

An Experimental Study of Online Peer-to-Peer Language Learning

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Abstract : Web 2.0 has significantly increased the amount of information available to users not only about firms and their offerings, but also about the activities of other individuals in their networks and markets. It is widely acknowledged that this increased availability of 'social' information, particularly about other individuals, is likely to influence a user's behavior and choices. However, there are very few systematic studies of how such increased information transparency on the behavior of other users in a focal users' network influences a focal users' behavior in the emerging marketplace of online language learning. This study seeks to examine the value and impact of 'social activities' - wherein, a user sees and interacts with the learning activities of her peers - on her language learning efficiency. An online experiment in a peer-to-peer language marketplace was conducted to compare the learning efficiency of users with 'social' information versus users with no 'social' information. The results of this study highlight the impact and importance of 'social' information within the language learning context. The study concludes by exploring how these insights may inspire new developments in online education.

Keywords : e-Learning, language learning marketplace, peer-to-peer, social network

Conference Title : ICCBS 2016 : International Conference on e-Commerce, e-Business and e-Service

Conference Location : Boston, United States

Conference Dates : April 25-26, 2016