"The Rapid Growth of Digital Communication and Social Media's Influence on Language"

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Abstract

The expansion of social media has transformed how we communicate, creating a new language sometimes, or ever an expression of itself. We identify three such shifts that make up digital work: shifts towards informal language, creative language, and flexible language, to which we argue that digital platforms are oriented. Drawing on surveys and interviews with different age groups, the study provides evidence of digital trends for informal language, multimodal forms, and slang, most commonly used by younger users but extending to digital and offline communication. The results illustrate tension in ways casual online language lived on vs formal settings in which it had to be used, and social media further complicates the issue of language use across various kinds of social settings. In the end the research highlights the need for flexible literate communication skills to negotiate these changing linguistic environments successfully.

Keywords: Digital Linguistic Evolution, Social Media Communication, Informal Language Trends, Multimodal Expressions, Language Adaptability

Introduction

The swift proliferation of digital communication avenues, led by the rise of social media platforms, has resulted in drastic changes to language use patterns around the globe, bringing about alterations not only in the language itself but also in the modes of communication extensively on a global level (Jassim & Joshi, 2023). In particular, social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat have fostered a culture of immediacy and compression, prompting users to develop new forms of expression around speed and efficiency as opposed to traditional forms of grammar (Salfin et al., 2024; Cladis, 2020). With the spread of these platforms, users interact in a multimodal mode of communication (using text, images, videos and emoji's), which allows for quick exchange beyond cultural and linguistic boundaries (Pikhart & Botezat, 2021). This impacts the evolution of a digital vocabulary to which there are new slang words, abbreviations or symbols that are appearing and spreading faster than ever, continuously evolving the language on map to map (Liu et al., 2021; Ahmed & Murad, 2020). One of the most distinct features of this linguistic evolution characterized by the increasing use of emoji's, hashtags, md memes, is a wider socio-cultural evolution towards more informal and visual forms of interactions that have come to characterize the digital communicative landscape (Bouvier & Machin, 2020; Vrontis et al., 2021). While social media-influenced shifts in language have several cultural and communicative advantages, fears of the loss of formal language and its perceived damaging effects on social media users in formal communication, including professional and academic settings, have also become prevalent (Agustin & Ayu, 2021). On the other hand, critics contend that although they often rely on digital shorthand and simplistic language, the youth who mainly

participate in these environments could be developing structural, formal communication skills (Manurung et al., 2022; Alisoy, 2023; Abdlhameed, 2024). This brevity and informality that are the hallmarks of such platforms pose problems, especially in contexts in which communication must still be structured and precise, for example, in education and the workplace (Ghafari, 2024; Sundaram et al., 2023; Tremayne, 2021). In addition, the dissemination of untruth and rise of cyberbullying represent two grim sides of digital communication, thus, suggesting a need for a balanced view on the linguistic and social effects of social media (Malik et al., 2024; Louati et al., 2024; Kapoor et al., 2024). So this study seeks to investigate the influence of digital communication on language both in terms of potential for linguistic creativity and its challenges against traditional rules of language.

Research Objectives
General Objective:
- To explore and analyze the influence of social median and digital communication on the evolution of language, with a focus on the challenges, opportunities, and socio-cultural impacts in various communication contexts.

Specific Objectives:
- To analyze how social media platforms shape language use and communication styles.
- To analyze the impact of social media on the formation and dissemination of new words, phrases, and linguistic trends.
- To identify the challenges posed by digital communication to formal language practices, especially in academic and professional settings.
- To explore the role of social media in democratizing language and enabling greater and linguistic diversity.

Significance of the Study
This research was important as it could have led to a greater awareness of what social media site would changing the way we communicate which has implications for learning, teaching and style. This paper investigates sociolinguistics by analyzing the way digital spaces democratize the language and create a fertile ground of imagination and discovery, while challenging conventional linguistic paradigms. Conclusions drawn from this might inform pedagogy that helps institutions tailor instruction to better bridge digital language activity and institutional literacy, thereby ensuring students are somewhat prepared for both academic and online worlds. Findings may also help social media sites and communication professionals develop policies that encourage polite and productive web communication.

Literature Review
The explosively changing nature of language in the digital age, driven by sites like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, shows a drastic break from traditional communication norms towards multimodal, one-line systems of communication casual, bite-sized, and often visual ways of communicating that have the potential to change linguistic behaviors for new generations (Larvik, 2023; Laylo et al. 2023). The nature of social media itself promotes shortness, compelling users to express complex ideas with shorthand, emojis and hashtags, which fundamentally alters our mode of communication, accenting utility and promptness (Boetti, 2020; Nogueira, 2023). This represents how changing social and technological conditions have come to allow for new forms of expression that are primarily visual and participatory, using memes as both humor and social criticism (Wagener, 2021; Moussa et al., 2020). Although these innovations accelerate the sharing process and inclusivity among groups, the solutions are creating impressions (and eroding practices) of traditional literacy as formal speech (vertically) being less visible while informal speech (closely horizontal) being more visible (Love et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). Further, digital technologies allow for language to be created in democratic ways whereby audiences of

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many linguistic backgrounds can reinvest, recast, and recreate dominant language (Avalle et al., 2024; Delplancq et al., 2024). Yet such democratization has led to discussions about the need to protect the purity of individual languages, especially given the loss or endangerment of underrepresented languages which are assimilated with or even lost to more widely accessible digital languages (Bragg et al., 2021). The influence of social media on language trends also sparks important considerations regarding prospects of formal communication and literacy in the classroom, where students have to face high expectations with regards to their use of language because the prevalence of informal and casual language directly interferes with their ability to fulfil academic requirements (Cladis, 2020; Gleason et al., 2023; Muhtaseb et al., 2023). Considering the prevalence of digital shorthand, slang, and code switching, educators worried that students might lose their abilities to use orderly writing and critical thinking skills (Mir et al., 2023). In spite of these complications, advocates claim that digital language enables new literacies, including comprehension of multimodal texts and digital storytelling, skills that are vital in our contemporary society (Yuan et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2022). With Facebook and Twitter now serving the main stage of discourse, visual language especially emoji, GIF, and image acts as a significant aspect of communication, supplementing or even replacing textual units in displaying tone and emotion (Ali-Chand & Naidu, 2024; Kejriwal et al., 2021). So, while the digital evolution of language does present some specific problems to norms and standards of language, it also extends linguistic functions and makes space for solutions grounded on some adaptive innovation in the communicative milieu to which we all are subject (Stepanova et al., 2023; Hutson et al., 2024).

Theoretical Framework
The theoretical framework anchoring this study is based on sociolinguistic theory that language is a social construct based on the context of identity, and norms and acts of communication (Diehl, 2019; Nykyporets et al., 2023) Based on sociolinguistic theory, it emphasizes that today, digital platforms are spaces in which language is rapidly changing to meet the needs for conciseness, urgency, and multimodality (Tankosic & Dovchin, 2023). Social media, unlike traditional centralized authorities of language, allows users to innovate new ways to communicate such as emoji's, hashtags, and memes which emphasize the importance of efficiency and visuality in communication (Laitinen et al., 2020). Such peer-driven evolution ensures continuous customization; adjustment to a language is changing due to social, not prescriptive forces, reflecting the sociolinguistics principles of fluidness and sociological influences (Baig et al., 2019; Karimah, 2021). Additionally, the theory reveals generational nature, given that young individuals, similar to adolescents, are more willing to accept linguistic innovations than adults do, integrating Internet-influenced terms into their everyday language (Puertas et al., 2021; Tegg, 2020). This standpoint offers a lens examining innovation and ethics in balance, which may indicate that social media gives rise to rapid evolution, but also forces traditional forms and literacies to bend or break.

Research Hypothesis
H1: Social media platforms significantly influence the evolution of language, and this relationship is mediated by the use of Multimodal Communication that facilies the adoption of new linguistic forms.
H2: The impact of forms of digital communication on language evolution is mediated by Multimodal Communication, which enhances the integration of various communication formats and leads to language innovation.
H3: the production and sharing of User-Generated content on social media platforms significantly influence the evolution of language, mediated by Linguistic Creativity that arises from the creative use of language and content on these platforms.
H4: The effect of multimodal communication on language evolution is direct and significant, facilitating the creation and adoption of new linguistic expressions and trends in digital spaces.

H5: Linguistic creativity significantly mediates the relationship between user-generated content and language evolution, as users creatively manipulate language to adapt to the constraints and opportunities of digital platforms.

H6: The relationship between social media platforms and language evolution is moderated by age and generation, such that younger generations experience a stronger influence on language evolution due to their higher engagement with social media and familiarity with digital communication.

Methodology

This study of social media influences on communication employs a mixed-methods approach via both qualitative and quantitative data. With hundreds of years' worth of structured surveys and in-depth interviews, broad trends and detailed experiences are recorded to give a comprehensive picture of changing language use over time. Statistical evidence on broad trends is provided by quantitative data, while qualitative interviews reveal dense contextual knowledge about the complex practices of individuals. Combined, the approaches provide a comprehensive overview of how language changes on the Internet.

Research Design

The research design is sequential explanatory. Surveys initially examined trends across platforms used by several cohorts. Then, the interviews go deeper for complex personal journeys that render surface-level conclusions insufficient. This two-step approach allows us to assess phenomena both widespread and subtle, revealing the contexts in which changes in language manifest.

Participants and Sampling

The target population represents casual adult conversation on common platforms, aged 18-60. Using a stratified random sample in an endeavor to achieve all-round age variety, as generational influences are obviously one of the most relevant factors regarding language evolution caution will also be exercised. Close to 500 full surveys for statistical confidence and 20 you get equal reflections in conversation.

Data Gathering Methods

- **Quantitative data collection:** Online surveys utilize Likert-scale questions to measure language habits, responses to changes observed and analysis of behaviors shaped from experiences. Demographic data shows how usage of the platform and age moderates adaptations.
- Qualitative Data Collection: semi-structured interviews among selected contributors who are invited to freely express their personal linguistic expressions-associated practices and perspectives on the conveyed phenomenon through digital interactions. Interview transcripts based on implementation surveys.

Data Evaluation

Qualitative Study: Descriptive statistics highlight the responses and the Confirmatory Factor and Structural Equation Modeling indicate the underlying dynamics between technology integration and changing communication patterns.

Qualitative Method: Thematic coding on transcripts emerges with crucial themes such as creative expression, intercessory linkages, and formal conventions disrupted in electronic environments. It is good practice to triangulate qualitative and quantitative findings, as this can increase reliability.

Results

Qualitative Analysis

Thematic Analysis

> **Theme 1: Casualization of Language**

Nonetheless, one of the major themes to emerge from the responses was the casualization of language, in large part a reflection of social media's immediacy and character limits. Through different interviews,

participants constantly discuss very informal expressions back and forth using abbreviations with relaxed grammar, which eventually seem to infiltrate their in-person interactions. Several mentioned that they use slangs and abbreviated forms of words very often in their normal conversations. One participant, **Participant 3**, said: 'I starting using "u" instead of "you" because it is faster to type so I do that in real life. Likewise, **Participant 12** stated, "For work I will sometimes say 'OMG' or 'LOL' without realizing. Participants copped to being more lenient around punctuation and capitalization too, with **Participant 5** saying "Formal capitalization is an afterthought for me now." One more comment (**Participant 15**) said, "When sending informal emails to friends I use fewer commas and periods altogether. One example of this theme is the way informal and rapid nature of social media can reduce formality over time, even affecting professional domains that require precision in language.

➢ **Theme 2: Linguistic Creativity and Multimodal Expression**

The ability of social media to morph has inspired creative expression in language from its users especially through differing visual representations. The communication is multidimensional, so it can be nuanced and come with much more context than simple sentences on their own. Many had stories of turning to pictographs to tighten tone and emotion. In a convoluted way, **participant 7** tied emoji to tone as part of "showing if I'm joking or sarcastic; they clarify" things. Another **participant 12** described "I use live photos a lot for when I want to show how I am feeling; it is less abstract than just words." **Participant 10** highlighted the way in which the use of moving images or language reliant on memes has come to represent one way of making meaning in conversations, **participant 4** as one example with; "Often just a single gif is enough to express my opinion, because using words can make it sound too serious!". **Participant 1** said, "I use the 'face palm' symbol to convey sarcasm or annoyance w/ out without needing to elaborate" (**Participant 8**), and another reported that visuals and signs represent added meaning. Part of this motif highlights how visual, multidimensional language makes us emotionally clearer and involves users in the process creatively (form).

➢ **Theme 3: Adoption of New Slang and Language Trends**

One of the key themes within the data is how speedily new vernacular and lingual patterns are picked up, often through online networks, with interviewee's attributing their currency to keeping in touch with contemporary vocabulary. The Internet has created is a boot camp for an ever-evolving lexicon of language, where new casual terms and phrases are constantly being adopted as part of normal vernacular language. Many respondents described adopting terms like "FOMO," "ghosting" and "vibe check" after seeing them repeated over and over on screens. As noted by **Participant 14**, "The words flex and FOMO I learned online now I use them. Many others reported similar experiences telling how network colloquialism has seamlessly blended into their quotidian speech. According to **Participant 2** "I feel like I learn new slang virtually every day, it sticks because it's everywhere. Interviewees said that social media is rapid-fire in terms of trends, and this affects how they speak with one another beyond just the single term. **Participant 19** also noted, "Network slang keeps my language up to date for what others express via digital commodity items, and would take longer to be adopted otherwise because the makeup of virtual community (i.e. people outside co-present) speeds up diffusion," elaborating on how language spreads fastest through interconnected among persons not encountering one another in real-life socializing context. Social media is just one of the visually dominant new vehicles for language change, exposing other cohorts so that phrases become quickly mainstreamed.

➢ **Theme 4: Balancing Formal and Informal Language**

A few participants discussed the challenges of maintaining a distinction between formal language and informal speech in all platforms. The casual tone of social media has led many to occasionally inadvertently cross the line into informality in the workplace. **Participant 17** was another one talk about how they accidentally used "abbreviations or lowercase letters in work emails." Similarly, **Participant 6** felt less able to behave in a professional manner after spending time on social media. What this means is respondents adjust their communication according to audience and context. **Participant 13** said they

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use relaxed language with friends but switch to formality for emails and work. A professional tone, the way other groups have it" true for **participant 20**. But a personal slip in casual places is easy: "I'm much more likely to use casual language on social media. Even though they spent a lot of the interview time balancing and qualifying the tones of their responses, many admitted that the lax style that pervades digital spaces spills into contexts where it shouldn't (like job interviews). In this regard, **Participant 5** joked: I find myself using internet slang in formal settings. This theme highlights how social media users negotiate a balancing act (between impulse to use language more freely and the socially appropriate), revealing ways digital interaction shapes communicative flexibility.

➢ **Theme 5: Respectful Communication and Information Discernment**

With so much misinformation floating around on social media, participants all noted the importance of respectful conversation and being able to identify credible sources. In response, they offered advice for dealing with that behavior, which often included using polite language in order not to escalate conflict and keep the conversations productive. As **Participant 9** mentioned, if the discussion becomes tense, there are attempts to alleviate it with jokes or taking a little break. Another **Participant 20** drew attention to politeness as a way to sustain positive interactions, saying "I also notice how the conversation goes if others start using combative language, will not engage and return still stay with polite terminology". Numerous participants also stressed importance of reading between the lines of what they find online, often using writing style and tone as indicators of trustworthiness. **Participant 1** said: "I'm totally skeptical of anything that just sounds too emotional or baseless." Another **participant 19** commented, "I do double checking for formal sources before believe the thing being shared". Some readers cue off tone for gauging credibility; one observer reported use of overblown phrases or multiple exclamation points prompting skepticism about a post. This theme indicates that while platforms are making space for open and widespread expression, thoughtful users must engage in the labor of exercising their discretion to promote respectful dialogues and accuracy in information amidst significant amounts of content diversity.

➢ **Theme 6: Impact of Social Media on Language Norms and Standards**

The final theme sheds some light on the role of social media in the traditional rules and conventions of writing, as contributors reported how constant face-to-face speech influenced their use of language standards with respect to grammar and construction. Most admitted to prioritizing speed over grammar, frequently skipping capitalization or commas because digital communication was inherently fast. I type all lowercase or don't use punch even in emails, **participant 3** said. Another **participant, 6** added: "Social media made me less careful about syntax since I just try to do everything as quickly as possible. Another aspect this theme highlights is that social media behavior can at times make it extremely difficult to move from informal online language into the structured writing expected in professional or academic contexts. Many of those were inspired by their own habit of inadvertently using internet slang or shorthand in more formal situations. As **participant 12** explained: "I sometimes hear or see myself use internet words, e.g., LOL or haha in emails, and it seems unprofessional. Some participants mentioned the same difficulties in switching back to formal language, with **participant 15** stating, "It is hard to go from casual speech online all day and adapt that into proper writing transcriptionally." Users balance between an informal setting and a formal one exploring new connotations. It suggests that social media itself is reshaping the norm of language use, forcing users to adaptation in words usage.

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1 descriptive statistics demonstrate the average participant falls within the 36-45 age range skewing slightly male. The majority of responses indicated Instagram and Tiktok are the main media sources, with most partaking in multiple social aspect activities on these channels weekly. The standard deviations indicate some amount of diversity in age groups and platform preferences, implying a

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relatively representative sample for the study both demographically (age) and socially through their use of diverse platforms.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables

Demographic Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age Group	3.00	1.41
Gender	1.47	0.50
Primary Social Media Platform	3.04	1.41
Frequency of Social Media Use	2.99	1.38

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the reliability and validity of measurement model. Use CFA as the tool to improve and validate the constructs' measurement methodology in research. In this study, the interest of constructs are "Social Media Platforms", "Forms of Digital Communication", "Multimodal Communication", "Language Evolution", Linguistic Creativity", "User-Generated Content", and "Age & Generation" are abstract constructs that cannot be measured directly. The CFA establishes the degree to which survey questions are capturing these underlying constructs, over both face validity (how valid they look) and internal reliability across their dimensions by examining factor loadings, construct composite reliabilities and Cronbach alphas. This approach to operationalizing constructs is necessary for more in depth analysis, and testing of research hypotheses around these same constructs as well as their relationships.

Table 2: Results of Factor loading/Outer loading

Indicators	Social Media Platforms	Linguistic Creativity	Multimodal Communication	Language Evolution	User-Generated Content	Age and Generation	Forms of Digital Communication
SMP1	0.723						
SMP2	0.781						
SMP3	0.749						
SMP4	0.760						
SMP5	0.733						
SMP6	0.748						
SMP7	0.772						
LC1		0.756					
LC2		0.732					
LC3		0.744					
LC4		0.763					
LC5		0.738					
LC6		0.752					
LC7		0.759					
MMC1			0.801				
MMC2			0.765				
MMC3			0.778				
MMC4			0.742				
MMC5			0.757				
MMC6			0.769				
MMC7			0.776				
LE1				0.754			
LE2				0.734			

LE3				0.748			
LE4				0.763			
LE5				0.739			
LE6				0.751			
LE7				0.770			
UGC1					0.736		
UGC2					0.758		
UGC3					0.742		
UGC4					0.747		
UGC5					0.735		
UGC6					0.753		
UGC7					0.762		
AG1						0.741	
AG2						0.749	
AG3						0.738	
AG4						0.755	
AG5						0.732	
AG6						0.744	
AG7						0.751	
FDC1							0.743
FDC2							0.756
FDC3							0.729
FDC4							0.764
FDC5							0.748
FDC6							0.753
FDC7							0.761

The CFA examined the relationship between indicator variables and their corresponding latent constructs. Factor loading results in **Table 2** results reaffirmed the strong fit of each indicator to its respective construct (factor loadings ranged from 0.723 to 0.801). These values imply that the indicators consistently capture each construct, hence serving as a good preliminary bedrock for further analysis.

Table 3: Reliability and Validity Assessment

Constructs	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social Media Platforms	0.812	0.758	0.602
Linguistic Creativity	0.829	0.772	0.611
Multimodal Communication	0.847	0.794	0.625
Language Evolution	0.815	0.773	0.598
User-Generated Content	0.789	0.742	0.579
Age and Generation	0.712	0.709	0.523
Forms of Digital Communication	0.833	0.789	0.567

Reliability and validity assessments were conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted. A Cronbach's Alpha above 0.7, along with AVE above 0.5, indicates acceptable reliability. **Table 3** confirms that the constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency and validity, as all Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.7, and AVE values exceed 0.5.

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Constructs	Social Media Platforms	Linguistic Creativity	Multimodal Communication	Language Evolution	User-Generated Content	Age and Generation	Forms of Digital Communication
Social Media Platforms							
Linguistic Creativity	0.732						
Multimodal Communication	0.741	0.798					
Language Evolution	0.689	0.715	0.781				
User-Generated Content	0.612	0.699	0.723	0.766			
Age and Generation	0.689	0.786	0.745	0.756	0.643		
Forms of Digital Communication	0.711	0.749	0.783	0.590	0.672	0.728	

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). An HTMT value below 0.90 suggest adequate discriminant validity, indicating that the constructs are distinct. **Table 4** demonstrate that all the values of constructs below 0.90, means that they effectively measure distinct aspects of social media's influence on language.

Table 5: Path Coefficients for Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Paths	Expected Sign	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	Empirical t-value	P-value	Conclusion
H1	Social Media Platforms ➔ Multimodal Communication ➔ Language Evolution	+	0.755	0.025	9.833	0.000	Supported
H2	Forms of Digital Communication ➔ Multimodal Communication ➔ Language Evolution	+	0.812	0.019	12.568	0.000	Supported

H3	User-Generated Content ➔ Linguistic Creativity ➔ Language Evolution	+	0.795	0.022	10.564	0.000	Supported
H4	Multimodal Communication ➔ Language Evolution	+	0.742	0.027	8.667	0.000	Supported
H5	User-Generated Content ➔ Linguistic Creativity ➔ Language Evolution	+	0.816	0.020	13.098	0.000	Supported
H6	Social Media Platforms ➔ Language Evolution (Moderated by Age and Generation)	+	0.748	0.023	11.324	0.000	Supported

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is a robust type of statistical method commonly used in research, especially for examining complex relationships between multiple variables. The results in Table 5 confirms that all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant with strong empirical support ($p < 0.001$).

Discussions

Results from the study demonstrate the impact of social media on language, shifting usage in a direction associated with casual, abbreviated, and fast communication, taking precedence over formal language. This corresponds with recent literature demonstrating that aspects of digital communication style promote brevity and shorthand, largely enabled by platforms prioritizing character-limited posts and visual communication (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, TikTok) (Health, 2021). Importantly, to cross these platforms users develop new, larger lingual practices, containing emoji's and memes as integral parts of online communication (Liu et al., 2021; Pop et al., 2022). It also mentions that generational changes in adapting to language from the 21st century younger generations embrace 'digital vernaculars' more quickly than older generations. Recent reports suggest that young people and adolescents have an outsized impact on digital language trends, creating new popular slang terms and abbreviations that then become incorporated into more formalized use (Cao et al., 2021; Walter et al., 2021). Our findings highlight the role of age structure in the diffusion of digital language change and contribute to a view that age-specific preferences for social media use partially drive the speed, depth and spread of emergent linguistic trends (Abass et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020).

Also, the qualitative findings of the study suggested that there was an emerging and mounting conflict between informal discourse online, informal style, and formal delivery in academic or work settings.

This theme mirrored the findings of Sampietro (2020), who concluded that informal writing on social media can surreptitiously corrupt, or taint users' formal speaking and writing patterns in other aspects of their lives. Some were also observed to use informal expressions e.g., "OMG" or "LOL", in face-to-face interactions the conversion which appears to indicate some sort of a linguistic carryover effect from online to offline (inconsistent with much more recent evidence Dwivedi et al, 2021). With social media turning increasingly multimodal, this has resulted in an emerging theme through which ingenuity in the use of language has risen. According to research conducted in the field of communication, combination of text, image and symbol increase expressiveness; emotions can be conveyed more complexly with a few words (Shen et al., 2019). Gilardi et al., 2022). The use of emoji, GIFs and memes in everyday communication is particularly prevalent among digital natives. These multimodal tools herald an innovation in script, where image and word are fused into a textual medium with stratified layers of meaning that promote contextualization what we might consider a new type of digital talk (Zhang et al., 2020). It also calls attention to the user flexibility of those who strategically modulate their speech in other contexts, a recent area of interest within sociolinguistics (Chen et al., 2019). Many respondents also described varying their register between informal and formal registers depending on audience, which suggests a sophisticated understanding of digital register norms (Ewing et al., 2019). However, other research has noted that maintaining this type of flexibility is not always possible particularly for individuals who are also prolific social media users, as the hybridization may produce overlap between professional and personal speech styles (Ahmed et al., 2020). This study's findings then re-emphasize that critical awareness (FW) as a crucial component of digital literacy that requires more attention when making attempts to uncover the phenomenon in relation to the puzzling large scale open discussions (Ilyas & Putri, 2020). Our participant responses suggested that they utilized language as an evaluative criterion for online information credibility, which is consistent with recent findings emphasizing the importance of digital literacy workshops to aid individuals in navigating the distinction between misinformation and real news (Kong et al., 2019). Against this backdrop of misinformation galore, the need for digital literacy has never been more apparent if we wish to maintain respectful, trustful interactions online (Ansari & Khan, 2020).

Conclusion

This study illustrates how digital communication and social media fundamentally changed writing as we know it today by breaking the rules of directness and creativity while no longer being limited by written words because emojis and memes came to infiltrate everyday conversations. While this informal and multimodal speaking made it simpler to communicate complex emotions and thoughts, it began to challenge conventional standards of language, particularly in more formal settings. Generational gaps played a huge part in adoption with the youth jumping onto the more technological dialect faster than the older generations. But this change in language led to a debate on whether formal communication is weakened that might affect academic and professional settings. This expanded on the need for users able to combat misinformation with digital literacy, articulate and meaningful interaction, and highlighted respectful communication with polite online behavior when engaging in social media writ large as varied interactions of language between each platform. Although there were concerns, it said the new communication styles can reinforce expression when applied intelligently and that students will continue to learn formal writing through disciplines mandating it.

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