

Chatterbox #10 – Facebook*



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Transcript

- Maura: Hello everyone out there, this is Maura...
- Harp: And Harp, and we're bringing you the **Chatterbox** podcast.
- Maura: Yeah. And this is the kind of podcast where we chat about all different kinds of things, what's happening—especially cultural things. Right, Harp?
- Harp: Exactly! And if you're interested in more information, or if you miss some words that we say, go check out our Lipservice at our website. The website is Culips, C-U-L-I-P-S.com, and in the Lipservice you can find the full transcript, plus Detailed Explanations, and even quizzes.
- Maura: Yes, there's lots of fun stuff and you can see our pictures.
- Harp: Exactly!
- Maura: So in today's Chatterbox, we're going to talk, Harp. What are we going to talk about?
- Harp: The topic is **Facebook**.
- Maura: Oh **Facebook**! It's so **huge** and popular right now.
- Harp: Exactly! So, today we're going to talk about three specific things. The first thing is the popularity of **Facebook**. The second, we're going to talk about a couple of important **terminology** that you need to know for **Facebook**.
- Maura: **Facebook** vocabulary!
- Harp: Exactly! And the third one is going to be **Facebook** at work.
- Maura: Yeah, the **controversy**, where the trouble starts.
- Harp: Exactly! So let's start with the first one. You already said this: **Facebook** is popular.
- Maura: It's so popular. Today, I was talking to a friend about **Facebook** and he actually doesn't have a **Facebook profile page**.

- Harp: No way!
- Maura: Yes. And so it's like that now, if you don't participate in **Facebook**, you're strange and maybe you don't get invited to parties. You're not included.
- Harp: Exactly! It's because sometimes people are using **Facebook** e-mail rather than their Hotmail* or their Gmail* or their Yahoo*. People are using **Facebook** for everything, it seems.
- Maura: Right! They'll use **Facebook** to send each other messages. So, Harp, what exactly is **Facebook**, can you define it?
- Harp: So, **Facebook** is a **social networking website**. You have a **profile** and you can put pictures up, you can invite people to different events, you can join different networks. It's basically a way of keeping in touch with your friends.
- Maura: Right. So, before they had **MySpace***, which was pretty popular, and I know in Japan they have **Mixi***. Do you know any other ones?
- Harp: There's **Bebo***, I think that's in South Korea, and there's more everywhere.
- Maura: Right! **Social networking sites** are everywhere, but **Facebook** is for sure the biggest one in North America—in Europe as well. It's almost everywhere now.
- Harp: Yeah, it seems like it. It has a hundred and fifty million users.
- Maura: Wow.
- Harp: It's **huge**.
- Maura: It's bigger than some countries.
- Harp: It's bigger than Canada, **by a long shot**. So, it's so popular in terms of what you were saying, but I was like your friend, eight months ago I didn't want to join **Facebook**.
- Maura: Really? Why not?
- Harp: I just thought it was a **passing fad**.
- Maura: OK, it was temporary, it wouldn't last very long, but Harp you were so wrong.
- Harp: I love **Facebook**; I check it all the time now.

- Maura: Yeah. It's an easy site to visit because you can see what's happening with your friends, you can see pictures of them, and send each other short messages.
- Harp: Exactly! So, if we move into the **Facebook terminology** or the **Facebook vocabulary**...
- Maura: OK.
- Harp: The first one is the **Facebook news feed**.
- Maura: Yes, the **news feed** is very important when you're using **Facebook**.
- Harp: Yes, so when you sign into **Facebook**, you see the **news feed** and it basically shows the activity that all your friends are doing on **Facebook**.
- Maura: Exactly! So, if one friend communicated with another friend, or made a new friend, or posted photos. Any activity is on **news feed**.
- Harp: Yeah! So, for example, if Maura is going to go to a party this weekend and she accepted an invitation on **Facebook**, then it will show up in my **news feed**.
- Maura: Exactly! Yeah, so the **news feed** really tells you what's happening on **Facebook** with all of your friends. It's right there when you sign in, and it's usually the first thing you see.
- Harp: Exactly!
- Maura: So, related to the **news feed** is the **Facebook status**.
- Harp: Yeah. So, your **status** is basically where... it's usually a short sentence about what you're doing, how you're feeling, really anything.
- Maura: Yeah, it's right on the top of your **profile page**, right beside your name and you can type in whatever you want. A short sentence about, like you said Harp, how you feel, or what you're doing. What was your most recent **status** on **Facebook**?
- Harp: My **Facebook status** right now is that I'm excited because I bought new skates.
- Maura: I see. So right now all your friends know that you bought skates and that you're excited.

- Harp: Exactly! What's your **Facebook status**?
- Maura: Well, I'm one of those people who doesn't update the **status** very often.
- Harp: Oh, you did put some new pictures up. I saw those.
- Maura: Yeah, exactly! So I put new pictures up and **Facebook** told Harp about it.
- Harp: Exactly! So I got to see the new pictures.
- Maura: Now what's this **controversy** you were talking about?
- Harp: So, the **Facebook-at-work controversy**.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: So, basically, companies out there are deciding that it can be unproductive. If you have **Facebook** at work, people check it too often, they don't work enough. So some companies don't allow people to see their **Facebook** at work.
- Maura: At my old job, I wasn't very busy, so luckily I could go on **Facebook** all the time. Yeah, and because there's so many things to do, I used it to entertain myself.
- Harp: There's lots of **groups** you can join. If you're interested, Culips has a **group**!
- Maura: Yeah, go to **Facebook** and search for "Culips" and you'll find us. But don't do it at work!
- Harp: Yes. Do it in your free time at home.
- Maura: Right! We don't want you to get in trouble.
- Harp: Exactly! So I think that's about it.
- Maura: Yeah! And go to the site and check it out for yourself. It is free to join and you can get connected with some old friends.
- Harp: Exactly. So today we discussed **Facebook's** popularity, we also discussed some **Facebook** vocabulary. And then we discussed the **controversy** with **Facebook** at work.

Maura: Yeah. Oh, **Facebook!** Well let's end this episode so we can go check our **Facebook**.

Harp: Exactly, I need to update my **status**.

Maura: And don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, 'cause it's fun.

Harp: It is fun!

Maura: OK, this has been Maura...

Harp: And Harp...

Maura: Bye!

Harp: See you later!

Detailed Explanation

Facebook

To understand **Facebook** you should simply visit the Web site: www.facebook.com. It is free to become a member. The site is fairly easy to navigate and to learn how to use. It could also be a great way to practice English. The site is available in many other languages, too!

Facebook was created by Mark Zuckerberg in 2003. At first it was only for students, but it then expanded to include anyone over the age of 13. Now there is reported to be over 175 million users (Harp says there are 150 million users, but since we recorded this episode the number of users increased!). People generally use it to make contact with friends and to stay in touch (to maintain contact) with old ones.

Huge

Facebook is **huge**! “**Huge**” is another word for “big.” “**Huge**” means “very big.” We can use it just like “big.”

- That is a big sandwich. OR That is a huge sandwich.
- He was so big. OR He was so huge.

We can also use “**huge**” or “big” to mean that something is popular at the moment. So in the way that Harp uses it, she means “popular.”

Here are some examples for you:

- Have you heard that new song by Justin Timberlake? It's **huge** in Europe.
- Wearing converse running shoes is **huge** again.

And as Harp says:

- **Facebook** is **huge** right now.

Terminology

This word is about “terms” or names of things. **Terminology** is a special kind of vocabulary for a specific subject.

You may need to know certain **terminology** for technology or for finance. A specialized area often has vocabulary used by the people who work or study in that field only. In this case, **Facebook** has special **terminology**, vocabulary only used by people who use it, and now that is a lot of people!

Here is a list of some basic **Facebook terminology**:

- **Status** and **status** update
- **Profile page**, **profile picture**
- Photo and photo album
- Application
- Settings
- Message
- The **wall**, to write on someone's **wall**
- To poke
- **News feed**
- Notification, to be notified
- To tag, to be tagged
- Groups

And depending what you want to do on **Facebook**, there is much more.

Profile Page

This is the page that is all about you, the user. Each person who has an account with **Facebook** has a **profile page**.

This is simply a **page** with the **profile picture** of your choice, some information about you (or no information, if you choose) and a **wall**, which is where people can leave comments or short messages to you. On the **wall**, it also gives general updates about what you have been doing on **Facebook**. For example, leaving comments on other people's **walls**. There is also a place for you to change your **status**.

News feed

This is the first page that you see when you sign in to **Facebook**. It looks like a long list of actions. The **news feed** includes information like the **statuses** of friends, videos or pictures that they have posted, when a friend has written a message on another friend's wall, etc.

On the **news feed** page, you can click on many different links to see the action in more detail. For example, you can click on your friend's name and go to their **profile page**.

Status

The **status** is a fast way for people to know what you are doing. Every **status** starts with the name of the person and then a brief message that person creates.

Harp's most recent **status** was: "Harp is excited because she bought new skates." A **status** on **Facebook** is a short and simple sentence about your present situation.

Groups

This is a common word and it has basically the same meaning on **Facebook**. On **Facebook** you can join **groups**. There are pages for all the different groups with information about anything new or upcoming events.

And, yes, Culips has a **group**. On the Culips page people can leave comments about Culips and different episodes. We also tell you when we are having another event (Culips has had three parties for international students, or anyone, in Montreal).

Social Networking Websites

Facebook is the biggest of the **social networking sites**. There are other ones we mentioned. **MySpace** was a really popular site, but **Facebook** is now much more popular. People still use **MySpace**, especially for promoting their music.

Mixi is a popular **social networking site** in Japan, and **Bebo** is a popular site for South Koreans.

By a long shot

This expression is usually used in a negative situation, which means that something is far from another. When one thing is far from another "**by a long shot**," it means that there is a big distance or amount between them.

Harp says that **Facebook** is bigger than Canada by a **long shot**. This means that the number of **Facebook** users is much bigger than the number of people who live in Canada. **Facebook** has 175 million users and the population of Canada is less than 33 million.

Here are some other examples using the expression, "**by a long shot**":

- She hasn't finished the report **by a long shot**.
- They haven't practiced much **by a long shot**.
- We are not finished the song yet, not **by a long shot**.

(In those examples there is a negative that goes with the expression.)

A passing fad

Harp says she thought that **Facebook** was just going to be a **passing fad**. A “**fad**” is a trend, something that is popular at a certain moment, but then it “**passes**” because after some time it is no longer popular. A **fad** usually passes or finished after some time.

It is easy to see examples of **fads** are from past years, by remembering what was popular then, but is not popular now. In the 1980s it was popular to wear ripped jeans. This was a **fad** because now it is not popular. *The Smurfs*, a popular cartoon for kids, was a **fad** in the 1980s, too.

Controversy

Controversy is **trouble**. When there is **controversy** there is debate or arguments about a certain issue, usually done in public.

For example, the decision to make smoking illegal in restaurants and bars is always controversial. Many people support this decision, but many others do not. There is **controversy** when there are two sides debating an argument.

Quiz (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

1. Facebook is so popular right now. It's _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) huge
- b) handy
- c) tiny
- d) hunky-dory

2. What is another word for specialized vocabulary?

- a) numerology
- b) terminology
- c) psychology
- d) theology

3. Which words below are used on Facebook?

- a) status, feed, purpose
- b) profile, status, news feed
- c) news, feed, profile
- d) chat, talk, smile

4. Harp thought Facebook was just a _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) strange website
- b) walk in the park
- c) passing fad
- d) fading pass

5. What is the controversy around Facebook?

- a) people were working on it
- b) no one was using it at work
- c) not enough people were using it at work
- d) too many people are using it at work

6. Facebook has more members than Canada has people by _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) a long shot
- b) a short shot
- c) a shot
- d) a short

7. Does Culips have a Facebook group?

- a) I think so
- b) I am not sure
- c) Maybe
- d) Yes!

Answers: 1.a 2.b 3.b 4.c 5.d 6.a 7.d