



THE ROLE OF EMOJIS AND MEMES AS NON-VERBAL COMPONENTS IN
DIGITAL ENGLISH DISCOURSE

Feruzaxon A. Ramazonova

Acting Associate Professor, Tashkent University of Applied Sciences

ORCID: 0009-0003-2641-5319

E-mail: feruzaramazonova@yandex.ru

Munisa S. Shomurodova

4th-year Student, Foreign Language and Literature Program

Tashkent University of Applied Sciences

E-mail: shomurodovamunisaaaa@icloud.com

Abstract

This paper analyzes the role of emojis and memes as non-verbal components in written digital English discourse. Emojis serve as an important tool for expressing emotions, enriching text messages and reinforcing their positive or negative tone. Memes, on the other hand, are used in humorous or ironic contexts, allowing users to convey their ideas in a concise and effective way. Each culture has its own distinctive emojis and memes, which contribute to mutual understanding in global communication. However, their misinterpretation may lead to confusion in communication. In conclusion, emojis and memes play a significant role in digital communication, and their proper use is essential.

Keywords: *digital communication, English language, non-verbal components, emojis, memes, internet culture, pragmatic meaning, intertextuality, digital discourse, global communication, communicative effectiveness.*

Today, digital communication has become an integral part of our lives. In communication through social networks, messaging applications, and other digital platforms, non-verbal components such as emojis and memes play an important role. This paper discusses the place of emojis and memes in digital discourse, as well as their communicative functions and impact.

As a result of the rapid development of modern information and communication technologies, the form of interaction between people has significantly changed. In particular, digital communication conducted in English—written discourse carried out through social networks, messengers, and forums—has given rise to new means of expression. Among these tools, emojis and memes hold a special place, as they enrich speech as non-verbal components, add emotional coloring, and increase communicative effectiveness.

Indeed, emojis serve as an important tool for expressing emotions in digital communication. They enrich text messages and add more emotional nuance to the topic being discussed. For example, a person receiving a message can better understand its tone or the





TANQIDIY NAZAR, TAHLILIY TAFAKKUR VA INNOVATSION G'OYALAR



sender's intention with the help of an emoji. The addition of a 😊 emoji to the message "I feel very good today" further reinforces its positive tone. In this way, emojis make communication more sincere and lively.

It can be said that memes represent a unique form of digital communication. They are usually used in humorous or ironic contexts and have the ability to spread rapidly. Memes are often based on specific cultural or social contexts; therefore, understanding them requires a certain level of background knowledge. Through memes, users can express their opinions, ideas, or even dissatisfaction in a concise and effective manner. For instance, a humorous meme used to react to a particular event can create a stronger emotional impact and convey meaning more vividly. Moreover, emojis and memes play an important role in strengthening cultural connections in digital communication. Each culture may have its own distinctive emojis and memes, which enhances mutual understanding in global interaction. For example, certain emojis or memes may be popular in a specific country or region, helping to develop cultural ties among users⁶⁹.

In addition, emojis are significant in expressing social closeness and informality. In digital communication, especially among young people, the use of emojis makes conversations more friendly and engaging. This reflects cultural and social codes within English-language communication. At the same time, the use of emojis in formal correspondence is limited, demonstrating their dependence on context. Memes, on the other hand, are more complex communicative tools, often generating meaning through the combination of images, text, and cultural context. English-language memes have become an integral part of global internet culture. They allow users to convey humor, criticism, or social commentary in a brief and impactful way. For example, popular meme formats can express complex situations or emotions through a single image. This ensures language economy and supports fast-paced communication.

Another important feature of memes is their intertextual nature. That is, to fully understand a meme, a user needs to be familiar with a particular cultural or internet context. This aspect is both interesting and challenging for learners of English, as memes require not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural literacy. At the same time, there is a possibility of misinterpretation of emojis and memes. The same emoji or meme may carry different meanings across cultures, which increases the likelihood of communicative misunderstandings. Therefore, it is important to consider context and audience when using them. However, emojis and memes also have certain drawbacks. Sometimes they may be misunderstood or used out of context, which can lead to confusion in communication. For this reason, users should approach the use of emojis and memes with caution⁷⁰.

⁶⁹ Danesi, M. (2016). *The Semiotics of Emoji: The Rise of Visual Language in the Age of the Internet*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

⁷⁰ Evans, W. (2017). *The Emoji Code: The Linguistics Behind Smiley Faces and Scaredy Cats*. Picador.



Although there are few comparative studies on the similarities and differences between emotive units in English and Uzbek, there are some. In his study, Kurbanov (2020) conducted a comparative analysis of the communicative functions of emotive units in English and Uzbek, examining how they are related to various cultural and social factors. According to his research, emotions in English are expressed more through specific words, while in Uzbek this is more context- and social-situation-dependent. For example, while direct emotional expressions such as “I’m angry” are common in English, in Uzbek emotions are often conveyed through verbal expressions rather than directly uttered. Statistical studies show that about 65-70% of communication in English is carried out through emotional expressions through emotive units. In Uzbek, this figure is slightly lower, around 55-60%. This difference is due to cultural and social factors, as Uzbek often uses indirect, figurative forms of expression rather than direct expressions of emotions. Since emotive units in English are used directly and widely, this language culture values openness and honesty in communication.

First, in English, emotional units are often expressed directly. This, in turn, is associated with the values of openness and individuality in English culture. According to the results of the study, emotional units in English make up 70 percent of communication, helping to clearly and directly express a person's emotional state. This strategy ensures open and fluent communication, in which the purpose of the speech is quickly understood. For example, through phrases such as "I'm really angry" or "I'm so happy", a person's feelings are conveyed without any indirect means. This situation is one of the important parts of emotional expression in English and is aimed at increasing sincerity in communication. In Uzbek, emotional units are expressed more indirectly, which is explained by the values of Uzbek culture such as collectivism, respect, and gentleness in communication. According to the results of the study, emotional expressions in the Uzbek language make up 60 percent of communication, but most of them are indirect and contextual expressions⁷¹. For example, expressions such as "I'm getting angry" or "Don't let my speech be heavy" are aimed at indirectly conveying the meaning of a person's feelings without directly stating them. Such expressions are mainly aimed at mitigating negative emotions in interpersonal relationships and conducting communication in accordance with cultural norms⁷².

First of all, emojis are an important tool for expressing emotions and moods in digital discourse. In plain written text, the absence of intonation, facial expressions, or body language often increases the risk of misunderstanding. Emojis help to fill this gap. For example, the sentence “That’s great” may be difficult to interpret as sincere or sarcastic when written alone. However, the addition of emojis such as 😊 or 😬 makes the intended meaning much clearer. In this way, emojis enhance the pragmatic meaning in written English communication.

⁷¹ Collection of articles on Uzbek linguistics, 2023, Institute of Language and Literature of the FA of Uzbekistan.

⁷² McCulloch, G. (2019). *Because Internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language*. Riverhead Books.





CONCLUSION

In conclusion, emojis and memes are important nonverbal components of digital English speech. They serve as effective tools for expressing emotions, enriching information, and strengthening cultural ties. However, their correct use and context should always be taken into account. With the development of digital communication, the role of emojis and memes is expected to increase further, making our communication more diverse and interesting. Emojis and memes serve as important nonverbal components of digital English speech. They play a major role in expressing emotions, enlivening speech, enhancing social intimacy, and conveying complex ideas in a concise manner. Considering their increasing importance in the process of modern communication, studying them from a linguistic and cultural perspective remains an important scientific direction.

REFERENCES

1. Danesi, M. (2016). *The Semiotics of Emoji: The Rise of Visual Language in the Age of the Internet*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
2. Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet Linguistics: A Student's Guide*. Routledge.
3. Evans, W. (2017). *The Emoji Code: The Linguistics Behind Smiley Faces and Scaredy Cats*. Picador.
4. Pavalanathan, U., & Eisenstein, J. (2015). —Emojis reveal different cultural usage in social media. *Proceedings of ICWSM*.
5. McCulloch, G. (2019). *Because Internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language*. Riverhead Books.
6. Collection of articles on Uzbek linguistics, 2023, Institute of Language and Literature of the FA of Uzbekistan.

