

Mohammed Salih Ahmed Al-Jaf

Istanbul Aydin University

[Mhamed986@yahoo.com](mailto:Mhamed986@yahoo.com)

***AN EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF USING FACEBOOK ON LANGUAGE  
LEARNING AMONG EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS***

**ABSTRACT**

Nowadays, social networking sites are becoming popular throughout the world and have been quite popular among various age group users particularly the young users but small number of researches have been done, especially in Iraq, on how much these websites can contribute to language learning and teaching though they seem to offer plenty of opportunities. This study provides insight into EFL students' opinions and attitudes of participating in activities through Facebook for language learning. Therefore, the study aims at examining students' views about the online learning atmosphere after having an eight-week course using Facebook, and to find the role of Facebook in language learning. In addition, the study discusses the overall effects and possible uses for Facebook in the field of second language (L2) learning and teaching. Forty-six students at the English Department, School of Languages from University of Garmian in the academic year (2015-2016) participated as the sample in this study. They were third year University students in northern Iraq, who voluntarily joined a closed Facebook group. This study used a one-group pretest-posttest design to examine its hypotheses. A questionnaire form using a 5-point Likert scale was used for both tests with research tasks based on any tasks and lessons to improve English language skills. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between participants' attitudes before and after the course and it showed positive attitudes toward most activities for language learning following the completion of the study compared to prior opinions. In the pre-test, the majority of participants considered Facebook to be generally useful because through this network, they can communicate and share knowledge. After the online course, most students indicated that, Facebook has high possibilities for being used as an effective formal educational tool. Furthermore, the posttest revealed that students' positive attitudes toward the usefulness of social networks increased under the influence of research tasks and activities. Finally, this study confirmed that every participant considered Facebook to be highly effective and potential educational tool, especially for improving language knowledge and performance in various online activities.

**Keywords:** social networking, social media, Facebook, Facebook group, computer assisted language learning

## ÖZET

Günümüzde, sosyal ağ siteleri dünya çapında popüler hale geliyor ve özellikle çeşitli yaş grubu kullanıcıları genç kullanıcıların arasında oldukça popüler olmuştur ama özellikle Irak'ta küçük sayıda araştırmalar yapılmıştır. Her ne kadar çok sayıda fırsat sunmak gibi görünüyorsa da bu web siteleri dil öğrenme ve öğretmekte katkıda bulunabilir. Bu çalışma, dil öğrenimi için facebook üzerinden EFL öğrenci görüş ve faaliyetlerine fikir verir. Bu nedenle, Facebook'u kullanarak sekiz haftalık kurs yaptıktan sonra çevrimiçi öğrenme atmosferi hakkında öğrencilerin görüşlerini incelemeyi ve dil öğreniminde Facebook'un rolünü bulmayı amaçlayan bir çalışmadır. Ayrıca bu çalışma, ikinci dil öğrenme ve öğretme alanında Facebook için genel etkiler ve olası kullanımları tartışır. Garmian Üniversitesi Diller Okulu İngilizce bölümünden 46 öğrenci 2015-2016 akademik yılı içerisinde bu çalışmaya örneklem olarak katıldı. Kuzey Irak'ta üniversite üçüncü sınıf öğrencileri gönüllü olarak boyunca kapalı bir facebook grubuna katıldılar. çalışma, hipotezleri incelemek için bir grup öntest-sontest deseni uygulanmıştır. 5 puanlık Likert ölçeği kullanılarak anket formu İngilizce dil becerilerini geliştirmek için herhangi bir görev ve dersler dayalı araştırma görevleri ile iki test için kullanılmıştı. Sonuçlar, ders öncesi ve ders sonrası katılımcıların tutumları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu belirtti ve önceki görüşlere göre çalışmanın tamamlanmasının ardından dil öğrenimi için faaliyetlere ilişkin olumlu tutum gösterdi. Ön testte, katılımcıların çokluğu nedeniyle ağ üzerinden yararlı olması için Facebook kabul edildi. Böylece iletişim ve bilgi paylaşımı yapabilirler. Online kurs sonrası, öğrencilerin çoğu Facebook'u etkin bir eğitim aracı olarak kullanmak üzere yüksek olanaklara sahip olduklarını gördüler. Ayrıca, sontest sosyal ağların kullanılabilirliği karşı öğrencilerin olumlu tutum araştırma görevleri ve faaliyetleri etkisinde artış olduğunu ortaya koydu. Son olarak bu çalışmada, her katılımcı Facebook'un son derece etkili ve potansiyel bir eğitim aracı olduğunu, özellikle çeşitli online aktivitelerin dil bilgisini ve performansını arttırmak için olduğunu doğruladı.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** sosyal ağ, sosyal medya, Facebook, Facebook grubu, bilgisayar destekli dil öğrenimi

## **INTRODUCTION**

This study attempts to show the roles of using social networking sites on language learning. In other words, it focuses on online learning strategy beside the traditional learning strategy which is classroom to encourage the students to learn English language in Northern Iraq. This Study involved 46 third year students at the English Department, School of language, Faculty of Education at University of Garmian as EFL learners in order to examine the effects of Facebook on the students' language learning. It was primarily used a quantitative method to explore the attitudes and opinions of Kurdish University students' use of Facebook in an educational background. The materials consisted of tools intended to elicit quantitative data, involving the research questionnaire form for the pretest and posttest and the tasks on English language that could be done through the Facebook group (FbG) with participants. Basically, the study utilizes a one-group pretest-posttest design to examine its hypotheses. A single group involves for conducting pretest and after taking the course, the same group involves for conducting posttest. As Gay, Mills, Airasian (2006) stated that the success of the treatment is indicated by comparing the results of the pretest and the posttest. Besides, the researcher tries to add some other members as guest speakers to investigate the significant of questionnaire statements by letting them to join the created group for the study purpose to have interaction with the study participants. The participants of the study are asked to not leave the group in order to have a proper result after the treatment.

As it is obvious that nowadays Facebook is a SNS which is widely used amongst people of different classes and ages, and students are a part of these Facebook users. Due to wide utilization of Facebook, this research attempts to show students' attitudes toward the use of Facebook and activities that could be done through Facebook. On the other words, the researcher tries to find out the opinions and perceptions of University students toward the use of SNSs on language learning in order to give proper setting to the first and second research questions and the hypothetical background supporting the study.

1. What are the University students' opinions of using Facebook in an educational field?
2. What are the University students' opinions towards the activities for language learning through Facebook?

## **Literature Review:**

### **1. Social Networking Sites (SNS) and Web 2.0**

A social networking site is the name of the last Web 2.0. It is an online site which provides users with a space to build virtual communities, share their interests and activities with the other users and explore the interests of the other users (Song & Kidd, 2010; De Ramirez, 2010). As indicated by Cook, et al. (2008), Web 2.0 tool is an arrangement the services and practices of internet that offer utilizers an incredible chance to take an interest in different groups of knowledge structure and learning distribution. Thus, social networking sites are said to have moved the Web from an impersonal library of static text-based pages into an interactive multimedia social media network being used by all (Peters, 2009). With a period alteration from Web 1.0, Web 2.0 advancements present a probability for utilizer participation in what creates the Internet. These Web 2.0 tools permit utilizers to transfer and to be more required in SNS communication groups which are special in relation to Web 1.0 that was progressively a matter of downloading. These websites redefine the way in which digital generation communicates and shares information because most of the face- to- face interactions are replaced by digital communities (Lytras, Damiani, & de Pablos, 2009).

### **2. Facebook: A Social Networking Community**

Facebook was built up in 2004 and has become exponentially to develop not just the most well-known SNS on the globe (Mazman and Usluel, 2010), but additionally the most conspicuous informal communication apparatus of the previous decade for students' internet learning (Omar, Embi, and Yunus, 2012).

As indicated by Facebook, there are more than one billion users around the world (Facebook, 2012) and very nearly 80% of those Facebook users are not from Canada and the United States (Facebook, 2012). Among the rankings by nation, Iraq is the area where the study happens, the number of users of Facebook in the world amounted to 629,622,400, Users and Iraq is a rate of 0.10% of this Number, that's mean, 625 780 users (Seksek, 2011).

### **3. The Use of Facebook as a Medium for Language Learning**

Facebook is a standout amongst the most well-known social networking websites which permit utilizers to post data, talk with each other, and also cooperate inside the organization (Stelter, 2008). At the point once students utilize Facebook such as an instrument for their scholarship by investing energy scanning profiles, get-together with new individuals, and investigating connections utilizing English language, they have more noteworthy chances to cooperate with an extensive figure of individuals throughout the world and study the goal language in the meantime (Educause, 2006). Students can build new information after they collaborate with the other individuals on Facebook.

However, due to the quick development of innovation and web, social networking sites can be utilized to address this specialty in Language learning and educating in Northern Iraq. Because of the huge popularity of social networking websites which is extremely common among students from any foundation, this study decided to utilize the social networking sites i.e. Facebook and attempted to achieve value of social networks in Language learning.

The literature review of Facebook has demonstrated that there are numerous approaches to utilize Facebook as an informal network site and for the purpose of education in general. Despite the fact that it appears that Facebook has purposes which develop language learning, just a few studies have paid attention on this pedagogical issue in Iraq. However, there is a gap between using Facebook and Learning English as a foreign language for Kurdish students. To separate the investigation of current study from the other studies, the researcher tried to shed light on an issue that has a good deal of Facebook's role in education and to an extent its role has been neglected as there has not been enough research or study about it in the northern Iraq. This research tries to show the Facebook role in Education and Language Learning, as its role has been mentioned and appreciated sufficiently in researches. Therefore, it is examining ways to use Facebook as Language Learning tool among Kurdish EFL University Students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Setting and Participants

The study was carried out at University of Garmian in Northern Iraq and continued for Eight Weeks. The Closed FbG was created at (10 May 2016), named (The Facebook Role on Improving English Language) and the activities on the group were started from (12 May 2016) and continued until (12 July 2016). There were 52 third year students from English Department. 46 of them were participated; only 6 of them did not respond the pretest questionnaire form. The sample contained of (29) females and (17) males. Their ages were between (19) and (39), with an average of (21, 96) years. They were all Kurdish native speakers.

**Table 1: The Statistics of Min, Max, mean and standard deviation of Age**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	46	19	39	21.96	3.627
Valid N	46				

### Materials

#### 1. Facebook Group (FbG)

In this research, the researcher used Facebook activities to provide students with an alternative to support them to be better in language learning. The researcher created a closed-group on Facebook and posted activities as daily basis. The students used the FbG wall on which they could converse their ideas and share any informative and interesting photos, videos and links to useful websites concerning English Language. At the end of the study, the researcher used the same FbG to obtain the posttest results.

#### 2. Research Questionnaire Design

Primarily, a quantitative technique methodology was utilized in this study to examine the university students' opinions of using Facebook in an educational background and their attitudes toward the language activities from Social networking sites i.e. Facebook. Section one contained five personal questions that asked for students' gender, age, and utilization of Facebook generally, containing to what extent they have been utilizing it and how often, on

average, they opened it and their participation at any similar educational FbG before the course answering by yes or no. Section Two consisted of 13 statements. It inspected the participants' opinions and perceptions of using Facebook for universal instructive purposes. While Section three consisted of 10 statements. It focused on the participants' views of the capability of Facebook's group role for conducting specific activities for language learning. All statements in Section three asked students to evaluate the effectiveness of using Facebook's group function to provide a variety of activities for learning language, covering all four skill sets in addition to other related tasks (See Appendix). Response choices for both second and third sections were scored from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) on a Likert scale. Data scored as 3 were considered *neutral* by the researcher. Initially, the researcher chose a 5-point scale to encourage more reliable and varying opinions and to limit responses from being too neutral. Then, for ease of presentation, the results from the questionnaire were collapsed into a five-point scale. For example, data scored from the Disagree side of the Likert Scale, 1 to 2, were merged and labeled as *Strongly Disagree* and *Disagree*, although data scored from the Agree side of the Likert Scale, 4 to 5, were merged and labeled as *Agree* and *Strongly agree*. Data scored as 3 were labeled as *Neutral*.

### **3. Research Task Design**

The teaching through Facebook with the group followed a method. Every week, from Sunday to Thursday, a Lesson, a Task were posted on FbG each day excluding Saturday and Friday based on any tasks and lessons to improve English language skills. Students were given tasks on Grammar, Vocabulary, listening and pronunciation, writing on specific topics, and word arrangements... etc. These tasks were called "Exercises" on Grammar and English Tenses, relating other tasks were called "Tasks" on Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Auxiliary verbs... etc. In addition, before posting the tasks, support posts were posted on the unchanged topics to enlighten students' understanding and increase their engagement with the topics; these posts were called "Lessons" and numbered them.

Besides, a video was posted to support the lesson and the task each and every day, as some instructors feel that viewing a video is entertaining rather than educating and learning. The videos mostly took from the two YouTube web Channels. First, Learn English with EnglishClass101.com's "English in Three Minutes" series and the second took from the <http://www.engvid.com/>'s "Learn English with Valen" series.

Students were also motivated to interact in the group freely. In addition, student used to post status, videos, useful links, pictures, comments or news freely which maintain the practical life interaction on the FbG wall. The students were given full independence; the topics were free and did not identify what topic to post. The researcher did not score their posts and their participation because he considered that Facebook is a comfortable learning channel where students could direct their ideas more freely than in the traditional classroom.

### **Procedure, Data analysis and Data Collection**

In this study, some basic procedures have been applied. The researcher acquired a permission from the English Department at University of Garmian to permit him to work with third year students during the period of his study and use them as Participants. It involved 46 students as EFL learners in order to inspect the effect of Facebook on the students' language learning. The researcher took an approval from his supervisor and the University to conduct the study, he organized a Questionnaire form for both pretest and posttest, he contacted with the jury members to check validity and reliability of the questionnaire items. The study used two types of tests in order to choose a good sample for the study and to collect its data. The tests were taken by the participants: pretest, and posttest, the same questionnaire was used as the testing tool for both tests.

The researcher determined a day for conducting pre-test at (10 May 2016) and all the third grade students were there to take the test excluding 6 of them. The researcher directed the questionnaire to all participants at the university class. The pretest was carried out at the beginning of the course to find out the students' opinions toward using Facebook in the field of education and their opinions toward the activities on Facebook based on language learning.

They were requested to answer the questionnaire statements outside of class or inside with the goal that they can take as much time as is needed answering every question fairly and proficiently. Also, Students were educated that all questionnaire responses are anonymous. For Section Three, students were requested to respond in view of primary reaction whether each and every activity could be effective or helpful if led through Facebook, as a few students might have had slight or no experience with the activities at this point of the study.

After joining the students to the FbG, the researcher directed some moral rules on the FbG wall so as to avoid problems and obtain the students to participate in the project successfully. He posted an announcement and welcomed everybody to the group. Then, he asked

participants to cooperate in the project, explained them the purposes of creating the group so as to understand the project comprehensively. Yet, he explained and assured them that their involvement was voluntary but they could not remove when they had taken pretest because the study involved activities for eight weeks and as soon as after the course period, they have taken posttest. In addition, he promised them that their identities would be kept private.

The Instructor started posting activities on the FbG wall as the place which is chosen for the study. Then, the students were asked to join the group and started its work on (12 May 2016). The FbG gave the participants with a chance to be educated for eight weeks in a computer-generated classroom by utilizing different media substance, for example, sounds, recordings, pictures, notices and different materials accessible on the Internet.

At the end of the eight -week course, the same questionnaire was used to find the posttest results. The purpose of the posttest was to discover to what degree the students' opinions toward using Facebook and the activities on Facebook based on language learning improved after using FbG as a way to share resources and interact with the members and instructors. The statements of both second and third sections of the questionnaire form were posted online from the Facebook group and the researcher asked the participated students to answer the Posttest items in two days so as they could have enough time answering each question honestly and proficiently, by commenting on the Posttest post, then the researcher collected all the data and typed their answers on the Post-test form by himself.

After conducting the pretest and posttest, the researcher evaluated the results by using SPSS Version 20 to observe the differences between the results of both tests and to investigate the significant of these differences. Then scoring data was analyzed using ANOVA and T-test.

## **RESULTS**

Based on the two research questions proposed in chapter one, the results were obtained from the analysis of the questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the online course:

- The University students' opinions of using Facebook in an educational field
- The University students' opinions towards the activities for language learning through Facebook

**Table 2: Opinions of using Facebook for pre-test and Post-test**

S.	Severity For pre-test			Severity For post-test		
	Mean	S.D	t-test	Mean	S.D	t-test
6.	3.80	1.03	26.95	4.19	.45	62.80
7.	3.65	1.01	24.38	4.30	.62	46.49
8.	3.73	1.08	23.39	3.84	.96	27.03
9.	2.91	1.02	19.20	3.06	.92	22.38
10.	3.86	1.06	24.60	4.28	.50	57.89
11.	3.84	.94	27.70	4.19	.45	62.80
12.	3.41	1.02	22.61	3.52	.86	27.69
13.	3.43	1.16	19.64	3.60	.82	29.50
14.	3.71	.83	30.21	3.93	.71	37.48
15.	3.26	.82	26.70	3.56	.91	26.55
16.	3.34	1.13	19.92	3.63	1.16	21.19
17.	3.36	1.10	20.72	3.67	.81	30.46
18.	3.78	1.15	22.25	4.02	.74	36.61
Total	3.54	1.02		3.83	0.76	

Concerning the students' Opinions of using Facebook at the pre-test, as it is shown in Table 2, the higher frequency of the participants' opinions of using Facebook in educational background before the course period on English language learning from the FbG was the statement 10, the mean was (3.86) which greater than the mean of other factors. As a result, make posts, upload pictures and videos is an important factor to help students to using Facebook as tool for language learning. However, the least frequency of the participants' opinion of using FbG in educational field in pretest was statement 9 because the mean of this statement was less than other factors. In regard to severity, the highest severe item was statement 10 ( $M= 3.86$ ,  $SD= \pm 1.06$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ) and the least severe item was statement 9 ( $M= 2.91$ ,  $SD= \pm 1.02$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ), the mean of this item was less than the general mean (3.0) which means that this item did not affect students opinion about using Facebook as a tool for learning language comparing to other factors. Finally, the overall mean and standard deviation of all items in pretest were (3.54,  $\pm 1.02$ ) respectively. But the results of participants' opinions of using Facebook at the post-test have been changed after taking a course. The higher frequency of participants' opinion of using Facebook was statement 7, the mean of this statement was (4.30) which greater than the mean of the other factors. As a result, "Facebook is a good program" is an important factor to help students to use FbG as a tool for learning English language. However, the least frequency of participants' opinion of using Facebook was statement 9 because the mean of this item is less than the mean of the

other factors. In regard to severity, the highest severe item was the statement 7 ( $M= 4.30$ ,  $SD= \pm 0.62$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ) and the least severe item was statement 9 ( $M= 3.06$ ,  $SD= \pm 0.92$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ). Finally, the overall mean and standard deviation of all items in posttest were ( $3.83$ ,  $\pm 0.76$ ) respectively which were increased comparing to the total mean score in pre-test.

**Table 3: Opinions of Activities on Facebook for pre-test and post-test**

S.	Severity For pre-test			Severity For post-test		
	Mean	S.D	t-test	Mean	S.D	t-test
19.	3.47	1.00	23.46	4.02	.77	35.22
20.	3.52	1.04	22.77	4.08	.78	35.36
21.	3.50	.86	27.51	3.63	.82	29.50
22.	3.34	.76	29.62	3.91	.66	40.16
23.	3.36	1.10	20.72	3.39	.97	23.54
24.	3.10	.97	21.70	3.02	.99	20.49
25.	3.19	1.18	18.28	3.36	1.08	21.11
26.	3.34	.99	22.85	3.78	.98	25.99
27.	3.30	.96	28.34	3.69	.83	29.84
28.	3.58	.85	28.34	4.36	.64	45.95
Total	3.54	1.02		3.72	0.85	

Concerning the students' Opinions of Activities on Facebook at the pre-test, as it is clear in table 3, the higher frequency of participants' opinion regarding English language learning before the course period was the statement 28, the mean of this item was (3.58) which greater than the mean of other factors. As a result, having discussions with English speakers on Facebook was an important factor to help students to develop their language skills. In regard to severity, the highest severe item was the statement 28 ( $M= 3.58$ ,  $SD= \pm .85$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ) and the least severe item was the statement 24 ( $M= 3.10$ ,  $SD= \pm .97$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ). Finally, the overall mean and standard deviation of all items in pretest were ( $3.37$ ,  $\pm .97$ ) respectively. On the other hand the results of participants' opinions of Activities on Facebook at the post-test have been changed after taking a course regarding language learning from the FbG. The higher frequency of participants' opinion of activities on FbG in posttest was the statement 28, the mean of it was (4.36) which greater than the mean of other factors. As a result, "having discussions with English speakers on Facebook" was an important factor to help students develop their language skills. Consequently, the mean of the statement 28 increased from 3.58 in pretest to 4.36 in posttest, the results between both tests show that this statement was the most favorable item from the students' point of view because this item has

the highest frequency in both tests regarding activities through Facebook. However, the least frequency of participants' opinion of activities on FbG regarding English language learning in posttest was statement 24 because the mean of this item was less than the mean of other factors. Consequently, the mean of the statement 24 decreased from 3.10 in pretest to 3.02 in posttest, the results between pretest and posttest show that this statement was the most unwanted item from the students' point of view because this item has the lowest frequency in both tests regarding activities through Facebook. In regard to severity, the highest severe item is the statement 28 (M= 4.36, SD= ±0.64, p-value <0.001) and the least severe item is the statement 24 (M= 3.02, SD= ±0.99, p-value <0.001). Finally, the overall mean and standard deviation of all items in posttest were (3.72, ±0.85) respectively which were increased comparing of the total mean score in pre-test.

**Table 4: The effect of Facebook Group on Participants**

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T-test	Sig.
Pre-Test	3.47	0.39	0.0577	-.46254	.000
Post- Test	3.78	0.31	0.0471		
P* <0.05	P** <0.01	P*** <0.001			

As shown in the table 4 that there were statistically significant difference between the mean of pre-test and post-test, the mean of pre-test (before using FbG as a course for learning English language) is (3.47), and the mean of post-test (after using FbG as a course for learning English language) became (3.78) and also p-value was less than the common alpha 0.05 which means that the use of FbG has an impact on participants' opinion after conducting the course because the result of p-value were less than 0.05 and the mean of post-test were vividly increased.

## DISCUSSION

With regard to the first research question, (*The University students' opinions of using Facebook in an educational field*) the present study indicates that participants belief towards the use of Facebook in education were overall positive in the case of the data in pretest. However, in some cases in the quantitative data in posttest, participant opinions of Facebook actually increased over the duration of the study.

It can be seen in the table 2 that the frequency of participants' opinions of using Facebook in pretest in statement 6, the mean was (3.80) while the mean increased to (4.19) in the posttest, which means that the students found Facebook as an easy tool to log in after having the course. Student responses to Statement 11, the mean was 3.84 while the mean increased to 4.17 in the posttest. It means that the item affected participants' opinions of Facebook's usefulness in contacting classmates after the completion of the course. Regarding the Statement 12, the mean was 3.41 while the mean increased in the posttest to 3.52, which means that the item affected students' opinions of Facebook's usefulness in contacting teacher and instructors after the course. It was also similar to the researcher's expectations.

Another increase in perceptions from the pre-test to posttest within the second section regarding opinions of using Facebook was seen in Statement 13, the mean was 3.43 while the mean increased to 3.60 in the posttest. University students frequently have long drives and different duties inside and outside of the classroom and in this manner acknowledge having the capacity to access class materials and information whenever the timing is ideal. Such member responses were reliable with past researches (Maloney, 2007; Bosch, 2009; Ophus and Abbitt, 2009; Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley, 2009; Akbari, Eghtesad & Simons, 2012; Karimi and Khodabandelou, 2013) where members' opinions were principally positive in respect for utilizing Facebook to access to materials identified with their studies and enhancing learning results.

Regarding the second research question, (*the University students' opinions towards the activities for language learning through Facebook*) the results suggested that members' attitudes toward maximum number of questionnaire items identifying with particular activities and exercises through Facebook mostly positive both before and after completing the study. There are numerous activities and exercises or tasks that show clear changes in students' attitudes, both positively and negatively in the quantitative data that are applicable and merit discourse in more detail.

Attitudes toward Statement 19, the mean was 3.47 while the mean increased in the posttest to 4.02, this means that the students' attitudes toward discussing topics with classmates increased after the course period, which was similar various different studies (Arendt, Matic, and Zhu, 2012; Omar, Embi, and Yunus, 2012; Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsithi, 2012) where students delighted in communicating on Facebook instead of a traditional classroom setting. It could be incidental that higher positive attitudes in the posttest were

depended on experiences discussing socially with companions on Facebook and that discussing topics in a scholarly setting met the participants' expectations. It is significant to indicate that this follows dissimilar results by DeSchryver, Mishra, Koehler, and Francis (2009) and Wang et al. (2012), who reported that members felt discussions, were unusual and they didn't care for having them.

As a result of the data analysis, females were participated more than males and also the age of most participations were less than 22 years. In pre-test, participants' perceptions showed that people used Facebook as a group for learning English language because it is easy to make posts, upload videos but when participants joined on FbG, their opinions have been changed to be Facebook is a good program compared to other programs, like Skype, twitter or Gmail. Moreover, the result of activities on Facebook showed that Facebook is a good place to have discussions with "guest speakers" like international students before and after the course on FbG, they had the same responses but their responses were extremely increased. Additionally, there were statistically significant relationship between university students and FbG because the p-value of t-test was less than the 0.05. As a result, University students were affected by FbG as a tool for learning English language.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research designed to find the results came about by utilizing Facebook Group as a part of educating an EFL correspondence course to Kurdish University students at Garmian University in Iraq. In accordance with social constructivist hypothesis, the essential advantages of Facebook as an effective learning device incorporate affordance of chances for students to cooperate and share information (Bosch, 2009; Maloney, 2007; McCarthy, 2012) and its capacity to promote, better cooperative learning opportunities through correspondence and social communication in the objective language (Wang & Vasquez, 2012).

The findings of the study demonstrated that the members made very remarkable involvements sharing, discussing, and dealing with each other in English, progressively. The reason was accepted to be because they were helped to join the group activities, lessons and exercises, and the English expressions and sentences to use at the interim through cooperative learning. Additional to that, the findings uncovered that through accommodating learning they made more progressive, notice on language fluency and grammatical correctness.

Similarly, utilizing FbG together with learning process in different sorts of classes should inspire achievement in learning and teaching English course in other foreign language setting.

The study concludes that instructors and educators should adjust to the changes in innovation and consider how the progressions influence the learning and teaching process. Online networking as the new pattern in today's general public can be possibly utilized for educating and learning purposes. The role of instructors as a facilitator is vital to guarantee that the utilization of online networking is like-minded with the earlier set purpose. Activities and lessons through a FbG can be embraced to enhance students' language skills as well as to help students convey what needs be better, connect and interact with their friends, classmates and instructors in a meaningful manner, assemble a decent relationship among them, and gain from each other. The conclusion is supported by some other researchers who cooperatively gather that when exercises and activities through Facebook are engaging and students can cooperate and think about their own particular learning, then inspiration, self-confidence, and attitudes will enhance (Mazer et al, 2007; Kabilan et al., 2010; Shih, 2011; Yunus & Salehi, 2012). With this respect, the future study may concentrate on examining the factor that impacts the students' collaboration in learning in FbG, how they initiate, help and assess the errands.

### **Appendix: (Facebook Questionnaire for 3<sup>rd</sup> Year University Students)**

#### **Section One. Personal Information**

Please complete the following questions.

1. Your sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_, Female \_\_\_\_\_
2. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_
3. I have been using Facebook for:  
A. 0-2 years \_\_\_\_\_ , B. 3-5 years \_\_\_\_\_ , C. 6-8 years \_\_\_\_\_
4. How often, on average, do you access Facebook per day?  
A. 1-3 x a day \_\_\_\_\_ , B. 4-6 x a day \_\_\_\_\_, C. 7 or more x a day \_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you ever participated at any educational Facebook group before this course?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Section Two.** Opinions of using Facebook

*This set of statements asks you to show your opinions of using Facebook. Please select the answer that best reproduces your perspective for each item. Answer each item as honestly as possible utilizing the following rating scale.*

Number	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

6	I found it easy to log in to Facebook.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Facebook is a good program Compared to other programs, like Skype, twitter or Gmail.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Facebook can be used both socially and for educational purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Facebook is safe to use both socially and for educational purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
10	It is easy to make posts, upload pictures and videos on Facebook.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Facebook is a good place to keep in contact with other students from class.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Facebook is a good place to contact my teacher outside of class.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Facebook is a good place to check class notes or homework assignments posted by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Facebook is a good place to ask for help about homework assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Facebook is a good place to check for school related updates and notices.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Facebook is a good place to notice my partner's English errors and learn from them.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Facebook is a good place to notice my errors in my English when I use it than when I speak out loud.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Facebook is a good place for practicing English.	1	2	3	4	5

### Section Three. Opinions of Activities on Facebook

*This set of statements asks you to show your opinion on activities that could be done through Facebook. Please select the answer that best reproduces your perspective for each item. Answer each item as honestly as possible utilizing the following rating scale.*

Number	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

19	Facebook is a good place to discuss different topics with classmates.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Facebook is a good place to post writing assignments like short stories or essays.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Facebook is a good place to access links to resources provided by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Facebook is a good place to post and respond to surveys.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Facebook is a good place to read articles and take notes to prepare for next Lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Facebook is a good place to listen to audio files and take notes to prepare for next Lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Facebook is a good place to review or edit classmates' writing assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Facebook is a good place to watch YouTube videos and discuss comprehension questions with classmates.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Facebook is a good place to make video posts as assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Facebook is a good place to have discussions with "guest speakers" like international students.	1	2	3	4	5

## REFERENCES

- Akbari, E., Eghtesad, S., & Simons, R. J.,** (2012), *Students' attitudes towards the use of social networks for learning the English language*. Available from, [http://conference.pixel-online.net/ICT4LL2012/common/download/Paper\\_pdf/357-IBT70-FP-Akbari-ICT2012.pdf](http://conference.pixel-online.net/ICT4LL2012/common/download/Paper_pdf/357-IBT70-FP-Akbari-ICT2012.pdf)
- Arendt, H., Matic, I., & Zhu, L.,** (2012). Qualitative analysis of academic group and discussion forum on Facebook. Unpublished manuscript. Available from, <http://cogprints.org/8281/>
- Bosch, T. E.,** (2009). Using online social networking for teaching and learning: Facebook use at the University of Cape Town. *Communication: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 35:2, 185-200. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02500160903250648>
- Cook, C., Fisher, T., Graber, R., Harrison, C., Lewin, C., Logan, C., Luckin, R., Oliver, M., & Sharples, M.,** (2008). *Web 2.0 technologies for learning: The current landscape – opportunities, challenges and tensions*. BECTA Research Report.
- De Ramirez, L.,** (2010). *Empower English Language Learners with Tools from the Web*. USA: Corwin.
- DeSchryver, M., Mishra, P., Koehler, M., & Francis, A. P.,** (2009). Moodle vs. Facebook: Does using Facebook for discussions in an online course enhance perceived social presence and student interaction? In C. Crawford, D. A. Willis, R. Carlsen, I. Gibson, K. McFerrin, J. Price, & R. I. Weber (Eds.), *Proceedings from The Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference 2009*, (pp. 329-336). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.
- EDUCAUSE.,** (2006, September 15). 7 things you should know about Facebook. Retrieved October 26, 2016, from <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2006/9/7-things-you-should-know-about-facebook>
- Facebook,** (2012). Facebook newsroom/key facts. Available from <http://newsroom.fb.com/content/default.aspx?NewsAreaId=22>
- Gay, L., Mills, G. & Airasian, P.,** (2006). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*. Canada: Pearson Education.

- Karimi, L., & Khodabandelou, R.,** (2013). Perspective of Iranian university students about academic use of social networking sites: A study of Facebook. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 2(3), 113-123. doi: 10.6007/IJARPED/v2-i3/83
- Lytras, M., Damiani, E. & de Pablos, P.,** (2009). *Web 2.0: The Business Model*. Italy: Springer.
- Madge, C., Meek, J., Wellens, J., & Hooley T.,** (2009). Facebook, social integration and informal learning at university: ‘It is more for socializing and talking to friends about work than for actually doing work?’ *Learning, Media and Technology*, 34(2), 141-155.
- Maloney, E.,** (2007). What web 2.0 can teach us about learning. *Information Technology*, 53(18), 26.
- Mazer, J. P., Murphy, R. E., & Simonds, C. J.,** (2007). I’ll see you on Facebook: The effects of computer-mediated teacher self-disclosure on student motivation, affective learning, and classroom climate. *Communication Education*, 56(1), 1–17.
- Mazman, S. G., & Usluel, Y. K.,** (2010). Modeling educational usage of Facebook. *Computers & Education*, 55(2), 444-453.
- McCarthy, J.,** (2010). Blended learning environments: Using social networking sites to enhance the first year experience. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 26(6), 729–740. Retrieved from <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet26/mccarthy.pdf>
- Omar, H., Embi, M. A., & Yunus, M.,** (2012). ESL learners’ interaction in an online discussion via Facebook, *Asian Social Science*, 8(11), 67-74. doi:10.5539/ass.v8n11p67
- Ophus, J. D., & Abbitt, J. T.,** (2009). Exploring the potential perceptions of social networking systems in university courses. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 5(4), 639-648. Available from, [http://jolt.merlot.org/vol5no4/ophus\\_1209.pdf](http://jolt.merlot.org/vol5no4/ophus_1209.pdf)
- Peters, L.,** (2009). *Global Education: Using Technology to Bring the World to Your Students*. USA: International Society for Technology in Education.

- Seksek, T.**, (2011, February 16). *Facebook statistics in the MENA region*. Retrieved October 26, 2016, from <http://interactiveme.com/2011/02/facebook-statistics-in-the-mena-region/>
- Shih, R.**, (2011). Can Web 2.0 technology assist college students in learning English writing? Integrating Facebook and peer assessment with blended learning. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 27(Special issue 5) 829-845.
- Song, H. & Kidd, T.**, (2010). *Handbook of Research on Human Performance and Instructional Technology*. New York: IGI Global.
- SPSS.**, (2012). *Statistical packages for the social sciences 21.0 for Macintosh*. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.
- Stelter, B.**, (2008). MySpace might have friends, but it wants ad money. (Business/Financial Desk). *The New York Times*, 157(54343), C4(L).
- Suthiwartnarueput, T., & Wasanasomsithi, P.**, (2012). Effects of using Facebook as a medium for discussions of English grammar and writing of low-intermediate EFL students. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 9(2), 194–214.
- Wang, Q., Woo, H., Quek, C., Yang, Y., Mei, L.**, (2012). Using the Facebook group as a learning management system: An exploratory study. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 43(3), 428–438. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8535.2011.01195.x
- Wang, S., & Vasquez, C.**, (2012). Web 2.0 and second language learning: What does the research tell us? *CALICO Journal*, 29(3), 412-430.
- Yunus, M., & Salehi, H.**, (2012). The effectiveness of Facebook groups on teaching and improving writing: students' perceptions. *International Journal of Education and Information Technologies*, 1(6), 87-96.

#### **Web Sites:**

<http://www.engvid.com/>

[Learn English with EnglishClass101.com](http://www.englishclass101.com)

<http://www.slideshare.net/hamzoz/statistics-user-of-facebook-in-iraq>