E-behaviors and E-community formation: An investigation on Vietnamese EFL students

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Abstract
Online communications have been widely researched in different education contexts during the last two decades. Together with the development of emerging technology, educational applications have received a huge change in e-communication modes, from unidirectional to interactive websites, asynchronous to synchronous exchanges, and stand alone to networked real-time simulations. These have constituted a platform for the development of online social life and communities. To take advantage of this environment for educational benefits, this study particularly attempts to investigate the habitual behaviors of undergraduates in Vietnam who study English as a Foreign Language when they interact with a Moodle site during an English course. It specifically focuses on students’ expectations and awareness of online communication, their preferences related to instant messenger and blogging, and influential impacts on the formation of the online communities. Qualitative data from individual interviews and document analyses have shown that students prefer to use synchronous communication modes and look for instant responses regardless of how often they go online. In addition, the shaping of the online educational communities needs a lot of support, reinforcement, and nurture from the facilitators and real life connections. Finally, the discussion suggests a possible analytical framework for online learning community investigation.

References


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