

Facebook Exposure on Students' Essay Writing Proficiency

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of Facebook Exposure on Students' Essay Writing Proficiency to the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students of Palompon Institute of Technology (PIT). The researchers conducted a survey on the randomly selected 150 STEM students. The findings showed that students needs improvements on their essay writing skills. In addition, students should limit the number of hours they spent on Facebook and focus more on learning or use Facebook as a way or tool for education and not just for entertainment.

Keywords: Facebook Exposure, Students' Essay Writing, STEM students

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INTRODUCTION

According to Pew Research Center (2017), the internet represents a vital shift in how Americans attach with one another, gather information and conduct their day-to-day lives. About half of all adults are already online in Americans' internet usage in early 2000. Today, roughly nine-in-ten American adults use the internet.

Filipinos thrive on staying connected with their communities. The mobile internet penetration rate is growing at a rate of 1.5x (or 30 million users) every year in the Philippines. Filipinos consume about 150k terabytes of data annually. The median age is 24 - the millennials who grew up as digital natives and the top activities are Facebook and Viber (Rappler 2017)

Facebook is a social networking service that was created by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. Initially designed as a networking tool for Harvard students, it quickly spread to other schools and was finally opened to the public in 2006. Facebook is now, by a very wide margin, the biggest social network worldwide. As of the first quarter of 2017, Facebook had more than 1.94 billion global monthly active users, including over close to 1.74 billion mobile monthly active users. (Facebook, 2017).

Camus (2017) stated that Filipinos spent an average of 4 hours and 17 minutes per day on social media sites such as Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter. The data were based on active monthly user data from social media companies as recent as Jan. 2017. The Philippines is followed by Brazil (3 hours and 43 minutes) and Argentina (3 hours and 32 minutes). The United States, where many of these social media players were founded, is among the bottom half at an average 2 hours and 6 seconds per day. The least active – the Japanese – logged on to social media an average of 40 minutes per day.

Writing provides a means for students to precede new information in their own words. It is how much of the world communicates. If the person does not write well, he/she will be cut off from a large community, Mourtaga as cited in Ibrahim.

Tan, as cited in Ibrahim (2013), added that writing is one of the ways that we interpret our thoughts for other people. It also formulates the learner for schools and employment both of which in most cases entail a lot of it. It helps him learn how to form language, how to spell, how to put together a plot. The student learns how to make logical arguments or how to persuade through writing.

Belal (2014) said that people are living in a global world and every day they are adopting new technologies, information, lifestyle, language and so on. Nowadays, digital social media (Facebook, twitter, yahoo messenger, google plus,) are very popular among young generations and they are influenced more

by them. They think what they are following in the digital social media is up to date and if they follow those trends, people will find them smart. However, nowadays, there are influences of digital social media in language acquisition of young learners. Young people are now most of the time connected with people through digital social media, so purposely or by chance they are following that trend of language acquisition.

And thus Facebook is a social networking site that supports collaborative work among learners, sharing experiences in thoughts and ideas especially in the writing skills which by its turn plays an extremely important role in improving the learner's abilities to write effectively (Ibrahim, 2013).

METHODS

A descriptive-correlational design was employed in the study in which information was collected without making any changes to the respondent.

This study sought to find a relationship between Facebook exposures on the students' essay writing proficiency.

The study was conducted at the Senior High School Department near the College of Education Building of Palompon Institute of Technology located at Evangelista Street, Palompon, Leyte. It was conducted in the morning (8:00am-11:00am) and afternoon (1:00pm-5:00pm) after their class discussions.

The respondents were the 150 Grade 11 Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students of Palompon Institute of Technology. The researchers chose them as the respondents because almost all of them used Facebook and they were from different schools and have different training in relation to writing proficiency. The researchers have administered a random sampling.

In order for the researchers to gather data, a questionnaire on the exposure of students to Facebook adopted from Villardo et al's (2017) study was used. There were 10 items all in all. Part 1 can be quantified by answering the specific time. Part 2 can be quantified by answering always, sometimes or never. The students placed a check mark on the space provided that fitted their response. To measure the level of students' essay writing proficiency, an instrument adopted from Patajen's (2014) study, the students wrote an essay about a certain topic. Their answers were rated by three (3) selected competent English teachers following a rubric for writing proficiency test.

After all the permission letters were sent and approved, questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers. The students were given 20 minutes to answer the survey about Facebook exposure. After that, the writing proficiency test was administered in the same time.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered from various research tools in the study.

Students' Exposure to Facebook

The following table shows the extent of students' exposure to Facebook.

Table 1. Level of Student's Facebook Exposure

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
1. How many times do you visit Facebook in a day?	2.31	Always
2. How many hours do you spend on Facebook in a day?	2.18	Sometimes
3. How many times do you visit Facebook during your vacant time?	1.95	Sometimes
4. How often do you visit Facebook during class hours?	1.31	Considerably Never
5. How often do you visit Facebook during weekends?	2.51	Always
6. Do you consider Facebook a waste of time?	1.88	Sometimes
7. Do you get information from Facebook every day?	2.33	Always
8. Do you post status updates using the English language on Facebook?	1.95	Sometimes
9. Do you communicate with teachers and classmates on Facebook?	2.36	Always
10. Do you use Facebook on educational purposes?	2.08	Sometimes
Overall Weighted Mean	2.08	Sometimes

Table 1 demonstrates that most of the students sometimes visited Facebook one to five times during vacant time. In a day, sometimes they spend one to five hours per day and considerably never visit it during class hours.

Furthermore, with all the above mentioned results they sometimes still consider Facebook as a waste of time, although they always use it to get information and to communicate with their teachers and classmates.

It was also shown that they sometimes update their statuses using the English language and use Facebook on educational purposes from time to time.

Generally, the Grade 11 STEM students are sometimes exposed to Facebook with an overall weighted mean of 2.08, inferred as sometimes.

This infers that there are still students who are not exposed to Facebook even though we are already technologically-based. It may be because there are some factors that hamper their contact to social media specifically Facebook. These factors can be the limited signal in their area are not reachable by cellular sites, data and Wi-Fi connection and the lack of gadgets. Also it may be, because there are just individuals who are simply not that fond of using or visiting Facebook.

Moreover, it was found out that during weekend the respondents rarely visit Facebook and sometimes consider it a waste of time, which means that they are not that occupied in Facebook. It was also observed that during class hours they never visit Facebook which implies that their focus is in their studies.

Students' Essay Writing Proficiency

The following table shows the students' level of essay writing proficiency in terms of content, mechanics, organization, vocabulary and grammar. The students' level of essay writing proficiency has a weighted mean of 77 inferred as superior.

Table 2. Students' Essay Writing Proficiency
Content Mechanics Organization Vocabulary Grammar

	<i>Content</i>	<i>Mechanics</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Grammar</i>
<i>Weighted Mean</i>	16	15	15	15	15

Table 2 demonstrates that students' essay writing proficiency in terms of content has a weighted mean of 16 which means they have good level of evidence and reasoning and range of ideas. When it comes to mechanics, it has a weighted mean of 15 showing that students have few minor mechanical errors with a maximum of six to ten errors. The organization of their essays have a weighted mean of 15 saying that it was fairly well-organized. Their vocabulary is 15 meaning they have effective choice of words. Lastly, the grammar weighted 15 inferring that they only have few minor errors with a maximum of four to six errors.

Moreover, it was found out that students' essay writing are high and can produce informal and formal writing on topics and can present well-developed ideas and opinions. They can also control structures, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and all other aspects of written form.

Facebook Exposure and Students' Essay Writing Proficiency

Table 3. The relationship between Facebook exposure and students' essay Writing Proficiency.

VARIABLES	Writing Proficiency		
	Pearson r	Degree of relationship	Interpretation
Facebook Exposure	0.01	Negligible Correlation	Significant
*Significant at 0.05 level (Critical Value = 0.273)			

Table 3 shows that there is a weak significant relationship between Facebook exposure and students' essay writing proficiency. This shows that the essay writing proficiency of students depends on the usage of Facebook. The Facebook exposure is high then the students' essay writing proficiency is high also. Therefore, students are dependent on Facebook.

conclusions and recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that students needs improvements on their essay writing skills. In addition, students should limit the number of hours they spent on Facebook and focus more on learning or use Facebook as a way or tool for education and not just for entertainment.

Based on the conclusions drawn, the researchers recommend that:

1. Instructors should give more writing activities to students to enhance their ability in writing.
2. Students must exercise self-discipline when it comes to using Facebook since no one can control them in using it.
3. Students should engage more in activities that may help them learn new vocabularies and enhance their grammar.
4. Instructors must encourage students to use and speak English language in order for them to make it easy in constructing essays since writing and speaking are likely the same.
5. Students must use Facebook for educational purposes and not just for entertainment purposes only so that they can learn from it when utilizing it not just waste time.
6. Instructors must give the students some interesting activities or topics that will catch their interest and can express their opinions.
7. Instructors must assess the students' writing skills so that whatever the result is, the instructors will think of a new strategy in enhancing the students' writing ability.

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