Language Exchanges on Facebook: Learners of L2 German and Japanese comment on the usefulness of social media for L2 learning

**What are the incentives of using Facebook to improve L2 German / Japanese learning?**

- "exchanging information with native speakers"
- "learning with visual support"
- "accessing German news"
- "getting to know other learners of German in Japan"
- "learning through interaction"

**What kind of activities / functions of the network are used for this purpose?**

- "reading news"
- "following group interactions"
- "watching life casts"
- "learning colloquial language"
- "maintaining contacts to native speakers"
- "expressing myself in German/Japanese"
- "getting in touch with L2 language and culture"
- "communicating with native speakers"
- "communicating across distances"
- "knowing what’s going on in the lives of friends abroad"

**What difficulties or limitations do learners encounter?**

- "lack of feedback on mistakes"
- "expressing my own opinion"
- "understanding dialect and colloquialism"
- "voicing my own opinion"
- "understanding written language"
- "understanding colloquial language"
- "reading long and difficult posts"
- "inadequate translation tools"

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**Online-Survey**

**regarding the usefulness of Facebook for L2 learning among:**

**Do German and Japanese learners use the network differently regarding L2 learning?**

- According to participants’ comments, the benefits of using Facebook for L2 learning include establishing and maintaining contacts with native speakers and other learners of the target language, accessing target language contents, as well as achieving a deeper understanding of target language and culture.

- Some respondents appreciated the opportunity of getting in touch with nonstandard and colloquial language, while others raised concerns about the formal correctness of the language they encountered on the network. This implies that whether something is perceived as a merit or a difficulty of using Facebook for L2 learning depends on individual preferences and expectations concerning L2 study.

- Since participation in this survey was voluntary, the results may be biased towards learners who are interested in using social media for language learning anyway. Consequently, the findings cannot be used to make general claims about L2 German and Japanese learners overall.

- Based on the findings of this survey L2 practitioners should ask themselves the following questions:
  1. How can I encourage my students to use SNS for improving their L2 skills?
  2. How can my L2 classes take advantage of the skills the learners acquired extramurally by using SNS?