

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION IN BLOGS OF MALAYSIAN TEENAGERS

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## ABSTRACT

In this era of advanced technology and the Internet, blogs has become one of the fastest growing genres in Computer Mediated-Communication (CMC). Through blogs, blog writers, (often refer as 'bloggers') cultivate conversations, build connections, and start relationships. This particular genre is immensely popular nowadays and it has become one of the favorable forms of communication among Malaysians ranging from different ages. The Internet is a vast space where one can simply create an imaginary persona. Therefore, a blogger's identity is often difficult to determine. This study examines the identity construction in blogs of Malaysian teenagers. The corpus was analyzed by focusing on the linguistic and non-linguistic features on blogs. There were 10 (ten) participants, 5 (five) males and 5 (five) females, between the age of 13 and 25 who took part in the study. The non-linguistic features were divided into 5 (five) areas: the design of the blog, photographs attached in the blogs, the sub-genre of the blogs, emoticons, and capitalization. For the linguistic features, the analysis was narrowed down to 7 (seven) areas: the usage of greetings, leave takings, expressions, code-mixing, disclosure of personal information (profile), abbreviations and first post of the blog. The findings of the linguistic features show that most of bloggers did use greetings in their blogs. Apart from that, bloggers often shared and learned the common expressions used in blogs. This might be because all of these bloggers chosen in this research were all Malaysians; hence they share the common schemata, semantics, syntax, views and beliefs. In terms of the non-linguistic features such as emoticons, it was found that female bloggers show a higher tendency to use emoticons as compared to male bloggers. Bloggers even code-mix by incorporating other languages into their blogs to create a distinction between other bloggers. In conclusion, the researcher found different and shared characteristics among these bloggers. These findings are the essential features as it allows the bloggers to construct their identities as a form of expression.