A Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Netspeak Maxim for English Academic Community

A Thesis

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Abstract

The present study is a socio-pragmatics analysis that attempts to verify the possibility of the presence of the adapted Model of Crystal (2006) & Thurlow and Brown (2003) principles of sociality (Brevity & Speed) in social networking pages within the comments from the websites of English academic institutions on Facebook. The study aims to investigate whether there is a phenomenon of breaking Netspeak maxims within academic institutions (Britain, American, Australia, and Canadian), its effects, and which factor has a great role in the breach of Crystal Maxims in Netspeak and principles of sociality. This study contains six maxims, these maxims are;

1- No trolling: Comments with false information to anger other users can only succeed when others are not aware

2- No lurking : The practice of reading posts without contributing anything to the discussion, especially if the discussion deals with personal issues

3- No spamming: The unwanted messages of excessive size, whether by sending emails or by posting them in comments on social networking sites.

4- No spoofing: Sending an odd message or comment in order to irritate others on the Web.

5- No flaming : An aggressive comments, target to a particular person or group, which tends to be in content and purpose basically to a particular person who gets the message

6- Brevity and Speed: While the maxim of brevity and speed manifests itself in (a) the abbreviation of lexical items (including letter-number homophones) and (b) the minimal use of capitalization, punctuation.

Two types of procedures are adopted to achieve the objectives of the thesis: Theoretical and practical sides. The theoretical procedures consist of presenting a theoretical framework for the adapted model, the concept of the Netspeak, its characteristics, and previous social communication theories. Whereas the practical ones consist of applying the model on a selected data which consists of (1) 2 publications from the University of Oxford (2) 2 Publications from Harvard University (3) 2 Publications from Sydney University, Australia (4) 2 Publications from the University of Alberta, Canada, beside analyzing and getting results.

The findings of the analysis have proved that the adapted model is applicable in the academic societies. Furthermore, it shows that the breach in the virtual environment was the result of the real environment since there is an exception of the coefficient that causes a lot of violations to be appeared in the academic societies. The study ends with a number of recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Social media plays an important role in establishing a new societal culture based on modern technology and the tremendous progress that it has made in the field of communication between people. So that , it has become an important player not only in the lives of individuals but also in nations, there is no doubt that communication methods and their patterns are an important part of the culture of any society.

The problem with this type of communication is the absence of clear norms of Netspeak communication (Pragmatic and Sociality) that control the interaction among participants. This type of communication is, at best, a hybrid version of spoken and written communication. The maxims of communication on the previous mediums of language (speech and writing) have already been established., so this is the first study of its type in the social media study and it is a special one because first; it is the only and the first study that is concerning all the maxims of Crystal and not specifying certain maxim. Second ; it is taken two deciplines, pragmatics and sociology and this make it more comprehensive and universal in copmarison with other previous studies that concern only one or two maxims of Crystal.

1.2 Research Questions

1- To what extent The Modified Model applied across the electronic environment in academic societies.

2- Are there any maxims that can control Netspeak use among the members of academic society.

3- To what extent are those maxims (if any) followed by the members of academic society.

4- To what extent does the culture effect the use of those maxims by the members of academic society.

1.3   The Hypotheses

It hypothesizes that:

1. Like speaking and writing, there must be some existing maxims that control the use of Netspeak by the members of academic society.

2. There must be some balance in applying the maxims by the academic society users of Netspeak.

3. Culture can affect the application of those maxims by the academic society users of Netspeak.

1.4. Aims of the Study

 The study aims at:

1. Investigating the maxims that controls Netspeak.
2. Finding out the variance in the use of Netspeak maxims among the members of the academic society.

1.4 The Procedures

To achieve the aims of the study and verify its hypotheses, the following steps are followed:

1. Presenting a theoretical framework of Netspeak, Features of Netspeak, previous theories of communicating, study community, socio-cultural effects.

2. Adapting a model for analysis. Then selecting data for the purpose of analysis and analyzing them in the light of the selected model.

3. Drawing conclusions, and stating recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

1.6 The Scope

The current study is limited to:

1. A synchronic Netspeak communication.
2. Facebook social media platform.
3. The academic society from the united states, Britain, Canada and Australia.
4. The Modified model of the current study which is based on Crystal Model (2001, 2006) and Thurlow and Brown (2003).

1.7 Significance of the study

1. It is hoped that the current study will be valuable to the research efforts that investigate the virtual communication on social media and socio-pragmatic shift that this virtual existence implies.

2. The current study is hoped to be a contribution understanding computer-mediated communication (CMC) mechanisms and development.

3- This study will be useful for everyone that is interested in social media and Netspeak maxims in order to be an active user of the internet and be restricted with these rules.