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Teaching Hamlet with Emojis

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the potential use of emojis as pedagogical tools for high school literature classes by focusing on Shakespeare's Hamlet. Examining the evolution, linguistic, and pragmatic functions of emojis, the study aims to emphasize emojis' ability to enrich communication by filling the gap of non-verbal expressions in computer-mediated communication (CMC). Emojis' pragmatic functions are analyzed based on Speech Act Theory and Politeness Theory, demonstrating how they might improve relational communication, mitigate face-threatening behaviors, and convey tone. This analysis forms the basis for utilizing these emoji functions as a potential method for teaching Hamlet. Further, it addresses educational technologies in literature and language teaching along with digital tools, which draws a connection to the method of using emojis in comprehending Hamlet as a tool. In light of multimodal pedagogy and culturally responsive approaches, this study proposes an innovative method for integrating emojis into Hamlet instruction by addressing the challenges associated with early modern English and sociocultural differences between students and the texts. The findings aim to offer a novel potential method for integrating emojis in Hamlet instruction in high school literature classes by offering a new attractive tool for students to create a bond between classic texts and contemporary students and suggest possible directions for future research.

Keywords; Hamlet, emojis, ESL, literature, teaching

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
INTRODUCTION.....	7
CHAPTER 1.....	13
BACKGROUND TO EMOJIS.....	13
1.1 Historical Background to Emojis	13
1.2 Functions of Emoticons	20
1.3 Emoticons and Emojis	23
1.4 Emoji Variation and Standardization	25
1.5 Context of Use and Perception of Emojis	30
1.5.1 Cultural Differences	31
1.5.2 Generation Differences	34
1.5.3 Gender Differences.....	35
1.5.4 Personal Differences.....	37
CHAPTER 2.....	39
LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF EMOJIS	39
2.1 The grammar of emojis	39
2.2 Emojis as allographs.....	41
2.3 Emojis as ideograms	42
2.4 The pragmatics of Emojis.....	43
2.4.1 Speech Act Theory	44
2.4.2 Politeness Theory	49
2.4.3 Politeness functions of emojis.....	53
2.4.4 Expressive functions of emojis	55
2.4.5 Interpretative functions of emojis.....	56
2.4.6 Relational Function.....	58
2.4.7 Emphatic functions of emojis	59
2.5 Impact of emojis on digital communication and language	62
2.5.1 Emoji translators.....	62
2.5.2 Recent improvements and innovations.....	62
CHAPTER 3.....	67

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, PEDAGOGY OF TEACHING LITERATURE, AND SHAKESPEARE	67
3.1 Educational Technology	67
3.1.1 Designing Instruction with Educational Technology.....	72
3.1.2 Challenges and Opportunities	73
3.2 Technology Use and Digital Tools in Language Teaching.....	73
3.2.1 Digital Tools Such as Emojis.....	74
3.2.2 Technology Use and Digital Tools in Literature	75
3.2.3 Challenges and Opportunities	79
3.3 Pedagogy of Literature	79
3.3.1 Approaches to Teaching Literature	80
3.3.2 Process of Teaching Literature	85
3.4 Teaching Shakespeare	87
3.4.1 How to Teach Shakespeare, Challenges and Strategies	88
3.4.2 Shakespeare in Curriculums of Different Countries and What Should Be Included in Curriculum for Shakespeare Teaching	90
3.4.3 Challenges that Students (May) Experience While Studying Shakespeare	91
3.4.4 Strategies and Methods to be Employed in Teaching Shakespeare.....	92
3.4.5 Teaching Shakespeare Plays with Emojis Example	95
3.4.6 Teaching Shakespeare with multimodality theory and emojis.....	97
CHAPTER 4	101
USING EMOJIS TO TEACH HAMLET IN HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE CLASSES	101
4.1 Hamlet	101
4.2 Methodology	122
4.3 Why Hamlet with Emojis?	124
4.4 Why Emoji-based Method and Targeting High School	125
4.5 Application of an Emoji-based approach	127
CONCLUSION	147
Riassunto in Italiano	151
REFERENCES	163

INTRODUCTION

The lack of visual and auditory signals, such as tone, pitch, gestures, and facial expressions, in a world where digital communication rules, have made it necessary to find alternate ways of expressing non-verbal elements in written forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Written material frequently needs these layers, which can cause misunderstandings or ambiguity in digital interactions. On the other hand, spoken communication benefits greatly from context, tone, and body language (Crystal, 2006). Visual aids such as memes, stickers, gifs, and many more have been devised to compensate for the lack of non-verbal communication in digital interaction. Emojis have emerged as one of the most commonly used visual tools in computer-mediated communication thanks to their visuality and practicality in expressing non-verbal expressions. Thanks to their visuality and practicality, emojis help bridge the gap between spoken and written communication, enriching the expressive capacity of digital texts (Danesi, 2017). The emoji has become so widespread that Oxford Dictionaries selected the 🥳 "face with tears of joy" emoji as its 2015 Word of the Year (Li and Yang, 2018, p. 2).

Rodrigues et al. (2017, as cited in Bai et al., 2019: 4) note that emojis are graphic symbols with predefined names and codes (Unicode), capable of representing various elements, including facial expressions, abstract concepts, emotions/feelings, animals, plants, activities, gestures/body parts, and objects. Despite their widespread use, debates persist on whether emojis can be considered as a language. Findings from Cohn et al. (2019) suggest that while emojis may exhibit certain patterns when interacting with grammatical structures in multimodal text-emoji creations, they lack inherent grammatical structures. There are still uncertainties regarding the potential

enhancement of a more complicated lexical system in emojis, researchers such as Evans (2017) and McCulloch (2019) believe this is unlikely. Evans (2017) contends that because emojis do not follow grammatical rules that enable the articulation of intricate and sophisticated concepts, they do not qualify as a language. In a similar vein, McCulloch (2019) argues that because emojis lack syntax and the ability to create recursive expressions, they behave more like gestures than actual languages. Emojis are typically used in brief social media messages to engage readers and offer flavor, color, and emotion. Emojis adeptly fill in the gaps left by speech-related gestures, facial expressions, and intonation in social media when they are used in expressive function as an example; "I can't believe it's Monday again 😞" statement conveys frustration or exhaustion.

The rapid development and increasing use of emojis changed the language of social media. According to Arafah and Hasyim (2019), in social media conversations, the use of both verbal and non-verbal text, such as emojis, enhances the expression of emotions and facilitates the interpretation of the sender's intended meaning, thereby improving communication effectiveness (Riordan, 2017). Interestingly, social media users not only use emojis as a visual language for conveying emotions and thoughts but may also integrate them into the structure of textual sentences such as in this message emoji replacing the word: "I ❤️ coffee in the morning". In this context, conversational sentences in social media often disregard traditional punctuation rules, with sentences concluding with emojis instead such as in this example; "That was amazing 🎉" rather than using an exclamation mark, using party emoji reflects the excitement. The incorporation of emojis into sentence structure in social media conversations reflects a significant shift in the way punctuation, traditionally used to denote the structure, organization, intonation, and pauses in writing, is combined with emojis (Arafah and Hasyim, 2019). Based on these characteristics, emojis can be used to politely end a conversation or provide a quick response to the recipient. They serve multiple purposes and fulfill various functions in communication, depending on the context.

Emojis can help to convey the intended meaning of a message to avoid misinterpretation. Bai et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review of emoji use and noted that Petra et al. (2015 as cited in Bai et al., 2019) categorized emojis into positive, negative, and neutral categories based on their emotional context. Furthermore, this

categorization, demonstrates that emojis assist in signalling the speaker's intent and emotional tone. Ge and Herring (2018) also state that emojis express different rhetorical and pragmatic roles in digital communication. According to this categorization of emojis, found that most emojis are used positively, but some could express irony or satire which is considered a negative use (Vanin et al., 2013, in Bai et al., 2019: 7). Additionally, Beißwenger and Pappert (2019), emphasize the pragmatic function of emojis in managing politeness. They examine the use of emojis to soften the tone of the message and prevent face-threatening acts. Therefore, emoji employment is not only limited to emotional expression or the replacement of words but also a strategic tool for fostering positive communication, and clarification of the intended meaning of the sender which aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, the strategies to foster prevent face threatening acts and keep social distance.

In the context of language learning, there are some studies to examine the emoji use in classrooms. One of them is Algaraady and Mahyoob's (2021) research on the potential use of emojis in university-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' writing skills. The study highlights that students associate linguistic forms with their meanings. This tendency often results in a preference for emojis over text-based language in social communication, as emojis provide a universal and visually intuitive means of expression that transcends linguistic barriers. In addition to this, acronyms and initialisms are common in texting, alongside emojis. Digital media is becoming increasingly influential in language, even though it may impact writing skills and spelling, particularly for second-language learners. Learners of EFL often find it easier to use acronyms, initialisms, and emojis to express their emotions in messages. This way of use is perceived as time-saving and serves as a way to avoid potential spelling or grammar mistakes (Algaraady and Mahyoob, 2021). In addition to concerns about the potential degradation of language, the effective use and acquisition of language in educational contexts depend on the active engagement and collaboration of both teachers and students.

Students often struggle to engage with literary works written in early modern or archaic language, such as Shakespearean texts, which portray societal rules, customs, and conflicts that may feel distant from their own lives. Students may find it challenging to completely understand and relate to these works in the current context because of the

linguistic and contextual gaps presented in them. Considering the possible gap including new methods of instruction in them may be helpful for students (Round, 1997). Teachers can help students understand these classic works better and make them more relevant and approachable for them by bridging the gap between the past and present using connections to modern language, cultural symbols, and relatable experiences. Furthermore, Alfaruque et al., (2022) found that incorporating digital tools like visuals, digital classics, storytelling, graphic novels, and interactive texts significantly enhances student learning outcomes. For example, the study of Hartman et al. (2021) used memes to assist in the comprehension of complex themes. They proposed a framework for incorporating memes as artistic responses that help students create concrete representations of their engagement with texts (Hartman et al., 2021)

Moreover, English as a second language classrooms have experienced a rise in the variety of approaches used in literature classes recently to improve students' understanding and encourage a deeper interaction with literature. These methods include incorporating drama-based activities, fostering cultural awareness, and integrating multimedia tools to create immersive learning experiences (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000; Pallathadka, 2020). Literature is considered a rich linguistic resource that improves language skills in context by exposing students to different syntax, complex narratives, and cultural insights (Keshavarzi, 2012; Gabrielsen et al., 2019) Beyond traditional approaches, the integration of technology has become an innovative and modern approach to literature instruction. Digital tools like interactive platforms and social media have enabled teachers to design more accessible, engaging, and relevant literature instruction (Alfaruque et al., 2022; Škobo, 2020). These new tools also enabled the use of multiple modes and methodologies in teaching like visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic. For example, hypertext or digital storytelling platforms enhanced the modes in teaching and led the multimodal tools to enhance comprehension (Kress, 2009; Kaba, 2020).

The basis of this study lies in referring to the potential challenges high school students might encounter when engaging in literary classics like Shakespeare's plays. These difficulties may occur because of the linguistic and contextual differences in times which may result in students not engaging deeply in the text. Even if Shakespeare's plays are pedagogically appropriate for high school students, they might

be challenging for students due to their complex language, metaphors, and references of the time and may require familiarity with Elizabethan culture and context (Murphy et al., 2020). The selection of Hamlet for this study mirrors these struggles of students since Hamlet includes intricate themes, questions about existence, and abstract meanings. Hamlet's deep cultural heritage and perceptive analysis of societal issues make it a good choice for integrating it with emojis. Its rich language and complicated characters, which frequently require a deeper understanding of historical and cultural settings, may make it difficult for students to read. This study examines whether emojis can be used as a tool to help students comprehend Hamlet in high school literature classes. By providing this approach, which is centered on multimodal pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching, it seeks to bring Hamlet closer to contemporary classrooms and accommodate students' communication habits.

There have been developments lately in the integration of emojis into learning. Notably, Penguin Edition interprets Shakespearean plays using emojis. Nevertheless, there is still a clear research gap regarding the pedagogical strategies and practical use of these emoji-integrated materials in learning environments. The existing literature on the topic, particularly the work of Martins and Sagres (2020) highlights the advantages and disadvantages of these books. Although this work illuminates the motivations behind and inventive elements of these emoji-based adaptations, it dismisses the critical question of whether emojis can be used to promote Shakespeare's plays in educational settings.

The following chapters are organized in the following way. The detailed introduction to emojis in chapter one covers the historical development of emojis from their first appearance to modern emoji sets and their effect on digital communication. In the second chapter, the linguistic and pragmatic functions of emojis along with their differences in use will be examined. Further in chapter three, an investigation into educational technology in literature and language classes; approaches and methods for teaching literature, and Shakespeare, which provides the background for the use of emojis as a teaching tool in literature classes, will be held. Lastly, the fourth chapter explores how emojis might be used to teach Hamlet in high school literature classes with the analysis of Hamlet. This chapter also focuses on the emoji choices and emoji-integrated examples for the monologue of Hamlet from Act 1, scene 2, and the dialogue

between Ophelia and Hamlet in Act 3, Scene 1. The purpose of this research is to provide a proposal for the possible effectiveness of emojis as teaching aids and to establish the requirements needed for their successful incorporation into literature lessons to teach Hamlet.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO EMOJIS

In this chapter, I will examine the evolution of emojis, starting with the transition from emoticons to emojis and their subsequent standardization by Unicode¹ in 2010. I will explore the standardization process as well as the varied perceptions and uses of emojis in different contexts.

1.1 Historical Background to Emojis

The way people communicate has changed dramatically as a result of technological developments, especially in digital and mobile communication, which enable people to have multiple conversations at once. Our communication patterns and social dynamics have changed as a result of this, as technology has significantly reduced the time we need to connect, answer, and maintain dialogues across diverse contexts. The late 20th century saw the emergence of the internet, which led to the development of Computer-mediated communication (CMC), an innovative form of human interaction. CMC refers to any form of communication between individuals that occurs through electronic devices, including the internet, mobile phones and related technologies (Leiner et al., 2009). By the 1990s, CMC had become a global phenomenon as a result of the commercialization of Tim Berners-Lee's 1989 invention, the World Wide Web (Leiner et al., 2009). Thanks to this development, people started to engage in multiple communications at once. Public access to CMC was facilitated by its commercialization, which opened up the possibility of immediate interaction through chat rooms, instant messaging, and later social media platforms (Herring, 1996). Social interaction has been profoundly impacted by the evolution of CMC: unlike conventional face-to-face communication, CMC enables users to have many conversations at once in a variety of social, professional, and personal situations, improving communication efficiency and reach (Walther, 1992).

¹ <https://home.unicode.org/>

The introduction and explosive growth of cell phones and texting represented a major turning point in the development of CMC. Early in the 1990s, Short Message Service (SMS) was introduced, opening up a new era of personal communication. With its rapid and effective means of establishing connections with people, text messaging swiftly rose to prominence as a communication method. Crystal (2008) states that the popularity of texting not only changed the way people communicated but also brought in new language conventions such as emoticons, acronyms and abbreviations, which are now widespread in digital communication. According to Crystal (2008), texting is a type of ‘language play’, in which users creatively modify words to fit the opportunities and limitations of the medium. The clarity and rapid nature of text messages impacted communication methods, resulting in more direct and informal exchanges. People were now able to manage larger social networks and participate in more complex kinds of social interaction, which altered broader social dynamics in addition to changing individual communication patterns (Baym, 2010).

Furthermore, the asynchronous nature of many CMC platforms opened up new possibilities for communication, including the possibility of misunderstanding because non-verbal cues are absent (Walther, 1992). Despite these difficulties, CMC has been assimilated into everyday life and transformed how individuals communicate, establish connections, and create communities in the digital world. Online interactions can occur in real-time, such as through instant messaging or video calls on platforms such as Zoom, or they can happen at different times, as seen with emails and blogs. With chatbots and virtual assistants currently involved in human communication and concealing the distinction between human and machine interactions, the growing sophistication of artificial intelligence and machine learning has also begun to impact CMC (Guzman and Lewis, 2020). These advancements have increased the potential of CMC, making it more dynamic, accessible, and essential to contemporary social and professional life.

However, in the last 20 years, CMC has also changed: at first it depended on text-based interaction like chat rooms and email, further, but it then expanded to incorporate a wide range of communication channels such as video conferencing, and multimedia messaging (Lombard and Ditton, 1997). The emergence of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have led to a further shift in the

field of CMC by enabling the development of online communities and mass communication in addition to interpersonal communication (Ellison, et al., 2014). Furthermore, mobile apps and smartphones allow for real-time communication and ongoing connectivity independent of physical location, further integrating mobile communication technology into daily life (Campbell and Kwak, 2012).

Finally, there may be a blending of direct, face-to-face communication with various forms of CMC, creating a spectrum of interaction possibilities. For instance, video conferencing services such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams allow users to use chat features, screen sharing, and other digital tools that improve collaboration in addition to having in-person interactions. Because of this integration, participants can interact in a more dynamic and adaptable way, combining or alternating between various modalities of interaction based on the situation and their own requirements. The integration of in-person and CMC interactions also happens in daily scenarios, like when people use their smartphones at social events or in-person meetings. Those can converse with one another in person while exchanging messages or sharing material with those who are not in the same room. This practice, which is also known as ‘phone snubbing’ or ‘phubbing’, exemplifies the intricate connection between mediated and direct communication in modern social contexts (Roberts and David, 2016). Although this can improve connectivity, there may be worries about the influence on the quality of interpersonal relationships and the possibility of distraction.

The development of digital communication brought to light the lack of non-verbal cues including tone, intonation, and facial expressions. The transmission of messages or information without the use of words is referred to non-verbal communication. Several cues are used in communication, such as body language, eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and vocal elements like tone and intonation. These cues all contribute to the process of communication by improving meaning, elaborating on emotions, and enhancing communication. According to Archer and Akert (1977), nonverbal clues including gestures, tone of voice, and facial expressions have a huge impact on social interpretation. In the context of computer-mediated communication (CMC), the absence of non-verbal cues often forces communicators to compensate by using substitutes such as emojis or other textual markers to express emotional tone and purpose (Bai et al., 2019). For example, it is difficult to understand irony and sarcasm from the digital

message: a message such as ‘Thanks for your help’ can be interpreted literally as expressing gratitude. However, if the speaker's tone or previous interactions suggest sarcasm, the phrase could be interpreted as an instance of sarcasm.

Context is one of the important cues to clarify the interlocutors' meaning and intention (Hastorf et al., 1970, as cited in Archer and Akert, 1977). However, in CMC, interpreting pragmatic meaning, such as the speaker's intention, can be challenging, even with available contextual cues contextual cues such as punctuation use or formatting like **bold**, *italics*. To provide another example, in the message ‘I guess we'll see’, without further context, it is unclear whether the writer is expressing uncertainty, resignation, or even sarcasm. To mitigate ambiguity in CMC, individuals often resort to emojis. These graphic symbols, such as "😊" or "😏," provide additional context and clarify the sender's intended meaning. For example, to clarify their intention, a writer could use the following emojis:

That's great! 😊 (Positive interpretation)

That's great... 😏 (Sarcastic interpretation)

However, emojis represent a relatively recent addition to digital communication tools. Even though emojis are primarily used in computer-mediated and mobile communication to convey intonation, clarify messages, imply sarcasm, and so on, they were not the first symbols used for these purposes. The smiley, a precursor to modern emojis, was first invented by American graphic designer Harvey Ross Ball in 1964 and became famous across the USA. Characterized by its yellow face, dot-like eyes, and broad smile, the smiley quickly gained cultural prominence, appearing on buttons, t-shirts, and other items. By the early 1980s, it was widely recognized in Western popular culture (Stark and Crawford, 2015). In 1972, Franklin Loufrani, a French journalist, trademarked the smiley symbol to highlight positive news stories, countering the negative tone in media (Stamp, 2013, as cited in Stark and Crawford, 2015).

In 1881, *Puck* magazine featured a series of typographical symbols to represent facial expressions such as joy, melancholy, and surprise, which were referred to as ‘typographical art’. These early representations are considered to be a precursor to modern emoticons, though they were not used in the digital sense we know today (Leonardi, 2022, p. 25)

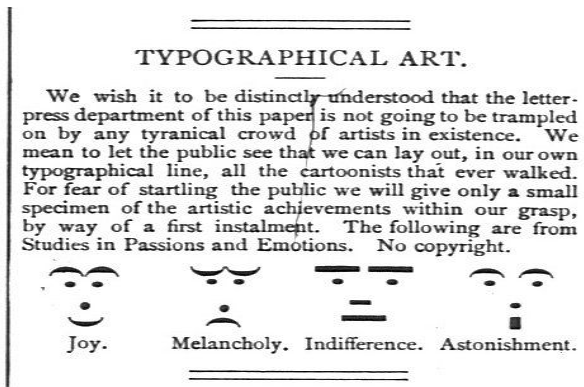


Figure 1. American satirical magazine introduced emoticons as typographical art (Turpin, 2022)

The term ‘emoticons’, a blending of ‘emotion’ and ‘icons’, describes visual symbols such as the smiley face used to enhance text in CMC. These symbols were introduced in 1982, when Scott Fahlman, a computer scientist at Carnegie Mellon University, suggested using a rotated smiley face :-) and a ‘frowny’ face :-(on a computer science discussion forum to indicate whether a message was meant humorously or not (Krohn, 2004 as cited in Dresner and Herring, 2010).

```

19-Sep-82 11:44      Scott E Fahlman           :-)
From: Scott E Fahlman <Fahlman at Cmu-20c>

I propose that the following character sequence for joke markers:

:-)

Read it sideways.  Actually, it is probably more economical to mark
things that are NOT jokes, given current trends.  For this, use

:-(

```

Figure 2. Scott Fahlman’s proposal to use a smiley in a discussion forum (Leonardi, 2022, p. 26)

In the 1990s, with the rapid growth of internet usage, ASCII emoticons became popular in online communication, particularly in emails and chatrooms. ASCII, short for ‘American Standard Code for Information Interchange’, is a standardized character encoding system used to represent text in digital systems, ensuring compatibility across different computers. By combining basic keyboard characters such as :-) or :-(, users were able to convey emotions such as happiness or sadness in a text-only medium, compensating for the lack of non-verbal cues in early digital communication (Walther

and D'Addario, 2001). In 1997, Nicolas Loufrani introduced 'portrait emoticon forms' as an evolution of the simplistic emoticons constructed from punctuation marks. His innovation aimed to enhance the expressiveness of emoticons used in digital communication. In 1997, Nicolas Loufrani introduced 'graphic emoticons,' which were more detailed and expressive than the simple emoticons constructed from punctuation marks. These new emoticons incorporated color and animation to better represent emotions in digital communication. Loufrani's innovation came during a period of rapid technological advancements in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which saw the growth of mobile phones and the internet, leading to the widespread use of digital symbols. This period also marked the smiley symbol's global recognition as a universal representation of 'positivity' and 'cheerfulness,' continuing from its earlier usage as a trademarked symbol in news reporting (Danesi, 2017, p. 2).

An emoticon, also known as an 'emotional icon', is created using keyboard characters to depict a facial expression, conveying the associated emotional state (Tang and Hew, 2018). Emoticons have variations that utilize different symbols, which are quite creative in forming meaningful expressions. Some emoticons are constructed only with ASCII symbols, while others are graphically represented (Dresner and Herring, 2010). For example, the basic smiley face :-) and frowny face :- (are formed using ASCII characters, while others, such as :D (grinning face) and :P (playful or teasing face with a tongue sticking out), convey different emotions. Firstly, ASCII-based emoticons appeared: these are created from keyboard letters such as :-) to portray facial expressions. Subsequently, increasingly complex visual depictions surfaced, first with the Japanese Shift JIS symbols and ultimately developing into Unicode-²derived emojis. Emojis, such as 😊 or ❤️, are graphical symbols that represent concepts, feelings, or objects, as opposed to emoticons, which are text symbol combinations. This then evolved into the icon-style emojis we are familiar with today. Eventually, the trend shifted towards the use of animated and colored stickers. These not only convey the author's emotions but also reflect the emotional tone, social context, and nature of interpersonal relationships. However, before starting the further advancements

I would like to examine two distinct groups of emoticons: Western and Eastern (Japanese kaomoji). Western emoticons, such as the sideways smiley face :-), have their

² <https://home.unicode.org/>

roots in Western culture and are often constructed using ASCII characters. These emoticons are typically read sideways and focus on mouth expressions to convey emotions like happiness :-), sadness :-(, and surprise :-O, and they are commonly used in global contexts (Dresner and Herring, 2010). In contrast, kaomoji, which gained popularity in 1986, is derived from the Japanese words kao (meaning 'face') and moji (meaning 'character'). Unlike Western emoticons, kaomoji are not read sideways and highlights on the eyes which reflects the Japanese cultural belief that the eyes represent a person's soul. For example, kaomoji like (^_^) express happiness, while T_T conveys sadness or crying. The eyes in kaomoji are key to interpreting the emotion, with minimal focus on the mouth, which is the opposite of Western emoticons. This difference highlights the cultural nuances between how emotions are depicted visually in different parts of the world (Katsuno and Yano, 2007, as cited in Leonardi, 2022).

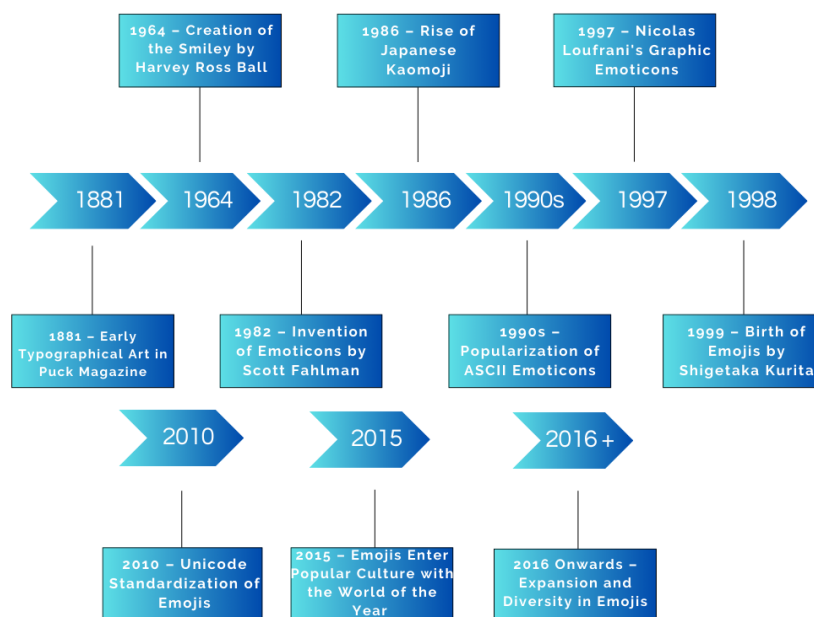


Figure 3. Timeline, The Progression from Emoticons to Emojis (Dresner & Herring, 2010; Blagdon, 2013; Danesi, 2017; Bai et al., 2019; Leonardi, 2022)

In conclusion, early typographical depictions from the 19th century which appeared in Puck magazine in 1881, represented the beginning of the evolution of digital communication symbols (Leonardi, 2022). In order to differentiate between serious and amusing comments in internet forums, Scott Fahlman invented text-based

symbols such as :-) in 1982, which gave rise to the present concept of emoticons (Dresner and Herring, 2010). With an emphasis on the eyes rather than the mouth, kaomoji became popular in Japan in 1986, indicating cultural differences in how people communicate their emotions (Katsuno and Yano, 2007, as cited in Leonardi, 2022). To convey emotions better in digital communication, Nicolas Loufrani invented graphic emoticons in 1997. These emoticons included color and animation (Danesi, 2017). When Shigetaka Kurita designed the first set of 176 emojis for NTT Docomo's mobile platform in 1999, the term "emoji," which means "picture character," was first used (Blagdon, 2013). Emojis were standardized by the Unicode³ Consortium in 2010 to ensure compatibility across platforms and devices (Evans, 2017). Emojis have now spread throughout the world as a universal digital language, capable of expressing feelings, concepts, and social identities in ways that text alone cannot.

1.2 Functions of Emoticons

To explore the differences between emoticons and emojis, I will briefly examine the use and function of emoticons, referring to the findings from several scholars. According to research by Lee et al. (2016), emoticons play dual roles in digital communication: strategic and functional. Strategically, emoticons are used for self-representation, maintaining social equilibrium, managing impressions to seem more likable or courteous, enhancing social presence, and fostering emotional sympathy among chat participants. Functionally, they serve as substitutes for text, providing a convenient shorthand in situations where written communication might be less personal or more time-consuming; they act as explicit social greetings, delivering clear, culturally understood messages without the need for words. This dual functionality emphasizes how important emoticons are in improving online interaction. Emoticons serve as a helpful way of bridging the gap that exists between face-to-face interactions and exclusively textual communication, which lacks non-verbal clues like gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice that transmit subtle emotional and social meaning. Excluding the fundamental reason of emoticon use which is expressing emotions, the following table summarizes the findings of Lee et al. (2016) regarding additional uses and functions of emoticons within digital communication:

³ <https://home.unicode.org/>

Role	Function	Description
Strategic Use	Self-representation	Using emoticons to craft and convey a desired self-image to others.
	Maintaining Social Equilibrium	Employing emoticons to adapt to and align with the communication styles of others, thus preserving social harmony.
	Impression Management	Choosing specific emoticons to seem more likable, courteous, or to project a particular persona.
	Enhancing Social Presence	Using emoticons to stand out and gain more attention in digital conversations, especially in group settings.
	Fostering Emotional Sympathy	Employing emoticons to create or enhance a sense of emotional understanding and connection among participants.
Functional Use	Substitute for Text	Opting for emoticons as a more convenient or expressive alternative to text, especially in brief exchanges.
	Explicit Social Greetings	Utilizing emoticons to convey clear, culturally recognized social messages (e.g., greetings, well-wishes) without using words.
	Supplementing Text	Adding emoticons to text messages to provide additional context, nuance, or to clarify the intended meaning.

Table 1. Functional Use and Strategic Use of Emoticons (based on Lee et al., 2016)

According to Derks et al. (2007), in CMC, emoticons play a crucial role that parallels the functions of nonverbal behavior in face-to-face interactions. These functions include: conveying information, managing the flow of interaction, and expressing levels of intimacy, similar to findings in traditional communication research (Derks et al. 2007). Emoticons act as ‘digital stand-ins’ for facial expressions, introducing a paralinguistic element to messages. This addition of emoticons enriches communication by providing extra social cues that text alone may not fully convey, thus facilitating a more nuanced exchange of social information (Derks et al., 2007). Table 2 outlines how emoticons perform functions similar to those of nonverbal behavior in face-to-face communication, as discussed by Derks et al. (2007).

Function	Description
Conveying Information	Emoticons serve as digital surrogates for nonverbal cues, enhancing the transmission of information by providing additional context and emotional tone to messages.
Regulating Interaction	Emoticons help manage the flow of interaction by signaling the emotional or social tone of the conversation, guiding the pace and direction of communication.
Expressing Intimacy	Emoticons facilitate the expression of varying levels of intimacy in CMC, allowing individuals to convey warmth, friendliness, or closeness despite the digital medium.

Table 2. Functions of Emoticons in Computer-Mediated Communication (Derks et al., 2007)

Lastly, Dresner and Herring (2010) claim that the term ‘emoticons’ might not fully capture the essence of their use, especially in instances where their main role is not emotional expression but the conveyance of pragmatic meanings. Therefore, understanding their function should lean more towards linguistic interpretations rather than non-linguistic. Furthermore, they identify three functions of emoticons as conveyors of emotions, directly reflecting facial expressions; as conveyors of meanings not tied to emotions; associated through conventional use with facial expressions; and as conveyors of illocutionary force, which does not traditionally correspond to specific facial expressions.

1.3 Emoticons and Emojis

Having discussed the functions of emoticons, I will now proceed to the distinction between emoticons and emojis, by exploring the reasons behind their creation and how their design evolved to meet the needs of digital communication. Furthermore, I will explore the reasons behind the necessity to enhance emoticons and identify the limitations of the emoticons. Emoticons, generated from keyboard characters, were early computer tools for simulating facial expressions and improving written communication with emotional or contextual cues which first appeared in 1982 with the suggestion of Scott Fahlman and gained popularity. They rely on the user's creativity for formulation and interpretation, providing a simple way to add personality to digital messages. Emojis, on the other hand, are colorful, standardized visual symbols found in the Unicode⁴ character set which represent a wide range of items and concepts, in addition to emotions. Furthermore, Bettelli and Panzeri (2023) describe emojis as visual symbols derived from the Japanese words for "picture" (e) and "character" (moji). Emojis, in contrast to emoticons' flexible, text-based nature, provide a large, set repertoire of images, ensuring consistency and a broader range of expression across multiple platforms (Evans, 2017).

Shigetaka Kurita, a Japanese artist, developed the first emoji in 1999 while designing the "i-mode" mobile internet platform for Japan's DOCOMO carrier. Kurita wanted to create visually appealing efficient ways of conveying information, so he developed a set of 176 12-by-12 pixel graphics that can be accessed via a keyboard-like

⁴ <https://home.unicode.org/>

grid. These emojis, which are now in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, gave symbols priority over faces which are consistent with DOCOMO's goal of developing innovative methods for communicating. Emojis are encoded by code points in the constantly evolving Unicode Standard and are displayed with small images such as 😊. These symbols extend beyond mere facial expressions to encompass a diverse variety of subjects such as objects, locations, weather phenomena, animals, and events. The transition from emoticons to emojis represents a shift toward a more visually appealing and globally accessible form of digital communication (Beißwenger and Pappert, 2019). While emoticons served as useful tools for conveying emotions, indicating irony, and providing non-verbal cues in CMC, they had limitations. These included a lack of variety in emotions, objects, gestures, and symbols compared to emojis, as well as a lack of visual appeal.

As emojis became popular in Japan, firms around the world, including Apple, began incorporating them into their platforms. In 2007, Google sought emoji recognition by the Unicode Consortium to ensure standard text reveal across devices. This led to Apple engineers agreeing on a proposal in 2010 to include 625 new emoji characters in the Unicode Standard, making emojis accessible to everyone (Pardes, 2018). With the release of Apple's Operating System Five (iOS5), which included emoji characters in a wide range of digital communication platforms, Kurita's picture-word symbols received a global increase in appeal in 2011 (Danesi, 2017). The use of emojis expanded as they became more widely used and more accessible. Due to this popularity, emojis made up about half of Instagram text messages, according to a report in March 2015. The rise in the popularity of emojis was directly associated with keyboards of Apple and Android devices (Dimson, 2015 as cited in Riordan, 2017). Emojis not only became popular in CMC but they also created a retail industry where items with emoji motifs are marketed, including candy, pillows, jewellery and board games (Riordan, 2017). To conclude, the popularity of emojis was confirmed in 2015 when the emoji "Face with Tears of Joy 😂" was selected as the "Oxford Dictionaries Word of 2015." The selection demonstrates the emoji's ability to convey the general tone, ethos, and 2015 global community concerns (Lu et al., 2016)

1.4 Emoji Variation and Standardization

The Unicode⁵ Consortium, founded in 1991, played a key role in standardizing global digital communication by providing a unified encoding method for characters, symbols, and emojis. The establishment of Unicode as a coding standard made it possible to generate pictorial symbols, which allowed software developers and graphic artists to take creative control over emoticons instead of users. Emojis gave shape to Unicode characters, which are widely recognized as expressive faces with small characteristics like twisted brows and blushed cheeks. As users liked these new symbols, they expressed their need for more, which led developers to swiftly release emojis representing a broad range of subjects, including food, flags, animals, clothes, weather, and activities. Due to Unicode's adaptability new emojis are added to each version of Unicode (Riordan, 2017).

Unicode Consortium's standard includes assigning a unique Unicode character and a descriptive name for each emoji, which helps in identifying them across different platforms. However, unlike text characters, the visual design of emojis can vary significantly because they are dependent on the fonts used by specific technology platforms. For instance, the emoji characterized by the Unicode code U+1F606, named 'smiling face with open mouth and tightly closed eyes', might look different on a Microsoft Windows device compared to an Apple device (Miller et al., 2017). There are different visual designs of emoji characters according to different platforms such as IOS (apple version), android version, and much more. Various websites and organizations exist to minimize emoji ambiguity by tracking the usage of emojis across different platforms such as Emojipedia⁶ and documenting the variations in emoji sets. One such website, Emojitracker⁷, enables users to observe the usage of emojis on Twitter and understand their meanings. Additionally, there is an organization affiliated with the Unicode Consortium called Emojination⁸. This organization advocates for diversity in emojis and supports the approval of emojis that represent different cultures and genders, aiming to ensure inclusivity within emoji sets. These platforms also provide insights into the most commonly used categories and datasets related to emojis.

⁵ <https://home.unicode.org/>

⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/>

⁷ <https://emojitracker.com/>

⁸ <https://www.emojination.org/>

Furthermore, the Unicode Consortium, a non-profit organization, not only releases new sets of emojis but also standardizes them. It offers the opportunity to propose new emojis to the public and contribute to their standardization. Each emoji is assigned a standard name and a pictorial representation within the Unicode system. Emojis are categorized in various ways; for example, facial expressions are grouped under ‘smiley’ and other types like food and drink fall into different categories. More details on these classifications will be discussed in the following subsection (Miller et al. 2017).

Despite this standardization of emojis, the appearance of emojis can vary significantly across platforms, with fonts and designs differing between devices like Microsoft and Apple (Miller et al., 2017). However, the Unicode Consortium embarked on a mission to correct this issue, aiming to standardize emojis and ensure consistency in their representation across all digital platforms. To establish harmony and standardized versions of emojis, Unicode implemented a standard. The Unicode standard requires both a Unicode character to identify each emoji across platforms and a name that describes its look. Individual emoji, as text characters, have a specific font that determines their look. This standardization process involved assigning a unique Unicode character to each emoji and establishing guidelines for their design and implementation, thus paving the way for a more cohesive digital communication experience (Unicode, 2023). Every character listed in Unicode is assigned a unique hexadecimal code, typically starting with U+. For example, the code U+1F607 stands for “smiling face with halo” (😊). Unicode encompasses 17 levels where characters are categorized into charts and provided with descriptive names, such as ‘face with tears of joy’, ‘Euro sign’ and ‘percent sign’ (Dürscheid and Siever, 2017). According to Lu et al. (2016), the Unicode standard ensures that emojis are developed and distributed consistently and uniformly. These attributes not only contribute to the widespread utility of emojis in user interfaces but also enhance their effective use in data analysis.

With the first Unicode characters officially designated as emoji were introduced to Unicode 5.2 in 2009. At that time, a set of 722 characters was designated as the combination of emoji characters used by Japanese mobile phone carriers. With each new Unicode emoji sets release, additional emojis were added to the standard, reflecting evolving trends and user preferences (Davis and Edberg, 2015 as cited in Ljubešić and Fišer, 2016). These additions encompassed a wide range of expressions, gestures, and

symbols, catering to diverse cultural contexts and user demographics (Unicode Consortium, 2023). Furthermore, the Unicode Consortium embraced proposals to expand the emoji catalog, incorporating emojis that addressed societal issues and promoted inclusivity (Miltner, 2021 as cited in Logi and Zappavigna, 2021). For instance, emojis representing diverse skin tones were introduced to better reflect the global population's racial diversity (Sweeney and Whaley, 2019 as cited in Bai et al., 2019). Similarly, emojis depicting people with disabilities were proposed to promote awareness and representation in digital communication (Unicode, 2023). These efforts underscore the Unicode Consortium's commitment to embracing diversity and fostering inclusivity within digital communication platforms. With the publication of the 15.1 version of Unicode sets in September 2023, there are 3,782 standardized emojis (Unicode, 2023).

In order to be included in Unicode an emoji must meet certain criteria. It needs to demonstrate widespread global use, so for example emojis representing regional foods that are unfamiliar in other regions would not qualify. Additionally, the emoji should hold social significance by representing diverse cultures and religions. This requirement prompted the inclusion of emojis depicting facial signs with various skin tones. Moreover, there have been attempts to create emojis representing individuals with disabilities, aiming to promote cultural inclusivity (Dürscheid and Siever, 2017). In recent years, emojis have evolved beyond their original role as mere embellishments in text-based communication. They have become powerful tools for expression, activism, and cultural commentary, serving as vehicles for social change and political expression. From campaigns advocating for environmental conservation to movements promoting LGBTQ+ rights, emojis played a significant role in amplifying diverse voices and raising awareness about social concerns (Unicode Consortium, 2023).

<p>Most Used Emojis on Twitter (2021-2022)</p>	<p>In 2021, "😭" Loudly Crying Face surpassed "😄" Tears of Joy as the most-used emoji on Twitter. By 2022, the two were in close competition for the top spot (Emojipedia).</p>
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Emoji Trends	📌 " Syringe emoji usage spiked after December 2020 (due to COVID-19 vaccinations). "🥺" Pleading Face was popular in 2020 but was overtaken by "✨" Sparkles as the third most-used emoji by late 2021.
Top 10 Emojis on Twitter (2021)	Dominated by expressions of emotion, with "😭" Loudly Crying Face and "😂" Tears of Joy leading the list (Emojipedia, n.d.)
Top Emojis in Unicode (December 2021)	According to Unicode's ranking, "😂" Tears of Joy and "❤️" Red Heart topped the most popular emojis list
Category-Specific Emoji Popularity	<p>Crown "👑": The most popular clothing-related emoji, symbolizing authority or success.</p> <p>Flexed Biceps "💪": The top body-related emoji, representing strength or success.</p> <p>Bouquet of Flowers "🌸": Widely used for congratulations or to express affection.</p>
Least Used Emojis	Flags 🚩: Particularly country flags, despite comprising the largest subcategory (258 emojis), are among the least used emojis (Daniel, 2021).

Table 3. Emoji Popularity (Emojipedia n.d; Daniel, 2021)

Emoji usage trends vary depending on the platform, as highlighted by Emojipedia⁹'s data. According to Emojipedia (n.d.); over the past decade, emoji usage has surged, with 7 billion tweets reflecting this trend. In 2021, the "😭" Loudly Crying Face emoji surpassed "😂" Tears of Joy as Twitter's most-used emoji. By 2022, "😂" Tears of Joy and "😭" Loudly Crying Face were in a close race for the top spot. The

⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/>

syringe emoji "🩸" has seen a significant increase in usage since December 2020. "😞" Pleading Face gained popularity in 2020 but was overtaken by "✨" Sparkles as the third most-used emoji by late 2021. During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Emojipedia¹⁰ observed a decrease in the use of positive smiley face emojis. Stability in the top ten emojis used on Twitter, with "😂" Tears of Joy leading. A continued rise in overall emoji usage, with nearly one in five tweets containing at least one emoji. Speculation that the increase in emoji usage might have been hindered by the pandemic's impact on daily life, although conclusive evidence is lacking. Furthermore, according to Emojipedia, the top 10 emojis used on Twitter in 2021 were dominated by expressions of emotion, with "😭" Loudly Crying Face and "😂" Tears of Joy leading the pack. However, according to emoji Popularity in Unicode, Unicode's ranking of popular emojis as of December 2021 reaffirms the dominance of emotional expressions, with "😂" Tears of Joy and "❤️" Red Heart topping the list (Emojipedia, n.d.).

Unsurprisingly, the top-ranking emojis tend to represent multiple concepts and are therefore versatile in their usage. For example, the crown emoji "👑", representing authority or success, is the most popular among clothing emojis. Similarly, the flexed biceps emoji "💪", symbolizing strength or success, dominates the body parts category. The bouquet of flowers "🌸" is widely used to convey congratulations or express affection in various relationships. However, not all subcategories of emojis enjoy equal popularity. While some, like smiley faces "😊", remain consistently popular, others, like flags, are significantly less used. Flags, particularly country flags, despite comprising the largest collection of emojis (258 in total), are among the least utilized. Understanding shifting trends in emoji use provides valuable insights for emoji proposal reviews and future additions to the Unicode Standard. (Daniel, 2021) At last, according to Ai et. al., (2017), sentimental emojis are more frequently used thanks to their quality to complement the context and their tendency to be used with other emojis. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of being clear and ambiguous as meaning for people to receive and they resemble emojis with words in that sense. All in all, we can say that the popularity of emojis depends on factors such as ambiguity and the sentiment of the context.

¹⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/>

1.5 Context of Use and Perception of Emojis

Even with Unicode's efforts to create standardized emoji sets, the perception and use of emojis may remain ambiguous. Despite the standardized meanings, the context in which people use emojis can significantly vary. Miller et al., (2017) notes that emojis are context-dependent for comprehension and can prevent misunderstandings in written texts. Ironically, although words often seem to convey clear and definite meanings, images, such as emojis, are usually more open to different interpretations without context (Albert, 2020 as cited in as cited in Leonardi, 2022). Miller et al., (2016) reinforce this by stating that words have dictionary definitions, but emojis, being visually nuanced, are more open to interpretation. However, this implies a double misconception: first, words themselves do not have fixed, context-independent meanings; second, images are never entirely open to interpretation. Understanding emojis requires considering their context, similar to verbal expressions (Albert, 2020; Miller et al. 2016, as cited in as cited in Leonardi, 2022)


The use and perception of emojis is influenced by various factors such as age, gender, and cultural background (Miller et al. 2016). Emojis often come to be known as a universal language due to their widespread integration into popular culture, prompting questions regarding their true universality. Despite their prevalence, the emotions conveyed by emojis, such as sad or smiling faces, may not necessarily translate universally, given cultural and linguistic diversities (Tigwell and Flatla, 2016) Emojis can signify a range of emotions beyond happiness or humour, including irony or sarcasm. (Hand et al., 2022). Their meanings may also vary across cultures, as gestures do. Ambiguity poses a significant challenge to emoji communication with its cultural variations and platform diversity. Unlike words with precise definitions, emojis' visual nature makes them allow for misinterpretation (Gawne and McCulloch, 2019). Thus, while emojis serve as widespread communication tools, their interpretive challenges underscore the need for further examination of their linguistic properties and cultural implications (Leonardi, 2022).

All in all, the use and perception of emojis are influenced by various factors such as age, gender, and cultural background. Different demographics may interpret and use

emojis in distinct ways, further contributing to their ambiguity. In the following subsections, I will explore these factors, to attempt to understand how cultural, generational and gender differences may shape individuals' use and perception of emojis in digital communication.

1.5.1 Cultural Differences

Despite efforts to standardize emojis, the use of the emojis is not dependent only on their intended meaning but also on the individual user's interpretation. We can compare this to body language, in which the meaning of specific gestures varies across different countries (Matsumoto and Hwang, 2013). Nonverbal communication can be divided into various categories based on Ekman and Friesen's (1969) classification of gestures. These categories include emblems, illustrators, regulators, and emotional displays. Here, emblems are especially significant since they are unique gestures to a culture. These gestures have similar functions as words, and emblems' meanings can vary depending on the cultural setting as spoken languages do. In countries like Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, rotating the palm inward transforms the 'peace sign' into the offensive 'up yours' gesture, a culturally specific symbol that conveys a meaning similar to the middle finger in many Western countries (Morris et al., 1979 as cited in Gawne and McCulloch, 2019). This variation in the interpretation of emblems across cultures illustrates how gestures can be subject to individual and cultural interpretations.

Ekman and Friesen's theory (1969) emphasizes how emblems, though seemingly straightforward, are context-dependent and deeply embedded in cultural norms. Similarly, emojis which we can say modern-day digital emblems are interpreted based not only on their intended meanings but also on users' cultural backgrounds, social contexts, and personal experiences. This flexibility in meaning makes emojis as prone to misinterpretation as traditional body language, especially in cross-cultural interactions. (Gawne and McCulloch, 2019). For example, bringing the fingertips together with the thumb, which is called finger purse, in Italy can signify frustration or irritation, whereas, in Turkey, it is used to express something that is good such as food. So, while Turkish people can use the finger purse () emoji to express positive emotions, Italian people can use it for negative ones. Beyond conveying emotions, the

use of the emoji system involves cultural practices (Guntuku et al., 2019). For example, there are some differences in the “Food” category: while meat is widely used in Western cultures, ramen and rice bowl emojis are among the most used in Eastern cultures. All in all, the study shows that even if some categories are used with similar frequency and denotation, others vary according to the sociocultural context (Guntuku et al, 2019).

I will discuss which regions use the emojis most frequently and which emojis are used more often by various cultures. Ljubešić and Fišer (2016) conducted a study on the density of emojis around the world to analyze their popularity and the connection between World Development Indicators and the distribution of individual tweets across regions. They also used the public Twitter stream.

Region/Continent	Country	Emoji Tweet Percentage	Global Rank
Asia	Indonesia	46.5%	1st
	Philippines	34.6%	3rd
South America	Paraguay	37.6%	2nd
	Argentina	30.7%	6th
Africa	Algeria	33.5%	4th
	Egypt	30.4%	7th
	Libya	29.7%	8th
Arabian Peninsula	Qatar	32.6%	5th
	UAE	27.1%	10th
Europe	Latvia	24.4%	Top in Europe
	Spain	24.1%	-
	Czech Republic, Portugal, Russia	23-24%	-
North America	Mexico	21.8%	37th
	United States	10%	152nd
Asia	Japan	7%	63rd

Table 4. Emoji density and popularity in Twitter across regions and countries (Ljubešić and Fišer, 2016)

According to the results of this study; Indonesia had the largest percentage of tweets involving emojis, at 46.5%, followed by the Philippines at 34.6%. Paraguay ranks highest in South America with 37.6% (second overall), followed by Argentina with 30.7% (sixth overall). In Africa, emojis are most popular in the north, with Algeria ranking fourth (33.5%), Egypt seventh (30.4%), and Libya eighth (29.7%). On the Arabian Peninsula, Qatar is ranked first (fifth overall, 32.6%), followed by the UAE (tenth, 27.1%). The top European countries are Latvia (24.4%) and Spain (24.1%), followed by the Czech Republic, Portugal, and Russia. Interestingly, Japan, the creator of emojis, ranks 163rd with only 7% of tweets containing them, while the United States, which popularized them, ranks 152nd with 10%. Mexico is the highest-ranking North American country, ranked 37th with 21.8%. As continents, Asia has the highest density of emoji tweets (26.3%), followed by South America (20.9%), Europe (16.7%), Africa (14.9%), Australia (13.7%), and North America (11.5%).

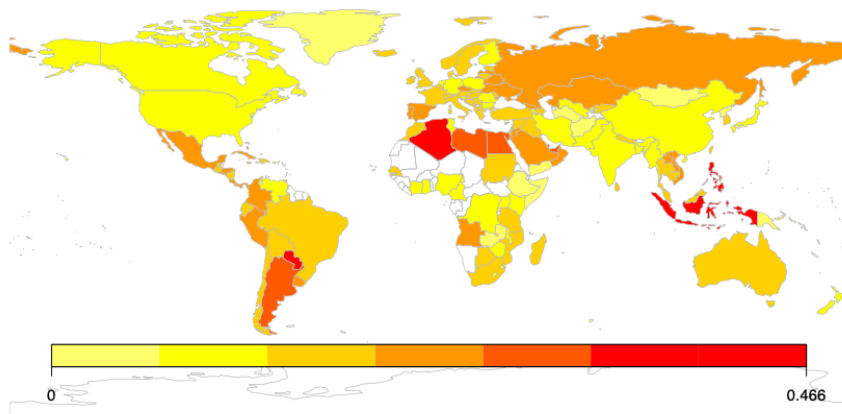


Figure 4. Emoji density per country measured as the percentage of tweets containing emojis (Ljubešić and Fišer, 2016)

To summarize, these findings show that culture may have some influence on emoji usage around the world: cultural practices may influence the popularity of certain

emojis and recognizing these can provide insights into the many ways emojis are used to communicate around the world.

1.5.2 Generation Differences

Understanding how people of different generations use and perceive emojis might provide useful information about enhancement. Previous studies show complex results regarding the relationship between age and emoji use, which may also depend on the platform being used. Some studies, such as an analysis of Facebook status updates, suggest that younger users use more emoticons than older users (Koch et al., 2022). However, research in online chat rooms and messages from WhatsApp revealed no significant age-related differences in emoticon usage (Koch et al., 2022). The findings of the study on emoji usage are similarly inconsistent: Siebenhaar (2018, as cited in Koch et al., 2022) discovered a negative correlation between age and emoji usage in a Swiss chat corpus but found no age differences in another chat corpus examined in the same study. Similarly, An et al. (2018 as cited in Koch et al., 2022) found no consistent correlation between emoji usage and age in WeChat communications. In their research, Koch et al., (2022) found out that younger users are more likely to use emoticons, first-person singular pronouns, and casual language than older people. These findings are consistent with some earlier research (Siebenhaar, 2018 as cited in Koch et al., 2022), but they differ with Fullwood et al. (2013, as cited in Koch et al., 2022), who reported no age-related changes in emoticon usage in online chat rooms.

Emoji use between generations may also depend on individual exposure to technology and accessibility. According to Alshenqeeti (2016), people who grew up with texting, mobile technology, and digital media are more likely to use emojis in their messages. However, Nishimura (2015 as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2016) observes that generational differences in emoji use are less significant than is thought. Instead, they are influenced by a person's exposure to technology in their surroundings. Older people who use technology for work or contact with younger family members are more likely to accept emojis. Lastly, Nishimura (2015 as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2016) and Lu (2016 as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2016) support the idea that emoji use is universal and cross-generational. Emojis are widely used and accepted across different age groups and cultures.

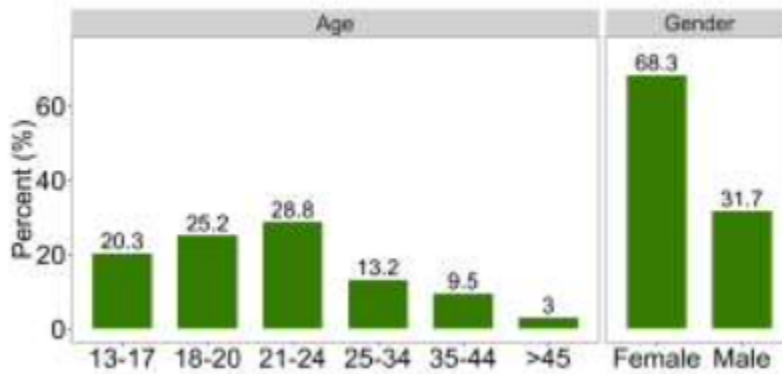


Figure 5. Gender and Age Distribution of Kika Emoji Keyboard Users (Lu et al, 2016:773 as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2016)

1.5.3 Gender Differences

Researchers have also studied the relationship between emoticon use and gender (Dresner and Herring, 2010). Witmer and Katzman (1997 as cited in Dresner and Herring, 2010) and Wolf (2000 as cited in Dresner and Herring, 2010) investigated public discussion forums and discovered that women used emoticons more frequently than men. Similarly, Baron (2004) found that women were the primary users of emoticons in her study of synchronous private instant messaging, and Herring (2003 as cited in Dresner and Herring, 2010) discovered that women in public Internet Relay Chat channels used three times as many representations of smiling and laughing as men. However, Wolf's study found that men frequently utilized emoticons to express sarcasm. Huffaker and Calvert (2005) found that teenage male bloggers used more "flirty" and "sad" emoticons than their female counterparts, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Notably, the use of emoticons is not so different from that of emojis. Figure 4 illustrates the results of a survey conducted by Kika Emoji Keyboard in 2015, which analyzed data from 1.03 million users and their 1.22 billion messages in September 2015. The data was collected from their keyboard application which is used worldwide. The study divided the data according to user demographics including gender and examined how users utilized emoticons and emojis in their messages. The findings indicate that 68.3% of users were female and 31.7% were male, suggesting that the majority of emoji and emoticon users tend to be female (Ai et al., 2017). As mentioned

earlier, younger individuals tend to use emojis more frequently than older age groups. In addition to the higher frequency of use among women, in a 2015 study of U.S. social media users, 78% of females identified as frequent emoji users, compared to 60% of males, and females also perceived emojis as more enriching than males (Emogi, 2015)

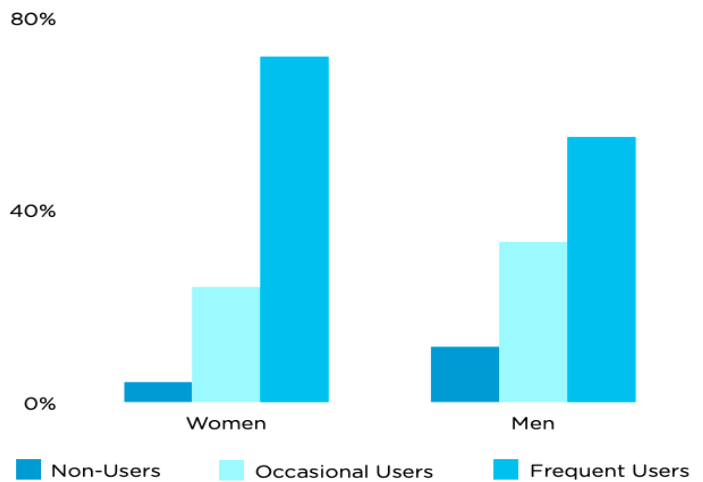


Figure 6. Frequency of Emojis Between Genders (Emogi, 2015)

Recent research shows that women generally use emojis more than men and find them more useful, enjoyable, and easy to use, especially younger women (Kelly and Watts, 2015, as cited in Herring and Dainas, 2020). While both genders acknowledge emojis' communicative functions (Herring and Dainas, 2018), women use them more frequently and positively (Prada et al., 2018, as cited in Bai et al., 2019). In contrast, men tend to use a broader range of emojis (Tossell et al., 2012, as cited in Bai et al., 2019). Women often perceive emojis as more common and clearer for conveying emotions (Rodrigues et al., 2017, as cited in Bai et al., 2019), while men typically use them to enhance emotional expression (Chen et al., 2018, as cited in Bai et al., 2019). However, there are differences in preferences: females favor emojis for support and positive feelings, while males use them for sarcasm and teasing (Wolf, 2000, as cited in Herring and Dainas, 2020). Despite these varied uses, studies suggest that men and women interpret emoji meanings similarly (Herring and Dainas, 2020).

Emojis appear to be more commonly used by women in public communication, while men use them more in private conversations (Chen et al., 2018). A large-scale investigation of smartphone users found that women use more emojis in their

communication than men (Chen et al., 2018). The study analyzed data from 134,419 anonymous Android users across 183 countries, examining 401 million messages collected for three months. The dataset included users who voluntarily exposed their gender, enabling the researchers to conduct a comprehensive statistical analysis of gender-specific emoji usage. In contrast, a smaller study of 96 Chinese WeChat users found no gender differences in emoji usage (An et al., 2018 as cited in Koch et al., 2022). Furthermore, women reported using emojis more frequently than men in self-reported surveys (Prada et al., 2018 as cited in Koch et al., 2022).

While these studies shed light on gender differences in emoji and emoticon use, there are important limitations. Many rely on self-reported data such as the survey by Prada et al. (2018, as cited in Koch, et al., 2022), which can be affected by social desirability bias. Others, like the study of Chinese WeChat users (An et al., 2018, as cited in Koch et al., 2022), use small or platform-specific samples by making it difficult to generalize their findings. Furthermore, these studies often assume binary gender categories, overlooking non-binary identities and individual differences. The focus on stereotypical gendered behaviors such as women using emojis for positive expressions and men for sarcasm (Wolf, 2000, as cited in Herring and Dainas, 2020) risks reinforcing conventional notions of gender communication. Finally, I would like to say that even if those studies give insights into the literature, they should be examined carefully. they should be approached with caution. Future research should adopt more inclusive methods, consider diverse communication contexts and avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes.

1.5.4 Personal Differences

Personal differences, as well as other influencing factors, have an important impact on how people perceive and use emojis. Our particular schemas and prior knowledge influence our spoken and nonverbal choices. These individual traits may be seen in the way we use and interpret emojis and enhance the uniqueness of our digital communication. According to Ge (2019), emoji sequences offer an original way for people to express themselves on social media, as opposed to traditional text-based and visual ways of self-presentation. This particular mode of communication enables individuals to incorporate their personal identity and creativity into their words. Emoji

sequences, unlike words in text, have a non-linear structure that allows users to express their thoughts and emotions flexibly and creatively. For example, some people may want to use a unique selection of emojis that reflect their personality or cultural background, resulting in a personalized "emoji vocabulary." This modification might represent an individual's mood, personality traits, or even sense of humour. Furthermore, the way emojis are combined and used varies substantially from person to person, depending on factors such as age, gender, and cultural background as we previously mentioned. Emojis are also used creatively to provide emphasis to narratives or jokes, as well as to effectively express complicated emotions. They may stand for tone and facial expressions in digital communication. Finally, that adaptability enables emojis to serve a variety of purposes, which will be explored in the next subsections. To summarize, personal differences have a big impact on how emojis are interpreted and used. Our digital connections are shaped by our unique backgrounds, experiences, and creative inclinations, allowing emojis to become a personalized and expressive component of online communication.

CHAPTER 2

LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF EMOJIS

This chapter will explore the pragmatic and linguistic functions of emojis, drawing upon Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson's Politeness Theory, and referring to John L. Austin's Speech Act Theory. I will also discuss the latest advancements in emoji development and trends, including the emergence of a new job field "Emoji Translator".

Thanks to their flexible sequences and creative usage, emojis serve multiple functions, linguistic and pragmatic. This flexibility and creative use of emojis has made them a subject of interest for linguists and communication scholars. This chapter will investigate the diverse functions of emojis by exploring both their grammatical and pragmatic roles in digital communication. First, I will introduce the grammar of emojis by raising questions about their potential linguistic structure comparable to traditional languages. Additionally, I will examine how emojis function as textual elements by discovering their impact on overall meaning and structure based on previous studies. Furthermore, I will discuss the pragmatic functions of emojis, with a focus on Speech Act Theory. The purpose of this section is to discuss how emojis enhance social interactions, assist in clarifying intentions, and convey emotions in digital communication. At this point, I would like to comment on how I will use the term "function" in this thesis. Functions refer to the specific roles or tasks that emojis perform within digital communication. In line with the first purpose for developing emojis, the first known function of emojis was to express emotions, but emoji functions then changed, were enriched, and are still changing.

2.1 The grammar of emojis

First of all, the term "emoji grammar" refers to the syntax and structural components that govern the use of emojis in digital communication. While emojis have a defined vocabulary thanks to digital platforms such as Unicode, which also depends on user preference, the subject of whether they follow a grammatical framework for sequencing is currently being investigated. Furthermore, their structural relationship to written language is currently being investigated. Despite their low sequence complexity, emojis are frequently used for expressive and communicative purposes, according to Cohn et al., (2019). Emojis offer unique information to statements by replacing verbs with nouns

and adjectives. Cohn et al., (2019) analyze how emojis are structured within digital communication, questioning whether there are underlying principles that influence how they are organized, similar to grammatical rules in English. They investigate whether emojis may play syntactic roles such as subjects, objects, and actions within sequences, much like words do in sentences. According to the study, while emojis efficiently express meaning and emotion, their arrangement may be based on general conceptual categories—such as identifying the agent performing an action—rather than strict grammatical syntax (Cohn et al., 2019).

In addition to the data from Cohn et al., (2019), Arafah and Hasyim (2019) investigate emoji sequences and link *langue* and *parole* to emojis. Saussure's concept of *langue* and *parole*, which Barthes developed, offers a framework for understanding language as a structured system (*langue*) and its practical usage (*parole*). *Langue* refers to the cultural norms and conventions that create a linguistic system, regardless of the specific speaker (Saussure, 1959, cited in Arafah and Hasyim, 2019). In contrast, *parole* refers to individuals' real use of language, where these norms are applied through speech acts (Barthes, 2006, as referenced in Arafah and Hasyim, 2019).

This concept extends beyond common spoken and written language to include specialized forms such as the language of fashion or, in our current digital setting, the language of emoji. Emojis function as a *langue*—a collection of social rules and conventions that manage users' communicative interactions—on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter (Arafah and Hasyim, 2019). Each use of an emoji (*parole*) adheres to syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic standards, improving communication by adding nonverbal cues and strengthening interpersonal relationships. For example, the placement of emojis within a sentence structure is similar to punctuation in traditional text, with 76.9% appearing after sentences to highlight or end statements (Arafah and Hasyim, 2019).

The addition of emojis to digital communication demonstrates how they can play a role as both linguistic elements and symbols, helping users to express themselves and fostering social interaction. In their research on the communicative function of emojis, Ge and Herring (2018) state that Emojis have not yet evolved into a fully functional language. They express different rhetorical and pragmatic roles than text sequences, and their expressive range is more limited. Emoji sets lack the necessary vocabulary to

convey grammatical functions such as tense, number, articles, and conjunctions. Furthermore, the grammatical structure of emoji sequences is dynamic and flexible, rather than strictly rule-based. Therefore, it is most accurate to describe the linguistic situation of emojis as that of a developing graphical language at the moment.

Finally, research on the syntax of emojis reveals their diverse role in digital communications. Emojis, while having a specified vocabulary via platforms such as Unicode, have different structural and syntactic qualities that are still being investigated. Cohn et al., (2019) found that emojis, despite their low sequence complexity, are important in communicating emotions and improving communication because they replace nouns and adjectives more frequently than verbs. Furthermore, Arafah and Hasyim's (2019) discussion of Saussure's concepts of *langue* and *parole* emphasizes that emojis act within a context of societal conventions (*langue*) and individual usage (*parole*), which is similar to traditional languages.

Emojis adhere to syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic standards, just like punctuation in written text, enriching digital conversation and strengthening interpersonal interactions. Despite their shared characteristics, emojis don't create an entire language with strict grammatical rules. They adhere to certain structural principles by following syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic conventions within digital communication —such as their sequence and placement, contextual relevance, and role in clarifying intention— and improve communication, but they lack the complexity and capacity of traditional languages. Thus, while emojis play an important role in modern digital communication and have common characteristics with language, they are not languages in the conventional sense. They act as both supplementary visual aids and fundamental elements, bridging the gap between spoken and nonverbal communication.

2.2 Emojis as allographs

Emojis can function as allographs, replacing letters in words based on visual similarities. For example, in the word "book," the letter "o" might be replaced with an eye emoji, which has the shape of the letter "o." This sort of visual substitution, known as allography, is frequently used in commercials. Ortner (2013 as cited in Dürscheid and Siever, 2017) addresses many types of "visual word formation" in his study, presenting vivid illustrations of the phenomenon. However, in mobile phone communication, this









practice is uncommon because of the popularity of automatic word completion, which eliminates the need for human letter substitution with emojis. Emojis may consist of letters, such as "circled M" (), "A button" (), or "B button" (). These are Unicode characters that represent letters and can be used to substitute them in text. In German, "Gute Nacht" ('good night') can be illustrated with the "A button" emoji instead of the letter "a." Emojis can also be used to replace other signs such as money symbols, question marks, and exclamation marks, increasing their versatility in textual communication. Unicode has emoji representations for punctuation marks, including the "Exclamation Mark"  (Dürscheid and Siever, 2017).



Figure 1. Emoji as Allograph (Dürscheid and Siever, 2017)

Overall, emojis as allographs highlight the wide range and creativity of visual symbols in contemporary communication. They provide a unique method for modifying and improving written content, stressing the dynamic aspect of digital language.

2.3 Emojis as ideograms

Emojis may function as both allographs and ideograms. For instance, in the word "heart," the letter "o" might be replaced with a heart emoji , which represents both the letter "o" and the meaning 'heart' as an ideogram. In the text "I'm travelling by ," the car emoji acts as an ideogram for 'car.' This emoji has a referential function, but it does not correspond to a specific spoken phrase; the statement could be understood as "I'm travelling by car" or "I'm travelling in my car." As this example shows, a single emoji can represent many noun phrases. Emojis can express the meanings of verbs or adjectives, such as "I  NY" or "I'm  was introduced to Unicode as a gesture for 'please' or 'thank you,' reflecting its widespread use in Japan. However, in Western culture, it is frequently perceived as a 'prayer' or a 'high-five' (Dürscheid and Siever,

2017). As discussed in the previous section, it is difficult to completely interpret the intended meaning, which is affected by certain factors.

2.4 The pragmatics of Emojis

In this section, I will examine the various functions of emojis in digital communication, with a focus on their pragmatic roles. Levinson (1983) defines pragmatics as “the study of language usage. In other words, pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that investigates how context influences the interpretation of meaning in communication. It explores how speakers employ language to accomplish certain goals or communicate specific intents, going beyond the literal meanings of words and phrases. (Levinson, 1983). Furthermore, Levinson (1983) highlights that pragmatics studies the language in a functional perspective and with the performance principles of the language not with linguistic structure. In the context of emojis, meaning depends on the place the emojis exist with the surrounding text and the relationship between the interlocutors. Hereby, pragmatics is the field that we need help to go beyond the literal meaning of emojis and examine how they communicate complex relational, emotional, and emphatic content in digital settings.

According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of how speakers use language to accomplish communicative objectives while accounting for social, cultural, and contextual elements. The intended meaning of utterances and their impact on the listener or reader is highlighted by pragmatics. When evaluating emojis, this distinction is crucial because their uses frequently extend beyond their fundamental appearance. Emojis serve as useful tools that alter, support, or soften written language messages, especially on digital platforms where nonverbal cues are not present (Herring and Dainas, 2018). Consequently, pragmatics offers the required perspective to comprehend how emojis function as a nuanced means of communication, expressing feelings, maintaining interpersonal connections, and enhancing politeness.

I will use J.L. Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory, which John Searle (1969) subsequently developed, as the foundation for my discussion. Speech Act Theory divides language use into several categories of acts, including directive (providing orders), declarative (effecting change through language), expressive (expressing feelings), commissive (making promises), and assertive (declaring facts) (Searle, 1969). Similar to how linguistic speech acts function, emojis can also serve a variety of

communication purposes. For example, an emoji might be used to affirm a remark, indicate a speaker's emotional condition, or even serve as a symbolic acknowledgment (Danesi, 2017). Additionally, by following face-work strategies, the Politeness Theory which was developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) provides insight on how emojis support the management of interpersonal relationships. According to Politeness Theory, people have "face needs", a need for autonomy (negative face) and social acceptance (positive face). Any communication that has the potential to damage someone's "face" or self-image is referred to face-threatening act (FTA). For instance, the listener's positive or negative face may be threatened by disagreements or criticism (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Emojis can be used as tools to uphold politeness in two ways: by reducing potential face-threatening acts or by fostering solidarity and relation (like humor or affection) (Danesi, 2017; Beißwenger and Pappert, 2019).

Finally, I will examine the particular pragmatic roles of emojis, such as their expressive, interpretive, relational and emphatic functions. I will also show how these non-verbal symbols help to bridge the gap between digital communication and face-to-face engagement. Through this examination, I will observe how emojis function as more than visual symbols; rather, they are integral parts of complex, pragmatically rich communication by enabling interlocutors to convey emotional nuance, reinforce social norms, and manage interpersonal relationships.

2.4.1 Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory was initially presented by English philosopher J.L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) by indicating how language performs actions in addition to conveying information. J.L. Austin (1962) listed three acts in one utterance: perlocutionary acts, illocutionary acts and locutionary acts. Locutionary acts are the utterance of a statement while determining its meaning and context (Levinson, 1983). The content of speech is involved in locutionary behaviors which refers to the act of saying (Cutting, 2002). For instance, in the sentence "It is raining," the locutionary act consists of the words employed to express a meteorological fact. On the other hand, illocutionary acts are acts done via speech that convey the speaker's intention. The illocutionary force of a speaker who says, "I promise to help you tomorrow," is not just announcing a future action, but also the act of promising. Austin's (1962) research

demonstrated how words may both carry out a task and transmit meaning. Lastly, perlocutionary refers to what is done when words are uttered; the impact on the hearer and their response (Cutting, 2002). These acts depict the results or emotions that the speech evokes, such as convincing, frightening, or entertaining someone. For example, shouting "Fire!" in a crowded room which creates panic or an evacuation would be considered a perlocutionary act.

The base of the theory was presented by Austin (1962). However, John Searle (1969) expanded on Austin's concept by classifying illocutionary acts—the five fundamental types of actions one might take—into separate categories such as commissives, representatives, declaratives, directives, and expressives (Levinson, 1983). Every category performs a different conversational function. In representative acts, the speaker states a conviction or a fact by describing or predicting something. For example, stating "The sky is blue" is an act of representative since it states a true belief. Requests, demands, or suggestions are examples of directives that aim to compel the listener to take a certain action. A directive act would be "Please close the door." which orders an action to the listener. Commissive acts, like promises or offers, obligate the speaker to take a certain action in the future. For instance, the statement "I promise to help you tomorrow" is a commissive act. Conversely, expressive acts, like saying "I apologize" or "Congratulations," express the speaker's feelings or attitudes and are essential to preserving social relationships (Cutting, 2002). Declaratives change the external world just by uttering a speech (Cutting, 2002). For example, formal statements like "I resign" or legal declarations like "I now pronounce you married" directly change the institutional or social reality.

A significant component of Speech Act Theory is the application of inferencing rules to assess an utterance's illocutionary force, particularly in real-time interactions. Cutting (2002) asserts that in addition to the word's precise meaning, meaning is influenced by the speaker's intention based on common information they share with the hearer and contextual cues. Such as situational context in which words are not implicit but meaning is provided by the surroundings. Also, cultural background is shared values, customs, beliefs, and traditions that shape the individual's understanding. Lastly, interpersonal background context, which refers to the prior experiences, relationships, and shared history between individuals that influence how they interpret and respond to

each other during communication, affects the meaning the hearer comprehends (Cutting, 2002).

Cutting (2002) asserts that meaning in communication is influenced not only by the precise meaning of words but also by the speaker's intention (illocutionary force), which relies on shared information with the listener and various contextual cues. Situational context plays a crucial role here, where meaning is influenced by the physical surroundings or situation, providing cues that are not explicitly stated. Additionally, cultural background—including shared values, customs, beliefs, and traditions—shapes how individuals interpret messages by affecting their understanding of meaning. Furthermore, interpersonal background context, which refers to prior experiences, relationships, and shared history between individuals, also influences how the speaker and listener interpret and respond to each other during communication (Cutting, 2002).

In recent years, further research has been conducted by several scholars on the application of these speech acts to digital communication. Dresner and Herring (2010) examined how emoticons function as illocutionary tools that alter or enhance the meaning of messages. They found out that emoticons impact the illocutionary force of digital messages by carrying out non-verbal communicating duties akin to gestures or facial emotions in face-to-face conversations. For example, saying "I'm fine" and adding a smiling emoji “😊” can convey sincere happiness, whereas saying the same thing and adding a winking “😉” or rolling-eyes “🙄” emoji might connote sarcasm or irony.

Furthermore, Speech Act Theory may not only be applied to spoken language but also to written language (Ge and Herring, 2018), and these acts help us to understand the role of emojis in digital communication. Ge and Herring (2018) extend the scope of speech act analysis beyond traditional modes of communication to include internet-based contexts. This consists of a wide range of computer-mediated communication (CMC), including instant messaging, emails, and user-generated content on social networking sites. The study focuses on Herring et al.'s (2005 as cited in Ge and Herring, 2018) interpretation of speech act theory in the CMC Taxonomy, which provides a structured approach to categorizing and assessing various types of textual messages incorporating emoji. Ge and Herring (2018) conducted the first investigation

into graphicons in computer-mediated communication (CMC) using speech act analysis and extended rhetorical structure analysis.

Furthermore, it is important to note that while most studies have concentrated on how individual emojis express emotions or communication tones, more recent studies have shown that emoji sequences have even more intricate purposes. Their results demonstrate that, unlike single emojis, which have been shown to have a limited effect in expressing emotions, nonverbal behavior, or tone (Pavalanathan and Eisenstein, 2016; Zhou et al., 2017, as cited in Ge and Herring, 2018). Emoji sequences, according to Cohn et al. (2019), produce "pictorial narratives" with temporal and logical patterns similar to spoken conversation. They discovered that similar to word order in spoken communication, the placement and mix of emojis affect overall meaning.

Emoji sequences frequently mimic gestures and paralinguistic aspects of spoken language, providing clues that alter the tone, rhythm, or emotional undertone of digital messages, as observed by Gawne and McCulloch (2019). This supports the finding of Dresner and Herring (2010) that while emojis can communicate more complicated, multi-layered meanings when used in sequence, they typically serve like speech acts by indicating the illocutionary force of a message. Pfeifer et al., (2022) showed that distinct combinations of facial emojis are employed to establish emphasis, express complicated emotions, or modify the tone of a conversation, further illustrating how emoji sequences specifically imitate spoken language's pragmatic tasks." Rhetorical meaning can be expressed by these combinations that mimic prosodic components of spoken language, such as intonation and stress. Emoji sequences appear to be evolving to take on the pragmatic depth usually associated with verbal interaction, according to this body of study, as they become more common.

Subsequently, emoji sequences influence the tone and effect of the message on the recipient in addition to representing emotions. In the case of the message "I am at the store atm will text u ltr 😊," the sender aimed to have a positive tone and apologize for the delay in responding. According to Cramer et al., (2016), emojis can indicate sarcasm and lighten the tone of a conversation. In this instance, the smiley face emoji modifies the message's intended meaning in addition to expressing an emotion. The message becomes more casual and friendly rather than just informative. The smiley face emoji softens what may otherwise be perceived as a message that is cold therefore

adjusting the illocutionary act of the speaker's purpose behind the words. Like tone or body language in in-person conversations, the emoji adjusts the illocutionary force of communication. This minor modification enables the recipient to interpret the message as less formal or apologetic.

Additionally, Skovholt et al., (2014) investigated the use of emoticons in emails and other professional contexts. They came to the conclusion that emoticons frequently act as indicators of politeness, softening directives or elevating recommendations, and therefore controlling the illocutionary power in professional communication. Comparably, Erle et al.'s (2022) study on the role of emojis in social information processing discovered that these visual cues are essential for conveying emotional tone, frequently enhancing or lowering the illocutionary force of a message.

Lastly, Yus (2014) provided a thorough examination of the pragmatic indicators that emojis serve. Emojis, he claimed, assist in compensating for the lack of non-verbal clues in CMC by directing how a message's illocutionary force is interpreted. This becomes especially important when making vague remarks because it's possible to misinterpret the intended meaning in the absence of contextual cues like tone or facial expressions. An otherwise neutral message can be entirely transformed from serious to humorous by simply adding a laughing emoji. In Table 1, you can find the results from Ge and Herring's research. It represents the emoji sequence acts according to the distribution of celebrities and general users in Weibo.

Table 1: Emoji sequence acts: Frequency distribution of celebrities and general users.

Categories	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	Celebrities' Posts		General Users' Posts		All Posts	All Posts
Claim	91	43.1%	26	44.9%	117	43.5%
Desire	25	11.8%	12	20.7%	37	13.8%
Explain	25	11.8%	3	5.2%	28	10.4%
Congratulate	20	9.5%	6	10.3%	26	9.7%
Manipulate	17	8.1%	5	8.6%	22	8.2%
Endorse	17	8.1%	2	3.4%	19	7.1%
n/a	8	3.8%	3	5.2%	11	4.1%
Thank	6	2.8%	1	1.7%	7	2.6%
Repair	2	1.0%	0	0%	2	0.6%
Total	211	100%	58	100%	269	100%

Table 1. Emoji Sequence Act According to the Distribution of Celebrities and General Users (Ge and Herring, 2018)

In Table 2, the definitions of those acts can be found. This taxonomy was developed by Herring et al., (2005 as cited in Ge-Stadnyk, 2021), However, the table with definitions was created by Ge-Stadnyk (2021) as mentioned below.

Categories	Definitions
Manipulate	Inquire (seek information); request (seek action politely); request (attempt to cause action); invite (seek participation/acceptance by the addressee such as by solicitation of input, suggestion).
Inform	Provide 'factual' information that is verifiable in principle
Claim	Make a subjective assertion; unverifiable in principle
Desire	A future, hypothetical, or counterfactual situation (e.g. hope, wish, dream, speculate, promise)
Explain	Comment on or elaborate
Accept	Concur; agree; acquiesce
Reject	Disagree; dispute; challenge
React	Show a positive, negative, or neutral response; indicate listenership
Repair	Return; clarify; correct misunderstanding
Apologize	Humble oneself; self-deprecate
Thank	Appreciate; express gratitude
Greet	Greet; inquire formulaically about/wish for someone's well-being

Table 2. CMC Act Taxonomy (Herring et al., 2005, as cited in Ge-Stadnyk, 2021)

Herring and Ge-Stadnyk (2024) expanded on this idea by classifying emojis into three general illocutionary functions: (1) modifying the force of a textual utterance, (2) constituting a stand-alone speech act, and (3) virtually performing an action. This unified classification scheme shows how emojis have become significant for digital communication by providing layers of meaning that parallel spoken language acts (Herring and Ge-Stadnyk, 2024). The study examined the pragmatic function of emojis and concluded that, in digital contexts, they can serve as performative elements as well as language modifiers by reinforcing the speech act framework in digital contexts.

2.4.2 Politeness Theory

Politeness is an important part of communication, whether face-to-face (F2F) or in written contexts, and it emerges in many ways depending on cultural and societal conventions. Cultural and societal norms play a significant role in shaping how politeness is expressed, and in many traditional contexts, choosing between formal or casual language is key to showing respect and managing social distance (Brown and Levinson, 1987). For example, in French, using “tu” instead of “vous” to address a stranger can be considered disrespectful unless the speaker is a foreigner. Similarly, addressing a police officer with “ciao” rather than “scusi” in Italy is likely to attract a

negative response because it violates social conventions. These indications of courtesy are evident in both speech and writing.

One of the first academics who provided a foundation for politeness was Geoffrey Leech (1983), who presented his Politeness Principle in *Principles of Pragmatics*. According to Leech (1983), being polite can help remove tension in social situations and bring communication into line with moral and societal standards. His idea encourages speakers to employ particular language strategies that demonstrate tact, generosity, approbation, and modesty which fosters harmonious social relations. Leech's work complements Grice's maxims of conversation which outline the basic cooperative principles underlying effective communication.

Here, I would like to give more details about Grice's maxims. Grice (1975) stated that to guarantee effective and cooperative communication, speakers should usually stick to a few conversational rules. The Maxim of Quantity proposes that presenters should give just the appropriate quantity of information neither too little nor too much. Another maxim is The Maxim of Quality which highlights the significance of communicating with honesty. It is required of speakers to stick to their beliefs and refrain from making claims that are blatantly untrue or devoid of supporting data. Further Grice (1975) claims that for effective communication, speakers should only offer facts that are directly relevant to the topic at hand which is called the Maxim of Relation or Relevance. As the last component, we need to be concise and systematic in our communication which is called Maxim of Manner (Grice, 1975). Additionally, Leech's maxims of politeness, which include tactics like tact, generosity, approval, and modesty, offer a thorough framework for comprehending how politeness can be expressed through different verbal choices. For example, the generosity maxim emphasizes minimizing the speaker's gain, whereas the tact maxim encourages speakers to reduce impositions on others. These maxims serve as guidance for speakers as they craft their sentences to adhere to socially acceptable standards of politeness (Leech, 1983).

On the foundation of Leech's (1983) work, Brown and Levinson (1987) developed Politeness Theory in 1978, first as an article in the magazine 'Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction' (Brown and Levinson, 1987), and later as an independent book in 1987. While Leech emphasized promoting social harmony, Brown

and Levinson centred their theory on face, which is a concept of the public self-image that people strive to maintain first introduced by Erving Goffman (1967). Brown and Levinson (1987) expanded their theory intending to identify universal social principles that govern language structure. They attempted to accomplish this by investigating the reasons behind the decisions made by speakers and listeners in ordinary situations. Brown and Levinson (1987) developed their theory to identify universal social principles that determine language structure. They tried to accomplish this by investigating the reasons behind the decisions made by speakers and listeners in everyday scenarios. Their approach mainly relies on the concepts of 'face' and 'rationality' to describe how speakers behave linguistically, claiming that these concepts are universal. They claimed that one typical motivation for breaching Grice's maxims (Grice, 1975) is to retain politeness, especially in instances where strictly obeying these maxims would result in impolite utterances.

Brown and Levinson's study examines both cultural similarities and distinctions in polite language use. They constructed their model on the concept of a Model Person (MP), an idealized fluent speaker endowed with reason and various qualities of 'face'—both positive and negative. An individual's face involves two dimensions: A positive face is a desire for recognition and approval of one's actions or traits which comes from the need for social acceptance and a positive self-image within a group (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The negative face represents the desire for freedom of action without intervention from others (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Within this concept, speakers (S) and listeners (H) are regarded as Model Persons. Brown and Levinson (1987) examined speech through the framework of speech act theory, viewing utterances as acts that communicate meaning and serve certain functions. They proposed that certain activities, known as face-threatening acts (FTAs), intrinsically threaten the face of either the speaker or the listener. In everyday interactions, people use a variety of methods to minimize the potential negative effects of FTAs on face.

Brown and Levinson feel that these strategies are impacted by socio-cultural factors and are generally applicable. They proposed methods that speakers commonly use in different situations (Alabdali, 2019). Off-record politeness occurs when communicative acts are ambiguous or indirect, and allows the speaker to avoid committing to a certain interpretation (Brown and Levinson, 1987). However, off-record

includes saying things indirectly to not thread the face of others but this kind of conversation flouts the maxim of quantity (Cutting, 2002). On-record politeness includes "Bald-on-record," which refers to face-threatening behavior without mitigating. Also includes On-record-with-redressive-action which occurs when face-threatening acts are followed by strategies to lessen or compensate for the threat (Brown and Levinson, 1987). These strategies include language choices that attempt to respect and manage both positive and negative facial needs during conversations. On-record-with-redressive-action entails adding to or changing utterances in a way that ensures the addressee that the FTA was not intended to injure their face and that the speaker recognizes and supports the addressee's facial needs.

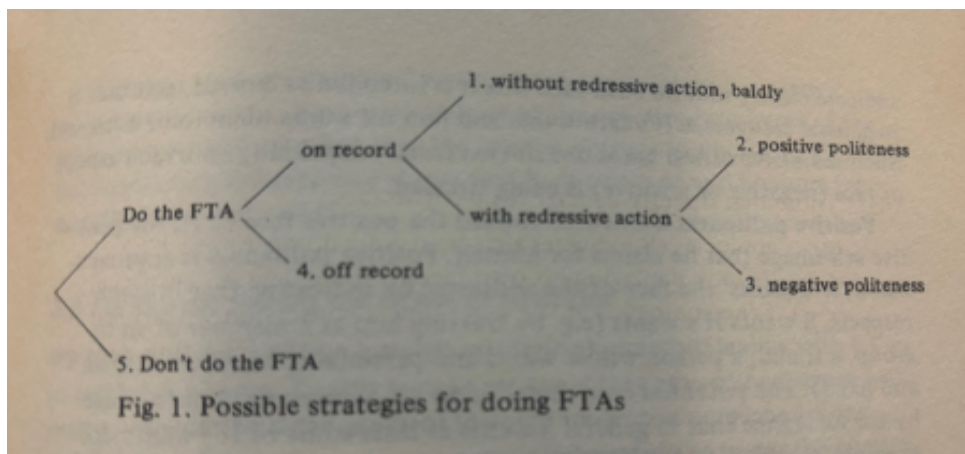


Figure 2. Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs (Brown & Levinson, 1987)

Brown and Levinson separate two major types of politeness within this strategy. Negative politeness can be defined as avoidance-based. It involves the speaker acknowledging and respecting the addressee's negative face demands, such as the need for freedom of action. This type of politeness aims to minimize interference with the addressee's independence. Assurances, apologies, and various linguistic strategies (such as hedges and modalisers) are used as contextual cues to soften potentially face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Positive politeness aims toward the addressee's positive face desires. It involves acts that validate and encourage the addressee's positive face by demonstrating that the speaker values and shares their desires. This type of politeness not only assists in repairing FTAs but also serves to strengthen social relationships by indicating a desire for stronger rapport with the addressee (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Watts (2003) expands on the theory by addressing the rigidity and universality of previous theories, especially those by Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987). Watts criticizes the idea that politeness strategies are universally applicable in all social settings and cultural contexts. Rather, he suggests that politeness is co-constructed by speakers and listeners in real-time interactions and is heavily context-dependent. According to Watts (2003), being polite is a dynamic process that changes depending on the needs and expectations of the participants in a conversation rather than a set of permanent strategies. Watts (2003) presents the idea of "politic behavior," which he describes as acting in a way that complies with social norms without highlighting the fact that it is either extremely polite or impolite. This distinction is important because something that is deemed courteous in one context or culture may be neutral or even offensive in another. Finally, we can conclude that Watts (2003) emphasizes the importance of interpersonal expectations, power dynamics, and cultural standards in politeness of communication and how politeness is perceived.

2.4.3 Politeness functions of emojis

In contrast to spoken and written communication, politeness indicators in digital communication via emojis are more implicit. Emojis are frequently used to indicate friendliness and politeness by smiling or making other positive face gestures. Several researchers have studied the politeness function of emojis. Although many academics recognize the politeness function of emojis, it is frequently classed as an interpretative function, which in the following part of the dissertation will be explained, with the notion that politeness emojis affect the message's meaning or illocutionary force (Dressner and Herring 2010). However, other linguists suggest that this use of emojis is more in line with the relational function, as relational emojis can improve positive speech acts whereas politeness emojis soften threatening speech acts (Tang and Hew 2019 as cited in Escouflaire, 2021).

Beißwenger and Pappert (2019) shared a qualitative study on the usage of emojis in politeness strategies, with an emphasis on face work in an online learning environment. They examined 280 emoji samples in 211 posts where students provided peer feedback, specifically on how emojis were used in posts with possible face-threatening acts. The study discovered that students frequently used emojis for

redressing acts, either softening possible face-threatening acts or reinforcing positive face actions, whereas verbal face threats were carried out without emojis. According to these results, emojis serve as tools for social structure and politeness, especially in situations where interlocutors must deal with potential face-threatening situations, such as in education. The study also identified factors that influence emojis' contribution to face work: their combination with specific linguistic acts (Face-threatening acts or face-flattering acts), their semiotic potential, their visual significance, and the author's selection of which linguistic acts to accompany emojis. Emojis engage with three levels of discourse: semantic, pragmatic, and structural, with each having a unique set of traits, contextual interactions, and visual attention-directing capabilities (Beißwenger and Pappert, 2019).

In the following examples, the "smiling face" emoji is used to soften a potentially face-threatening order, while the "winking face" emoji softens criticism. These uses align with positive politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987), as they help convey friendliness and reduce potential negative effects on the receiver's face, making the interaction appear more casual and affirming social bonds. Furthermore, McCulloch (2019) notes that an emoji can reduce the directness, aligning with negative politeness strategies that aim to minimize imposition and make the communication less threatening.

"Please send me the report by the end of the day 😊"

"Your presentation needs more detailed explanations 🙄"

In digital communication, emojis are typically used for informal communication among friends and acquaintances, although their popularity is growing across many online platforms. Twitter, for example, provides an ideal environment for observing how new communication styles emerge. Danescu et al., (2011 as cited in Danesi, 2017) found that tweets have distinct styles depending on the use of specific terms and emojis, which help sustain social acceptability and positive social identity. Tweets from the same topic frequently share stylistic components, indicating a shared knowledge and familiarity among users (Danesi, 2017).

2.4.4 Expressive functions of emojis

The ability of emojis to transmit emotions, attitudes, or subtle emotional changes within a message is known as their expressive function. This capacity may be similar to non-verbal indicators used in face-to-face communication, such as gestures or facial expressions (Dresner and Herring, 2010). Emojis' potential to represent nonverbal cues like gestures and facial expressions is one of their most evident uses. Emojis with expressiveness enable authors to convey emotions or provide their writings more emotional depth. Emojis are a useful tool for conveying feelings and reactions, which improves the emotional expressiveness of texts. This includes reactions, tone modification (such as conveying humor), and contributing to the playful or serious nature of conversations (Logi and Zappavigna, 2021). Emojis in digital communication can represent emotions in two ways. Firstly, they can reveal the writer's emotional condition at the time of sending the message by acting as "indicators of affective states." Second, they can indicate the emotional tone of a message in the absence of explicit emotional content by acting as "indicators of stance." (Escouflaire, 2021) Furthermore, in his study, Escouflaire (2021) separated functions of emojis and expressive function was the most used used function as primary function.

Emojis can also be used to reply to earlier messages or situations, as seen in independent reactions in Facebook comment threads, which Beißwenger and Pappert (2019) call the "evaluative" or "commentary" function. Panckhurst and Frontini (2020) distinguish between emojis that convey the writer's feelings and those that reflect the recipient's emotions. Furthermore, this expressiveness function can interact with their ability to clarify interactions, which means that the level of emotional output may be influenced by the ambiguity of the message and help to the emotions become more obvious (Riordan, 2017). It can be seen as the booster of the message. For example having a message "Thanks for your efforts" may be ambiguous. However, when it is sent with an emoji like "smiling face" emoji (😊), can emphasize the positive attitude of the message. Some categories of emojis, particularly "Smiley" emojis, are commonly used for expressive functions. However, the context and the sender's intent can vary based on the situation, so these factors should always be considered. To express sorrow, "crying face" emoji (😭) can be used, whereas "heart eyes" emoji (😍) expresses appreciation or affection. Furthermore, sending a "red heart" emoji (❤️) to show

affection or appreciation towards someone or something. Emojis can repeat or highlight the message provided in the text, emphasizing the emotional or situational context. For example, "Happy birthday! 🎉" highlights the joyful aspect of the conversation (Cramer et al., 2016). Furthermore, Riordan (2017) discovered that non-face emojis may enhance the positive affect and joy, separate from their primary quantity in interaction. Despite showing everyday items, non-face emojis may convey emotions. The (🌟) "glowing star" emoji can express admiration or emphasize something wonderful.

Finally, emojis are important in reducing social faux pas and miscommunications in digital media, which frequently lack verbal cues like tone and facial expressions. Emojis provide nonverbal indicators for digital communication, indicating the intent and emotion behind the interaction. However, sometimes some factors such as social conventions influence emotional expression by making it difficult to interpret these emotions (Gibson et al., 2018). Emojis may be seen as body gesture, however, emojis have the communicative purposes beyond expressing emotions and unlike the body gesture they are not spontaneous. In fact, they are deliberate and consciously used features in digital communication that show intentional expression rather than automatic responses

2.4.5 Interpretative functions of emojis

Emojis play an interpretive role when it comes to adding extra information or indications that help determine how a message should be interpreted. Emojis serve as markers of tone, facilitating clearer interpretation of message intended by the recipient, especially in instances when there is ambiguity (Dürscheid and Siever, 2017). Some researchers describe interpretative emojis as "tone" modifiers rather than "mood," separating them from expressive emojis, which directly impact the message's emotional context (Cramer et al., 2016). Dürscheid and Siever (2017) refer to this particular use of emojis as "intention signals." For example, texts such as "Mom said we're eating pizza again today" can be read differently depending on the emoji used. The message conveys the writer's joy by using the "grinning face with smiling eyes" emoji: "Mom said we're eating pizza again today 😊" In contrast, adding a "crying face" emoji at the end of the identical text tells the recipient to read the message negatively: "Mom said we're eating

pizza again today 🍕” (Escouflaire, 2021). The emojis serve as interpretative markers by guiding the recipient on how to read the emotional tone of the message.

The use of emojis clarifies the writer's intention and lowers the possibility of misunderstanding among communicators (Amaghlobeli, 2012). Spina (2018) refers to such emojis as pragmatic indicators since they allow users to derive contextually relevant meanings from text. Emojis are commonly used for their interpretative role in humorous settings, such as irony or sarcasm. Emojis are efficiently used in computer mediated communication to signify sarcastic utterances, signaling to the recipient that the intended meaning differs from what is said. Emojis can effectively identify and decode sarcastic messages in digital communication (González-Ibáñez et al., 2011; Weissman and Tanner, 2018 as cited in Escouflaire, 2021). For example, the "extremely happy" face 😄 is commonly used as an ironic discourse marker, similar to a smirk used to express discontent or annoyance towards something. In one message, this emoji is repeated three times and followed by a distinctly sarcastic thumbs-up emoji, underlining the scepticism toward perceived wasteful spending (Danesi, 2017).

Following Reyes et al.,'s (2013 as cited in Danesi, 2017) findings, who identified irony as an ongoing trend in digital communication despite challenges posed by the lack of face-to-face interaction and vocal cues, the textual analysis revealed that ironic meanings are conveyed through contextual clues and associations. This includes the use of emoji sequences ("you're a loving person 🥰" followed by a tongue-sticking-out emoji after a sarcastic remark), unexpected placements (such as inserting a satirical comment unexpectedly, like "she said she was coming, as she always does, btw 😂" accompanied by a laugh-out-loud emoji), and patterns of repetition.



Figure 3. Ironic and Sarcastic Message Employed with Emojis (Danesi, 2017)

As mentioned above, emojis can be utilized to make the text's emotional tone clearer. According to Dresner and Herring (2010), emojis often operate to disambiguate

the intent behind messages, performing a critical role in elucidating the emotional content and intended meaning. But they also assist in resolving ambiguity within the text in addition to helping to make emotional sentiment clearer. Emojis serve a significant function in digital communication by expressing emotional tone and defining the intended topic of contact (Cramer et al., 2016). Since non-verbal signals are essential for complete comprehension in face-to-face communication, they fill in the gap left by the absence of non-verbal cues by ensuring that communications are accurately understood and well received (Derks et al., 2007).

Emojis can be separated into two groups: with emotional tone with an expressive function; and as a clarifier with an interpretative function. (Escouflaire, 2021) For example, “Are you free tonight?” This basic questioning might be viewed differently depending on the context and tone. Without further clues, the recipient may wonder if the sender is requesting availability, proposing a plan, or asking about something else entirely. "Are you free tonight? 🎥" Adding the movie camera emoji " 🎥 " makes the message clearer and more specific. Now it's clear that the sender wants to know if the recipient is available to watch a movie tonight. The emoji offers context and clarifies the notion behind the question, allowing the recipient to comprehend and answer accordingly. The emoji " 🎥 " clarifies the message's intended meaning, reduces ambiguity, and facilitates effective communication between sender and recipient. Furthermore, this function is also related to the sender of the message which is illocutionary force (the intended force or meaning behind an utterance) of a message and so that speech acts too (Schneebeil, 2017). Furthermore, this interpretative function is closely related to the illocutionary force of the message. By clarifying ambiguity, emojis ensure that the illocutionary force—the sender's intention— reaches the recipient effectively, thereby facilitating smoother and more effective communication.

2.4.6 Relational Function

The relational function of emojis refers to their role in maintaining and enhancing interpersonal relationships in computer-mediated communication (Escouflaire, 2021). Emojis are useful for managing and fostering relationships in computer-mediated communication. Emojis, like nonverbal cues such as eye contact and laughter in face-to-face talks, have a phatic role by conveying intimacy and familiarity between users

(Escouflaire, 2021; Spina, 2018). Messages sent with emojis appears to be more likely informal and promote a sense of intimacy (Janssen et al., 2014 as cited in Tang and Hew, 2019). They also encourage recipients to reciprocate by using emojis in their responses, similar to how small chat or typical greetings like 'hello' or 'how are you?' help to create a positive impression (Spina, 2018).

According to the research by Fullwood (et al.2015 as cited in Escouflaire, 2021) emoji users are generally perceived as more friendly and welcoming than people who do not use emojis. Cramer et al., (2016) also examine how emojis might be useful tools in digital discussions, particularly for maintaining and improving user relationships. Their research demonstrates that emojis are more than just visual characters; they function as signals of rapport and shared understanding in continuous encounters. When responding with emojis, people take into account both previous exchanges and the current conversational context by strategically employing emojis to express intents that improve relationship dynamics.

By using emojis, sender and receiver signal mutual appreciation and strengthen relational bonds over time. This use can evolve into shared traditions where specific emojis, like the "little ghost" or a smiling cat, symbolize unique aspects of the relationship, fostering intimacy and creating memorable shared experiences. The choice of emojis is not spontaneous; it reflects the shared history and emotional connection between users by conveying subtle meanings that are comprehensible primarily to those with an intimate knowledge of the relationship's context and development (Cramer et al., 2016).

2.4.7 Emphatic functions of emojis

The emphatic function of emojis reflects to their role in reinforcing or amplifying the meaning of a message, often by mirroring an emotion or stance already expressed verbally. Emojis can employ an emphatic function in two distinct ways (Escouflaire, 2021). Firstly, emojis have the ability to highlight an emotion or attitude that has already been expressed in the text, so "mirroring" the content. This use reinforces the message and adds emotional weight (Amaghlobeli, 2012; Schneebeli, 2017). For instance, an extra emoji can serve as an additional linguistic hedge to decrease the facial threat in potentially dangerous situations where verbal hedges are employed to

minimize the impact. In these terms, we can say that this function resembles the politeness function.

Secondly, a forceful emoji can enhance the impact of other identical emoji in a message. Cramer et al., (2016) discovered that repeated emojis within a message might increase their emphatic value. According to data from Swiftkey, a virtual keyboard software, the most common emoji combinations were sequences of the same emoji. More than half of emoji bigrams, trigrams, and quadrigrams contained the same repeated emojis (McCulloch and Gawne 2018). McCulloch and Gawne (2018) compared emoji to "beat gestures," claiming that repeated emoji emphasize in the same way that repeated gestures do in face-to-face discourse. For example; GREAT PERFORMANCE 🙌🙌. To summarize, emojis may emphasize emotions or attitudes by imitating verbal content or repeating identical emojis to boost their emphatic impact which makes them useful tools for reinforcing messages in digital communications.

Table 3 shows the examples and the definitions of the functions of emojis.

Function	Description	Examples
Expressive Function	Emojis convey paraverbal cues like facial expressions and gestures, allowing writers to express feelings or add emotional depth to their messages.	😊 (happiness), 😞 (sadness), 😂 (laughter)
Politeness Function	Emojis soften potentially face-threatening acts or reinforce positive face actions, playing a role in politeness strategies.	😊 (softens a command: "Could you send me the report 😊?"), 😊 (softens criticism: "I think you might have made a small mistake 😊")

<p>Illocutionary Function</p>	<p>Emojis clarify the speaker's intention and modify the illocutionary force of a message.</p>	<p>🤔 (indicating a thoughtful question: "What do you think about this idea 🤔?"), 🙏 (expressing a request or gratitude: "Could you help me with this 🙏?")</p>
<p>Relational Function</p>	<p>Emojis enhance social interactions and help maintain positive relationships by improving the tone and intent of messages.</p>	<p>❤️ (expressing love or care in a friendly message: "Take care ❤️"), 👍 (showing agreement in a supportive way: "That sounds good 👍")</p>
<p>Referential Function</p>	<p>Emojis act as ideograms, representing objects, concepts, or ideas directly.</p>	<p>🚗 (indicating a car: "I'll pick you up 🚗"), 🍏 (representing an apple: "Don't forget to eat your 🍏 for a snack")</p>
<p>Interpretive Function</p>	<p>Emojis act as "tone" modifiers, clarifying the writer's intention and reducing ambiguity in messages.</p>	<p>🎬 (clarifying a plan: "Are you free tonight 🎬?" indicates a movie plan)</p>
<p>Emphatic Function</p>	<p>Emojis emphasize or highlight a particular emotion or stance already conveyed in the message, acting as a booster of the text's intended tone.</p>	<p>😊 (emphasizes a positive attitude: "Thanks for your efforts 😊"), 🎉 (highlights joy: "We did it! 🎉")</p>

Table 3. Functions of Emojis (based on Dresner and Herring, 2010; Yus, 2014; Skovholt et al., 2014; Cramer et al., 2016; Spina, 2018; Gibson et al., 2018; Beißwenger and Pappert, 2019; Escouflaire, 2021)

2.5 Impact of emojis on digital communication and language

After discussing the functionality and widespread use of emojis, this chapter examines recent developments in the field, such as the development of the new role of Emoji Translator. This role reflects the increasing recognition of emojis as vital for global communication, requiring specialized skills to read and adapt their diverse meanings across languages and contexts.

2.5.1 Emoji translators

According to Petroff (2016), a global translation company from London started the first emoji translator of the world and published the job advertisement with quite amount of applicants. Furthermore, they explained it as a growing field which require time and energy. According to the job requirements, emoji translators manage translation tasks for clients and create monthly reports on emoji trends, developments, usage patterns, and areas of confusion and cultural differences. In order to select top applicants, the company created an online test in which participants had to convert sequences of emoji into English phrases. For example, the Statue of Liberty plus an airplane is the New York Jets. This was the first job advertisement appeared in the field of Emoji Translation. However, I believe that the fast-growing emoji field, there will be need for Emoji Translation or different new job areas to use in marketing, advertisement and other different fields require communication and digital communication alongside of the academic studies.

2.5.2 Recent improvements and innovations

Aside from the new career field, the popularity of emojis prompted innovative studies, such as the emoji translation of Herman Melville's Moby Dick and the adaptation of classic children's stories as emoji posters. Emoji versions have also appeared in the Bible and popular media, such as Beyoncé's "Drunk in Love," highlighting emojis'

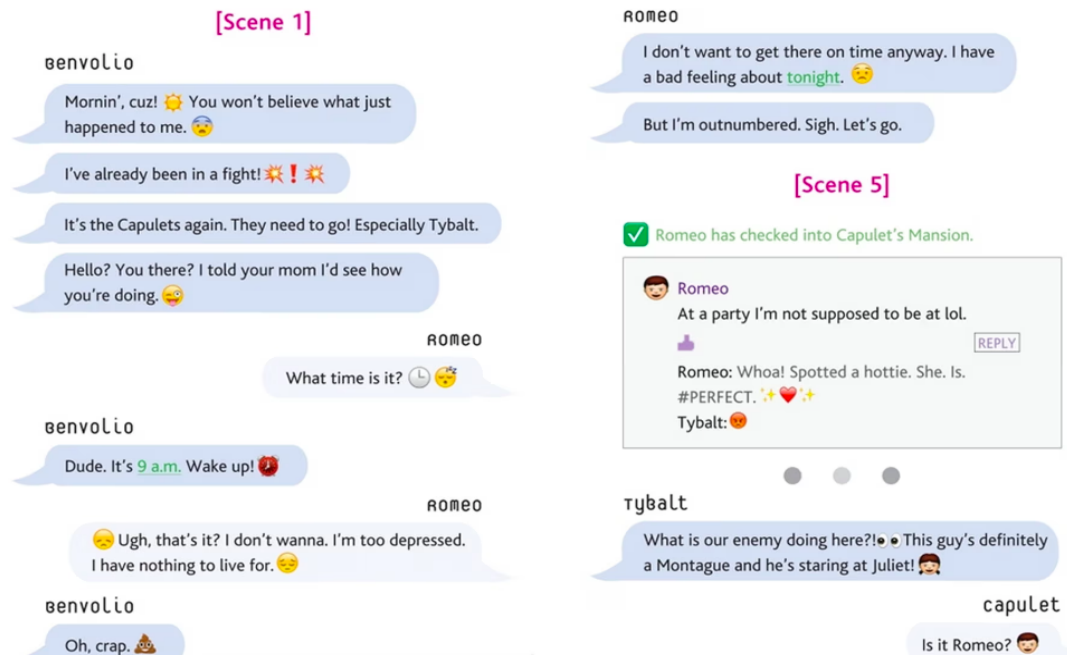


Figure 5. YOLO Juliet Scene 1 (Wright and Shakespeare, 2015)

Besides this creative creation with emojis in literature, there has been an important change in one emoji. The water pistol emoji 🗡️, first introduced as "Pistol" in Unicode 6.0 in 2010 and then included in Emoji 1.0 in 2015, has undergone major design revisions over time. Originally portrayed as a classic handgun resembling a revolver or similar firearm, Apple updated it in 2016 to depict a toy water pistol—a green or orange plastic gun with an orange tip and barrel pointed left. This change by Apple indicated a trend away from displaying weaponry and toward more playful portrayals. Following Apple's lead, other major platforms altered their designs to include toy-style water pistols by 2018. Smaller platforms or older emoji sets may still show the water pistol emoji in its original handgun form. Microsoft originally portrayed the emoji as a futuristic ray gun before switching to a revolver form and finally settled on the current depiction of a water pistol. Google, on the other hand, once represented the emoji as a blunderbuss, a type of old firearm. These developments mirror larger cultural shifts and concerns about the portrayal of firearms in digital communication. The history of the water pistol emoji demonstrates how emoji design has evolved to reflect norms in society and technological developments over time (Emojipedia, n.d.). Even now in the website of Emojipedia there is a warning saying that it should be use with caution probably reflecting on the interpretation differences.

Water Pistol

 Appearance historically differs greatly cross-platform. Use with caution.

Figure 6. Emojipedia Warning about Water Pistol, Emojipedia. (n.d.). Pistol emoji. *Emojipedia*.¹¹

Finally, despite concerns that emojis could signal the deterioration of written English, they could be regarded as a complementing the visual dimension to the text. Yet, while emojis can improve communication, they might not be able to replace the depth and richness of language.

¹¹ [1] <https://emojipedia.org/pistol#emoji>

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, PEDAGOGY OF TEACHING LITERATURE, AND SHAKESPEARE

In this chapter, I will begin by discussing educational technology and how it is employed in language and literature classrooms as well as exploring the role of digital tools. Furthermore, I will give examples of integrating emojis or emoticons into language and literature classes. In addition, I will examine some of the approaches to teaching literature, followed by a focus on Shakespeare. Finally, I will mention some innovative approaches to teaching Shakespeare, also with the use of digital tools.

3.1 Educational Technology

The Covid-19 pandemic made it necessary for students and instructors to use e-learning tools and remote learning. The shutdown of schools affected about 1.6 billion children in 194 countries and the widespread impact of the Covid-19 pandemic revealed important insights into how the role of technology might shift substantially to accommodate these 1.6 billion students and modify learning procedures during challenging times (Janssen, 2022). Educational technology helped students across the world to access materials and instruction in different ways. However, the peak of educational technology might have occurred in Covid-19 times, but it did not start in this period. Laverty (2005), defines educational or learning technology as the incorporation of computer-based information and communication tools in the teaching and learning processes. Furthermore, Sharples (2019) indicates that educational technology is undergoing a revolution, as seen by the development of new technologies such as augmented and virtual reality, enhanced methods for evaluating student data, and creative online learning pedagogies. Universities are developing relationships with publishers and start-ups to improve online teaching and learning.

Educational technology has evolved dramatically over the last four decades. In the early stages of educational technologies, the development process involved creating many early versions which are called prototypes. These prototypes were generally experimental and needed adjustments, which are known as rapid fixes, to correct

unexpected issues that arose during their initial use. These prototypes need adjustments to enhance their functionality rather than being completely developed solutions. However, later it became clear that achieving long-term success in educational technology required a more sustained and research-driven approach by focusing on understanding how students learn and designing effective interventions accordingly (Sharples, 2019). Early computers were used in schools for both play and programming. However, this initial excitement was followed by a period of slow development, with only rare and mostly challenging experimental usage of computers in education (Molnar, 1990). By that time, universities and research institutions were developing advanced educational technology such as touch-screen electronic displays linked to mainframe computers. To understand better the progression and tools of educational technology, we can explore its historical improvements and innovations.

Behaviorist principles grounded the early stages of educational technology, especially in language learning, which emerged in the 1950s and dominated the 1960s and 1970s. Behavioristic Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) systems, which based on practice activities and repetitive drills, became popular during this time. These systems which referred to "drill-and-practice" approach, were founded on the idea that learning requires repeated exposure to the same content (Warschauer, 1996). These systems such as PLATO system used mainframe computers to deliver vocabulary drills, grammar exercises, and translation tests (Ahmad et al., 1985 as cited in Warschauer, 1996). One significant figure during this period was B.F. Skinner, whose behaviourist theories profoundly influenced educational practices, particularly in the 1960s. Skinner (1965) introduced teaching machines and programmed instruction by aiming to automate the instructional process and make learning more efficient by applying scientific concepts (Skinner, 1965). His approach emphasized reinforcement schedules, which he believed were essential for programming behaviours in both simple and complex learning activities. Skinner's models demonstrated the capacity of technology to revolutionize learning environments, stressing the importance of persistent innovation and integrating scientific advancements into educational methodologies (Skinner, 1965).

During this period, Computer-Aided Instruction (CAI) evolved, providing interactive lessons and activities designed to teach specific skills or knowledge. This development was soon followed by the introduction of Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS), which built upon CAI principles to adapt to individual learning paces and styles, offering personalized assistance and feedback (Wankat and Oreovicz, 2015). Despite their common use, the decline of behaviourist theory in language teaching and the advancement of microcomputers in the late 1970s led to the development of another phase in CALL. This dissatisfaction with behaviouristic approach and the increasing popularity of the communicative approach in language instruction directed us to the communicative phase of CALL, which arose in the 1970s and 1980s (Warschauer, 1996). Communicative CALL focused on meaningful acquisition rather than drills and learning practice. According to Underwood (1984), communicative CALL should promote interactive, student-centered learning, let students create original utterances, and emphasize language use rather than isolated form acquisition. With software created to encourage conversation, critical thinking, and problem-solving, the computer's function changed to stimulus (Underwood, 1984) During this time, a variety of CALL program types developed by moving away from repetitive drills to paced reading, text reconstruction, and language games. Learner-computer interaction and more student control were made possible by these programs (Stevens, 1989). It was an important phase for learner autonomy.

The third phase of CALL is integrative CALL which appeared with the introduction of the internet and multimedia computers in the 1990s. The goal of Integrative CALL is to include language learning into more comprehensive, content-based activities by combining several language skills (speaking, writing, listening, and reading) (Warschauer, 1996). Through hypermedia systems, learners can control their learning routes in more immersive environments. Multimedia technology which incorporates text, images, sound, and video made it possible to (Schank and Cleary, 1995 as cited in Warschauer, 1996). Changes in language teaching in educational technology also emerged through internet. Through real-time (synchronous) or delayed (asynchronous) communication with peers throughout the world, computer-mediated communication (CMC) promotes cooperative learning and realistic language use (Warschauer, 1996).

Another important component of educational technology is Web 2.0. With its emphasis on social networking and user-generated data, Web 2.0 revolutionized educational technology by enabling students to be both knowledge producers and consumers. Social media tools, blogs, and wikis provided fresh approaches to encouraging communication and teamwork. E-learning 2.0 emerged as a result of Web 2.0 tools that allowed students to build knowledge collaboratively (Perumal and Vinothkumar, 2022). According to Web 2.0 technology academics, these platforms moved education toward more constructivist learning models where students may communicate, exchange resources, and work together on projects using blogs and wikis (Perumal and Vinothkumar, 2022).

Learning Management Systems (LMS) also gained popularity in the early 2000s and became crucial for planning and distributing instructional materials. Teachers were able to develop course materials, monitor student progress, and support both synchronous and asynchronous learning with the use of platforms like Blackboard and Moodle (Alzahrani,2019). Initially, LMS platforms served administrative functions, but over time they evolved into comprehensive tools supporting blended learning models. With the rise of cloud computing in the late 2000s, LMS platforms expanded beyond on-premises servers. Such cloud-based platforms enable real-time collaboration (Turnbull et al., 2019 as cited in Bradley, 2021), thereby enable them to find online solutions for enhancing learning (Bradley, 2021).

Furthermore, mobile devices also created significant change in educational technology since they allow for learning outside of the traditional classroom. Mobile learning, or m-learning, promotes flexibility in education by using portable devices like smartphones and tablets to access learning resources at any time and from any location (Salhab and Daher, 2023). With mobile technology, students can now engage in interactive and collaborative learning settings thanks to the growing popularity of mobile technology, which supports individualized instruction and greater accessibility (Criollo-C et al., 2021). We can give example of mobile devices for language learning like Duolingo.

Looking ahead, advancements in virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) will have a significant impact on educational technology. By customizing data according to each student's progress, engagement, and preferences, AI is being used more and more to personalize learning experiences. By analyzing student behaviour, learning patterns, and performance indicators, AI algorithms enable adaptive learning environments with resources and content that tailored to each learner (Jiao, 2024). In a similar vein, VR technology is revolutionizing learning environments by providing engaging, interactive experiences that exceed traditional classroom limits. Students can interact with challenging material in VR settings, which improves understanding and memory. Because they offer safe, practical training experiences that may be too expensive or unattainable in real life. For example, virtual labs and simulation, are being used more commonly in engineering and medicine industries (Dick, 2024). Immersive learning environments could revolutionize how students engage with educational content thanks to the development of virtual reality (VR) and cross-reality (XR) systems (Herczeg, 2024). In order to further maximize learning outcomes, learning analytics and artificial intelligence are also being incorporated into increasingly complex LMS platforms and in the future with the integration of AI and VR LMSs will be offering more features for personalized learning and educational technologies (Proliant, 2024).

Lastly, Herczeg (2024) compares the learning scenes of the students with past years, now and possible future. In the past years in his example in 1974, students relied on textbooks and physical classroom experiences, with early digital technologies only beginning to make an appearance. However currently a student uses digital resources, video conferencing, and online data in their studies, but they still face problems like access to paid resources and the technical complexities of generating digital presentations. For the future, he envisions a fully integrated digital environment in which technologies such as VR, AI, and learning management systems will provide immersive and individualized learning experiences. In 2049, he predicts that students will employ advanced technologies like personal AI assistants, virtual reality environments, and cross-reality (XR) systems to improve their learning and presentations, making education more participatory, accessible, and efficient (Herczeg, 2024).

3.1.1 Designing Instruction with Educational Technology

Shewell (2016) emphasizes precise instructional design concepts, providing a thorough framework for effective online education. In his opinion, the spontaneity that may be acceptable in traditional face-to-face classes becomes problematic in online settings, where the lack of clear, structured guidance can lead to confusion and restrict student performance. Shewell (2016) argues that successful online learning begins with the intentional use of instructional design principles, highlighting the need for educators to provide explicit instructions that guide students step by step toward accomplishing specific learning objectives. Shewell's method is based on the idea of carefully and simply incorporating technology. While modern technologies present great opportunities, he advises on their indiscriminate usage, instead pushing for courses designed to accommodate the lowest common technological denominator. This offers equal access to course materials and activities, which is especially important in different learning situations where students may have different internet speed and technical access (Shewell, 2016). Therefore, it may create information inequalities which bring us to the new point called as digital divide. Moore et al., (2018) examines this inequality and suggest policy recommendations for teachers similarly to Shewell (2016).

Furthermore, Shewell (2016) emphasizes that for learning to be effective, every aspect of the course—from readings and multimedia presentations to assessments—must be closely aligned with the broader learning objectives. This unity not only improves coherence but also allows students to comprehend how each learning activity fits into their broader educational path. Another component of instruction of digital technology is engagement. The notion of community-centered lens helps instructors to design their online lessons. The notion is based on Vygotsky's concept of "social cognition" (2000, as cited in Anderson, 2008), which highlights how students might work together to create new knowledge in an online learning environment. Lipman (1991 as cited in Anderson, 2008) expanded on this idea with the idea of the "community of inquiry," and Wenger (2002 as cited in Anderson, 2008) expanded on it with his "community of practice." Both concepts show how members of a learning community support and challenge one another, leading to the creation of meaningful and useful knowledge (Anderson, 2008). It highlights the importance of engagement in online learning between students and instructor and also student to student. Unlike face-

to-face situations, where contact can happen spontaneously, online environments necessitate purposeful preparation and effort to make students feel connected and supported. It's the responsibility of the instructor to deliver timely feedback, coordinate course activities, and cultivate a feeling of presence that assures students of their instructor's availability and dedication to their learning achievement. (Shewell, 2016).

Finally, scaffolding is another component that instructors should prioritize in digital education. It involves strategies to identify and address learner difficulties, such as supporting new concepts and challenging students to exceed their current abilities. Student success requires effective learner support, which includes personalized feedback and academic or personal counselling. Peer support is also important and is often facilitated by instructors through structured group activities (Bates, 2015). For these reasons, although educational technology can be a valuable tool, instructor presence remains crucial for student outcomes, particularly in online settings (Shea et al., 2010, as cited in Bates, 2015).

3.1.2 Challenges and Opportunities

Like in every development, there is also advantages and disadvantages of educational technology. Collier (2018) emphasizes that digital technologies strengthen the bond between students and course materials, which in turn fosters creativity and digital literacy. Additionally, digital platforms provide wide access to a variety of viewpoints, promoting cooperative learning outside of the classroom. Furthermore, educational technologies facilitate social learning and this led small-group cooperation that improves creativity and learning outcomes, and personalized learning (Sharples, 2019). However, there are downsides of educational technologies. One major issue is the overload of information which requires to teach students how to distinguish reliable sources (Collier, 2018). Additionally, teachers may also be reluctant to use technology because of inexperience, insecurity, time constraints, and a lack of financial incentives (Wankat and Oreovicz, 2015).

3.2 Technology Use and Digital Tools in Language Teaching

In this section, I will discuss how technology and digital tools are transforming language teaching. Language training has been transformed by technology which

provides a variety of resources appropriate for various learning preferences. Digital apps, social media, and mobile devices now offer flexible and immersive learning environments. According to Hockly (2011), mobile learning combines formal and informal learning contexts by enabling students to access and produce knowledge both within and outside of the classroom. Similar to this, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) improves language instruction by using dynamic, customized learning resources including online materials and language software (Garrett, 2009). Furthermore, social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp allow for real-time, genuine language exchanges, extending learning outside of the classroom. Averianova (2012) highlights the importance of CMC in creating dynamic and inspiring language learning environments. Gamification and references to popular culture are also used by interactive apps like Duolingo and Memrise to make learning fun and interesting (Nawaila et al., 2020).

Student involvement is further enhanced by the use of digital tools. Incorporating entertainment and media, such as TV series and films, promotes excitement and cultural awareness while assisting students in learning slang and cultural contexts (Nawaila et al., 2020). Additionally, music and lyrics are effective for teaching pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, creating an enjoyable and memorable learning environment (Salaberry, 2001). In conclusion, the integration of digital tools and technology in language education is changing the nature of learning by making it more culturally relevant, individualized, and engaging.

3.2.1 Digital Tools Such as Emojis

Here, I will focus on how digital tools, especially emojis affect language learning. Emojis have become a prominent mode of communication in educational settings, and digital tools have brought new approaches to improving learning and engagement. Emojis have been found to have a significant effect on EFL learners' writing skills. For example, according to Algaraady and Mahyoob (2021), emojis may assist interpersonal communication by efficiently expressing emotions, but they can also cause spelling and punctuation mistakes. According to their study in Taibah University, using too many emojis in texting frequently causes problems with regular writing skills, exposing certain flaws in linguistic accuracy besides its benefits. Furthermore, the informal nature

of emojis also presents challenges. Veytia-Bucheli et al. (2020) explored emoji use among Mexican graduate students, noting that while emojis contribute to faster and more expressive communication, they also encourage a less formal tone. This informality may, in turn, affect students' ability to produce formal written language, as they become more accustomed to the daily style of digital interactions.

Furthermore, another study aimed at enhancing EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs using digital technologies, including emojis, found that emojis can make learning more enjoyable and less scary for students. Emojis can help teachers create a more engaged and supportive learning environment. This method not only increases learners' confidence but also stimulates more active engagement in language learning activities (Chen and Hsu, 2022).

Emojis are used for more than just communication; they also serve a cultural and pragmatic purpose. Maa and Taguchi (2022) investigate how Japanese students of English employ emojis to negotiate interactional pragmatics in computer-mediated communication. The study discovered that learners employ emojis to compensate for the absence of nonverbal clues in online communication, improving the intelligibility and emotional tone of their messages. Emojis can assist learners in politeness, expressing emotions and conveying delicate meanings in their second language (Maa and Taguchi, 2022).

In summary, including emojis in language classes allows instructors to create a more interesting and collaborative learning environment. However, it is critical to address the possible limitations, ensuring that students continue to acquire effective writing capacities while also improving their ability to communicate effectively with digital technologies.

3.2.2 Technology Use and Digital Tools in Literature

It can be said that today's students are digital natives who understand technology and media, therefore instructors must incorporate these elements into their teaching practices in order to attract their attention and create relation to the real world. By introducing digital tools and technology use into literature instruction, educators may make literary studies more relevant, accessible, and engaging, improving students' knowledge and appreciation of literature. Furthermore, they can create new strategies to

enhance their instruction (Pallathadka, 2020). This section explores how technology and digital tools can be used to assist studies in literature by giving examples of the studies held in the field. The incorporation of technology into literature instruction provides various advantages, including greater accessibility, interactivity, and engagement. Modern technologies such as hypertexts, e-books, social networking, digital storytelling tools, and virtual reality have changed how literature is taught, making it more engaging for students.

Hypertext is composed of interconnected documents linked by keywords, which creates a web-like structure with documents acting as nodes. According to Kaba (2020), hypertext creates a more engaging reading experience by allowing students to explore numerous paths and comprehend various connections within the text. Meanwhile, e-books provide ease and accessibility by allowing students to read on a variety of devices while also incorporating multimedia components such as audio, video, and interactive graphics. Platforms such as "Actively Learn" allow teachers to incorporate questions, notes, and multimedia directly into the text, giving learners a more immersive and interesting reading experience (Kaba, 2020). Feustle (1997) investigates the possibilities of hypertext in literary instruction, emphasizing its ability to modify the traditional reading experience by allowing readers to follow several narrative lines, resulting in a multifaceted interpretation of the text.

Another digital tool to use may be social media and online platforms. By using these tools, educators can connect with students in inventive ways. For example, developing social media identities for literary characters or Twitter accounts for literary conversations can encourage more in-depth interaction with the material. Škobo (2020) indicates how Sinergija University students established Facebook accounts for characters from Oscar Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Gray," which boosted their knowledge and engagement with the literature. These platforms also enable collaborative projects and debates, allowing students to share their perspectives and opinions with their peers.

Moreover, digital storytelling combines classic narrative approaches with digital elements to provide a rich and interesting way to teach literature. Students can use tools like Storybird and Adobe Spark to create digital stories that include text, graphics, and

audio, allowing them to convey their interpretations in unique ways. According to Škobo (2020), the game "To Be or Not to Be," a choose-your-own-adventure style game of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" may help students comprehend and appreciate the play by allowing them to explore alternative narrative paths interactively. Furthermore, Lieberman (2018) discusses the innovative use of digital technologies such as Esri Story Map¹² in literature lessons. Esri Story Map is the digital platform where students can create stories with maps, location and narrative texts with videos, images and shapes.

Besides these studies, Bender (2020) investigates the unique use of Snapchat in literature classrooms by focusing on a project on Miguel de Cervantes' "Don Quijote de la Mancha." In this project, students use Snapchat stories to analyze and interpret the text by integrating visual and textual aspects to improve comprehension and engagement. Bender (2020) addresses how students utilized the app's features, including filters, subtitles, and Bitmojis, to portray and evaluate characters and scenes from "Don Quijote," by successfully combining modern digital skills with literary analysis.



Figure 1. Snap Story of Students Retells the Marcela-Grisóstomo Episode from the Point of View of Ambrosio, (Bender, 2020)

Hartman et al., (2021) hold a study which discovers that using memes in literature instruction may help to simplify and make difficult literary concepts more understandable (Hartman et al., 2021). Hartman et al., (2021) outline a framework for

¹² https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/products/arcgis-storymaps/overview?srsltid=AfmBOopOaPkoIiXkRdZJ7_Kb8eBLyFMUd_fLuBgWSV4FdwKISW7iPZdl

incorporating memes into literature education. They emphasize that memes, as a sort of artistic response, assist students in developing concrete representations of their encounters with texts. Memes rely on students' familiarity with social media and pop culture, making literary topics more accessible. The Perspective Meme project uses visual comparisons to assist students in understanding character development and thematic components by fostering critical thinking and deeper engagement with the text (Hartman et al., 2021).

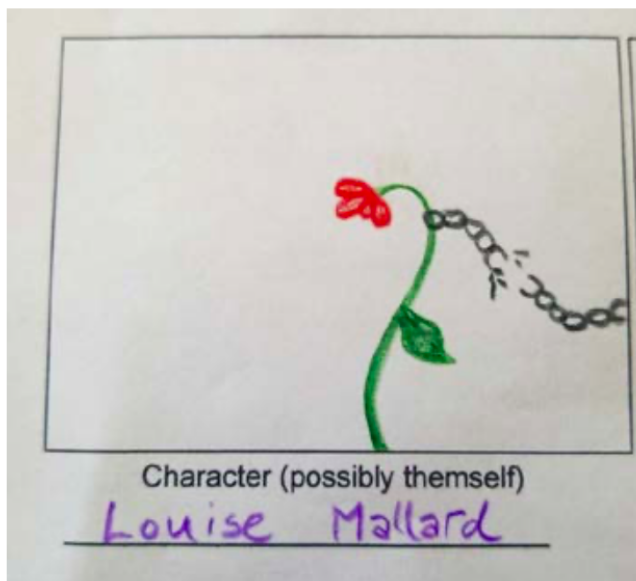


Figure 2. Symbolic Representation of The Character by Student's Perspective (Hartman et al., 2021).

According to Maa and Taguchi (2022), using internet forums for literature debates can help students strengthen their analytical and interpretative skills by exposing them to a variety of viewpoints and feedback. The incorporation of collaborative learning tools such as Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams has also increased student involvement and participation. These tools allow students to discuss literary texts, offer insights, and receive comments from classmates and teachers by promoting a sense of community and active learning. Pallathadka (2020) highlights the potential of technology in creating interactive and engaging literature lessons, which can significantly enhance students' comprehension and retention of the material. Alfaruque

et al.,'s (2022) findings revealed that using digital tools such as visuals, digital versions of classics, digital storytelling, graphic novels, interactive hypertexts, and distanced reading of texts dramatically improved students' learning results. The study highlighted that technology not only facilitated improved comprehension of literary materials but also promoted students to engage more thoroughly with the material (Alfaruque et al., 2022).

3.2.3 Challenges and Opportunities

While incorporating technology and digital tools into literature teaching has numerous benefits, it also has obstacles. The primary concern is that these tools are used effectively to assist learning objectives rather than distracting students from learning. Educators must carefully choose and apply digital tools to complement traditional teaching techniques and improve students' comprehension of literature. Moreover, the digital divide remains a major concern, as not all kids have equal access to technology. Educators must take these differences into account and work to ensure that all kids have equitable learning opportunities. According to Maa and Taguchi (2022), resolving technological gaps among students is critical to ensure all learners benefit from digital tools in literature instruction. Another challenge is maintaining a rigorous curriculum while introducing digital tools into literature study. Educators have to maintain a balance between making literature accessible and encouraging students to interact with the content critically and meaningfully.

3.3 Pedagogy of Literature

Teaching literature is an evolving, multidimensional field that must meet the diverse needs of students in a rapidly changing environment. Historically, literature instruction has focused on traditional methods such as close reading and textual analysis, fostering critical thinking, cultural awareness, and a deep analysis of literary works (Murphy et al., 2020). These approaches have helped develop generations of readers who value the complex nature of literature. According to Pieper (2006), such strategies are crucial for understanding literature's societal impact.

However, as education changed towards more interactive, student-centered learning, new strategies have emerged. Modern pedagogical approaches incorporate

digital tools that make literature more engaging for today's students. Bender (2020) notes that such methods not only enhance student engagement but also teach essential skills for the digital age.

Literature pedagogy now represents a blend of traditional and modern approaches, balancing critical analysis with the use of technology to improve engagement and relevance. In the following part of this chapter, I will explore both traditional and modern approaches to pedagogy of literature.

3.3.1 Approaches to Teaching Literature

The Cultural Model is one of the traditional approaches to teaching literature. It emphasizes the research and interpretation of a text's social, political, literary, and historical settings. This approach aims to demonstrate the universality of thoughts and ideas, encouraging students to comprehend diverse cultures and ideologies in connection to their own (Savvidou, 2004). Using this methodology, educators aim to foster an appreciation for the cultural and historical importance of literature by students, as well as promoting cross-cultural understanding and empathy (Fernandes and Alsaeed, 2014). However, this approach has been criticized for being teacher-centred and providing few possibilities for extended language practice (Savvidou, 2004). Critics argue that this method can be excessively didactic, focusing more on cultural information rather than engaging students in active language use and textual interpretation (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000).

Another model to teach literature is the language model. It focuses on allowing students to access texts systematically to demonstrate specific linguistic properties and it leads teachers to focus on grammar and vocabulary (Fernandes and Alsaeed, 2014). This approach is consistent with a variety of EFL teaching strategies, including cloze procedures, prediction exercises, jumbled sentences, summary writing, creative writing, and role play (Savvidou, 2004). The fundamental goal here is to employ literature as a tool for language exercise, assisting students in developing their linguistic competence through exposure to authentic texts. Despite its broad application, the Language Model is sometimes criticized for its reductive approach, which prioritizes language practice ahead of literary engagement (Carter and McRae, 1996 as cited in Savvidou, 2004).

Furthermore, the personal growth model which is one of the models of Carter and Long's (1991 as cited in Khan and Alasmari, 2018) connects the cultural and language Models by focusing on the distinctive use of language in a text and locating it within a specific cultural context. This approach encourages students to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and personal connections to the text, consequently fostering personal and cultural experiences (Khan and Alasmari, 2018). This approach highlights the reader's interaction with the text, which leads to comprehension and personal growth (Cadorath and Harris, 1998 as cited in Savvidou, 2004). It is especially helpful in increasing student motivation and engagement because it allows students to see how literature applies to their own lives and experiences (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000).

Nunan (1989 as cited in Khatib et al., 2011) identified the Task-Based Approach as engaging learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting with the target language with an emphasis on meaning over form. In their model Khatib et al., (2011) they define task as linguistic, physical, emotional, intellectual, social, critical, creative, and aesthetic involvement which they name as Whole Literary Engagement (WLE). In this model, tasks are designed to imitate real-life language use, enabling students to interact with literature in a meaningful and contextually relevant way (Khatib et al., 2011).

Lucas (1990 as cited in Khan and Alasmari, 2018) categorizes the texts into two categories as artistic and functional to study literary works. Artistic types of texts can include novels, short stories, essays, poems, and plays. Lucas (1990 as cited in Khan and Alasmari, 2018) suggests that those are the artistic texts which scholars analyze for their aesthetic and thematic qualities. On the other hand, functional texts include newspapers, legal documents, non-fiction works, dictionaries, catalogues or journals which mainly have the purpose of information transfer. Through this classification, students may be able to distinguish different types of text and recognize their purposes to enhance their skills in comprehending and analyzing different types of texts. (Khan and Alasmari, 2018)

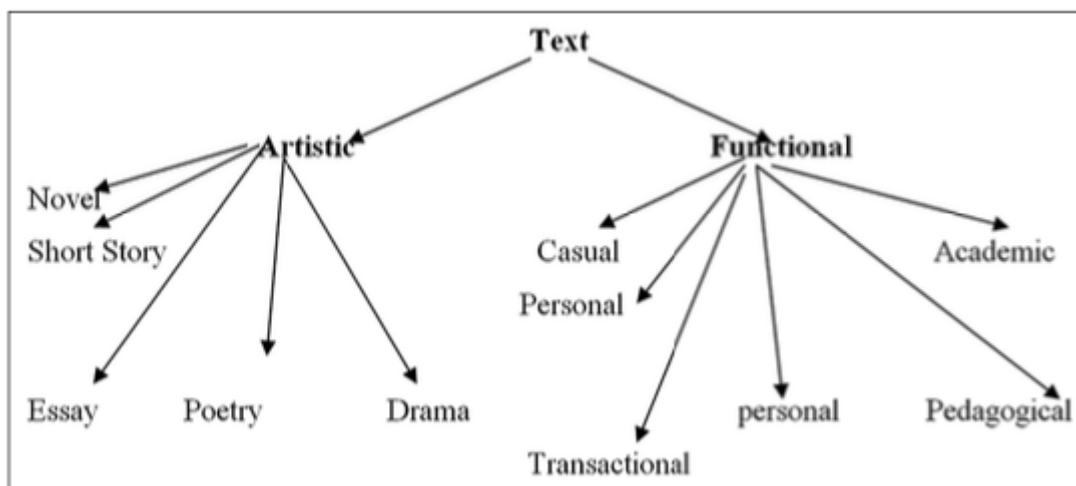


Figure 3. Classification of the texts by Lucas (1990, as cited in Khan and Alasmari, 2018)

New Criticism prioritizes a text's formal features, such as rhyme, meter, imagery, and theme, while ignoring the writer's objective and the reaction of the reader (Van, 2009). This method encourages attentive reading and analysis of literary devices, but it is frequently criticized for ignoring the relationship between the text and the reader's experiences, potentially leading to a negative attitude toward literature (Thomson, 1992 as cited in Van, 2009). As Parkinson and Reid Thomas (2000) state the New Criticism reached its most popular times around the 1940s and 1950s. Even if it is replaced by academic discussion some of its principles such as the emphasis on 'close reading' of texts, are still important. New Criticism arose alongside the academic study of literature in universities, particularly in Cambridge following World War I, where I. A. Richards introduced the method known as Practical Criticism (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000). According to Thomson (1992 as cited in Van, 2009), the main disadvantage of New Criticism is that it tends to make the study of literary terms an end in itself, rather than a way of discovering the beauty and value of a literary work.

The following approach is the stylistic approach which examines literary language elements to help students improve their sensitivity to literature. It fosters the use of linguistic knowledge to create aesthetic judgments and interpretations, contrasting literary with non-literary works to highlight the different uses of language in literature (Van, 2009). This technique allows students to comprehend the power and

versatility of language. This technique demonstrates that literary language is a distinct type of discourse, and it teaches pupils how to use language in new ways. This comparative approach improves students' grasp of registers—the various ways language is used to communicate in specific settings—and helps them distinguish between literary and non-literary language (Widowson, 1983 as cited in Van, 2009). According to Khatib et al., (2011) this approach highlights the text, description and analysis of language rather than the text.

Another approach is the reader-response approach that stresses the reader's participation in interpreting literature by emphasizing on personal experiences, opinions, and feelings (Rosenblatt, 1978 as cited in Van, 2009). It promotes the accessibility of literature by utilizing students' prior knowledge and fostering emotional and intellectual engagement (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988 as cited in Van, 2009).

Furthermore, critical literacy investigates the relationship between the literary work and social background while encouraging students to consider how social and political variables influence the literature (Khatib et al., 2011). This method aims to raise critical awareness about the function of language in sustaining and altering social connections and power structures (Fairclough, 1992 as cited in Van, 2009). Cummins (2000) defines critical literacy as a transformative pedagogy in which students and teachers collaborate to develop a critical awareness of the socio-political use of language. This concept assists students in comprehending the ideological assumptions behind texts and enables them to apply language effectively (Cummins, 2000).

Moreover, Wellek and Warren (1994) offer two approaches to study literature which are intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The intrinsic approach focuses on the structure, language form, images, symbols, style, contrasts, and plot growth within a literary text. It emphasizes close reading and textual analysis without considering external factors (Wellek and Warren, 1994). In contrast to the instinct approach, the extrinsic approach examines the biography of the author, historical background, social aspects, and other contextual elements that influence the text (Khan and Alasmari, 2018).

The Drama-Based Approach is one of the modern approaches that are used in literature classes. According to Parkinson and Reid Thomas (2000), drama consists not only of words, but also of sights and sounds, stillness and motion, noise and silence,

relationships, and responses. According to Birch (1991), the text of any play is composed of at least two pieces: a literary text and a performance text. The traditional method of a school or class group 'putting on a play' has diminished, but mini-drama activities such as improvisation and role play are becoming increasingly important in language-learning settings (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000). These activities foster active engagement and enhance language acquisition through experiential performance, making them beneficial for various learner types, especially kinaesthetic learners. (Parkinson and Reid Thomas, 2000). Here, how to develop activities in literature classes may require further reading. However, I won't explore different ways of using drama in literature classes since it is not related to this dissertation.

Duff and Maley (1990, as cited in Savvidou, 2004) highlight linguistic, methodological, and motivational reasons for using integrated approaches in literature education. Offering diverse texts helps students explore different language elements and improve autonomy in literary studies, becoming more aware of reading processes like schema use. Motivationally, literary texts emphasize the pleasure of reading, evoking human responses (Short and Candlin, 1986, as cited in Savvidou, 2004). An integrated model combines linguistic analysis with stylistic evaluation (Short, 1996), making text selection adaptable and accessible (O'Brien, 1999, as cited in Savvidou, 2004). Timucin (2001) further integrates stylistic and language-based techniques into a framework that enhances student engagement, appreciation, and motivation. This approach encourages students to explore linguistic elements while engaging in creative interpretation by providing a more enriching learning experience (Khan and Alasmari, 2018).

Lastly, I would like to point out shortly to the strategies of teaching literature. One effective strategy in literature classrooms is discussions, where the teacher introduces key themes and concepts, followed by class discussions. According to Murphy et al. (2009), classroom discussions enhance students' comprehension and critical thinking. Dramatization and Role-Playing is another valuable approach, particularly in language teaching, as it boosts speaking and listening skills while motivating students (San Jose and Galang, 2015).

Additionally, Reporting and Presentations allow students to research and present on a literary work or theme, improving public speaking, research skills, and promoting peer learning (Applebee, 1993). literature circles, where students work in small groups

with assigned roles, support intellectual growth and foster collaborative learning (Graham-Marr and Pellowe, 2016).

Finally, culturally responsive teaching emphasizes selecting texts that reflect students' backgrounds, creating an inclusive and engaging learning environment (Mirra et al., 2023).

3.3.2 Process of Teaching Literature

Before talking about the process of teaching literature, I would like to examine the researchers' ideas who think literature should be included in curriculum and why. Gillespie (1994, as cited in Mirra et al., 2023) emphasizes that literature helps students broaden their experiences by seeing themselves in others' lives, fostering empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives. This empathy is key to creating a more inclusive society. Literature also sharpens critical thinking, as Langer (2011) notes, encouraging openness and inquiry. Students improve interpretative skills, engage in dialogue, and explore different viewpoints, enhancing their comprehension of the world (Gabrielsen et al., 2019). Furthermore, exposure to literature deepens cultural awareness, promoting tolerance and countering stereotypes. Grene (2020) notes that reading helps young people redefine themselves and engage more in their communities.

In English language teaching, literature is a rich linguistic resource by enhancing language skills in context. Keshavarzi (2012) argues that literature improves competency through varied sentence structures and engaging narratives. Stern (1992) and Yildirim (2012) assert that understanding a language's cultural context boosts communication and proficiency. Literature transmits cultural values and traditions, offering insights into different societies (Yildirim, 2012). Carroli (2008) further emphasizes that literature, as a cultural product, is necessary for teaching language in context.

After discussing why literature should be integrated into learning, I will now focus on how to integrate it and which strategies to use in the classroom. Effective literature teaching depends on various factors, including teacher strategies and student backgrounds. Teachers play a vital role in designing lessons by considering students' needs and proficiency levels, and adapting new strategies. Administrators support this

process by providing resources, while parents encourage reading habits and learning beyond the classroom (Greene, 2020).

To implement effective literature classes there are some steps, the first step is to develop a curriculum that blends classic texts with modern and culturally diverse literature and the teacher should ensure it aligns with learning objectives (Applebee, 1993). Also, text selection should include various genres, periods, and cultures. Teachers should prepare detailed lesson plans with objectives, activities, and assessments. Using diverse strategies to meet different learning needs enhances teaching (Gabrielsen et al., 2019). An effective lesson plan includes pre-reading activities, guided reading, and post-reading discussions. Introducing the literary work begins by setting the context, providing background information such as historical, cultural, or social details, and using strategies like presentations or pre-reading activities (San Jose and Galang, 2015). Engaging students in discussions that connect new material to their prior knowledge helps them see the relevance of the text and prepares them for deeper comprehension (Mirra et al., 2023).

After preparing the class for the text now we should focus on during reading strategies. During text analysis, teachers can use strategies like literature circles or guide students creatively. Encouraging students to ask questions, make connections, and engage critically is necessary for engaging the text (Nystrand, 2006). Dramatizations or role-plays can also be included.

Next stage of the literature class is post-reading process. In the post-reading stage, promoting class discussions and allowing students to share interpretations enhances their learning. Gabrielsen et al., (2019) highlight how literary classroom discussions not only help students explore text content but also foster deeper engagement through personal and analytical interpretations. Moreover, assessment and feedback are crucial parts of the educational process so that quizzes, essays, presentations, and other evaluation techniques can be used to foster analytical skills. Offering positive feedback directs students' learning and helps them improve (Murphy et al., 2009). Collaboration with peers to share ideas and tactics improves teaching practice (Applebee, 1993).

All in all, the role of the teacher as the guide of the learning process is significant in literature classes. As emphasized by Round (1997) teachers need to create

interactive and collaborative learning environments to assure lifelong learning of literature. This requires developing new strategies and being open for innovative ways of teaching literature and being aware of needs of the students. Furthermore, teachers need to be flexible and reflective by assessing and adjusting the ways of effective teaching and learning (Round, 1997).

3.4 Teaching Shakespeare

Shakespeare is one of the greatest playwrights and poets and he has deniably canonical place in literature. His works have been studied, enjoyed by not only native speakers of English but also a lot of English as second language learners and also by the literature passionates. Besides his popularity, his works are appreciated due to their rich language, complex characters and insight into human nature. Therefore, teaching and studying Shakespeare not only reflects the depth of those brilliant texts but also discovering the historical and cultural elements of English literature. In this subsection, I will explore the possible challenges students may experience, the approaches that have been used to teach Shakespeare, curricular considerations across different countries.

Shakespeare's inclusion in the curriculum is crucial as his works combine poetic elegance and narrative depth, enhancing students' literary abilities. His language enriches their understanding of English evolution, while his themes—love, betrayal, and power—resonate across cultures and eras. These elements foster critical thinking and introspection. Shakespeare's influence on English vocabulary, introducing phrases and words still used today, further illustrates his impact. His exploration of human nature remains relevant, offering insights that provoke both pleasure and intellectual engagement (Brady and Flaherty, 2016). Additionally, his plays help students grasp key literary devices and provide a window into the social and political context of the Elizabethan era (Webb, 2009).

Although teaching Shakespeare has these advantages, like every beneficial thing it brings some challenges for the students and teachers which leads teachers to find strategies. Frequently, students find the language archaic which may decrease their motivation for the text. (Batho, 1998) Furthermore, some elements of Shakespeare's works such as cultural references and historical settings might be distant for modern students and it may be difficult for students to relate to the characters and context. To

deal with these challenges teachers came up with different strategies. I will dive deeper into the methods and strategies in the following sections.

Also, as a student, for me, it is insightful to study Shakespeare to improve my comprehension of the English literature and Elizabethan period along with its challenges. So, to guide students to study Shakespeare in a worldwide educational context, the teachers should make an effort to appeal to learners and find methods to teach Shakespeare. To create useful background knowledge. I will delve into the pedagogy of teaching Shakespeare, the curriculum requirements of various educational systems and reflection on the strategies to overcome the obstacles students may encounter.

3.4.1 How to Teach Shakespeare, Challenges and Strategies

Over the years, methods for teaching Shakespeare and curriculum have undergone significant changes. There have been different approaches to teach Shakespeare such as the text-based approach to modern performance-based approaches. The history of the pedagogy of Shakespeare mirrors the wider changes in educational philosophy and the cultural importance related to his works.

In the early twentieth century, the teachers taught Shakespeare's plays by making students read and analyze them. The reason for using this approach related to the Victorian view that exposure to Shakespeare's plays, which were seen as the peak of English literature, was inspiring. The methods at that time were grounded on the notion that students should study Shakespeare's works to understand the morals and intellectual content of the works. The plays were generally studied by close reading and performative aspects of the plays were not much considered (Irish, 2008). Before the standard curriculum was introduced, the ways of teaching Shakespeare in schools were constructed by the ways of teachers and the sources they have which makes it inconsistent. During this time Shakespeare was considered as a pride of the nation and a literary genius in England (Irish, 2008).

When we came to the 1980s, there was a significant change in the pedagogy of Shakespeare with the National Curriculum in England. It was significant progress in a more standardized approach to teach Shakespeare since his literary works also started to be studied in different levels of education. Furthermore, this brought discussions on the

methods to teach Shakespeare in the best way. Most importantly, during this period performance pedagogy became more evident as the result of the teachers' recognition of the importance of engaging the plays in dynamic and interactive ways. In fostering this approach, The Royal Shakespeare Company plays a significant role by showing the needs of students in the interactive classroom setting (Fairbairn and Gilmour, 1997 as cited in Irish, 2008).

Moreover, the dramatic nature of Shakespeare's plays led scholars and theorists to endorse performance-based pedagogy. Some of the crucial figures to promote this approach are John Styan and Rex Gibson. Styan (1974) emphasized the significance of comprehension of Shakespeare's plays as lively performative texts rather than static ones along with imaginative reading of them. He suggested that students may obtain a better appreciation of Shakespeare by engaging with the plays through performance, allowing them to examine the complexities of the language and the characters in a more expressed and even experienced manner. He called this as Direct Method of teaching Shakespeare (Styan, 1974).

After that, with the Cambridge School Shakespeare series and its editor Rex Gibson's work performance-based pedagogy gained rise in the 1990s. The series incorporated performance activities directly into Shakespeare studies, allowing students to "play" with the text and engage in active, imaginative learning which makes this series remarkable. So, it can be said that Gibson's approach broke down the traditional division between analysis and imagination by fostering a critical and compassionate instruction. In summary, this series made Shakespeare accessible and immersing for students of all levels (Brady and Flaherty, 2016).

The progress of Shakespeare instruction continued into the twenty-first century, with additional shifts in how his works are taught in schools. The Royal Shakespeare Company's education programs are important in assisting the "Stand up for Shakespeare" campaign, which argues the method that includes seeing the plays performed live, playing the plays themselves, and introducing Shakespeare education early in school. The project reflects the widespread belief that Shakespeare's plays are best understood as living works that should be seen and heard rather than solely read (Irish 2008).

3.4.2 Shakespeare in Curriculums of Different Countries and What Should Be Included in Curriculum for Shakespeare Teaching

In different countries Shakespeare's literary works included in curricula in various ways along with different cultural and historical methods, furthermore, the level that students study Shakespeare also differs. For example, in the United Kingdom, Shakespeare's literary works are started to introduce around the secondary school curriculum especially in Key stage 3 (Olive, 2012). Key stage 3 means the educational stage of 11 to 14 years old (year 7, 8, 9) students in the United Kingdom. During this stage it is mandatory to study and be assessed on at least one of the Shakespeare's plays. Significant role of Shakespeare in English literature is highlighted by obligated inclusion of his works into curriculum and appreciation of mastery language use and universal topics. However, Wade and Sheppard (1993 as cited in Batho, 1998) comments on the possibility of over focus on specific plays such as Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream which may restrict the discovery of variety of Shakespeare's works. Moreover, standardized testing frequently hinders teachers' ability to engage learners creatively with the texts, potentially reducing their interest and connection to the material (Batho, 1998).

In Canada, ongoing discussions regarding Shakespeare's applicability in a multicultural and bilingual society have affected his educational role. Despite these debates, Shakespeare remains an important figure in Canadian education and are frequently employed to examine broader cultural and historical settings. Colarusso (2016) investigates how to use Shakespeare's work to examine the complex topics of historical heritage such as colonialism and national identity critically by students. With the use of this method, students can interact critically with Shakespeare and reinterpret his plays to make them more relevant to the multiculturalism of Canada and current social concerns (Colarusso, 2016).

Shakespeare's incorporation into the curriculum of Turkey is an example of how the nation's diverse cultural and linguistic identity is reflected. From its start under colonial influence, Shakespeare studies in Turkey have developed into a field that increasingly takes into account local cultural elements. Öğütçü (2023) states that Turkish educators concentrate on translating and adapting Shakespeare's works so that Turkish learners may comprehend them better along with emphasizing themes that are

consistent with Turkey's own historical and cultural events. This method exemplifies a larger movement in education toward decolonization, in which Shakespeare's plays are adapted to appeal to non-Western audiences (Öğütücü, 2023). As I was born and raised in Turkey until my master's degree, I can say that until starting to study in the university I didn't study Shakespeare before. However, Shakespeare's literary works and their effect commonly are mentioned. In the university, as English Language Teaching students, we study Shakespeare with performance-based techniques and with the reflection of the cultural backgrounds as Öğütücü (2023) mentions. Furthermore, there was drama classes which were not compulsory.

It is crucial to maintain a balance between an in-depth examination of Shakespeare's language, structure, and literary methods and an awareness of the historical and cultural settings in which he wrote when determining what should be taught in a Shakespeare curriculum. Students need to examine the texts carefully and comprehend how Shakespeare conveys meaning via structure and imagery. A deeper comprehension of the ideas and characters in the plays can also be attained by investigating the Elizabethan worldview, social frameworks, and the function of the monarchy (Webb, 2009).

3.4.3 Challenges that Students (May) Experience While Studying Shakespeare

Students often face major challenges when studying Shakespeare, including complex language, intricate plots, and performative aspects. Murphy et al., (2020) conducted research with 120 high school students, ages 15 to 18, from diverse backgrounds to explore these difficulties. The study included both native and non-native English speakers to emphasize how linguistic background affects comprehension. Participants included students from Lancaster, UK (native speakers), and non-native speakers from Barcelona, Spain, and Joensuu, Finland.

The study shows that non-native speakers struggle with Shakespeare's idioms and metaphors, especially without knowledge of Elizabethan culture. For instance, students had difficulty understanding Hamlet's classical allusions and The Taming of the Shrew's falconry metaphors. Both native and non-native speakers faced these challenges, though multilingual students sometimes had an advantage due to familiarity with other languages. Students also lacked knowledge of Classical Greece and Rome

which is essential for understanding Shakespeare's context and meaning of Shakespeare's stories. Interestingly, not all students learning a second language agreed on this issue for cultural references students from Spain or the Mediterranean region sometimes have better knowledge about the references from the Greek tragedies (Murphy et al., 2020). The table below presents student opinions on Shakespeare's works.

	Lancaster	Barcelona	Joensuu
What do you like and dislike about Shakespeare?	<p>Like Innovative, creative and complex – makes you think Plots and characters</p> <p>Language – poetic, eloquent, natural, creative and prestigious Universality, moral message</p> <p>Dislike Wordy, lengthy and convoluted – hard work Context-dependent</p> <p>Outdated language/jokes/ references Miss out on humour Pronunciation changes</p>	<p>Like Plots and character construction Locations</p> <p>Identification with themes and characters Universality</p> <p>Dislike Overcomplicated, pretentious and pedantic Overexposed and overrated Complex/Archaic language Difficulty</p>	<p>Like Plots and characters</p> <p>Relevant themes Open to adaptation Good humour</p> <p>Dislike Difficult to read Too many characters Stereotypical characters</p>
What do you find tricky when you read Shakespeare?	<p>(Archaic) language</p> <p>Apostrophes used for elision punctuation Metaphors and idioms</p> <p>Meanings same as present-day? Word order Word play Pronunciation changes Grammar</p>	<p>(Archaic) language</p> <p>Historical and classical references Metaphors</p> <p>(Long) sentence structure</p>	<p>Difficult vocabulary Change in meaning Aspects of grammar</p>

Table 1. Students' Comments from Padlet Discussion (Murphy et al., 2020)

3.4.4 Strategies and Methods to be Employed in Teaching Shakespeare

In the previous sub-section, the challenges of teaching Shakespeare and why students find Shakespeare's literary works difficult were mentioned. Now I would like to focus on solutions for these challenges and explore new ways to teach Shakespeare. For this, I will dive into the different strategies has been researched from various studies.

Webb (2009) suggests that watching films of Shakespeare's works can help students view the texts as plays rather than novels, as it emphasizes their performative aspects. Additionally, Bruce (as cited in Hiscock and Hopkins, 2007) proposes that

organizing debates, where students work in teams, can encourage greater involvement and foster critical thinking while studying Shakespeare. Moreover, Webb (2009) recommends pairing a Shakespeare text with another literary work, rather than simply pairing it with chosen criticism, in order to offer fresh pedagogical perspectives. Furthermore, Heilmer (2009) suggests integrating various critical approaches, such as feminist, post-colonial, or psychoanalytic theories, which allows students to interpret the plays from multiple viewpoints, thereby connecting the works to contemporary societal issues. In addition, Reynolds (1991, as cited in Webb, 2009) offers a more active strategy for teaching Shakespeare's sonnets. Alongside performative methods, he suggests to use games, videos, and even physical activities to teach both plays and sonnets. For example, splitting sonnets into lines and reciting them aloud can help students become more familiar with the language, by promoting expressive reading and comprehension.

Another strategy Web (2009) highlights is sub-texting which encourages students to focus textual details. Such as interpreting the idea lie behind of the text with the opinion of the students for the text rather the literal text. In Hiscock and Hopkins (2007), David Ruitter highlights the importance of constructivist approach. They may start to examine an early speech of one of the main characters by focusing on the phrases mainly reflect the personality of the character. Then they can discuss their observations and reach an agreement in the character analysis. After that, students can predict how those characters may interact throughout the play.

Besides the performative approaches, Murphy et al., (2020) suggest to focus on also broader contextual approaches and sociocultural perspectives as a textual approach, a pedagogical corpus-stylistic method. McIntyre and Walker (2019 as cited in Murphy et al., 2020) pedagogical corpus stylistic method which combines stylistic methods with corpus linguistics techniques like concordance and collocation. This method is used for language teaching, however, Murphy et al., (2020) suggest to use this method to overcome the difficulties students experience with the language of Shakespeare. They suggest that incorporating a mixed pedagogical approach which include textual, contextual and performative to teach Shakespeare is the most effective way for enhancing students' comprehension. Moreover, besides those they suggest bringing corpus-based methods into the classroom, where students actively engage in discovering

meanings, though they acknowledge that these methods have limitations, particularly with complex syntax.

Additionally, as it is mentioned before, Gibson's active methods approach broke down the traditional division between analysis and imagination, intellect and emotion, fostering responses that were both critical and appreciative. The Cambridge School Shakespeare series brought these active methods directly into classrooms (Brady and Flaherty, 2016). Gibson's approach emphasized the importance of social interaction and physical engagement in learning, using drama to challenge traditional teaching methods. Students were not just taught about the character, instead, they had the opportunity to represent the role of the character and decide how to react in various scenarios as the character. The activities which included choral readings, role-playing, and writing staging notes, demonstrated that there are several options for students to consider working collaboratively rather than a single correct interpretation (Gibson, 2016 as cited in Brady and Flaherty, 2016).

Schupak (2018) supports the use of performance pedagogy in teaching Shakespeare, where students engage by acting or analyzing performances. This method not only helps them interact with the text but also involves casting, rehearsing, memorizing, and performing or observing performances (Rocklin, 2005, as cited in Schupak, 2018). Performance-based techniques vary: some teachers prefer staging a full play, while others focus on activities like choral readings, improvisations, or acting out specific scenes, which require less preparation (Schupak, 2018). Additionally, using videos in the classroom is debated. Critics like James Bulman (1984, as cited in Schupak, 2018) worry that students may rely on films instead of reading and it may limit their understanding of Shakespeare. However, studies show that watching performances can enhance comprehension, especially for students struggling with Early Modern English. Therefore, while videos should be used cautiously, they can still be valuable teaching tools (Fonseka, 2013, as cited in Schupak, 2018).

Lima (2018) offers a mixed approach to teaching Shakespeare to international students. She argues that studying Shakespeare combines language acquisition, cognitive engagement, and higher-order thinking by focusing on how language functions within the text. Attention to word choices, verb/noun patterns, and repetitions not only enhances vocabulary and language awareness but also aids in interpretation and

critique. Although the structuralist/formalist approach may seem outdated in the poststructuralist era, Lima stresses that it remains essential for both students and teachers. However, she emphasizes that fluency in English alone is insufficient, she defends teaching the sociocultural and historical context of the Elizabethan era as well (Lima, 2018).

Finally, Naylor (2001, as cited in Heilmer, 2009) and Morrison (2002, as cited in Heilmer, 2009) argue that Shakespearean studies should incorporate creative, technical, and journalistic writing assignments. These activities, such as writing letters, diaries, advice columns, or newspaper articles from the perspective of Shakespeare's characters, can enhance students' writing and interpretation skills while demonstrating their understanding of the plays. Some scholars advocate expanding traditional essays to make them more engaging, while others, like Hadley (2002, as cited in Heilmer, 2009), support the continued use of essays for assessment. These assignments could include evaluating Shakespeare's cinematic adaptations or exploring his treatment of significant themes like feminism or war, and comparing Elizabethan and modern cultural perspectives (Heilmer, 2009).

3.4.5 Teaching Shakespeare Plays with Emojis Example

The integration of emojis as tool into teaching Shakespeare is not an old technique but innovative approach to connect modern world with classic texts. As it is mentioned before, OMG Shakespeare series include the re-writings of Shakespeare plays to help students' understanding in the plays (Martins and Sagres, 2020). Emojis are used in the OMG Shakespeare series to symbolize feelings, actions of the characters and more. In some parts Shakespeare's deep vocabulary was replaced with emojis which created debates among scholars. Emojis are employed to make text simpler and easier to understand for students, especially for those who may find Shakespeare's original works difficult to read in Early Modern English. Emojis serve as visual signals that lead students through the story and make it easier for them to understand the characters' motivations and feelings (Martins and Sagres, 2020).

Furthermore, the idea of intermediality which describes the interaction between various media forms is fundamental to the usage of emojis in this context. The OMG Shakespeare series delivers a multimodal learning experience by blending the

contemporary, digital style of text messaging with the classic medium of reading. Shakespeare's Early Modern language and contemporary forms of expression are bridged by this intermedial method, which increases student engagement by making the content more applicable to their everyday communication habits (Martins and Sagres, 2020).

The approach was used in OMG Shakespeare series relies on semiotics and emojis convey meaning through visual representation instead of verbal description. Those can be classified under Peirce's (1998 as cited in Martins and Sagres, 2020) theory of signs which are icons, indices, and symbols. He indicates that emojis often serve as icons, directly resembling the emotions or objects they represent, such as a heart emoji representing love (Martins and Sagres, 2020).

Emoji usage in OMG Shakespeare series also corresponds to the elements of multimodality, a conceptual framework that investigates how many communication modalities, image, and sound interact within a single medium to produce meaning. The multimodality theory of Elleström (2010, cited in Martins and Sagres, 2020) states that each media includes material, sensory, and semiotic modalities that combine to create a communicative act.

Pedagogically, using emojis as in OMG Shakespeare series reflects to the linguistic struggles that students face in Shakespeare's works. The series translate complex emotions and actions more understandable visual signs and they don't deal with the complex language. However, I think it also prevents students from understanding the essence of Shakespeare and the features of Elizabethan era. On the other hand, emoji use promotes culturally responsive pedagogy by recognizing and incorporating students' cultural customs into the curriculum. Emojis are a regular feature of everyday communication in today's digital communication. Teachers recognize students' language and cultural backgrounds by incorporating them into the study of Shakespeare, which makes the classroom a more interesting and friendly environment (Martins and Sagres, 2020).

In conclusion, the OMG Shakespeare series provides an example of how emojis may be used as an inventive teaching tool when studying Shakespeare. It improves comprehension, increases student engagement, and creates a link between Shakespeare's plays and the modern digital age. However, according to my opinion those materials

should be used as a tool rather than the main material. By using these as the primary texts, we would not fully capture the essence of Shakespeare and his brilliant writing. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will propose the integration of emojis as a supplementary tool for teaching Shakespeare, alongside a pragmatic approach to Hamlet.

3.4.6 Teaching Shakespeare with multimodality theory and emojis

Innovative methods help teachers to bring a bridge between their modern classes and the classical texts which may seem scary to some of the students. Furthermore, in today's digitally surrounded environment the integration of what is similar to them may enhance their familiarity to the materials. While doing that multimodal tools such as emojis may assist them. Kessler (2022) defines Multimodality as the use of different modes or channels to convey meaning such as linguistic, visual, aural, gestural and spatial features. The theory has gained significance in English Language Teaching and in wider pedagogical context. In pedagogy the theory reflects to the importance of conveying the message through beyond the language and also by integrating multi forms such as images, sounds and gestures. Since day by day, educational tasks require students and teachers to apply multimedia sources, multimodality become more remarkable in education (Kessler, 2022). When students encounter with a complex text, for interpreting it relying on only to the language may be difficult for them so visual cues and symbols might be the tool to assist them. Emojis can be beneficial modality tool for them to led them visualize character's emotions, relationships and thematic elements through what is familiar to them. That is why this technique resonate with multimodal pedagogy to enhance comprehension and engagement. Moreover, emojis contain multimodality since they are visual symbols that function as emotion, action and abstract idea signifiers. In multimodal learning visual elements enhance the analysis of the texts with the supply of non-verbal cues. Therefore, emojis present familiar, culturally accordant tool which students can employ to interpret and comprehend Shakespearean language and themes.

In addition to these, the relation between literature and emojis lies in utilization of symbols. Literature uses symbols, metaphor and themes that expand the literal meaning. On the other hand, emojis provide modern way to employ emotions and ideas

(see Chapter 2). With the integration of emojis in Shakespearean texts, students can benefit from these tools to comprehend abstract ideas. I think this theory significantly important in teaching Shakespeare since Shakespeare's plays include intricate language, historical context and complex themes which can alienate students from the lesson. As it mentioned before (see 3.4.3) especially students have struggle in meaning of Shakespearean plays. Therefore, using emojis in teaching Shakespeare may provide more familiar, culturally aligned tool that allow students to comprehend and express their perspectives through relevant to their modern world with visual symbols. One of the attempts for that was OMG Shakespeare series which interpret the Shakespearean plays into modern context and simplify the language and educators engage with the students through a modern, accessible modality that parallels students' daily communication styles (Martins and Sagres, 2020). I think with this framework emojis offer an innovative way to introduce semiotic elements in Shakespearean pedagogy by making these intricate elements more visually appealing and inviting students to engage with the plays with the help of a new perspective. Furthermore, this approach resonates with social semiotics in which emphasizes that visual symbols can function as effective tools for communication especially for the concepts that may be difficult to express via just text (Kress, 2009).

Subsequently, emojis allow students to interact with the text in layers; for example, by placing emojis as interpretive notes next to the conversation, they can use emojis to represent and assist their comprehension for intricate words. It is an example of multimodality in literature. Furthermore, in Hamlet's monologues students might use emojis to mirror Hamlet's complicated emotions which enable them to depict mood shifts of Hamlet. However, the expanded examples will be demonstrated in the following sections. Also, this method may work as a scaffold that connects classic texts to modern literary practices with more dynamic interaction with the material. For example, by seeing an emoji with metaphor of Shakespeare can assist to convey meaning by fostering deeper understanding of the text. However, while emojis help to visually represent the expressions or themes, they do not take the part of the language. Instead, they serve as interpretative tools by being the guide of the students. It is expected that this method may encourage students' critical analysis skills, imagination and creativity. Furthermore, emojis may function in different ways in literature such as

representing emotions of the characters which would be the symbolic expressions that connect students to the characters' emotions and may mirror the themes by bringing better understanding.

Finally, with the help of this multimodal method I aim to create more dynamic interaction with and interpretation of the text which brings together traditional language and visual representation. Integrating emojis into Shakespearean plays is experimental, however, there are previous pedagogies which aims to make accessible Shakespeare's texts. Such as Gibson's (2016, as cited in Brad and Flaherty, 2016) performance-pedagogy as mentioned by Brady and Flaherty (2016) and interactive approaches. These approaches have demonstrated that enhancing the methodology with different modality could foster more interactive and meaningful engagement with Shakespearean texts. Furthermore, I believe that this approach may bring a familiar modality for students to reduce their stress when they encounter dense and intricate texts and visual support may be a way to integrate it. In conclusion, this approach is an experimental approach that aims to assist students, by adopting multimodal theory, and is based on innovative methods in literature and teaching Shakespeare.

CHAPTER 4

USING EMOJIS TO TEACH HAMLET IN HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE CLASSES

In the previous chapters, I explored the literature surrounding emojis, including their origins, applications in various contexts, and functions, focusing on their pragmatic use. Additionally, I examined the pedagogy of educational technologies and methods for incorporating them into teaching. I also analyzed techniques for teaching literature, including various approaches to teaching Shakespeare. In this chapter, I will present my proposal for integrating emojis into Hamlet's instruction in high school literature classes. First, I will examine the contextual background of Hamlet along with the language, themes, and characters. I will also discuss the rationale behind selecting Hamlet for this approach and the reasons for targeting high school students. Next, I will explain why an emoji-based approach is valuable for teaching Hamlet and provide examples from a monologue and dialogue from Hamlet for teachers who wish to implement this innovative method. Finally, I will address the challenges that may be faced when using emojis to teach Hamlet in high school literature classes.

Before starting this chapter, I would like to clarify the use of emojis to teach Hamlet in high school literature classes. As I mentioned earlier, the aim of this method is not to replace Shakespeare's language with emojis, but rather to use emojis as a supplementary tool for teaching his work. I believe that removing Shakespeare's original language entirely and interpreting the whole text would hinder students' ability to engage deeply with the play and fully appreciate its richness. Therefore, emojis will be used as a supportive tool, not as a replacement for the text itself.

4.1 Hamlet

Hamlet is one of Shakespeare's most complicated and thematically dense tragedies. It has layers of religious confusion, socio-political and cultural elements of Elizabethan England. Here, I would like to give the contextual background of Hamlet by discussing the religious conflicts of the Reformation, the effects of Shakespeare's personal life, and the political anxieties of Shakespeare that affected his writing.

Hamlet was written around 1599-1601, when William Shakespeare was already known as a successful playwright the first time in 1601 Hamlet was staged at the Globe Theater (Gibson, 2002). Hamlet had three different early printings that all have diverse versions of the play. The First Quarto was printed in 1603; it used to be known as the “bad quarto”. This version is shorter than the other versions and the characters' names and dialogues are different than the other printed versions. For example, the name of Polonius was Corambis (father of Ophelia and Laertes, counselor of Claudius). By many scholars, it was assumed as unreliable and relied on the memory of an actor or audience (Mowat and Werstine, 2023). The Second Quarto (1604 -1605) is instead seen as a “good quarto” which probably mirrors a more authentic version sourced from Shakespeare’s manuscripts (Everett, 1989). In 1623 after the death of Shakespeare, the First Folio was printed. This one includes changes in lines and suggestions for stage practices. To achieve a closer version of the authentic text, editors generally mix the Second Quarto and First Folio which was a debate in editorial tradition (Mowat and Werstine, 2023).

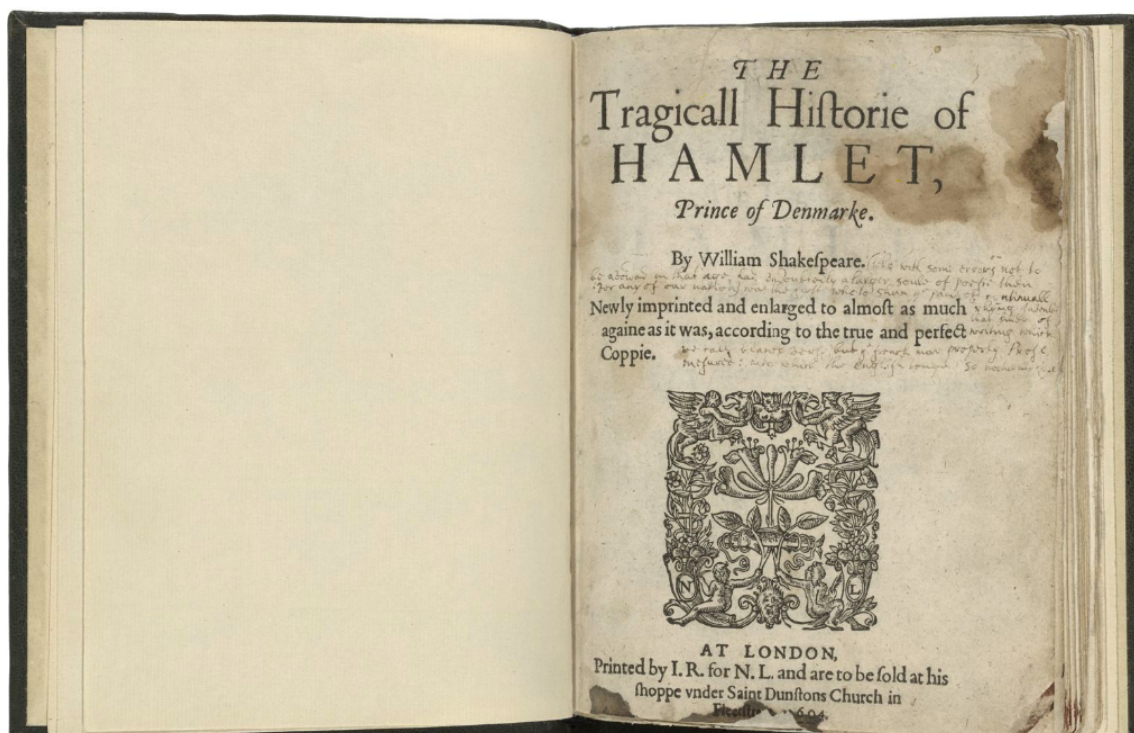


Figure 1. Hamlet Second Quarto (1604) Folger Shakespeare Library

Hamlet’s story is based the Scandinavian legend on Amleth, which was printed in Latin by Saxo Grammaticus and then translated into French by François de

Belleforest (Gibson, 2002). The legend of Amleth tells the story of a young Danish prince who searches for revenge for his father's murder. However, Shakespeare changes the legend by enhancing the themes of existential crises, betrayal, and the moral dilemmas related to revenge. This extended revenge narrative also reflects the quite popular revenge tragedy genre which focuses on vengeance and moral corruption. English writers were influenced by the tragedies of Seneca which depend on Greek myths (Mercer, 1987; Gibson, 2002). For example, Thyestes inspired the playwrights to create protagonists who seek revenge with the encouragement of a ghostly image like King Hamlet's ghost (Mercer, 1987).

Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* also is one of the plays inspired by Seneca's plays. The plot of the play hinges on Hieronimo's change into "revenge-seeking fury"; it also demonstrates the genre's important elements which are revenge seeker's psychological unravel and moral degradation. Similar to Hamlet, Hieronimo is first hesitant and fights his conscience before carrying out his revenge, which leads to a cycle of increasing violence that perfectly captures the genre's cathartic yet unsettling examination of retribution (Mercer, 1987).

Similarly, *Antonio's Revenge* by John Marston expands on this idea by putting its protagonist in a setting where morality becomes unclear and revenge is unavoidable. Antonio's journey from quiet sorrow to violent action is similar to Hamlet's (Mercer, 1987). The Elizabethan audience's understanding of revenge as a complex ethical issue that goes against social and religious standards is reflected in the characters' moral quandaries in both plays, which cause them to postpone their deeds (Mercer, 1987). While there are no direct proof of its existence, there are some allusions to previous play about Hamlet the so-called Ur-Hamlet (early Hamlet) before Shakespeare wrote Hamlet (Gibson, 2002). Shakespeare's Hamlet was influenced by the Elizabethan revenge tragedy genre, as were Seneca's tragedies.

After sources of inspiration, the Elizabethan era, Shakespeare's England will be examined. First, let's start with the political situation in England. Hamlet reflects on the anxieties of its time. In the play, we see the despair and uncertainty about the future with Hamlet's father's death. During that time, Elizabethan England was facing an uncertain future with their queen not having an heir. This created national anxieties about the sequence and stability of the throne. Those concerns were mirrored in

Denmark's court by Shakespeare through Hamlet's suspicions on Claudius's accedence and the surrounding moral questions on the authority. The concerns of power, legitimacy, and moral authority are highlighted by Hamlet's corrupt political climate which mirrors Elizabeth's court in real life (Hadfield, 2005)

Moreover, for the display of the atmosphere of Elizabethan England, we should mention the Essex Rebellion in 1601. Earl of Essex, who had been a former favorite of Elizabeth, attempted to rebel against Queen Elizabeth 1. But the rebellion failed and Essex was executed. However, the event highlighted the unpredictable dynamics of Elizabethan politics and the potential discontent (Hadfield, 2005). It can be said that it has some thematic relevance in Hamlet's political insights towards Denmark court.

Biographers often ponder whether the death of Shakespeare's son, 11-year-old Hamnet, about four or five years before *Hamlet* was first performed, had any connection to the play's tragic themes (Everett, 1989). In the same year as Hamnet's death, Shakespeare's father applied for and received a coat of arms on behalf of the family which enhanced the family's social status as Gentleman. These two significant events may have affected Shakespeare's thoughts about the idea of his tragic play centered on a son (Everett, 1989).

Another important feature of the time when Hamlet was written is the effect of the English Reformation on the religious divide between Catholicism and Protestantism. In the play, Hamlet is confused about the ghost which could be the ghost of his father or an evil creature who wants to deceive him. The ghost alludes to the Catholic concept of purgatory where souls pay the price for their sins before going to heaven. However, Protestant reform rejected this belief. Therefore, Hamlet's skepticism towards the ghost is probably the influence of Protestant beliefs. Furthermore, according to Greenblatt's (2013) view, the "Protestant temperament" in Hamlet goes beyond his suspicion that the ghost may be an evil spirit which is a common fear for both Catholics and Protestants. Rather, it alludes to a more profound sense of Reformed skepticism that shapes Hamlet's opinions and behavior. After killing Polonius, he has a disturbing conversation that reflects this approach. Hamlet responds to Claudius' question about Polonius' presence by saying, "At supper...Not where he eats, but where he is eaten." The "supper" in this context may allude to the Lord's Supper, also known as the Eucharist, a ritual that caused a great split between Protestants and Catholics. During the 16th

century, Protestant leaders frequently made fun of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which states that the bread and wine in the Eucharist become the body and blood of Christ. Protestant criticism is emphasized by Hamlet's dark humor, which mocks Catholic ritual's emphasis on material objects and its presumed physical literalism (Greenblatt, 2013).

The Globe Theatre held an important place in Elizabethan society by offering a place for plays to be performed and bringing new concepts to public theater. The design of the Globe Theater consisted of an open yard surrounded by three layered seats and a wide stage which provided closer engagement with the spectators. This led plays to directly address the audience and intensify the effect of plays like Hamlet (Kiernan, 1999). Moreover, the audience at the Globe Theatre was diverse; wealthy patrons were seated in the upper galleries, while the common people who could not afford these seats stood in the area known as the “groundlings”. This diverse audience helped the theater succeed and established it as the center for Elizabethan London's popular and intellectual culture (Kiernan, 1999).

In Hamlet, language serves important roles by mirroring Hamlet's emotional state—his confusion and anger—and is a useful instrument for expressing the complex theme of the play. Shakespeare demonstrates his mastery of language with intricate soliloquies, layered metaphors, wordplays, puns, imagery, and more. With the help of the language and these devices psychological depth of the play is enhanced. Shakespeare creates a complex depiction of existential crisis in Hamlet by using language that is both approachable and highly symbolic (Gibson, 2002).

Furthermore, Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq (2012) argue that language in Hamlet provides multiple functions like self-defense and manipulation. Hamlet's speech reflects the duality of his mental conflict throughout the play which fluids between the courtly diction that is expected of him and a metaphysical tone influenced by the Ghost. Hamlet's linguistic richness enables him to mislead the other characters and seek the truth (Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq, 2012). Particularly in his monologues, Hamlet uses language to protect him from vulnerability and to hide his desire for revenge. This strategic employment of language is evident in his interactions with Polonius and Claudius; his deliberate chaotic responses shift attention and mask his genuine aims by making him ambiguous to other characters (Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq, 2012). For

instance, in Act 1, scene 2, Hamlet complains “How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable / Seem to me all the uses of this world!” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.135–136). It represents a crux moment in which he uses language to reflect his anger and rage to philosophical notions rather than immediate action (Anand, 2019). In this context, language serves as a vehicle for Hamlet's existential reflections which permits him to express sentiments that would be considered unsuitable or harmful for the court. Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq's (2012) study indicates that Hamlet's altering linguistic registers are not simply stylistic decisions but are essential to his tragic arc. Also, it depicts his growing isolation and willingness to act only when the constraints of his reality have weakened his mental shields..

Anand (2019) points out that Hamlet's language is important for linguistic and cultural criticism since it refers to Elizabethan cultural norms, religious conflicts, and social perspectives on revenge and honor. For example, Hamlet's reaction to his mother in “Frailty, thy name is woman!” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.150) reflects the Elizabethan perspective on family and loyalty by demonstrating gender expectations of fidelity and loyalty. Furthermore, Weitz (1972, as cited in Anand, 2019) highlights that Shakespeare's language with its intellectual dialogue, irony, puns, or straightforward prose, portrays genuine human interactions. Anand (2012) and Weitz (1972 as cited in Anand, 2012) give an example of it with the existence of “again” in “What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?” (*Hamlet*, 1.1.26) since it emphasizes the reality of the dialogue. It serves to highlight Shakespeare's commitment to imitating realistic human dialogue.

Another use of language depends on the employment of pronouns in Hamlet. Shakespeare uses pronouns to emphasize the relationship between characters and who they refer to. For example, in Act 1, Scene 2, Claudius appears for the first time in the play. Claudius here holds power and control through his speech. He uses formal language, courtly expressions, and complex grammar structures (Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq, 2012). His linguistic style expresses the key issues of the court: his controversial marriage, the growing threat of Prince Fortinbras, Laertes's request and Hamlet's sorrow. He starts with: “Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death / The memory be green... / Together with remembrance of ourselves” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.1-2-7). If we check the pronouns he refers to “our dear brother”, and “remembrance of ourselves” rather than saying my, myself, etc. It shows the tone of the king's speech; however, it is

still ambiguous whether he refers to the court or Danish society. Even Shakespeare shows a little certainty, he always leaves a door to different interpretations.

Furthermore, we see that he uses masking techniques and manipulation that mislead the attention of the audience. “Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen... / Taken to wife”, (*Hamlet*, 1.2.8-14) he delays the main verb and arranges the sentence to mask the questionable nature of the marriage with Gertrude. The auxiliary verb is separated from the main action by prepositional phrases filled with paradoxes. For instance, “With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage.” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.12) This anastrophe represents the moral complexity of the marriage, which is regarded as incestuous by religious and social standards, and highlights the contradiction between public appearance and hidden motives (Al-Abdullah and Shunnaq, 2012).

Finally, Lewis (2012) examines Hamlet's complex language by referring to memory. When his father's ghost says “Remember me”, he responds “yea, from the table of my memory I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,” (*Hamlet*, 1.5.105-106) and Lewis (2012) interprets this as an expression of his struggle to keep his father's command within a conceptual mnemonic space. In declaring to erase other memories from his mind, Hamlet uses metaphorical language that is consistent with early modern mnemonics, in which memory is frequently portrayed as a type of cognitive "erasure" (Lewis, 2012).

Now, I would like to dive into the literary devices that Shakespeare used in this intricate language of Hamlet. Hamlet's imagery not only helps to convey the political corruption of Denmark but also the emotional and psychological complexity of its characters. Surgoen (1935 as cited in Anand, 2019) states that poetic imagery creates the atmosphere, and transmits emotions without detailed description. After this statement, scholars focused on the Shakespearean language. Anand (2019) identifies that Hamlet contains numerous images of illness and physiological decay, highlighting the play's thematic theme of corruption. The imagery is not just illustrative, but also representative of the moral and political decay that infects Denmark. The repeated metaphors such as “ulcer” in “It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,” (*Hamlet*, 3.4.168) captures the realms of the ill state and it is made evident in expressions like "blister" in “And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows”, "sick soul" in “To my sick soul (as sin's true nature is)” and "thought-sick" in “Is thought-sick at the act.”. The

physical references blend with the psychological ones to depict Hamlet's and Denmark's common melancholy (Anand, 2019). This employment of the disease imagery strengthens the idea of rot spreading throughout the palace which aligns with Hamlet's depiction of Denmark as an "unweeded garden" in Act 1, scene 2. I think these language tricks Shakespeare uses help to enhance the reality of the emotions and the effect behind the conditions of the characters, especially in Hamlet's situation. Moreover, these uses of language create the theme of corruption.

Furthermore, Owens (2020) states that the imagery he employs shows his attitude towards women which is obvious from his harsh and misogynistic behaviours. It can be seen in the "closet scene" when he faces off against Gertrude. In this scene, Owen (2020) emphasizes that Hamlet's language combines his mother with Ophelia by implying that he puts his frustration with female morality on both women. He accuses Gertrude with the imagery that is more applicable to describe Ophelia such as "the rose / From the fair forehead of an innocent love" (*Hamlet*, 3.4.51-52). This statement suggests Ophelia's purity, which Hamlet feels has been corrupted, and illustrates his internal conflict and conflation of women as symbols of betrayal (Owen, 2020). Moreover, the celestial and supernatural elements intensify the imagery's effect and enhance the emotional impact. Hamlet's statement that "Heaven's face does glow O'er this solidity and compound mass" (*Hamlet*, 3.4.57) personifies divine displeasure and metaphorically frames his mother's perceived sin as an act so great that it warms the heavens. It illustrates how firmly the imagery is rooted in gender roles and Hamlet's subsequent notion of feminine faithfulness (Owen, 2020)

Subsequently, Gibson (2002) emphasizes the importance of imagery in Hamlet which serves to engage with the imagination of the audience and enhance the play. For instance, in Act 1, scene 1, Francisco says "Not a mouse stirring" (*Hamlet*, 1.1.11) to create an atmosphere of cautiousness and hidden danger which is a motif that continues during the play. His imagery also uses similes and personifications to employ comparisons that deepen meaning. Such as the description of poison seeping into King Hamlet's ear as "swift as quicksilver, like eager droppings into milk" (*Hamlet*, 1.5.73-76). Furthermore, personification when Hamlet describes death in Act 5, scene 2 "This fell sergeant... swift in his arrest" which gives death human traits that emphasize its relentless nature (Gibson, 2002). Imagery related to hunting, war, and theatre occurs

throughout the play which adds thematic layers. In hunting imagery, we sense the entrapment and slyness such as “springes to catch woodcock”. However, in war imagery, we sense conflict and heroic deeds. In fact, Gibson (2002) also states that the most common imagery is related to the decay and corruption of the Danish court and Hamlet’s madness. At last, theatre references in The Mousetrap scene serve as a criticism of truth versus appearance by highlighting the deception that defines life at Elsinore which might be correlated to Shakespeare’s criticism in his time (Gibson, 2002). As Gibson (2002) notes symbols like play-within-a-play, create the narrative of Hamlet which embodies the observation and truth. This leads Hamlet to catch Claudius’s betrayal and highlights the motif of using theatre to reveal the truth. Another theatrical metaphor we can see is in Act 5, Scene 2 when Hamlet says “Or I could make a prologue to my brains, / They had begun the play" (*Hamlet*, 5.2.35-36). Here Hamlet narrates his actions as if they were pre-written which demonstrates his tendency to externalize responsibility and suggests that some of his decisions occur automatically, independent of conscious moral scrutiny (Latham, 1962). This depiction culminates in the ritualistic, game-like duel, by conveying Hamlet's fatalistic acceptance of fate in “Preparation is all” and the idea that the actual action is not impulsively provoked, as seen in his killing of Claudius after Laertes' cry of guilt (Latham, 1962).

Also when Hamlet says "Hamlet the Dane" is not only a self-definition but also an emphatic assertion of his rightful place, symbolizing his dominance in grief and personal assertion of love for Ophelia. The imagery of this scene shows his sincerity but at the same time his competitiveness with Laertes since he swears "I'll rant as well as thou," (*Hamlet*, 5.1.301) which demonstrates how his grief is both performative and profound (Latham,1962).

According to the analysis of Ahmad (2016), the Royal Court of Elsinore represents an important symbol of a hypocritical world. This moral and political corruption is personified by Claudius, who uses the glamour of the court to hide his ambition and fratricide. His declaration in which he balances joy and grief demonstrates the hypocrisy that drives his ruling standards and highlights the morally corrupted Denmark (Ahmad, 2016)

Another symbol depends on the ghost. The ghost represents the duality of revenge and spiritual unrest which calls for an action but also foreshadows Hamlet's

inner turmoil. Ghost says “But that I am forbid / To tell the secrets of my prison-house” (*Hamlet*, 1.5.18-19) which refers to the tortured soul of his father which makes Hamlet stay in between the betrayal and loss of his father. Shakespeare portrays classical and biblical motifs and The Ghost echoed the myths of subterranean journeys in Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy* (Al-Abdullah & Shunnaq, 2012). Furthermore, we can see the allusions to Adam and Eve which supplies also metaphors from the Book of Genesis. In Act 1, Scene 5, Hamlet refers to Claudius as “The serpent that did sting thy father’s life / Now wears his crown.” (*Hamlet*, 1.5.46-47). In this case, Claudius is the serpent evil that seduces her mother we can see her as Eve, and those lead them to unfortunate events that represent their expel from the Garden of Eden (Al-Abdullah & Shunnaq, 2012).

In addition to these, the poison that Claudius uses to kill King Hamlet demonstrates the symbol of betrayal. In Act 1, Scene Ghost tells Hamlet that “Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole / With juice of cursed hebenon” (*Hamlet*, 1.5.68-69) which gives the implication of murder and symbolizes the corruption related to deception. Further, this reoccurs when Claudius and Laertes poisoned the sword and the cup (Ahmad, 2016).

Moreover, Ahmad (2016) emphasizes that the skull of Yorick symbolizes the inevitability of death. This serves both as a literal symbol and a metaphysical metaphor. In Act 5, Scene 1, by saying “Alexander returneth to dust” (*Hamlet*, 5.1.217), Hamlet reminds us of Alexander the Great and even if you have great ambitions, goals, etc. he says that all is left from them is this dust. This insight serves as the foundation for the play’s analysis of human mortality in contrast to the worldly aspirations that ultimately lead to disaster. The symbolism of the skull connects with Hamlet’s deeper thoughts about the value of life and the legacy left behind.

Another important symbolism lies in the flowers of Ophelia. Ophelia’s flowers in Act 4, Scene 5 represent the characteristics and leading faith of the court. “There’s rosemary, that’s for remembrance. / Pray you, love, remember;. and there is pansies, /that’s for thoughts” (*Hamlet*, 4.5 199-201) which also presents Ophelia’s madness and the thematic intersections of innocence, treachery, and disillusionment. She gives fennel and columbines to Claudius which represents his immoral marriage and betrayal. Then she gives daises to Claudius and Gertrude for their lies and infidelity (Ahmad, 2016).

Hamlet shows Shakespeare's talent in word plays which also compliments the complex psychology of Hamlet. For example, at first, he says in Act 1 Scene 2, he says "A little more than kin, and less than kind" (*Hamlet*, 1.2.67) which implies that Claudius's calling him son (kin) is insulting and his nature (kind) is not like Claudius's nature (Gibson, 2002). Then the line "I am too much in the sun" (*Hamlet*, 1.2.69) uses the example of a pun. He plays with words by using "sun" to reflect "son" (Al-Abdullah & Shunnaq, 2012)

In Hamlet, doubling in the language and scenes is also used commonly to contrast the characters and thematic element. For example two sons of fathers (Hamlet and Laertes), two brothers (King Hamlet and Claudius) and two fellows Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and more. Furthermore, Hamlet and Laertes offer an example of parallel journeys. Both are driven by the revenge of their father's death which leads them to their end. Werstine (1988) notes that Laertes's pursuit of revenge acts as a foil to Hamlet's contemplative nature and hesitation. This duality allows Shakespeare to explore themes of action and inaction and to showcase a variety of responses to moral dilemmas. Additionally, language displays doubling with words and phrases such as "tush tush", "This too too solid flesh" (*Hamlet*, 1.2.133) and more. Gibson (2002) states that in Hamlet there are approximately 250 examples of this doubling.

At last, in the play word "question" is repeated 17 times as Levin (1959) reports which gives the play an interrogative theme and creates its uncertain atmosphere. Shakespeare created these uncertainties which we still try to interpret and analyze his language and what happened in the play. For example, we still do not know for sure if Hamlet is mad, Ophelia commits suicide, does Gertrude is also involved in the murder of King Hamlet, or what Hamlet means by "to be or not to be" (*Hamlet*, 3.1.64)). Is it a question of deciding how to act and being undecided to kill Claudius or himself, or his emotions as being living death who is in between death life and in a purgatory like the ghost, or his existential crisis about life and death? These questions will continue to engrave our minds and they will create the deeper layers of the characters in the play.

By examining language, I have already discussed some of the themes implicitly. Here, we will examine more of the themes of Hamlet. At first, one of the most obvious themes we see in Hamlet is revenge. Hamlet seeks revenge from the killer of his father who is his uncle, Claudius. As Mercer (1987) states, revenge theme is integrated with

satire, which may share a manic temper so it may bring the madness of Hamlet. Also, Mercer (1987) emphasizes that in revenge tragedy, delay and the appearance of insanity that nearly always accompanies it are so noticeable that it appears likely they are essential to its meaning structure. Therefore, along with revenge, we see the themes of madness and Hamlet's delay of revenge. In the narrative, this theme is mixed with Hamlet's emotional and moral dilemmas. As Everett (2004) emphasizes, this revenge theme is not solely equipped with the need for revenge but also entangled with a complex of emotion, motive, language, and intention. It shows us that Hamlet's intense grief, disillusionment, and ingrained sense of corruption infect not only Denmark's court but also moral values which are layered by the revenge atmosphere.

The place of Hamlet among the revenge tragedies is predicated on melancholia and existential questions which makes him indecisive rather than earlier revenge tragedy archetypes of wild figures. His acts show us his character whose determination is continually undermined by his intense awareness of the moral decay around him and his persistent philosophical introspection. This hesitation may also be seen as a different theme of Hamlet as action vs inaction. This hesitation reinforces the theme of delay—often framed as a fundamental structure of revenge tragedy—and interweaves it with apparent madness, which Mercer (1987) argues, serves as both his strategy and symptom of his emotional turmoil. Hamlet's vacillation where is seen when he abandons immediate violent retribution for reflection and satire—turning Claudius into a symbol of hypocrisy—underscores a central thematic paradox. Furthermore, in Act 1, Scene 5 after he learns about his father's murder from the ghost instead of turning to his dagger he chooses to turn to his tables. By delaying justice and calming his initial rage, this decision emphasizes that Hamlet's internal conflict and doubts about the morality and effectiveness of retaliation may be his real enemies rather than just Claudius (Mercer, 1987).

Moreover, the uncertainty of the ghost's nature and intentions makes Hamlet more confused which results in prolonging this delay. Hamlet's monologues which are filled with existential and ethical questions reveal a character challenged with a reality that resists simple acts of revenge (Mercer, 1987). However, Hamlet transforms from avenger to target of vengeance through the accidental killing of Polonius which changes the momentum and makes him the victim of the joint anger of Claudius and Laertes.

Shakespeare shows us what revenge does to the soul by suggesting that revenge ruins not only the guilty but also the seemingly fair. The idea of revenge becomes more than an individual quest; it spirals, echoing the "whirligig" of time which is a motif that Everett (2004) likens to a torturous cycle that is both entertaining and frightening, trapping all participants (Everett, 2004). Furthermore, this impulsive revenge action demonstrates the future of Elsinore and the multifaceted nature of revenge enlarges by the difference between Hamlet's and Laertes's way of revenge and this difference emphasizes the tension between thought and action (Mercer, 1987). Therefore, in Hamlet, revenge is not just a theme but a reflection of the fragility of humanity and the significant moral questions it raises.

According to Knights (1966), the theme of death is not just a ubiquitous background, but an integral force driving the play's action and philosophical musings. Hamlet opens with Barnardo's question, "Who's there?" (Hamlet 1.1.1) a line that as Nuttall (1988) suggests not only a question of a guard to protect but an inquiry about the essence of existence among the dead. This question has deeper ambiguity such as the boundary between life and death and the question of being. Furthermore, Knights (1966) emphasizes that many characters in Shakespeare's tragedies face the inevitable death of their fellow characters', Hamlet forces its audience to think about what death means. Hamlet blends linguistic elements and word choices to enhance the literal understanding of the question and make the audience question in the play the existence of life beyond death. Hamlet's encounter with the ghost drags him to the uncertain nature of the dead and brings the darkness which shifts from the external to internal. Nuttall (1988) describes him as "a dead man walking among the living" who is in between life and death living in his own purgatory. We can say that this prevents Hamlet from living his human life and makes him like the ghost in between life and death with his conflicts. In his dialogues with the ghost or the gravedigger, he engages the dialogues about mortality and existential as if he is an expert on death, especially the dialogue with the gravedigger making it a dialogue between death experts (Nuttall, 1988). However, according to Nuttall (1988), we should approach this theme with an agnostic approach rather than certain answers by respecting the ambiguities of the play. Hamlet's famous line from Act 1, Scene 5 to Horatio "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, / Than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (Hamlet, 1.5.187-188)

highlights this ambiguity and the nature of death which cannot be fully understood. Knights (1966) also agrees that for Hamlet, the idea of death is inextricably connected to his existential inquiries which is a search for purpose among deterioration and corruption that provides neither comfort nor simple solutions.

Besides this uncertain nature, as Knights (1966) states death is not just as a physical end in Hamlet but as an infusion that sneaks into the consciousness of the characters, especially Hamlet. In fact, the one who initiates the conflict, which is the center of the play, brings the chains of events that result in multiple deaths. This remembrance of King Hamlet's murder resonates during the whole play such as at the end of Fortinbras's question: "O proud Death, / What feast is toward in thine eternal cell". (Hamlet, 5.2.403-404) This focus on death highlights Hamlet's existential struggle by bringing up questions not only related to death but also the consequences and its impact on the meaning of humans (Knights, 1966). Moreover, as we see in the cemetery scene in Act 5, scene 1 Hamlet says "To what base uses we may return, Horatio! / Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of / Alexander till he find it stopping a bung-hole?" (Hamlet, 5.1.209-211) which demonstrates his fascination towards death's reality and its concreteness. Finally, Hamlet's questions about life and death are universal. These questions push the play not to be just tragedy of revenge but deeper human concerns about mortality, corruption, and the meaning of being so Hamlet becomes a mirror of being itself where death is the end and force that shapes human existence (Knights, 1966). At last, Hamlet's holding of the skull represents the inescapable circle of life and death, the skull represents the death image of every man, also Hamlet.

Regarding language, there are lots of images related to corruption and decay in the play which makes it one of the most important themes of Hamlet. This corruption is both related to the court of Denmark but also to individual concepts in society such as family and its most evident example is the incest marriage of Gertrude and Claudius. As Bozer (2019) emphasizes in widely used metaphors in the Middle Ages, the body politic and body natural were thought to mirror the institutions of the state according to the situation of the ruler which is an analogy. Therefore, the sickness and moral decay of the ruler also affect the constitutions of the states which expands to the whole country, the family, and individuals. Moreover, Claudius is likened to a disease that is infused in

Denmark's body by spreading through its institutions as a contagious infection. When Hamlet returns to Denmark, he is upset but not only upset because of his father's death also furious since her mother gets married to his uncle two months after his father's death. (We can conclude this from Ophelia's lines "Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord." 3.2.136) Furthermore, the ghost of the father wanders around the castle who is a soul that seeks revenge and justice from its murderer. Horatio's words, "This bodes some strange eruption to our state." (*Hamlet*, 1.1.80) can be considered a foretaste of the troubles that await Denmark. Hamlet is aware of the corruption in Denmark by resembling it to an "unweeded garden," which is a symbol often representing moral decay in Renaissance. In doing so, he identifies Claudius and other morally corrupt characters as "weeds" that must be eradicated. On the other hand, Ophelia represents purity but in the end, she gets lost in a society that is surrounded by decay and corruption (Bozer, 2019)

Subsequently, I would like to point out the subordination theme of women in the play. In modern criticism, the feminist point of view analyzes the characters of Gertrude and Ophelia who are the reflection of Elizabethan patriarchal society in which their legal, social, and economic rights were restricted. Gibson (2002) points out that women exist under the control of male figures such as fathers, husbands, or sons. Gertrude and Ophelia show the lack of independence of women and their social roles are also dependent on male figures (father Polonius, sister to Laertes and mother of Hamlet or wife of King Hamlet / Claudius). The only disobedience of Gertrude to Claudius we see in the play is to drink from the poisoned cup. However, Ophelia's life is completely controlled by her father and brother like most Elizabethan women she is the possession of men (Gibson, 2002). Also, Showalter (1985) agrees on the representation of women, especially with Ophelia's portrayal. She is used as a trap for Hamlet and manipulated by Polonius. Furthermore, she is mentioned as an object or a livestock belonging to Polonius when he says in Act 2, Scene 2, "I'll loose my daughter to him" (*Hamlet*, 2.2.176) (Gibson, 2002). This subordination of Ophelia damages her mental health and leads to her tragic madness and end. Showalter (1985) argues that Ophelia's insanity represents the restrictive gender norms in Elizabethan society where female sexuality and demonstration of emotions were viewed as pathological. When we compare with Hamlet's madness, Ophelia's madness is analyzed as the weakness of women and

suppressed desires which mirrors the patriarchal view of femininity. However, Showalter (1985) criticizes this depiction and suggests that her madness has been exaggerated to highlight her helplessness and innocence and has deducted her character as a tragic figure rather than a complex character (1985). Finally, also Hamlet's grief according to Claudius is "unmanly" and I think this is because showing emotions is unacceptable and the madness, and hysteria belong to the women not men according to the view of time.

Before diving into the characters and their analysis, I would like to emphasize some significant elements of the plot. Everett (1988) mentions Hamlet as a time tragedy by referring to his delay is not being just psychological but also a metaphysically deeper connection with time. As Everett (1988) states, in the plot Hamlet's procrastination is not just a failure of decision but a philosophical attitude. He is aware that his actions depend on the time which puts him in a "waiting game" in which choices and actions lose their urgency. Moreover, we can call it a paradox since it seems like Hamlet has a choice but in the plot events also lead him and leave him at the hand of the fortune. In the play revenge gradually fades with the Ghost, and transforms from "royal presence" to "man in a dressing-gown," which reflects the decreasing urgency of the revenge plot. Thus, Hamlet's delay matches with his changing identity which leads him to take the role of dead father rather than carrying out his will. Everett (1988) thinks that the role of time in the plot resembles an hourglass in which the sand is flowing and also still. I would also like to comment on the mirroring plot of Hamlet's life, at first Hamlet is the one who suffers from his grief and the loss of his father. Later, he becomes the source of suffering in Act 4; Ophelia and Laertes live the same grief but this time because of Hamlet and the plot mirrors Hamlet's grief to Laertes and Ophelia. However, the effects of Hamlet's grief are somewhat distributed between Ophelia and Laertes. Ophelia internalizes Hamlet's pretended madness which becomes her reality, while Laertes is consumed by a desire for revenge. Therefore, they suffer with Hamlet and from Hamlet.

Finally, the characters of the play will be examined in the following passages. As a revenge tragedy and a story already told, what makes Hamlet famous is the deep analysis of the characters, his brilliant language, and the layered meanings and complexity of the characters Shakespeare created in them. Hamlet is one of the most intricate characters in Shakespeare's plays which makes him one of the most difficult

characters to understand with his word plays and sarcastic tone. Furthermore, we see him as a kind, loving person but also a misogynist and royal snob. According to Robertson (1790), Hamlet's character is rooted in a duality between his noble intent and his gentle, meditative spirit. Also, Knights (1966) states that Hamlet is not only created to inspire admiration but to show that he is also swallowed up by the evil and corruption in the play. Also, he is not an isolated hero but part of a collective tragedy. Even if he has virtues and morality contrary to the corrupted characters such as Claudius, he is as vulnerable to destruction in the play (Knights, 1966). However, we can't say that Hamlet also becomes evil but he becomes the catalyst of the destruction with his impulsive actions which is ironic since he delays his revenge for a long time.

Moreover, Knights (1966) states that Hamlet is not a character who struggles with decisions or puzzles to be solved rather he is a man who goes through the certain experience which is tangled with death and corruption. Hamlet's character is defined by his high self-consciousness which contrasts his subconscious world and as Knights (1966) describes him in the most unpleasant of all situations (Knights, 1966). Hamlet's introverted nature traps him in a cycle of self-reflection and obsession which prevents him from going beyond thinking to decisive action. As Foakes (1993) comments, Hamlet's inaction and introspection align with "typical modern character" features which is an instance of struggles between idealism and reality of action, that conflict reflects to the modern life's complexity. His self-consciousness alienates him from those around him and he struggles with the existential realities and moral questions. For this reason, we can call it a human journey since everyone passes through to obtain sincere self-awareness. Foakes (1993) also highlights the complexity of Hamlet and how he reflects on both noble and flawed human traits. Furthermore, he is a character that has universal validity which resonates with readers and audiences. As it was mentioned before, he has noble traits such as intellect and morality but also he also demonstrates human weaknesses such as self-doubt and indecisiveness which makes him a genuine human. As Jameson (1840, as cited in Foakes, 1993) Hamlet's inner conflicts and dilemmas led the audience to accompany Hamlet "to the brink of eternity" with thoughts on innocence, beauty, and despair which makes us realize that his character contains the interests of human beings.

Another important aspect is his “madness”. Robertson (1790) suggests that his pretended madness is not only a strategy but also an extension of his complex inner world. Shakespeare blends real and feigned madness to keep dramatic tension and thematic depth. Furthermore, Stirling (1956) states that interpretations of Hamlet's "antic disposition" have varied, with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critics describing his madness as a brilliant cover, a reaction to deep melancholy, or even a true mental breakdown. According to Stirling (1956), Hamlet's madness seems both real and staged, especially when he talks to the Ghost in the Closet scene with Gertrude reflecting this duality so he is both an actor and the victim of madness. These back and forward behaviours from rationality to madness make the analysis of Hamlet's state of mind. Madness and strategic role-playing in Hamlet's character make it difficult for the audience to understand him. The ambiguity of Hamlet's madness reaches a climax in Act 3's "recorder" scene, in which he warns Rosencrantz and Guildenstern for attempting to dig into his thoughts. Here, Hamlet's antic disposition becomes an accusation against the one who thinks they can manipulate him and he says “though you can / fret me, you cannot play upon me” (Hamlet, 3.2.401-402). Stirling (1956) interprets this scene as the symbol of using this pretended madness to resist and protect his autonomy. Therefore, his madness is also a mask that protects him from the surrounding danger.

In another perspective, Robertson (1790) believed that in the scene where Hamlet is with Laertes at Ophelia's grave, he declares his love and grief and it is more like a revealing of his suppressed emotions, not his madness. Also, Stirling (1956) states that Hamlet's confrontation with Laertes and uncontrolled emotional flow is not because of madness but reflects Hamlet's ultimate failure to contain the “real ecstasy” that emerges from his grief, betrayal, and existential questioning. Therefore, according to his perspective, Hamlet is not a character driven by his impulsive actions and madness but a character who is affected by his gentleness and tries to keep his flowing emotions under control. So his struggle depends on not madness but the struggle between gentleness and sensibility (Robertson, 1790). I think it is proof that we see a character who is disgusted by everything he encounters, all the corruption and decay around Hamlet. Another point about his gentleness, and sympathy for others appears in

the grave scene when he is holding the skull, that skull maybe nobody but it is somebody for Hamlet.

Ophelia is one of the most affected characters from the play and there have been different interpretations for her character as mentioned before. Everett (1988) suggests that Ophelia has a complicated character and her character reflects Hamlet, she describes her as the “shadow of Hamlet” submissive in her agency and freedom, just as the moon reflects the sun's light without producing its own. She tries to assert herself but fails in the existence of a dominant father and protective brother who imprisons her in the court of Denmark which leads to her madness and eventually death. Laertes uses “crescent” to symbolize Ophelia’s passive role as stuck in the orbit of Hamlet and unable to affect her destiny. However, Showalter (1985) criticizes that while Hamlet’s struggles are criticized as intellectual sufferings Ophelia is only seen as the emotional response to male submission. She supports that her story deserves to recognition as female repression and mental suffering rather than just a background story (Showalter, 1985).

Hamlet sees his father as a hero which we can interpret from his Hercules image and this reflects unrealistic expectations also from her mother. His expectations of Gertrude to be attached to his father even after death, mourn for her whole life, and be an example of virtue make him surprised at her marriage and he does not want to acknowledge her independence. Even though Hamlet consistently accuses her, she keeps being attentive to her son’s well-being (Foakes, 1993). Also, Gibson (2002) points out that Hamlet and Claudius see her as a sexualized symbol which we see from Hamlet’s lines “Frailty, thy name is woman” (Hamlet, 1.2. 150) which reflects his and society’s view on women’s vulnerability. However, feminist scholars such as Smith, (1980) questioned these portrayals by suggesting that Gertrude should be seen as a loyal woman who obeys the rules of the time and symbol of maternity rather than corrupt. In addition to this idea, Smith (1980) emphasizes that Gertrude is a woman stuck between Hamlet and Claudius rather than a woman who is an active participant in deceit or lust which creates a new point of view towards her character. All in all, in the play Gertrude’s intentions and emotions are ambiguous. We don’t know whether she betrays her husband or she allied with Claudius to kill King Hamlet.

Claudius is a character that embodies the villain of the play but also the character who integrates political power traits and personal morals. He portrays a calm public persona in the ceremonies unlike the idealized warrior kind of king image by Hamlet. Claudius represents a ruler who prefers diplomacy in his court probably to secure his throne (Foakes, 1993). Even though his controversial marriage and power seem to be accepted by the court, Hamlet has suspicions about him from the beginning. Although he has immoral traits, Claudius's character becomes self-aware and conscious of what he has done. In his monologue in Act 3, Scene 3, he displays his internal conflict when he confesses his crime and he struggles with the burden of his guilt. His moral agony makes him human-like for a glance and looks like a king between his ambitions and morality. His lines in the same soliloquy "My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen." (*Hamlet*, 3.3.59) show his internal division between the role of the ruler and his private guilt (Foakes, 1993).

The political interests displayed by Claudius ultimately lead him to act with ruthless determination and when Hamlet murders Polonius, he sees him as a political threat for him. So that he manipulates Laertes to be against Hamlet and creates a counter-attack. However, I think it is interesting that he is not a warrior to fight with Hamlet but uses Laertes to kill Hamlet, i think this also makes him a villain who is not even noble. The shift in his character from being a king who feels guilty to the planner of the murder shows his choice on survival and his throne over morality, therefore his decay.

The Ghost in Hamlet serves as a moral and physical dilemma's representation. The Ghost's anger about lust and incest in Denmark's "royal bed" not only shows King Hamlet's moral outrage but also Hamlet's disgust (Foakes, 1993). Furthermore, Foakes (1993) emphasizes that according to some critics, the ghost is the reflection of Hamlet's mind and stresses themes of purity and vengeance by asking Hamlet to purify Denmark without "Taint not thy mind.". However, this results in Hamlet taking the warrior position which he idealizes (Foakes, 1933), and leads him to be passion's slave as Stirling (1956) defines. Furthermore, the ghost is both being and not being as in "to be, or not to be".

On the other hand, Horatio serves as the voice of reason and philosophy in the play. According to Hui (2013), Horatio is a mediator of the play by having roles as

interpreter, fellow, and at the end witness of Hamlet and his death. Furthermore, his philosophical disposition helps Hamlet when he faces ambiguities and he is a loyal friend of Hamlet. For the proof of this we can check the line of his in Act 5 Scene 2, before Hamlet dies he says “I am more an antique Roman than a Dane” (5.2.374) which alludes to the death of Julius Ceasar. He says like a true Roman, noble and wants to be perished with his friend to whom he is loyal but Hamlet rejects it by asking him to tell his story and shows his trust to Horatio (Hui, 2013). However, we can't compare his fellowship with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. According to Levin (1959), they are not bad fellows but they are professional in that. He states that their characters don't have characters and their duty is to give Hamlet his lines.

Another character who represents corruption is Polonius. His old age affects his abilities by forgetting things and giving nonsense speech. During his conversation with Reynaldo he mumbles these lines “And then, sir, does he this, he does—what / was I about to say? By the Mass, I was about to say / something. Where did I leave?” (2.1.56) which shows his forgetfulness and his old age's effects. His personal ties are also entangled in the court's intrigues that even he uses Ophelia as a pawn to spy on Hamlet and forces her into separating from him. Additionally, the tactics Polonius uses when instructing Reynaldo to secretly slander Laertes in France highlight his morally corrupted approach to honor (Bozer, 2019).

Finally, Laertes is a character driven by loyalty and decisiveness which contrasts with Hamlet's indecisiveness. He returns to Denmark for Claudius's coronation and before departing again warns Ophelia to protect her virtue and compares her innocence to a flower vulnerable to corruption (Bozer, 2019). Unlike Hamlet, Laertes does not hesitate when he seeks his father's death. Claudius manipulates Laertes' grief by comparing the spread of rumors to a disease infecting the state. Thereby, he fires Laertes' desire for revenge against Hamlet. After getting Hamlet's wish to confront he feels relaxed which reflects to immediate action for revenge in his lines in Act 4, Scene 7 “And so have I a noble father lost, / A sister driven into desp'rate terms ... / But my revenge will come.” (4.7.27-29) (Bozer, 2019). Even if he dies at the end avenges his father. Perhaps this can be interpreted as Shakespeare showing that not doing anything is also making a decision, with decisions made with determination, loyalty, and without

the influence of corruption, on the line between action and inaction while making decisions in the limbo between life and death.

4.2 Methodology

With the growth in the use of technology, educational methods, and pedagogies have changed. In particular, the possibility of multimodal tools has opened up new methods. This study aims to propose a new experimental method for teaching Hamlet with the use of emojis as an assisting tool. This method combines existing methodologies from linguistics, literature Shakespeare pedagogy, and digital communication with innovative methodologies to explore how modern visual symbols might help to bring together Shakespearean texts and modern students' learning experiences. The results of this possible approach aim to contribute to pedagogy and enhance the strategies to make Shakespearean texts more accessible to students.

The study's primary foundation relies on Multimodality Theory which is the use of different modes or channels to convey meaning such as linguistic, visual, aural, gestural, and spatial features (Kress, 2009). Frameworking that theory, emojis serve as multimodal tools that enrich comprehension by allowing students to engage with Hamlet with culturally familiar visual symbols. Furthermore, this feature of the method resonates with the Culturally Responsive Method (Mirra et al., 2023), which attempts to capture students' engagement with the material and requires the choice of culturally familiar elements so that students might not feel too alienated from the materials. Moreover, the study draws on the communicative potential of emojis to convey the intention of the speaker and clarify the understanding in CMC. This function is developed from the Speech Act Theory (Austin 1962; Searle, 1969), which focuses on the intended meaning behind a speaker's utterances and the expected acts to be created by the hearer. Moreover, the Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987) is another framework of the function of emojis which refers to the maintenance of social harmony by preventing face-threatening acts and to preserve social distance. Together these theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for examining the possibility of emoji use in the instruction of Hamlet.

The research methodology of the study involves a review of existing literature on emojis, educational technology, literature pedagogy, and especially the approaches to

teaching Shakespeare. Emojis development and the cultural, historical shift from emoticons to complex symbols found on different platforms were examined (Unicode Consortium, 2023; Leonardi, 2022). This analysis contextualizes the role of emojis as popular tools in CMC. In addition to this, the functions of emojis and their pragmatic functions with the help of Speech Act Theory and Politeness Theory are established. According to this examination, emojis have different functions such as conveying non-verbal cues, softening potential face-threatening acts, clarifying the intention of the speaker, representing objects and ideas, maintaining social relations, reducing ambiguity, and highlighting the intended tone in CMC (Dresner et al., 2010; Yus, 2014; Skovholt et al., 2014; Cramer et al., 2016; Spina, 2018; Gibson et al., 2018; Beißwenger et al., 2019; Escouflaire, 2021). The results of this analysis help to understand the function of the emojis while teaching Hamlet, therefore, by serving as supplementary visual tools they might clarify ambiguous or emotionally complex parts for the students when studying Hamlet.

Subsequently, to support this approach, the literature on Shakespearean pedagogy and literature pedagogy along with educational technology are summarised to remake evolving teaching methods and innovative strategies for practicing classical texts. The necessity for educational technologies has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in the use of digital tools and made the digital use in education closer to contemporary students who are familiar with the technology. By that time, it should be taken into account that teaching literature in innovative ways and Shakespeare had already rapidly increased, especially Gibson's (1998, as cited in Brady and Flaherty, 2016) new ways to teach Shakespeare plays, where students engage with the plays physically and creatively brought us in to look for new methods.

In the research, a qualitative research method is used to create a theoretical basis for using emojis as pedagogical tools in Hamlet by analyzing the secondary literature and their contextualization. The main focus areas are the background to emojis by examining their linguistic and pragmatic functions in CMC and reviewing innovative approaches in Shakespearean pedagogy that have arisen in recent years. In light of this framework, it presents an experimental hypothesis as to whether emojis can be effective in teaching Hamlet. Finally, the proposal will be presented with the demonstration of how emojis can be integrated into Hamlet instruction.

4.3 Why Hamlet with Emojis?

Among Shakespeare's plays, Hamlet is one of the most linguistically complex plays which makes it difficult to get deeper into the text and, in our case, perfect to employ for integrating emojis. Also, most of Shakespeare's plays use complex themes with intricate language. However, Hamlet's irony, sarcasm, and imagery in his monologues and dialogues, and commonly used double entendre in Hamlet make a perfect play to use emojis as a tool to enhance comprehension. Furthermore, while choosing Hamlet among other Shakespearean tragedies, I wanted to choose the one that challenged me the most when I was studying them for the first time. Also, the ambiguity of the text helped me decide on my selection. Hamlet is immersed in indirect meaning, metaphors, imagery, and intricate language. In the following passages, I will demonstrate my rationale for choosing Hamlet with examples.

Firstly, the primary reason for choosing Hamlet is its fruitful use of double entendre which functions as a literary device. According to Shackford (1926), Hamlet displays a deep sense of tragedy by examining fundamental conflicts in the human experience. It conveys a very satirical perspective on life, emphasizing how confusing and mysterious life is and how human reality has contradictory and deceptive sides (Shackford, 1926) This duality contributes to the complexity of Hamlet's tone. Oxford English Dictionary (2023) defines double entendre as a word or phrase that has two meanings, especially when used to express a discourteous intention. In Hamlet, double entendre aims to create ambiguity depending on the context which creates multiple interpretations. These characteristics create the opportunity to incorporate emojis into the study of Hamlet to highlight meaning.

Another example of the intricate language of Hamlet is in Act 2, Scene 2 Hamlet says to Polonius "You're a fishmonger". He insults him by using the Elizabethan slang "fishmonger". His real intention is to imply that he is dishonest and immoral. In the play, we can also encounter irony frequently which requires deeper analysis. The irony is used by the writer to allow the audience to infer the speaker's true intentions by conveying meanings that are often the opposite of the literal expression. In Act 1, Scene 2 we can see an example of irony. At first, Claudius calls him "my cousin Hamlet, and my son," Hamlet responds with "A little more than kin, and less than kind" where he

criticizes their new relationship and their marriage. Further, Claudius asks why Hamlet seems so depressed and then Hamlet replies “I am too much i’ the sun.” which is an ironic statement. He plays on the literal and metaphorical meaning of “sun” and also refers to “son”. As Claudius's stepson, Hamlet implies that he is resentful of Claudius's authority and the repressive position he must play. By comparing Claudius's corrupt influence to a strong, destructive force, the sentence subtly criticizes it and demonstrates how Hamlet uses irony to reveal the hypocrisy and corruption in the court (Liu, 2016; Hooper, 2003; Draudt, 2002 as cited in Al-Saidi et. al., 2022). He uses irony and implies his darkness cleverly by using the opposite meaning which is brightness (Al-Saidi et. al., 2022). Since in Chapter 4.1 the language and the theme of Hamlet are analyzed, I won't repeat the complex themes, language, and deeper understanding of the play.

In summary, the choice of Hamlet stems from the play's capacity to demonstrate important aspects of Shakespeare's language, complex themes, and imagery. Hamlet's character and multi-layered but also ambiguous language make it perfect to examine. Furthermore, as Doran (1964) also states Hamlet is an ideal choice to demonstrate Shakespeare's effortless mastery of style and his capacity to manipulate language according to his needs. I aim to bring modern students closer to the classic text and enhance their understanding.

4.4 Why Emoji-based Method and Targeting High School

After exploring the choice of Hamlet, I would like to explain my rationale for choosing high school students to use an emoji-based method in teaching Hamlet. I base it on some reasons such as examples from literature, competency, and the development of students. Firstly, when we consider students' cognitive development and current syllabuses of English classrooms this method can be used in high school English classrooms, especially for 11th or 12th grade students. High school students are at an appropriate developmental stage for engaging in critical texts like Hamlet. Higher-order cognitive abilities like abstract reasoning and critical analysis are being developed by adolescents in this age range. These skills are necessary while examining Hamlet for not only its intricate language but also for its themes such as revenge, power, and madness. Furthermore, according to the literature, some of the new techniques for teaching Hamlet to students mostly target high school students. For example, Anglin and

Smagorinsky (2014) examined high school seniors taking an AP English Literature and Composition course in their study, *Hip-Hop Hamlet: Hybrid Interpretive Discourse in a Suburban High School English Class*. The purpose of the study was to investigate how the students would perceive each act of Hamlet through presentations. They incorporated elements of popular culture, particularly hip-hop and rap to encourage students to examine and reinterpret the text (Anglin and Smagorinsky, 2014)

Secondly, another factor in choosing high school students is the alignment of the curriculum. Hamlet typically is the part of high school curriculum, especially around 11th and 12th-grade English classes (The Albert Team, 2022). For students in the United States, Common Core standards play a role in the selection of the texts and alignment of the students' needs. As Canon (2024) notes, Shakespearean language and the complex themes in Hamlet may pose challenges for younger learners which might create a barrier to their connection with the text. Therefore, targeting high school students is appropriate but also, we may consider junior or senior students. Furthermore, Bushman (1997) also supports this idea by categorizing Hamlet in 11th or 12th-grade readings.

Finally, this choice also aligns with the Canadian curriculum. Colorusso (2016) states that 12th-grade students can captivate complex moral and ethical dimensions of the play. Furthermore, students can comprehend the power of language and the audience's influence while studying Hamlet. These points show that high school students are able to engage critically with Hamlet with the help of digital tools such as emoji-based instruction. Moreover, the idea of using emojis as an instructional tool was inspired by some of the examples of adaptations and interpretations of classic texts into emojis. Such as The Random House Books for Young Readers' OMG Shakespeare series including *srsly Hamlet*, *YOLO Juliet* which uses emoji narratives in the message context. Additionally, the emoji translation of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* is another example of the interpretation of classic texts (see Figure 4.5 in Chapter 2). These adaptations aim to create a bridge between modern students and the classic texts by making them more approachable and relevant to the digital context.

The idea of using emojis as a teaching tool in literature came up based on these examples. Emojis are widely used by people of all ages, therefore I thought there would be potential for using them as a teaching tool to get students' interest in Shakespeare's

language and themes which often are felt distant by the students. As previously discussed, students might face challenges when studying Shakespeare due to several elements, such as intricate language, complex metaphors, and cultural references in his plays (Murphy et. al., 2020). These factors may affect the comprehension of the text and make it difficult to engage with the text. To address these issues, integrating digital tools into literature may help to create familiarity for students with the classic text and make it less intimidating for students.

Additionally, with the help of emojis, students might engage better with the characters' motives and emotions. Using emojis may assist students in understanding the context and interpreting the motivations of the characters through their dialogues and monologues. Emojis' visual aspect can be helpful for students' attention and interaction with the text. Moreover, emoji-based instruction may have a positive impact on the motivation and participation of the students. With the help of these visual cues, emojis can make the play more interesting and interactive for the students and this may lead to active participation in classroom discussions and activities as they feel more confident and equipped to engage with the text. Students may be more motivated and be able to comprehend the material better when they are less stressed in the classroom and use concepts, they are already familiar with besides the new material. With the help of emojis, students may feel more comfortable and familiar with Hamlet and the correct design of instruction with interactive and collaborative activities can create enjoyable and approachable learning experiences.

All in all, the selection of emojis-based instruction in Hamlet is rooted in the aim of bridging the classical texts and today's students making Hamlet more accessible without sacrificing the clever language of Shakespeare and the deeper meanings of his texts so I chose to use the emojis as tools rather than the translations of the text. Also, with the help of these visual symbols, I aim to improve engagement and comprehension of the study of Hamlet in a more inclusive and meaningful experience.

4.5 Application of an Emoji-based approach

In the previous passages, we examined the rationale behind the suggested approach by discussing the aims and targeted students. In this section, I will outline the employment of the emoji-based method through the analysis of two scenes. These scenes will be the

first soliloquy of Hamlet (*Hamlet*, 1.2.133-164), and the dialogue from the nunnery (*Hamlet*, 3.1.96-162). These scenes were chosen because of their portrayal of Hamlet's emotional and physiological complexity and their contrast between Hamlet's solitary reflections and his interaction with a female character, Ophelia. Monologues have an important place in *Hamlet* (there are nearly two hundred lines of soliloquy in the play (York Notes, n.d.); they express the emotional depth of Hamlet and enrich the narrative with these emotional turmoils. Firstly, Hamlet's first soliloquy, in which he reveals his inner turmoil, existential question, and grief, will be analyzed. For this dialogue, emojis will be used as interpretive tools to represent emotions and enhance comprehension of the text that captures the depth of Hamlet's character. Later, in the dialogue between Ophelia and Hamlet, emojis will be used to highlight Hamlet's complex and contradictory treatment towards Ophelia which reflects the elements of betrayal, frustration, and irony. With this analysis, comparison between Hamlet's self-reflective monologue and his internal dialogue will be examined; the use of emojis will be aimed to assist in analyzing the shift of the tone and language of Hamlet.

Before the monologue of Hamlet, In Act 1, Scene 2, the court was shaken by the death of the king and was changed by a controversial marriage. The scene starts with the speech of King Claudius, who is newly crowned, about his new marriage with Gertrude, the old king's wife who is also the mother of Hamlet just a couple of weeks later of King Hamlet's death. Claudius wears his public face by attempting to prove his power in the court and trying to manipulate the court to diminish his shocking, incest marriage. He tries to console Hamlet by encouraging him to stop his grief which he sees excessive reaction to fate and accept his new family. Gertrude also requests him to stop mourning and move on to his life. However, a sense of betrayal and his mother's perceived disloyalty to Hamlet's grief create a complex emotional dilemma that drives him into deeper melancholy. After Claudius and Gertrude leave the scene, Hamlet begins his first monologue which is the initiator of the portrayal of his inner conflict. He starts his monologue by exposing his thoughts on suicide which are fueled by the moral and spiritual decay around him.

The monologue starts with Hamlet's anguished wish: "O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt, / Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew," (*Hamlet*, 1.2.133-134). With this start, he questions how Hamlet shall react to this world not just in his actions,

but also within himself. In the last confrontation, the Ghost demands that Hamlet focus solely on it, and he surrenders to this demand (Knights, 1966). However, this puts a heavy burden on his shoulders and dilemmas to deal with. Here, Hamlet uses a series of words to express his desire to disappear which emphasizes the depth of his anguish such as “melt,” “thaw” and “resolve”. He repeats the words that his flesh is “too, too sullied” to show that he feels entrapped in his physical body and he wants to release himself. Girdham (2020) states that while in one version the word “sullied” is used, in another “solid” is used. However, each version adds different layers for the text, “solid” suggests something physical and immutable, logically leading to ideas of melting or dissolution. On the other hand, “sullied”, as “dirty” or “tainted,” reflects Hamlet's internal sense of corruption in the world (Girdham, 2020).

The imagery of “thaw” and “resolve into a dew” contrasts with the solid nature of his flesh by symbolizing his longing for purity and release from them by death. However, in the following lines, he states that he cannot seek this release because of religious rules (cannon) of God (the Everlasting) against suicide (Gibson, 2002). Even if he believes in God who bans “self-slaughter”, the thought of suicide passes through his mind but he is afraid to disobey God’s commands (Champion, 1976). Hamlet’s allusion to God’s prohibition against suicide emphasizes the struggle between his morality and spiritual agony. This emotional conflict of Hamlet between his desire to end his suffering and his obligation to endure this pain mirrors his inner conflict and self-restraint which is a theme that will reoccur throughout the play. The description of the world as “weary, stale, flat and unprofitable” demonstrates his despair towards the meaningless of creation and moral decay around him (Champion, 1976). Furthermore, the deliberate omission of conjunctions between these adjectives accentuates the breadth and intensity of his disappointment with everything he encounters. Also, these words evoke corruption and decay so his word choices are not coincidental. Subsequently, he uses a metaphor to describe the corruption around him as an “unweeded garden” full of “rank and gross”. He thinks that the world is overtaken by moral corruption (Girdham, 2020). “Unweeded garden” mirrors neglect and decay while “rank and gross” suggests rot and ethical degradation, and “unweeded garden” where the coarse and vulgar things grow in abundance (Nasrin et al., 2016). Then his monologue switches from general corruption to his personal grief and sense of betrayal for his mother. He complains that

she got married “two months” after the death of his father (Nasrin et al., 2016). Hamlet describes his disgust by mythological allusions. According to Hamlet, the late king was not just a perfect king but also a heroic, godlike figure. He compares his father to “Hyperion” which is the Titan god of light and he resembles Claudius as a “satry” (York Note, n. d.). Shakespeare uses juxtaposition here to highlight the difference between his noble father and his morally corrupt uncle. Also, he does not only blame his uncle but also, he is disappointed by his mother.

Further, he states his lament by recalling the love of his father for Gertrude and he claims that she must have forgotten her husband who loves her that much and he is angry that she moved on so quickly. In a hyperbolic image, he conceives his father as a perfect figure which enforces the correctness and purity of their marriage. He accuses his mother of emotional and sexual betrayal of his father; he sees her as a lustful woman who has sexual wants. He actually thinks aloud by reflecting on his inner turmoil with the monologue by saying “let me not think on’t” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.150); he tries to prevent himself from thinking but is not a possibility for Hamlet’s character (Girdham, 2020). Then he reflects his anger through misogyny and generalizes Gertrude’s betrayal to all women by saying “Frailty, thy name is woman” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.150). Later on, I will analyse his change of mind/heart towards women in the dialogues with Ophelia. Hamlet hyperbolizes the shortness of her mourning time and he thinks that even a monster would mourn more (Nasrin et al., 2016). There is an irony here that refers to her unfaithfulness by reminding us of a figure from Greek mythology who wept for her children who were killed by the gods. This simile compares Gertrude to Niobe underscores Hamlet’s perception of her inconstancy which he views her as someone who should have mourned indefinitely but instead moved on with “wicked speed” (Meer, 2024). And he emphasized with who she got married “my uncle, / my father’s brother” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.155-157). He demonstrates the horrible situation to himself (Girdham, 2020) and lastly, he contrasts his father with Claudius in “but no more like my father / than I to Hercules” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.157-158) in which he sees his father as strong and a warrior figure but Claudius is not (Meer, 2024).

After that in the lines that he reflects his disgust and confusion by “O, most wicked speed, to post / With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!” (*Hamlet*, 1.2.161). He thinks that this marriage is driven by base instincts and morally questionable. This is

evident in both Hamlet's speech and the images (York Notes, n.d.). He expresses his discontent but also this can't be good for anyone he says. At the end of this monologue, he contemplates his inability to act or openly express his anger and he ends his speech with a confession: "It is not good, nor can it be: / But break my heart; for I must hold my tongue" (*Hamlet*, 1.2.163-164). He chooses to keep silent by suppressing his anger and agony since politically Claudius is accepted as a king (Champion, 1976). This shows that Hamlet is aware that if he rejects it would be in vain which enriches his inner conflict. Also, he is aware that suicide can't be acceptable in the law of God so is not an option either. However, he implies in his last words in the monologue that his silence and suffering will bring a bigger aim to him (York Notes, n. d). Subsequently, Nasrin et al., (2016) note that his delay of action is a tragic irony that he sees his silence serves as a greater purpose but Hamlet is inevitably pulled into a fate that will prevent him from pain in his inner conflict.

Finally, Hamlet's fragmented syntax and exclamations reflect his emotional intensity, as he struggles to articulate his sense of betrayal without succumbing to despair (Champion, 1976). This monologue shows us the character's struggle with his inner thoughts and his decision to delay of act for his revenge (Nasrin et al., 2016). Thanks to the choice of imageries such as gardens, mythological allusions, and decay, Shakespeare's language demonstrates a prince in agony and disgust. The soliloquy's tone, figurative language, and insights into his emotions portray Hamlet's existential crisis, betrayal, and desperation. It also shows his motives for revenge, grief, and his confusion about identity, duty, and morality.

According to this analysis, to apply the emoji-based method in teaching Hamlet's monologue, emojis will be used as interpretive symbols to help students visually connect with Hamlet's emotional states, symbolic language, and thematic content. With the help of visual cues, this approach aims to make the text more accessible without replacing Shakespeare's original language which may allow students to engage with the monologue to enhance comprehension and critical thinking. Emojis act as supportive tools that help students identify and interpret Hamlet's inner conflict, moral struggle, and tone shifts.

Emojis are utilized in key parts to represent Hamlet's emotions and to clarify Shakespeare's figurative language to demonstrate the method in the following passages.

However, it can be used as an activity for students to employ emojis rather than the instructor's choices of emojis. In the opening lines, Hamlet's statement, "O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt," is paired with a melting face emoji¹³ (🤔) or water droplets¹⁴ (💧) to symbolize Hamlet's despair and his wish for dissolution. This combination may help to reflect Hamlet's anguish by inviting students to explore his sense of despair. When Hamlet mentions "the Everlasting" and refers to God's prohibition against suicide, emojis like a cross¹⁵ (✝️) or praying (folded) hands¹⁶ (🙏) can be used to represent the weight of religious and moral restrictions so that it may convey the conflict between Hamlet's despair and his spiritual beliefs by highlighting the influence of religious morality on his choices.

Furthermore, in Hamlet's metaphor of the world as an "unweeded garden," emojis of plants, and bugs such as fallen leaf¹⁷, cockroach¹⁸ (🐛), or wilted rose¹⁹ (🌹) may represent the corruption Hamlet perceives around him. These symbols may guide students to recognize the theme of decay which might help to understand how Hamlet's surroundings result in his feelings of disillusionment and anger. When Hamlet contrasts his father to "Hyperion," with Claudius which he views as a "satyr," we can use sparkles²⁰ emoji (✨) for Hyperion since he is the titan god of heavenly light and a devilish emoji known as the goblin emoji²¹ (👹) for the satyr to convey this juxtaposition visually. This contrast allows students to see Hamlet's respect for his father and his disdain for Claudius which may encourage discussions on themes of betrayal and family loyalty.

Moreover, to assist students understanding of Hamlet's fragmented expressions which he uses to mirror his emotions, it can be displayed with some smiley emojis. For example, to show his confusion and his meditative nature, an exploding head²² emoji

¹³ <https://emojipedia.org/melting-face>

¹⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/droplet>

¹⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/latin-cross>

¹⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/folded-hands>

¹⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/fallen-leaf>

¹⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/cockroach>

¹⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/wilted-flower>

²⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/sparkles>

²¹ <https://emojipedia.org/goblin>

²² <https://emojipedia.org/exploding-head>

(☹️) can be used or his sadness, confusion, and desperation face in clouds ²³(☁️) emoji can be used. As an example from the soliloquy, “Frailty, thy name is woman!” can be accompanied by an enraged face ²⁴(😡) to emphasize Hamlet’s bitterness toward his mother and his generalized disillusionment with women. It may demonstrate visually the shift in his emotions and his confusion. In the monologue, emojis might act as interpretive helpers for understanding the complex themes of Hamlet’s monologue by giving further background for the whole play. When Hamlet reflects on Gertrude’s marriage to Claudius, a broken heart²⁵ emoji (💔) or expressions of betrayal can symbolize Hamlet’s agony and disappointment with an anxious face with sweat²⁶emoji (😓). These visual elements highlight the sense of familial betrayal and disappointment, guiding students to discuss how Hamlet’s relationships with his family members shape his worldview. Hamlet’s ironic statement, “But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue,” can be marked with a sad or disappointed emoji ²⁷(😞) to visually express his sense of resignation. This helps students detect the irony in his words and explore how Hamlet’s inability to openly express his anger contributes to his internal conflict. With the help of this approach, interpretation of the text might be more collaborative by assisting them to understand Hamlet’s emotions, interpret literary devices, and get deeper into thematic content.

"O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt, 🙄
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew! 💧💧
 Or that the Everlasting 🛖 had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God! 🙏
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world! 😞
 Fie on't, ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden 🌿🐛🌻

²³ <https://emojipedia.org/face-in-clouds>

²⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/pouting-face>

²⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/broken-heart>

²⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/anxious-face-with-sweat>

²⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/disappointed-face>

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this! 💔
 But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two:
 So excellent a king; that was, to this, ✨
 Hyperion to a satyr 🐉; so loving to my mother
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—
 Let me not think on't 🤔 —Frailty, thy name is woman! 😡
 A little month, or ere those shoes were old
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears 😭—why she, even she—
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
 My father's brother; but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules: within a month,
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears 😭
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post 😡
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 It is not nor it cannot come to good:
 But break, my heart 💔; for I must hold my tongue."

Example 1. Integration of Emojis in Act 1, Scene 2 Monologue of Hamlet (*Hamlet*, 1.2.133-164)

The dialogue between Ophelia and Hamlet in Act 3, Scene 1 also known as the “nunnery scene” reflects Hamlet’s frustration about not only Ophelia but women and his relationships, morality, and identity. Throughout the dialogue, he commands

Ophelia to “get thee to a nunnery” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.131-148-149-162) which is a statement that the meaning of it has been still argued by the critics. In a sense, he exposes the depth of his despair and disappointment of betrayal and dishonesty in his human connections which also mirrors the existential questions of the theme. The implication of “nunnery” has been debated by academics for its layered meaning. It may imply convents or it may mean slang word for brothel. Before discussing it, it is noteworthy that Hamlet’s words here mirror some of the themes of the play: corruption, revenge, and his inner turmoil. Furthermore, he expresses his emotions towards women in a morally decayed society. Just as we explored his own thoughts and feelings in the previous monologue, here how these flaming emotions turn into words against a woman as the representation of the whole.

Before the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia, the scene starts with a setting where Claudius, Gertrude, Polonius, and Ophelia are. Ophelia will be the bait to make Hamlet speak while Claudius and Polonius spy on him. They try to learn the real reason behind his seeming madness. Later Hamlet comes in with his famous monologue “to be or not to be” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.64). Then he sees Ophelia and starts a conversation with her. The dynamic of the communication between Hamlet and Ophelia mostly depends on the domination of Hamlet. According to (Khan and Bughio, 2012), Hamlet controls the dialogue by shifting the topic, interrupting Ophelia. On the other hand, Ophelia responds to his questions with short and fragmented sentences which represent the male domination in Elizabethan society and her emotional constraint. This aggressive manner of Hamlet does not only show his aggression against Ophelia but also his complex emotions towards betrayal, revenge, and human relations.

Moreover, the paradoxical behaviour of Hamlet towards Ophelia enhances the complexity of the scene. He comes and goes in an emotional state that is between loving to hostile. At the beginning of their dialogue, Hamlet welcomes her: “Soft you now! / The fair Ophelia” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.96-97). This seems to show his past affection towards her. However, soon after he denies his love towards her: “I loved you not” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.129). This sudden change is analyzed by the critics as the reflection of his inner turmoil and confusion towards the betrayal of his mother. Sen (1940) sees this behaviour of Hamlet as he expects more from Ophelia since he is alone in his agony; Hamlet’s attitude depends on his unresolved feelings of anger, disappointment, and

betrayal especially for his mother's unconventional marriage. According to that, Hamlet's scolding of Ophelia mirrors his need to display his pain towards Gertrude to the women in his life which accumulates his isolation and hatred (Sen, 1940). Furthermore, he expects Ophelia to be supportive which his mother is not. In fact, under the effect of her father's prohibition of seeing him, her rejection of his letters puts their relationship in danger which is also a disappointment for Hamlet. Furthermore, with these attitudes, his accumulated feelings toward women confirm his view from the monologue: "Frailty, thy name is woman!".

Subsequently, Ophelia says "Good my lord, / How does your Honor for this many a day?" (*Hamlet*, 3.1.99-100) Even if she saw him just the day before she says "many days" which makes Hamlet see her as dishonest. According to him, this implies her disinterest and distance.

After this, his affectionate tone changes into a more distant and formal distance with "I humbly thank you, well." (*Hamlet*, 3.1.101) (Sen, 1940). And it gets worse when she returns his gifts; Hamlet feels rejected and betrayed. She states that she "longed long" to return his gifts, indicating that she decided to end their relationship. Yet, this does not imply that she does not love him. Hamlet replies: "No, not I. I never gave you aught." (*Hamlet*, 3.1.105) can be interpreted differently. One, he might want her to keep the gifts since he still loves her; secondly, he may want to hurt her after her saying or he denies the meaning of the gifts that he gave to her in the absence of love (Khan and Bughio, 2012). Then his exclamation "Ha, ha!" might be his realization of the suspicion on the effect of Polonius on Ophelia so that, further he questions her sincerity. That shows his accumulated mistrust not only of Ophelia but also of his mother. He saw both of them as moral women; then his perspective of them changed and saw them as corrupted (Khan and Bughio, 2012). He states her beauty can corrupt her by implying that is a paradox which he refers to his mother who was once pure then lustful. Later on, he denies his love to her; she responds that she was also hurt: "I was the more deceived." (*Hamlet*, 3.1.130). She also feels betrayed and she thinks that his affection for her is insincere. As a result of these, with a sense of betrayal and anger, he commands her to go to the nunnery.

I think the ambiguity of "nunnery" creates tension in the scene and is a tool for him to both be disillusioned towards Ophelia and still somehow eager to protect her. In

Elizabethan slang, “nunnery” (convent) may also mean brothel which reflects Hamlet’s confusion with this double meaning. It could probably mean that she should be away from harm and the corruption of this world. Therefore, he may ironically try to protect her from the evil of the world which may be one of the correct interpretations since afterward he comments that she should not bear a sinner into this world by saying “Why wouldst thou be / a breeder of sinners?” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.131-132). In the nunnery, as I mentioned before, she would be safe away from the intrigue and decay of the court and Claudius. However, his tone shifts: anger not only implies a desire for protection but also his disappointment and anger towards her perceived dishonesty. Therefore, it may reference the brothel which shows his cynicism and perspective towards Ophelia but more generally towards women. Hamlet might be reflecting his broader mistrust of her and blaming her for the sins of the corrupted society. I think rather than examining which implication is correct, seeing the “nunnery” with such double meanings and analyzing accordingly respects Hamlet’s layered character and his dilemmas (Khan and Bughio, 2012).

Then Hamlet tells her not to have children since there are a lot of bad people in this world to commit sins. Further, he continues with his own sins (Tearle, 2023): “I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offenses at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in”. Later, he also remarks on the corrupted nature of all humankind, which does: “What should such fellows as I do crawling / between earth and heaven?” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.138-139). However, Tearle (2023) states that it may be a reference to the Ghost which is in between heaven and earth as being in purgatory (Khan and Bughio, 2012). Sen (1940) thinks that “We are arrant knaves, all,” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.139) expresses Hamlet’s disenchantment with humanity in general and this is the attitude he performs to protect Ophelia from this world. He recommends her not to believe any men including him. When he comments on the sinners of course he also implies Polonius. He asks “Where’s your father?” (*Hamlet*, 3.1.141) When he learns the place of Polonius, he tells her to keep him home so that he can be a fool only there. This statement may be interpreted in different ways. Firstly, he may refer to the tricks Polonius made to prevent Hamlet’s plans or it may mean that he understood that Polonius is using Ophelia (Khan and Bughio, 2012). Then he wants to cut the dialogue by saying “farewell”. However, Ophelia invokes heaven by

hoping that God helps his madness; this only makes Hamlet angry since he thinks that she and the other women do not have virtue. Therefore, he says that if she gets married, he will curse her, and she cannot escape from the curse even if how pure she is, she will keep this burden (Tearle, 2023). Then he says “be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as / snow, thou shalt not escape calumny”(Hamlet, 3.1.147-148), using “ice” and “snow” as symbols for purity even though he thinks that no purity cannot be possible in this corrupted world. These metaphors function as a signifier of beauty but also imply danger and death which foreshadows her madness and then death.

One more time he repeats his command with these reasons why she should go to a nunnery. Otherwise, she should marry someone fool, since wise men are aware that corrupted women turn them into “monsters” by betraying them. Shakespeare possibly chooses to use “monsters” as a replacement for “cuckolds” since women betray them by their unfaithfulness (Tearle, 2023). Again, he hears her praying and he starts to imply women’s duplicity and explains how horrible things he knows about them (Khan and Bughio, 2023). Here, he talks about the makeup of women. He alludes to women deceiving men by creating false reality with the use of make-up (Tearle, 2023). I think also this part shows Hamlet’s hatred towards women with his perceived idea of deceit and he uses his all excuses to be a misogynist. Then, he says that women use their ignorance as an excuse to deceive. According to Khan and Bughio (2012), when Hamlet says: “It hath made me mad.” (Hamlet, 3.1.159) It implies that he got mad because of the sinful marriage of Gertrude and it is his wish that he does not want any other marriage. However, here it is not clear whether he means his madness or anger. At last, he shows his decision by saying the ones who got married will live except one of them. He shows his eagerness for revenge which enhances his cynicism to everyone that is corrupted around him (Khan and Bughio, 2012).

After analyzing the meaning of the text, it is useful to mention some critical takes on this scene. According to Fischer (1990), Ophelia’s silence in this dialogue reflects a broader analysis of women’s role in society. Fischer (1990) interprets that he uses this harsh language to convey the excessive expectations he has for women. Moreover, she connects Ophelia’s fragmented responses, speech, and her end to the anguish of marginalization. Furthermore, Fischer (1990) suggests that Hamlet's charges, which she is unable to entirely comprehend or deny, magnify her anguish, making her a

symbol of silenced womanhood. Thus, this dialogue shows the destructive power of Hamlet's misogyny and the broader societal limitations imposed on women.

In addition to Fischer's perspective, Carlisle (1967) interprets the perspectives on the emotions in Hamlet which is observed by the actors and critics. Carlisle (1967) highlights that Hamlet's language in this scene reflects his personal conflict and alienation and his attitude may be seen as cruel but it reflects his internal turmoil and despair. His attack is not just for Ophelia but for the broader conceptions in his life. Carlisle (1967) contends that Hamlet's cruelty might be interpreted with a couple of reasons those are; feigned madness and protection for Ophelia, his emotional turmoil and duty of revenge, Ophelia's perceived betrayal, the reflection of his hatred for all women, along with her mother's betrayal, on Ophelia and his histrionic nature which he uses to outlet his internal conflicts in a destructive way (Carlisle, 1967).

In the light of this analysis, emojis will be used in this dialogue between Ophelia and Hamlet to increase the comprehension of Hamlet's complex emotions such as betrayal, frustration, disillusionment, and feelings that he projects to Ophelia. By integrating the emojis, this method aims to assist students in comprehending how Hamlet's changing emotions shape his words and reflect wider existential themes. Furthermore, this dialogue is the act of his emotions and his thoughts pass through his mind which can be contrasted to his monologue. Here, this method highlights the key elements of the dialogue such as the emotional density of the scene and Hamlet's complex feelings toward Ophelia. Like in the monologue, instructors can create their own strategies to use this integration which may be the students' employment of the emojis for expressing their interpretations of the dialogue.

For example, Hamlet starts the conversation with, "The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered," (*Hamlet*, 3.1.97-98) which may be paired with a rose²⁸ emoji (🌹) and a slightly smiling face²⁹ (😊), representing his affection then, a dark moon³⁰ (🌑) and a broken heart³¹ (💔) can be used to hint at his inner agony and emotional distance. Even before he catches her wrong statement, his emotions are not completely positive from the beginning since her father does not let her see him so

²⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/rose>

²⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/slightly-smiling-face>

³⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/new-moon>

³¹ <https://emojipedia.org/broken-heart>

she is not responsive to him lately. Ophelia's formal response, "Good my lord, How does your Honor for this many a day?" can be symbolized by an hourglass³² emoji to represent that many days passed (🕒) and a neutral face³³ (😐) these emojis may help to convey her effort to keep him distant and her tone that shows no closeness. Then, Hamlet's tone changes with "I humbly thank you, well," which is more distant and overly polite according to his first line of the dialogue so we can mark this with fog³⁴ emoji (🌫️) and pensive face³⁵ emoji (😞). This is where Hamlet's mistrust and disappointment started toward Ophelia and these emojis may help students to recognize this shift. Afterward, Ophelia expresses that she wants to return his "remembrances" which are the gifts that Hamlet gave her. To indicate the meaning of remembrance we can use a gift emoji (🎁) which symbolically emphasizes her love for him so for her feelings we can use a pleading face³⁶ (🙏) that may also symbolize her innocence and pain. After that, Hamlet's denial of giving gifts might be displayed by a shrug³⁷ emoji (🙄) and it may show his rejection of his past affection; crossed swords³⁸ (⚔️) can represent his guard from pain as a protective mechanism and his rejection of his feelings.

Ophelia's response includes an attempt to restore intimacy that reflects on his initial attitude towards Ophelia so, it may be paired with bouquet³⁹ emoji (🌸). It also represents that once the gifts of Hamlet were important for her. Furthermore, the words of Hamlet hurt Ophelia for this reason we can use a confounded face⁴⁰ (😞) to show her frustration and sadness. It may help students to see Ophelia's neutral tone change into a more expressive one. Later, Hamlet's exclamation "Ha, ha!" can be matched with a smirking face⁴¹ emoji (😏), which may mirror his ironic laugh and sarcastic disbelief toward Ophelia, and for the question of Hamlet "Are you honest?" we can use the raised

³² <https://emojipedia.org/hourglass-done>

³³ <https://emojipedia.org/neutral-face>

³⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/fog>

³⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/pensive-face>

³⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/pleading-face>

³⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/person-shrugging>

³⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/crossed-swords>

³⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/bouquet>

⁴⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/confounded-face>

⁴¹ <https://emojipedia.org/smirking-face>

eyebrow⁴² emoji (🙄) which represents Hamlet's sceptical tone since he understands the influence of Polonius behind Ophelia's attitude. Hamlet's question about the contrast between Ophelia's physical beauty and her morality can be shown with a mask emoji (😬) and emphasizes the duality. Hamlet's questions confuse Ophelia and does not comprehend the question so we can use a confused face⁴³ emoji (😞) with a question mark⁴⁴ (?). The paradox Hamlet expresses in beauty and honesty can be expressed with rose⁴⁵ (🌹) and wilted rose⁴⁶ emojis (🌿) to show that beauty corrupts honesty which he perceives in his mother and Ophelia's beauty: "For the power of beauty will sooner / transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than / the force of honesty can translate beauty into his / likeness." and they can convey the meaning of decay. His expression that he loved her once can be expressed with also a broken heart (💔) and Ophelia's response which is filled with regret, can be matched with a crying face⁴⁷ (😭), reflecting her emotional vulnerability and the pain of feeling deceived. For Hamlet's cold tone in denial and cynical attitude toward his disbelief in sincere virtue can be expressed with an ice cube⁴⁸ (🧊) and a face with rolling eyes⁴⁹ (🙄). Then Ophelia's disappointment can be expressed through a disappointed⁵⁰ face (😞).

Subsequently, he states his ambiguous command "Get thee to a nunnery". Since there are different interpretations of this statement, we can imply it as a convent with a church⁵¹ emoji (🏰) and we can use a smirking face emoji to imply his sarcastic tone for his distrust of Ophelia's innocence (😏) so that we can show the ambiguity of the statement; whether he wants to protect her or he is mocking her purity. Further, for the part where Hamlet confesses his flaws as referring to human nature in here, weary face

⁴² <https://emojipedia.org/face-with-raised-eyebrow>

⁴³ <https://emojipedia.org/confused-face>

⁴⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/question-mark>

⁴⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/rose>

⁴⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/wilted-flower>

⁴⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/crying-face>

⁴⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/ice>

⁴⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/face-with-rolling-eyes>

⁵⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/disappointed-face>

⁵¹ <https://emojipedia.org/church>

⁵²(😞) can be used to express his emotional burden and internal conflict or face with spiral eyes⁵³ (🌀) to show his inner turmoil and sense of disorientation which may reflect his existential crisis. Also, he expresses his wish not to be born so the skull⁵⁴ emoji (💀) could be a good representation of his emotional death and nihilism toward his existence. His feeling of entrapment between earth and heaven can be expressed through cloud⁵⁵ (☁️) and globe⁵⁶ (🌐) emoji and his sense of being stuck in between them like the Ghost's being stuck in purgatory so it can be highlighted with ghost⁵⁷ emoji (👻). Before repeating the command, he warns Ophelia about the untrustworthy nature of mankind which shows his sceptical nature. Therefore, the face with a monocle (👁️) emoji can represent his cynicism and suspicion for the corrupted world. Then with a sudden change, which is not so unexpected as mentioned above, Hamlet asks Polonius's place. After learning he is at home, he responds with his sarcasm: "Let the doors be shut upon him that he may play the fool nowhere but in 's own house". A derelict house⁵⁸ emoji, which may refer to his being old that Hamlet mocks and his corruption, (🏠) with a door⁵⁹ emoji (🚪) may symbolize Hamlet's wish for Polonius to stay isolated in his own deception, while a clown⁶⁰ emoji (🤡) can represent Hamlet's view of Polonius as a foolish figure who is deceitful. For Ophelia's prayer to the heavens can be depicted with folded hands⁶¹ (🙏) emoji. Later, the lines where Hamlet curses Ophelia if she marries can be expressed with snowflake⁶² (❄️) and ice cube (🧊) to mirror his phrases "chaste as ice" and "pure as snow". Even though the imagery of these phrases seems positive, he believes that even the purest person cannot escape slander. A virus⁶³ emoji (🦠) might be appropriate to represent the "plague" he wishes

⁵² <https://emojipedia.org/weary-face>

⁵³ <https://emojipedia.org/face-with-spiral-eyes>

⁵⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/skull>

⁵⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/cloud>

⁵⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/globe-showing-europe-africa>

⁵⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/ghost>

⁵⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/derelict-house>

⁵⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/door>

⁶⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/clown-face>

⁶¹ <https://emojipedia.org/folded-hands>

⁶² <https://emojipedia.org/snowflake>

⁶³ <https://emojipedia.org/microbe>

upon her dowry, which symbolizes the corruption he sees in human nature and relationships. Here, Hamlet advises Ophelia to marry a “fool,” as he believes wise men are aware of women’s perceived treachery and an ogre ⁶⁴emoji (👹) may depict the “monster” Hamlet claims women turn men into which alludes to “cuckolds” or betrayed husbands. This imagery implies Hamlet’s bitterness toward women and mistrust of female fidelity so we can also include a face with symbols on mouth⁶⁵ (🗨️) emoji to convey his rage toward women. Then Hamlet increases his misogynist speech by using his all cards against women with makeup up which is a metaphor for deception. For that, lipstick⁶⁶ emoji (💄) can represent the paintings which he means makeup and for the underlying meaning of it we can use lying face⁶⁷ (😏) emoji to mirror deceit. The dancer emoji (💃) could stand for "jig and amble" to convey Hamlet's disgust for what he perceives to be feminine "wantonness" behaviors, and for expressing Hamlet's developing rage and misogyny as he criticizes the actions and intentions of women can be displayed enraged face ⁶⁸(😡) and also I think there is an ironic tone in his speech which mocks with Ophelia so I think upside-down face⁶⁹ emoji (🙄) can interpret this. For the expression of Hamlet “It hath made me mad”, an exploding head⁷⁰ emoji (💥) can be employed to remark his intense emotions and since this does not only refer to madness but his anger, agony, and all complex emotions that he has, this outburst would be a good choice. Also here, he implies that he will kill Claudius and he is passionate about taking his revenge for that dagger⁷¹ (🔪) and heart on fire (🔥) can be appropriate emojis.

⁶⁴ <https://emojipedia.org/ogre>

⁶⁵ <https://emojipedia.org/face-with-symbols-on-mouth>

⁶⁶ <https://emojipedia.org/lipstick>

⁶⁷ <https://emojipedia.org/lying-face>

⁶⁸ <https://emojipedia.org/pouting-face>

⁶⁹ <https://emojipedia.org/upside-down-face>

⁷⁰ <https://emojipedia.org/exploding-head>

⁷¹ <https://emojipedia.org/dagger>

HAMLET: The fair 🌹 Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons 😊 be all my sins remembered.



OPHELIA: Good my lord, How does your Honor for this many a day 🕒? 😊

HAMLET: I humbly thank you, well 🙏 😊.

OPHELIA: My lord, I have remembrances 📺 of yours that I have longèd long to redeliver. I pray you now receive them 😊.

HAMLET: No, not I. I never gave you aught 🧑🔪.

OPHELIA: My honored lord, you know right well you did, and with them words of so sweet 🌸 breath composed as made the things more rich. Their perfume lost 🌿, take these again, for to the noble mind rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind ❤️. There, my lord 😊.

HAMLET: Ha, ha! 😊 Are you honest 😊?

OPHELIA: My lord 😊?

HAMLET: Are you fair 🧑👉?

OPHELIA: What means your Lordship 😊??

HAMLET: That if you be honest 😊 and fair 🌹, your honesty 😊 should admit no discourse to your beauty 🌸.

OPHELIA: Could beauty 🌹, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty 😊?

HAMLET: Ay, truly, for the power of beauty 🌹 will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox 🌸, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once ❤️.

OPHELIA: Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so 😊.

HAMLET: You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not 🙏 😊.

OPHELIA: I was the more deceived 😊.

HAMLET: Get thee to a nunnery 🏰 😊. Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners?

HAMLET: I am myself indifferent honest 😊, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me 😊.

HAMLET: What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth 🌍 and heaven ☁️?

HAMLET: We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us 😏. Go thy ways to a nunnery 🏰.

HAMLET: Where's your father 😏?

OPHELIA: At home, my lord 😏.

HAMLET: Let the doors 🚪 be shut upon him that he may play the fool 🤡 nowhere but in 's own house 🏠. Farewell.

OPHELIA: O, help him, you sweet heavens 🙏!

HAMLET: If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague 🦠 for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice 🧊, as pure as snow ❄️, thou shalt not escape calumny.

HAMLET: Marry a fool 🤡, for wise men know well enough what monsters 🤩 you make of them 🤡.

HAMLET: To a nunnery 🏰, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

OPHELIA: Heavenly powers, restore him 🙏!

HAMLET: I have heard of your paintings 🗨️ too, well enough. God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another 😏.

HAMLET: You jig 🎭 and amble, and you lisp; you nickname God's creatures and make your wantonness your ignorance 🤡. Go to, I'll no more on 't 😏. It hath made me mad 🤡. I say we will have no more marriage 💍🚫. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live 🗡️❤️. The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery 🏰, go.

Example 2. Integration of Emojis in Act 3, Scene 1 Dialogue Between Hamlet and Ophelia (*Hamlet*, 3.1.96-162)

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore the possibility of using emojis to teach Shakespeare in high school literature classes. Emojis' potential for bridging the accessibility gap in Shakespearean studies, especially for high school students who might find early modern English difficult, was examined to answer this question. This study explores whether emojis can be a useful addition to the teaching of complex literature, especially in Hamlet, by maximizing their familiarity and appeal among younger generations. Through a qualitative analysis of secondary sources, this research offered the potential use of emojis as supplementary tool for high school students. At the beginning of the examination, emojis' historical evolution explored from their first appearance in Puck Magazine as typographical art to the shift of emoticons with the proposal of Fahlman and at the end improved version Kurita's design of 176 emojis which were later standardized and improved by Unicode (Blagdon, 2013; Leonardi, 2022). By tracking these developments, this study emphasized the growing role of the emojis in digital communication where they fulfil absence of non-verbal cues in CMC. Since emojis helpful to convey various emotions, gestures and objects, they have become significant part of the communication of today's students which makes emojis great tool to connect classic literature and digital forms of expression.

Further, an examination of the pragmatics, linguistic, and pedagogical functions of emojis is provided. This examination included and was based on Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory and their functions are discussed. These theories highlight that the intention of the speaker for conveying the message can create the function of the speech and create the action by the hearer. These actions are commissives, representatives, declaratives, directives, and expressives which all perform different conversational functions (Levinson, 1983). Meanwhile Politeness Theory emphasizes the strategies for showing respect and maintaining social distance in a conversation (Brown and Levinson, 1987). With the application of these theories to emojis, it is demonstrated that emojis can help to convey tone, intent and emotion in CMC which helps to improve the clarity of written interactions. Moreover, with the view of emojis as using Politeness Theory showed the ability of emojis in assisting to soften potential face-threatening acts and

reinforce social boundaries. These insights provided a rationale for emoji integration in literature classes, where they might assist students to interpret the tone, irony and complex emotions of a play as Hamlet.

Later, educational technology and digital learning tools were explored which have expanded rapidly since COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the enhancement of student engagement and the possible improvement of teachers' instruction through integration of digital tools discussed (Sharples; Pallathadka, 2020). With the examination of educational technology, it is explored that digital tools like emojis are in line with modern pedagogical methods that prioritize engagement, interactivity, and student-centered learning. Investigating the innovative pedagogical approaches and techniques in literature and instruction of Shakespearean texts provided examples on the integration of digital tools and innovative methods.

Moreover, the use of multimodality theory in teaching created the main framework of the method since it supports the idea of using multiple sensory systems (Kress, 2009). In order to encourage students to interpret, portray, and critically engage with Shakespeare's themes and characters with the help of emojis, this framework served as a foundation for the proposal of emoji integrated method for teaching Hamlet. In addition to Multimodality Theory, the method also resonates with Culturally Responsive Method since the method stems for the idea that using tools students familiar with in this case emojis, in literature pedagogy. Culturally Responsive Method seeks to integrate students' cultures, languages, and life experiences into educational materials so that integrating the use of emojis which are digital communication tools particularly relevant given students' familiarity might be helpful in their engagement with the text. This study aimed to contribute to Hamlet instruction by offering a novel, culturally relevant tool for high school students. With the help of emojis as supplementary tool, it protects the richness of Hamlet's language but also offers visual symbols to enhance comprehension that students familiar with them. For learners who might usually find it difficult to relate to Hamlet's language and cultural allusions may have benefit from the use of emojis and it could offer an option.

Hamlet is one of the most debated works of Shakespeare, critics have been analyzed Hamlet and each analyze created new layers in Hamlet's motivations, meaning and the complexity of the characters. Furthermore, Hamlet's the sarcastic tone,

psychological depth, moral ambiguity and existential crisis makes Hamlet more completed for students to comprehend. Therefore, Hamlet became the main literary text choice of the thesis. With the emoji integrated dialogue and monologue examples from Hamlet by representing character interactions, key points of the theme and the emphasis of tone shifts are displayed. These examples showed how emojis can be integrated into Hamlet's monologues and dialogues to help students visualize and internalized the language of Shakespeare, thematic complexity and the motives of the characters in Hamlet. Therefore, this study offers an innovative experimental method to teaching Hamlet in high school literature classes for active engagement.

Despite these, the study acknowledges the limitations that may affect the application and efficacy of proposed method. While there are studies aiming to explore emojis in CMC and emoji use in ESL classrooms, there is limited research specifically on emoji integrated method for instructing literature and especially for Shakespearean texts. Due to the lack of empirical data, the effectiveness of emojis as teaching tools for the instruction of Hamlet in high schools is not certain. Another limitation for this study is ambiguous nature of emojis since they can be interpreted differently depending on the culture and diverse personal experiences. Also, the use of emojis differ from their standardized meanings and their use depends on the intention of the user which can lead to inconsistencies in students' interpretations. However, the explanation like in Chapter 4 may prevent students to misinterpret and discussion on how the students use emojis by interpreting the text may prevent this limitation so well-prepared instruction might overcome this limitation. Lastly, the popularity of emojis depends on the popular culture which means that their common use may evolve in time by impacting their appealing quality in literature classes. This cultural dependency might limit the long-term applicability of emojis in literature classes since new technologies and digital tools might appear.

Derived from these findings and limitations, future research should primarily focus on empirical studies in classroom settings to collect data on the effectiveness of emoji-based method for teaching Hamlet in high school literature classrooms. Assessments for both before and after use of emojis could be used in these studies to determine how much students' understanding, involvement and critical abilities have affected. Furthermore, feedback from students and teacher observations could provide

better understanding of the effectiveness and limitations of using emojis in teaching Hamlet. Additionally, future research should also refer to the potential limitations of emoji interpretation, such as standardized set of emojis to employ in key scenes of Hamlet or interpretation sources like emoji dictionary for Hamlet. So, in this way, the method may offer more structured framework to minimize ambiguity and improve cohesion in classroom implementation. Finally, expansion of this method into other Shakespearean plays or other classic texts perceived complicated by students could help to determine the efficacy of emoji-based method and the integration of emojis into literature pedagogy in various genres and texts. Therefore, future research can develop a more comprehensive knowledge of how digital tools can support literature education and whether some types of genres are better suited for emoji-based instruction than others by examining the use of emojis in various literary contexts.

All in all, this study offers potential tool for instruction of Hamlet to function as an accessible and relevant technique for high school students. This method offers to create a connection between Hamlet, along with Shakespearean language, and digital communication habits of students. Although this method requires further research, it offers a step in the right direction of integration of a popular digital tool into literature instruction by being in line with the contemporary pedagogical methods for teaching literature. Teachers may provide students a modern introduction to Shakespeare's intricate syntax and concepts by incorporating emojis into their lessons which might result in a literature curriculum that is both contemporary and responsive. Finally, another aim of this study is to contribute to keep Shakespeare's texts relevant for future students and generation by introducing students to Shakespeare's literary works in meaningful ways to comprehend the depth of his plays, his language and his mastery in literature.

Riassunto in Italiano

L'insegnamento di Shakespeare nelle aule delle scuole superiori rappresenta una delle più grandi sfide e opportunità nell'istruzione. Essendo una delle figure più venerate nella storia della letteratura, le opere di Shakespeare sono una pietra angolare della letteratura inglese, offrendo una profondità senza pari nel linguaggio, nei personaggi e nei temi. Tuttavia, per molti studenti, l'esperienza di impegnarsi con le sue opere è irta di difficoltà. Le barriere linguistiche poste dall'inglese moderno, unite alla distanza storica e culturale tra l'Inghilterra elisabettiana e il mondo contemporaneo, possono far sembrare le sue opere inaccessibili e irrilevanti. Gli studenti si ritrovano spesso sopraffatti dalla sintassi intricata, dal vocabolario non familiare e dalle metafore dense che caratterizzano il linguaggio di Shakespeare. Allo stesso tempo, potrebbero avere difficoltà a connettersi con le norme sociali, gli idiomi e le metafore dell'era elisabettiana, che sembrano distanti ed estranei alle loro esperienze vissute. Queste sfide possono portare al disimpegno, alla comprensione superficiale o persino al rifiuto totale delle opere di Shakespeare, privando gli studenti delle ricche ricompense intellettuali ed emotive che hanno da offrire.

La sfida di insegnare Shakespeare è particolarmente acuta nel caso di Amleto, una delle sue opere più complesse e celebrate. Amleto approfondisce temi profondi e spesso astratti, come il dubbio esistenziale, la moralità, la lealtà familiare e la ricerca della verità. Il suo linguaggio è carico di ricchezza metaforica e strati di significato, che richiedono ai lettori di confrontarsi con una sintassi intricata e riferimenti culturali che non fanno più parte del discorso quotidiano. Per gli studenti che non sono abituati a tale complessità linguistica e tematica, l'opera può apparire impenetrabile, portando a frustrazione e disimpegno. Il risultato è che molti studenti si avvicinano alle opere di Shakespeare con trepidazione, se non addirittura resistenza, e gli educatori affrontano l'arduo compito di rendere questi testi non solo comprensibili, ma anche pertinenti e coinvolgenti.

Ad aggravare queste sfide è la natura mutevole della comunicazione e dell'alfabetizzazione nell'era digitale. Gli studenti di oggi, spesso definiti "nativi digitali", sono cresciuti in un mondo in cui la tecnologia plasma ogni aspetto della loro vita, incluso il modo in cui comunicano, imparano e pensano. Le forme di

comunicazione tradizionali basate sul testo sono sempre più integrate e, in alcuni casi, sostituite da forme di espressione multimodali che combinano testo, immagini e simboli. Le emoji, in particolare, sono emerse come una caratteristica centrale della comunicazione digitale. Questi piccoli simboli colorati servono come aiuti visivi ed emozionali, arricchendo le interazioni basate sul testo replicando gli indizi non verbali, come tono, espressione facciale e gesti, che sono assenti nella comunicazione scritta. Le emoji migliorano la chiarezza, riducono l'ambiguità e aggiungono profondità emotiva ai messaggi, rendendole uno strumento vitale per la comunicazione nell'era digitale.

Questo passaggio verso la comunicazione multimodale ha profonde implicazioni per l'istruzione, in particolare nell'insegnamento della letteratura. Mentre gli educatori affrontano la sfida di coinvolgere gli studenti in un panorama culturale e tecnologico in rapida evoluzione, si sta diffondendo la consapevolezza della necessità di adattare i metodi di insegnamento per allinearli alle abitudini e alle preferenze digitali degli studenti. L'integrazione di strumenti e risorse digitali in classe ha già trasformato l'insegnamento della letteratura, consentendo agli educatori di rendere testi complessi più accessibili e coinvolgenti. Piattaforme multimediali, risorse interattive e supporti visivi come meme e infografiche sono diventati strumenti preziosi per promuovere la comprensione e il coinvolgimento. Tuttavia, il potenziale degli emoji come strumento pedagogico nell'insegnamento della letteratura rimane in gran parte inesplorato, rappresentando un'importante opportunità di innovazione.

L'argomento centrale di questa tesi è che gli emoji possono fungere da ponte efficace tra il linguaggio complesso e i temi dell'Amleto di Shakespeare e le sensibilità visive, emotive e culturali degli studenti contemporanei. Sfruttando il potere comunicativo degli emoji, gli educatori possono creare un approccio multimodale all'insegnamento che si allinea alle abitudini di comunicazione digitale degli studenti, favorisce un coinvolgimento più profondo con il testo e migliora la comprensione. Gli emoji, in quanto linguaggio visivo universale, sono particolarmente adatti a questo compito. Offrono un modo per semplificare idee complesse senza diluirne il significato, forniscono spunti visivi che chiariscono tono e intento e creano un'esperienza di apprendimento più interattiva e relazionabile.

Il potenziale degli emoji come strumenti pedagogici risiede nella loro capacità di integrare, piuttosto che sostituire, i metodi tradizionali di analisi letteraria. Traducendo

scene chiave, temi e dialoghi di Amleto in sequenze di emoji, gli educatori possono fornire agli studenti un quadro visivo ed emotivo per comprendere il testo. Allo stesso modo, le complesse dinamiche della relazione di Amleto con Ofelia possono essere visualizzate attraverso emoji che catturano la loro intensità emotiva e i toni mutevoli. Queste rappresentazioni visive non solo rendono il testo più accessibile, ma incoraggiano anche gli studenti a impegnarsi in modo critico e creativo con il suo contenuto.

Al centro di questa tesi c'è il concetto di pedagogia multimodale, che enfatizza l'uso di più modalità di comunicazione (testo, immagini, audio e simboli) per migliorare l'apprendimento. La pedagogia multimodale riconosce che gli studenti imparano in modi diversi e cerca di creare ambienti di apprendimento inclusivi e coinvolgenti che soddisfino una gamma di preferenze e punti di forza. Integrando gli emoji nell'insegnamento di Shakespeare, gli educatori possono sfruttare i principi della pedagogia multimodale per rendere Amleto più accessibile, riconoscibile e significativo per gli studenti. Questo approccio si allinea anche con l'insegnamento culturalmente reattivo, che cerca di collegare i contenuti del curriculum con i background culturali, le esperienze e gli stili di comunicazione degli studenti. In questo contesto, gli emoji fungono da ponte tra il mondo di Shakespeare e la cultura digitale degli studenti di oggi, creando un'esperienza di apprendimento che è sia radicata nella tradizione che reattiva alle realtà contemporanee.

Il significato più ampio di questa tesi risiede nel suo contributo al dibattito in corso sull'innovazione educativa e l'integrazione di strumenti digitali in classe. Man mano che l'istruzione si evolve per soddisfare le esigenze dell'era digitale, c'è una crescente necessità di ripensare gli approcci tradizionali all'insegnamento e all'apprendimento. Esplorando il potenziale degli emoji come strumenti pedagogici, questo studio cerca di espandere i confini di ciò che è possibile nell'insegnamento della letteratura, offrendo nuovi percorsi per rendere testi classici come Amleto rilevanti e risonanti per le generazioni future. Nel farlo, mira a ispirare gli educatori ad abbracciare creatività, adattabilità e innovazione nelle loro pratiche di insegnamento, assicurando che le opere senza tempo di Shakespeare rimangano accessibili e di impatto in un mondo in rapido cambiamento.

Questa tesi è strutturata per fornire un'esplorazione completa delle dimensioni teoriche, pratiche e pedagogiche degli emoji. Inizia con un esame dell'evoluzione, delle funzioni e dei ruoli linguistici degli emoji. Quindi esamina le tecnologie educative e la pedagogia della letteratura e di Shakespeare. Lo studio approfondisce quindi l'applicazione degli emoji nell'istruzione di Amleto. Infine, affronta le implicazioni, le limitazioni e le direzioni future della pedagogia basata sugli emoji, collocando lo studio nel contesto più ampio dell'innovazione educativa e dell'alfabetizzazione digitale. Alla fine di questa esplorazione, la tesi cerca di dimostrare che gli emoji non sono solo un'aggiunta giocosa alla comunicazione digitale, ma possono essere un potente strumento per reimmaginare l'istruzione letteraria.

Il primo capitolo inizia tracciando la storia degli emoji, contestualizzando la loro ascesa come elemento trasformativo nella comunicazione digitale. Gli emoji si sono evoluti dagli emoticon, i simboli basati su testo introdotti nei primi anni '80 per affrontare la mancanza di segnali non verbali nella comunicazione mediata dal computer (CMC). Ad esempio, semplici combinazioni come :-) per la felicità o :-(per la tristezza hanno aggiunto un contesto emotivo al testo, rendendo i messaggi più chiari e coinvolgenti. Sebbene efficaci, le emoticon avevano una portata limitata, basandosi sulla creatività degli utenti per costruire simboli utilizzando caratteri standard della tastiera. Nel 1999, Shigetaka Kurita ha introdotto il primo set di emoji per la piattaforma mobile giapponese DOCOMO. Questi simboli grafici rappresentavano emozioni, oggetti, condizioni meteorologiche e concetti, ampliando significativamente il vocabolario visivo della comunicazione digitale. A differenza delle emoticon, le emoji sono state progettate per essere intuitive e universalmente riconoscibili, consentendo agli utenti di trasmettere idee complesse con il minimo sforzo. La standardizzazione delle emoji da parte dell'Unicode Consortium nel 2010 ha segnato una svolta, garantendo la loro compatibilità tra dispositivi e piattaforme. Oggi, le emoji sono diventate un fenomeno globale, con oltre 3.000 simboli nel set Unicode, che vanno da semplici espressioni facciali a simboli astratti e icone culturali.

Partendo dal loro contesto storico, il secondo capitolo esplora le dimensioni linguistiche degli emoji, analizzando come funzionano come estensioni del linguaggio scritto. Sebbene non siano un linguaggio a tutti gli effetti, gli emoji mostrano somiglianze strutturali e funzionali con i sistemi linguistici, rendendoli potenti strumenti

per migliorare la comunicazione. Il capitolo identifica tre ruoli linguistici principali degli emoji: gli emoji spesso sostituiscono parole o frasi, funzionando come stenografia visiva. Ad esempio, un emoji a forma di cuore può sostituire "amore", una faccina che piange "tristezza" e un pollice in su "approvazione". Queste sostituzioni riducono il carico cognitivo della decodifica del testo, rendendo la comunicazione più rapida ed efficiente. Gli emoji aggiungono sfumature emotive e tonali ai messaggi scritti, chiarendo l'intento e prevenendo interpretazioni errate. Gli emoji agiscono come una forma di punteggiatura, segnalando pause, enfasi o cambiamenti di significato. Ad esempio, una sequenza di emoji di fuoco può evidenziare intensità o eccitazione, mentre una serie di punti seguiti da un emoji potrebbe indicare suspense o accumulo emotivo. Queste funzioni sono analoghe al ruolo della punteggiatura nel linguaggio tradizionale, migliorando la leggibilità e l'espressività del testo.

Il capitolo esplora anche i ruoli pragmatici degli emoji nella comunicazione digitale, concentrandosi su come aggiungono contesto e arricchiscono l'interpretazione del significato oltre il testo letterale. La pragmatica, definita da Levinson (1983) come lo studio dell'uso della lingua nel contesto, evidenzia come gli emoji interagiscono con il testo circostante e le relazioni interpersonali per trasmettere contenuti emozionali, relazionali e funzionali sfumati. Gli emoji colmano l'assenza di segnali non verbali, consentendo agli utenti di comunicare tono, emozione e intento nella comunicazione mediata dal computer (CMC).

Basandosi sulla teoria degli atti linguistici di Austin (1962) e sull'espansione di Searle (1969), la sezione categorizza l'uso del linguaggio in atti come dichiarativo, espressivo, direttivo, commissivo e rappresentativo. Le emoji rispecchiano questi atti enfatizzando le emozioni, affermando le intenzioni o modificando il tono dei messaggi scritti. Ad esempio, un'emoji sorridente ammorbidisce una direttiva ("Si prega di inviare il rapporto 😊"), mentre un'emoji che ammicca aggiunge sarcasmo alla critica. Le emoji funzionano anche come strumenti di cortesia, allineandosi alla teoria della cortesia di Brown e Levinson (1987) riducendo gli atti minacciosi e mantenendo l'armonia sociale. Ciò evidenzia il loro ruolo nella gestione delle relazioni interpersonali, sia attraverso la cortesia positiva (costruzione di un rapporto) sia attraverso la cortesia negativa (rispetto dell'autonomia).

Le emoji svolgono anche funzioni espressive distinte, simili a segnali non verbali come le espressioni facciali nella comunicazione faccia a faccia. Aggiungono profondità emotiva, chiariscono l'intento e potenziano la risonanza emotiva dei messaggi. Ad esempio, una "faccia che piange" trasmette tristezza, mentre "occhi a cuore" esprimono ammirazione. Le sequenze di emoji possono creare significati più ricchi, simili a narrazioni, imitando la prosodia e migliorando la chiarezza interpretativa. Inoltre, le emoji contribuiscono alle funzioni relazionali promuovendo l'intimità, riflettendo norme culturali condivise e rafforzando il rapporto attraverso tradizioni emoji condivise. La sezione si conclude sottolineando i ruoli multiformi delle emoji, dall'agire come modificatori di tono e migliorare le interazioni sociali al chiarire messaggi ambigui. Mentre arricchiscono la comunicazione digitale, le emoji sono strumenti deliberati, modellati dal contesto, dall'intenzione e dalla comprensione culturale condivisa, che li rendono inestimabili per navigare nelle complessità dell'interazione online.

Il terzo capitolo inizia esaminando l'impatto trasformativo della tecnologia educativa nel rimodellare le pratiche di insegnamento in tutte le discipline, in particolare nelle classi di lingua e letteratura. La pandemia di COVID-19 ha sottolineato l'urgenza di adottare strumenti digitali, poiché le scuole di tutto il mondo sono passate all'istruzione a distanza, modificando il modo in cui milioni di studenti hanno imparato. Tuttavia, l'integrazione della tecnologia educativa non è solo una risposta alla crisi. Nel corso dei decenni, si è evoluta da semplici modelli "drill-and-practice" basati su principi comportamentisti a sistemi dinamici e integrativi che si allineano ai quadri pedagogici contemporanei. Sistemi come Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) rappresentano questa evoluzione, passando da esercizi di memorizzazione meccanica ad approcci comunicativi che enfatizzano l'acquisizione significativa della lingua e l'applicazione nel mondo reale. Iterazioni più avanzate di CALL, che incorporano attività multimediali e contestuali, hanno ridefinito ciò che è possibile nell'educazione linguistica.

Tecnologie emergenti come la realtà virtuale (VR) e l'intelligenza artificiale (AI) personalizzano e approfondiscono ulteriormente le esperienze di apprendimento. Le piattaforme basate sull'AI analizzano le prestazioni degli studenti e adattano le risorse alle esigenze individuali, mentre la VR immerge gli studenti in ambienti simulati,

consentendo un coinvolgimento esperienziale con materiale complesso. Tali innovazioni accennano a un futuro in cui gli strumenti digitali promuovono esperienze di apprendimento multidimensionali che integrano l'analisi critica con l'immersione emotiva e sensoriale.

Tuttavia, gli insegnanti affrontano sfide significative quando progettano l'istruzione con la tecnologia. La precisione nella progettazione didattica è fondamentale, soprattutto negli ambienti virtuali in cui un'impalcatura chiara e un feedback tempestivo sono essenziali per il successo degli studenti. Passi falsi nella progettazione del corso possono causare confusione e disimpegno, compromettendo il processo di apprendimento. Le aule digitali efficaci sfruttano questi principi per creare comunità e replicare le dinamiche interattive delle impostazioni faccia a faccia. Nella pedagogia letteraria, ciò implica la creazione di spazi in cui gli studenti non solo analizzano i testi, ma li collegano anche alle proprie vite e ai contesti culturali.

L'educazione letteraria trae vantaggio in modo unico dalla tecnologia educativa, affrontando le sfide storiche nell'impegnare gli studenti con testi complessi. Piattaforme come e-book, ipertesti e strumenti di narrazione digitale ridefiniscono l'esperienza di lettura, offrendo interpretazioni interattive e ricche di contenuti multimediali di opere classiche. L'ipertesto, ad esempio, consente agli studenti di esplorare le opere teatrali shakespeariane attraverso annotazioni interconnesse, aprendo percorsi verso una comprensione più profonda di temi, contesto storico e sfumature linguistiche. Le piattaforme di narrazione digitale consentono agli studenti di visualizzare elementi letterari come motivazioni dei personaggi o sviluppi tematici, fondendo analisi visive e testuali. Tali strumenti completano l'istruzione letteraria tradizionale rendendo testi canonici come Amleto più accessibili e stimolanti.

L'insegnamento di Shakespeare è da tempo una pietra angolare dei programmi di studio letterari, ma esemplifica le sfide del collegamento tra opere storiche e pedagogia contemporanea. Storicamente, Shakespeare è stato insegnato attraverso approcci incentrati sul testo, enfatizzando l'apprezzamento morale, intellettuale e linguistico. Nel corso del XX secolo, i metodi basati sulla performance hanno guadagnato terreno, riconoscendo le opere come testi viventi destinati al palcoscenico. Rex Gibson, un pioniere della pedagogia shakespeariana, ha sostenuto approcci incentrati sullo studente che combinassero performance, pensiero critico e immaginazione. Questi metodi

invitavano gli studenti a calarsi nei ruoli dei personaggi di Shakespeare, esplorandone in prima persona le motivazioni e le relazioni. Questa evoluzione nella pedagogia ha reso Shakespeare più accessibile, promuovendo l'impegno creativo pur mantenendo il rigore analitico.

A livello globale, l'insegnamento di Shakespeare varia per approccio ed enfasi. Nel Regno Unito, le opere di Shakespeare sono obbligatorie a vari livelli educativi, rafforzandone il significato culturale e letterario. Al contrario, i programmi di studio canadesi spesso inquadrano Shakespeare attraverso lenti critiche, come il postcolonialismo, usando le sue opere per interrogare questioni di potere, identità ed eredità culturale. In contesti non occidentali come la Turchia, dove l'inglese è insegnato come lingua straniera, le opere di Shakespeare sono adattate ai quadri culturali locali, assicurandone la pertinenza e la risonanza. Questi diversi approcci dimostrano come l'universalità di Shakespeare sia sia una sfida che un'opportunità, richiedendo agli educatori di adattare le sue opere per soddisfare le esigenze linguistiche e culturali dei loro studenti.

Gli studenti incontrano spesso ostacoli quando studiano Shakespeare, tra cui la complessità del suo linguaggio, la densità dei suoi temi e la natura performativa delle sue opere. Per i non madrelingua, le sfide sono aggravate da idiomi non familiari e allusioni storiche. Per affrontare queste barriere, gli educatori impiegano diverse strategie, come l'abbinamento di Shakespeare a testi contemporanei, l'uso di quadri femministi o postcoloniali per reinterpretare le sue opere e l'incorporazione di strumenti interattivi come la linguistica dei corpus. Questi metodi incoraggiano gli studenti a vedere Shakespeare sia come un prodotto del suo tempo sia come una lente attraverso cui esaminare le preoccupazioni umane durature. Ad esempio, analizzare i soliloqui di Amleto attraverso moderne prospettive psicologiche può aiutare gli studenti a collegare le sue lotte esistenziali alle proprie esperienze di dubbio e processo decisionale.

L'integrazione di strumenti digitali nella pedagogia shakespeariana trasforma ulteriormente il modo in cui le sue opere vengono insegnate e comprese. I progetti sui social media, come la creazione di profili di personaggi o la rievocazione di scene tramite piattaforme come Instagram, consentono agli studenti di interagire con Shakespeare in modi giocosi ma sostanziali. I meme sono diventati un mezzo particolarmente popolare per esplorare temi shakespeariani, consentendo agli studenti di

distillare idee complesse in formati visivi che riflettono l'umorismo contemporaneo e i riferimenti culturali. Allo stesso modo, strumenti di narrazione interattivi come i giochi di scelta della tua avventura basati sulle opere di Shakespeare invitano gli studenti a navigare trame alternative, approfondendo la loro comprensione dell'agenzia del personaggio e della struttura narrativa.

Le emoji offrono un altro strumento innovativo per insegnare Shakespeare, colmando il divario tra l'inglese moderno e la fluidità digitale degli studenti di oggi. La serie OMG Shakespeare, che reimmagina il dialogo shakespeariano usando emoji e slang moderno, esemplifica come questi simboli possano semplificare il linguaggio preservandone la profondità emotiva e tematica. I critici di questo approccio sostengono che rischia di banalizzare la ricchezza linguistica di Shakespeare. Tuttavia, i sostenitori vedono le emoji come un punto di accesso accessibile per gli studenti, in particolare per coloro che non hanno familiarità con la sintassi e il vocabolario di Shakespeare. Traducendo emozioni complesse e concetti astratti in simboli visivi, le emoji consentono agli studenti di esplorare le dimensioni affettive delle opere di Shakespeare in modi che risuonano con la loro alfabetizzazione digitale.

Mentre strumenti digitali come gli emoji offrono possibilità entusiasmanti, gli educatori devono bilanciare l'innovazione con il rigore accademico. Il rischio di semplificare eccessivamente testi complessi rimane una preoccupazione, sottolineando l'importanza di allineare la tecnologia con gli obiettivi del curriculum. Ad esempio, mentre gli emoji possono rendere le opere di Shakespeare più facilmente riconoscibili, dovrebbero integrare piuttosto che sostituire i metodi analitici tradizionali, assicurando che gli studenti sviluppino sia capacità interpretative che critiche. Un'integrazione ponderata della tecnologia può arricchire lo studio di Shakespeare, fornendo molteplici punti di accesso per gli studenti, preservando al contempo la profondità intellettuale ed emotiva delle sue opere.

In sintesi, questo capitolo evidenzia il potenziale trasformativo della tecnologia educativa nella pedagogia della letteratura. Integrando strumenti come ipertesto, narrazione digitale ed emoji, gli educatori possono colmare il divario tra testi classici e studenti moderni, creando ambienti di apprendimento inclusivi e dinamici. Le opere di Shakespeare, con i loro temi universali e la loro ricchezza linguistica, fungono da potente banco di prova per queste innovazioni. Man mano che la tecnologia digitale

continua a evolversi, offre nuove opportunità per reimmaginare il modo in cui gli studenti interagiscono con la letteratura, assicurandone la rilevanza e la vitalità nell'aula del XXI secolo.

L'ultimo capitolo sostiene l'uso di emoji come strumenti visivi supplementari per migliorare la comprensione di Amleto, prendendo di mira le complessità linguistiche e tematiche che spesso alienano gli studenti. Attraverso questo approccio, il capitolo cerca di colmare il divario tra l'inglese elisabettiano di Shakespeare e l'era digitale, promuovendo il coinvolgimento senza compromettere la ricchezza del testo originale. Il capitolo inizia situando Amleto nel suo contesto storico e letterario. Scritto nei primi anni del 1600, Amleto è descritto come una tragedia tematicamente e linguisticamente densa plasmata dalle tensioni religiose, sociopolitiche e culturali dell'Inghilterra elisabettiana. La storia testuale dell'opera, comprese le varianti nelle sue prime edizioni stampate First Quarto, il più affidabile Second Quarto e il First Folio pubblicato postumo, ne sottolinea la complessità. Queste edizioni riflettono non solo incongruenze testuali, ma anche decisioni editoriali che hanno plasmato le versioni moderne dell'opera. Questo background contestuale stabilisce perché insegnare Amleto richiede approcci innovativi, specialmente per gli studenti delle scuole superiori alle prese con un linguaggio non familiare e riferimenti culturali.

Un punto focale del capitolo è la logica dell'uso degli emoji come strumento pedagogico. La decisione di rivolgersi agli studenti delle scuole superiori è in linea con il loro sviluppo cognitivo e con i requisiti del curriculum, poiché Amleto viene comunemente insegnato in 11a e 12a elementare. Gli adolescenti sono attrezzati per affrontare i temi intricati dell'opera, come dilemmi esistenziali, vendetta e ambiguità morale, ma potrebbero avere difficoltà con le complesse metafore e il linguaggio arcaico di Shakespeare. Gli emoji, in quanto simboli culturalmente familiari, possono fungere da supporti interpretativi che rendono il testo meno intimidatorio e più interattivo. Forniscono rappresentazioni visive di emozioni, temi e dinamiche dei personaggi, consentendo agli studenti di connettersi con l'opera a un livello più profondo. Il capitolo offre esempi concreti di integrazione di emoji che possono essere utilizzati anche come attività dall'istruttore nel primo soliloquio e monologo di Amleto tra Ofelia e Amleto nell'Atto 3 Scena 1. Questi spunti visivi possono aiutare gli studenti

a decifrare il linguaggio figurativo e il contenuto tematico di Shakespeare, promuovendo un'analisi collaborativa e critica.

In conclusione, lo studio esplora la possibilità di integrazione degli emoji nelle lezioni di letteratura delle scuole superiori, concentrandosi sul loro ruolo di strumento supplementare per l'insegnamento dell'Amleto di Shakespeare. Sottolinea che gli emoji, in quanto simboli digitali familiari, possono aiutare a colmare il divario tra l'inglese moderno e le abitudini comunicative degli studenti, migliorando il coinvolgimento senza sostituire la lingua originale di Shakespeare. Inoltre, lo studio allinea l'integrazione degli emoji con la teoria della multimodalità e la pedagogia culturalmente reattiva. La teoria della multimodalità supporta l'uso di più sistemi sensoriali per coinvolgere gli studenti, mentre la pedagogia culturalmente reattiva sostiene strumenti che risuonano con le esperienze degli studenti. Gli emoji soddisfano entrambi i criteri, promuovendo un ambiente di apprendimento inclusivo e interattivo.

Vengono discusse applicazioni pratiche, come l'uso di emoji per annotare i monologhi e i dialoghi di Amleto, aiutando gli studenti a visualizzare temi e motivazioni dei personaggi. Nonostante il suo potenziale innovativo, lo studio riconosce dei limiti, tra cui la natura soggettiva delle interpretazioni emoji e la loro dipendenza dalle tendenze culturali in evoluzione. Inoltre, viene notata la mancanza di dati empirici sull'insegnamento della letteratura basato sugli emoji. Lo studio si conclude sostenendo la ricerca futura per valutare l'efficacia della pedagogia basata sugli emoji attraverso prove in classe e quadri standardizzati. Suggerisce di espandere il metodo ad altre opere shakespeariane e testi complessi per valutarne la più ampia applicabilità. In definitiva, questo approccio mira a modernizzare l'insegnamento della letteratura rendendo le opere di Shakespeare accessibili e coinvolgenti per le generazioni future.

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