

MALAYSIAN ENGLISH BLOGS: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC) has become an essential tool for computer literate individuals who communicate online. As part of the CMC tree branch, the blogs enable an individual to communicate in an interactive manner and to create a virtual link. This study investigates the content and form of blogs posted by Malaysian teenagers between the ages of 15 to 25 years old. The primary purpose is to analyze the various features of thirty (30) blog texts downloaded from Blogspot. Since blogging employs both written and oral modes of mediated interaction, three categories, namely, interactional structure, lexical analysis and semiotics are used in analyzing the corpus. The findings show that in terms of interactional structure, Indian bloggers and Malay bloggers often greet their readers while Chinese only show gratitude in leave takings. Although lexical features such as code switching and code mixing are common in the corpus, Chinese and Malay bloggers tend to use code mixing more than the Indian bloggers. As regards semiotics such as emoticons, photographs, font styles, sizes and colors, all bloggers make use of these features, but Malay and Chinese bloggers display more photographs and other images while Indian bloggers are more into words. Moreover, Malay bloggers often use abbreviations of Malay expressions and this is also shown when they write in English. All these features contribute to multimodality, which conveys the bloggers' messages to their readers as well as demonstrates the communicative intent of their bloggers' linguistic codes through code switching and that semiotics offers new forms of self expression as bloggers combine words and images in designing their homepages and composing their blogs.