

Examination and analysis of posts and publication materials on the Pisay-Ilocos Facebook page: Basis for a suggested guideline for information dissemination

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Abstract

In today's era, the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus (PSHS-IRC) heavily relies on social media platforms for communication and information sharing among teachers and students. Thus, the objective of this research is to scrutinize the languages, themes, and content utilized across PSHS-IRC's social media platforms, analyze the rationale behind the language preferences of administrators and content creators, and offer suggestions for improving information dissemination. Utilizing content analysis techniques, this study reveals that a significant portion of posts on PSHS-IRC's official Facebook page pertains to official announcements. Moreover, 84.3% of the language used in these Facebook posts is English, with 2.5% in Filipino. To discern the motive behind this preference for English, surveys were conducted, utilizing snowball sampling with site administrators and content creators. The findings indicate that English is favored due to its status as a universal language and because the primary target audience, comprising teachers and students, predominantly comprehends English. Considering these findings, to enhance information dissemination, it is recommended to create and publish three versions of Facebook posts, each containing translations in English, Filipino, and Ilokano. This approach ensures equitable utilization of all three languages for sharing information. Consequently, this study concludes that, in the context of the "new normal," English serves as the medium for communication and information dissemination across PSHS-IRC's various social media platforms. However, it is advisable to subject posts published before the advent of the "new normal" to a similar analysis for comprehensive insight.

Keywords: language, FB page, posts, information dissemination, social media

Examination and analysis of posts and publication materials on the Pisay-Ilocos Facebook page: Basis for a suggested guideline for information dissemination

1. Introduction

In the world of social media, the English language is the most widely used by people. According to statistics, English comprises 25.9% of the overall languages used on the internet (Johnson, 2021). Based on data collected by Kemp (2021) in January, the Philippines once again ranked as the largest consumer of social media globally and had the highest internet usage. However, it is perplexing that despite the long history of Filipinos using the internet and social media, the use of the Filipino language is relatively small. Some of the most prominent social media platforms on the internet include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Reddit, among others. In Guiang's research (n.d.), an attempt was made to understand why Filipinos prefer using English as a means of communication on Reddit, an online forum. The study revealed that Filipinos consider English as the lingua franca of the internet, and they also prefer that foreigners understand the content of their forums. Furthermore, the research observed that the language used in the topic of the forum is the same language used in the discussions about it.

Based on statistics, the Philippines ranks sixth among countries with the highest Facebook users, a widely used social media platform in the country. According to the same statistics, English leads as the most used language on Facebook, with over 50% of Facebook users using English as their language, while Filipino users account for only 3.4% (Kemp, 2021). Delos Reyes, De Vera, and Medriano (2018) conducted a study identifying the roles of language in posts on Facebook by middle-aged Filipino ESL learners (Senior Teacher Education Students at Urdaneta City University). The study focused on the psychological aspects of language use and found that language is used more to express the thoughts and emotions of users.

Many studies have been conducted on social media and its relationship with language, but most of them focus on forums and other popular social media sites like Reddit and Twitter, rather than sites like Facebook. Additionally, more attention is given to the psychology of users rather than the actual languages used in communication. The use of social media as a medium for disseminating information in the Philippine Science High School-Ilocos Region Campus has become widespread, and the diversity of languages used in pursuing this objective has been observed. Posts and publication materials can be seen on the official Facebook page of PSHS-IRC, which is managed by site administrators who are teachers and employees of the institution. Because of this, an examination and analysis of the publication materials and posts on the said Facebook page were conducted, focusing on the primary languages used, the reasons for using these languages, the themes of the posts and uploaded publication materials, and providing suggestions that may contribute to the improvement of information dissemination within the institution. This study serves as a valuable resource for site administrators and teachers who create publication materials and posts, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of information dissemination in the institution.

Statement of the Problem - The primary objective of this study is to scrutinize and analyze the posts and publication materials on the Facebook page of the Philippine Science High School-Ilocos Region Campus as a medium for information dissemination. This research also addresses the following specific questions:

- What languages are used in the dissemination of information on the FB page?
- What are the reasons for using the languages in the publication materials on the FB page?
- What are the common themes in the content of the posts and publication materials on the FB page?
- What guidelines can be proposed to improve the publication materials on the FB page?

2. Related Literature and Studies

Medium of Communication - Before the advent of email, text messaging, and social media, there were various mediums of communication. The simplest of these is the human voice, through which messages are conveyed verbally or through speech in front of a group of people. According to Boston University (2018), the medium of communication has evolved from ancient forms of writing to the invention of printing technology in 800 AD, Gutenberg's printing press in 1455, the development of newspapers, radio, television, and eventually the invention of the internet in 1990. Through these advancements, digital communication has become commonplace.

English as a Language in the Philippines - The Philippines is home to more than 120 languages, but only two are recognized as the official languages of the country: Filipino and English. Tagalog, which later became known as Filipino in 1959, was designated as the national language in 1937 by then-President Manuel L. Quezon of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. The 1972 Constitution designated Filipino and English as official languages, with Filipino emerging as the new national language derived from a fusion of languages spoken in the country. Following the People Power Revolution or EDSA Revolution in 1986, Filipino was established as the national language because it served as the national lingua franca. As English is also one of the official languages of the Philippines, the country is recognized as one of the largest English-speaking nations (Cabigon, 2015). English is used in commerce, law, and as the primary language of instruction in education. Many Filipinos have also grown up using English as their second language.

English as the Lingua Franca of the Internet - In the 21st century, English has become the second language, if not the primary language, for many people due to globalization and technology. English has been widely used by most people in communicating with others, especially when they are from different countries, because it is more prevalent worldwide. According to Christiansen's study (2015), their results show that even in the age of the internet and technology, English remains the dominant language. Therefore, English is considered the lingua franca of the internet, and people have become more comfortable and familiar with it compared to their native languages. In the Philippines, English is highly valued in the field of the internet, more so than native languages, and it is studied and given more attention as a result.

3. Methodology

Research Design - This study employed a qualitative research approach, which is crucial in sociological research, especially when it pertains to language (Batan, 2015). The research utilized a descriptive method supplemented by content analysis as the research design. It investigated the content of social media through a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis, examining both the number of posts using different languages and the variations in their themes (Bajar, 2017).

Population and Sampling - Similar to Nilsson's study (2014) related to the medium of communication used on social media, this study used snowball sampling to identify participants. Snowball sampling was appropriate for this research because key participants, such as site administrators, provided information about others involved in creating publication materials. The selected respondents were the creators of publication materials for posts on the Facebook page of PSHS-IRC. Researchers conducted virtual interviews with those who consented to provide information as facilitated by the Facebook page admin.

Research Instrument - The research instrument used in the study was the social media posts for analysis, Google Forms for obtaining permission from respondents and for data collection, and multiple-choice questionnaires. Any evidence gathered will remain confidential and will only be used for the research within the stipulated time, location, and subject. In line with this, the researchers sought permission for data collection through a letter of consent anchored in human rights under Republic Act 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Data Collection and Analysis Methods - Observation of Facebook Posts on PSHS-IRC The researchers visited the school's official pages and communication channels and collected posts that appeared during the

academic year 2020-2021. The collected posts were analyzed using content analysis techniques. The researchers formulated ten (10) survey questions distributed to the respondents. Some of these questions included which social media sites they used and which of these they served as administrators, the languages they used in posts and publication materials, and the reasons for using these languages on each of the mentioned social media sites. The list of teachers at PSHS-IRC who created publication materials was obtained from the Facebook page admin. This method ensured a smoother acquisition of information from the selected participants. Researchers provided a letter to the participants containing the background of the study, research objectives, and a consent form to inform them of the purpose of this research and request their permission. The consent form was embedded in Google Forms. The survey was distributed to participants through a Google Forms link sent to their email or Messenger accounts. Participants were given the option to take the survey at their own pace, taking a few minutes or hours to consider their responses. The responses from the survey were compared and related to each other to generate coherent data. Observations from the Facebook posts of PSHS-IRC were also recorded. The data gathered from respondents' answers in the online interviews were analyzed one by one. Content analysis was used to identify the themes within the content of the posts and categorize them into the appropriate categories identified by the researchers (Bajar, 2017). This method allowed for the identification of the primary reasons behind the frequent use of specific languages in communication and information dissemination. All collected data remained confidential and were solely used as research data. The safety and anonymity of those involved in the study were also ensured.

4. Results and Discussion

In this study, the language used, themes, and content of the PSHS-IRC Facebook page were investigated and observed. Furthermore, the reasons behind the use of this language by site administrators and creators of publication materials at PSHS-IRC were also explored through conducted interviews.

4.1 The language used in the Facebook page

Table 1

Language used in the PSHS-IRC's FB page

Language	Frequency
Filipino	4
Ilocano	2
English	134
Combination of Filipino and English	11
Combination of Ilocano and English	8
Combination of Filipino, English and Ilocano	2
Total	161

Based on Table 1, there were a total of 161 Facebook posts from the academic year 2020-2021. The majority of the posts used the English language, with 134 posts or 84.28% of the total number of posts, followed by Filipino and English with 11 posts or 6.92% of the total number of posts. These findings align with the study conducted by Villareal et al. (2021), where their analysis revealed that English was the most commonly used language in the three major cities of the Philippines: Manila, Cebu, and Davao, with Filipino coming second. This was based on the signage found in these cities. It was found that English predominated because it is a universal language, and it can be seen in various establishments and announcements, as well as for clarity and prohibition. On the other hand, Filipino is used for local communication. Additionally, the high percentage of English in Figure 1 is supported by Guillermo's study (2016), which found that the defended master's theses/dissertations from the years 2000-2009 at the Asian Center and the College of Arts and Letters had more written in English, and some of them did not cite or mention any Filipino works.

4.2 Reasons for Using Language in Information Dissemination

Interviews were also conducted with individuals closely involved with the Facebook page of the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus through a survey. The survey aimed to determine the various reasons

why site administrators and publication material creators of PSHS-IRC use these languages on different social media platforms for information dissemination. According to the responses gathered from the survey, the predominant reason for creating publication material is to provide reminders or information, and the commonly used languages are Filipino, English, and Ilokano.

Frequency of Use. In the interview with the publication material creator, English is most frequently used because they are more comfortable using it. Based on their experience, more people understand the content of publication materials when they are in English, especially among the chosen audience of the Facebook page. This aligns with the research of Olojede, Ebim, and Abioye (2018), which described the commonly used language as the primary medium of communication due to its commonality and understanding by both readers and writers.

Purpose of Posts/Pubmat. Furthermore, the creator also uses Ilokano and Filipino but not as frequently as English because they use them only when the caption is appropriate for the content of the post. One example of this is posts related to "Buwan ng Wika" (Language Month), where Filipino is used because it is the appropriate language. In Ilokano, it is used to promote the Ilokano language and culture. However, the choice of languages for posts is often based on the post's purpose, the language used in the publication material, the chosen audience, and the desired effect. These are consistent with the findings of Barata, Shores, and Alperin (2018), who observed that the language used depends on the post's purpose or the specific social media platform, which may vary and is not the same for all situations or objectives.

Familiarity with Language: According to the interview with the post creator, English, Filipino, and Ilokano are the only languages used because they are the languages they know or are familiar with. According to the site administrator, these are the common languages used on Facebook, so they use these languages in creating posts. This aligns with the results of the study by Lantz-Andersson (2017), which found that one of the main reasons some people use a particular language on social media is because they are familiar and comfortable with it, more so than other languages.

Chosen Audience: According to the post creator of the Facebook page of the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus, the language used significantly affects the effectiveness of information dissemination. The post creator mentioned that English sounds intimidating and elitist, while Filipino can also be challenging to understand, especially for those more accustomed to English. Unfortunately, this can be a problem because the chosen audience comes from various places or provinces. Regardless of which language is chosen for captions or publication materials, some people may not understand these languages. Without careful planning, this can negatively impact the effective dissemination of messages. It can also alter people's perceptions of PSHS-IRC in a negative way if not handled well. This is in line with the study conducted by Pedersen and Kruz (2016), which found that using Facebook for educational purposes or program dissemination offers many benefits because, aside from its worldwide popularity, you can select which specific audience will see the posts. The post creator also expressed that, overall, using English, Filipino, and Ilokano for information dissemination is effective. This is because the majority use Facebook, and therefore, many people can be reached through the posts, especially the chosen audience of the PSHS-IRC Facebook page. Additionally, based on the chosen audience of the PSHS-IRC Facebook page, other languages are not guaranteed to be as effective, apart from the three mentioned, due to the language background of the chosen audience, as most of them primarily speak English, Filipino, or Ilocano.

4.3 Themes of the posts on the PSHS-IRC Facebook page

Reminder. Most of the analyzed posts contain themes of reminders or informative content. For example, there are announcements about events or celebrations at PSHS-IRC. This category has the highest number of posts based on Table 2. Perhaps because Facebook is one of the most frequently used platforms by students, teachers, and parents of PSHS-IRC who follow the school's official Facebook page, most announcements are distributed here as it is easier for those following the page to see them. Based on the research of Lund and Wang (2020), interactions on social media posts differ depending on the type of information being shared. Most posts on Facebook with

related individuals (such as a student's or teacher's success) often have more interactions. In the research of Quadri and Idowu (2016), they analyzed the use of social media by librarians in disseminating information and found that social media posts containing instructions are effective in providing additional knowledge and professionalism.

Table 2

Themes of the posts on the PSHS-IRC Facebook page.

Themes	Frequency
Reminder	69
Instructions	17
Advertisement	11
Entertainment	10
Invitation	10
Greetings	42
Total	159

Greetings. These are the second most common theme in the analyzed posts. This theme accounts for 26.4% of the analyzed posts, with a total of 159 posts, of which 42 fall into this category. This category includes posts that pay tribute to students who participate in competitions and former students who have achieved remarkable feats. It also includes greetings on significant days such as the new year and posts offering condolences for those who have passed away. Based on the research by Dumpit and Fernandez (2017) mentioned in the previous "Entertainment" theme, posts containing greetings can energize social media page followers, even if the act of greeting was not the primary intention of the post or reading. This could be one of the reasons why greetings are included in the content being disseminated.

Instructions. The theme instructions are third most common theme in the analyzed posts. Under this theme, posts include instructions for various processes, such as application registration, participation in webinars, and registration for events like the 19th Foundation Day of PSHS-IRC. These instructions are for all followers of PSHS-IRC, including students, teachers, and people outside the school. Utz and Breuer (2016) discussed the importance of using social media to disseminate instructions: due to the model of spreading information on social media, there is a higher reported likelihood of benefits in terms of gaining additional knowledge and professionalism.

Advertisements. The theme of advertisements is the fourth most common theme, with 11 out of 159 or 6.9% of the total number of Facebook posts selected. These advertisements may promote the school, its employees, programs, or projects of PSHS-IRC students. Often, these advertisements are not only for school students but also for other people outside the school. Advertisements are included in the types of information and content discussed by Kumpel, Karnowski, and Keyling (2015) as one that dictates the type of news shared on social media. This supports the finding that advertisements are a common theme.

Entertainment. A small number of the analyzed posts contain themes of entertainment or simply serve as amusement for the audience. This includes textual trivia, amusing graphics, and parody videos. The effectiveness of these entertainment elements is evident in the research of Dumpit and Fernandez (2017), where the presence of entertaining content that provides amusement to social media page followers stimulates more use and support. Even though entertainment may not be the primary intention behind posting, it still affects the broader use of social media. This could be the reason why entertaining content is included in the information being disseminated.

Invitations. Under this theme are posts that invite or encourage readers to take action. This category has one of the lowest numbers of posts according to Table 2. Within this category, there are five posts inviting readers to the Recognition Rites/Commencement Exercises of the school. There are also invitations to watch virtual musicals and seminars on topics related to nature and nutrition. Since one Facebook post can potentially reach a large number of people, the school uses it to save time and quickly disseminate invitations to students and parents. According to the research by Pedersen and Kurz (2016), there are many benefits to using Facebook for education or program dissemination because it is popular worldwide, and specific audiences can be targeted through posts.

4.4 Suggestions for Improving Information Dissemination

Based on the research findings and survey responses, English is the dominant language used in posts on the PSHS-IRC Facebook page. Therefore, it is suggested to diversify the languages used in publication materials. The creator of the publication materials emphasized the need for continued efforts in the equitable use of the three languages in posts. Additionally, it may be beneficial to create different versions of Facebook posts translated into Filipino and Ilokano to make it easier for the local audience, who may be more comfortable with these languages, to understand. Through the more detailed suggestions below, information can also reach a wider audience in the community, helping to promote Filipino and Ilokano as formal communication mediums: develop various versions of a publication material for each of the three mentioned languages with the assistance of individuals knowledgeable in these languages at PSHS-IRC; include captions in posts that are also translated into English, Filipino, Ilokano, and potentially Pangasinan's based on a broader community survey regarding minority languages used since some of the scholars locale is in Pangasinan; collaborate with other organizations or pages that aim to promote the use of different languages, especially those focusing on regional aspects, to enhance the quality of translation; and implement these suggested methods on various social media platforms such as email, Instagram, and others to further enhance information dissemination.

Implications - The involvement of language in communication is of utmost importance. It is essential to consider a language that is easily understood by the target audience. Having a systematic and orderly flow of communication makes it easier to present ideas, opinions, and thoughts to one another. The study greatly contributes to improving and organizing the posts and publication materials on the PSHS-IRC Facebook page, encouraging more readers to engage with them. It also serves as motivation for readers when they understand the language used in the posts and publication materials. It is also beneficial to extend the use of languages spoken by students and employees. The students at PSHS-IRC come from diverse backgrounds, each with their own regional languages, so it is important to consider the use of these languages to make them feel included in the institution where they belong.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has successfully identified and analyzed the medium of communication and information dissemination on various social media platforms during the new normal at the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus. Among the aspects identified and analyzed were the languages used, themes, and content of the PSHS-IRC social media sites. Also included were the reasons behind the language choices of site administrators and creators of PSHS-IRC publication materials. Based on the findings of this study, the following specific conclusions have been drawn: English is the commonly used language in the Facebook posts of the official page of the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus. Site administrators are more comfortable using this language, especially since their primary audience consists of teachers and students at PSHS-IRC who understand English; in terms of themes, reminders (paalala) emerged as the most common type of content in the Facebook posts of the official page of the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus. It was found to be the most effective way of disseminating information due to its formality and directness; and to enhance information dissemination on the Facebook page of the Philippine Science High School - Ilocos Region Campus, it is suggested to create three versions of Facebook posts translated into English, Filipino, and Ilokano to ensure equitable use of these languages in conveying information.

Recommendations - Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations can be considered: further research should delve deeper into including posts from previous years to compare the methods and language of information dissemination on the PSHS-IRC Facebook page. This will help identify any evolving trends in themes compared to those identified in this study against themes prevalent in past posts; extend the research to encompass the languages used for information dissemination on PSHS-IRC across other social media platforms such as email, Messenger, and others. This will allow for the identification and comparison of observed differences in methods, languages, and themes prevalent on different platforms; incorporate the

perspectives of students, teachers, and other stakeholders at PSHS-IRC regarding the methods of information dissemination in the research. This will provide a better understanding of its shortcomings and gather insights into ways to improve it for better service to the community; and include translated versions of content into languages other than English in the posts to reach a wider local audience. Encourage a focus on considering community members who are not proficient in English and recognize these languages as formal communication mediums.

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