



Using Emojis in the Makassar Ethnic WhatsApp Groups

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Abstract. This study is titled The Use of Emojis in WhatsApp Groups of the Makassar Tribe. The study aims to analyze the types of emojis, their functions, and the factors influencing emoji usage in WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe. The data collection method used the observation technique with note-taking and screenshotting techniques. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive analysis. The results of the study show that the types of emojis commonly used in WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe are angry emojis, happy emojis, sad emojis, and surprised emojis. The functions of using emojis include reinforcing communication, reducing ambiguity, increasing communication efficiency, enhancing personal connection, conveying context and tone, and facilitating creativity and playing with language. The factors influencing the use of emojis in communication include biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors.

Keywords: emoji, WhatsApp, Makassar tribe, function, factors

1. Introduction

The development of communication today goes hand in hand with technological advancements. Communication on social media is increasingly used by the public, often referred to as netizens or internet users. one of the platforms is whatsapp. communication through whatsapp is very trendy among the public nowadays. almost everyone uses whatsapp. in whatsapp communication, internet users make use of emojis.

Based on data from the Indonesian internet service providers association, internet users in Indonesia account for around 50% of the total population of Indonesia (Hasyim 2018:503). Technology has changed the way humans communicate worldwide. Housewives use technology more to communicate with their children. For example, to tell stories to their children, mothers play stories available on the internet. Children who use the internet have a larger vocabulary compared to children who do not use the internet. This aligns with the opinion of Ferguson and Donellan (2014), who stated that children who do not use the internet have very low language proficiency compared to children who use the internet.

In conversations on WhatsApp, using emotional language and emojis to express oneself is very common. However, sometimes the use of emojis can be excessive. For example, expressing thanks

like this  along with clasped hands . Using a thank-you emoji like this is more expressive and engaging. However, it can be over the top. So, it's necessary not to use emojis excessively.

The use of emojis should be appropriate to the context. However, sometimes the use of emojis does not match the context. For example, the text says 'see you later,' but the writer uses a tongue-out emoji (🙄). This is what makes it interesting to study the use of emojis in WhatsApp groups, specifically in Makassar community WhatsApp groups.

The Makassar ethnic group is one of the ethnicities in South Sulawesi whose people often use WhatsApp. In terms of culture, Makassar people are friendly, humorous, and like to joke around. So, the use of emojis should also take into account the culture of the ethnic group, in this case, the Makassar people. The Makassar have a life philosophy: *siri'* na *pacce* is the foundation of character, which means maintaining self-respect (*siri'*). Makassar people hold self-respect in very high regard. Self-respect is evident in their daily life.

The people of Makassar are tolerant and helpful, but if their dignity is insulted or belittled, they will defend it. It can even be a matter of life and death. Likewise, *pacce*, or their sense of empathy, allows them to feel the suffering of others; if their sibling or neighbor is in distress, they will immediately help. Other concepts include *Sipakatau* (treating each other as humans), *Sipakalebbi* (mutual respect), and *Sipakaing* (mutual reminders).

2. Research Problems

The questions of the research are:

1. What types of emojis are used in the WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe?
2. What are the emotional functions of emojis in the WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe?
3. What factors influence the use of emojis in the WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe?

3. Research Method

The research method used is the Observation method with note-taking and screen capture techniques. According to Mahsun (2005), the Observation method is a data collection method used to observe language usage, such as the use of emojis. The data collection techniques used are the note-taking technique and the screen capture technique. The note-taking technique is used to record the phenomenon of emoji usage, while the screen capture technique is used to directly capture data from a mobile device as a means of data collection.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Emoji

The word emoji comes from Japanese, a combination of "e" (picture) and "moji" (character). So the word emoji means a picture that has character. The existence of emojis has a very long history. The journey of emojis began long before the smartphone era that we know today. In Japan, the roots of emojis can be traced back to Japan in the late 1990s. Shigetaka Kurita, an interface designer who worked for NTT DoCoMo, a Japanese telecommunications company, is considered to be the creator of the first emoji.

According to emoji expert Danesi (2017), emoji means images and letters with the function of enhancing the effectiveness of conversations on WhatsApp. Bezabeck (1998) also stated that emoji is a visual cue formed from ordinary symbol letters, which, if read upside down, shows the emotional feelings of the creator. From the experts mentioned above, it can be concluded that emoji is an image representing a certain character that can reinforce the messages sent on WhatsApp.

Communication on WhatsApp among WhatsApp members involves using emojis. Emojis are digital images that have characters to convey ideas and are increasingly used to express various emotions. Along with the use of messaging applications, the use of emojis has become an integral part of communication and a trend in society.

The use of emojis (pictorial language) can influence the thoughts of the listener and the conversation partner (Nurhayati, 2023). Using emojis can emphasize sentences or messages on WhatsApp. However, we need to be careful when using these emojis. What we intend as emphasis or clarification may, on the contrary, backfire on the sender if the emojis are used incorrectly. Pay attention to the emojis below.



Emoji number (1) is an expression of disappointment. It is not very appropriate to use it for sadness. Emoji number (2) is a surprised emoji, which would not be suitable for expressing happiness. Similarly, emoji number (3), the laughing emoji, is definitely not suitable for sentences with a sad tone.

So, emojis as a form of pictorial language can influence the reader's mind. This aligns with Edwar Sapir's opinion (in Chaer, 2003) that language affects thought. L.S. Vygotsky reinforces this view that the development of thought is influenced by language.

4.2 WhatsApp

People certainly need communication. This is important for interacting with other citizens. The need for information and communication is very crucial to support productivity and social activities, which are definitely highly needed. One of the most widely used applications on the internet is WhatsApp. This application has become one of the most dominant tools used in Indonesia. Almost 83% of internet users in Indonesia use WhatsApp as their communication choice.

WhatsApp as the most effective communication tool, according to Trisnani (2017). Jumiati-moko (2016) states that WhatsApp is an internet-based application that allows its users to share various kinds of content with each other. In addition, in agreement with this, according to Pranajaya and Hendra Wicaknono, Jumiati-moko says that WhatsApp is the most popular social media that can be used as a means of communication. A glimpse of the Makassar Tribe.

In May 2018, as many as 1.5 billion WhatsApp users sent up to 65 billion messages through the WhatsApp app and WhatsApp Web daily. A year after being acquired by Facebook, the daily message traffic recorded for WhatsApp users reached 30 billion messages. The number of messages sent to

The whole world is already using WhatsApp (Ngazis, 2018). Although WhatsApp is considered an effective means of communication, the question is whether WhatsApp is really an effective communication tool and truly necessary for delivering information services. Because effective communication through WhatsApp is the key to success in the information service itself. To create effective communication, adequate communication media/facilities are needed. The WhatsApp application, which is widely used in various WhatsApp groups, including Makassar ethnic WhatsApp groups, needs to be studied in depth.

4.3 Makassar Tribe

The Makassar tribe is also commonly called the Mangkasara tribe, and they like to refer to themselves as the Mangkasara people. The Makassar tribe mostly resides in the areas of Gowa, Takalar, Jeneponto, and Makassar City itself. This tribe also inhabits coastal areas, making them skilled sailors.

The center of the Makassar kingdom was in the Gowa Kingdom. This is evident from its cultural heritage, such as Balla Lompoa. Here are stored the kingdom's tools, such as weapons, and others. In addition, this ethnic group maintains its identity through its language, namely the Makassar language. There are also cultural traditions such as dances (pakkarena, pepe-pepe, etc.). In terms of food, there are dishes like pisang ijo, coto, konro, and others.

There is also a distinctive culture of the Makassar people, which is the culture of 'siri na pace.' Siri is self-esteem, honor, and dignity. The siri culture is very important to the Makassar people. Upholding siri means upholding dignity, especially the family's honor. Moein Mg, (1990) explained that siri for the Makassar people is a concept that impacts and influences all tangible behaviors. These behaviors are observed in the manifestation of culture. The pace culture is a concept of care, affection, mutual cooperation, and empathy towards others. If someone needs help or assistance, the Makassar people are very loyal in helping to lighten the burden.

Regarding language, the Makassar people recognize high and low forms of language. High language is used by the nobility and people of high status, while for politeness, the general public can use it. This aligns with Chomsky's opinion (Uriagereka, 210:16) that in speaking, it is determined by who is speaking to whom.

4.4 Psycholinguistic

Study Etymologically, psycholinguistics comes from the words psychology and linguistics. Nonetheless, the object of psycholinguistic study is language. Language is processed by our brain and how it manifests in communication. Psycholinguistics is also an approach in language research that relates to language use from a psychological perspective.

Slobin (1974, Meller 1964) stated that the main goal of psycholinguistics is to find a theory of language that is linguistically acceptable and can psychologically explain the nature of language and its acquisition (Chair, 2003).

5. Discussion

5.1 Types of Emojis in Makassar Tribe WhatsApp Groups.

In the WhatsApp groups of the Makassar tribe, many emojis are used alongside the messages sent. Among them are angry emojis, happy emojis, sad emojis, and surprised emojis. Here is the explanation.

5.1.1 Angry Emoji

There is some data on the use of the angry emoji. However, not very much. The use of this emoji is mostly for joking.

Data 1 from Nnda's WhatsApp

Kha infoko Jko blng Bukaki Pnjual Bkso Wha Jadi Blng Mka Bukaki



Translation:

You informed that the meatball seller is already open, so you informed the meatball seller.

But

Answered angrily because disappointed, two disappointed emojis (😞😞)

This WhatsApp message is actually angry but uses a laughing emoji. The person is really angry, but this anger is expressed jokingly.

Data 2 (WA ~)



Jangko has many reasons if it becomes @Amel (

The pointing hand emoji means to be careful at first.

Translation:

Don't give too many excuses once it's done.

The two data above illustrate an angry emoji with a disappointed emoji and a pointing emoji. Data (1) shows a disappointed emoji that is actually angry because it is disappointed and asking if the meatball seller has opened, while data (2), with the writer's angry emotion, provides a pointing emoji along with the words 'Jangko banyak alasan' (Don't give too many excuses). The presence of the two displayed emojis gives a stronger emphasis to the sentence conveyed.

5.1.2 Happy Emoji

The happy emoji is an image of a character that shows a happy expression. It is widely used in WhatsApp by the Makassar community.

Data 1 (No name)

Hello, the rice coupons have been distributed but the RT Is the one giving them out. (🙏)

Translation:

The rice coupons have been issued, but they are distributed by the neighborhood head (RT).

In this WhatsApp message, it is announced that rice collection coupons from the government are available. However, the RT (Neighborhood Unit) is the one distributing them, with a thank-you emoji.

Data 2 (WA ~)

Praise be to God. ( )

This WhatsApp shows a sense of gratitude or happiness.

The two happy emojis used by the writer accompanying their sentence are the grateful emoji and the praying hands. This indicates that the writer wants to emphasize the message conveyed, which is being thankful and praying. The rice coupons that will be distributed by the Neighborhood Association (RT) leader.

5.1.3 Sad Emoji

There are many depictions of sad emojis. In WhatsApp, the Makassar community uses several of them.

Data 1 (WhatsApp BT)

Innalillahi wainnailahi has passed away into the mercy of Allah, Fajar, the child of Kebo, at Thalia Hospital earlier today at 3 PM.

Innalillahi waninnailahi rojiun has passed away to the mercy of Allah, Fajar, Kebo's child, at Thalia Hospital at 3 PM

Answered via WhatsApp (NM)



Data 2

Hope you get well soon, Kodong



Sorry I haven't had a chance to visit, still busy at the camp



Translation:

Sorry, I haven't had a chance to visit yet; I've been busy at the camp.

The sad emotions shown in the 2 data above are the crying emoji and the praying person. The crying emoji emphasizes the sadness. The praying person emoji reinforces the sad statement being conveyed.

5.1.4 Shocked emoji (WA R)

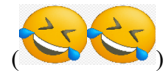
Data 1

Ommalek

Columbus'

crew

acted.



Translation:

Oh mama,

the

Columbus

group

takes

action.

Answered



Data 2

Hampir sy tlp keluarga yg tinggal di Samata.



Translation:

I almost called my family who live in Samata.

The shocked emoji, along with the shocked and astonished face emojis, conveys the writer's emotional emphasis of surprise.

Based on the data above, the types of emojis most commonly found in research on WhatsApp groups of the Makassar ethnic group are angry emojis, happy emojis, sad emojis, and surprised emojis. These four emojis are used by the Makassar people on WhatsApp to emphasize the sentences they accompany. In addition, in Makassar WhatsApp groups, emojis (character images) are used to illustrate that the Makassar people, as ordinary humans, also have emotions such as anger, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Se Boutet et al. (2021) stated that the emotional state of the message sender is perceived negatively when negative emojis are present, regardless of the sentence's valence. Positive emojis increase the positivity of positive and neutral sentences and reduce the negativity of negative messages (Boutet et al., 2021).

The level of warmth increases with the presence of positive emojis, regardless of the supportive valence of the sentence. Conversely, emojis can also cause sadness or gloom. This is reinforced by the findings of Boutet et al. (2021). A literature study in Indonesia by Putri et al. (2021) suggests that emojis tend to direct communication in a more practical form of nonverbal communication.

5.2 The Function of Using Emojis in Makassar Ethnic WhatsApp Groups

Emojis have become an integral component of modern digital communication, playing various important roles that go beyond merely decorating text. Emojis can provide emphasis and enhance the effectiveness of the conveyed message. In addition, the use of emojis in Makassar ethnic WhatsApp groups adds variety to communication. The functions of emojis in WhatsApp conversations among the Makassar ethnic group are. Here are some of the main functions of emojis in the context of digital communication.

5.2.1. Enriching/Reinforcing Emotional Expression

One of the most fundamental functions of emojis is their ability to add emotional nuance to text messages. In written communication, especially in short formats like instant messages or social media, it is often difficult to convey the right tone or emotion. Emojis help bridge this gap, allowing users to express their feelings more accurately and efficiently.



Example: dripda nu than Cinna nu

Translation

Instead of holding back your desire.

5.2.2 Reducing Ambiguity

Written text can often be misinterpreted, especially when the context or tone is unclear. Emojis can help reduce this ambiguity by providing visual cues about the intention or feelings behind a message. For example, adding a smiling emoji to the end of a sentence that might sound critical can change the overall tone to be lighter or more playful.

Example Nd lucu besok nangis ka 😊

Translation: It's not funny, I might cry tomorrow.

5.2.3 Improving Communication Efficiency

In an era where speed and efficiency are highly valued, emojis offer a way to convey complex ideas or feelings quickly and concisely. A single emoji can sometimes replace several words or even an entire sentence, allowing for faster and more dynamic communication. Some people send only emojis. This will be efficient.

Example: Ka maljun Ki tonight.

Translation: This Friday night.



Answer:

This means feeling confused or repeatedly upset

5.2.4 Creating Personal Connections:

In digital interactions that often feel impersonal, emojis can add a human touch. They help create a sense of closeness and emotional connection, even in long-distance conversations or between people who have never met in person.

5.2.5 Conveying Context and Tone:

Emojis can help convey context and tone that might be lost in written communication. For example,



the grateful emoji. Example:

5.2.6 Facilitating Creativity and Playing with Language

Emojis allow users to play with language and express themselves creatively. Clever combinations of emojis can create visual metaphors or complex jokes.



Example:

Cat emojis evoke feelings of cuteness and joy

5.3 Factors Affecting the Use of Emotional Language and Emojis

There are several factors why people use emotions and emojis. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), there is a relationship between habits and emotions; the factors are as follows.

5.3.1 Biological Factors

Biological factors are aspects related to the functioning of the human body and nervous system. Humans have hormones that play an important role in regulating emotions. Hormones such as serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin are often associated with feelings of happiness, love, and pleasure. The hormone cortisol can trigger negative emotions, such as anger. In WhatsApp, among the Makassar, this factor affects their nervous system when encountering the use of emojis, for example, the surprised emoji.  Of course, this emoji affects the tension nerves.

5.3.2 Psychological Factors

Psychological factors are related to how people respond to the way someone thinks, feels, and processes information from their environment. Past Experiences: Emotional experiences that a person had in the past, whether positive or negative, can shape their emotional responses in the future. For example, childhood trauma can lead to fear or anxiety that persists into adulthood. For example, emoji  crying over this. Psychologically, it affects the reader's mind.

5.3.3 Social Factors

Social factors can also influence a person's emotions. Interactions among individuals are often colored by emotions as an effective communication tool. Interpersonal Relationships: Interactions with family, friends, or colleagues can affect one's mood. Good social support usually results in positive emotions, while social conflicts can cause negative emotions such as stress or anger. For example,

emojis  giving a friendly social impression.

5.3.4 Environmental Factors

The physical environment around an individual also plays an important role in shaping emotions. Weather Conditions: Weather can affect mood. Sunny days are often associated with feelings of happiness, while rainy or cloudy weather can trigger melancholic feelings.

6. Conclusion

The use of emojis is important in communication to convey emphasis to friends or interlocutors, particularly in WhatsApp communication within Makassar ethnic WhatsApp groups. The use of these emojis can provide benefits to group members. Communication reinforcement through emojis includes using emojis such as angry, happy, sad, and surprised emojis. The functions of using emojis are to emphasize communication, reduce ambiguity, increase communication efficiency, enhance personal connection, convey context and tone, facilitate creativity, and play with language. The factors influencing the use of emojis in communication include biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors

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