# The Dichotomy of Thumbs-Up Emoji in Online Conversations

**John Rey Osben Pelila[1*], Jayson Ace Kigis Abenoja[2], Troy Pangwi Raymundo[3]** (iD)

[1,2,3] Benguet State University, La Trinidad, Philippines
*Corresponding author: johnpelilalpt@gmail.com

## Abstrak

*Emoji memiliki arti standar, namun penafsirannya tidak disepakati secara universal. Kesenjangan ini menjadi jelas ketika menentukan penggunaan emoji jempol yang tepat, mengingat sensitivitas budaya dan kesesuaian kontekstualnya. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau interpretasi positif dan negatif emoji ini dalam percakapan online dan mengidentifikasi solusi untuk mengatasi potensi salah tafsir. Dengan menggunakan tinjauan literatur sistematis (SLR), peneliti menyaring 39 catatan, mempertimbangkannya untuk ditinjau berdasarkan kriteria inklusi-eksklusi seperti artikel teks lengkap yang diterbitkan di jurnal peer-review, ditulis dalam bahasa Inggris, dan diterbitkan antara tahun 2013 dan 2023. Setelah melakukan analisis tematik, terungkap bahwa kesesuaian penggunaan emoji jempol berbeda-beda bergantung pada latar belakang budaya dan sosial, sehingga memengaruhi apakah individu menganggapnya dapat diterima dalam percakapan online. Secara khusus, empat interpretasi positif dari emoji ini adalah digunakan untuk persetujuan dan penerimaan, pujian dan pengakuan, penegasan, dorongan, dan sikap mendukung. Selain itu, ada dua penafsiran negatif yang terungkap: hal ini dapat dianggap menyinggung dan tidak sopan di beberapa budaya dan tidak pantas digunakan selama krisis. Terlepas dari adanya dikotomi emoji jempol ke atas, beberapa solusi muncul untuk mengatasi kesalahpahaman, seperti membatasi penggunaannya dalam hal-hal serius, menggabungkan emoji jempol ke atas dengan elemen lain, dan sebagai gantinya mengirimkan pesan teks. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa meskipun beberapa orang memandang emoji ini secara positif, penafsirannya berbeda-beda berdasarkan latar belakang budaya dan sosial. Oleh karena itu, komunikasi yang efektif bukan semata-mata tentang adaptasi satu pihak terhadap preferensi pihak lain; ini melibatkan penyesuaian timbal balik untuk alur percakapan yang lancar..*

*Kata kunci: Emoji, Komunikasi Online, Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis*

## Abstract

Emojis have standard meanings, but their interpretations are not universally agreed upon. This discrepancy becomes evident when determining the appropriate use of the thumbs-up emoji, considering its cultural sensitivity and contextual appropriateness. Therefore, this study aims to analyze both positive and negative interpretations of this emoji in online conversations and identify solutions to address potential misinterpretations. Employing a systematic literature review (SLR), the researcher screened 39 records, considering them for review based on inclusion-exclusion criteria such as having full-text articles published in peer-reviewed journals, written in English, and published between 2013 and 2023. After conducting a thematic analysis, it was revealed that the appropriateness of using the thumbs-up emoji varies depending on cultural and social backgrounds, influencing whether individuals find it acceptable for online conversations. Specifically, four positive interpretations of this emoji are that it is used for approval and acceptance, commendation and recognition, affirmation, encouragement, and a supportive gesture. Additionally, two negative interpretations were revealed: it can be seen as offensive and disrespectful in some cultures and inappropriate to use during a crisis. Despite this dichotomy of the thumbs-up emoji, some solutions emerged to address misunderstandings, such as restricting its usage in serious matters, combining the thumbs-up emoji with other elements, and sending a text message instead. Therefore, it is concluded that while some view this emoji positively, its interpretation differs based on cultural and social backgrounds. Thus, effective communication is not solely about one party adapting to another's preferences; it involves mutual adjustment for a seamless conversation flow.

**Keywords:** Emoji, Online Communication, Systematic Literature Review

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is characterized by the escalating use of the Internet, which has led to the widespread deployment of digital devices. At the same time, it has surged in popularity and become generally available, making the digital world more accessible for global interaction (Bojkovsky & Pikuliak, 2019; Ferri et al., 2020). It is evident that language plays a crucial role in communication, transitioning from traditional written and spoken forms to a more prevalent online format (Li & Yang, 2018; Muhammad & Nasim, 2023). In virtual communication, the absence of traditional body language poses challenges. It lacks emotional depth, allowing for

quick reactions such as emojis as substitutes for gestures, tone of voice, and facial expressions in written language without the need for thoughtful formulation of words (Globokar, 2018; McLean et al., 2022). The term "emoji" in Japanese literally means 'picture letter'. These symbols, created primarily by software and technology companies and adopted through standardization by the Unicode Consortium, serve as digital expressions representing emotions, concepts, and objects in text-based communication, especially on social media platforms (Ge & Gretzel, 2018; Hanafi et al., 2021; Muhammad & Nasim, 2023). When it was introduced, it played a significant role in enriching digital communication, acting as a shorthand method of expression, and it has proven indispensable in online interactions, aligning with the rapid growth of the internet and electronic communication channels (Li & Yang, 2018; Missirian, 2021).

However, despite their popularity, emojis, particularly graphic ones, have raised concerns about their impact on language and expression (Delobelle & Berendt, 2019; Hardiyanti et al., 2020). Just like the characteristics of a language that is dynamic, the interpretation of the meanings of the emojis becomes ambiguous, especially when interacting with strangers or across different cultures (Muhammad & Nasim, 2023; Sugiyama, 2018). As noted by some authors, factors such as geographical locations, cultural backgrounds, technological exposure, and emoji features all contribute to variations in emoji interpretations (Bai et al., 2019; Maryam et al., 2020). In this case, one emoji needs to be investigated: the thumbs-up emoji. Although it has standardized meanings—such as being the most frequently used emoji across different social media platforms, especially in informal messages, serving various purposes from expressing approval to rating content—its interpretation is not universally agreed upon (Hakami et al., 2022; Schneebeli, 2017). In other words, this is one of the emojis that convey positive or negative sentiments depending on cultural backgrounds and contextual factors (Kousar et al., 2020). Thus, the ambiguity of this particular emoji poses challenges in determining its appropriateness in communication, especially with unfamiliar individuals or in unclear relational contexts. Despite claims that the thumbs-up emoji has various interpretations, fewer studies consolidate these positive or negative interpretations. Additionally, considering the different interpretations, there are fewer studies addressing these misinterpretations (Muhammad & Nasim, 2023; Sampietro, 2019). Therefore, this study aimed to review the available literature on the different interpretations of the thumbs-up emoji in online conversations and identify solutions to address potential misinterpretations.

Through this study, it is possible to draw a line for thumbs-up emoji usage, considering various cultural sensitivities and contextual appropriateness. It could also advocate for the development of netiquette guidelines on the use of this emoji, reminding everyone that not all online conversations can be appropriately responded to with a thumbs-up emoji. The novelty of this study contributes to establishing ethical standards for the use of such non-verbal cues. This study aims to analyze both positive and negative interpretations of this emoji in online conversations and identify solutions to address potential misinterpretations.

## 2. METHODS

In order to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment of the available evidence regarding the thumbs-up emoji, the researcher conducted a systematic literature review. The aim of this design is to review previous research from various sources, guided by pre-defined eligibility criteria (Kysh, 2013; Pelila & Palangyos, 2021). Subsequently, the researcher critically appraised and synthesized these studies with transparency and thoroughness to produce a reliable and comprehensive summary of evidence relevant to the research questions (Moher et al., 2015; Okoli, 2015). The researcher used Google Scholar to search for literature, considering it a widely recognized and accessible academic search engine that provides a comprehensive and diverse collection of scholarly articles, papers, and publications across

various disciplines. An inclusion-exclusion criterion was also employed to screen the data generated from the mentioned database as show in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria used by the Present Study

| Criteria | Inclusion | Exclusion |
|---|---|---|
| Full-Text Article | Only include articles that provide access to the full text. | Exclude articles that are not available in their entirety. |
| Publication Type | Include articles published in peer-reviewed journals | Exclude articles from non-peer-reviewed sources. |
| Language Use | Include articles that are written in English. | Exclude articles written in languages other than English. |
| Year of Publication | Include articles published between 2013 and 2023. | Exclude articles published before 2013. |

As show in Table 1, the researcher included only those from peer-reviewed journals. In addition, only those records with full texts written in the English language were included. Regarding the year of publication, the researcher considered reviewing a 10-year range from 2013 to 2023, and this was deemed appropriate to ensure a sufficiently broad pool of literature.

The researcher then filtered the records using the advanced search feature of Google Scholar, specifying that the records must include the exact phrase 'thumbs up emoji.' As a result, 573 records were generated, excluding 7,217, through an automation tool. Additionally, the year of publication is included as a part of the database automation tool. Applying a 10-year range from 2013 to 2023, 555 records were filtered, thus excluding 18 records. Subsequently, the researcher manually checked the screened records based on the remaining criteria, resulting in 87 records that met the criteria after excluding 468 records. PRISMA flowchart illustrates that 7,790 records were identified when the researcher generated data from the target database is show in Figure 1.
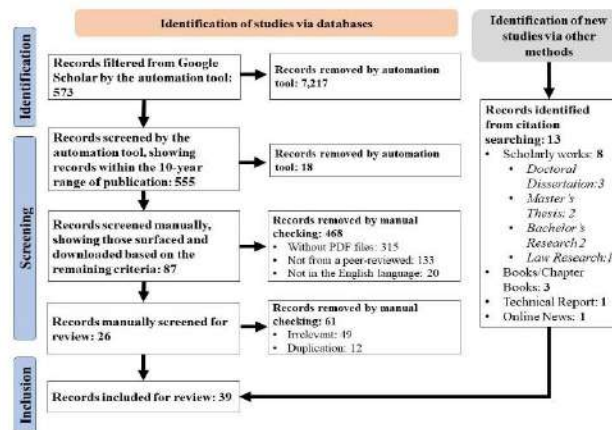


**Figure 1**. PRISMA Flowchart Used in the Present Study

Base on Figure 1, the exclusions were due to the absence of a PDF file (f=315), not being from a peer-reviewed journal or an online thesis/dissertation (f=133), and not being in the English language (f=20). Although the researcher downloaded the files, 61 were removed due to irrelevance (f=49) and duplication (f=12). In total, 26 articles were assessed for the review. However, the researcher reconsidered the importance of some of those initially excluded based on the generated records. Thus, 13 were reconsidered, of which eight (8) are scholarly works, three (3) are online books, one (1) is a technical report, and one (1) is an online news article.

The researcher employed a thematic analysis address the research problem or gap identified in the study. After screening the literature, the next step involved conducting the thematic analysis by identifying codes to discern positive and negative interpretations of the thumbs-up emoji. The analysis identified various codes corresponding to the research questions, which were then organized into four (4) themes showing positive interpretations of thumbs-up emoji. These include a) approval and acceptance, b) commendation and recognition, c) affirmation, and d) encouragement and supportive gesture. On the other hand, the analysis also thematized two (2) negative interpretations of the said emoji, namely, the said emoji is a) offensive and disrespectful in some cultures and it is b) inappropriate to use during a crisis. Additionally, certain codes led to the identification of themes on the solutions for addressing the negative interpretation of the emoji, such as a) restricting usage of the thumbs-up emoji on serious matters, b) combining the thumbs-up emoji with other elements, and c) sending a text message instead.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
**Results**
### *The Positive Interpretations of the Thumbs-Up Emoji in Online Conversations*
The thumbs-up emoji is widely acknowledged as a positive form of communication with a universal positive connotation (Escouflaire, 2020; Jenner, 2022; Park & Lee, 2023). In English-speaking communities and various regions, it is universally perceived as a positive symbol, conveying the following:
Numerous studies consistently highlight the primary interpretation of the thumbs-up emoji as a symbol of approval or acceptance (Al Zidjaly, 2017; Blakenship et al., 2020; Ismael & Kumar, 2019; Vogiatzis et al., 2022). It commonly signifies agreement or mutual understanding in online conversations (Al Zou'bi & Shamma, 2021; Herring & Dainas, 2018; Kahar & Habil, 2021) and indicates approval of something mentioned in a chat. Also, users often use the thumbs-up emoji as a quick means to express approval, conveying a sense of 'okay' (Lewis et al., 2021; Reeves et al., 2022)
Social media users use the thumbs-up emoji to signal agreement with sentiments expressed in comments or commend someone for their actions or achievements. Also, sending a thumbs-up emoji implies recognition and appreciation for the sender's message. For instance, in verbal terms, the thumbs-up emoji is analogous to expressions such as well done, good, nice, perfect, bravo, and others (Day et al., 2021; Lexander & Androutsopoulos, 2023; C. M. Piotrowska, 2022). The thumbs-up emoji is an affirmation, positively asserting a message. It conveys agreement or confirmation without requiring a written response and signals that the sender has acknowledged a message, akin to saying 'I am on it' (Faris et al., 2020; Gullberg, 2016). The thumbs-up emoji is viewed as an act of encouragement, offering support, hope, and confidence. It can convey praise or express the desire for someone to do their best, similar to saying 'Way to go!'. In certain cases, the thumbs-up emoji is used for acknowledgment, accepting what is conveyed in a message, and showing support, akin to saying 'good luck' (Sampietro, 2019; Sun & Yu, 2020).

### *The Negative Interpretations of the Thumbs-Up Emoji in Online Conversations*
The thumbs-up emoji's interpretation is deeply influenced by cultural nuances, leading to diverse meanings across different regions. Indeed, the thumbs-up emoji is often misinterpreted and perceived negatively due to cultural sensitivities and contextual factors (Delobelle & Berendt, 2019; Hakami et al., 2022) in some countries, this emoji is considered offensive and disrespectful, especially in the Middle East (e.g., Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan), some European countries (e.g., Italy, Greece) and even parts of Latin America, West Africa, and Russia, which is perceived as a sign of disrespect or a gestural counterpart to a vulgar insult. In the case of the thumbs-up emoji, it can convey positive or negative sentiments depending

on cultural backgrounds and contextual factors, leading to its ambiguity, which poses challenges in determining their appropriateness in communication, especially with unfamiliar individuals or in unclear relational contexts (Ge & Gretzel, 2018; Sugiyama, 2018). Besides, there is the study of Renold saying that it is sensitive and taboo for some because, in some cultures, the thumbs-up emoji is associated with 'masturbation' and can be linked to girls' social media profiles, constituting a disrespectful act and resulting in unintentional miscommunications.

The use of the thumbs-up emoji during a crisis, like health or death, is not acceptable at all. For instance previous study said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, many saw that the said emoji faced mixed acceptance, wherein some perceived it as playful (Norwanto & Risdianto, 2022). Some said it lacked empathy for those affected by the pandemic. In virtual meetings, such as online classes, students may engage with each other to exchange information, link ideas, and make sense of meanings. However, when a thumbs-up emoji is used, other study attest that it signifies disengagement, creating a sense of disconnect in the virtual space (Kearns et al., 2021). This specific use of the emoji may signal the conclusion of a conversation, indicating acknowledgment without further engagement, particularly in casual communications (Park & Lee, 2023; I. Piotrowska et al., 2022).

### *Solutions to Address Potential Negative Interpretations of the Thumbs-Up Emoji*

Certain concerns have been raised regarding potential misinterpretations of the thumbs-up emoji, particularly among recipients. Authors suggest various approaches to address these concerns, primarily focusing on senders. Avoid reacting with thumbs-up emojis to serious stories or conversations. Previous study propose the simplest solution to prevent misinterpretations: refrain from using the thumbs-up emoji altogether or substitute it with other emojis (Griggio et al., 2019). In the case of Facebook Messenger, while this emoji is the default, users can customize their emojis. It is advised not to employ the thumbs-up emoji in contexts such as the COVID-19 pandemic or police reports, as it may lead to miscommunication.

In order to convey a more nuanced message, combine the thumbs-up emoji with other emojis, words, or phrases. This approach is considered an effective experimental construction that enhances the sender's expression. For example, pairing a thumbs-up emoji with emojis like a blowing kiss, clapping hands, or words such as 'okay,' 'nice,' 'good job,' etc., can clarify the sender's intent and prevent misunderstandings (Alharbi & Mahzari, 2023; Lexander & Androutsopoulos, 2023). On the other hand, there is study state even suggest sending three thumbs-up emojis in order to convey compliments (Fitriyani et al., 2021). Consider sending a message rather than relying on a single thumbs-up emoji. Previous study argues that although a thumbs-up emoji efficiently confirms a message, responding with a personalized message is a more polite and effective way to acknowledge and engage with the sender (Gullberg, 2016).

### Discussion

Previous study stated that concerns regarding the use of the thumbs-up emoji are considered de minimis, meaning they are minor, inconsequential, or too trivial to merit consideration for argumentation (Sweeney, 2021). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that not everyone views this emoji favorably, as individuals from various cultures may find it problematic. The findings clearly indicate that most people use the thumbs-up emoji to convey approval, agreement, commendation, recognition, affirmation, encouragement, and support, among other sentiments (Grodeck & Grossman, 2022; Sweeney, 2021). Despite the positive connotations, the overuse of the thumbs-up emoji has led to negative interpretations, making it offensive, disrespectful, rude, vulgar, taboo, and sensitive. When considering both positive and negative interpretations based on themes, it becomes evident that the thumbs-up emoji is not universally accepted. Therefore, senders should be cautious, as receivers may not share the same interpretations, regardless of the sender's positive intent.

In order to address potential misinterpretations, the findings suggest refraining from using the thumbs-up emoji during serious matters, especially in social crises. Combining it with other emojis or integrating it with words is recommended if its use is unavoidable (Boys, 2018; Maryam et al., 2020). However, as indicated by the findings, the safest approach is to convey messages directly rather than relying on the thumbs-up emoji.

Achieving effective communication requires adjustments on both the sender's and the channel's sides, considering the possible feedback when using a specific channel. Adopting these strategies helps individuals navigate potential pitfalls associated with the thumbs-up emoji, ensuring clearer communication and minimizing the risk of misinterpretations in various contexts. However, it is noteworthy that some receivers dislike the thumbs-up emoji because it is considered an informal text language, especially in business conversations (Prasetyo et al., 2022; Titarenko & Little, 2017). According to previous study despite its seemingly harmless appearance, the thumbs-up emoji is the most passive-aggressive among emojis and is akin to the middle-finger emoji for those less bold (Sweeney, 2021). It is viewed as a way of abruptly ending a conversation without explicitly silencing the other party.

This rejection of the thumbs-up emoji underscores that communication preferences vary among individuals, influenced by cultural background, social environment, education, occupation, personal values, and communication style. The findings can strengthen social learning theory, which suggests that individuals learn and shape their behavior through observation and environmental influences (Abbaspour et al., 2022; Titarenko & Little, 2017). Moreover, other study approach emphasizes that social interactions resemble theatrical performances, with individuals adopting different roles based on the context. Formality levels can vary, and the perception of formality is subjective, depending on observers and cultural differences. Thus, understanding and adapting to these varied preferences can contribute to more effective communication.

With this humble discovery, the study's findings could help mitigate misinterpretations in online communications. It can serve as an additional reference in teaching ethics in online communication. Specifically, it can contribute to raising awareness among students that not all teachers (or vice versa) are accustomed to receiving a thumbs-up emoji in response to their queries or questions (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Missirian, 2021). On the other hand, since teachers are stakeholders in online learning and online conversation is an emerging phenomenon, they should welcome the idea of using thumbs-up emojis and other emojis when engaging with their students. A lot of research in the field suggests that the use of these semiotic signs can be beneficial to student-teacher interaction and student learning (Hidayat et al., 2019; Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). It is essential to note that the safest route for any form of distance learning is to treat it with the utmost formality, just like in a face-to-face classroom setting. Assessing the formality begins when the teacher initially uses the thumbs-up emoji, which serves as a go signal in its usage on the student's part.

Thus, the discretion of the user and the interpreter is largely confined to the ambiguity of the thumbs-up emoji. There is a need for both parties to gain more knowledge on how computer-mediated communication works and how these visual aids, specifically the thumbs-up emoji, contribute to the overall context of the message sent. As much as comprehension plays an important role in every online conversation, knowing the advantages and repercussions of the thumbs-up emoji is a game changer.

Although this study is limited in its scope, particularly in exploring why individuals choose not to use emojis, especially with a lack of existing research on the subject, there is potential for future investigations in understanding such phenomena. Also, the suggested solutions can be beneficial, emphasizing the importance of understanding both the sender and receiver. Factors such as communication style, message composition, and personal preferences play a crucial role. It is imperative to recognize that the appropriateness of a solution may vary from person to person, making it a case-by-case consideration. Also, as this study primarily

relies on a literature review, real-life solutions for addressing challenges related to thumbs-up emoji usage present an avenue for future research. Exploring practical strategies for handling these issues could significantly enhance communication dynamics in various contexts.

## 4. CONCLUSION

It has been observed that the appropriateness of using the thumbs-up emoji varies, with some individuals finding it acceptable while others perceive it as sensitive. While some view this emoji positively, its interpretation differs based on cultural and social backgrounds. In essence, not all uses of the thumbs-up emoji can be universally categorized as positive or negative, highlighting the influence of individual perspectives. Thus, effective communication is not solely about one party adapting to another's preferences; it involves mutual adjustment for a seamless conversation flow.

## 5. REFERENCES

Abbaspour, H., Moonaghi, H., Kareshki, H., & Esmaeili, H. (2022). Positive consequences of the hidden curriculum in undergraduate nursing education: An integrative review. *Iranian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Research*, *27*(3), 169. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijnmr.ijnmr_325_21.

Al Zidjaly, N. (2017). Memes as reasonably hostile laments: A discourse analysis of political dissent in Oman. *Discourse & Society*, *28*(6), 573–594. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926517721083.

Al Zou'bi, R., & Shamma, F. (2021). Assessing instructors' usage of emojis in distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science*, *16*(1), 201 – 2019. https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v16i1.5520.

Alawamleh, M., Al-Twait, L. M., & Al-Saht, G. R. (2022). The effect of online learning on communication between instructors and students during Covid-19 pandemic. *Asian Education and Development Studies*, *11*(2), 380–400. https://doi.org/10.1108/AEDS-06-2020-0131.

Alharbi, A., & Mahzari, M. (2023). The pragmatic functions of emojis in Arabic tweets. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 1 – 14. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1059672.

Bai, Q., Dan, Q., Mu, Z., & Yang, M. (2019). A systematic review of emoji: Current research and future perspectives. *Frontiers of Psychology*, *10*, 1 – 16. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02221.

Blakenship, M., Saladino, C., & Brown, W. E. (2020). COVID-19: Economy recovery, twitter, and public perception of Las Vegas. *Economic Development and Workforce Fact Sheet*, *18*, 1 – 6. https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/bmw_lincy_econdev/18.

Bojkovsky, M., & Pikuliak, M. (2019). STUFIIT at SemEval-2019 Task 5: Multilingual hate speech detection on Twitter with MUSE and ELMo embeddings. *Proceedings of the 13th International Workshop on Semantic Evaluation*, 464–468. https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/S19-2082.

Boys, C. (2018). Nine ways to use emojis in the English classroom. *British Council*. https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/emojis-english-language-.

Day, G., Robert, G., Leedman-Green, K., & Rafferty, A. M. (2021). An outbreak of appreciation: A discursive analysis of tweets of gratitude expressed to the National Health Service at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Health Expectations*, *25*(1), 1 – 14. https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.13359.

Delobelle, P., & Berendt, B. (2019). Time to take emoji seriously: They vastly improve casual conversational models. *Computation and Language*, *1*, 11. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1910.13793.

Escouflaire, L. (2020). *Building a typology of the linguistic functions of emoji: A cross-*

*linguistic and cross platform corpus analysis of emoji in conversation*. http://hdl.handle.net/10852/79377.

Faris, I. N. I., Budiarti, D., & Permadi, A. (2020). Emojis in Indonesian intergenerational family WhatsApp group. *Advanced in Social Science, Education and Humanities*, *546*, 217 – 2224. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210427.033.

Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., & Guzzo, T. (2020). Online learning and emergency remote teaching: Opportunities and challenges in emergency situations. *Societies*, *10*(4), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc10040086.

Fitriyani, F., Hengki, H., & Aprizani, Y. (2021). Junior high school students' interest in English speaking supported by classmates and teacher. In *Proceeding to Studium Generale 2021* (pp. 191–199). Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Banjarmasin. https://ojs.uniska-bjm.ac.id/index.php/PIUOK/article/view/6718.

Ge, J., & Gretzel, U. (2018). Emoji rhetoric: A social influencer perspective. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *34*(15–16), 1 – 24. https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.1483960.

Globokar, R. (2018). Impact of digital media on emotional, social and moral development of children. *Novaprisutnost*, *16*(3), 545 – 560. https://doi.org/10.31192/np.16.3.8.

Griggio, C. F., McGrenere, J., & Mackay, W. E. (2019). Customizations and expressions breakdowns in ecosystems of communication apps. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 1 – 26. https://doi.org/10.1145/3359128.

Grodeck, B., & Grossman, P. J. (2022). *Thumbs down for the thumbs up emoji: Experimental evidence on the impact of instantaneous positive reinforcement on charitable giving*. SRRN. https://doi.org/10.2139/srrn.4010270.

Gullberg, K. (2016). *Laughing face with tears of joy: A study of the production and interpretation of emojis among Swedish university students*. https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/record/8903284/file/8903285.pdf.

Hakami, S., Hendly, R. J., & Smith, P. (2022). Arabic emoji sentiment lexicon (Arab-ESL): A comparison between Arabic and European emoji sentiment lexicons. *Proceedings of the OSACT 2022 Workshop*, 51–59. https://aclanthology.org/2021.wanlp-1.7.

Hanafi, Y., Bari, D., & Hadijah, H. (2021). A semiotic analysis of emoticon symbols on WhatsApp Messenger in students' chat activities. *Tamaddun*, *20*(1), 92 – 105. https://doi.org/10.33096/tamaddun.v20i1.92.

Hardiyanti, W. E., Ilham, M., Suziman, A., & Astriyani, A. (2020). The Use of Emojis To Improve Well-Being And Language Skills In Early Childhood. *Early Childhood: Journal of Education*, *3*(2), 15–25. https://doi.org/10.35568/earlychildhood.v3i2.653.

Herring, S., & Dainas, A. R. (2018). Receiver interpretations of emoji functions: A gender perspective. In S. Wijeratne, E. Kiciman, H. Saggion, & A. Sheth (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 1st International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media (Emoji2018). CEUR Workshop Proceedings*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ashley-Dainas-2/publication/342216416.

Hidayat, D. N., Abrizal, A., & Alek, A. (2019). A multimodal discourse analysis of the interpersonal meaning of a television advertisement in Indonesia. *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)*, *5*(2), 119–126. https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v5i2.11188.

Ismael, A., & Kumar, N. (2019). Empowerment on the margins. *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300329.

Jenner, M. J. (2022). *Revisiting emotions: An analysis of contemporary perceptions of facial expression*. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/34118.

Kahar, R., & Habil, H. (2021). WhatsApp conversations using belf in Malaysian-Turkish business communication: Analyzing interactional structure using speech acts theory. In

H. Habil & C. Mason (Eds.), *The Second Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics International Conference. Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics*. http://irep.iium.edu.my/93135/4/MALLIC-E-PROGRAM-BOOKV49.pdf.

Kearns, A., Gallagher, A., & Cronin, J. (2021). Quality in the time of chaos: Reflections from teaching, learning and practice. *Perspective*, *6*(5), 1310 – 1314. https://doi.org/10.1044/2021_PERSP-21-00095.

Kousar, A., Memon, S., & Ali Simming, I. (2020). The pragmatic analysis of ?, ?, ✌ emojis by ESL learners in verbal modalities: A case study of WhatsApp chat. *International Journal of Computer Science and Network Security*, *20*(10), 199 – 205. https://doi.org/10.22937/IJCSNC.2020.20.10.25.

Kysh, L. (2013). Difference between a systematic review and a literature review. *Medical Library Group of Southern California & Arizona (MLGSCA) and the Northern California and Nevada Medical Library Group (NCNMLG) Joint Meeting*. https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.766364.

Lewis, B., Matejka, M., Grossman, T., & Fitzmaurice, G. (2021). Slacktivity: Scaling for large organizations. *Graphics Interface 2021 Conference Second Cycle*. https://openreview.net/forum?id=2RMSIdhlfH9.

Lexander, K. V, & Androutsopoulos, J. (2023). *Multilingual families in a digital age: Mediational repertoires and transnational practices*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003227311-6.

Li, L., & Yang, Y. (2018). Pragmatic functions of emoji in internet-based communication: A corpus-based study. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, *3*(16), 1 – 12. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-018-0057-z.

Maryam, F., Mushtaq, F., Sumaira, S., & Shahzadi, H. (2020). Culturally ostracized emoji: A semiotic analysis of emojis and emoticons. *Review of Education, Administration and Law (REAL*, *3*(3), 457 – 469. https://doi.org/10.47067/real.v3i3.91.

McLean, D., Chiavaroli, N., Denniston, C., & Richardson, M. (2022). In-verse reflection: structured creative writing exercises to promote reflective learning in medical students. *Journal of Medical Humanities*, *43*(3), 493–504. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10912-022-09740-7.

Missirian, D. E. (2021). The use of emoji in international communication: A cultural bridge for businesses or a potential pitfall. *American Journal of Trade and Policy*, *8*(2), 147 – 154. https://doi.org/10.18034/ajtp.v8i2.538.

Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Clarke, M., Ghersi, D., Liberati, A., Petticrew, M., Shekelle, P., Stewart, L. A., & Group, P. R. I. S. M. A.-P. (2015). Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015 statement. *Systematic Reviews*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-4-1.

Muhammad, H. A., & Nasim, S. H. (2023). Translating polysemous emojis into Kurdish: An empirical study. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*, *10*(1), 218 – 263. https://sangarnajim.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Translating-Polysemous-Emojis-into-Kurdish-An-Empirical-Study-2.pdf.

Norwanto, N., & Risdianto, F. (2022). The norm establishment in WhatsApp group conversations. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *22*(2), 504 – 507. https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v22i2.4810.

Okoli, C. (2015). A guide to conducting a standalone systematic literature review. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, *37*(43), 879–910. https://hal.science/hal-01574600/.

Park, S. Y., & Lee, S. W. (2023). Why "why"? the importance of communicating rationales for edits in collaborative writing. *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1 – 25. https://doi.org/10.1145/3544548.3581345.

Pelila, J. O., & Palangyos, A. C. (2021). Consolidated reading strategies used in

comprehending text from various studies: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Language Education and Educational Technology*, *6*(2). https://doi.org/10.33772/jleet.v6i2.20019.

Pennington, J. W., & Thomsen, R. C. (2010). A semiotic model of destination representations applied to cultural and heritage tourism marketing. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *10*(1), 33–53. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250903561895.

Piotrowska, C. M. (2022). *Lockdown language: Online communication in South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic*. http://hdl.handle.net/10394/40134.

Piotrowska, I., Cichoń, M., Sypniewski, J., & Abramowicz, D. (2022). Application of Inquiry-Based Science Education, Anticipatory Learning Strategy, and Project-Based Learning Strategies. *In Didactic Strategies and Resources for Innovative Geography Teaching*, 23–50. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9598-5.ch002.

Prasetyo, A., Aini, N., Aulia, A., Kurniasari, D., & Ariando, W. (2022). The Effectiveness Interpersonal Communication Increasing Success of Pokdarwis Arumsari. *Habitat*, *33*(3), 231–240. https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.habitat.2022.033.3.23.

Reeves, J. L., Gunter, G. A., Braga, J., & Racilan, M. (2022). Using the community of inquiry framework to analyze emojis as an emerging language in an online educational experience via WhatsApp. *Documentacao de Estudos Em Linguistica Teorica e Aplicada*, *38*(2), 1 – 34. https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-460X202238252396.

Sampietro, A. (2019). Emoji and rapport management in Spanish WhatsApp chats. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *143*, 109–120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2019.02.009.

Schneebeli, C. (2017). *The interplay of emoji, emoticons, and verbal modalities in CMC: A case study of Youtube comments. VINM 2017: Visualizing (in) the New Media*. HAL Open Science. https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01632753/document.

Sugiyama, S. (2018). The emoji and the management of social boundaries. In K. Roy (Ed.), *Interrogating Boundaries in our Twenty-First Century World* (pp. 19–33). Intervalla Platform Intellectual Exchange.

Sun, W., & Yu, H. (2020). WeChatting the Australian election: Mandarin-speaking migrants and the teaching of new citizenship practices. *Social Media + Society*, *6*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120903441.

Sweeney, T. (2021). Take note, Stephen Donnelly: The 'thumbs up' emoji is the most passive-aggressive of all. *The Irish Times*, 1 4473009. https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/tv-radio-.

Titarenko, L., & Little, C. B. (2017). International Cross-Cultural Online Learning and Teaching: Effective Tools and Approaches. *American Journal of Distance Education*, *31*(2), 112–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2017.1306767.

Vogiatzis, D., Charitonos, K., Giaxiglou, K., & Lewis, T. (2022). Can WhatsApp facilitate interaction? A case study of adult language learning. In B. Rienties, R. Hampel, E. Scanlon, & D. Whitelock (Eds.), *Open Learning* (pp. 44 – 62). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003177098-5.