



University of Babylon

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## **The Use of Blocked Phrases in Social Media**

A Paper Submitted to the Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Babylon, as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of B.A. in English Language

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate*

بَلِ اللَّهِ فَأَعْبُدْ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

*"Nay! But worship Allah, and be among the grateful."*

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*God Almighty has spoken the truth*

(سورة الزمر : آية 66)

(Surat Az-Zumar: verse 66)

# *Dedication*

My father, my mother, brothers and sisters

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## Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Title	i
Quran	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Contents	v
<b>Chapter One : Introduction</b>	
1-1 The Problem of the study	1
1-2 The Aims of the study	1
1-3 The Hypotheses of the study	1
1-4 The Procedures of the study	2
1-5 The Limits of the Study	2
1-6 The Value of the Study	2
<b>Chapter Two : The literature review</b>	
The definition of blocked phrase	3
Types of blocked phrase	3
Function of blocked phrase	6
Chapter Three: Blocked phrase in social media	8
Chapter Four: conclusion	11
References	12

# Chapter One

## Introduction

Blocked phrases mean to prevent someone or something to do anything that cause a damage or harm to anyone. Block phrases are a particular subject which causes a problem of understanding for the users of social media because this subject is a type of structure which differs from normal clause or sentence structure. That means the blocked phrases are term used in some grammatical description to refer to the use of abbreviated structures in restricted communicative context, especial use being made of the word or phrase, rather than the clause or sentence.

Bus Stop

Police out

### 1.1 *The Problems of the study*

- 1-What are the blocked phrases ?
- 2- Why does the Social Media prevent to use this kind of phrases ?
- 3-What are the structure, types and functions of the blocked phrases ?

### 1-2 the Aims of the study

- 1- To identify the Blocked Phrases in social media .
- 2- To highlight the Blocked phrases and the problems that caused if they are used.
- 3- To explain the structure, types and functions of the blocked phrases.

### ***1.3 The Hypothesis of the study***

1-Blocked phrases are caused a lot of problems and sometimes much harm if they are used in free in social media.

2-The users of social media are not understanding and facing difficulties when they use the blocked phrases in social media.

### ***1-4 The Procedures of the study***

1- Giving an account of block language depending on the literature in this field.

2- Analyzing the results on the media of which conclusion have been drawn. .

### ***1-5 The Limits***

The work is limited to the study of block phrases in English. And it limited to use the blocked phrases in social media .

### ***1-6 The Value***

It is hoped that this study will be benefit to students who are interested in linguistics and to open the way to more studies because the blocked phrases are more used in our day in all the social media .

# Chapter Two

## Blocked Phrases

### **2-1 The Definition of Blocked Phrases.**

Block Phrases can be structured in terms of single words or phrases rather than in terms of organized units of clause and sentence . It appears (especially in writing) in such functions as labels, titles, headings, newspaper headlines, notices and advertisements. Simple block Phrases message often consists of a noun or noun phrase or nominal clause in isolation, no verb is needed, because all else necessary to the understanding of the message is furnished by context:

1. English Department
2. Fresh Today
3. Entrance

Block language (especially in newspaper headlines) develops its own abbreviated clause structure:

4. Film- star marries ex- priest .
5. Election a landslide for socialists .
6. Nixon to meet Asian premiers .
7. Share prices now higher than ever .( Quirk,1973:205).

Block languages are a new proposal to let teachers make available to their students new versions of popular programming languages in a block language style. Furthermore, teachers can easily create block language versions of their favorite programming languages or even of pseudo languages created by them. Block languages free the students from the burdens of syntax and allow at the same time teachers not to loose the specificities of their curriculum. Also, there is no logical reason why one right in a certain context, whereas another is wrong. Using block language correctly is a problem faced by students because most of block language have several functions ((Mardh,1980:98).



The term block language was coined by Straumann who was the first to study newspaper headlines. According to him it is defined as the type of linguistic utterance which occurs in telegrams, book-titles, diaries, advertisements, recipes, dictionaries, catalogues, on posters and labels and in headlines (Straumann (1957:54).

Moreover Crystal (2003:216) added that minor sentences are common in certain types of written language, such as notices, headlines, labels, advertisements, subheadings, Web sites and other setting where a message is presented as a 'block'.

The body of a block is either an empty statement, which is defined by the empty production, or, it is a non-empty statement, in which case, the body of a block is defined by non-terminal sentence defines a sequence of one or more non-terminal symbols stat separated by the literal terminal (Miller, 1985:77).

## **2-2 Types of Block phrase**

### **2-2-1 Newspaper Headlines**

Mention that newspaper headlines can be considered as one kind of block phrase which is formed with the omission of words that can be understood from the context, such as the finite forms of the verb Be and the articles:

8. Oil spill threat decreasing
9. President calls for claim
10. Share prices now higher than ever
11. Miners ban over time(Greenbaum,1990:224)

The abbreviated style of newspaper headlines is characterized by short words, omissions, and ellipsis. States that newspaper headlines explain in complete sentences what each of the headlines is about

12. For tonight's holiday shoestring
- 13 By- pass crash; Motorist charged
14. Goya for the nation
15. Bigger grants for Repertories(Quirk, R; Greenbaum,1972:360)

Denotes there are many types of newspaper headlines without articles, some of these types are headlines for commentary or editorial pieces which do not appear to show article and also subheads are considered as smaller headlines that can be combined with the main headline also appear not to show article drop:

16. Man bites (a) dog (ibid).

### **2-2-2 Titles, Notices, Labels, Headings, and Slogans**

Indicates that they can be formed in short phrases rather than in sentences without including articles which means that we can drop the articles from the titles, headings, and also the name of buildings and institutions. [8, pp.329] states that the name of a story, a book, a film, and a word is used in front of persons' name or a sport championship. The label (noun) is a slip of paper indicating contents ownership, etc. Sometimes we forget that people, not words who make meaning. When this happens, we pay too much attention to labels and too little attention to reality, we can approach this phrase of our study of meaning by labels and how strongly they can influence use, for example: (Swan,1995 :1)

17. Royal Hotel
18. Bus Stop
19. Super Cinema
20. Police Out
21. More Money for Nurses

## **2-2.3 Personal Letters, Cables, and Diaries**

State that block phrases can be used in many situations because of its simple structures. So, it can be used in postcards, informal personal notes especially notes taken from lectures or books where the first person pronouns are often omitted: (Trask,1993:329)

22. Sorry about John.

Block phrases can also be used in cables when the sender decides to omit some words that can be understood by the receiver:

23. No money send hundred.

The abbreviation can be used in diaries:

24. Went to office instead. Worked till 12 on government contract.

Block phrases is a special type of language which has its own characteristics. (Bram ,1995:107) states that block phrase is “the typically common language used by the printing media. This kind of language uses the shortened syntactic structures (usually in phrases and words, rather than clauses and sentences) in a restricted communicative context, such as a title of a magazine or poster. The specific characteristic of this language is that it does not have grammatical sentence, especially in newspapers headlines. Bram explains “titles applying block language do not usually contain determiners or finite verbs” (Bram ,1995: 108)

### **2-3 The Function of Blocked Phrase**

#### **2-3-1 Grammar**

1.A noun and a verb” Example:

25.Holiday hotel death

26.More wage cuts

2. Three, four, or more nouns; nouns earlier in the string modify those that follow:

27. Furniture Factory Pay Cut Row.

3. The verb be Example:

28. Shakespeare play immoral says headmaster schoolboy walks in space.

4. Progressive or perfect forms. The simple present is used for both present and past events” (Swan, 2005, p. 211). Example:

29. Blind girl climbs Everest (= ... has climbed ...)

30. Students fight for course changes (= ... are fighting ...)

5. Infinitive to refer to the future Example:

31. Pm to visit Australia

32. Hospitals to take fewer Patients. (Swan, 2005 :211).

6. Auxiliary verbs are usually dropped from passive structures Example:

33. Murder hunt: man held (= ... a man is being held by police)

34. Six killed in explosion (= Six people have been killed ...) (Swan, 2005:212)

## **2-3.2 Vocabulary**

1. act: Take action; do something Example:

35. Food Crisis

36. Government to act

2. Aid: military or financial help; to help Example:

37. More aid for poor Countries ((Swan, 2005:213)

3. Alert: alarm, warning Example:

38. Flood alert on east coast

4. Allege: make an accusation Example:

39. Woman alleges unfair treatment

5. appear: appear in court accused of a crime Example:

40. Mp to appear on drugs charges

6. axe: abolish, close down; abolition, closure Example:

41. Country bus services axed small schools face axe.

## Chapter Three

### Blocked Phrase in Social Media

Social media is often used as a term for new media that requires interactive participation. Images or posts of ordinary people at spontaneous moments seem to be shared extensively through social media. It tends to connect with the emotional side of the user, who can make it a viral phenomenon. The media has become more unrealistic due to manipulated images and news, causing a growing desire for authenticity and uniqueness.

Social media are about your life, what you like, what you feel and they cater towards what you prefer by constantly monitoring your online behavior. They argue that social media does not show us the 'real world', but a world that we like, where all like-minded people are gathered together.

#### 1- Blocked phrases in Facebook

A-FOOD CRISIS: GOVERNMENT TO ACT

There is a food crisis, the Government must take a procedure.

B-MORE AID FOR POOR COUNTRIES

military or financial help; to help poor people

C-FLOOD ALERT ON EAST COAST

alert: alarm, warning

D-MP TO APPEAR ON DRUGS CHARGES

appear in court accused of a crime

E- HOTEL BARS FOOTBALL FANS

bar: refuse/refusal to allow entry

F- SPENDING BOOM OVER, SAYS MINISTER

boom: big increase; prosperous period

G- DOCTOR CLEARED OF DRUGS CHARGE

clear: find innocent

H- SMALL SCHOOLS FACE AXE

abolish, close down; abolition, closure

## **2- Blocked Phrases in Instagram**

A-HANDICAPPED DUO ROW ACROSS ATLANTIC

duo: two people

B-HOSPITALS FACE MORE CUTS

face: be threatened by

C-PAY FREEZE FUELS UNION ANGER

fuel: provide reason for growth (of anger, protest, etc)

D-ENVIRONMENT MINISTER LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN FOR CLEANER BEACHES

launch: send (satellite, etc.) into space; begin (campaign, etc.); put (new product) on market

E-BISHOP LASHES TV SEX AND VIOLENCE

lash: criticize violently

F-NEW LEAD IN PHONEBOX MURDER CASE

lead: clue (in police enquiry)

G- NEW TRADE LINKS WITH PERU

link: connection, contact

## **3- Blocked Phrases in Twitter**

A-NEW ROW OVER PENSION CUTS

row: noisy disagreement

B-CRISIS OVER BY SEPTEMBER.

Over= be prepared

C-CRASH DRIVER 'HAD BEEN DRINKING'

Car accident causes by drank driver

D-MOTORWAY CRASH: DEATH TOLL RISES

Accident causes deed people

E-HOSPITAL BOSS AXED AS PATIENTS DIE

The manager of the hospital puts under investigation because patient dies.

F- MURDER HUNT: MAN HELD

a man is being held by police

## G-SIX KILLED IN EXPLOSION

Six people have been killed

Table (1) the blocked phrases in social media

Total	Facebook		instagramm		Twitter	
	no	%	no	%	no	%
69	44	50	14	30	11	20

In the table above, we notice that Facebook (44) blocked phrases in its location , because Facebook has a large base between users and according to CNN agency more than 150 million people use Facebook. Instagram has (14) blocked phrases, while Twitter has (11) blocked phrases because Twitter doesn`t use for news, otherwise it uses for politician speech .

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion

Block Phrase is a special type of language which has its own characteristics. block phrase is “the typically common language used by the printing media or oral media This kind of phrase uses the shortened syntactic structures (usually in phrases and words, rather than clauses and sentences) in a restricted communicative context, such as a title of a magazine or poster. The specific characteristic of this language is that it does not have grammatical sentence, especially in newspapers headlines.

Blocked phrase can be occurring in newspaper or advertisement and in large at social media. The blocked phrase have two main topics:

1-Grammar , the social media doesn't use a complete sentence when they write the headline. Eg "HOTEL HOLIDAY DEED" with nouns or verbs.

2- Vocabulary : words are chosen not because they are short, but because they sound dramatic (e.g. *blaze*, which means ‘big fire’, and is used in headlines to refer to any fire). Eg " SMALL SCHOOLS FACE AXE "



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