

Beyond Text and Image: the Style of Communication in Social Network websites'

By

Dr. Yousreya Ahmed Ali Alhamshary

Lecturer of Applied linguistics

English department, Faculty of Education, Damanhour University

e-mail: alhamshary@edu.dmu.edu.eg

Abstract:

With the rapid growth of communication technologies, there has been a parallel rapid variation in the forms and the style of ordinary language used on social websites for the purpose of communication. We are surrounded by text and audio messages everywhere. Consequently, new graphological forms and features have emerged. Thus, there is a need to analyze the reasons behind the excessive use of the new features of electronic discourse, and how they are used for communication. Four main aims are considered; first, recognizing the main features of communication in the e-discourse? Second, recognizing how these features are used by Egyptian young individuals. Third, what are the reasons behind using these particular features? Finally, how images represent the ideologies of its users. Corpus of the paper derived from some illustrative visual images and text responses drawn from the official website of the Faculty of Education, Damanhour University. The theoretical framework of this study is based on both models Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (2004) and Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodality. The findings indicate a change in the linguistic utterance used in e-discourse and the replacement of other forms, such as pictures, with comics or jokes for commenting, word-letter replacement, and motion to communicate.

Keywords: e-discourse analysis, e-social communication, Internet graphology, reading visual image.

1. Introduction:

Contemporary culture is marked by important developments in the way of communication. Every day, most of us access information from the web or other new digital media sources like tweeter or Facebook. These media equally carry messages through image, or an integrated composition of print and image (Healy, 2000). Reading such messages and texts requires both verbal and visual literacy, and the ability to read the interaction between both verbal and visual elements. Without these literacy skills, it is difficult to see how we could survive in the contemporary world and keep connections with others.

As language is a tool for communication, it changes and is influenced by social change. In recent years, individuals have depended heavily on electronic communication, even if they are physically next to each other. They tweet and send messages on Facebook using iPhone to express what they want to say. This has led to the emergence of new features in the structure of language itself. Hence, electronic communication has led to the rise of a new variety of language. The use of the Internet and computer technology has significantly changed the language and its usage; technology has paved the way for the appearance of a new language. Simultaneously, a new type of discourse has emerged as a result of technology interactivity, which Yates (2001:p.106) refers to as the "imaginary space created by the Internet in which people interact and form social relationships". According to Hodge and Kress (1988: p.vii) the new electronic language discourse is characterized by the presence of two principles: the first is "the primacy of the social dimension in understanding language structures and processes", and the second is that "no single code can be successfully studied or fully understood in isolation" This indicates that meaning is not restricted only to the linguistic code, but "resides so strongly and pervasively in other visual systems of meaning, in a multiplicity of visual, aural, behavioral and other codes, that a concentration on words alone is not enough." Due to the change in discourse, discourse analysis as a linguistic discipline is taking on new dimensions in which the style of technologies should be considered (AbuSa'aleek, 2015). This discourse has no definite features, as it is neither spoken nor written, but shares features of both types of discourse simultaneously. Until 2011, written discourse was the most widespread and preferred. After 2011, e-discourse in Egypt has gradually changed to include picture-like comments. A rapid change in social situations

helped to encourage that change. Political changes help this direction to spread, as many comics were used in pictures, as will be discussed later. This change in social factors led to a change in the linguistic features and style of communication within e-discourse. This variation is discussed in more detail in the remaining sections of this study.

The major emphasis has been on understanding the link between (environments of) language use and (features of) the language used (Hymes, 1964; Labov, 1966). Visual structuring has either been treated as simply reproducing the structures of reality, or it has been discussed in formal terms only. Arnheim, 1974, 1982, in his analyses, which are of specialty related to ideology, offers many insights on the semantic dimension of visual structuring. Ideologically, visual structures do not only reproduce the structures of 'reality', but they also produce images of reality bounded up with the interests of the social institutions in which the images are produced, circulated and read. Visual structures are never merely formal but have a deeply important semantic dimension. Where visual structures and verbal structures can be used to express meanings drawn from a common cultural source, both are not simply alternative means of representing 'the same thing'. The relation between image and text is not illustrative. The image does not duplicate the meaning by representing visually what has already been represented in text. The relation between text and image is a part-whole one. Images and posts on Facebook are not just illustrations of a verbal text, not just "creative embellishment"; they are part of a "multimodality" conceived text, a semiotic interplay in which each mode, the verbal and the visual, is given a defined and equal role to play (Kress, 2006). This study addresses the kinds of issues that are involved in "functional communication" and specifically addresses the role of language in this respect. It aims to highlight the verbal language as a set of "meaning-making resources" rather than as a set of syntactic/semantic constructs that exist outside of the communicator's everyday environment. The study discusses the role of language in social life in which speakers not only convey information to each other but maintain social relationships through communication. Jewett and Oyama (2001) show how important health messages may visually encode narrow constructions of gender. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p. 254) show how children's toys may steer very young children to gendered play. Consequently, this type of reading is based on a systematic approach to articulating visual meaning. A great advantage of their method for reading the visual is that it allows multiple readings of the same visual text. It is based on semiotic principles (how meaning is made and how it is understood) that is why it is widely

used by academics and practitioners in the areas of functional linguistics and visual discourse analysis (Jewitt & Oyama 2001). It provides detailed and explicit methods for analyzing the meanings established by the syntactic relations between people, places and things depicted in images. These meanings are described as not only representational (whether physical or semiotic representation of entities), but also interactive (images construct the nature of relationships among viewers and what is viewed) and compositional (the distribution of information value or the relative emphasis among elements of the image)

2. Aims and Methodology

The paper aims at analyzing the e-discourse represented by Facebook website created for members' interaction, with different ages and different places, as an official group for communication using images and shortcut posts. Hence, the research seeks to list the mostly used features and how they are used in communication by them. The researcher also investigates reasons for using these features in that certain way, and how images represent identities and ideologies of its users. To know these elements the researcher adopts a theoretical framework based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1994) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) of Multimodality. The researcher in this study adopts Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) view where they draw an analogy with language in that they have concentrated on the meaning projected by the individuals, scenes and objects portrayed within images. For them, the term 'grammar' implies that the ways in which what is depicted in images is combined into a coherent, meaningful whole. This approach aims, in common with many functional linguistic models, to link form with meaning, where linguistic and visual grammatical forms are seen as resources for encoding interpretations of experience and forms of social interaction. Hence, culture and ideology are also important in both verbal and visual grammars. A point, which Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) highlight is that image is one of the serious linguistic forms in communication, quoting Halliday's (1985:101) assertion that "grammar goes beyond formal rules of correctness. It is a means of representing patterns of experience ... It enables human beings to present a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them". Thus, visuals can represent people, places and things as though they are real, as though they actually exist in this way, or as though they do not - as though they are imaginings, fantasies, caricatures etc.

Modality; designing models of reality, looks for how to evaluate the credibility of the images and therefore the messages offered by the images. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) confirm that modality markers in the messages and textual cues are what one relies on to weigh the reliability of the information one receives. They state that modality should be "interpersonal" rather than "ideational", and based on such justification, they concluding that in visual communication, modality judgments are dependent on "what is considered real (or true, or scared) in the social group for which the representation is primarily intended" (p.156). Colours, hence, serve as "a marker of naturalistic modality" in terms of three scales: colour saturation, colour differentiation, and colour modulation. Other key markers of visual modality include contextualization, representation, depth, illumination, and brightness.

In order to collect the data, an observation period (a month) before and during their exam of the first term is included in analyzing the discourse of a Facebook website created for the purpose of follow up and communicating with them. The researcher plays the role of observer as being the site admin. From my experience as an admin for the site, this time is very critical to them. While analyzing Facebook discourse users often code-switch between two languages while posting, chatting or communicating with others. Sometimes users use informal language and slang as well. Members use both colloquial Arabic and English in communication together while chatting. Group members use language/s depending on their relationship and context. Collected data includes pictures and text used as posts or comments to respond and give communication.

3. Theoretical Background

Social networking sites had never dreamt to reach today's demand. There are many definitions that could be used to define social networking sites, but the appropriate one may be,

... is a form of social media, used for interactive, educational, informational or entertaining purposes. Social media comes in many forms, but all of them are related: blogs, forums, podcasts, photo sharing, social bookmarking, widgets, video, just to name a few. (History of Social Network, 2016, p.3)

Consequently, social media are opening a new world for people to be aware of the latest news, create their profile where they represent their personality, upload the photos and videos they like, make friends and sociability, give status and share their memories with the one's

near and dear to them. Thus, social networking replaces the previous mailing or communicating system. Nowadays, the most popular social networking sites are WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber, and others. But, Facebook is considered the most prominent and popular one.

Discourse analysis is a term that consists of a wide range of related contrastive aspects. Scholars like Parker, (1992); Wodak, (1998); Wood & Kroger, (2000) used it in terms of general methodology. However, other scholars allocated different definitions to discourse analysis. In Stubb's view (1983, p.1) it is a "level of structure higher than a sentence". He believed that "discourse analysis" is analysis of language beyond or above the sentence". Whereas Schiffrin (1994), defines discourse as a particular unit of language and a particular focus on language use.

Different terms have been used to refer to the language used by members in the electronic communication environment; this environment is referred to in this context and hereafter as "electronic discourse". Researchers like Davis & Brewer, (1997) and Panckhurst, (2006) call it "electronic language"; Herring, (1996) called it "interactive written discourse". Herring (1996, p. 1), states that:

E-Discourse refers to text-based CMC, in which participants interact by means of the written word, e.g., by typing a message on the keyboard of one computer which is read by others on their computer screens, either immediately (synchronous CMC) or at a later point in time (asynchronous CMC).

Davis and Brewer (1997, p.2) define e-discourse as "one form of interactive electronic communication in which a person using a keyboard writes a language". They state that the term "electronic discourse" refers to written talk or "writing that stands in place of voices". In the present paper, the term virtual language is used to express the language used to exchange communication in the electronic virtual learning environment; it includes all linguistic forms or signs used to express meaning or to respond to meaning in order to communicate with others. For Davis and Brewer (1997) the term e-discourse differs, as it refers to how individuals use language to share and exchange ideas and views rather than the medium or means by which they convey and deliver their communication. Thus, the usability and flexibility of context are of great importance. One of the advantages of e-communication in social media is the ability to modify a message before and after writing, however, chat rooms and e-mail messages as e-tools do not allow editing but these forms of communication allow

sending messages instantly. For this reason, e-communication discourse can be considered as a spoken discourse even though it is conducted through a written medium. Electronic discourse provides individuals with opportunities to take advantage of emerging technologies, which can lead to autonomous language interaction with native speakers or other users outside a controlled academic context. Gonglewski and DuBravac (2006; p.46) note that:

One goal of foreign language education is to prepare students to participate more actively in global learning communities and use a foreign language in new ways in a “technology-saturated world.

Many studies have been conducted around the features of linguistic discourse, and elements of those studies have varied. AbuSaaleek (2013) has conducted a study to categorize the linguistic features used in the language of chats, web-based discussions, and instant messages and focused on distinctive linguistic features of e-discourse. Tagliamonte & Denis (2008) examined the language of instant messaging and found that instant messaging is a distinctive new hybrid of language, which exhibits a combination of formal and vernacular variants. Thurlow (2003) has also conducted a sociolinguistic study in which he investigated linguistic structures and communicative roles; he found that e-discourse is linguistically unremarkable and does not corrupt language structure. However, e-discourse for him is used only for skilled and creative interactions. Recent studies have shown great interest in investigating the language used by individuals in electronic discourse like (Thurlow, 2001; Muniandy, 2002; Thurlow & Brown, 2003; MacFadyen, Roche, & Doff, 2004; Crystal, 2006; Plester, et.al, 2009; Baron, 2010; Jonge & Kemp, 2010; Lyddy, et.al, 2014). Different components of discourse analysis have been used to identify and explore the impairment, and how they affect one's language practice. The present study adopts the term e-discourse to signify the written form of the e-language used by young members in electronic communication. It presents a comprehensive view of electronic discourse as a new variety of language and describes its innovative features. In addition, it analyses linguistic features found in the electronic discourse of communication. E-discourse can now reflect the whole setting and communicate clearly without the use of words. Even if those communicating use only smileys and emoticons, one can understand the whole perspective and attitudes of the participants in any e-discussion.

Connections online are everything now for all business, education, and social life. Statics prove that by 2017, the global social network audience is total 2.5 billion. In addition,

Entertainment, hard-hitting news, networking are all an essential part of everyday life. Many colleges even offer Bachelor's Degrees in "Media & Cultural Studies" – such a prevalent topic today!

The word culture is very wide expression though it is one word. Many scholars try to give accurate definition like that of Avruch (1998: 6) "Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. 'it consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves' (Avruch 1998: 17). Another definition is introduced by Adler (1997: 14) "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action." Or "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" as defined by Hofstede(2001: 5) or that of Matsumoto (1996: 16)."... the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next". "Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.' (Spencer-Oatey 2008: 3). All previous definitions of culture indicate the importance of considering communication among people and how people can affect and be affected by each other. All definitions include behaviours and beliefs as components of culture. The electronic environment allows all types of cultures; internal or external to get closer and interact each other which is for granted affect the formulation of the individual personality and in turn an identity of the community or society of that person. The human ability to feel fear, anger, love, joy, sadness, the need to associate with others, to play and exercise oneself, the facility to observe the environment and talk about it with other humans all belong to this level of mental programming. However, what one does with these feelings, how one expresses fear, joy, observations, and so on, is modified by culture. Human

nature is not as 'human' as the term suggests, because certain aspects of it are shared with parts of the animal world.

For an idea, a thing, or a behavior to be considered cultural, it must be shared by some type of social group or society. culture is transformed from the people one interacts with as one is socialized. Culture's transmission among people comes as a result of their interaction and communication. Culture is also taught by the explanations people receive for the natural and human events around them. Certainly there are variations in what a child is taught from family to family in any given culture. However, our interest is not in these variations but in the similarities across most or all families that form the basis of a culture. Because there is a specific interest in the relationship between culture and interpersonal communication, scholars focus on how cultures provide their members with a set of interpretations that they use as filters to make sense of messages and experiences(Lustig and Koester 1999: 2-31). Culture is not the same as identity that is based on mutual images and stereotypes and on emotions linked to the outer layers of the onion, but not to values(Hofstede 2001: 10). Thus, Culture is both an individual construct and a social construct. Parallel to culture, an ideology is a set of opinions or beliefs of a group or an individual. Very often ideology refers to a set of political beliefs or a set of ideas that characterize a particular culture.

A lot of studies have dealt with social media and communication. For example in business Odii and Njoku (2016) concludes that since the social media is a very powerful communicative tool, it has the ability to strengthen change management initiatives. And Paus (2013) states that social media as a tool positively affects leadership skills. Baruah(2012) concludes that social media as a tool of communication enable a good connection and communication among individuals. Form the forgoing studies and background one can deduce that social media can be a very good mirror to reflect on the paper's theme which is identifying individual's culture and identity or ideology from his/her communication on Facebook as a social media tool.

4. Data Analysis

While some like Lunenburg (2010) and Clark & Gruba (2010) claim that, good communication allows influence to become easier and strengthens relations and such social networks are the place of "motivation, frustration and demotivation" (, p. 10). Others claim that it creates language distortion as there is no commitment to any rule or linguistic form.

Content refers to the subject matter, which can be temporary events, whether political, social, religious or other, such as killing, but with a comic and sarcastic style. Many choose pictures in which the characters exhibit a good sense of humor and are very expressive like those of the famous actors Mohamed Hineady and Ahmed Abdelaziz. Written comments are very appropriate to the picture used, which indicates excellent comprehension of thoughts and a parallel line of thinking. The structure relies on the overall organization or format of the discourse, taking into account "who is speaking to whom, when, where and for what purpose; the physical setting; the social scene in which the discourse occurs; the roles and statuses of the participants involved ...etc", as shown in the pictures. Framed double pictures of two people can convey the sense that the subjects should be read as being 'together' in some way, the nature of that connection being revealed by reading the verbal text accompanying the framed images.

Attempting study aims, some students' posts are analyzed. The results of this analysis show that most of participants use pictures for fun and for expressing their feelings due to their unwillingness to write. Sallabank (2010), Oshima et al. (2012) and Cavalli et al. (2011) point out that participants always burst their emotions, feelings regarding certain incidents, their rage while communicating or chatting with others through social networks and Facebook. This is seen in the number of likes or dislikes for fun or serious problems or topics they deal with. Generally speaking, they like fun and jokes which is a general characteristic of the Egyptians as a whole and indicate a sense of humor. Most of the participants use different discourse elements while communicating with others. They do not use turn taking or wait for others, they never care for sequencing previous conversations. Oshima et al. (2012) and Sallabank (2010) indicate that they use lots of turn-takings while chatting, informal language, and language shift among users while communicating with others on Facebook.

They may share links or extensive readings that might be helpful for awareness and cultural topics rather than provide something for entertainment only. They may share their experience regarding reading a book in English in place of posting statuses. They can use Facebook for discussing subject material, their problems and solutions like an online discussion blog. They should not be biased towards Facebook only for gaming and fun or jokes. They should be aware of using proper language either Arabic or English for writing and speaking while communicating through Facebook. They should know the purposes of using language for academic and developmental purpose as a part of formulating their identity. In

these ways, they might use Facebook in the best way. Local people need to learn how to adapt Facebook for academic reasons using the variety of apps added to support educational purposes. Sallabank (2010) ends his study by saying that social networks (Facebook) can provide options from saving a language from language death. Moolenaar (2012) says that academics and instructional institutions should change their negative attitudes towards social networks. All these mean that people have to change their thoughts and attitudes concerning social networks. Based on the previous discussion, let us analyze examples of these images and what they include.

Image type (1) representing comics:



Image (1) represents two of the famous characters in the TV series (Souq Alasr) where one of them is responsible for the other. It is known for the viewers that Said as one of the brothers and sisters, is of bad luck in the TV series and Mansour is struggling with all of his brothers and sisters to get them better. The choice of the image represents the relationship between members to be like brothers and sisters and they are responsible for each other. The producer of the image represents the one who needs help and the viewer represents the one who is

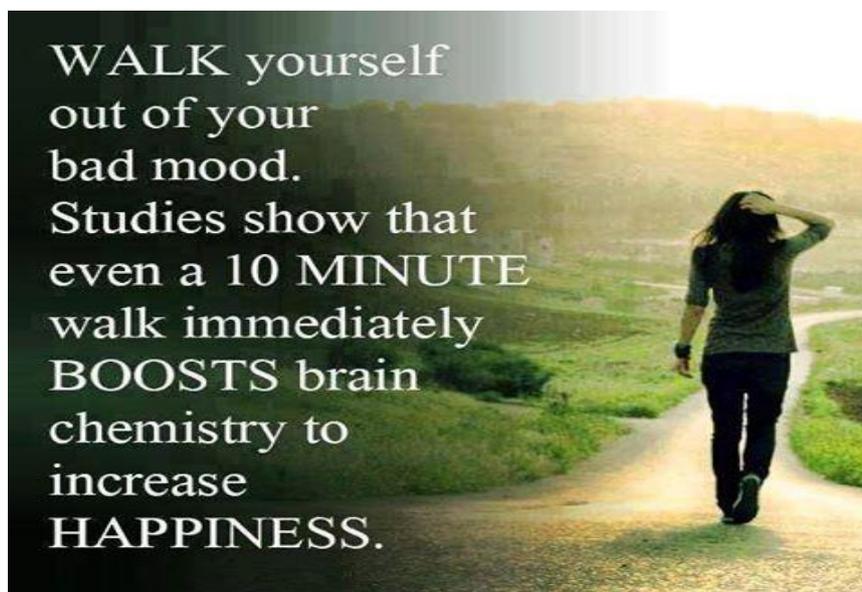
responsible for the others. The whole situation can be found in the unseen text where the context is represented by the environment of the TV series in which people are suffering from misery. The view is two complex visions the big face of the producer indicates that his psychological status is very bad, whereas the same facial expressions of the viewer shares him his status; and the gestures of both of them confirm the same meaning. The image illustrates a very good degree of involvement focusing in the only two persons. The image also displays the scene as a dialogue starting with the viewer and ending with the producer as if the producer asks the viewer for emotions. However, in the first scene the producer's big face means he faces a big problem the viewer does not know about because he is behind in the scene. The movement of hands and facial gestures indicate the reality of the scenes (modality). Brightness of colors represents the clearness of the situation for both. No details are present in both scenes which mean focus on the problem of the producer. Illumination plays a good role in displaying the meaning of the image. The whole scene seems natural to all viewers as they all know the same background knowledge of the TV series or their studying situation. Thus, the interactive meaning is well presented here. The text in the image is a question and answer (/ خلصت كام ماده يا سيد؟/ لسه مبداتش يا منصور. / How many subjects did you study Sayed? O' Mansour, I did not start yet.) that offer information which is taken for granted by the viewers. It is formed in short sentences positioned in the center with a big font to indicate its effectiveness and importance. The readability of the text is controlled by the position of the text that catches the attention by the size and color and position. The comic insight here represents the scene of studying in the form of the TV series which evoke laugh at the first sight. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), salience is not an objectively measurable quality, but it acts as 'clues' to the viewer to know what is important, and what is more important than other elements. It is displayed in the image by the short bold sentence at the center of the image.

Image (2): comic and sarcastic situations



The second image representing comic is the picture of the most famous comedian at the moment and the one who almost 70% of young people prefer and follow his program Abo Hafiza. The image is clear and brightness is good. No more details are present which also means that the focus is on the character of the scene. The picture here is divided in two scenes too and the brown color forms the majority of the picture. Same topic of studying but the text and the theme of the picture is different. The producer here displays something that all of them may feel but do not show. The culture of feeling save if people are equal in status and one is not alone feeling lost. The picture represents also the disaster that all students do not understand but it is good for both viewer and producer to be the same case. The choice of the character is very good for the text and if imagined it gives a very good sense of humor and the movement of the character's hands gives a sense of real speech. The size and frame of the picture is almost medium which mean that it suits all members attitude and represents a relationship of sociability and equality where the viewer and the producer are the same rank. The background of the picture has no detail to focus on the text. The text includes positive and negative feeling at the same time namely, happiness and sadness. The text is written at the center to show concentration and importance. The reading path is regular for the viewers because of the Arabic text's usability and regularity.

Image type (3) representing wise words or advices:



This picture focuses in words not in the one character inside. Details are clear and the green color gives hope that goes with the text inside. The road lying in front of the girl shows that life is long and still young have a lot to do in their life. The girl is seen from the back and not recognized to be a symbol for all of her age. May be she is a girl because they feel anxiety more than boys. Part of the background is clear to deal with the unsaid meaning and the other part is dark to fit displaying the text. The picture is for a girl inside, moving towards the front to go with the target of the written text. The text included has only two points and one of them is scientific information (Studies show that even a 10 MINUTE walk immediately BOOSTS brain chemistry to increase Happiness), and the other is an advice (WALK yourself out of your mood). The target of the second part is illustrated in the capitalized words (10 MINUTES, BOOSTS and HAPPINESS) that form the message of the post. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), salience is not an objectively measurable quality, but it acts as 'clues' to the viewer to know what is important, and what is more important than other elements. The capitalization of words represents this item in the text format. The repetition of the verb "walk" two times also shows the importance of moving on. The image represents inequality in speech rank, as wise words and research results come from the old educated person so the producer imagine himself in an upper rank of speech than the viewers. The full shot of the scene shows generalization of the text. Visual modality is well expressed in this image by the use of color variation for in this picture the more the color is reduced, the lower the modality. Visual modality is continuum by color saturation, which relates to common standards of photographic naturalism. It runs from full colour saturation on the right to a complete absence of colour on the left and replaced by black background. Colour differentiation is another scale which ranges from full colour differentiation on the right visual scene to what may be termed a 'reduced palette', and then to monochrome. The composite layout signals its primary messages through the relative salience of its elements or through framing devices in terms of information value, salience and framing. The text is positioned in the right side but with full dark colour to highlight its importance. The reading path starts with the catching point of capitalized words. No Vectors are found in the image.

In addition to image there is text forming the other side of communication. Let us see some analysis about text. A primary function of language for the human beings in real life is to communicate through conveying information to each other or request services of some kind in a variety of situations (e.g., relating events that happen to them, giving someone directions, asking for services such as in a shopping or other service encounter). Different contexts need different kinds of vocabulary and expressions that are suitable in that context. Such contexts can be classified according to "genres" such as narrative, recount, exposition, procedure, protocol, report, explanation, and interview (Butt, et.al, 2000). But in the e-environment it is different. The function of language is also different. Consequently, the tools available for use shape communication style that the user should adopt. Language is purposefully used to engage others as well as simply convey certain types of information. Speakers can construe their own identity and authority, and choose to align or dis-align themselves with potential conversation partners through their choice of words and particular grammatical constructions. Additionally, they adjust their style of language according to whom they are talking (here they are, young adults, in general). For example, language may be relatively "formal" if used when talking with someone who is unfamiliar or has higher authority than the speaker. Conversely, contracted grammatical forms and shared "local" vocabulary may be used with friends. For example, most people use complete text structure in e-mails and other forms on Facebook. Additionally, people write economically in e-mails but include moving figures and pictures because the technologies support different types of communication. For example, if a user displays the "listening to" emoticon, a pop-up list with a selection of musical artists is included to help the user complete his or her status update. This is not available while they are writing text unless they write every character of the words necessary to express this status. Hence, they are quickly able to give detailed information without writing or thinking about sentence structure, punctuation or even spelling. Abbreviation and shortened sentences are mostly used, as in the following sentences: "I don't feel it 2B good idea. UR right we have to go now 4 the party is not nice" or "we missed u 2day".

Another function of language is to create coherent messages (Halliday, 1994). Most responses do not show care for spelling or punctuation or even correct sentence structure. They may even mix Arabic words with English, such as "right now yahabibty". Capitalization in e-discourse is not limited to first words or names. It is even acceptable to write the whole sentence in capitals, as in the following example:

" WILL YOU COME TOMORROW WITH ME?"

i do not have time.

Lolhehehehehe this is not nice.

go next week no problem.

In contrast, native e-discourse keeps all the rules of linguistic form for writing. It is notable that most of the first comments on a post are perfect in linguistic form. They use correct punctuation and capitalization and full sentence structure with conjunctions and perfect word choice; however, later on, users resort to short answers and even use one-word responses and the same features of capitalization and punctuation.

5. Discussion and Results

Both language and visual communication express meanings belonging to and structured by cultures in the one society. Egyptian individuals feel safe if all others do the same action even if it is the negative one. The culture of being not the only one who has done the action in Egyptian society provides them with the feeling of security. Consequently, meanings expressed by speakers, writers, are first and foremost social meanings, even though we acknowledge the effect and importance of individual differences in doing so. Visual resources are used for the representation of interactions and conceptual relations between people (emotion and jif for representing status), places (buildings classes...etc) and things depicted in images. Whereas, visual communication also has resources for constituting and maintaining another kind of interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image like offering to have a cup of tea. Another way of saying this is that images (and other kinds of visual interaction) involve two kinds of participants, represented participants (the people, the places and things depicted in images) and interactive participants (the people who communicate with each other through images, the producers and viewers of images).

Communication in this context comes in many forms like text, image or motions figures. Most of the posts are represented by comic images including the vision of their posters with different topics, jokes, and even wise words. The most distinguished, figurative and attractive pictures and some comments about them are used for analysis. The way the distinction between subjective and objective meanings realized in language is quite different from the way it is realized in images as they use pictures expressing a lot of meaning. First let us deal with the analysis of some pictures that are categorized into (comic, wise words or advice,

religious aspects, information or comic, information, critical, sarcastic, and social). Here the researcher concentrated on three of them as they are mostly the effective ones and the most repeated among them namely comics, sarcastic, and wise words or advice. Only three images are analyzed also for the same reason. They are repeated a lot in the posts and comments.

The three kinds of relations can be seen: (1) relations between represented participants (in Kress and Van Leeuwen represented participants inside the image, here means the one posting); (2) relations between interactive and represented participants (the interactive participants' attitudes towards the represented participants here means the ones who give responses in their comments on the previous post); and (3) relations between interactive participants (the things interactive participants do to or for each other through images). Interactive participants are therefore real people who produce and make sense of images in the context of social context (here means the social website) which, to different degrees and in different ways, regulate what may be 'said' with images (included all different types as shown above), how it should be said (the picture representing feelings and attitudes), and how it should be interpreted (represented in the comments of others as response). In many cases, there is no immediate and direct response. The producer is absent for the viewer, and the viewer is absent for the producer. Think of photographs on Facebook. Who is the original producer? The photographer who took the shot? The person who selected and distributed it? The picture editor who chose it? Or the layout person who cropped it and determined its size and position on the page? Most viewers will not only ever meet all these contributors to the production process of face to face. All they have is the picture itself (modified with each type of response), as it appears in Facebook. And producers, similarly, can never really know their vast and absent audiences who will see it in the future, and create a mental image of 'the' viewers and 'the' way viewers make sense of their pictures that will be used in different contexts but same status of feeling and same status of concept. Producers and viewers are physically absent. Something similar occurs in writing. Writers, too, are not usually physically present when their words are read. Readers are alone with the written word. This bracketing out of real authors and real readers carries the risk of forgetting that texts, literary, artistic and mass media texts are produced in the context of real social institutions, in order to play a very real role in social life – in order to do certain things to or for their readers, and in order to communicate attitudes towards aspects of social life and towards people who participate in them, whether authors and readers are consciously aware of this or not. Readers

will at least recognize these communicative intentions, values and attitudes for what they are, even if they do not ultimately accept them as their own values and beliefs.

However important and real this disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception, the two do have elements in common: the image itself, and knowledge of the communicative resources that allow its articulation and understanding, knowledge of the way social interactions and social relations can be encoded in images. It is often said that the knowledge of the producer and the viewer differ in a fundamental respect: the former is active, allowing the 'sending' as well as the 'receiving' or 'messages'; the latter is passive, allowing only the 'receiving' or 'messages'. Producers are able to 'write' as well as 'read', viewers are able only to 'read'. Up to a point, this is true, at least in the sense that the production of images is still a specialized activity, so that producers 'write' more fluently and eloquently, and more frequently, than viewers. But we hope our attempts to make that knowledge explicit will show that the interactive meanings are visually encoded in ways that rest on competencies shared by producers and viewers.

The articulation and understanding of social meanings in images derives from the visual articulation of social meanings in face-to-face interaction, and the spatial positions allocated to different kinds of social actors in interaction (whether they are seated or standing, side by side or facing each other frontally, etc.). In this sense, the interactive dimension of images is the 'writing' of what is usually called 'non-verbal communication', a 'language' shared by producers and viewers alike. The disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception has yet another effect: it causes social relations to be represented rather than enacted. Because producers are absent from the place where the actual communicative transaction is completed, from the locus of reception, they cannot say 'I' other than through a substitute 'I'. The relation between producer and viewer, too, is represented rather than enacted. In face-to-face communication, we must respond to a friendly smile with a friendly smile, to an arrogant stare with a deferential lowering of the eyes, and such obligations cannot easily be avoided without appearing impolite, unfriendly or impudent. In social websites, the images may represent unreal statuses of feeling. People like real life may send a lot of smiling faces and kind words in spite of their contradicting feeling. However, when images confront us with friendly smiles or arrogant stares, we are not obliged to respond, even though we do recognize how we are addressed. The relation is only represented. We are imaginarily rather than really put in the position of the friend, the layperson who must defer to the expert. And

whether or not we identify with that position will depend on other factors – on our real relation to the producer or the institution he or she represents and on our real relation to the others who form part of the context of reception. All the same, whether or not we identify with the way we are addressed, we do understand how we are addressed because we do understand the way images represent social interactions and social relations. But the concepts of 'offer' and 'demand' can also be related to another key concept in linguistics, that of the 'speech act theory'. As mentioned, the researcher has taken the terms from Halliday's description of four basic speech acts (or 'speech functions' as he calls them in his Introduction to Functional Grammar, 1985). Each of these speech acts can (1) 'offer information', that is, form a statement, in which case the response sought is 'agreement', although the statement may of course also be contradicted. They can 'offer goods-and-services' in which case the expected response is 'acceptance', although the offer may also be rejected. They can 'demand information', form a question, in which case the expected response is an answer, although the responder may also disclaim the question.

The people one sees in images are for the most part strangers. It is true that one see some of them (politicians, film and television stars, sports heroes, etc.) a good deal more than others, but this kind of familiarity does not of itself determine whether they will be shown in the close shot, medium shot, or long shot. The relation between the human participants represented in images and the viewer is once again an imaginary relation. People are portrayed as though they are friends, or as though they are strangers. Images allow us to imaginarily come as close to public figures as if they were our friends and neighbors – or to look at people like ourselves as strangers, 'others'. In the primary-school social studies textbook from which one have quoted several examples, Abo Hafeza is seen occupying only about a quarter of the height of the 'portrait' format frame. We cannot see the details of his face but the whole figure is used as someone close to them or representing themselves by him as in the following picture.

There is yet another way in which images bring about relations between represented participants and the viewer's perspective. Producing an image involves not only the choice between 'offer' and 'demand' and the selection of a certain size of frame, but also, and at the same time, the selection of an angle, a 'point of view', and this implies the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes towards represented participants, human or otherwise (Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). By saying 'subjective attitudes', we do not mean that these attitudes

are always individual and unique. Their posts go in non-linear texts where viewers can select their own images and view them in an order of their own choosing also respond in nonlinear order. The beginning is glancing at the photo, and then make a new start from left to right, from headline to photo, after which, optionally, they move to the body of the verbal text. Such pages can be scanned or read, just as pictures can be taken in at a glance or scrutinized in their every detail (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1992, pp.218-219).

The gaze direction of people depicted in images and the composition of the image cohere to position the viewer in a certain relationship to the images Meta-function of used images and their relationship showing knowledge and truth are constituted within this context. As with language, any image communicates (has meaning) only in context and leaves much "unsaid," assuming it will be filled in by people's knowledge of the context, including their cultural knowledge and former experience with such images. Images, just like when we speak or write in language are always part of Discourses, if the images are meaningful and communicative. Images are associated with words, settings, and other sorts of objects in the service of letting people enact or recognize different sorts of socially-significant identities and activities (practices). We always ask what words add to the image (or its elements) what the image (or its elements) adds to the words, and how or what unifies words and image that could not have been communicated (at least not in the same way) by images or words alone.

Due to the spontaneity of responses and the tendency to write brief but concentrated answers, many abbreviations, unconventional punctuation and misspelled structures are used (Lee, 2002, Toyoda & Harrison, 2002), this has led to the utilization of non-standard punctuation and upper case in e-discourse style, suggesting linguistic economy (Sims, 1996). This usage simplified responses and pushed users to use pictures and emoticons for comments instead of writing in order to avoid the features of language that may indicate the users' linguistic limitations. Since e-discourse is dependent on reading and writing skills, Abrams (2003) notes that writers have invented linguistic devices, including abbreviations that indicate a lot of meaning (e.g., lol = laugh out loud, btw = by the way) and keyboard symbols using smiley faces (e.g., :-)), to make up for the absence of the paralinguistic features of real-time communication (Lee, 2002; Smith, 2003). Although e-discourse is written discourse, it is mostly characterized by spoken discourse features, where short sentences, abbreviations or emoticons are used to express meaning. Franco became one of the main features of a writing

style supported by pictures and emoticons related to social and religious events, such as the month of Ramadan. Averianova (2012, p. 15) states that

...the unique linguistic and iconographic features of electronic writing comprise but are not limited to an innovative abbreviation (acronyms, clippings, logograms or letter-numeral hybrids and letter-morpheme substitutes, vowel deletion, etc.), emoticons, truncated simplified syntax, non-normative capitalization, and other characteristics.

It can be concluded that in the new variety of language used in electronic discourse, new forms, and functions of language may be more commonly used in addition to the use of shortening, clippings, and contractions, unconventional spellings, word-letter replacement, word-digits replacement, word combination, initializes and emoticons. Observation and follow up of the site reflects that Gif and still pictures are the most frequently used.

The concept that a picture is worth a thousand words is at the core of electronic communication during this period of time, as much of the text generated in computer-mediated communication is considered a manifestation of a new type of electronic or Internet discourse. The new electronic medium keeps the nature of verbal communication but is faster and more expressive. One can send two or three pictures that express a lot of meanings in one click. Hence, a unique combination of written, oral and hybrid features is reflected in the new style of discourse. The need to write quickly and briefly has led to the situation of using selected words in pictures to express a lot of meaning (Murray 1990). Three types define the profile of electronic discourse, namely, picture comments, emotion, and written text.

One of the reasons to use pictures is to have more freedom from punctuation and syntax difficulties. There is no commitment to use lower and upper cases, such as those found in comments like, "why NOBODY answers me?????" to indicate which parts of a message are to be stressed. Instead of using words, many use emoticons first, and then change to using 3-D pictures. Recently, users of the website have used famous actresses and actors to represent feelings. These pictures are also related to the current series on TV or those that are most beloved to them (in our case, Turkish artists). Users could use a very rich message in meaning to communicate by using a simplified picture. Emotions and attitudes are represented by pictures, but actions like laughing or jumping or any other activities are represented by emoticons that convey the writer's state of mind. There are incomplete sentence structures or fragments of speech such as "what topic then???? dunno yet ..." as well as contractions, such

as "don't", "I'll" and "I'm", all indicate the spontaneous nature of speech. Another feature is the absence of capitalization at the beginning of sentences, which is present due to the rapid response of writers or the absence of the concept of formal and informal spoken (also written here) discourse. This is a natural feature of electronic discourse. Short-forms are evident in responses, where "abt" (about), ASAP (as soon as possible) and "u" (you) are used. Before the prevalence of electronic communication, it was difficult to decide to whom, when and who was talking, but with the new application of Facebook, it is easy to postulate the context of a situation in terms of the roles and statuses of the participants involved: who is speaking to whom, when, where and for what purpose. Using false names in accounts creates some difficulty in identifying a speaker, but friends still know who is responding.

The application of web communication has been developed to let comments be specified to each speaker. This feature has added more to the comprehension of written conversation, as one can decide the appropriate response according to the comment. Adding the time of a comment clarifies when the message was sent and whether or not the message was seen, which aids in feeling a sense of closeness and increases comprehension. It appears that the new generative style of communication is a natural development for the slang language of writing, where no rules or features of linguistic forms are used. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) assert that there is a deal of similarity between the sequential nature of information in the verbal language and the horizontal structuring of visual layout. This can be seen the pictures of a girl asking for famous (lantern) for Ramadan as a gift.

The use of Facebook can be used academically for educational purposes and a lot of studies have been done in this field. In the case of academic uses such as writing, users should use correct English. They have to be conscious about spelling as well. Using short forms, non-lingual features should have limited access. They should take Facebook more seriously and consciously for educational purpose. This goes with the results of Deway et al. (2013), Oshima et al. (2012), and Clark and Gruba (2010). In general they point out that the use of informality should have limited access in e- discourse while communicating through social networks and Facebook.

Results also show that a lot of the participants use emoticons because they are more expressive in the e-environment, and they want to display spoken features to their peers. Only few members use them for fear of committing spelling mistakes or writing incorrect or

inappropriate words before their colleagues. Technologies also make participants' thinking and reasoning visible to each other, which are important to communication where there is no time restriction, competition for attention or interruption in the course of peer collaboration. Image posts strengthen the virtual relation of individuals as viewing a visual in the websites involves "being located in a particular social way by and in relation to the image" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1990:23) which is a sort of unifying vision for both viewer and producer. This happens despite the fact that the producer of the visual image is more often absent physically from the communicative situation. Even though there is this disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception, the "two have elements in common: the image itself, and a knowledge of the communicative resources which allow its formation and understanding, a knowledge of the way social interactions and social relations can be encoded in images" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:120). Although this encourages easier communication, it leads to greater deterioration in language use, as many mistakes or linguistic exercises, such as sentence structure, spelling and syntax rules will be ignored. Users now depend more on commenting using pictures, which they believe to be more expressive. The result is a language with no rules or structure.

6. Conclusion

Linguistic forms and features of e-discourse are rapidly changing. The English handwriting of users could suffer if they continue to use such picture language in the comments of e-discourse. Therefore, awareness of linguistic variants in electronic language communication and standardized forms that will preserve language skills is critically needed. Further studies may be carried out to investigate other aspects of e-discourse. From the results, one critical question arises if technology helps to return to using symbols as a language for communication or not. If so, will these symbols ignore the rules of original language and drive us to use what is called animated symbol language? All these questions should be included in future research about language variation as a result of technology integration. On the other hand, using short forms, emoticons, informal and fragment sentences while chatting or posting status, spelling mistakes, mispronunciation might hamper one's language development or might create distortion in many cases. Thus, firstly, people need to be aware of the harmful sides of the Internet, social networks, and Facebook; secondly, they need to consider the positivity of social networks and the positive ways of using these. Users can employ Facebook for academic reasons.

مجلة كلية الآداب . جامعة الإسكندرية . المجلد ٦٩ . العدد ٩٨ .

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