

The Linguascope of English Social Media and the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster: The Sociolinguistic and Educational Implications in the Context of Japanese EFL University Students

This study conducts a critical discourse analysis on English language Western social media such as Facebook through the “eyes of Japanese EFL university students”, focusing on thematic issues specifically related to the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan. The main research participants are Japanese EFL students studying at the University of Aizu, Fukushima, Japan, who all have personally experienced the disaster in 2011. The study shows three main implications:

1. The overall linguistic practices of social media participants should be better understood through the notion of “linguascope” because of their recontextualization of varied transnational flows of linguistic, cultural and semiotic resources circulating across the current globalization.
2. Understanding locally challenging yet globally controversial issues such as the Fukushima nuclear disaster through “the linguascope of social media” may open up the ways where EFL students in Japan negotiate their linguistic and cultural differences and similarities through critical eyes and open-mindedness in order to become “socio-culturally conscious” globally mobile citizens.
3. As opposed to anecdotal and negative ideologies mainly circulating across the Western social media, the study offers a better real-life understanding of the Fukushima nuclear disaster from the perspectives of local residents, while seeking to contribute to the Fukushima revitalization initiatives and programs in Japan.



Dr. Sender Dovchin is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Language Research, The University of Aizu, Japan. She completed her PhD and MA degrees in language education at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. Her research pragmatically contributes to the second language education of young generation living in the Asian peripheral contexts, providing a pedagogical view to accommodate the multiple co-existences of linguistic diversity in a globalized world. She has authored articles in most prestigious international peer-reviewed journals, such as *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication*, *World Englishes*, *Asian Englishes*, *English Today*, *International Journal of Multilingual Research*, *Translanguaging and Translation in Multilingual Contexts* and *Inner Asia*.

Her first research monograph co-authored with Alastair Pennycook and Shaila Sultana, “*Popular Culture, Voice and Linguistic Diversity: Young Adults On- and Offline*” (Language and Globalization Series: Palgrave-Macmillan) was published in

August 2017. Dr. Dovchin has recently been awarded one of the most competitive Japanese research grants - KAKENHI - by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science between 2017-2020. Her Kakenhi research topic is: “*Integrating English language based Western social media in the EFL classrooms in Japanese universities*”.

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UBC Institute of Asian Research Room 351
(C.K. Choi Building, 1855 West Mall)