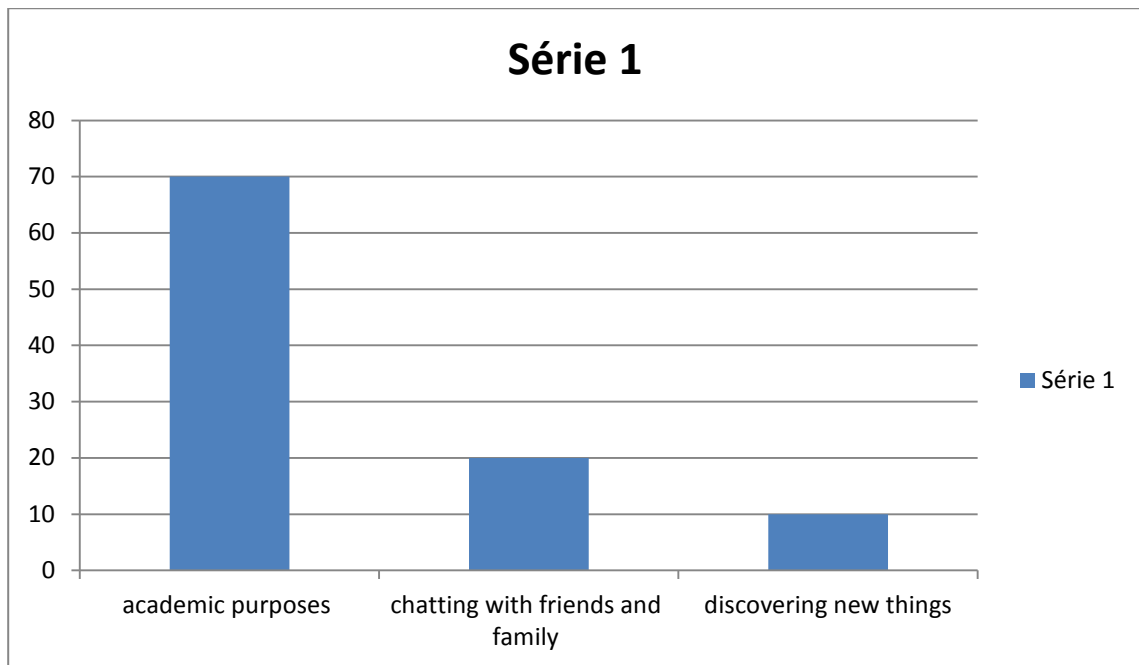
	<b>From 0h to 3h</b>	<b>From 3h to 6h</b>	<b>From6h to 9h</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>260</b>



**Graph 01** : The time load of using the internet by students .

According to the statistics , we notice that 80 of the students spend more than six hours on media

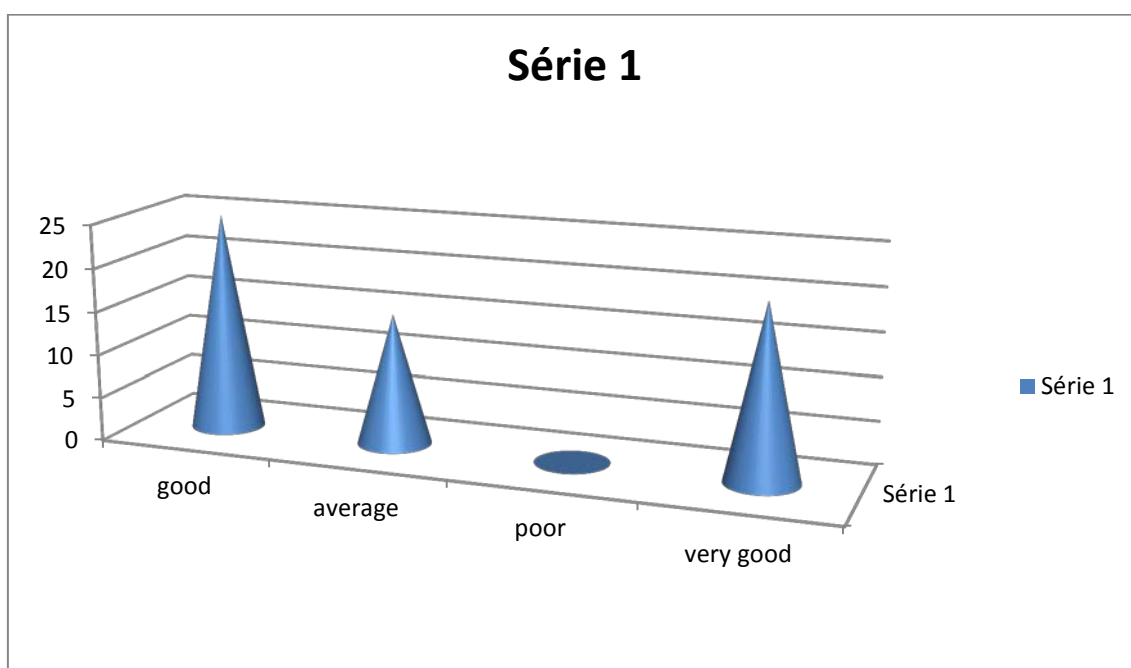
**Q 2 -Do you use social media for ?**



**Graph 02** : Prefebale online activities .

The results in statistics summarizes the Prefebale online activities for students, It is clear that 70 % of students prefer chatting for academic purposes , 20% of them prefer chatting with friends and family , also 10% for discovering new things.

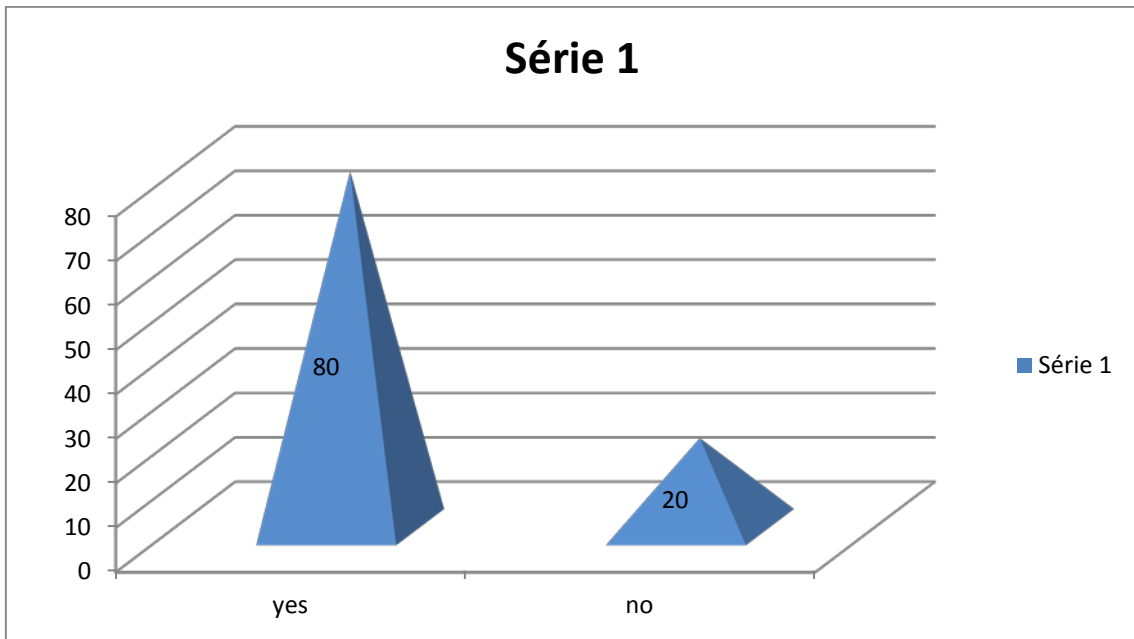
**Q3 how do you evaluate your writing skill in English ?**



**Graph 03:** Evaluation of writing skill

In this question (53.09%) of the students evaluated thier writing skill as good in English ,(22.73%) are average ,(13.64%) are very good while poor choice was noticeably not taken into consideration with a low percentage of (4.55)

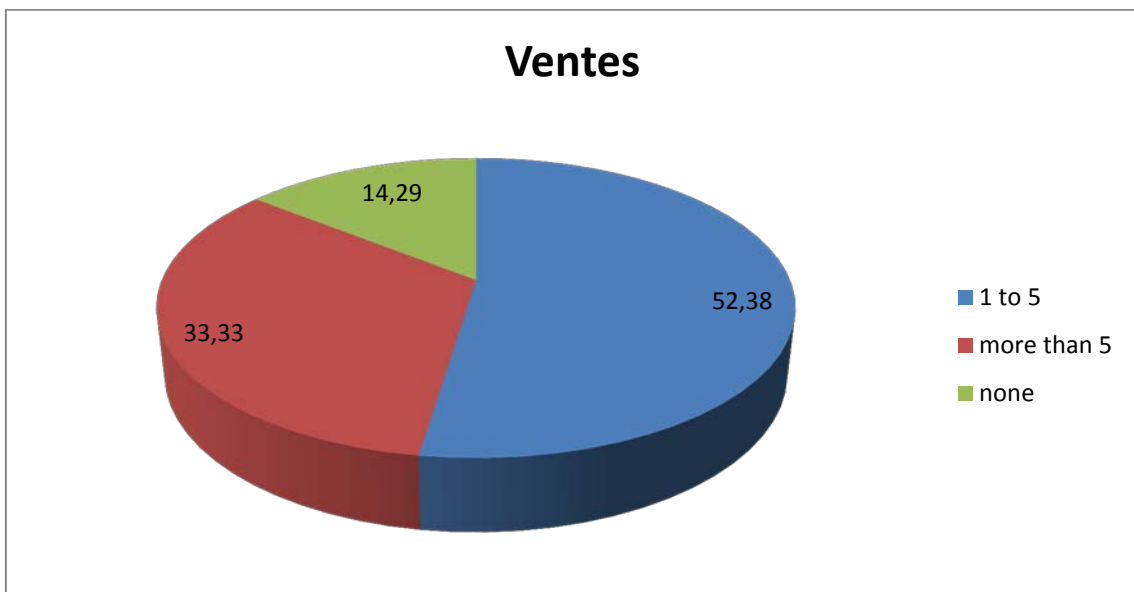
**Q4 –do you check the spelling of words while typing. ?**



**Graph 04 :** Student’s Concern of Using Correct English .

We notice that the graph shows that (20%) of students are not concerned with the kind of messages . They use when chatting , while (80%) of them mind about the kind of messages they use in chat .

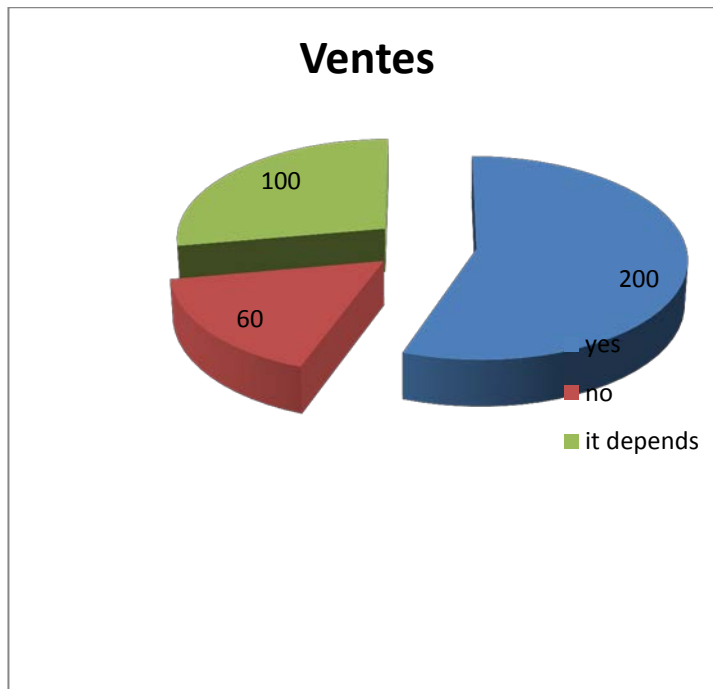
**Q5 how many words do you acquired from chatting in a week?**



**Graph 5.** Number of words that are acquired from chatting in a week

Through this diagram we observe that most of the sample (52.38%) acquire about 1 to 5 words from chatting per a week, while (33.33%) acquire more than 5 words; however a low number (14.29%) said that they do not acquire any word from chatting.

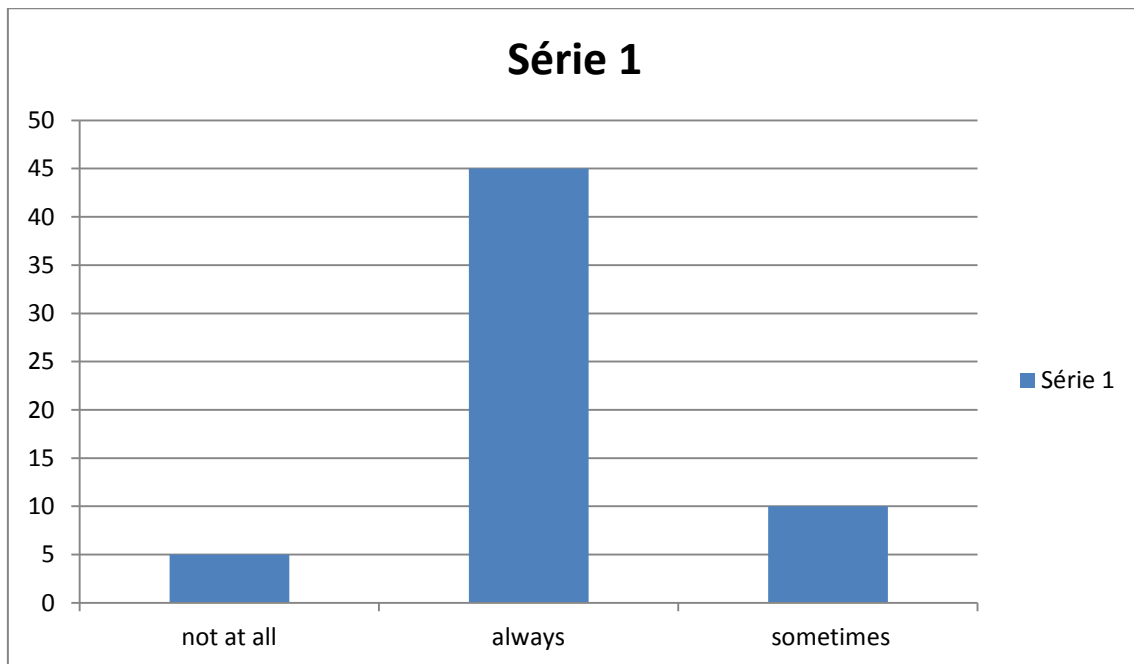
**Q6- do you find some difficulties in writing while chatting in English**



**Graph 6 :**difficulties that are faced while writing

We can see from statistics that 200 they did not find difficulties while writing while 60 they find some difficulties and 100 they said it depends.

**Q7 do you take into consideration grammar rules and spelling mistakes?**



**Graph 7** the frequency of checking grammar rules while writing

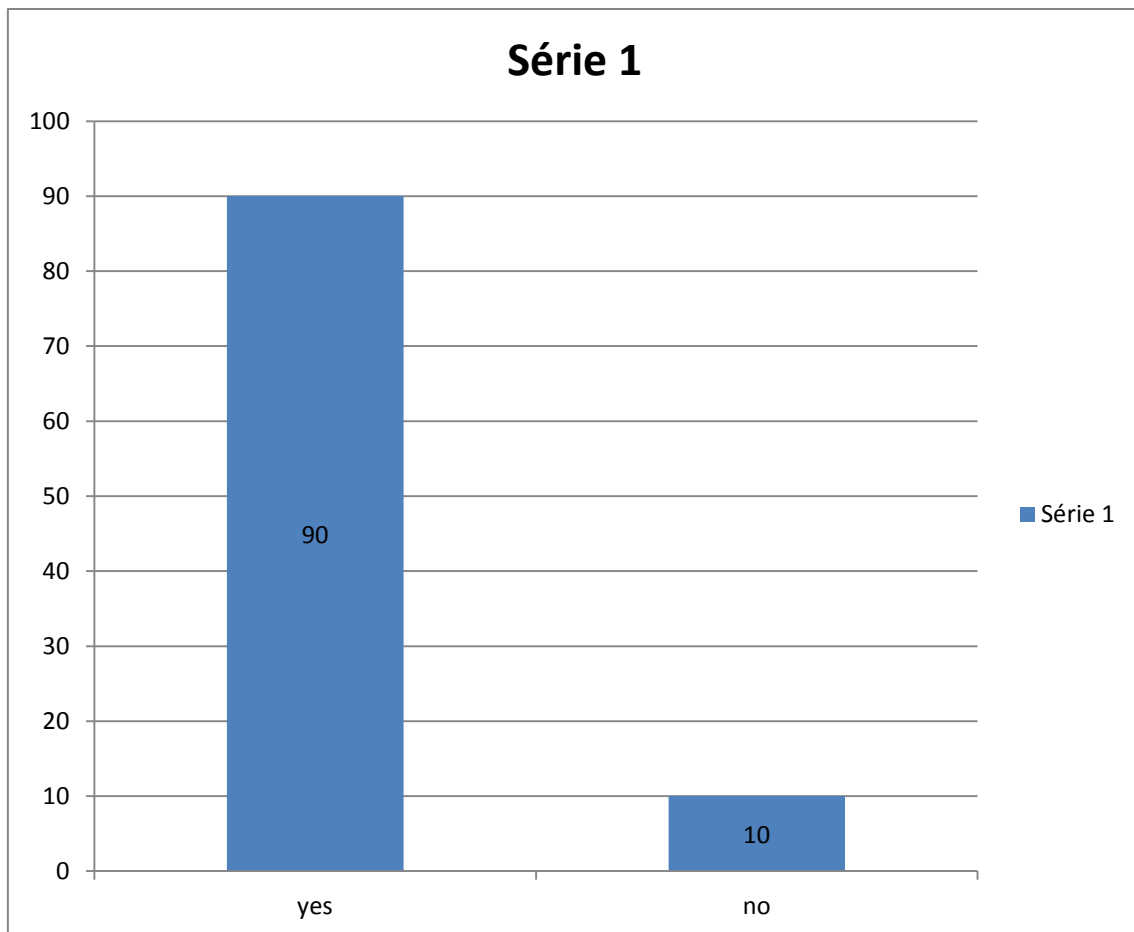
From the diagram we notice that 45 students are always checking grammar rules ;while 10 students said sometimes and 5 they said not at all.

**Q8: Do you think that chatting in English helps in improving your writing skills**

- From that open question, we have noticed that each one of our participants has his own personal story about learning English by chatting with other people, most of them have practiced typing in English through messenger, they have also declared that online chatting is the only alternative to practice typing in English with others from other countries that use that language ,however few participants have stated that media was not that much helpful for them ,because most of messenger users use abbreviations ,informal language, slangs and jargons do not care much about grammar and written expression rules.

**Q9 do you consider online chatting as an important tools in developing writing skills?**

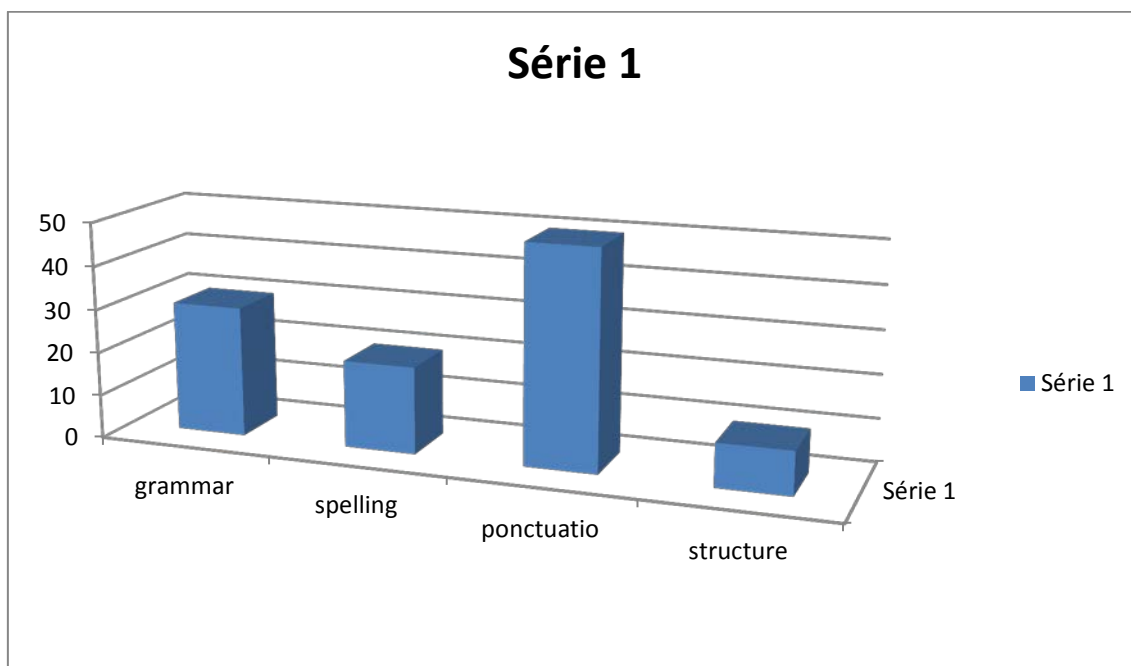
	Yes	No
Student Percentage	90	10



**Graph 09:** the importance of using online chatting while connecting

We can see from the graphic that 90 of students consider online chatting as an important tools in devloping writing skills, while 10 they did not consider online chatting as an important tools to develop writing skill

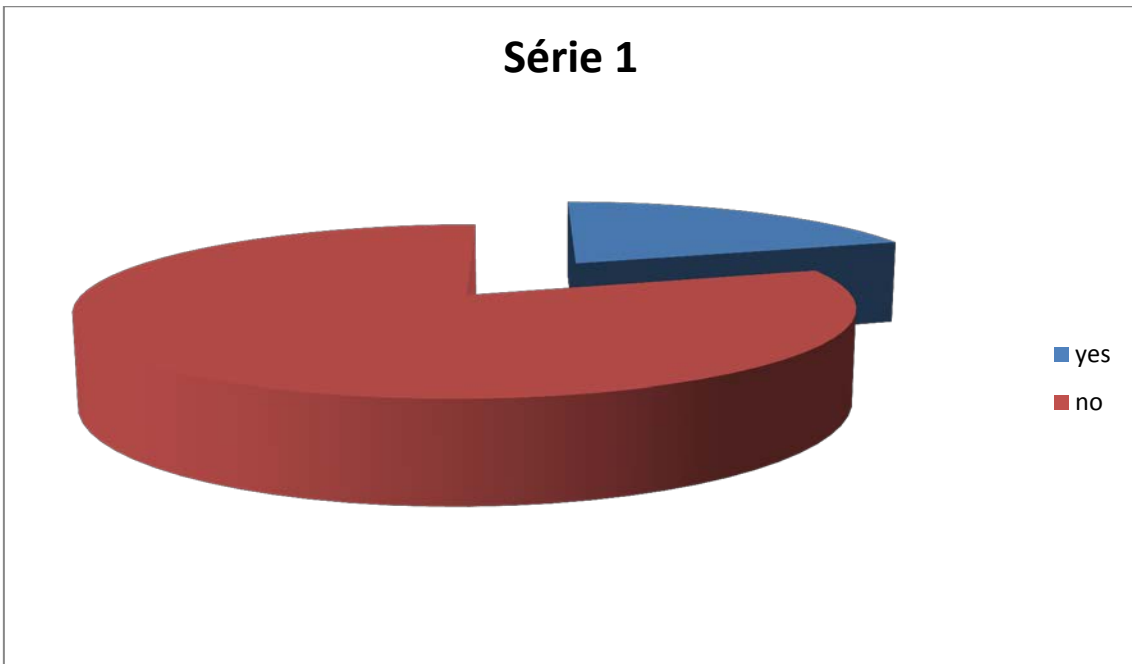
**Question10: What are the most affected aspects?**



**Graph10:** The Most Affected Aspects of writing.

It is clear that all the aspects are affected ,(60 %) of participants choose punctuation as the most affected aspect , (10%) for spelling , and (20%) for grammar , and only (10%) for structure .

**Q11 Do you use abbreviation while texting, like (lol: laughing out loud/ omg: oh my God)?**



**Graph11:** Students' use of Abbreviations

the results revealed that 20% of the informants said that they use abbreviations while texting. While 80 % they said no.

## **Discussion**

Results from students' questionnaire and teacher's interview show that most of respondents said that chatting has an impact on their academic writing. In addition, most of respondents said that chatting has a positive impact on their academic writing and vocabulary enrichment, also they considered online chatting as an important tool for teaching and learning. Furthermore, the majority of the students admit that it is much easier for them to express themselves through written communication on Facebook after they experience various learning activities on the writing group. Prior to this study, most of them say that it might take them more than half an hour to write a post in English on their Facebook timeline due to the lack of ideas of the topic to write. However, after experiencing this Facebook-enhanced writing class, they agree that they could write much faster even when they do not plan any topic to discuss yet. These results confirm previous several studies. For example Mariam Ibrahim ghaleb (2013.) investigated the effect of using facebook. Similar work was done by Selami (2016.) stated that facebook group discussion makes it possible for students to engage in learning and brainstorming thier schemeta before they write in class. A statement from baby-boomer caretaker written that facebook is the most widely used internet application and sender can edit or rephrase sentence many times before actually sending it.

### **Suggestions and recommendation**

Results of the study led us to draw the following suggestions and recommendations

\*both students and teachers should be conscious about the positive side of online chatting.

\*facebook should be used as a supplementary learning tool in higher education classrooms as it brings positive effect not only on student's learning but also on writing.

\*students should give the value of the priceless change made by using modern technology or while chatting for improving their writing.

\*students should not worry too much about their mistakes. Mistakes are inevitable and one can learn from these mistakes.

\* Within the limited scope of the study, we suggest replication in other universities in order to make generalisation.

**General conclusion**

## **Conclusion:**

learning writing through online chat can increase students to be enthusiastic, motivated and active in learning. Students have positive perceptions of the use of social media in writing class, but some factors influence the implementation. The biggest limiting factors are the access to the internet also the use of abbreviations that can create a problem to the students they will forget how a certain word is written because they have used their abbreviation more. But mostly the writing practice of English among this generation is influenced by chatting using long sentences status with friends exchanging different information regarding academic purpose to develop one's English language practice. Teachers can also use this as a platform where they can easily communicate. Online chatting is already making an impact in the classroom as a tool for improving writing skill. However, this kind of writing activities is more effective to the present language learners but with few restrictions.

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## Appendices

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a Master dissertation, carried out to investigate the impact of online chatting on EFL students' academic writing. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions as clearly as possible. Your help is much appreciated.

Q01: How many hours do you spend using media?

\*0\_8h

\*3\_6h

\*More than 9h

Q 2: Do you use social media for?

\*chatting with family and friends

\*academic purposes

\*discovering new things

Q3: how do you evaluate your writing skill in English?

\*good

\*poor

\*average

\*very good

Q4: do you check the spelling of words while typing. ?

\*yes

\*no

Q5 :how many words do you acquired from chatting in a week?

\*None

\*1\_5

\*more

Q6- do you find some difficulties in writing while chatting in English

\*yes

\*it depends

\*no

Q7: do you take into consideration grammar rules and spelling mistakes?

\*not at all

\*sometimes

\*always

Q8: Do you think that chatting in English helps in improving your writing skills?

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

Q9: do you consider online chatting as important tools in developing writing skills?

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

Question10: What are the most affected aspects?

Q11: Do you use abbreviation while texting, like (lol: laughing out loud/ omg: oh my God)?

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