

An Exploratory Study of Language Use by Malaysians on Facebook

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Abstract

Educators are exploring the potential of social network sites as a teaching and learning tool as these sites are playing an increasingly vital role in today's society. This study highlights a segment of a larger study that explores the quality of Facebook (FB) discourse so as to investigate its potential as a learning tool in the context of English language learning in Malaysia. Quality is defined as the extent of construction of knowledge based on social constructivism theory. This study explores the content posted and interactions taking place on Facebook walls. It draws on the perspectives of FB users and their postings to investigate the predominant language use by Malaysians on FB, to determine the level of accuracy on the use of English and to explore the amount of construction of knowledge in the FB content. A mixed methodology framework is adopted involving both quantitative questionnaires addressed to FB users and a qualitative content analysis on the FB platform. Highlighted in this discussion are the characteristics of FB comments from samples of FB profiles to give a wide overview of the language use particularly by Malaysians.