

New and old speakers of Low German on Facebook

This paper analyses how speakers of Low German, a regional language used by a decreasing number of speakers mainly in northern Germany, make use of social media. The focus of the analysis is on the social network site Facebook and its interactive potential for individual speakers. The study therefore examines linguistic practices on Facebook, with special emphasis on language choice, bilingual practices and writing in Low German. The findings suggest that social network sites such as Facebook have the potential to provide new mediatised spaces for speakers of a smaller language that can instigate sociolinguistic change. The paper will also discuss how social media platforms such as Facebook could be employed to support the learning and teaching of smaller languages.