

Acknowledgments

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the impact of the internet and new technologies on written English. It considers both theoretical and empirical aspects of writing in Computer-mediated communication (CMC). Theoretically, it reviews research on the impact of different mediums on writing, introduces the new medium of CMC with particular focus on Facebook, then it reports the linguistic properties of computer-mediated writing found in previous research. Empirically, it analyzes Algerian EFL learners' writings in a computer-mediated situation, namely Facebook chat. The assumption is that writing in Facebook chat, and by extension all modes of CMC, is different from the traditional norms of formal English. In testing this, the present research examined how orthography, grammar, and vocabulary were practiced by Algerian EFL learners in CMC, and compared them to both standard writing and speech. The results revealed that writing in CMC is a hybrid of formal standard writing and speech. However, the tendency was more toward informality and speech, especially in the typographical features that were used creatively to convey paralinguistic features.

Key words: Computer-mediated Communication, Facebook chat, written English

List of Abbreviations

Async CMC : Asynchronous Computer-Mediated Communication

BBS: Bulletin Board System

CMC : Computer-Mediated Communication

CMD : Computer-Mediated Discourse

CS :Common Speech

EAP : English for Academic Purposes

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

E-language :Electronic language

E-mail:Electronic mail

FF : Female to female conversation

FM : Female to male conversation

f-t-f : Face to Face

FW : Formal Writing

IM : Instant Messaging

IRC : Internet Relay Chat

MM : Male to male conversation

MUD :Multiuser Domain

SMS:Short Message Service

Sync CMC : Synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication

WWW : World Wide Web

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