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The Impact of Hashtags and Memes on the Ordinary Communication of Algerian Instagram Users

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On:

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents, my lovely mother who taught me to never

stop dreaming and for my supportive father who gave me the ability to realize

my dreams, I would thank them for believing and trusting me, I hope that they

are proud of the version I am now .

I dedicate also my brothers, sister and friends who were by my side, a special

thank for my partner in this journey Narimane for being patient and helpful and I wish her

all the success.

Sara

Dedication

In the name of ALLAH, The most Merciful, The most Compassionate. All the praises and thanks are to Allah who gave me the power and patience to complete this work.

I dedicate this humble work to my beloved family. My supportive parents who encouraged me and gave me strength to keep achieving my goals.

I am deeply grateful to my sisters and my only brother for their being with me without forgetting my nephews.

A special thank for my partner in this journey Sara for being patient and helpful and I wish her all the success.

To all my friends and relatives who were by my side .

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Abstract

This study is done on the aim of investigating the impact of using hashtags and memes as a social media language and whether these forms of language have an effect on the online communication of Algerian Social media platforms users specifically Instagram. From this study we suggested that both memes and hashtags affect language by reducing the amount of words used between people during their communication process, also hashtags have a greatest influence on this process. We have examined all the Algerian users of Instagram in order to confirm our hypothesis, the method adopted in this research is a descriptive based on the instrument of questionnaire distributed to 100 people from different age groups of society. Thus, we gathered 59 hardcopy answers and 41 answers from different social media platforms (Instagram and Facebook).By the end of this study we confirmed the previous suggested hypothesis**.**

Key words: Social Media, Hashtags, Memes, Social Media Language, Communication.

List of Figures

List of Tables

Table of Contents

Chapter I

The Communication Process and Online Communication

Chapter II

Social Media and Language

Chapter III

Methodology and Research Design

General Introduction

Background of the Study

Since humans are social creatures meant to survive and prosper on Earth, communication with others is essential to achieving this goal. Over the ages, man has developed one of the most important skills: sharing and exchanging ideas as well as expressing feeling, individuals differ from one another in their communication styles, It may be observed by another that certain individuals find it difficult to effectively communicate the ideas inside their minds to others, leading them to avoid social interactions. Conversely, some people possess a high level of ability to express their ideas and feelings to others and do so in a way that is appropriate and that facilitates communication effectively.

On an annual basis, the means of communication change and advance. The tools that previous generations employed are insufficient in the contemporary era. Social media sites like Facebook, email, and mobile phones have taken the place of telegrams, printed letters, and fax machines. The method of communication has been made easier by these contemporary tools. The distances between nations have been reduced, making it simpler to connect with individuals worldwide and stay up to date on all of their news in the present moment from the comfort of your home via a mobile device, In other words, the recipient no longer has to wait for an extended period to receive the message. These contemporary methods have emerged as a result of this. It was credited with having a significant influence on language by bringing new, then-unpopular phrases to the fore—what became known as the social media language: Hashtag, meme, and emoji. These phrases have permeated every aspect of our everyday lives, expanded among social media users, and evolved into essential components of communication. Emojis are widely used in social media posts and are thought to be the most popular term among users. It is said that the earliest emoji dates back to the 17th century, A lot of research were done about emoji like the study The impact of Emoji On

Language And Communication by Boudjemaa Aboubakr sedik in 2019 and the study done by Debba Iman about the use of emoji In Online Communication And Differences Between Genders in 2017 an other study done in 2021 by Mokhtari Djihnane Razika and Mostefaoui Djihad on Investigating The Distinctive Usage of emoji Between Genders. When individuals would send letters with an emoji attached to better explain or communicate the sender's state at the time of writing. Memes are used variably by different people. Some use it to specific a sure state of affairs or feeling, at the same time as others use it for decompression and laughter. As for the hashtag, it has come to be utilized by all segments of society, specifically recently. The hashtag has helped resolve many issues amongst social media users, as a few have come to be crucial in the use of it of their posts.

Statement of the Problem

 Since the chronologies of the emoji is older than the records of the hashtag and the meme, maximum books and research have indicated its effect on language and verbal exchange amongst individuals of society despite the fact that memes and hashtags are used from extraordinary sort of society. This is what triggered us to delve deeper into the impact and role of the hashtag and the meme at the verbal exchange process.

 Aims of the Study

 This study aims to explore the effects of using" Hashtags" and "Memes " in social media platforms on the way individuals communicate in real life , with a purpose of highlighting the power of social media in shaping the language and identities of nowadays generation .

Research Questions

The present study is conducted to answer the following questions:

● How do" hashtags "and "memes" affect language?

● How do they affect real life communication?

● What are the main reasons for people to use hashtags on social media and real life?

Research Hypothesis

This study aims to investigate the virtue of the following hypotheses:

● Memes and hashtags reduce the amount of words used between people while they

communicate.

● Hashtags have a greatest influence not only on communication but also on the world.

Significance of the study

This study is very important for both users and non-users of social media platforms in general, since it aims to discover the effects of using memes and hashtags on the language used in communication, and highlights their effect on the world .In fact, it helps to prove the power of social media language and its international spread.

Methodology

For the purpose of testing the hypothesis, and in order to accomplish the objectives of our study, in this research we have employed descriptive method based on the instrument of questionnaire that will be distributed to one hundred (100) Algerian Social Media users from both genders and different age groups, through this questionnaire participants share their opinions about the use and effect of both memes and hashtags on language. The data of this

research were collected from 59 hardcopy answers and 41online answers of the participants on the questionnaire.

Research Tool and Target Population

Research data were gathered using a questionnaire to answer the research questions and prove or refute the prementioned hypothesis, by using a quantitative research. A total of 100 participants are included in this study as a sample. All of the participants are active users of instagram platform, who accepted to answer the questionnaire and be a part of this inquiry.

Dissertation Organization

This dissertation is divided into two main parts, theoretical and practical. The theoretical part is divided into two chapters the first one deals with the communication process and over view on it. Whereas the second one gives insight into social media platforms and the language used there .the practical part is composed of one chapter that deals with the methodology, clarifying the findings, as well as analysis of the questionnaire .

Definition of Key Terms

Communication

A process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols , signs, or behavior.

Social media

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines social media as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos).

Memes

An idea, behavior, style, or usage that spreads from person to person within a culture Memes (discrete units of knowledge, gossip, jokes and so on) are to culture what genes are to life. Just as biological evolution is driven by the survival of the fittest genes in the gene pool, cultural evolution may be driven by the most successful memes.— Richard Dawkins

Hashtags

A word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#), used on social media sites and applications, especially Twitter, to identify digital content on a specific topic**. (**Oxford dictionary)

Online Communication

The messages, chats, ideas, feelings that are shared between people through social networks such as facebook, instagram, email.

Chapter l

The Communication Process and Online Communication

<center>**The Communication Process and Online Communication**</center>

Introduction

It is predominant that we are as human beings social creatures, we live in families and societies, share some rights and duties, and some general norms and culture. In order to understand each other and our social realities we need communication. By the mid 1990's, the way of giving, receiving, and exchanging ideas and opinions between people differ along with the new inventions and development of the world especially with emergence of the internet that leads to change the nature of human interaction. From that time and with all the renovate faced the internet, people addict to the new social life they discover and bring new ways of interaction. Yet, the process of communication and exchanging the ideas remains the same.

The communication process continue to be valid and goes with all the types and contexts of communication that a person may face .This chapter is devoted to provide the readers with a definition of the term "communication", an overview on the main communication models and types, as well as the elements and the process of communication.

Besides, it sheds light about the concept of online communication as the most important point that influence communication and language.

1.1. Definition of Communication

Communication is a process of sending and receiving messages between two people or more. The word communication has been derived from the Latin word "communicare" which means to import, participate, or transmit. Leagans (1961) defined communication as the process by which two or more individuals share thoughts, information, emotions, or sensations in a way that helps each individuals to understand the purpose, meaning, and application of messages". Turner & West (2019 cited in Miller, 2020), proclaimed that: "communication is a transactional process using symbols to create (shared) meaning" (p.4). In

<center>6</center>

the same context, Rothwell (2020, p.6 cited in Miller, 2020.) added :"communication is a transactional process of sharing meaning with others ". In this vain, the transactional process means that the communication is held between two people where the feedback is necessary.

Furthermore, Alder, Rodman, & du pré (2020, p.2 cited in Miller, 2020) declared that:"

Communication is the process of creating meaning through Symbolic interaction ". In that respect, symbolic interaction refers to the use of gestures, symbols, and signs to create messages and convey meaning through not only words or verbal language but, through a non-verbal one along the lines of body language and facial expressions. Despite all these definitions the communication process remains the same in all concepts in this DeFleur, Kearney, & Plax (1993) asserts : "unique factors characterize communication in each context, but the process by which people construct meanings and transmit them to others, who then interpret and respond, is essentially similar in all contexts". (p.6)

1.2. Communication Models

Communication is the exchange of formations, or meanings between individuals through symbols, signs, or behavior. Scholars in this filed provide a systematic representation that helps in understanding the process of communication. Among them, three can be considered as the basic ones.

1.2.1. Aristotle's Concept of Communication

Aristotle's model considered as the first and widely accepted model of communication. It was proposed before 300 B.C. The main focus was the speaker and speech. This denotes that it is a speaker-centered model. Aristotle's model is based on five major elements: the speaker (sender), the speech (message), the audience (receivers), the occasion (context), and the effect (consequence).
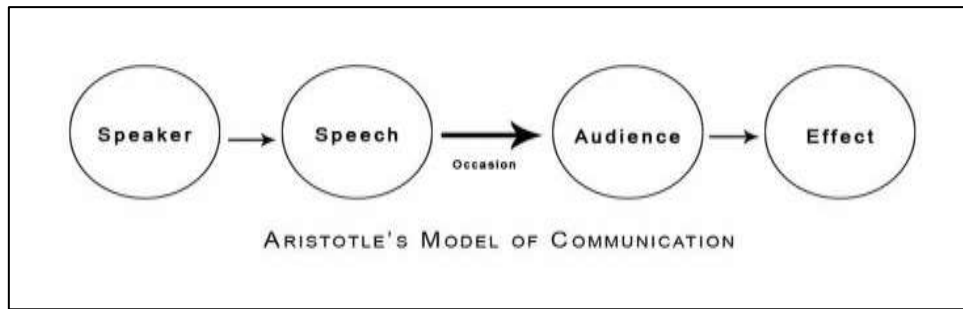
Figure 1: Aristotle's Model of Communication

Source:https://www.google.com/url?q=https://medium.com/%40pragyamishra_84005/aristotles-model-of-communication.

1.2.2. De Vito's Definition

Davit's defines communication as: "the act by one or more persons sending and receiving messages, distorted by noise, within a context, with some opportunity for feedback."

Devito brings a new concept that affect the communication process and are considered as a barrier under the name of "noise" and "feedback".

1.2.3. Lsswell Model

In the 1948, Lasswell proposed his model of communication based on Aristotle's model. He focuses on other elements of the communication which are: "_who ,says what, In what channel, To whom, With what effect _ " (Narula,2006,p.26). According to him the communication process is achievable when these five elements occur.

- **Who:** the sender or the producer of the message.

- **Says what:** the produced message.

- **In what channel:** the medium

- **To whom:** the receiver of the message.

- **With what effects:** the impact of the message on the receiver.

1.3. Types Of Communication

There are mainly two types of communication: verbal and non-verbal communication.

1.3.1. Verbal Communication

Verbal communication refers to all what is communicated using word, figures, draws, and symbols. It is divided into three main types: written, visual, and oral. The written one is about all the messages, and words that convey a meaning, the visual communication is based on meaning transferred via pictures, videos, and gestures. The oral communication stands for the ordinary communication of individuals exchanging words and messages orally and with voice. (Mokhtari.D.R, Mostfaoui. D, 2021)

1.3.2. Non - Verbal Communication

The non -verbal communication characterized by the use of physical emotions, body language, the eye contact, and mimic language. From this perspective, the individual can understand and convey meaning without the need for words or sound at all. (Mokhtari.D.R, Mostfaoui. D, 2021)

The following figure can simplify these two types of communication:
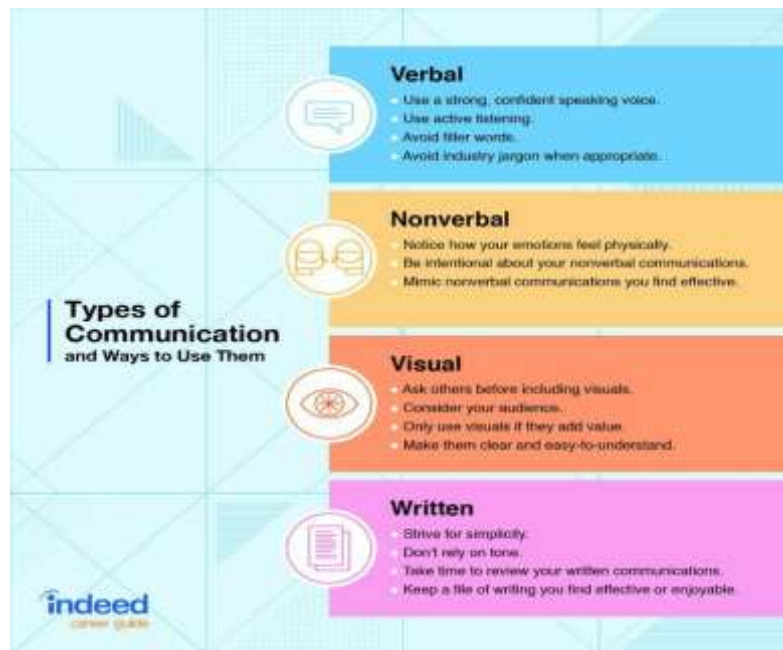
Figure 2: Types of Communication

Source: https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/types-of-communication.

1.4. Elements of communication

Communication model has eight elements:

• **Sender**: the sender is the person that initiates the communication process, whether with an individual or a group to convey his ideas, thoughts and feelings. The success of the communication process depends on the sender's ability to translate the message in his mind and deliver it in a correct way to the receiver.

• **Message**: the message has a vital role in the communication process, it could be in form of words, ideas, feelings and gestures carefully chosen and transmitted to message by the sender to be well understood by the receiver.

• **Encoding:** converting the feelings and thoughts inside the mind into words by the sender that are easy for the addressed group to understand.

• **Media**: during the communication process the sender chooses the appropriate medium to deliver his message to the receiver, the success of the message reaching him is linked to the extent of sender's success in choosing the appropriate medium.

• **Decoding:** It tests the receiver's ability to decode and understand the symbols emitted within the message sent by the sender.

• **Receiver**: Is a pivotal part in this process his role depends on understanding and interpreting the message emitted by the sender in order to exchange roles with him after understanding it .

• **Feedback**: after receiving the message the receiver gives his feedback that determines the extent of his understanding for the sent massage.

• **Noise**: It is certain that the communication process could be impacted by different factors that impact the understanding of the meaning of the message, these factors may be external such as the noise of cars or loud music and it may be internal such as thoughts that invade the receiver's mind.

1.5. How The Communication Process Works?

The communication model passes through five basic steps for its success which are: idea formation, message encoding, message transmission, message transmission medium, decoding, and feedback. In the following, we will explain how this steps are interconnected to make this process successful, this process primarily on the sender's ability to translate the feelings and thoughts inside his mind in a smooth way taking into account the communication skills, age, and culture of the receiver weather individual or group, the sender must carefully choose words that are easy to understand, for example using French words in a conversation with person who is not fluent in it will fail the message to be understood by the recipient. After choosing the appropriate words, the sender should choose the appropriate medium to deliver the message; this medium could be visual or written (email, text message, image,

article). When the message arrives the receiver tries to decode the words and codes used by the sender to understand the hidden meaning the extent of understanding the message varies from one person to another due to the previously mentioned factors. The receiver must avoid Pre-judging the message until he/she gets the meaning. The last and most important step is feedback through which we know whether the receiver understood the message correctly or not, the sender can ask direct questions such as "is it clear?" or "any questions?". Feedback is a shared responsibility between sender and receiver through which we test the extent of the sender's success in conveying his ideas and the extent of the receiver's success in understanding this message.

1.6. Online Communication

Online communication refers to the messages exchanged between people through internet, social networks, and platforms. In1978, Hiltz and Turoff introduced the term Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in their study of computer conferencing .The term CMC refers to electronic communication that is healed through computers and mobile phones with the use of internet, websites, and E-mails. December (1996) stated that: "CMC involves information exchange that takes place on networks. Messages can be sent through social media after being encoded in the form of symbols and characters. The resulting information content exchanged can involve a wide range of symbols people use for communication". (p.24) CMC have influenced both the way of communication and the language, due to the internet interference and the invention of software and programs (Kuo and Wible, 2001).

The language became a form of symbols for instance, like" 👍 " that conveys a meaning of admiring something. Online communication shifted the attention of the interlocutors from the standard face-to-face communication into the CMC, which became commonly used between this generations.

1.7. Modes of Computer-Mediated Communication

Computer-Mediated Communication has mainly two forms; Synchronous and Asynchronous. The former requires the interlocutors to be online at the same time in order to have a successful interaction; whereas, the last does not require. (Mehidi.A, 2019)

1.7.1. Synchronous CMC

As we have mentioned before, Synchronous CMC insists on the presence of all the interlocutors online on the immediate time of conversation. Under this form we may find; Chats, Instant Messaging (IM), and Facebook. All these look for communication through text, audios, and verbal communication. (Mehidi.A, 2019)

1.7.2. Asynchronous CMC

Emails, voice and video notes, project management platforms, digital whiteboards, and visual collaboration platforms are all medium where a synchronic CMC manifests. Thus, the absence of an instant responses or interaction is regarded. The sender of messages in this case may not communicate directly with the receiver who is offline. (Mehidi.A, 2019)

Conclusion

Communication is a process of transmit and interpret a message by two interlocutors or more. From the concerns of this chapter it became perspicuous that communication process have many main types as well as models, the success of these models depends on the collaboration between all the elements of communication. Starting with the sender who tries to transfer his thoughts and ideas into message that is sent to a receiver, who decodes the meaning of this message and provide an insight feedback about it, then exchange role with the sender. Besides the over view on communication, this chapter shads light to an important concept that shift the attention from the ordinary face to face (verbal) communication to a new

way of communication that is based on what people share and communicate on social platforms, under the name of "Online Communication ". Moreover, a clear definition of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and its relation to online communication has been resolved.

Chapter II

Social Media and Language

Introduction

Social media is any form of spoken communication that allows customers to create or share substance with other human beings in their networks. Over the past few years, social media has expanded both in scope and popularity, enabling chatting with people easier .With the emergence of social media new language has emerged through the use of abbreviations, emojis and informal language. All of this led to new form of verbal contact between societies. This chapter provided an overview of social media with the goal of providing a historical context for the widely used social networks and how they affect the way people communicate.

2.1. Definition of Social Media

Social media is any medium of verbal exchange that approves customers to create or share content with other human beings in their networks. Since the first time the term social media emerged many definitions were provided to it. For instance, according to Haelein and Kaplan (2010) "social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user henerated content" (p.61). Moreover, Tuten and Solomon (2015) asserted that: "social media are the online means of communication, conveyanse, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, comunities, and orgnizations enhanced by technological capabilities" (p.4). On this basis, social media are technological web sites and networks that allow its users to interact, share thoughts, videos, and blogs even with a distance people who share the same social community with them.

2.2. History of Social Media

When Samuel Morse used a device known as the telegraph to transmit the first electrical message from his city to another city in 1844, social media made its global debut. Even though this method was successful, scientists were not content with this program's limited

functionality as a communication tool. Instead, they created others that allow users to transmit messages, videos, and images. Scientists worked very hard to do this during the 1970s. In 1997, the first social networking site called Six Degrees was created by Andrew Weinreich; this program differs from previously launched programs in terms of the advantages it offers to its users. Similar to sending messages between different countries of the world, it provides the opportunity to send pictures and share video clips between users, whatever they are. The distance between them and the spread of social networking sites continued to increase year after year and the competition intensified between scholars to create a new platform with many advantages. The emergence of the six degrees website opened the door to several other sites. The most popular sites that appeared were the Facebook application, followed by Twitter and then Instagram as programs for users from different countries.

Andrew Weinreich founded the first social networking site, Six Degrees, in 1997. The benefits that this application provides to its users set it apart from other programs that have

been released. It offers the ability to exchange images and share videos with users, in a manner similar to exchanging messages across international borders. The gap between them became wider every year, social networking sites proliferated, and academic race to develop a new, highly advantageous platform grew. A number of other websites were made possible by the rise of the six degrees website. The Facebook application was the most widely used website, followed by Twitter and Instagram as user programs from many nations.

2.3. Popular Platforms on Social Media

2.3.1. Facebook

Facebook is an online social media platform and social community provider founded by Mark Zuckerberg and based in the United States that may fall under the umbrella of Meta Platforms. With over half of its 3 billion users accessing the platform every day as of 2021,

Facebook allows people to communicate with people over the world and it has become the most well recognized social media platform globally.

Figure 3: Founder of Facebook Mark Zuckerberg

Source: https://pin.it/6GdPtZ9hS.

2.3.2. Instagram

Instagram is a social network service and online photo and video sharing platform founded by Mike Krieger and Kevin Systrom. In 2022, Instagram, one of the largest social media networks globally, attained more than two billion monthly active members.

Figure 4: Cofounder of Instagram Mike Krieger and Kevin Systrom

Source: https://www.google.com/imgres.

2.3.3. Twitter

X is an online social media platform and tweeting website that offers brief messages of no more than 280 characters. It was originally known as Twitter. Elon Musk is the owner of X Holdings Corp.

Figure 5: Founder of Twitter Elon Musk

Source: https://www.google.com/imgres.

2.3.4. WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a free messaging program that Meta owns. On the site, users can speak live via audio or video chat or send text and voice messages to one another. Location and image sharing are also supported by WhatsApp. Although registering requires a cell phone number. WhatsApp created by Jan Koum and Brian Acton.

Figure 6: Cofounder of WhatsApp Jan Koum and Acton$

Source: https://www.google.com/imgres.

2.4. Social Media and Language

2.4.1. Language

2.4.1.1. Definition of language

Language is a mean of communication for all the living things, it is a process of representing, expressing, or conveying meaning and messages through symbols signs and sounds, in this same idea Richards. J. C and Schmidt. R (2014) defined the language as "the system of human communication which consists of the structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) into a larger units, morphemes, words, sentences, utterances. (p.288)

In common usage, it can also refer to non-human systems of communication such as the "language" of bees, the" language" of dolphins." (Cited in Alshami, 2019; 1). Through language, which is the application of standard spoken, signed, or written signs, humans express themselves as members of a social institution and individuals within its culture. There are many uses for language, such as play, communication, expressing one's identity, and

letting out emotions. There are numerous attempts to define language. Sweet. H stated: "Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts." The American linguists Bernard Bloch and George L. Trager stated that: "A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates:" Chomsky on another path focuses on the structural features of language and define language as " "a set of (finite or infinite) sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.". According to most accounts, language's main function is to enable communication—that is, the transfer of knowledge from one individual to another.

2.4.1.2. Dialect

Is a variety of language produced by different persons, it signals where a person comes from, the origins of the word dialect is from Greek which derived from dialegesthia.

2.4.2. Social Media Language

Social media language is a term used to describe the new vocabulary, syntax, and writing styles used in social media platforms and networks. This language is characterized by its use of slang language, abbreviation, and short phrase. As a matter of fact, social media open the way to its users to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts in more flexible tone and form then the one used in daily life. In this vain, new words and slangs have been invented and became widely used by individuals from the same social media community, among them emojis,memes, and hashtags can be mentioned.

2.4.2.1. Emojis

Digital pictograms used widely throughout social media, texting, e-mail, and other computer-mediated communications. Emojis are used to express a range of objects and ideas, including human emotions, animals, geography, foods, and flags. The term emoji was born

from two Japanese words: e, meaning "picture," and moji, meaning "written character."Kendall, E. (2024, March, 28).

Figure 7: Famous Used Emojis

Source: https://www.google.com/imgres.

2.4.2.2. Memes

This word's origins date back to Richard's use of it in his book in 1976. This term refers to the use of pictures, statements, gestures, and video clips that represent a situation or a person's experience with it. Among users of social media, this word has become very popular. On social media, people post amusing or ironic words on images or videos they've taken, whether they're from movies or real life. Most of the time, people utilize them for amusement purposes. Memes are now frequently utilized in discussions and even comments, since their use has grown in recent years. Some believe they are a more effective way to express the message or the situation that he is going through.

JUST SMILE
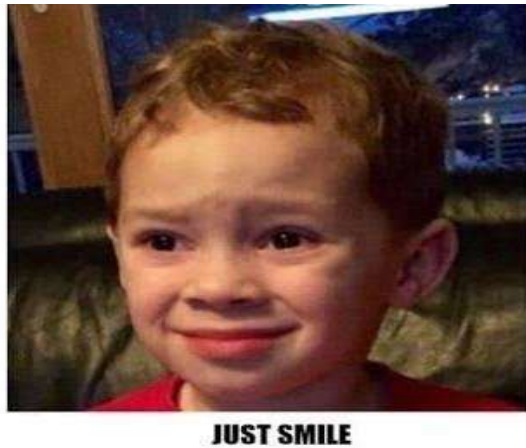
Figure 8: One of The Most Famous Memes

Source: https://images.app.goo.gl/jsXYd9uDDKKCm4EVA.

2.4.2.3. Hashtags

Although it was not a new term, the "Twitter" application played an important impact in popularizing the hashtag among its users. The hashtag was originally used in hashes and occurred for a while. In 2007, Twitter users suggested using it, and in 2009, the hashtag started to be linked to primarily identify with the Twitter app, it has been developing year over year and has now expanded to multiple other apps, including Facebook,Instagram, and Pinterest. Social media users utilize hashtags, which are symbols that are attached to words or phrases, to categorize content or make it easier to access particular content. Once you enter

the term "fashion," for instance, or any other content.

Figure 9: Use of Hashtags on Different Platforms

Source: https://www.google.com/imgres.

2.4.3. The Impact of Social Media on Language

The social media affected the language used in societies in an evident way. The vocabulary of social media has changed significantly in recent years due to its broad adoption. When considering the benefits of adopting the language of social media, the language used by social media founders is different from the language of reality because they add symbols and numbers to some phrases to represent a specific meaning. Provided that social media has now offered its users the chance to have discussions with individuals from all over the world and learn about new cultures and languages, we discover that these sites have allowed many words to invade the language lexicon such as the words "friended" and "unfriended". Social media has also given some members of society more power to identify and fix misconceptions and spelling mistakes made by social media users by having them remark on each other's writing.

On the negative side, we observe that the pioneers of social media have become less conscious of spelling mistakes, sentence structure, or even grammatical make use of rules. Due to the use of shortened language, linguistic abilities have significantly reduced in contrast to earlier years, some people use abbreviations without knowing the original word even though they are aware of their meaning and they use them just because they are terms used in

social media language. Commonly the younger generation is typically the one using this language since it is hard for them to express themselves and share their thoughts with the older generation, which has trouble understanding short words and social media vocabulary. Social media users have made considerable use of abbreviated words. Some of the most well-known terms that have become regular in written and spoken English are lol,btw,and omg. These terms have also been included into language dictionaries.

Conclusion

With the prelevence of social media, new ways of communication have emerged; along with this, new forms of language developed and became prominent among the current generation. Among them the abbreviation such as (LOL, OMG, BTW.etc), the emojis, memes, and hashtags. These new forms of language became internationally used and understood. In this chapter a clear overview on social media and language has been provided, casting light into some new forms of language that are widely used in nowadays conversations. Besides, the positive and negative impact of social media on language has been highlighted in order to reveal the extent of the influence of social media networks on the language and the ordinary communication.

Chapter III

Methodology and Research Design

Introduction

After having presented the theoretical part in which communication through social media has been highlighted. This chapter is devoted to explore how the social media language affects the ordinary communication of Algerian Instagram users. In order to explore the effects of using" Hashtags" and "Memes " in social media platforms on the way individuals communicate in real life , with a purpose of highlighting the power of social media in shaping the language and identities of nowadays generation . Clear analysis of a questionnaire that was giving to Instagram users is provided. The responses give an idea about the participants'' experiences towards using memes and hashtags as a social media language, and how they affect the way of communication among them. Therefore, this section provides definitions of the research instruments, population, and setting. As well as describe each of them and analyze the data collected to be discussed later on.

3.1. Research Methodology

In this research a descriptive design based on survey methodology is used for the exact purpose of exploring and describing the impact of using memes and hashtags on the communication of Algerians Instagram users.

3.2. Population and Sample

One of the most important elements in any research are population and samples. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2011, p.92) "the population is the group of interest to the researcher to whom the researcher generalizes the result of the study". However, the sample is the specific group selected from the whole population in order to represent it and gather information from them. In this research the population is represented by all the Algerian Instagram users whom are actively using Insatgram. We gathered about 100 samples from this population; their age is from 12 to 30 years old.

3.3. Research Instrument

In this study a questionnaire was selected to collect data. The questionnaire contains about (11) questions; four of them are of multiple-choice type, four are "yes/no" questions, and three direct questions where participants express their opinion towards the question. The questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first one is about personal information about the participants, the second is about social media platform and how often are used by people the third is about memes and how they are used. The last is about hashtags and its usage out of social media.

3.4. Analysis of the Findings

3.4.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire

In this section we will present the numerical data obtained from the questionnaire and transmitted by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as quantitative data.

3.4.1.1. Section 01: Personal Information

Question One

➢ **Gender**

In this study the total number of the participants is (100), over (67%) making up 67 subject are female, while 33% (33 subject) are male. Data indicates that female are active users of social media platforms than male that is the feminist category are more interested about this platforms. The aim of this question is to know the total number and the gender of the participants. The percentages and number of the participants are identified in the figures bellow.
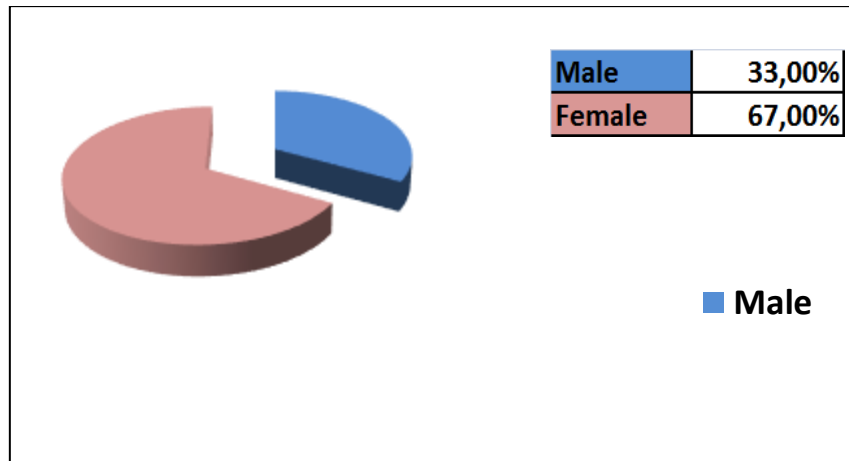
Figure 10: Gender

Gender				
Valid	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Percentage valid**	**Percentage accumulated**
Male	**33**	**33%**	**33**	**33**
Female	**67**	**67,00%**	**67**	**67**
Total	**100**	**100%**	**100**	**100**

Table 01 : Gender

Question two. Your Age

The age groups of the participants were as follows :among the hole participants we can observe that the most interested category in social media platforms are the younger age group ,the percentage of this category from the age of 19 to 24 reached 58% (58 person) ,followed by the age group between 24 to 30 years old about 42 individual (42%) as we notice a complete absence of the age group between 12 to 18 years old .The table and figure bellow indicate the number and percentage of the age groups of participants .
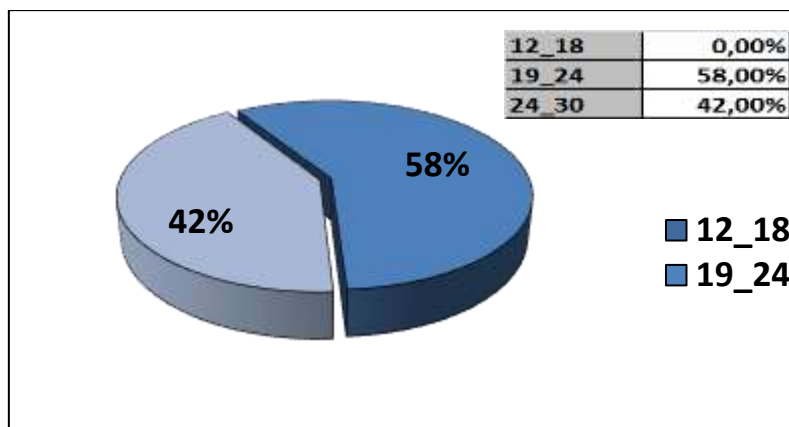
Figure 11: Age

	Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Percentage valid	Percentage accumulated
Age					
	12_18	0	0	0	0
	19_24	58	58	58	58
	24_30	42	42	42,00	42
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table 02: Age

3.4.1.2. Section two. Social Media Platforms

Question three: What social media platform do you frequently use?

□ **Instagram**   □ **Facebook**   □ **WhatsApp**   □ **Tik Tok**   □**others**

The type of this question is a multiple –choice, where the participant can choose more than one answer, the aim behind this question is measuring the amount of using instagram by Algerian social media users compared to other platforms. The answers shows that instagram is the most used application among the participants with (65) frequency in answers that makes (41.1%) percentage. However, Facebook take the place of the second most used platform with (35) frequency (22.2%) percentage, (14.5%) percentage goes for Tik Tok with (23) time frequency, and (12.7%) percentage and (20) time frequency for WhatsApp. Other platforms take the percentage of (9.5%) with (15) time frequency. The figure and table below identify the most social media platforms used according to the Algerian social media users.
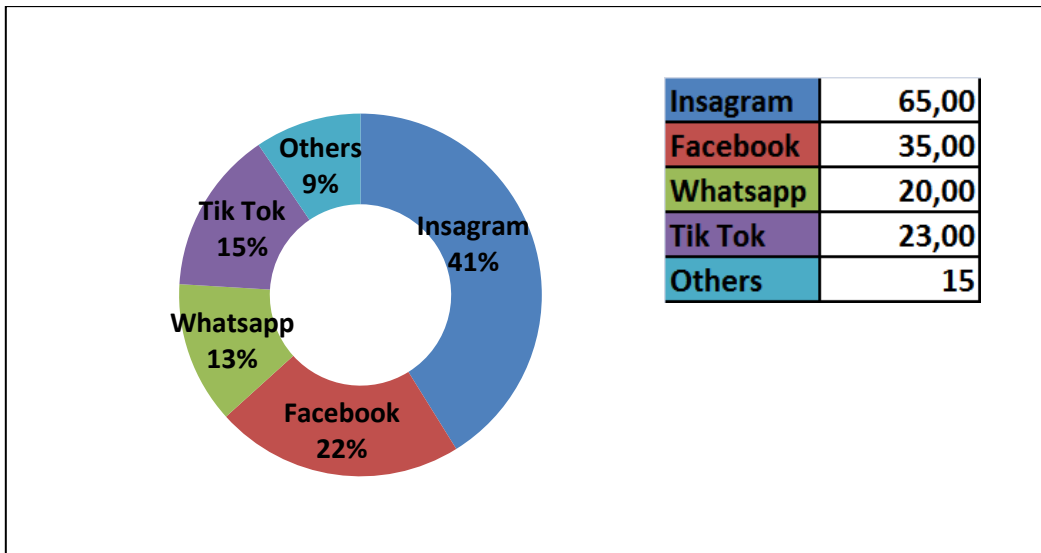
Figure 12: Frequently Social Media Platforms Used

Frequently Social Media platforms used				
Valid	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Percentage valid**	**Percentage accumulated**
Instagram	**65**	**41%**	**41%**	**41%**
Facebook	**35**	**22%**	**22%**	**22%**
WhatsApp	**20**	**13%**	**13%**	**13%**
Tik Tok	**23**	**15%**	**15%**	**15%**
Others	**15**	**9%**	**9%**	**9%**

Table 03: Frequently Social Media Platforms Used

Question Four. How often do you use it?

□ Always   □ Often   □ Rarely

According to what the table and figure above show ,we observe that the duration of using social media platforms differ from one participant to another , 65 person of the hole population (65%) always use social media platforms and 26% (26 individual) often use them , while few of the participants rarely use the mentioned platforms .

Always		65,00
Often		26,00
Rarely		9,00
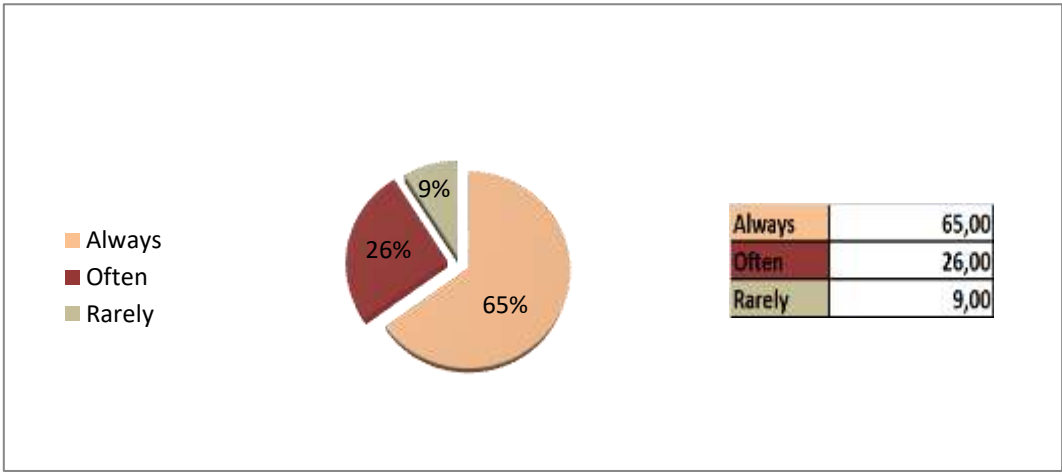
Figure 1 3: Often of Use

Often of Use				
Valid	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Percentage valid**	**Percentage accumulated**
Always	65	65,00%	65	5
Often	26	26,00%	26	26
Rarely	9	9,00%	9,00	9

Table 04: Often of Use

3.4.1.3. Section Three. Memes

Question Five: Do you share memes with your friends?

    ○ **Yes, I do**   ○ **No**

This question was asked to reveal the total use of memes by people in order to know their impact on language and communication. The chart and table diagnose that (93%) of participants share memes in their conversation while only (7%) do not use memes at all. This determines that memes are widely used by people in their daily conversation. The table and figure below identify the numbers and personage of using memes by social media users.

Yes,I	93,00
No	7,00
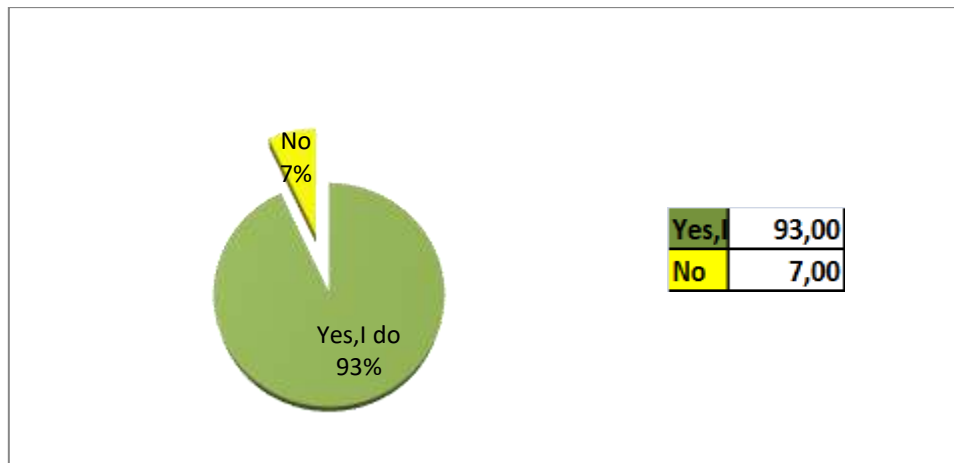
Figure 14: Sharing Memes with Friends

Sharing Memes with Friends				
Valide	**Fréquence**	**Pourcentage**	**Pourcentage valide**	**Pourcentage accumulated**
Yes,I do	93	93%	93%	93%
No	7	7%	7%	7%
Total	100	100%	100%	100%

Table 05: Sharing Memes with Friends

Question Six: What form of memes do you frequently use?

□ Images   □ Symbols   □ Text   □ Videos   □ Gifs

In this question participants choose more than one answer to describe the form of meme they frequently use for the exact purpose of knowing the new and preferred form of language and ways of communication used by people to convey their messages. In the results

videos where their percentage attains 46% (46 person),followed by images as a second most used form of memes its percentage accomplish 22 % (22 individual) ,the numbers were close between those who choose symbol and the others who choose Gifs ,as the percentage of participants who opt for symbols reached 12 % (12 person), while the percentage of those who goes for Gifs is 15% (15 individual) and the lowest percentage is for text with only 5 persons(5%) of the total number .The above table and figure indicate the most used form of memes according to social media users.
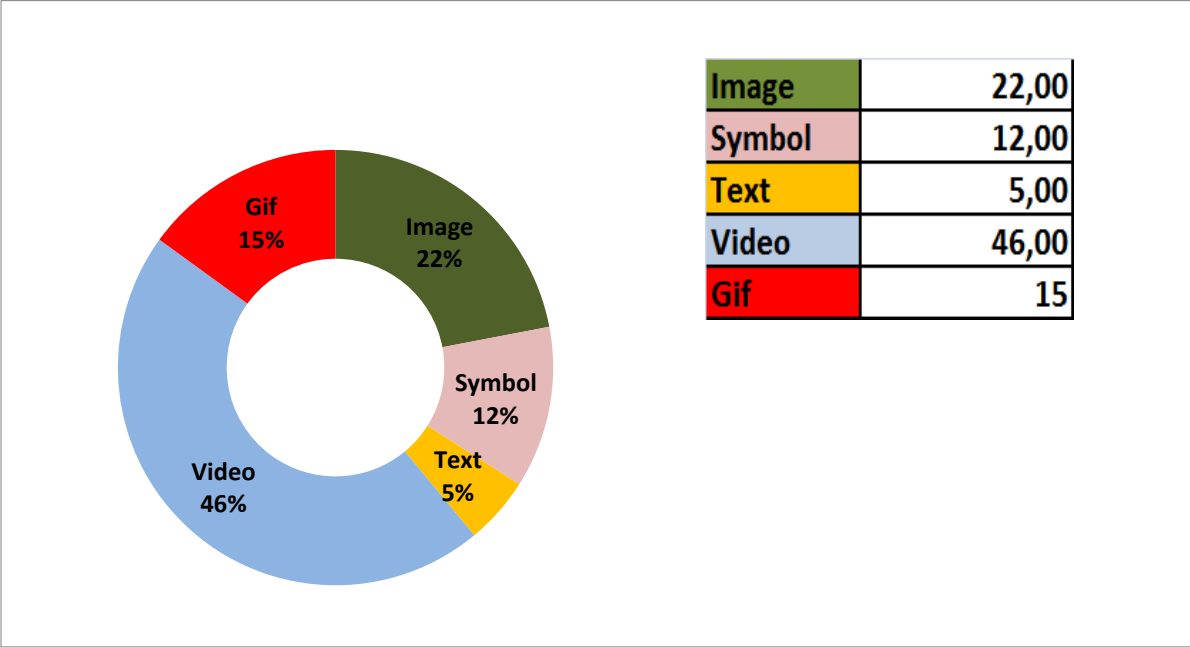
Image	22,00
Symbol	12,00
Text	5,00
Video	46,00
Gif	15

Figure 15: Frequently Used Forms of Memes

Frequently Used Forms of Memes				
Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Percentage valid	Percentage accumulated
Image	22	22%	22%	22%
Symbol	12	12%	12%	12%
Text	5	5%	5%	5%
Video	46	46%	46%	46%
Gif	15	15%	15%	15%

Table 06: Frequently Used Forms of Memes

Question Seven. Could a meme sometimes express your idea better than words?

□ Yes   □ Sometimes   □ No

As we considerably notice from the figure and the table most of Algerian social media users find that memes are a good way of communication that is why 57 % of the answers is "yes" while 43 of the participants (43%) choose sometimes they use memes instead of words to convey their ideas ,and we also remark that no one of the hole participants agree that memes are not a good tool of communication and it could not replace words.
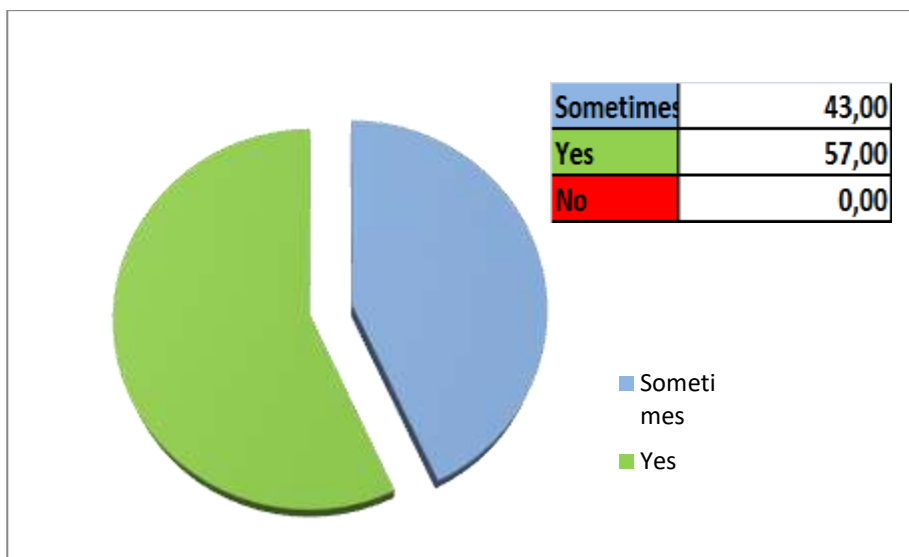
Figure 16: Expressing Ideas with Memes Instead of Words

Expressing Ideas with Memes Instead of Words				
Valid	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Percentage valid**	**Percentage accumulated**
Sometimes	43	43,00%	43	43
Yes	57	57,00%	57	57
No	0	0,00%	0,00	0

Table 07 : Expressing Ideas with Memes Instead of Words

3.4.1.4. Section Four. Hashtags

Question Eight. How about Hashtags do you use them?

□ Yes   □No

This question was asked in the purpose of exposing the total use of hashtags by social media users in order to know their impact on language and communication. In this question and as the figure and table above show the participants'' opinions were sorted into three distinct groups : " yes", "sometimes", and " no", as a result the percentages of the answers were fairly similar, with 32 percent (32 individual) of participants choosing "yes",37 % opting sometimes and the rest 31% selecting " no".
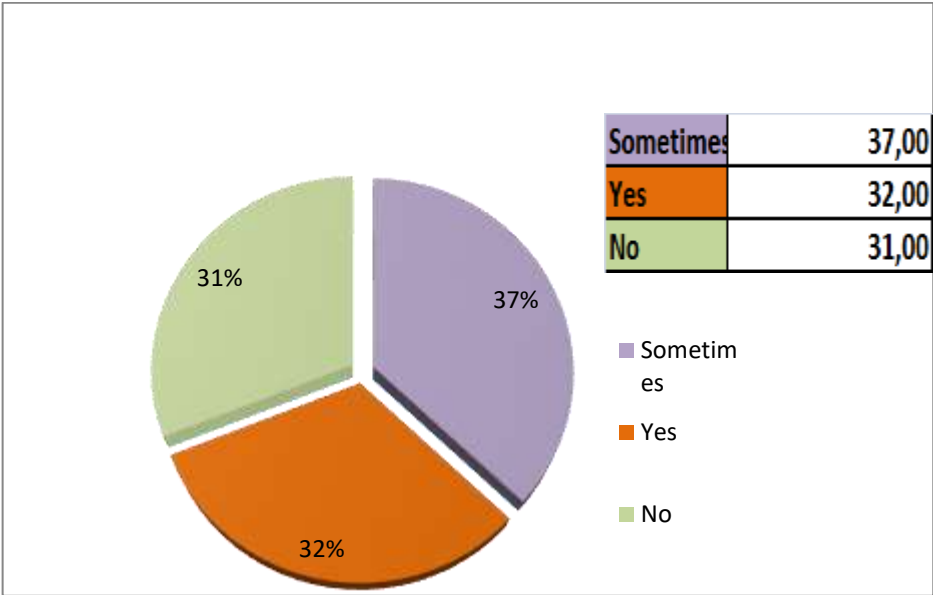

Sometimes	37,00
Yes	32,00
No	31,00

Figure 17: Use of Hashtags

Use of Hashtags				
Valide	Fréquence	Pourcentage	Pourcentage valide	Pourcentage accumulated
Sometimes	37	37,00%	37	37
Yes	32	32,00%	32	32
No	31	31,00%	31,00	31

Table 08: Use of Hashtags

Question Nine. If yes, why you use them?

This question determine the purpose behind using hashtags by the instagram users. the results denotes that 55% of the participants use hashtags to find a specific topic, while 33% use them to attract the right people, 9% use them to get more views and likes on their posts, 7 % use them to share ideas, 6% use to them to expand more the information, 6% use them to solve problems, and 2% use hashtags to elevate the status and for the algorithm of the instagram. All these percentages are presented in the chart bellow,according to the results described above the participants mention that they use hashtags to:

• A. Find specific content .

• B. Expand more the information .

• C. Attract the right people .

•D. Get more views and likes on their posts .

•E. Share ideas .

•F. Elevate the status .

•J. For algorithms .

•H. Solve Palestinians problems .

•I. Make people see the work of pages that have business .

Question Ten. What are the newest hashtag you face? (Mention at least three)

There are many recently used hashtags on social media platform, Thus the majority of the answers were repeated by several participant. The results present about 28 % usage of the hashtag "Free Palestine ", while 10 % used "freedom " , 9% for both hashtags "Palestine" and "Free Palestine" , 5 % for   "Genocide ", other hashtags such as Boycotting , Palestine under attack, stop killing children, Gaza in war, stand with Palestine take the percentage of 2%. Furthermore, the hashtags Covid, Skin care, sport and Gym , food, aid also have the percentage of 2%. The hashtags "fashion" and "Dz /Algeria " have 3% . The lowest percentage goes to the hashtags of " Independent, Palestinian life matter, Fire, SOS Palestine, views, Model, TikTok, vibes, poses, Ramadan, Instagram, and Meme".

 The majority of participants answer this question with:

Palestine	Stand with Palestine
Freedom	Views
Independent	Tik Tok
Free Palestine	Vibes
Boycotting	Dz/Algeria
Genocide	Poses
Fire	Memes

Palestine under attack	Models
Stop killing children	Ramadan
Gaza under war	Aid
Save Palestine	Instagram
Palestinian live matter	Explore
SOS Palestine	Fashion
Food	Couple
Skin care	Sports &Gym
Covid	

Question Eleven. Do you think that hashtgs helps in the Palestinian cause? How?

Since in the last few months the most used hashtags in all social media platforms were about Palestine and what is happening there, not only by Algerian social media user, but by all people around the world. We suggested this topic specifically to investigate the impact of hashtags nowadays in solving such problems, In this question all participants agreed on the effectiveness of the hashtags in the Palestinians issues. In this, 14% argued that hashtages helps in making the case international and reach high level of authority, 23% said that hashtags raise awareness about the case, while 13% of people declared that hashtags helps to support the Palestinian, ask for justice, and make the world aware of the genocide and crimes. Furthermore, 7% said that hashtags leads to Know the reality, while 5% said that hashtags show what the Palestinian face (treatments) ,and Help with the views (by photos, videos).

Additionally, 4% said that hashtags are important to define the Palestinian, ask for aids, and donates. About 3 % believed that hashtags are used to raise the voice of Palestinian to reach the high authority (through manifestations) , Keep the world up to date, Spread the

information, and ask for freedom. 2% answer with to correct the wrong ideas, and ask to stop the war and crimes. The answers were as follows:

• A. To make the case international and reach high level of authority .

•B. To raise awareness about the case .

• C. To show what the Palestinian face (treatments) .

• D. Define the Palestinian and ask for aids and donates .

•E. Help with the views (by photos, videos) .

•F. Raise the voice of Palestinian to reach the high authority (through manifestations) .

• G. Support the Palestinian and ask for justice .

•H. Spread the information .

•I. Make the world aware of the genocide and crimes.

•J. Know the reality .

•K. Keep the world up to date .

•L. Correct the wrong ideas .

•M. Ask for freedom .

•N. Ask to stop the war and crimes .

3.5. Discussion of The Findings

The obtained results from the questionnaire reveal that instagram users use memes and hashtage for many reasons, and that affected the language used in both social media and real life. In the same vein with the hypothesis suggested before that memes reduces the amount of words used in communication, most users said that they use different forms of memes and

agree that they could express their ideas better than words. For that specific purpose instagram users use memes and tend sometimes to substitute the words and language with them.

Besides, the data shows that the hashtags are also used to a great extant, and their effects exceed the standard communication between people to reach an international communication that is understood by people around the world. Owing to the fact that hashtags transmit a meaning that everyone understands, they also help in raising voices and impose an international pressure on the world. The great example for the effect of hashtags is determined by the Palestinian cause. That is what the questions 10 and11 in our questionnaire attempts to reveal; that the hashtages go beyond their standard use of reaching the right content, getting views, and introduce the small business, to solve the world problem and make changes only by this sign (#) . Not forgetting to shed light that the hashtags are used on social media platforms and outside it as we can find them in manifestation boards and walls.

Conclusion

This chapter attempts to analyze and discuss the results of this study. It also highlights the method, instrument, and population used to obtain the data. The discussion of the outcomes that were gathered. The survey shows a resemblance between the hypothesis and the results. Therefore, we can conclude by saying that the memes and hashtags reduce the amount of words used in communication, and that hashtags have the power to transmit meaning understood by all people, and a remarkable impact on the world.

General Conclusion

General conclusion

This research is based on exploring the impact of using memes and hashtags as a social media languages on the ordinary communication of Algerian Instagram users, for the purpose of exploring the impact of hashtags and memes on the language used in real life, and to shed light to their usage. To reach that and answer the inquiry of this research an online and hard copy of a survey was submitted to 100 Instagram user.

The dissertation is divided into two main parts theoretical and practical. The theoretical part is composed of two chapters. The first one titled "The Communication Process and Online Communication" it begins with a definition of communication and over view on its models, types, elements, and process. Besides, it addresses the online communication and computer mediated-communication (CMC). Under the title of "social media and language" lie the second chapter that spot light on one hand to social media; its definition, history, and the famous social media platforms. On the other hand to language, the specific language used in social media, and the impact of social media on language.

The second part; practical part deals with the methodology and research design in which a clear analysis and discussion of the data gathered from the questionnaire is provided to verify the virtue of the mentioned hypotheses.

Based on the data gathered from the prementioned tool, the Hashtags and Memes have a great impact on the language used between people on the ordinary communication. The memes became the vital tool to express and describe feeling, thoughts, and situations that may face the individual. Besides, the role of Hashtags exceeds the role of twits a word to became a tool to present and define one's work, to expand more information, to get more views and became famous on the social media platforms, the most important point is that Hashtags are now used to solve the world problem as the Palestinian case by imposing pressure on the authorities

only by the (#) sign . Therefore, the results of the experiment support the hypothesis and answer the research questions.

Limitation of the study

For the sake of being objective, constant, and let this field permanent, the following limitations must be mentioned:

• First because of the time and other issues (as the privacy of profiles) the data we collect were mostly from the regions of Touggourt and Ouargla. So the same study could be repeated in other places in Algeria to really generalize the findings about using memes and hashtags.

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Appendix

Appendix

Instagram User's Questionnaire .

The Impact of Social Media Language Specially Hashtags and Memes on the Ordinary Communication of Algerian Instagram Users

Dear people,

Thank you in advance for being part of our study that aims at investigating the impact of social media languages memes and hashtags on the ordinary Algerian communication. Feel free to share with us your thoughts and ideas through this questionnaire.

Section one: Personal information

Question one . Your gender

○ **Male**

○**Female**

Question two your age

○ **12_18**

○ **19_24**

○ **25_ 30**

Section two: Use of social Media platforms

Question three. What social media platform do you frequently use?

□ **Instagram**

□ **Facebook**

□ **WhatsApp**

□ Tik Tok

□ Others

Question four. How often do you use it?

○ Always

○ Often

○ Rarely

Section three: Memes

Question five. Do you share memes with your friends?

○ Yes , I do

○ No

Question six. What form of memes you frequently use?

○ Images

○ Symbols

○ Text

○ Videos

○ GIFs

Question seven. Could a meme sometimes express your idea better than words?

○ Yes

○ Sometimes

○ No

Question eight. If yes, why you use them?

....

Section four: **The Role and Impact of Hashtags**

Question nine. How about Hashtags do you use them?

○**Yes**

○**Sometimes**

○**No**

Question ten. What are the newest hashtags you face? (mention at least three)

...........…………………………………………………………………..

Question eleven. Do you think that hashtags helps in the Palestinian cause? How?

……………………………………………………………………..

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الملخص

أجريت هذه الدراسة بهدف التحقق من تأثير استخدام الهاشتاج والميمز كلغة لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ومدى تأثير هذه المصطلحات على التواصل عبر الإنترنت لمستخدمي منصات التواصل الاجتماعي تحديدا منصة إِنستغرام في الجزائر.

اقترحنا من خلال هذه الدراسة أن لكل من الهاشتاج و الميمز تأثير على اللغة وذلك بتقليل كمية الكلمات المستخدمة بين الأشخاص أثناء عملية التواصل، كما أن للهاشتاج تأثير أكبر على هذه العملية .

قمنا بفحص جميع مستخدمي الانستغرام الجزائريين من أجل تأكيد فرضياتنا، حيث اعتمدنا في هذا البحث على الاستبيان الموزع على 100 شخص من مختلف الفئات العمرية للمجتمع. وكانت نتائج هذه الدراسة كالاتي

59 إجابة ورقية و41 إجابة من مختلف منصات التواصل الاجتماعي (فايسبوك و انستقرام). وفي نهاية هذه الدراسة تأكدنا من صحة الفرضيات المقترحة سابقا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سوشل ميديا، هاشتاج، الميمز ، لغة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، التواصل.

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