Social Media Exposure and Paragraph Writing of Pre-Service Students

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***Abstract*---**This research determines the relationship between the paragraph writing performance and the social media exposure of the pre-service teachers of the College of Teacher Education at Cagayan State University located in the Northern Philippines. The respondents are fourth year college students who specialize in TLE, English, Social Science and Mathematics. Through a descriptive quantitative research design, this research finds out that the pre-service teachers need improvement in mechanics, grammar, vocabulary and language use. Respondents who are generally exposed to social media once or twice a week, who use mostly their mobile phones at home in accessing the Facebook and messenger for searching different sources for information and learning prove to help improve their written outputs especially in their grammar and writing mechanics.

***Keywords*---**effects of social media, paragraph writing, pre-service students.

Introduction

Writing is an essential communication skill for a successful future career of students especially of future teachers who will be required varied writing tasks and who will model to their students the correct and good writing skills. Written communication skill, according to Foster (2017), is essential to the successful continuation and future development of global environment. However, many students find writing to be difficult even in their native language. The challenge is even greater for students when they write using the English language and reinforces grammatical structures, vocabularies and with different writing mechanics. Many college students today, as evident in their composition writing outputs in their English classes or even in their content area subjects, still find

difficulty in effectively and correctly communicating in written English (Gilmore, 2009).

Brake (2014), described the written compositions of the second-year students of the College of Teacher Education at Cagayan State University Piat to be weak in unity, coherence and organization. Labrague et al. (2012), studied the error and written composition of Ozamis City and concluded that the students incurred both local and global errors in their written compositions. Thus, were advised to involve themselves in remedial activities to improve their writing ability.

The individual is a product of heredity and environment. His or her intellectual potential is not just determined by the heredity but also environment where he or she lives. This suggests that the kind of writing skills the students have can be attributed to the traits of their parents' family as well as to the formal and informal learning experiences and exposures in the environment. One aspect that the researchers believe to be helping and affecting the learners' writing skill is their exposure to social networking sites such as Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Google, Yahoo, Skype, Messenger, E- mail and Facebook, the most popularly used sites. According to Mark Zuckerberg, the CEO of Facebook, Facebook's number of monthly active users hit 1.79 billion as of the third quarter of 2016, with a large number of active users than any social networking sites (Davies, Grandoni, Guynn and Tsukayama as cited by Kamnoetsin (2014). As of January 2019, the number increased to 2. 32 billion (http://zephora.com).

Mingle & Adams (2015), cites Maloney et al. (2015), in defining Social Media Technology (SMT) as "web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage and share new generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication." These sites are used by students to interact with friends, peers and others that are found in groups on these sites. The sharing of information ranges from news, debates, gossips, feelings or statement of mind, opinions, research and others, which admittedly, is beneficial to them as instructional tool because of the possibility to develop useful and creative thinking and for imparting skill and knowledge.

Ahn (2011), added that "SNS provide a platform for the youth to participate in communities that help them to learn, and practice skills within a particular knowledge." A study conducted by Alloway et al. (2013), revealed that the use of Facebook had an effect on the spelling of some students. Also, in another study, Wood et al. (2014), noted that the use of texting language harms the grammatical understanding of students. It can also result in miscommunication because writing can be lacking in the opportunities for expression, explanation and clarification that are found in face-to-face interactions (Wang, 2011). It may also increase the poor usage of English as students tend to use non-standard English (Manan et al., 2019). However, the evidence regarding the effectiveness of these social networking sites on EFL and ESL learners' writing has been inconclusive.
Considering these premises, the researchers thought of conducting a research to find out the internet websites which they are exposed to, the extent of their exposure, and the influence of internet websites to their writing performance. Through this study, they can already have a better idea of their students' writing abilities, strengths and weaknesses thus will know how to help them improve

because as pre-service teachers, their students should be excellent in writing in order to transmit knowledge, skills, values and at the same time written communication to their future students entrusted to them.

Objectives

Generally, this study aimed to determine the relationship between the paragraph writing and internet exposure of the pre-service students from the College of Teacher Education. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

- What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - Writing Skills
  - Social Media Exposure
- Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' writing skills and social media exposure?

Method

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design in describing the respondents' writing skills, social media exposure and the relationship between them. The study was conducted using 84 pre-service students of Cagayan State University Piat Campus during the school year 2017-2018 using random sampling. Data were gathered using the instruments that follow:

Paragraph Writing Test- given to the respondents in order to describe their writing skills in terms of vocabulary and language use, grammar and writing mechanics. The respondents were required to write a paragraph on the question "Are you in favor of the reimposition of Death Penalty in the Philippines? Why yes or why not? and were provided infographics taken from www.philstar.com. The written outputs were analysed using the rubrics adapted from Teaching ESL Writing retrieved from http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource that rated the output of the students from 1-5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest further described as follows: 5 (excellent), 4 (very good), 3 (good), 2 (fair) and 1 (poor). Survey Questionnaire – used to gather data on the social media exposure of the respondents. To describe and analyze the data gathered, the researchers used the following treatments: Frequency, Percentage Distribution and Mean Score was used to determine the writing skills of the respondents which was further analyzed using the arbitrary scale below:

Arbitrary Scale	Adjectival Value
4.20-5.00	Excellent
3.80-4.19	Very Good
2.60-3.39	Good
1.80-2.59	Fair
1.00-1.79	Poor

Weighted Mean Distribution was used to determine the respondents' social media exposure which was further analyzed using the scale below:

Arbitrary Scale	Adjectival Value

4.20-5.0	Always
3.40-4.19	Often
2.60-3.39	Sometimes
1.80-2.59	Rarely
1.001.79	Never

Pearson – r Analysis was used to determine the relationship between the respondents' social media exposure and their writing skills.

Discussion

- The Pre-service Teachers' Writing Skills

Table 1 presents the paragraph writing performance of the pre-service teachers specializing in English. It shows that they are excellent in vocabulary and language use with the highest mean score of 5.00. It further shows that they are only very good in writing mechanics with the lowest mean score of 4.00. As expected, they are generally excellent in writing paragraphs with a weighted mean score of 4.56; however, they need to improve on the proper use of punctuations, capitalization of letters and correct spelling of words.

Table 1
The paragraph writing performance of the english major pre-service teachers

Criteria	Mean Score	Descriptive Value
Vocabulary and language use	5.00	Excellent
Grammar	4.67	Excellent
Writing mechanics	4.00	Very Good
Weighted Mean Score	4.56	Excellent

Presented in Table 2 is the performance of the pre-service teachers majoring in Mathematics. As shown in the table, they are excellent writers considering their vocabulary and language use with the highest mean score of 4.25. However, they are weak on writing mechanics with the lowest mean score of 2.38 described as fair. They are generally good in writing paragraphs with a weighted mean score of 3.29. These findings imply that they need more assistance in the correct use of punctuations, capitalization of letters and correct spelling of words (Leshchynska et al., 2021; Koroliova et al., 2021).

Table 2.
The paragraph writing performance of the mathematics major pre-service teachers

Criteria	Mean Score	Descriptive Value
Vocabulary and language use	4.25	Excellent
Grammar	3.25	Good
Writing mechanics	2.38	Fair
Weighted Mean Score	3.29	Good

Data in Table 3 are the results of the paragraph writing performance of the pre-service teachers specializing in Social Science. The data show that they are very good in vocabulary and language use with the highest mean score of 4.17 but only fair in writing mechanics with a mean score of 2.08. Their weighted mean score of 3.42 reveals that they are generally very good in writing paragraphs; however, they need help especially in the proper use of punctuations, capitalization of letters and correct spelling.

Table 3
The paragraph writing performance of the social science major pre-service students

Criteria	Average Score	Descriptive Value
Vocabulary and language use	4.17	Very Good
Grammar	4.00	Very Good
Writing mechanics	2.08	Fair
Weighted Mean Score	3.42	Very Good

Shown in Table 4 is the paragraph writing performance of the pre-service teachers specializing in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE). Generally, they are good writers with a weighted mean score of 3.36. They perform best on vocabulary and language use with a mean score of 3.91 described as very good and weakest in writing mechanics with a mean score of 2.95 described as good. These findings imply that they need more help in the proper use of punctuations, capitalization of letters and correct spelling (Rueda et al., 2017; Rasheed et al., 2020).

Table 4
The paragraph writing performance of the TLE major pre-service students

Criteria	Mean Score	Descriptive Value
Vocabulary and language use	3.91	Very Good
Grammar	3.23	Good
Writing mechanics	2.95	Good
Weighted Mean Score	3.36	Good

Table 5 presents the paragraph writing performance of the pre-service teachers taking up Bachelor of Elementary Education (Fajet et al., 2005; Le Cornu, 2009). As shown in the table, they are generally good in writing paragraphs with the weighted mean score of 3.32. Further gleaned from the table is that they are good in vocabulary and language use with the highest mean score of 3.08 and only fair in terms of writing mechanics with the lowest mean score of 2.33. Hence, a more intensified training on the proper use of punctuations, capitalization of letters and correct spelling of words is required for BEED pre-service teachers.

Table 5
The paragraph writing performance of the BEED pre-service teachers

Criteria	Mean Score	Descriptive Value
Vocabulary and language use	3.03	Good
Grammar	3.33	Good

Writing mechanics	3.6	Very Good
Weighted Average	3.32	Good

Shown in Table 6 is the summary of the mean scores of the pre-service teachers' paragraph writing skills showing that they perform best in vocabulary and language use with the highest mean score of 4.07 described as very good and weakest in writing mechanics with the lowest mean score of 3.00 described as good (Ashwell, 2000; Tamplin et al., 2018). These findings imply that the pre-service teachers of CSU Piat need much help in writing mechanics compared to their need for help in grammar and in vocabulary and language use in order to improve their written outputs.

Table 6
Over-all paragraph writing performance of the pre-service teachers according to their mean scores

Respondents	Vocabulary and Language Use		Grammar		Writing Mechanics	
Bachelor of Secondary Education	Mean	Descriptive Value	Mean	Descriptive Value	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. English Major	5	Excellent	4.67	Excellent	4	Very good
2. Mathematics Major	4.25	Very good	3.25	Good	2.38	Fair
3. Social Science Major	4.17	Very good	4	Very good	2.08	Fair
4. TLE Major	3.9	Very good	3.23	Good	2.95	Good
Bachelor of Elementary Education	3.03	Very good	3.3	Good	3.6	Very good
Weighted Mean	4.07	Very good	3.69	Very good	3.00	Good

- Respondents' Social Media Exposure

Presented in Table 7 is the weighted mean distribution of the pre-service teachers' social media exposure showing that they use social media sometimes with an over-all weighted mean of 3.26. Specifically, the respondents use social networking sites rarely with a weighted mean of 2.59 using mostly Facebook and Messenger while using least Twitter and Blog. They mostly use the social networking sites often with a weighted mean of 3.60 mostly on searching for sources of information and learning and chatting on line while least on sending and reading e-mails. The internet media are accessed sometimes with a weighted mean of 2.60 mostly using their mobile phones which are easily available often and they access their social media at home often, rarely in school and never in the community (Lau, 2017; Kaya & Bicen, 2016). Findings imply that the respondents use the social media often because they need it for educational, communication and entertainment purposes; that they can afford to buy smart and android phones thus are able to access the social networking sites in their homes.

Table 7
Weighted mean distribution of the pre-service teachers' social media exposure

STATEMENTS	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE VALUE
1. How often in a week do you use these social networking sites?		
2.1. Facebook	4.54	Always
2.2. Twitter	1.37	Never
2.3. YouTube	2.82	Sometimes
2.4. Instagram	1.81	Rarely
2.5. Skype	1.61	Never
2.6. Messenger	4.46	Always
2.7. E-mail	2.41	Rarely
2.8. Blog	1.59	Never
2.9. Wattpad	2.69	Sometimes
2. How often do you do the following activities as reasons for use of the social networking sites?		
2.1. Sending and reading e- mails	2.33	Rarely
2.2. Chatting online (e.g. Facebook, Instant messenger)	4.03	Often
2.3. Posting statuses, pictures with captions and comments to update friends with personal information and other activities.	3.70	Often
2.4. Reading stories in Wattpad and other posts for entertainment, information, and vocabulary building.	3.59	Often
2.5. Watching Youtube for entertainment and for additional knowledge needed in Literature, Social Science, Music and more.	3.51	Often
2.6. Searching for quotations and literary selection for entertainment, for additional information, and for future use especially in writing.	3.80	Often
2.7. Exchanging comments in Wattpad, Facebook, Instagram, etc.	3.76	Sometimes
2.8. Opening links for further information about a searched item.	3.56	Often
2.9. Searching different sources online for information and learning.	4.10	Often
2.10. Browsing the internet for entertainment.	3.58	Often
Over-all Weighted Mean	3.26	Sometimes

- Relationship between the Respondents' Writing Skills and Their Social Media Exposure

Table 8 shows that the there is a significant relationship between respondents' social media exposure and their writing skills in terms of grammar and writing mechanics but not in terms of their vocabulary and language use. Findings imply that the respondents' social media exposure affects their writing skills in terms of grammar and writing mechanics but not in terms of their vocabulary and language use (Cheng et al., 2009; Goodnough et al., 2009). This further shows the possibility that the kind of grammar and writing mechanics that the respondents encounter in their social media activities will be the kind of grammar and writing mechanics that shall be reflected in their written outputs while the kind of vocabulary and language use they will have in their written works may or may not be the same.

Table 8
Pearson-r analysis of the relationship between the pre-service students' social media exposure and their writing skills

Criteria	Computed value	Tabular Value	Decision
Vocabulary and Language Use	r= 0.245	0.250	Accept Ho
Grammar	r = 0.354	0.250	Reject Ho
Writing Mechanics	r = 0.292	0.250	Reject Ho

Conclusion

It is concluded that the written outputs of the pre-service students of CSU Piat needs improvement in their writing mechanics, grammar and vocabulary and language use respectively while their social media exposure using mostly their mobile phones at home in accessing Facebook and messenger for searching different sources for information and learning will help improve their written outputs especially in their grammar and writing mechanics.

Acknowledgments

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