فعالية وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على عملية تعلم لغة أجنبية

احمد عبدالوهاب

The Effectiveness of Social Media on The process of Learning a Foreign Language
Ahmed Abdlwahab

Abstract

The use of information communication and technology (ICT) and social media use has become increasingly embedded'in everyday life. Among various social media, Facebook is a highly interactive virtual social communication tool and it has become increasingly among college students. Dudeney (٢٠٠٠) states that more and more teachers have acknowledged that the Internet is an in note source of authentic materials, and supplies a vast encyclopaedia of information on a variety of topics which are able to engage students. Apparently, the use of social media in the field of language teaching and learning is gaining tremendous favour in Iraq. Despite the benefits of implementing social media in EFL .classroom, critics argue that "there are serious risks to using social media in the classroom" (Lederer, ٢٠١٢). In fact, there are critics which call for regulation and for removing social media from classrooms. Research results have indicated that Facebook could be an effective platform for informal learning. However, most of current studies in the educational use of social media seem to pay more attention on college students. This study, however, explored the effectiveness of social media on learning English as a foreign language.

الخلاصة:

أصبح استخدام المعلومات والاتصالات والتكنولوجيا (ICT) جزءاً لا يتجزأ وبشكل متزايد في الحياة اليومية. ومن بين مختلف وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الفيسبوك (Facebook) كونه أداة التواصل الاجتماعي الأكثر تفاعلية وبشكل عملي، حيث أصبح استخدامه يزداد بين طلاب الجامعات.حدَدَ دودني (Dudeney) عام ٢٠٠٠ بأن المزيد والمزيد من المدرسين اعترفوا بأن الانترنت (Internet) هو المصدر الموثوق للمواد الأصلية ويقدم موسوعة هائلة من المعلومات لمجموعة متنوعة من الموضوعات التي لها القدرة لإشغال الطلبة.ويبدو جلياً بأن استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في مجال تعليم وتدريس اللغات لاقت استحساناً ودعماً هائلاً في العراق، وعلى الرغم من مزايا تطبيق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي للغة أجنبية كاللغة الانكليزية في الصفوف الدراسية بين النقاد بأن هناك مخاطر جدية لاستخدام وسائل التواصل في الصفوف الدراسية، وضح لايدرر (Lederer) عام ٢٠١٢ "في الواقع، هناك نقاد يدعون إلى التنظيم وإزالة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من الصفوف الدراسية"، وأشارت نتائج الأبحاث بأن الفيسبوك (Facebook) يمكن أن يكون منصة فعالة للتعليم الغير رسمي، ومع ذلك فإن معظم الدراسات الحالية التي تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في المجال التربوي تولي المزيد من الاهتمام على طلاب الجامعات.تهدف هذه الدراسة كشف تأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على تعلم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية.

The Effectiveness of Social Media

١. Introduction

Teaching a language in the most effective way has always been an important issue for language teachers. The use of computers in language teaching dates back to ١٩٦٠'s and since that time, we see the shift of the role of computer from a mechanical tutor used primarily for drills into a real usage of language in an authentic context by students "self discoveries and developments" (Lee, ٢٠٠٠). When microcomputers entered in the daily life in ١٩٧٠'s, the era of computer assisted language learning has begun at schools and computers were used primarily for drilling activities in language classes. Computer assisted language learning (CALL) expanded in ١٩٨٠'s and ١٩٩٠'s with accessibility of personal computers for language learners. The use of internet in ٢٠٠٠'s enabled educators to create web-based language programmes which allowed students to use language in real context. Today, millions of people are using social networking sites and online learning has arisen as one the most important and fastest moving trends in education (Palmer and Bray, ٢٠٠١). Especially in recent years, social networking sites have become conspicuous genres, having hundreds millions of users worldwide (Selwyn, ٢٠٠٩).

Teachers from primary schools to universities have been using web assisted learning as a supplement to classroom and for delivering learning experiences (Hong, Lai and Holton, ٢٠٠١). The rise of technology tools which are described as the web-based services providing users visual, textual and interactive information has made social networking very popular all over the world (O'Reilly, ٢٠٠٥). There has been a great increase in the use of social networking sites like wikis, blogs, Myspace and Facebook (Bosch, ٢٠٠٩). The use of technologies in every aspect of our lives has led researchers to consider the potential of social network use in education (Tilfarlioglu, ٢٠١١). Mason (٢٠٠٦) claims that social networking sites have enough capacity for a good "official" education matching the social contexts of learning and promoting critical thinking in learners (Mason, ٢٠٠٦). There are even researchers contending that social networking sites have potential to change educational system radically, motivating students for better learning rather than being passive attendees of a classroom (Ziegler, ٢٠٠٧).

Technology tools, like Youtube and Facebook have millions of users around the world. The use of web-based in education has gained popularity recently, people frequently use the Internet as a social medium to interact with each other and expand their social circles, share • information and experiences, and organize communities and activities (Bourlard, Krishnamurthy, Sun, Zhao, & Liu, ٢٠١٢). Social media provide multiple dimensions for developing creative learning strategies that allow students to connect formal and informal learning settings. Students can find like-minded people and organize informal knowledge exchange for educational purposes (Wodzicki, Schwammlein & Moskaliuk, ٢٠١٢). The use of social media applications in teaching and

learning has garnered substantial interest among educators (Cain & Policastri, ٢٠١١).Web-based social networking platforms such as MySpace, and Facebook offer users communication and interaction channels to link with friends, family, and community. Most current studies in educational " use of social media seem to pay more attention on college students.

College students are curious, active and creative while learning language (Lin, ٢٠٠٨). Blattner & Fiori(٢٠٠٩) indicated that various usages of Facebook can be integrated in foreign language courses. Students could experience authentic language interactions and develop socio-pragmatic awareness (e.g., language use in specific contexts, relationship building...), which are often absence in textbooks. In Iraq, such notions are particular interest since learning a foreign language, especially English, is considered to be the most important supplementary work after the regular classes.

٢. Social Media for Academic Purpose.

Using social media by university students is certainly a fascinating portion of research for educationists and social scientists. Hamid, Chang & Kurnia (٢٠٠٩) Maintain that in the available literature there are beneficial designs and styles of employing it at school level. It describes the introduction of contents and focuses on how to share, interact, and collaborate and socialize by its use. There appear different top reasons to justify using social media in greater education. It usage was confirmed by preserve setup its familiar with enhance study encounters of students by provision of e-support services on their behalf (Dabner, ٢٠١١). It's familiar with facilitate communication among and between students in virtual cities. Amongst others, the Facebook appears being most likely probably the most favourite was suggested as a means of communication for reaching students (Mack, Behler, Roberts, & Rimland, ٢٠٠٧).Internet sites focus heavily on building online metropolitan areas certain to along with common interests or activities. Therefore give them tools that help them to make this happen. Within the portion of collaborative learning, the internet sites handled the large problem elevated by teachers within the recent period. For instance, insufficiencies in humanitarian aspect and recognized to it teaching lacks spirit, However, Websites have assisted to solve a few individuals' problems, with the aid of interactive affiliate by getting a person, making the participation within the human consider the academic process something important. That introduced with an increase to attract people toward collaborative learning and many researchers within the aspects of social sciences undertaking studies to look at this phenomenon and to clarify the actual reason behind the attraction educated about internet sites for example (Ractham& Firpo, ٢٠١١; and Jiang &Tang, ٢٠١٠).

Furthermore, instructors have reported that using online technologies can encourage online discussion among students outside the classes, beyond the traditional class setting (Gray, Chang, & Kennedy, ٢٠١٠). Inside the situation

of internet sites or blogs, when students update their user profiles and personalize their unique pages, they could provide comprehensive particulars about themselves (e.g., full title, date of birth, address, educational background, and hobbies). The academics that are using such technologies inside their class will have a way to discover much more about the students they train simply by viewing the students' profiles (Griffith, & Liyanage, ٢٠٠٨). Consequently of the, instructors can personalize this program material using the students' profiles (Oradini, & Saunder, ٢٠٠٨).Some social media such as Wikipedia and to some extent blogs encourage investigative-based and collaborative activities among students in 'higher education. This open access for active participation and can therefore create opportunities for effective learning. Linked with this principle of collaborative development among learners, social media enable learners and teachers to share and publish information as a result of the learning activity (e.g., course materials such as course syllabus, course notes, assignments, test cases, etc) and invite feedback from peers. By publishing and presenting their work to a wide audience through blogs, wikis, or podcasts, learners benefit from the opportunity to appropriate new ideas, and transform their own understanding through reflection (Cale & Pymm, ٢٠٠٩).Students especially at higher level of learning can function collaboratively through exploring the opportunities given by online social atmosphere to resolve certain academic issues or issues with their peers (Andreas, Kaplan & Haenlein, ٢٠١٠; Kane & Fichman, ٢٠٠٩). This is indicative that through collaborative or team learning through integration of social media, students can establish positive contact, using the goal of working towards particular final results, both in offline and online modes (Lockyer & Patterson, ٢٠٠٨).According to (Silius, et al., ٢٠١٠) created a social media site for college students, striving at improving both collaborative study and social interaction. Their research uncovers that creating social networking tools as part of traditional learning will attract students and may motivate their participation within the learning process. In other similar studies, a social bookmark posting tool (Farwell & Walters, ٢٠١٠), a blogging service (Rosen & Nelson, ٢٠٠٨), or wiki software (Hazaei, North & Moreland, ٢٠٠٩) are really acquainted with engaging students in collaborative projects and encourages creating, editing, and speaking about content. The study ensures that, it's promising to consider social networking learning because it encourages collective understanding generation and encourages active user participation. However, using social networking to boost learning solutions remains at the earlier phase and really should be further investigated.Social Media to assist Collaborative Learning (SSCL) might be the pc network found in learning atmosphere for encouraging the students in learning process and cooperates in groups with the group process, communication involving the students, experts and workplace entrepreneurs.
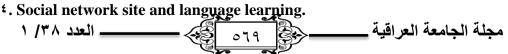
The understanding and experience is viewed since the tools for understanding construction that's precise and matches the particular context in solid existence (Yampinj, et al., ٢٠١٢).

٣. Effects of social media on the academic performance of students

The social media engages students and have to be examined as entrepreneurs of understanding. The interactive character of online conditions has extended with social networking. The improved usage of Websites has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time. What began out as being a hobby for several computer literate people has converted to a social norm and existence-style for individuals from around the globe. Teens and teenagers have especially recognized these internet sites to be able to contact their peers, share information, reinvent their personas, and showcase their social lives. While using the increase of technology helpful for getting together with others along with the recognition on the internet, Internet sites are now being an activity that's done mainly on the web, with Websites.According to Kjan (٢٠٠٩) Facebook users often time experience poor performance academically. Similarly, (Englander, -Terregrossa & Wang, ٢٠١٠) posit that social media is negatively associated with academic performance of student and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. Internet addiction consequently gave rise in internet usage within the last couple of decades. Nalwa and Anand (٢٠٠٣) recommended that addicted users prefer using internet setting back their personal and professionalresponsibilities which ultimately leads to poor academic performance.According to Karpinski (٢٠٠٩) pointed out that Facebook users devoted lesser time to their studies in comparison to nonusers did and subsequently had lower marks. Karpinski and Duberstein (٢٠٠٩) also mentioned that among various unique distractions of every single generation, Facebook remains a major distraction of current generation. According to (Kubey, Lavin & Barrows, ٢٠٠١) impairment of educational performance and internet dependency are correlated by utilizing synchronous communication programs including internet sites and forums.There are benefits and risks associated with using any social network. There have been reports regarding its effect on students' academic performance. Some researchers investigated the end result of social networking usability among College students' and with their English language performance. They found a poor effect and influence when the media is overuse in such a way that do not academically improve learning or its process (Wang, Chen & Liang, ٢٠١١; Stollak, et al., ٢٠١١; and Canales, Wilbanks & Yeoman, ٢٠٠٩) Other researchers examined this same problem but found either no significant relationship between using social networking and student English language performance (Ahmed & Qazi, ٢٠١١; and Hargittai & Hesieh, ٢٠١٠), or really a factor in students' academic performance.

٤. Social network site and language learning.

Harrison and Thomas (٢٠٠٩) recognized that technologies have been advanced as potentially transformative in the area of foreign language learning. They believed that technologies are presenting new opportunities for developing diverse online learning environments and enhancing interactivity, participation and feedback between students, their peer groups and teachers. They further argued that language learning is not only how learners develop their language skills, but also how the learning process impacts on their overall personal development in terms of cultural values and beliefs, something that has been generally overlooked in computer-assisted language learning research to date.Blattner and Fiori (٢٠٠٩) indicated that Facebook could be an effective platform for language interactions. Godwin-Jones (٢٠٠٨) also believed that Facebook could benefit interpersonal communications. They believed that unique functions of Facebook provide a constructive learning environment while maintaining a certain degree of privacy and safety.Some evidences have been established for the fact that Facebook helped language learning. Ajjan & Hartshorne (٢٠٠٨) recognized that active users could improve their communication and writing skills through virtual social interactions with Facebook. Mill (٢٠٠٩) discovered that language learning with Facebook was effective as virtual social activities help students develop better verbal communication competences in the real world. Moreover, Shin (٢٠١١) used Facebook as the platform to perform peer evaluation. The result indicated that peer evaluations at Facebook significantly improved student's learning interest and learning motivation. These positive results.

٥. Student involvement theory and technology.

The theory of college student involvement was developed by Alexander Astin in ١٩٨٤ and then was renamed by him as the "Engagement Theory", where engagement is defined as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (Astin, ١٩٩٣, p.٢٩٧). Engagement and involvement will be used as synonyms here. According to this theory, an active student is a student who devotes considerable energy to studying, is usually active in the university, and has communication and interaction with other students and teachers (Astiii, ١٩٨٤). In fact, this theory states that a more successful student is one who has more engagement, and the higher the engagement, the more the learning (Astin, ١٩٨٤). This theory puts emphasis on active participation in the process of learning (Astin, ١٩٨٤). Astin's student involvement theory has five basic tenets, which can be used for the assessment of students' level of participation in a specific experience. For the purposes of this paper, the focus is on the last two tenets. The five tenets are as follows:

١) Involvement Requires Physical and Psychological Energy.

This tenet states that "involvement refers to the investment of psychological and physical energy to various objects (Astin, ١٩٩٣, p.٥١٩). Given the various research findings about the prominent degree of online social networks as used by students (Ajjan & Hartshorne, ٢٠٠٨; Davies, ٢٠١٢; and Greenhow, et al., ٢٠٠٩), it can be claimed that students are deeply involved in online social networks; they use both physical and mental energy when using these networks. Therefore, designing and developing different academic courses using online networks, such as for foreign languages, can increase student involvement such as the student-student and student-teacher interactions and communication for learning activities.

٢) *Involvement Occurs Along a Continuum.*

This tenet asserts that "students will invest varying amounts of energy" in different areas (Pascarella & Terenzini ٢٠٠٥, p. ٥٣). This tenet refers to students' different amounts of activities, in other words that some students are more active than others or devote more time to a specific activity than their fellow classmates. This tenet can be applied to the study of online social networks because first, preplanned performing activities in online social networks seem to constitute a continuum, and second, a great number of students have active presence in the environment of online social networks and spend a considerable amount of time using them, or in the words of Boyd (٢٠٠٧) that students live within these networks. It seems that because of the facilities and features of online social networks (participative and interactive-led involvement inclined to produce high-quality work), it may be expected that students become more connected to the world outside their classroom, which promotes more genuine interaction with various resources, coaches, peers and experts. Within the interactive environment of online social networks, students may work together with peers from their class or from other courses both within and outside the regular class hours. Interaction, communication and collaboration between students and teachers may contribute to a more productive content construction within communities with different (linguistic) needs. In this way, students' involvement can increase along the continuum, and they can learn to communicate with other groups within this continuum, by engaging in synchronous and asynchronous communication with their fellow peers. Engagement in social networks will vary for different students as well as within courses per student.

٣) *Engagement has both Quantitative and Qualitative Features.*

This tenet suggests that students perform activities at different points in time and these activities- can be measured both by quantitative and qualitative methods (Astin, ١٩٨٤), for example, the number of hours they have been studying can be investigated as well as the mental energy they spend. As stated earlier, when using online social networks, students spent both physical and mental energy in their activities. Some of these activities may be

measurable by qualitative methods while measurement of other activities rely mostly on quantitative methods.

٤) *Development Is Proportional to Quantity and Quality of involvement.*

This tenet suggests that students' learning in a program is proportional to the quality and quantity of their involvement in that program. This tenet might also, be generalizable to the environment and activities in online social networks, and to different kinds of learning activities-, whether web-based or non-web-based, because this tenet suggests that both the quantity and the quality of students' involvement can be expected to influence their learning. Thus, a relation is expected between quality and quantity of engagement and learning outcomes.

٥) *The Effectiveness of any Educational Practice Is Directly Related to the Ability of that Practice to Increase Student Engagement.*

Different studies (Baralt, ٢٠٠٩; Lomicka & Lord, ٢٠٠٩; Brick, ٢٠١١b; Mills, ٢٠٠٩) indicate that using online social networks increases students' active participation in various learning activities. In addition, there exist, in these networks, numerous web pages that correspond to different fields of teaching and subjects. A brief overview of the literature indicates high levels of students' participation in such activities. Rosenshine (١٩٨٢) argues that the greatest amount of learning will occur when a learning environment is designed in a way that it encourages students in active participation and interaction. Therefore it is expected that online social networks will provide effective educational practices because of the opportunities they provide to increase student engagement. However, there is no previous empirical research to support this.

In the current research, the focus is on the last two tenets of Astin: development of quality and quantity of engagement and effectiveness. One other aspect is added to this: motivation. Motivation is defined as a set of interrelated beliefs and emotions that influence and direct behavior (Green, et al., ٢٠٠٧; Martin, ٢٠٠٨; Wentzel, ١٩٩٢). Engagement is defined as students' involvement in activities and conditions that is likely to generate high quality learning (Ball & Perry, ٢٠١١). Motivation relates to emotions and beliefs and engagement relates to (mental) activities. As mentioned above, the theory of Astin only refers to students' engagement, while in the process of learning; motivation is also an important variable, along with engagement, in learning (Bandura & Walters ١٩٦٣; Becker ١٩٦٤; Chan & Ahern, ١٩٩٩; Weiner, ٢٠٠٠). In the study reported here, the focus will be on the motivation theory of Ryan and Deci (٢٠٠٠). This is one of the most popular approaches towards motivation these days. According to Ryan and Deci's Self- Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, ٢٠٠٠), students who were highly motivated also demonstrated that they had more engagement in their learning processes. Zyngier also (Zyngier, ٢٠١١) argues that increased motivation in students

promotes engagement. Engagement coupled with motivation is considered very important for enhanced learning outcomes of all students (Schlechty ٢٠٠١; Woolfolk & Margetts, ٢٠٠٧). Increased motivation may therefore be expected to lead to an increase in engagement (Malhiwsky, ٢٠١٠). Despite the emphasis put on the relation between motivation and engagement, in the relevant literature studies investigating both variables simultaneously are

Some research for example has indicated that using social media as an educational tool can lead to increased student engagement (Annetta et al. ٢٠٠٩; Chen et al. ٢٠١٠; Dunne et al. ٢٠١٢; Junco ٢٠١٢; Patera et al. ٢٠٠٨). Other researchers (Baker et al., ١٩٩٠; Boster, et al., ٢٠٠٢; Dwyer, ١٩٩٤; Reynol, ٢٠١٢; Swan, et al., ٢٠٠٥) argue that using technology influences students' motivation in a positive way. Moreover, different studies (Mills, ٢٠٠٩; Blattner & Fiori, ٢٠٠٩; Kabilan, et al., ٢٠١٠; Mazer, et al., ٢٠٠٧; Ross, et al., ٢٠٠٩; Wise, et al., ٢٠١١; Mazer, et al., ٢٠٠٩) indicate that specifically using the social network Facebook will considerably increase motivation in the process of language learning.

Evidently, the relation between engagement and motivation has not

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Different studies (Baralt, ٢٠٠٩; Lomicka & Lord, ٢٠٠٩; Brick, ٢٠١١b; Mills, ٢٠٠٩) indicate that using online social networks increases students' active participation in various learning activities. In addition, there exist, in these networks, numerous web pages that correspond to different fields of teaching and subjects. A brief overview of the literature indicates high levels of students' participation in such activities. Rosenshine (١٩٨٢) argues that the greatest amount of learning will occur when a learning environment is designed in a way that it encourages students in active participation and interaction. Therefore it is expected that online social networks will provide effective educational practices because of the opportunities they provide to increase student engagement. However, there is no previous empirical research to support this.In the current research, the focus is on the last two tenets of Astin: development of quality and quantity of engagement and effectiveness. One other aspect is added to this: motivation. Motivation is defined as a set of interrelated beliefs and emotions that influence and direct behavior (Green, et al., ٢٠٠٧; Martin, ٢٠٠٨; Wentzel, ١٩٩٢). Engagement is defined as students' involvement in activities and conditions that is likely to generate high quality learning (Ball & Perry, ٢٠١١). Motivation relates to emotions and beliefs and engagement relates to (mental) activities. As mentioned above, the theory of Astin only refers to students' engagement, while in the process of learning; motivation is also an important variable, along with engagement, in learning (Bandura & Walters ١٩٦٣; Becker ١٩٦٤; Chan & Ahern, ١٩٩٩; Weiner, ٢٠٠٠). In the study reported here, the focus

will be on the motivation theory of Ryan and Deci (٢٠٠٠). This is one of the most popular approaches towards motivation these days. According to Ryan and Deci's Self- Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, ٢٠٠٠), students who were highly motivated also demonstrated that they had more engagement in their learning processes. Zyngier also (Zyngier, ٢٠١١) argues that increased motivation in students promotes engagement. Engagement coupled with motivation is considered very important for enhanced learning outcomes of all students (Schlechty ٢٠٠١; Woolfolk & Margetts, ٢٠٠٧). Increased motivation may therefore be expected to lead to an increase in engagement (Malhiwsky, ٢٠١٠). Despite the emphasis put on the relation between motivation and engagement, in the relevant literature studies investigating both variables simultaneously are scarce. Some research for example has indicated that using social media as an educational tool can lead to increased student engagement (Annetta et al. ٢٠٠٩; Chen et al. ٢٠١٠; Dunne et al. ٢٠١٢; Junco ٢٠١٢; Patera et al. ٢٠٠٨). Other researchers (Baker et al., ١٩٩٠; Boster, et al., ٢٠٠٢; Dwyer, ١٩٩٤; Reynol, ٢٠١٢; Swan, et al., ٢٠٠٥) argue that using technology influences students' motivation in a positive way. Moreover, different studies (Mills, ٢٠٠٩; Blattner & Fiori, ٢٠٠٩; Kabilan, et al., ٢٠١٠; Mazer, et al., ٢٠٠٧; Ross, et al., ٢٠٠٩; Wise, et al., ٢٠١١; Mazer, et al., ٢٠٠٩) indicate that specifically using the social network Facebook will considerably increase motivation in the process of language learning. Evidently, the relation between engagement and motivation has not been studied in detail. Specifically, the relationship between these two variables has not been studied in the context of social networks. Online social networks seem to play an important role in stimulating active student participation and interaction, given the facilities and features mentioned above. According to other authors (Dixon & Black, ١٩٩٦; Routman, ١٩٩١), the distribution of student work increases motivation in students; online social networks provide many opportunities for students to distribute their work that can have many pedagogical advantages and implications.

٦. Conclusion :

Based on Astin's theory (Astin, ١٩٩٣), the most successful students are those who demonstrate more engagement in the process of learning as well as in the learning environment. The importance of any educational strategy or practice is highlighted if it can increase students' engagement, since an increase in engagement will result in more effective learning (Astin, ١٩٩٣). In our perspective, the environment of social networks paves the way for the enhancement of engagement as well as motivation so that the use of this online learning and teaching may be expected to bring about considerable and positive results in regards to learning outcomes.In this study suggested three predictors of using social media for improve students' academic performance by collaborative learning among students they are as follows with interactivity

with peers, interactivity with the teacher and engagement.In the results acquired, it may be concluded that social media facilitates the academic experience. Unless will affect the use of social media negatively on the academic performance of students. We propose for future work more studies and addition of factors have an effect with collaborative learning to improve students' academic performance of the English language.

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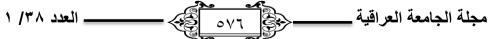
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