Level of Acceptance of Filipino Facebook Users on the Contrivance of Ludic Language

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Abstract

This study identified the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language. Furthermore, this study aimed to determine if there are differences on their level of acceptance when grouped according to age, gender and nature of work.

Based on the findings, facebook users generally favor the contrivance of ludic language not so strongly. Results also unfold that there are differences in the level of their acceptance that ages 11-14 favor strongly, ages 15-19 favor not so strongly, ages 20-35 oppose strongly, and ages 36 and above oppose not so strongly; male favor not so strongly and female oppose strongly; and, facebook users whose job is related to arts favor strongly, those in education oppose strongly, those in management favor not so strongly, those in science fields oppose not so strongly, and students favor strongly.

These findings are seen to have pedagogical significance for ESL or EFL teachers; language play may provide insight into learners' diverse competencies, may encourage frolic output, and may be a viable tool for encouraging language learning. The researcher further recommends the need of research on language play to assess its efficacy as a pedagogical technique and to determine its implications in the field of second language learning. Further research on the use of social networking sites as a medium of communication may be conducted to assess the depth of media literacy among the identified respondents, for the need of literacy in using media for any purpose is, at this time, fundamental.

Keywords: acceptance level, Filipino Facebook users, contrivance of ludicity of language

Introduction

Language acquisition has been an issue when it comes to understanding the language itself. Many linguists as well as researchers provided different or even contrasting theories or assumptions as to how they viewed language, either as a source language or target language. Some of them claimed that either nature or nurture is the most important aspect to consider in language learning (Lanir, 2011). There are also some who affirmed that children are born with a kind of "universal grammar," (Mahoney), and others emphasized that adults play a major role in a child's language acquisition process (Crystal, 2009). Different views as they are, linguists must all agree that language acquisition or language learning in other context is a complex process, governed by numerous changes and further studies.

Recently, everyone enjoys playing with language or simply responding to language play. People tend to play language when they "manipulate" it as a source of enjoyment, either for themselves or for the benefit of others. The word "manipulate" is used to simply mean literally taking some linguistic features of the language, such as a group of sounds, a series of letters, a

part of word, a word, a phrase, or even a sentence to some extent, to make things appear beyond their linguistic conformity, thus breaking or bending the rules of language.

This scenario of language play is best termed as "ludic language". Taking it into account, ludic language is also considered by many researchers as metalanguage, which is simply coined as using language to talk about language itself (Fries, 1996). In addition, ludic is one of the general functions of language, which was further exemplified by U.P. Robinson in terms of rhyming, making up nonsense words, trying out possibilities of language as it is being learned and cracking jokes (Robinson, 2003). To illustrate, people have been creating expressions according to similar sounds over the years. For example, the expression "See you later" merely indicates that the conversation is put to an end, but a group of people added humor to the expression by saying "alligator" at the end of it, making the expression sound "See you later, alligator." "Alligator" in this case was made as the final sound of "later" is synonymous to that of "alligator's" final sound. The interjection "OMG" is originally transcribed as "Oh My God", but some people made possibilities of saying "Oh my gosh", which now is getting common among speakers of the language.

This paper considers the expressions "amalayer", "major major" and "jejemon," which have been the talk of umpteen websites, social networking sites and the media for a time. "Amalayer" presumably stands for "I'm a liar", which is considered a buzzword among many people who have watched and listened to the speech of a student saying "I'm a liar" in the viral video of her berating a lady guard at one light rail transit station. "Major major" came into view after the country's representative for Miss Universe pageant in 2010 failed to get the crown, which was according to the event experts and spectators, because of her answer to one of the judges' question that contained the expression. "Jejemon" appeared even before these two expressions patented. It is a term coined by combining the text messaging term for laughter and the suffix used in a popular cartoon of trainable monsters, which later caused several connotations. Fun as they sound now, they create an issue on communicative competence, specifically on sociolinguistic competence. As far as the knowledge of sociocultural rules of language and discourse are concerned, sociolinguistic competence asserts that only in a full context of this kind can judgments be made on the appropriateness of a particular utterance.

Thus, it is the researcher's desire to ravel out the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the emerging ludic language in the contemporary society, specifically its contrivance to the process of language acquisition or language learning in other contextual reference. Further, it is geared to determine the significance of the aforementioned ludicrous language in understanding the social context in which the ludic language is used, the role of the speakers who uttered the aforementioned expressions, the kind of information they conveyed, and the nature and function of the interaction. Hence, this study is brought to light.

Research Design

This paper was patterned from causal comparative or ex-post facto design of research, in which survey questionnaire was used as a method of investigation. It involved collection, presentation and comparison of the obtained data in order to answer the questions concerning the current status of the study. Data were gathered through an online survey checklist on the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language. The obtained data

were presented using frequency counts, ranking and weighted means. In addition, inferential statistics was used in the interpretation of data.

Prior to the conduct of the study, a pilot sampling was conducted through administering the online survey questionnaires to other groups of identified respondents of the same social networking site. Random sampling was used in such a way that only selected respondents were included in the study.
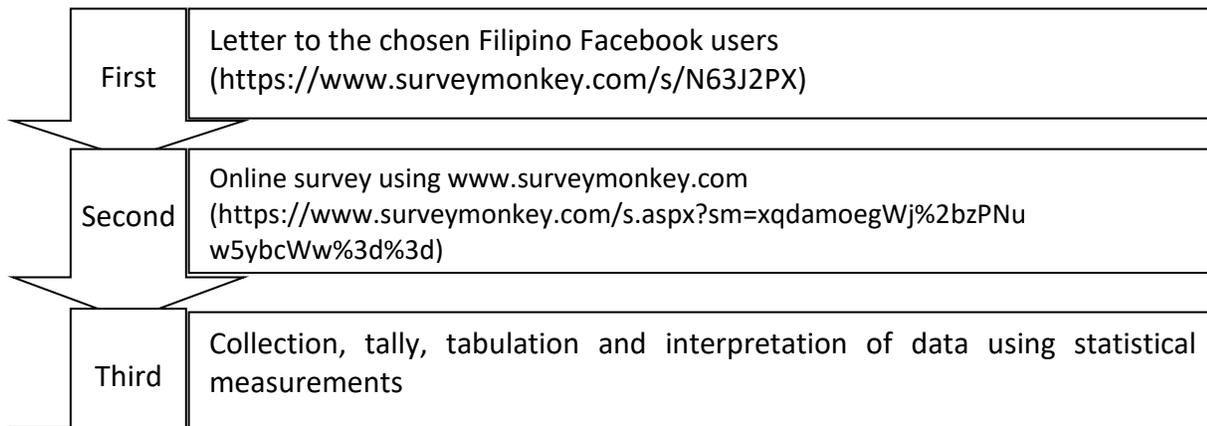
Population and Locale of the Study

This study was conducted online to randomized 80 respondents through the social networking site, facebook. Aside from the researchers' interest in utilizing the site, facebook was chosen as the study site because it is one of the most commonly used site among its million users.

Moreover, facebook language is becoming localized and is currently available in 70 languages accordingly, so the researcher believes that it would help in the conduct of the study. Specifically, the respondents, who are facebook users, already have background information on what a ludic language is.

Data Collection Instruments

An online survey questionnaire-checklist was constructed by the researcher to serve as primary tool for gathering data. It required the profile of the respondents as to their age, gender and occupation. The final part of the questionnaire called for the respondents' assessment on their acceptance level on the contrivance of ludic language.

Data Collection Procedure

First	Letter to the chosen Filipino Facebook users (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N63J2PX)
Second	Online survey using www.surveymonkey.com (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xqdamoegWj%2bzPNu w5ybcWw%3d%3d)
Third	Collection, tally, tabulation and interpretation of data using statistical measurements

Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the respondents were treated statistically. Their responses were tallied and tabulated, thus were subjected to computations such as frequency counts, ranking and weighted means.

To determine the level of acceptance of the Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language, the following criteria for assessment were utilized:

Range		Level of Acceptance
5	-	Favor strongly
4	-	Favor not so strongly
3	-	Oppose strongly
2	-	Oppose not so strongly
1	-	Do not mind at all

After the scores from the respondents' assessment of their acceptance level on ludic language had been tallied and tabulated, computation for weighted mean or the F-test for analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to find out if there are significant differences in the mean levels of acceptance of the Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language when grouped according to their age and occupation.

The ANOVA table (Walpole and Myers, 2003) is:

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F
Treatment (between columns)	k – 1	SSA	$MSA = \frac{SSA}{k-1}$	$F_c = \frac{MSA}{MSE}$
Variance (within columns)	k(n – 1)	SSE	$MSE = \frac{SSE}{k(n-1)}$	
Total	nk – 1	SST		

To determine if there is a significant difference in the level of acceptance of the facebook users, T-test for paired samples was used. T-test is illustrated as:

$$t_c = \frac{\bar{X} - \bar{X}_o}{\sqrt{s^2/n}}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$ – mean of the first group
$\bar{X}_o$ – mean of the second group
sd^2 – standard deviation
n – number of observable samples

Results and Discussion

Level of Acceptance of Filipino Facebook Users on the Contrivance of Ludic Language

The table below shows the data gathered from the facebook users' assessment of their acceptance level on ludic language. Generally, the facebook users favor ludic language not so strongly.

	5	4	3	2	1
Age					
11 – 14	10	4	4	1	1
15 – 19	8	9	3	0	0
20 – 35	2	5	11	2	0
36 - above	1	1	8	9	1
Gender					
Male	10	12	9	9	0
Female	9	9	11	9	2
Occupation					
Arts	8	2	2	4	0
Education	0	6	8	2	0
Management	0	8	4	2	2
Science	2	4	4	6	0
Student	10	6	0	0	0

Difference in the Level of Acceptance of Filipino Facebook Users When Grouped According to Age

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F
Treatment (between columns)	4	217.50	54.38	$F_c = 2.61*$
Variance (within columns)	15	312.50	20.83	
Total	19	530		

Results reveal the differences in the level of acceptance of the facebook users on ludic language that ages 11-14 favor strongly, ages 15-19 favor not so strongly, ages 20-35 oppose strongly, and ages 36 and above oppose not so strongly. The table above shows that at 5% level of significance, $F\_c = 2.61$ is not greater than $F4,15 = 3.06$, thus, there is a difference in the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language when grouped according to their age.

Difference in the Level of Acceptance of Filipino Facebook Users When Grouped According to Gender

Results unfold the difference in the level of acceptance of the Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language that male favor not so strongly and female oppose strongly. The table above unveils that at 5% level of significance, t_c = 1.48 is not greater than tc 0.05, 8 = 1.86, thus, there is a difference in the level of acceptance of facebook users on ludic language when grouped according to their gender.

Treatment	Computation	Computed T
$t_c = \dfrac{\bar{x}-\bar{x}_0}{\sqrt{s^2/n}}$	$t_c = \dfrac{9.8-8}{\sqrt{14.89/10}}$ $= \dfrac{1.8}{1.22}$ $= 1.48$	$t_c = 1.48*$

Difference in the Level of Acceptance of Filipino Facebook Users When Grouped According to Nature of Work

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F
Treatment (between columns)	4	64	16	$F_c = 2.\,29*$
Variance (within columns)	20	140	7	
Total	24	204		

Results unfurl the differences in the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language that users whose job is related in arts, favor strongly, those in education oppose strongly, those in management favor not so strongly, those in science fields oppose not so strongly and students favor strongly. Table 3 presents that at 5% level of significance, F_c = 2. 29 is not greater than F4,20 = 2.87, thus, there is a difference in the level of acceptance of Filipino facebook users on the contrivance of ludic language when grouped according to nature of work.

The respondents extended varied reasons for their level of acceptance on the contrivance of ludic language. To mention, they favor the contrivance of ludic language for the following reasons: it is a matter of pun, an aid to language learning; it is an offshoot of language change or dynamism; in phonological studies, mimicking and applying the sounds of these ludic expressions in daily conversations can be associated to blending and reduction of sounds; and it is somehow an attribute of being gay. On the other hand, ludic language is considered shallow and irrelevant; a tool in labeling one's educational background as inability to comprehend the target language; a diminishing factor of the established image of Filipinos in the Business English Index (BEI), a word closely compared to bullying, and a form of a social fad.

Summary of Findings

Based on the findings, the Filipino facebook users favor the contrivance of ludic language not so strongly.

When grouped according to their age, the Filipino facebook users who are 11-14 years old favor the contrivance of ludic language strongly; those who are 15-19 years old favor not so strongly; those who are 20-35 years old oppose strongly; and those who are 36 and above oppose not so strongly.

Further, when grouped according to their gender, male favor the contrivance of ludic language not so strongly and female oppose strongly.

Furthermore, when grouped according to their nature of work, those whose jobs are related to arts favor the contrivance of ludic language strongly; those in education oppose strongly, those in management favor not so strongly, those in science fields oppose not so strongly and students favor strongly.

The difference in their own assessment of their acceptance level is duly supported by what they think of. The respondents, who favor the contrivance of ludic language, consider it in various ways – pun as learning aid, language dynamism, part of freedom of speech and a way of being gay. In contrast, the respondents who do not favor it think about it as a shallow and irrelevant speech, belittling one's educational background and ability of language use, a roadblock to Filipino's known good reputation in speaking the language, a way of bullying and finally a social fad.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were put together. The Filipino facebook users favor ludic language not so strongly. Also, there are differences in the level of acceptance of facebook users on ludic language when grouped according to their age, gender and occupation. They carry diverse reasons for their stand on the identified issue.

Implications

Although ludic language has become evident in authentic speech in our society, it has received little serious attention in the field of second language acquisition, but it can be studied further. The level of acceptance of out-group on ludic language may not be the same with that of the in-group in the language community.

Belz (2002) conducted a study of 31 English-speaking adult learners of German in which the learners were asked to write a multilingual composition of 300-500 words in German and another language of their choice. Data were triangulated through voluntary interviews, surveys, journal entries, and videotaped discourse. Belz found that language play occurred at phonological, orthographic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic levels of linguistics; learners were able to cleverly combine English and German morphemes for the purposes of humor and creativity, and in one case, a learner blended German and English syntaxes and lexicons, essentially creating sentences that were minimal pairs, their only difference being either the syntax or the lexicon. Additionally, the learners in this study confirmed that their code-switching was based upon deliberate choices, revealing their metalinguistic awareness. Belz concludes that language play does not appear to directly aid acquisition since the learners were

using forms previously acquired, but rather may "represent and figure in the emergence of multi-competence in the learner". Although she acknowledges that playing with language forms may relate to the acquisition of those forms, she overtly relates her results to the development of learners' identities in a second language.

Bell (2005) attempted to link language play to second language acquisition in her study of three non-native speakers of English, but instead discovered connections between play and proficiency. Bell collected data by asking her participants, three women of different linguistic backgrounds and varying levels of proficiency, to audio record their authentic conversations with native speakers of English; she later coded the recordings for all instances of humorous dialogue to find potential correlations with acquisition and triangulated the data by conducting playback interviews with the participants. Bell found that the type of humor or word play employed by learners was contingent upon their levels of proficiency: the least proficient of the learners experimented only with double-voicing, the temporary adoption of a different register or dialect (Tarone, 2000), and using an ironic tone; the learner of intermediate proficiency was able to additionally use references to pop culture in her humor; and the most advanced learner was able to creatively experiment with linguistic forms. Bell also found instances when a humorous sequence of dialogue led to an impromptu vocabulary lesson between the native speaker and the non-native speaker, causing focus on form and noticing. Nevertheless, Bell concludes that her results suggest correlations between language play and proficiency rather than acquisition.

Recommendations

These findings may have pedagogical import for ESL teachers; employing language play in the classroom may provide insight into learners' multi-competencies, may encourage frolic output, and may as well be a viable tool for encouraging language learning, provided that the teachers supervise the students and guide them as to the manipulation of the language.

Further research is needed in the area of language play to assess its efficacy as a pedagogical technique and to determine with certainty its implications in the field of second language acquisition or learning, as used in other references.

Additionally, a research on the use of social networking sites as a medium of language play may be conducted to assess the depth of media literacy among the identified respondents, for the need of literacy to use media for any purpose is, at this time, fundamental.

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