

**THE UNIVERSITY OF DA NANG
UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDIES**

NGUYỄN MẬU VŨ

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO WAYS OF USING
ENGLISH IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES'
FACEBOOK PAGES**

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(A SUMMARY)**

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Supervisor: A/Prof. Dr. Nguyễn Văn Long

Examiner 1: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Trần Hữu Phúc

Examiner 2: Dr. Bảo Khâm

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

Social networks have a strong influence on the society more and more in every field. They play an important role in helping people keep in touch with each other, particularly in online communications and interactions. And language is still the most essential component.

The phenomenon that language has been used in various novel ways is appeared increasingly on social networks, gradually infiltrating into social communication, even appeared in English course book for students. Many global linguists consider this phenomenon as a plentiful resource for investigating extensively. Some of them are Bodomo and Crystal whom the author spent a lot of time on in terms of new forms of language in computer-mediated communication.

Like Bodomo (2010), the author supports the view that there is a causal relationship between the emergence of new tools of communication and the creation of new forms of language. Therefore, the author would like to carry out the research entitled *“An investigation into ways of using English in American Universities’ Facebook Pages”*.

1.2. AIMS and OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

This study aims to investigate various ways of English use in American universities’ Facebook pages in the situation of strong development of social networking sites. In addition, the study is responsible for seeking the main reasons which lead to innovative linguistic and technological events.

1.2.2. Objectives

- To classify new forms of language use according to Bodomo's theoretical view, and then update or complement new things in terms of non-standard orthography.
- To show and identify new ways of English use from posts and comments according to Crystal's theory in terms of vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, and style.
- To analyze factors leading to the ways of using English on these pages.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does the language used in American universities' Facebook pages retain the developed linguistic features comparing with Bodomo's model and studies (2010)?

2. What are the innovative ways of using English in American universities' Facebook pages?

3. What factors lead to the innovation of using English in these pages?

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

With the aims and objectives mentioned, this study focuses on investigating ways of English use from posts and comments in the year 2016 of five official American universities' Facebook pages, including Princeton University, Harvard University, Yale University, Columbia University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). However, the thesis is just based on the viewpoints and studies of Bodomo (2010) and Crystal (2006, 2011) regarding online linguistic characteristics.

1.5. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

1.5.1. Non-standard orthography

1.5.2. Facebooker

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is a synthetic, additional and up-to-date exploration of English use on Facebook sites. Therefore, this study is hoped to be a practical piece of work to help English learners to have a comprehensive understanding of English use in the case of social networks. More importantly, it can be used as a reliable source of reference for those who are interested in language change at the time of information and technology explosion.

1.7. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recently, Nguyễn Văn Long (2011) has paid much attention to sociolinguistics in the digital media age. Especially, as being an expert on application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into language education, he clarifies the importance of Computer-mediated Communication (CMC) as a tool of foreign language learning (Nguyễn Văn Long, 2015a) because CMC has various pedagogical features (Nguyễn Văn Long, 2013) which are believed to play significant roles in modern teaching methodology. Besides, through his meta-analysis (Nguyễn Văn Long, 2015b) of the relationship between the concepts including discourse, technology, multi-dimensional communication and ideology in the digitized era, we should agree with him that technology changes so fast that “new elements” quickly become “ex-elements” in digital

media. Nowadays anyone who wants to get information about language use on the internet cannot ignore the publication “Internet Linguistics” by David Crystal in 2011. Concerning the CMC field, Bodomo (2010) proposes a model which is called Technology-conditioned approach to Language Change and Use (TeLCU). He suggests that there is a causal relationship between the emergence of new tools and media of communication in our society and the use of language. It is the theoretical basis for himself and for many authors in investigations of the development of language variation through CMC. Also, research on social networking sites, such as Facebook and others (Boyd & Ellison, 2007) starts to profile user behaviors and characteristics (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Golder, Wilkinson & Huberman, 2007; Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield, 2007). Especially, Ellison et al. (2007) provide an overview of Facebook. Until now, application of social networks for research on human activities has been far-reaching around the world. It is mainly towards two major directions. Linguists concerned with linguistic features or practices collected from social networking exchange, while scholars considered WBSNs (Web-based Social Networks) as a motivative tool for foreign language teaching and learning. After reviewing Bodomo’s research presented in the book *Computer-Mediated Communication for Linguistics and Literacy: Technology and Natural Language Education (2010)*, we find that the question of whether the new communication technologies are changing language structure and use is perhaps the central preoccupation of linguists working in the field of CMC. However, someone can argue that in the period of Industry 4.0, many things will be changed for suitable situations because of technological involvement, whether human

communication and exchange rely much more on the online manners or not. This is the important reason why research on the relationship between CMC and language change is necessary for new language trends in the future.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

2.2.2. Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

2.2.3. Sociolinguistics

2.2.4. Social Networks

In the article “*Social networks and language change: what does research tell us?*” (2017), the writer clarifies Early and Modern Social Networks, as well as provides some evidence about the relationship between social networks and language change. And in this study, we mention social networks as modern social networks, more exactly web-based social networks (WBSNs), which are online communities that allow users to publish resources and to establish a relationship for certain purposes, such as business, entertainment, dating...

2.2.5. Facebook

Facebook, created by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 is the most widely used social networking site to date, with 1.79 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2017).

It has one, of many others, asynchronous messaging feature, namely status updates, which conform to the micro-blogging concept (Köbler et al., 2010). This feature enables users to post short messages that communicate their feelings, thoughts, whereabouts, inquiries or any information that they want to share with their friends. Users can also post photos, videos or links in the status box. When

users post a status on their wall, such status will appear on their friends' news feed. This will allow friends to like the status by clicking the 'Like' button or leave a comment to what has been posted. Users can also 'tag' their friends in their status and posts. Friends that are tagged will receive a notification that links to the post. This will make such post accessible to be commented on by their friends.

2.2.6. Language and Linguistics

2.2.7. Language Variation and Language Change

2.2.8. Technology-conditioned approach to Language Change and Use (TeLCU model)

This approach projects the view that there is a causal relationship between the emergence of new tools and media of communication and the creation of new forms of language and literacy. New tools and media of communication demand the creation of new forms and ways of communication. These new forms compete with existing forms and ways of communication, leading to changes in the way we use language in its various forms, including spoken and written forms.

TeLCU model provides a technology-sensitive ecology for discussing evolving forms and uses of natural language. However, Bodomo does not exclude the possibility of a 'reverse' process, i.e. the possibility where new forms of language and literacy reinforce changes in new technologies. I myself think that the rapid development of the Facebook platform is apart from language practices changed and innovated by Facebookers. Indeed, this study also aims to fulfill the lack of this model.

Based on this model, Bodomo examined some new forms and uses of language under topics like technobabble, acronym, punctuation, and emoticons that are also primary features this thesis intends to focus on first and foremost, or non-standard orthography.

2.2.9. Internet Linguistics

In this thesis, the writer decides to explore and renew some aspects which Crystal showed on the view of changes in language, including vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, and styles which are equivalent to lexical features, grammatical features, discourse features, graphic and orthographic features (Crystal, 2006).

Chapter Three

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGNS

This study follows a qualitative approach with the support of the quantitative one that employs the combination of several methods.

3.2. PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher would like to use this source of data for some reasons: Firstly, these sites are public, authentic and open-access without any member registration; secondly, the language for communication and interaction on these sites is mostly English; thirdly, they are five famous American universities where are recognized and received a great deal of interest from all levels of society, nearly all intellectuals; and the data collected in the entire year of 2016 are enough to show outstanding annual events in order to ensure various topics in social life, not just only learning and teaching activities.

3.3. DESCRIPTION OF DATA

Data used for analysis consist of 999 posts and 36,127

comments. They must conform to some criteria as follows:

- Each sample message had to be a product of a one-to-one, one-to-many exchange;
- Each message had to be written in English, or mixture of English and other languages.

3.4. DATA ANALYSIS

The process which the writer will carry out may be described by a diagram as follows:

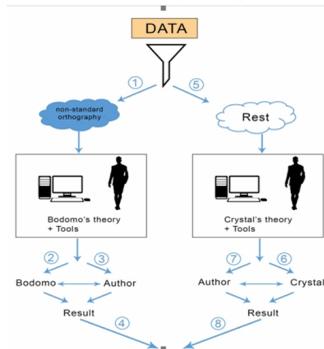


Figure 3.1. Process to analysis

The aim of analyzing data is to observe textual features of CMC. Therefore, the data which used to analysis is firstly non-standard orthography and secondly contributes to show new forms and uses of language comparing with Bodomo's view, after that the author will figure out new ones and complement for this theory.

The process to data analysis continues with the rest of data after processing non-standard orthography. Basing on Crystal's classification of main types of linguistic features and the support of technical tools, the author would like to find out some newly developed ways of using English from the posts and comments in terms of vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics and styles.

3.5. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

3.6. SUMMARY

Chapter Four

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. STRATEGIES OF USING ENGLISH ON FACEBOOK COMMUNICATION

4.1.1. Developed linguistic features

4.1.1.1. Acronymy

Statistics (Table 4.2) shows that shortenings appear in all Facebook sites with the total of 2153 cases, accounting for 5,8% total of posts and comments in the study. Although the use of shortenings is different among Facebook sites, Facebookers in every site tend to employ this feature to show their mind.

Table 4.2. Shortenings in universities' Facebook in 2016

University	Number of shortenings	Number of samples	Percentage
Princeton	230	3033	7,58%
Harvard	1230	24079	5,11%
Yale	205	3289	6,23%
Columbia	138	1755	7,86%
MIT	350	4970	7,04%
Total	2153	37126	5,8%

From Table 4.3, it is clear that Harvard's Facebook page covers all developed ways of shortenings whereas only the combination of letter and number homophone isn't seen in Yale's Facebook communication. It means that Facebookers on these two pages are fruitful and creative in their uses of language to express the ideas. Also, we can conclude from the comparisons that the uses of the

acronym, letter homophone, and reduction of individual words are still very popular on this kind of CMC exchange, as evidence can be seen in all these Facebook sites.

In addition, among ways of shortening we can see on the Facebook exchange, clipping also carries much users' creativity. For example, "*uni*" for "*university*", "*bro*" for "*brother*". This feature is applied by Facebook interlocutors in certain concrete contexts with the combination of other linguistic elements which helps readers understand the meaning.

4.1.1.2. Punctuation

Totally agree with Bodomo about how these punctuations are used on Facebook posts and comments: repetition of question mark to emphasize that the message writer is curious and eager to know the truth, repetition of exclamation mark to emphasize the tone of utterance and combination of (?) and (!) to show surprises and doubts at the same time.

Table 4.3. Comparison of new approaches to shortening among Facebook pages

University	Acronym of sentence	Letter homophone	Number homophone	Letter + number homophone	Reduction of individual words	Letter initial + letter homophone
Princeton	X	X			X	X
Ex:	Omg (oh my god) Brib (be right back)	n (and) U (you)			Hr (hour) pls (please)	Yr (year) Thr (there)
Harvard	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ex:	Omg (oh my god) Lol (laugh out loud)	U (you) R (are)	2 (to) Gr8 (great)	P2P (peer to peer)	Thx (thank) Pls (please)	Ur (you are) Gud (good)
Yale	X	X	X		X	X
Ex:	Lol (laugh out loud) Lmao (laugh my ass off)	M (am) U (you)	2pac (Tupac)		Cnt (can't) Nxt (next)	Ur (you're)
Columbia	X	X			X	
Ex:	Omg (oh my god) Lol (laugh out loud)	N (and) R (are)			Yrs (years) Grt (great)	
MIT	X	X			X	X
Ex:	Tbtf (to be fair) Lmao (laugh my ass off)	U (you) R (are)			Wt (what) Fr (from)	Tho (though)

Regarding using punctuation on Facebook, it will be a mistake if we do not care about the lack of right punctuations that leads to many misunderstandings on CMC. Firstly, it is easy to see on these Facebook pages the lack of apostrophe (') in some cases:

Example 6:

Comment: [F4-P321-C27]

[Thats why I love **Columbia University in the City of New York**]

(That's why I love Columbia University in the City of New York)

Secondly, the absence of some common punctuations in a sentence, such as comma and full stop, is also popular in this communication platform.

On the contrary, someone likes writing the comment into a string with punctuations instead of adding some spaces. For example:

Example 11:

Comment: [F2-P271-C11]

[Can,we,make,a,good,choice?to,make,pice,and,love,in,t
hey,harts,of,all,,]

(Can we make a good choice? To make peace and love in their hearts of all)

The explanation for all usage of punctuations includes two main reasons. In term of subjective, they are mistakes which users type intentionally due to saving time for using their fingers. And in objective reason, the media tools they use could be mobile phones, tablets or desktop computers have different ways to input, i.e. it will take them some more time and action if they want to do that correctly.

4.1.1.3. Emoticonomy

With the figures collected from the corpora, emoticons are employed in a high frequency, 14.5% total of posts and comments contain this feature with various types. Besides, we notice another kind of conveying users' emotions, that is *Sticker*, accounting for 11.4% of emoticonomy.

Table 4.6. Frequencies of emoticon and sticker use on Facebook pages

University	Emoticonomy		Total
	<i>Emoticons</i>	<i>Stickers</i>	
Princeton	495	35	530
Harvard	2850	540	3390
Yale	705	40	745
Columbia	288	36	324
MIT	1040	40	1080
TOTAL	5378	691	6069

We will not pay attention to sticker for data analysis. But there is a concern about the introduction of Stickers on electronic communication and functional differences between emojis and stickers. We should put ourselves into the role of Facebook administrators, and consider why we need to create them, stickers. It is very clear that this issue relates to technological aspects which are increasingly developing to supply high demands from Facebook users. For those who want to have multiple options in showing their mind and emotions in what ways they satisfy most. It means that technology must change with the pace of modern life. The birth of new media tool is to keep pace with human progress; in other words,

it helps to maintain stable development of social life and from that, to make a contribution to improving the living standards, especially promoting effective communications between human and human, human and machine. Thus, we can infer that appearance of Stickers on the Facebook platform is a part of new communicative technology due to the change in what way people would like to communicate online. Further understandingly, to an extent what people require a new communicative tool to convey their mind through new language in both online and offline. It depends on the speed of human and technological development, but we are sure about one thing, the development of social life in which communicative languages exist and technology is always going ahead.

4.1.2. New trends of linguistic features on Facebook

Based on the five main types of linguistic features defined by Crystal (2006), along with an analysis of data, this part will answer the second research question about innovative ways of using English on American universities' Facebook pages comparing with Bodomo's studies. However, these categories are not stable due to the speed of technological change, doubtless, new situational variables will emerge which will make any attempt at classification quickly outdated. To some extent in this study, the writer follows the way Crystal (2011) recall his classification in terms of grammar (grammatical features), vocabulary (lexical features), pragmatics (discourse features) and styles (graphic and orthographic features).

4.1.2.1. New styles

The use of literary quotes is a Facebook style which can be seen with the highest frequency in these sites. This feature would refer to a

catchphrase or saying a user could post within a message. With the support of technological functions, it has been so easy to do some activities. It is simply to copy and paste what you want to quote regardless of how long the saying is. Even we could paste some links referring to any story or event in your message. According to the statistics, there are 1367 quotes and 1186 links posted in a total of posts and comments. That is the most outstanding function (40.29%) which Facebook users feel very convenient and useful, is suitable for those who have a high spirit of showing proof, especially intellectual people.

The use of capital letters adds extra emphasis to highlight an essential idea, name or word, etc. Message postings written only with capital letters are usually considered as a strong marked form of communication, such as shouting. There are few instances of capital letters used as a form of emphasis found in the data.

Inversely, *the omission of capital letters* is also a linguistic practice by online users. In general, the Internet is not case-sensitive; interlocutors have the tendency to use lower-case letters, referred to as the save a keystroke principal (Crystal, 2006), even in the case of the first letter in the sentence, or proper names:

Symbols are visual cues made up of keyboard characters used to display emotion. Facial expressions, gestures, and conventions of body posture and distance, the kinesics and proxemics of spoken language are essential in physically articulating opinions and attitudes, and visually displaying the overall tone of everyday conversations and of moderating social relationship (Crystal, 2006).

Spelling mistakes. Crystal (2006) claims that spelling mistakes found within the online written exchange or internet-using situations do not indicate the lack of education, but purely a function of typing inaccuracy. In other words, no almost interlocutors spend time on revising before sending.

Creative spellings are new spelling conventions or non-standard spellings which have emerged in many interactive media situations. And there are numerous creative spellings found in these posts and comments, for examples, “*Thru*” for “*through*”, “*Plz/pls*” for “*please*”.

Phonetic spellings are linguistic features which Facebook platform introduce many non-standard spellings that reflect pronunciation. For instances, “*U*” for “*you*”, “*N*” for “*and*”

Slang refers to an informal variety of language that is not used in formal speech and writing. It may be restricted or representative of a social group. There are several forms of slang which could be identified as spoken slang heard in English, from the data analysis, as follows: “*Gotta*” for “*got to*”, “*Hell yeah*” replaces “*an expression to say yes*”.

Laughter is one of the strategies that are employed by users to express prosodic features. These are routinely used to signal, for example, a speaker’s attitude to what they are saying, their emotional state or different rhetoric functions. Laughter in CMC is formed by use of onomatopoeic or stylized spellings. One well-known example is “*haha*” to indicate laughter. As laughter is a big part of face-to-face communication, it is also part of online communication as shown in 221 posts and comments.

The use of interjection in electronic discourse is also one of the prominent ways to show real styles by Facebookers. The particle *well* is also multifunctional because it serves as a response marker at the beginning of a turn; tends to answer yes/no-questions; signals hesitations, reservations, objections, rejections, and indirectness; mitigates face-threatening responses; and fills interactional silence (Siti Nurbaya, 2012; Bolden, 2006; Schegloff & Lerner, 2009).

The reduplication of letters, noticeably, refers to the fact that letters are repeated, sometimes in long strings. In the light of this, the examples that follow were, for instance, found in the analysis of some comments:

Example 25:

Comment: [F2-P1-C22]

[Nooo I thought it was wise old age.]

Besides, examples regarding *the repetition of words* should be illustrated and discussed. The reduplication of words, simply put, refers to the fact that words are repeated, sometimes directly after each other, as follows:

Example 29:

Comment: [F2-P178-C1]

[This interview is very very amateur.]

The basic difference between spoken communication and written communication is the lack of real surrounding sounds or no interlocutors' tones. The latter is filled with many communicative strategies such repetition of letters/ words, use of various punctuations and interjections, but the former still relies on users' imagination, or sometimes interlocutors accept to forget this element

which is perhaps determined quite small during the “conversation”. It does not mean that no one pays attention to this vivid detail which probably makes any far-spaced language-based exchange more directly and perfectly. Look at the following examples from Facebook data:

Example 34:

Comment: [F2-P70-C12-16]

[*Cries in MATLAB*]

4.1.2.2. New trends of grammar

The communicative types which take place here include one-to-one (but others can read conversation contents) and one-to-many. Therefore, the use of first personal pronouns reflects that the main topics in Facebook are those related to common interesting issues which any interlocutor wants to express his/ her opinions or emotions. Thus, it is not surprising to find a high presence of the forms *I/my/me* or *we/our/us*.

On the contrary, in terms of *syntactically reduced form* and subject pronoun, a sentence that is reduced in this way, subsequently, refers to the fact that the subject or a pronoun is omitted.

Also, there are some other ways to save time on Facebook discussion, namely *contraction*. It is not difficult to see some reduced forms, like: “*ain’t*” represents the standard informal contractions “*isn’t, aren’t, hasn’t, haven’t and ‘m not*”; “*y’all*” is the contracted reduced form of “*you all*”; as well as the use of “*-in*” instead of “*-ing*” found in gerunds and verb suffixes.

Next, the writer relies on data collected from Facebook comments of famous universities to show some mistakes in the use of articles and grammatical structures.

4.1.2.3. New trends of pragmatics

Pragmatics studies and explains the choice available to people when they speak or write, and it also points out the factors which govern their choice. So, in term of pragmatics, it is necessary to analyze the intentions of site-owners and users to evaluate the effects of their linguistic decisions on Facebook's posts and comments.

Run-on sentences instantiate sentence constructions without any kind of punctuation. In the context of Facebook comments, these might be motivated because their purpose is to imitate speech where pauses are made whenever needed, without the need of any punctuation sign.

Break sentences happen because of the influence of commentary turns where some sentences are sent quickly in order to achieve quicker communication. An additional meaning for them is that they are another strategy for emphasis and for simplifying sentence structures. Besides, posting another new comment aims to supplement previous opinions by different expressions.

Brevity is mainly shown by the use of abbreviations. The special network vocabulary often takes abbreviations to simplify the article, save printing space and reading time, thus meeting the requirements of the computer science and high-speed development of network technology.

Today's online communication environment is more and more visually oriented. Thus, using ***ymbicons*** (Smallman et al., 2001) to

convey messages – the most visible part of pragmatics – is a crucial type of communication by Facebook interlocutors and by online users in general. According to Smallman, symbicons are “hybrids that combine the best aspects of symbols and icons” which are found in the analysis of the conversations on Facebook in this current paper.

4.1.2.4. Vocabulary (lexical features)

Facebook posts and comments, a kind of online communication, make a great use of abbreviated forms. The fast pace of no-stop-point conversations requires brevity, both more and less informal nature of many communicative situations allows for a less elaborate discourse, typing is demand, the vast amount of information and possibilities available on the platform will not let anyone linger in one place longer than necessary. Therefore, the less text there is to write, the better it is.

Frequently used abbreviations of conversational phrases:

- Tbf – “to be fair”
- Rip – “rest in peace”

Acronyms are often written in lower case, again as the consequence of simplification and quickening of the typing process. Capitals are used for adding emphasis and for most two-letter abbreviations (IT - information technology, HU – Harvard University, NY – New York), since those are easier recognizable as acronyms if written in upper case and will not be confused with a misspelled word.

Conventional abbreviations continue appearing in these communication forums. It means that these words or phrases refer to

abbreviations which are agreed or generally accepted, in Standard English. For examples:

- VIP = Very important person
- PhD = Doctor of Philosophy

As regards the use of unconventional abbreviations, these are used for the same reason as conventional ones. Yet, unconventional abbreviations also have another function.

4.2. FACTORS LEADING TO NOVEL WAYS OF USING ENGLISH

The diagram describes the relationship between three entities which are three modes of communication among people from the past (face to face) to present (Facebook) and supposed future (new Facebook)

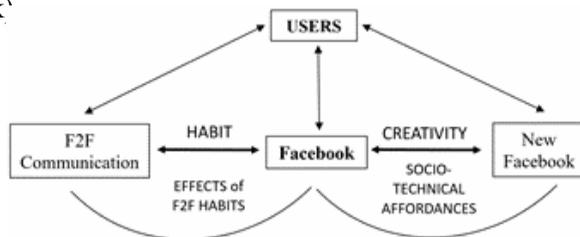


Figure 4.2. Factors lead to new trends in Facebook communication

As we know, before Facebook communication, the kind of face-to-face conversation has existed for a long time. It is sure that many language practices or habits were created from this communication would affect and keep applying in younger modes of communication as usual in terms of language choice and expressions. Also, thanks to the coordination of new communicative environment and technical support, Facebook communication and interaction create favourable

conditions for users not only to keep their habits but also to emerge a lot of creative ways of language exposure through linguistic features and stylistics.

4.2.1. Effects of face-to-face communication habits

4.2.1.1. Language choice by individuals

Transferring spoken language into written-based communicative situations is a clear example to prove the influence of face-to-face (F2F) method on CMC. This phenomenon is analyzed and mentioned above. They are intentional cases of punctuation-free in order to show the fast pace of “speaking” without any pause, like exchanging face to face. This way is used a lot in run-on sentences from a pragmatic view. Other examples related to the reduction of personal pronouns or auxiliaries to achieve the brevity in writing, even using much more slang or informal words while writing for academic issues. In addition, interlocutors tend to use a lot of interjections to reveal diversified emotions, such as from enthusiastic (*whoop, whaa hoo*), cheerful (*hey*) to surprised (*yikes, wow, ohh, uh*), even angry (*graaaa*)... which are same as communicating face to face with other users directly.

4.2.1.2. Language choice relied on CMC functions

CMC in this generation has developed to a multi-functional social networking interface such as Facebook, allowing the users to interact with a group of people in a number of ways apart from chatting. The increase of the interaction methods in Facebook can help to move the CMC to the face-to-face end by sharing visual and audio information. As for coordinating with the change of the communication mode, the users tend to shift their conversation to the

face-to-face end as well. As a result, the use of emoticons in today's Facebook communication is not only due to the compensation of missing meaning of the message but aims to deliver a more accurate and finer non-literal meaning that is expressed in the spoken F2F communication. One of the possible ways is to decorate the emotions with English letters to show a more delicate facial expression.

4.2.2. Socio-technical affordances

The statistics show that more and more people prefer Facebook to do online work, and of course, communication is one of the indispensable activities. Thus, the close relationship between mankind and technology has created a system, namely the *socio-technical system* (Baxter & Sommerville, 2011) which people and technology are the constituents.

4.2.2.1. Factors caused by Facebook users

All these strategies just fight against the constraints of time-consuming, which can be the main reason leading to many abbreviations and contractions. On contrary, some Facebook users do not care about the time saving on this site, they pay more attention to what creative ways of expression, aiming to show their meaningful message as well as to contain private communicative styles.

4.2.2.2. Factors caused by technology

Some factors are mentioned here related to technical infrastructure, technological devices, and outstanding Facebook functions.

Chapter Five

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.1. CONCLUSION

First, we find that developed linguistic features Bodomo figured out before still retain and appear in this study with high occurrences. It is believed that these forms have been existing popularly since they were created on this communication channel. It can be inferred there are some new linguistic forms gradually created in new CMC and becomes familiar in that environment.

Second, the research will be a synthetic, complementary and updated source for previous studies, simultaneously a contrastive foundation for future research in online communication. As a result, the author has looked for all linguistic characteristics according to Crystal's classification and grouped them into four trends of styles, grammar, pragmatics, and vocabulary. They are four groups of features which carry many creative traces by Facebookers at this moment.

Third, reasons cause these new trends of using English on Facebook currently consist of two groups of factors. Firstly, Facebookers are affected by some habits of F2F communication. They want to employ all features of written language along with integrated technological functions to show their minds in a comprehensive way including both linguistic and non-linguistic forms. Secondly, the socio-technical theory can be used to explain the mutual relationship between society and technology.

5.2. IMPLICATION

As for researchers, the results of this research will be an important basic which some future studies in the same field should rely on and contrast with. In addition, it is necessary to extensively investigate whether innovative features would be applied to other means of communication.

As for English learning and teaching, nowadays the self-study of English learners takes place more and more on social networks. Thus, during the online interaction, learners have to proactively make choices of suitable contents as well as surely master a standard language system. About the role of language teachers, they should be aware of factors leading to using of diversified language on this communicative channel where their students spend much time on.

5.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Firstly, no matter how much effort was put into this research, it seems difficult to identify all linguistic features used in American universities' Facebook posts and comments. Secondly, analysis of posts and comments in 2016 from five chosen universities just reflect a part of communication on American Facebook sites, other periods of time may show different language use. Finally, the study can only explore some characteristics of English use in terms of stylistics, grammar, pragmatics, and vocabulary.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

- An investigation into ways of using English in Facebook pages of research groups.

- An investigation into ways of using English in Facebook pages of business groups.