

Emojis as paralinguistic resources in written online interaction

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This article introduces a new perspective on emojis, viewing them as an embodied semiotic resource. Building on previous research regarding ways to compensate for the absence of physical cues in written online interaction, the article examines how emojis can serve as substitutes for nonverbal cues such as body movements, facial expressions and vocal tones. Emphasizing emojis as a prefabricated system of communication technology, the article offers a summary of prior studies on the pragmatic function of emojis. Drawing on Peirce's semiotics, the article illustrates how body language manifests itself in digital body-emojis functioning as icons, symbols and indices. The analysis investigates how participants utilize digital body language in various online interactions, suggesting that viewing emojis as embodied communication tools clarifies their effectiveness in conveying emotions and guiding recipients in understanding the sender's intentions. By mimicking the appearance and sensations of physical gestures, emojis are used by participants in online communication to compensate for the lack of nonverbal cues.

KEYWORDS: emojis; written online interaction; paralanguage; mime; gestures