

Language and Online Identity among Saudi Youth: A Case Study of Saudi Students at One University in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate how students attending a public university in Saudi Arabia construct their online identities through translanguaging and examine the impact of online language practices on their identity formation. It employs an ethnographic research design and adopts qualitative data collection and analysis. The results demonstrated how the participants constructed distinct identities by utilising a variety of language repertoires as well as other web-based semiotic resources like emojis. Emojis, Standard Arabic, English, code-switching between Arabic and English, and regional variety are among these repertoires. According to one of the main findings, the participant depended more on the regional variety than any other variety. Another finding is that English is rarely used, and standard Arabic is only used for posts associated with religion. Additionally, the participant employed emojis in ways and contexts that differed from those reported in earlier research.