

Review article

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USAGE OF EMOJIS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Abstract

The appearance of *emojis* as pictorial symbols used in written communication is not a new phenomenon in human conversation – even the Egyptian hieroglyphs were based on pictographic system. They were created in Japan in late 1990s, and their global availability was enabled by adding them to the *Apple iPhone* in 2011. In 2015 *Oxford English Dictionary* selected the emoji “The face with tears of joy” as a word of the year. Unicode, a non-profit institution composed of representatives of companies and industry institutions, standardizes the global emoji system. The latest updates are mentioning about 2666 *emojis*. According to the surveys, around 6 billion *emojis* are sent on a daily basis. Whilst the process of trying to convert the *emojis* into the global language is ongoing and organizations are accepting it more and more during the course of their communication, on the other hand scientists have different views regarding their use in formal business communication based on the results obtained from the existing studies. One group of scientists consider their appearance as a huge step back for humanity regarding the communication context and advocates the need to follow already established standards in written business communication and therefore to avoid the use of *emojis* because they may indicate, among other things, the lack of professionalism of the communicator. In contrast, there are opinions whereby *emojis* are considered as inevitable part of on-line business communication, based on the axiom that each organization needs to communicate with their stakeholders with mutually acceptable communication code. They are considered as non-verbal signs which may

emotionally reinforce the message by adding contextual information to it, thus overcoming speech based barriers, particularly in global business communication. The paper analyzes the terms of *emojis*, *emoticons* and *smileys*, provides a historical overview of their origin and development and analyzes the results of available research related to their use within the context of business communication.

Key words: emoji, emoticon, communication, business communication