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STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPOSURE ON WRITING PROFICIENCY AND THEIR VIEWS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN RELATION TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to evaluate the English language exposure on writing proficiency and views of social media in relation to academic performance among college students at the Visayas State University (VSU). The first set of respondents composed of nineteen (19) Bachelor of Arts in English Language (AB-EL) students answered two research instruments. The language exposure checklist was based from the study of Magno et al (2009). The writing task for writing proficiency test with rubrics was from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS, 2017). The writing outputs were given to a writing instructor at the Department of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Sciences (DLABS) for evaluation. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. To determine the relationship between English language exposure and writing proficiency, correlation analysis (Pearson r) was employed. Results showed that 42% of the respondents have a "High" language exposure while 58% of them have a "Moderate" language exposure. From their writing proficiency scores, findings revealed that they have achieved the writing task successfully. Furthermore, results were able to establish that there is a significant relationship between the students' English language exposure and their writing proficiency. The higher the language exposure level, the higher also is the writing proficiency. The lower the exposure to the English language, the lower also is the writing proficiency. On the other hand, the second set of respondents composed of fifty-one (51) Junior AB-EL students answered a survey questionnaire delving into social media on the academic performance of the students adopted from Jabe et al (2015). The respondents' Grade Point Average (GPA) during the previous semester served as the variable for the academic performance. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. To determine the relationship between the students' views of social media and their academic performance, Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was used. Results showed that majority of the respondents "agree" on using social media for finding and interacting with friends online, private messaging and updating profile information, fun and leisure, studies, watching movies, and course work discussion, but they "disagree" using social media for dating. Findings further revealed that there is a significant relationship between the students' views of social media and their academic performance. Overall, this research had discovered that high language exposure leads to a positive result in the assessment of the writing proficiency of the respondents, and that their views of social media has a significant positive influence to their academic performance.

Keywords: English language exposure, writing proficiency, views, social media, academic performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Exposure in a language is considered successful when the learner can already produce the target language. In fact, Lightbrown and Spada (2006) claimed that language acquisition theories emphasize the importance of interacting with others in broader social context. This interaction may either be in spoken or in written form. Rao (2007) pointed out that writing in English strengthens students' learning and thinking capabilities and helps them in their academics. It is acknowledged that a lot of factors could contribute to writing proficiency (Atkinson, 2010) and one

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of them is language exposure. Meanwhile, people use social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace to create and sustain relationships with others as social media has become an international trend and has spread its reach to almost every corner of the world (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Ahn (2011) adds that Social Networking Sites (SNS) provide a platform for the youth to participate in communities that help them to learn and practice skills within a particular knowledge area. However, Banquil et al (2009) found a continuing drop of grades among students who use social networking sites. This was supported by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), who found a significant negative relationship between Facebook use and academic performance. They concluded that students who use Facebook spend fewer hours per week studying on an average than Facebook non-users and this resulted in lower GPA (Grade Point Average). In view of this, it is imperative to have more studies on the influence of social media to the academic performance of the students as well as with language exposure and writing.

Objectives of the Study

This research tackled about students' English language exposure on writing proficiency and their views of social media in relation to their academic performance. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Find out the students' English language exposure and writing proficiency;
2. Determine the correlation between students' English language exposure and their writing proficiency;
3. Determine students' social media usage and access;
4. Determine the students' views of social media;
5. Identify the students' academic performance;
6. Determine the relationship between students' views of social media and their academic performance.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The first set of respondents composed of nineteen (19) graduating AB-EL students at VSU answered a language exposure checklist adopted from Magno et al (2009) and a writing proficiency test adopted from IELTS (2017). A writing instructor from DLABS was requested to evaluate the written outputs of the respondents. The second set of respondents composed of fifty-one (51) Junior AB-EL students at VSU answered a survey questionnaire about the respondents' views of social media adopted from Jabe et al (2015). The GPAs of the respondents during the previous semester served as the variable for the academic performance. The study followed a descriptive survey design. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. To determine relationships among variables, Pearson r and Spearman's Rho correlation analyses were used.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Across the factors on language exposure efficiency, results showed that respondents are clearly exposed to the English language when they are at school followed by media, with friends, then at home. With school as the number one domain for language exposure is not surprising since essentially, English has been used as the medium of instruction, and especially when students are required to use English in conversation. Their English language exposure ranges only from "Moderate" (58%) to "High" (42%). With regard to their writing proficiency, 31.58% fall under "Competent user", 26.32% "Good user", 21.5% "Modest user", 15.79% "Very good user", and 5.26% "Limited user". The result indicated that the respondents have achieved the writing task successfully. This implies that the graduating AB-EL students are somewhat proficient users of the English language as shown in their writing proficiency scores. Results further showed that the students with high and moderate exposure to the target language have a good standing in their writing proficiency level. This implies that high exposure level to the language would result to high writing proficiency and low exposure level to the language would result to low writing proficiency. Meanwhile, on the place of access and duration of usage of social media among fifty-one (51) Junior AB-EL students, majority of them have their place of access at home for 1-5 hours during weekdays and weekends. Majority of them answered "agree" of using media for finding and interacting with friends as well as for private messaging, updating profile, and for fun and leisure (especially in watching movies). A number of respondents also regard using social media as a tool for academic purposes, and majority of them "agree" with using media for course work discussions. These results might be the reasons why majority of the respondents answered "disagree" with

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using social media for dating. Results imply that the respondents' views of social media indicated that social media plays an important role in the student's life, from socialization, recreation, and application to their studies in the academe. Findings further revealed that majority of the respondents "agree" that social media can help them improve their grades, and in order to succeed in the university, they need to reduce the time they spent on social media. However, the respondents are not willing to advise the younger generation to avoid social media because they believe that social media can help them acquire more knowledge for their studies and for life as well. On the other hand, since the GPA (Grade Point Average) of the respondents served as another variable in this study, the researchers took time to have an access on the respondents' GPA through the computerized report of grades from the VSU Registrar's office. Data showed that 25.5% students had an "outstanding" grade of 1.00 - 1.50; 41.2% had an "above average" grade of 1.51 - 2.00; 23.5% had an "average" grade of 2.01- 2.50; 3.9% had a "below average" of 2.51-3.00; and 5.9% had a "failed" grade of 3.01- 5.00. Results indicated that most of the respondents were able to perform and comply in their course requirements. Findings further showed that there is a significant relationship between the students' views of social media and their academic performance. This is in consonance with the findings of Roblyer (2010), Mehmood and Taswir (2013), Moralo (2014), and Helou and AbRahim (2014) which revealed that social media can improve students' academic performance.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has come to conclude that high language exposure can lead to a positive result in the assessment of one's writing proficiency, and that social media can be a positive influence to the academic performance of the students. Since all of the students use social media, this research recommends the use of time management strategy to balance their academics with their social media usage. This study suggests that social media usage does not carry negative effect to the academic performance of the students. It depends on the students' dedication to pass or be better in their academics. As social media has become a part of everyone's life, students are to exhibit good judgment on how to be more productive with social media and be aware of the effects if used out of hand or excessively.

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