Construction of Knowledge on Facebook

HAYATI IDRIS
Department of English Language and Literature
KIRKHS, International Islamic University Malaysia
yati6893@gmail.com

ROZINA ABDUL GHANI
Department of English Language and Literature
KIRKHS, International Islamic University Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This study highlights a segment of a larger study that explores the discourse of social network sites. These social sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Myspace have become such an intriguing social media that there is a growing need among educationalists to explore their impact in the field of teaching and learning. In Malaysia, Facebook is one of the most popular social network sites. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the potential of Facebook as an English language learning tool in Malaysia. It employs both qualitative and quantitative measures in order to analyze the extent of construction of knowledge on the postings on the Facebook walls. Preliminary findings reveal that FB could indeed be an online tool that trigger reflective thinking, construct knowledge and consequently enhance learning.

Keywords: Social Network Sites (SNSs); Facebook; knowledge construction; reflective thinking; online communication

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the findings of a content analysis on the language use in Facebook (FB) postings by Malaysian users. It specifically focuses on the extent of construction of knowledge in this form of online communication. The development of online technologies has changed the way people access, interact with, create and share data and information (Ajjan & Hartshorne 2008, Dearstyne 2007). The advent of these new online technologies particularly referred to as Web 2.0 technologies which include weblogs (blogs), wikis, new mobile hardware capabilities and social networking sites (SNSs) has generated interest in understanding how these technologies could be optimised for learning (Teclehaimanot & Hickman 2011).

The arrival of Web 2.0 signifies a second generation of web development and design in which web content is characterized by interconnectivity, interactivity and collaboration. This has sparked a new wave of interest in students' use of the internet especially in using new social media such as blogs, wikis and social networking. Bryant (2006) claims that this new interest in the new social media has subsequently become the source of significant debate in education.

FB with 750 million users has become phenomenal because of its number of users (eBizMBA Rank at http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-networking-websites, March 5, 2012). It is the most popular social network sites (SNSs) by Alexa Global Traffic Rank and U.S. Traffic Rank which constantly update their database information. Twitter follows second with 200 million users and LinkedIn with 110 million users. The huge number of users on these SNSs platform offers an extensive repertoire of language use that can be investigated, hence, extending the literature in the area.

FB is chosen as the focus of this study as it also provides interest on how English can be learnt using technology. It also has pedagogical potential (McBride, 2009) besides its vast number of users. This is relevant as the paradigm of learning have evolved beyond traditional classroom settings to synchronous and asynchronous, interactive, and collaborative learning which is further extended by social networking approaches (Gunawardena, Hermans, Sanchez, Richmond, Bohley & Tuttle 2009).

In Malaysia, the reduction in the amount of exposure to English for students has led to the declining standard of English language (Fong Chan Onn, www.allMalaysia.info.com, April 12, 2011). Nik Safiah Karim, a language expert, asserts that there is need for more exposure to the language and more opportunities to use the language as there are not enough platforms for students to use English (Sunday@thestar.com.my, April 3, 2011). This is still a concern today as asserted by Normazidah Che Musa, Koo Yew Lie and Hazita Azman (2012) in their review of current research that examine the problem and practice of English language learning in Malaysia. They note that one of the factors that might contribute to the low standard of English among Malaysian learners is the lack of exposure to the language due to limited opportunity to use English outside the classroom. A similar concern was raised by Arnold and Paulus (2010) who stressed that offering additional venues for interaction was particularly valuable in foreign language learning, where exposure to the target language was often inadequate. This gap is filled by electronic communication as it can provide a space for meaningful interaction that promotes cultural, pragmatic and linguistic competence by allowing learners to use the language with other learners (Abrams 2006, Lomicka 2006). SNSs such as FB may offer this much needed additional platform for English language use as SNSs promote social interaction between individuals with the potential for supporting active learning, social learning and construction of knowledge within a student-centered constructivist environment (Ferdig 2007).

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

This study was initiated to explore language use in FB platform as a potential tool for language learning. It specifically analyzed the patterns of language use in FB and investigated how knowledge is constructed by Malaysians in FB. It specifically aimed at answering the following research question: What are the major indicators reflecting knowledge construction process of the FB postings by Malaysians? The answer to this question can contribute to the pool of literature on the value of such online social interaction as research on social networking in education is rather limited (Lockyer and Patterson 2008 cited in Mazman & Usluel 2010) and not clearly defined (Jones 2009***).***

SOCIAL NETWORK SITES (SNS)

According to Turley (2010), the internet has become the point of reference of sociological intrigue for the last twenty years and its communication has become the latest unifying concept. The Internet has the capability to change the way people interpret the world and how they view each other. As online communication is continuously evolving, the internet allows a wider link to existing social relations. Wu et al. (2009) suggest that the web is a potentially valuable corpus for language study as it offers a large example of contextualized and authentic language that is easily accessible.

The advent of online communication has brought forth the wave of social network sites (SNSs). SNSs can be broadly defined as internet or mobile device-based social spaces

which are designed to facilitate communication, collaboration and content sharing across networks of contacts (Childnet International, 2008; Cachia, 2008). Ellison, Lampe & Steinfeld (2007) posit that SNSs has the potential to fundamentally change the character of social lives, both at interpersonal and community level. There is also evidence of change in interaction patterns as well as social connections among young people who are noted as heavy users. They also assert that SNSs offer simple, cheap ways to organize members, arrange meetings, extend information, and gauge opinion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is situated within the social constructivism paradigm. The rationale for this paradigm is based on the premise that SNSs promote social interaction between individuals with the potential of supporting active learning, social learning and construction of knowledge within a student-centred, constructivist environment (Ferdig 2007). It is also suggested that students' interests in the use of new social theories of learning which display interactivity and collaborative features are linked with socio-cultural theories of learning which tends to emphasize the co-construction of knowledge in social settings (Selwyn et al 2008). It has also been noted that the explosion of computer-supported social networks has promoted the constructivist approach to a greater community than before which requires practitioners to start taking the transition seriously (Cram & Richards 2008).

Social constructivism, one of the widely accepted constructivist learning theories, emphasizes that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon existing knowledge (Bruner 1976, http://tip.psychology.org/bruner.html)). Based on this theory, learners are viewed as "active constructors" of their own learning environment (Mitchell and Myles 1988 cited in Yang and Wilson 2006). This is in line with Vygotsky's (1978) from which the basic premise of social constructivism is developed. Vygotsky's idea can be construed as a concept of learning that deals with social construct mediated by language via social discourse (McMahon 1997, Kamel Boulos & Wheelert 2007, Gunawardena et al. 2009). Learning is viewed as an activity that takes place among active members of society and not as isolated individuals. Social context determines what we learn and how we make sense of knowledge.

The basic principle of social constructivism derived from Vygotsky's (1978) is that learning occurs through dialogue (Yang & Wilson, 2006). The dialogue is at first *intermental* which means that learning takes place between teachers and students, between students, or even between text and reader (Wilson 1999, cited in Yang & Wilson 2006). However, the learner makes meaning of what is said or written via *intramental* (or internal) dialogue (Vygotsky 1978). Thus, learning is said to be interactive as learners must interact with sources of ideas or knowledge in social settings and that they also have to play an active role in reconstructing ideas or knowledge within their own minds (Yang and Wilson 2006, Gunawardena et al. 2009). Similarly, in FB setting, which offers strong potential for social interactivity (McMahon 1997) and a platform for discussion and interaction (Gunawardena et al. 2009), the same process of *intermental* and *intramental* takes place. Participants engage in active construction of knowledge through social interaction and exploration via virtual interaction (Kamel Boulos & Wheelert 2007). Furthermore, Ferdig (2007) elaborates that SNSs can relate students with Vygotsky's More Knowledgable Others (MKO) beyond interaction with peers within students' Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD). The MKOs can be, theoretically, anyone in the world who is online and not limited to the classroom or the family.

STUDIES IN RELATED AREAS

Research on social networking in education is still limited despite the varied issues explored (Lockyer and Patterson 2008 cited in Mazman and Usluel 2010). Similarly, Jones (2009) posits that the ways in which SNSs may be able to help learning is still emerging and the extent to which these sites may facilitate both informal and formal learning is still largely undefined. Nevertheless, Mason (2006) considers FB as an educational tool because of its beneficial qualities that enable peer feedback, and as an interactional tool. Cram and Richards (2008) also notes that the explosion of computer-supported social networks has promoted the constructivist approach to a greater community than before, thus, suggesting that teachers should not take the transition lightly.

As most FB users are university students aged 18 to 25 (Bumgarner 2007, Mazman & Usluel 2010) deduce that FB can be a useful educational tool especially by offering active participation and collaboration to its users. In their recent study, Mazman and Usleul (2010) designed a structural model explaining how users could utilize FB for educational purposes. With the help of structural-equation model, the researchers examined three dimensions of FB uses for communication, collaboration, and resource/material sharing. The educational use of FB was explained directly by purposes of FB usage and indirectly by FB adoption. The findings suggested that FB adoption have a significant positive relationship with usefulness, ease of use, social influence, facilitating conditions and community identity. The most important factor in predicting the adoption of FB was usefulness. Thus, usefulness was viewed by FB users as one of the major reasons for the rapid adoption of FB as well as the rapid increase in the number of its users. These findings support the findings by Selwyn (2007) that found students' use of FB could be categorized under five themes: recounting and reflecting on their university life, exchanging practical information, exchanging academic information, and exchanging humorous or entertaining materials, all of which support the notion that FB usage in daily activities is closely linked with its educational usage as concluded by Mazman and Usleul (2010).

In another study, Rozina (2009) examined the patterns of construction of knowledge in an open-ended small group synchronous computer-mediated classroom discussion (CMCD). This descriptive case study looked at the quality of the synchronous online discussions among 70 non-native intermediate ESL/EFL students at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). It sought to gain an in-depth understanding on the potentials of small-group synchronous online communication. The data was gathered from the discourse analysis of participants' online transcripts and the post experimental semi-structured interviews with all the participants. The students were asked to discuss given topics in their textbooks online. The online communication was observed and collected for nine weeks. The data was later analysed for the process of knowledge construction following Pena Perez (2000) indicators of knowledge construction. The participants were also interviewed to obtain their views on their language output in the online discussion.

The study found evidence of all the indicators identified in the process of knowledge construction. The data revealed 16,375 messages posted by three classes that shared consistent patterns in the construction of knowledge. All the participants made used of *questions, reply, conflict, clarification, support, judgme*nt and *others* as their strategies for knowledge construction. Questioning formed the highest percentage at 18% with information seeking questions and discussion questions. Reply took up the same percentage i.e 18%. The participants were involved in direct responses to information seeking questions, while at the same time elaborated and clarified the questions posed. Other indicators found in the study include *support* (4%) and *interpretation of ideas and statements* (2%). Conflict represented 1% and other indicators which include *assertion, consensus building, judgment* and *reflection*

were also found to represent 1% in each category. The indicator *others* made up 43%. Others category comprised socializing and making off-task comments. Some of the messages that fall under this category included social comments such as greetings, taking leave, humour and sarcasm.

The study revealed that participants in this study related their online discussion to their experience. The process of knowledge construction could be seen in their articulation of thoughts within the context that they could relate to. They collaborated and experienced various discourse functions which enabled them to construct knowledge. This online experience helped the participants to develop, test, and evaluate their ideas with peers which eventually exposed them to different views before reaching conclusion of the given topic.

This study concluded that synchronous computer-mediated communication could foster reflective thinking and knowledge construction among non-native speakers of English. Such online communication was a beneficial ground for students to experience the process of knowledge construction as they participated in purposeful discussion, reflection, creative thinking, persistence and cooperation which were important elements in the process of knowledge construction. In such a process, the interaction between existing knowledge and new knowledge leads to learning and the production of new knowledge.

Rozina's (2009) findings extended the findings of another study conducted by deLaat. deLaat (2002) investigated interaction patterns among the members of a community of practice within the Dutch police organization and how they share and construct knowledge. The focus of the study was on the information exchanged through computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) environment as such environment was claimed to provide ideal possibilities to study interaction patterns amongst members of a network and the content of the discourse. de Laat asserted that information gathered within such an environment could help in highlighting the quality of learning and the social construction of knowledge.

The study followed an existing community of practice within the Dutch police in order to analyze their activities. 46 members used this electronic environment to discuss work related problems and exchange information as well as to uphold expertise. Their exchanges were recorded for the period of six months. Social network analysis (SNA) was used to analyze the social structure. The coding scheme from Gunawardena et al. (1997) was used to examine the negotiation of meaning and social construction of knowledge. The study found that the members were active members with 233 messages written on the entire network. The average number of messages per person was 5.07. The messages were read 7486 times with an average of 162.74 per person. In relation to the quality of discourse, it was found that social construction of knowledge remains mainly in the phase of sharing information.

In relation to language learning, Godwin-Jones (2008) claims that SNSs tools and platforms such as FB that improve communication and human interaction are likely to increase language learning and become new avenues for potential research (Bloch 2008). This claim supports earlier findings as highlighted by Chapelle (2004) in which she asserts that online communication is useful for language practice based on the amount of communication as users actively participate in such environments. Kern et al (2008) emphasize that work on network-based language teaching has moved to examine online learning in the non-classroom contexts as well. Undoubtedly, these findings support the potential of SNSs as a platform for learning. It can also be concluded that SNSs is a platform which offers this non-classroom context. Niemuth (2010) asserts that internet-based learning tools can allow for real-time interactions with people around the globe as traditional classrooms do not allow students to engage in authentic communication. This kind of communication encourages participants to take active roles in communication (Bikowski &

Kessler 2002) and allows learners who are unwilling to speak in front of others, due to self-consciousness or shyness, the chance to communicate with more confidence (Hata 2003).

Computer-mediated communication is extensively discussed in language learning as it offers opportunities for language learners to practice their language (Abrams, 2006). According to Thelwall (2008), it is vital to study language on social network in order to be able to teach it to English learners as well as to support and understand its use amongst children and young adults. As such, FB is chosen as the focus of this study as it provides interest on how English language learning can be learned using technology which include promoting language learning in a variety of way (Mitchell, 2009), and having pedagogical potential (McBride, 2009; Blattner & Fiori, 2009) besides its vast number of users. In a conceptual paper, Blattner and Fiori (2009), investigate and discuss the use of FB to enhance the development of socio-pragmatic competence among language learners and the sense of community in language classrooms. The findings indicate that FB can be used for authentic language interaction and to improve motivation as well as language learners' English performance. Moreover, FB may offer an additional platform for English use as there are needs for more exposure to the language and more opportunities to use the language since there are not enough platforms for students to use English (Sunday@thestar.com.my, April 3, 2011) particularly in the Malaysian context.

METHODOLOGY

This research is an exploratory study using qualitative analysis as the main tool in examining the discourse of FB postings. Generally, it sets to investigate the overall values of such online site in promoting construction of knowledge by analyzing the patterns of language use and investigating the extent of construction of knowledge following the Indicators of Construction of Knowledge (Pena-Pérez, 2000).

The data were taken from FB postings of the lead researcher which includes her own FB friends and friends of her friends. These friends fall within the age range of 11 to 50 years old. The primary source of data were postings on the researcher's FB profile, individuals' postings and comments of the individual's postings on their FB walls. The smallest unit of analysis was a word or a symbol that carries meaning to the entire strand of discourse on the FB. A total of 654 postings with approximately 11, 286 words were analyzed from the total of 1006 postings. The data had been collected since January 2010. The collection of data involved storing the various components of FB posting exchanges in Microsoft word format and its statistics feature which included the number of words in each posting. As the data were taken from the researcher's own FB, research ethics were adhered to in order to ensure that the researcher reduces if not eliminates chances of being bias or by leading the participants. In the course of ensuring this, the participation of the researcher in the FB is also limited to merely observing rather than commenting or triggering.

ANALYSIS

The analysis on construction of knowledge was conducted using Pena-Pérez (2000) Indicators of Construction of Knowledge Framework. This framework was chosen because it was grounded in the constructivist theory of learning. Moreover, the set of indicators was built upon a thorough synthesis of other indicators developed by Henri (1992), Henri et al. (1996), Newman et al. (1995); and Zhu (1996). In addition, issues of validity and reliability

of Pena-Pérez's study were addressed thoroughly. The table presents the Indicators of Construction of Knowledge.

TABLE 1. Pena-Pérez (2000) Indicators of Construction of Knowledge

Category	Description	Indicators
Questions	Asking questions to gather unknown information, inquire, start a discussion or reflect on the problems raised	· Information seeking questions · Discussion questions · Reflective questions
Reply	Responding to other participants' questions or replying to other participant's statements in a way that shows the interactive nature of the discussions.	· Direct responses to information-seeking questions · Elaborated responses that include information sharing, clarification and elaboration, and interpretation
Clarification	Identifying and elaborating on ideas and thoughts. This classification process even when associated with previous messages, either by responding to previous messages or debating statements posed by other participants presents characteristics of a soliloquy, a reflective process to attain understanding.	· Stating or identifying ideas, assumptions and facts · Linking facts, ideas and notions · Identifying or reformulating problems · Explaining ideas presented by: - Using examples - Describing personal experience - Decomposing ideas · Identifying or formulating criteria for judging [ossible answers or to justify own statements (Making lists of reasons for or against a position) · Arguing own statements · Defining terms · Establishing comparisons · Presentation of similarities and differences · Listing advantages and disadvantages · Using of analogies · Identifying causes and consequences
Interpretation	Reaching conclusions, using inductive and deductive analysis based on facts and premises posed, making predictions and building hypotheses. Just as the category above includes reflection and analysis when originated from the clarification process.	· Reaching conclusions · Making generalizations · Predicting · Building hypothesis · Summarizing · Proposing solutions
Conflict	Debating other participants' points of view, showing disagreement with previous messages and taken to an extreme, friction among participants.	· Presenting alternative/opposite positions (debating) · Disagreements · Friction
Assertion	Maintaining and defending ideas questioned by other participants by providing explanations and arguments that defend original statements.	· Re-statement of assumptions and ideas. · Defending own arguments by further elaboration on the ideas previously stated.
Consensus Building	Trying to attain a common understanding of the issues in debate.	· Clarifying misunderstandings. · Negotiating. · Reaching consensus or agreement.
Judgment	Making decisions, appreciations, evaluations and criticisms of ideas, facts and solutions discussed as well as evaluating text orientation and authors' positions.	· Judging the relevance of solutions. · Making value-judgments. · Topic evaluation. · Evaluating text orientation and authors' position about the subject being discussed.
Reflection	Acknowledging learning something new, judging importance of discussion topic in relation to learning.	· Self-appraisal of learning. · Acknowledging learning something new. · Acknowledging importance of subject being discussed in their learning.
Support	Establishing rapport, sharing feelings, agreeing with other people's ideas either directly or indirectly, and providing feedback to other participants' comments.	· Acknowledging other participants' contributions and ideas. · Empathy: sharing of feelings with other participants' comments "I felt the same way…" · Feedback
Other	Includes mixed messages difficult to categorize and social statements.	· Messages not identified as belonging to a specific category. · Social comments not related to the discussions: greetings, jokes, etc. · Emotional responses.

During the data analysis process, many instances were found to be rather overlapping. For example, *reply* can also be coded as *clarification* and vice versa. In such a case, the raters would confer and refer to the entire strand of discourse in order to ascertain the appropriate category, and hence, determine the most suitable category. As the study did not involve interviews with the respondents, the category was coded based on the entire strand of discourse and never in isolation. This was done to avoid the possibility of biasness and misjudgement. In addition, to ensure the reliability of the analysis, inter rater and intra rater reliability were also employed.

RESULTS

The data revealed a total of 654 postings with approximately 11, 286 words that were analyzed from the total of 1006 postings. Generally, the postings showed code-mix patterns of language use and shared the patterns of construction of knowledge as classified by Pena-Pérez (2000).

PATTERNS OF LANGUAGE USE

The postings analyzed showed that users discussed a wide range of ideas, issues and facts that are related to their daily social experiences. Most participants wrote their postings in English language (BI) at 60.2% alongside Bahasa Melayu (BM) at 39.8%. There were many instances where the language used was a mixed of both languages. There was a Korean word in Roman transcript, some phrases in Japanese and Arabic characters.

KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION PATTERNS

All the indicators categorized by Pena Perez (2000) were identified in the FB postings. Of these categories mainly statements of *clarification, interpretation, question, assertion* and *support* seemed to be highly employed by the participants. Figure 1 shows the percentage of statements identified in each category.

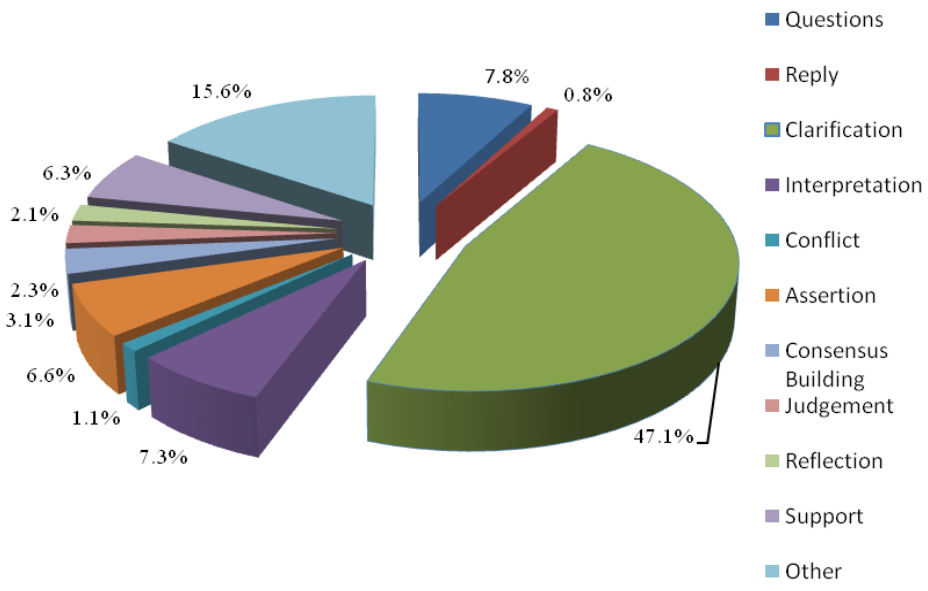

FIGURE 1. Percentage of Knowledge Construction Indicators

CLARIFICATION

The data revealed that a total of 308 postings fall under the *Clarification* category. This number is equivalent to 47.1% of the 654 total number of English language postings analyzed in the study. This means that FB users spent a lot of time stating their ideas and elaborating on the ideas and thoughts. Most of the clarification statements were responded to by *questions* or *assertions* among others. However, there were times when these statements were not responded to.

QUESTIONS AND REPLY

Questions represented 51postings or 7.8%. Questions were mainly used not to initiate discussion but to ask for opinions or clarification relating to the ideas mentioned in earlier postings. Reply to questions represented only 0.8% as only some postings were direct reply to earlier or previous questions. Some questions, however, were not responded to.

INTERPRETATIONS

Interpretation statements represented only 7.3%. The interpretations made were mainly in response to earlier postings. Interpretations were related to ideas and beliefs about the ideas mentioned in the postings.

OTHER

The indicator Other made up 15.6% of the total postings analyzed, This percentage was obviously rather high as this category represented social comments such as greetings, well wishes, condolences and emotional expressions which include emoticons, expressions representing laughter, feelings etc. The high percentage was due to the fact that the participants spent a lot of time socializing on FB. Postings which consisted of such contents were not included in *other categories* of the indicators.

OTHERS (CONFLICT, ASSERTION, SUPPORTING, CONSENSUS BUILDING, REFLECTION, JUDGEMENT)

Conflict represented only 1.1%. This showed that users rarely argued or debated on ideas presented in the postings. However, users seemed to be more assertive in giving assertion (6.6%) in view of what was being presented in the postings and supporting (6.5%) opinions, views or arguments posted by others. Consensus building (3.1%) in this case was merely agreeing to ideas raised in the discussion rather than actually debating over the ideas. Reflection (2.1%) is more of acknowledging or reflecting upon the ideas and not acknowledging new knowledge. Judgement (2.3%) is more of making evaluation rather than making decisions.

DISCUSSION

FB discourse analyzed in this study showed that social network sites could indeed become a platform where users generate reflective thinking, construct knowledge and consequently enhance learning. Evidently, the findings show that users utilised all the indicators of construction of knowledge in their FB interaction despite the virtual and asynchronous nature of social network sites. These findings concur with those by McMahon (1997)and Gunawardena et al. (2009) which suggest that online setting offers great potential for discussion, interaction and interactivity.

The study noted that most of the postings were clarification statements and the questions posed were mainly seeking clarification of earlier postings. Users' postings were responded to by others by either elaborating or agreeing to the ideas but rarely debating the ideas. For most part, users wrote their postings and responded to others' postings. However, there were instances where postings in terms of questions or statements were not responded to. Users' responses to postings were prompted by either answering the questions or commenting on the ideas, issues or facts presented. Their responses were either short or concise answers to information-seeking questions or long elaborated answers which include clarification, interpretation, disagreement or opinion. The threads were sometimes synchronous which could take place in a chat window of the FB application but the users opted to use their FB wall instead. These findings concur with Rozina (2009) in that the process of construction of knowledge is evident in online discourse. Both computer-mediated classroom discussion (CMCD) and FB provide avenues for social interaction that enable the process of construction of knowledge to take place.

Besides the social network site, the study also found that the users' diverse background and experiences have prompted the users to discuss a broad range of ideas, issues and facts that are related to their daily social experiences. This is the kind of fruitful interaction as proclaimed by social constructivists (Bruner 1976, Vygotsky 1978) and many of their proponents (McMahon 1997, Yang and Wilson 2006, Kamel Boulos and Wheelert 2007, Ellison, Lampe and Steinfeld 2007, Ferdig 2007, Selwyn et al. 2008, Gunawardena et al. 2009).

This study also reveals that FB users engaged in a social interaction that relates to construction of knowledge mainly through clarification, question, interpretation and assertion. Users of this platform are seen to be interacting actively and the fact that English is used more than their L1 thus supports the claim that SNSs platform such as FB can be used as an additional platform in terms of English language use (Chapelle 2004, Mason 2006, Abrams 2006, Lomicka 2006, Ferdig 2007, Godwin-Jones 2008, Thewall 2008). Despite the encouraging results of this small scale study, a more extended analysis involving a bigger corpus is needed to produce more conclusive results.

CONCLUSION

Online communication offers enormous interaction opportunity. This is evident in the FB data gathered in this study, which are loaded with postings of different forms and functions. The textual nature of FB postings encourages active participation, interaction and construction of knowledge. In the process of socialising, participants are able to inform and share knowledge, collaborate and cooperate with one another. These are all the required behaviours in the quest of knowledge, which also contributes, to life-long learning.

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