

A Discursive and Pragmatic Analysis of WhatsApp Text-based Status Notifications

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Abstract

WhatsApp has significantly penetrated the various spheres of peoples' lives all over the world. The purpose of this study is to look at two aspects of WhatsApp text-based status notifications; namely, the most common discursive realizations and the major pragmatic themes. A sample of 846 status notifications for WhatsApp users' profiles was analyzed. Data, which were gathered between January and March 2017, were from three sets of male and female users. The status notifications were qualitatively analysed in terms of both the most common discursive realizations and pragmatic themes. The major findings of the study showed a variety in the discursive realizations, including self-generated statuses, which marked 82%, and auto-generated statuses, which made 18%. Data revealed also that the most used type of the self-generated was the pure text, which marked 53%. In terms of the major pragmatic themes employed by the users, data showed four main categories: religious, social, personal and national. The findings were then discussed, justified, and compared with results from previous research. The paper concludes with the limitations and future research recommendations.

Keywords: Discourse, language and technology, pragmatics, statuses, WhatsApp

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