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IMPROVING WRITTEN COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA-
FACEBOOK

GAMEEL MAHMMOUD SAEED RAJIH

M.A English. Department of English ,
Dr. Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University,
Aurangabad,India



**GAMEEL
MAHMMOUD SAEED
RAJIH**

ABSTRACT

Written communication is defined as the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by writing. It is a process by which a shared understanding is created. Written communication in English can be improved with the help of many approaches, methods, techniques and trends. The most advanced one in the era of technology is social media. Being closer to the social media- Facebook- creates the opportunity to improve written communication in English. It has become very popular during the past few years, and it plays an important role in our life nowadays. Social media- Facebook-helps us in the field of education. It is of great value to learners as the activities concentrate on useful interactions between their peers. It is the best platform where the learners can express and expose themselves to English language.

This paper aims at identifying the methods through which written communication in English can be improved through social media-Facebook . It provides various practical facebook activities teachers can use to enhance English writing skills of their learners.

Keywords: Written Communication ,Social media- Facebook

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1. INTRODUCTION

Written communication is defined as the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by writing. It is a process by which a shared understanding is created. Writing skill is an important part of communication. A good writing skill allows learners to communicate their messages with clarity and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations. They might be called upon to write a report, plan or strategy at work; write a grant application or press release within a volunteering role; or they may fancy communicating their ideas online via a blog. And, of course, a well written CV or résumé with no spelling or grammatical mistakes is essential if they want new jobs.

Today, when anyone can be their own publisher, we see more and more examples of poor writing skills both in print and on the web. Poor writing skills create poor first impressions and many readers will have an immediate negative reaction if they spot a spelling or grammatical mistake. As just one example, a spelling mistake on a commercial web page may cause potential customers to doubt the credibility of the website and the organization.

Every decade has a new trend in improving writing skills. Written communication has become an essential part of the language of the corporate world, there has been a growing concern on how best English writing skills may be imparted for the purpose of communication.

Written communication in English has been learned with many approaches, methods, techniques and trends for a long time. It can be obviously seen that the learners of today cut away from the stereotypical trends followed in learning writing skill. The learners of English start learning writing with the textbook. Though simple and easy, a textbook becomes the 'Bible' and the learners are not encouraged to think above the stringent codes. The activity-based learning is yet. The Learner has to take efforts to learn and check his or her written communication. Social media has been viewed as referring to networked tools that allow people to meet, interact and share ideas, artifacts and interests with each other. (T. Aderson, 2010). This social media has opened up new opportunities of interaction and collaboration between teachers and learners. The use of social media- **Facebook**- has become popular in everyday communication. It is even used for collaborative learning especially in language learning. Social media – **Facebook**- has been phenomenally popular in the communication world as it can be used to improve English Writing skill.

2. Facebook and Written Communication in English

Writing through social media - Facebook - improves one's standard of writing as it is a process of creation and not a mechanical production.

Facebook also has positive effects on English language learners' writing. In terms of writing, previous researches have shed light on advantages of using Facebook in the SLL writing classrooms. First, many students in the SLL field believe that it helps improve students' writing (Kabilan et al., 2010; Shih, 2011; Yunus et al., 2012).

Learners majoring in English who use Facebook are provided opportunities to do many things on Facebook, such as improving their own grammar, sentence structure, content, organization of writing, and vocabulary.

As a start the teacher creates a facebook group and the learners are asked to join the group. Then, a sample activity is presented so that learners get concrete ideas about how to improve their written communication through Facebook. A learner centered approach is presented in this sample. This approach allows more exploration of Facebook in English language learning. Here the learners get more opportunities to formulate their own ideas or feeling about the issues as well as to improve their writing skills. It is necessary that teachers create a variety of writing activities in Facebook group to help his learners to develop their writing skills. They can ask learners to write comments on the topic of discussion or more complex writing activities if learners have reached a high level of language proficiency. Learners can also be asked to write any responses raised by the teacher in the group discussion of Facebook which can help them to improve their writing skills. The teacher can directly give correction if grammatically, there are any incorrect sentences.

The teacher can assign the learners to answer questions based on a text , e.g. The Story of **Gulliver's Travels**. Here ,it is better to start with short answer questions and then move to long answer ones.

- [1]. What was Gulliver schooled to become?
- [2]. After Gulliver's schooling was complete and his first voyage was over, where did he marry and settle down?
- [3]. What happens to cause Gulliver to abandon ship during his first voyage after the second time his practice failed?
- [4]. After his dingy is overturned and Gulliver swims to shore, what does he do?
- [5]. When he awakes, what kind of people surround Gulliver?

[6]. When Gulliver gets his hand free from his bonds, what do the men do?

[7]. How is Gulliver fed??

The previous activity is based on a literary text and literary texts are very useful in learning English writing skill as Oster (1989) stated that literature helps learners to write more creatively.

The teacher can also **post the picture of a place in the Facebook group** and ask the learners answer "Where is it?" or ask them to write and describe the place.

Another activity is **to take pictures in the classroom of their classmates** and then post them in the Facebook group. Once the pictures are posted, people can tag, label, and write comments about the photos..

Chatting on Facebook is a good task that can improve the written communication in English. The teacher assigns the following activity to his learners.

This week you'll chat through Facebook with two people from your class that you don't know well. First make plans using messages or the wall in Facebook.

- 1) Choose your classmates.
- 2) Decide with messages at what time you are going to meet on Facebook.
- 3) Discuss at least three themes that you are interested in and will inform you about each other.
- 4) At the end of the week you need to write in a note what you learned about those two people.

Personal Use of Technology is another activity that can be used by teachers to help their learners to improve their writing skills on Facebook. In this activity the learners can be asked to write at least three paragraphs about two modern technologies they use daily. The answers will be posted on Facebook and the learners will have the opportunity to see the different answers and benefit from them in enhancing their written communication.

Teachers can also improve the written communication of their learners through an **activity based on photos from winter break**. In this activity the learners are regrouped after the winter break. It is also a way to reconnect although, as planned, many continue communicating during the winter break via mother tongue Facebook. Again, this assignment creates a flurry of activity on Facebook in the target language. It can be designed as follows:

In this activity, you are going to upload photos that you took during the winter break. Share them and write comments about the pictures of your friends in class. If you do not have pictures from the winter break, upload recent photos and add comments about the people in them, where they were taken, who is in the picture, etc

Conclusion

Language teaching and learning using ICT is a good way to the development of the information and communication technology in this era. The recent trend in ICT is social media –Facebook-. Facebook is not only posting pictures on the wall, but also sharing educational and learning resources and we can create a broad based discussions on many subjects. We can ask questions in any subject and send it across to all people in the group through a broadcast or start a meaningful discussion on concepts we need to understand much better. Facebook application can be used to enhance English writing skill through many activities teachers can use in their teaching so that learners may get new opportunities to expose themselves to English -basically to writing.

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