

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Synchronous Facebook Communication: Native and Non-native English Speakers

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Abstract:

The purpose of this research was to study language with a focus on online communication between native speakers (NSs) and non-native English speakers (NNSs) in an international study consultancy Facebook group. This communication has proven unique and is important to study for two specific reasons. First, the popularity of social networking sites and their use by second language learners both amongst themselves and with NSs makes it important to investigate. Second, the analysis of these types of conversations is essential to understand how power and identity work in online interaction between NSs and NNSs. The study addressed the questions of what type of discourse are these highly contextualized groups of English speakers using to communicate online and how does the online environment shape NNSs' power relation and identity shifting when interacting with NSs on Facebook. The study findings revealed that there are pedagogical implications in the interactional collaboration between NSs and NNSs in online interaction on Facebook. In the context of second language learning (L2), scaffolding was not only offered by collaborating with peers and interacting with more knowledgeable others, but also by the friendly environment of the social networking sites and the meaning negotiation strategies.

Key Words: Computer Mediated Communication, critical discourse analysis, Facebook, identity, native speakers, non-native speakers