Verbal vs Non-Verbal Means of Expressing Emotion in CMC

Tatevik Kirakosyan
Yerevan State University

In the last decade there has been an enormous increase in computer-mediated communication (CMC)[1]. CMC includes a variety of electronic message and conference systems, which can be supplemented by audio and video links. Computer-based communication has become common in our daily lives, and this raises the question of how different online communication is from face-to-face communication. Do we chat in the same way in live interactions and via computers?

Nowadays one can hardly meet a friend or a colleague somewhere and ask for a phone number, rather they will exchange e-mail addresses and chats, which makes the work more efficient. In addition, email and chat services also help us to maintain our relationships with friends and colleagues in different locations. CMC can be synchronous (e.g., chat) or asynchronous[2] (e.g., e-mail), and the messages are predominantly typewritten (Adrianson 2001). More and more interactions take place via e-mail and chat, privately as well as professionally. In other words, for most people today it is hard to imagine themselves without a computer and without access to the Internet.

The aim of this article is to review whether communication of emotions is more difficult in computer-mediated communication (CMC) than in face-to-face (F2F) interaction by using certain verbal or non-verbal means of communication.

Emotion communication is defined as the recognition, expression and sharing of emotions or moods between two or more individuals. As humans we experience different types of emotions and feelings. Emotions determine the quality of our lives. They occur in every relationship we care about. They can save our lives, but they can also cause real damage. We don't become emotional about everything. Emotions come and go: we feel an emotion one moment and may not feel any emotion at another moment. Some people are much more emotional than the others, but there are times when even the most emotional do not feel any emotion.

The most common way in which emotions occur is when we sense, rightly or wrongly, that something that seriously affects our welfare, for better or worse, is happening or is about to happen. According to P. Ekman it is a simple idea but a central one - emotions evolved to prepare us to deal quickly with the most vital events in our lives (Ekman 2003).

Many philosophers distinguish between two types of emotion: episodes and emotional states or dispositions. Philosophers call episodes *occurrents* when they refer to the things which happen. Episodes may be short-lived[3] or long-lived. Philosophers often distinguish between occurrents and endurants. Occurrents happen, whereas endurants last, endure. One type of endurant, if common sense is to be believed, is ordinary things and persons. Another type of endurant is states. On one common view, states are a type of continuant - they last. The category of states has often been applied to affective phenom-

ena: someone can be in a state of sadness, in a mood or state of melancholy, despair, or bliss. Moods as we know are states or frames of mind. The frequency of our emotional episodes is another crucial feature in understanding an individual's emotional profile. How well we can control what we do and say and feel during an emotional episode is also an important element in each individual's emotional profile, while another aspect is how clearly we signal others how we are feeling (Ekman 2003).

There is some confusion over whether emotions and feelings are the same thing. We freely talk about how we feel when describing emotional states, and use the words interchangeably. An emotion is a state of awareness that gives people information about the world, and a feeling is one's conscious awareness of the emotion itself (Damasio 1994; Mc Lauren 2010). When we say *I feel anxious, angry, happy...*, what we are really doing is interpreting emotion by how it feels to your mind and body. These may refer either to simple body sensations, such as hot, cold, pain, touch, etc., or they may be feelings associated with emotions as for example love, hate, joy or anger. But what's important to remember is that emotions rarely occur singly, or in pure form. What we are reacting to in the environment often changes quickly; what we remember and imagine about the situation may change; our appraising changes; and we may have affect-about-affect. Typically, people experience a stream of emotional responses, not all the same ones.

One of the functions of emotion is to focus our conscious awareness on the problem at hand, the one that has triggered our emotions. Typically, our emotions do not operate outside of our awareness, although that can also happen.

Talking about past emotional experiences can also trigger emotions. We might tell the very person with whom we had an emotional reaction about how we felt. Sometimes the simple act of talking about an emotional episode will cause us to re-experience the emotion all over again, just as it happens when we conduct experiments and ask people to try to do so. It is important to remember that emotional signals do not tell us their source. We may know someone is angry without knowing exactly why. It could be anger at us, anger directed inward at his or her self, or anger about something the person just remembered that has nothing to do with us. Sometimes we can figure it out from our knowledge of the immediate context:

> e.g.
> *- God knows why such things should ever happen!*
> *- I hesitate to say that I like this because how can I like something that*
> *shows such pair?*

Here we can obviously observe that the speaker is angry or, at least, not contented with the message he had heard (in our case read) and this is seen in the context of his response.

When comparing the way in which emotions are communicated in CMC and F2F, it is crucial to consider the contextual differences in these two communication modes. The most important feature that distinguishes both mediums and that is relevant for studying the role of emotions is its different sociality or social presence. Although non-verbal cues can indicate what general class of emotions a person is feeling, they typically do not provide detailed information about that person's emotional state. By seeing that someone

is crying, for instance, we might assume that s/he is sad; by the extent of sobbing we might even be able to infer the intensity of the sadness. But the tears in and off themselves provide no information about the particular experience of sadness. The cognitions that go along with the sadness or the circumstances that lead up to feeling sad are as in the following example:

> *Oh, dear. Sorry to hear that.*
> *God give him power to fight his disease.*

Some authors claim that CMC is a cold and impersonal medium, where emotions are very difficult to express. However, within the scope of this article we are making an attempt to show that the difference between CMC and F2F in this regard is not great. For this purpose we first distinguish between verbal and non-verbal means of online communication. As electronic language is a written text, it is divorced from gestures, facial expressions, and prosodic features such as intonation, rhythm, and volume and these can lead to the difficulty of smooth and comfortable communication. Over the past several decades, substantial progress has been made in understanding how emotions are expressed through these non verbal mechanisms (Scherer & Ekman 1984; Fussell & Glazer 2010). Emoticons (or smileys) have entered cyberspace to provide the electronic communication with emotional and human touch. An emoticon (a word coined from *emotion* and *icon*) is a facial expression represented by a combination of punctuation marks, letters or other characters, that viewed from the side resemble a facial expression or, more rarely, gestures. So, CMC does not completely lack non-verbal information, because it has its own version of non-verbal displays, namely *emoticons* or *relational icons*, created with typographical symbols that resemble facial expressions (Walther & D'Addario 2001). Emoticons can be considered a creative and visually salient way to add expression to an otherwise strictly text-based form. In the same way as non-verbal cues in F2F, emoticons also help to accentuate or emphasize a tone or meaning during message creation and interpretation (Crystal 2001). Emoticons like any other emotional word can be understood both in a positive and negative sense. The sad emoticon at the end indicates that the message has a negative interpretation. Emoticons serve the function of clarifying textual messages which is similar to non-verbal displays in F2F.

Like other non-verbal means, emoticons can also supplement the verbal context as well as express the significance independently. Besides adopting face-to-face communication methods, people communicate using extra-verbal methods, similar to non-verbal communication but uniquely designed for an online environment.

One extra-verbal method in use is the deliberate use of capitalization. In online communication, typing in all capital letters is the equivalent of screaming, that is used to emphasize the emotionality of the messages, in place of "screaming caps". For example*, BEAUTIFUL? !!!, IT'S AWSOME!!!!!!, SOO HANDSOME WOW!!!!, YOU LOOK AMAZING!!!*

Internet users also strategically use punctuation to get others' attention and to emphasize their emotional messages online.

e.g.
  - BEAUTIFUL!!! Was this little creature in your yard? ... and which lens did you use???
  *- ******* NICE, NICE, and, NICE....*
  - love you millions. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

In the above utterances, by using different punctuation marks, the speakers emphasize their surprise, admiration and love.

Verbal descriptions of emotional states can provide quite precise information about the specific form of an emotion, such as anger, sadness, depression, or happiness that a person is experiencing. Thus, whether it is easier to commuicate in F2F or CMC depends on the person, character, etc. One thing is obvious, CMC makes it possible to find similar others who share specific interests or emotional needs, and it is as convenient to share emotions with these others as it is with friends in real life, resulting in the development of new close and intimate relationships in CMC. Moreover, the findings with regard to the success of internet suggest that the relative anonymity of CMC creates a safer environment for some people to share emotions.

As in the case of F2F communication CMC also is not devoid of the presence of negative emotions. One form of negative emotion expression in CMC that has been studied is uninhibited behavior, sometimes also referred to as "flaming". Flaming has been defined as the expression of strong opinions, accompanied by the display of negative, antagonistic emotions in the form of insulting, swearing, offending, or hostile comments (Glazer 2010).

Another means of expressing emotions through CMC is an interjection or the so-called inarticulate exclamation. In the utterance *Hoorrrraaayyy! The world is white again! After one day without snow on the ground I was getting positively depressed that I was not going to see it again for many months ahead... What a relief!* an extreme happiness and a state of relaxation is expressed, and in *Wow, beautifully done! Great job guys!* we see tones of surprise. According to some dictionaries, interjections can encode no more than an unspecified emotion, an emotion of any kind. For example, *LDOTEL* describes the English *oh* as "an interjection used to express an emotion of surprise, pain or desire", and Webster describes the English *ah* as "an exclamation, expressive of pain, surprise, pity, compassion, complaint, dislike, joy, exultation, etc. depending on the matter of utterance" (Wierzbicka 2003).

Other interjections that the netspeakers use repeatedly are *Yeah!!!!!!!* to express relief and excitement and *OOPs!!* to express remorse over a misunderstanding or missed deadline, etc. These interjections could have been inserted into a face-to-face conversation with the same effect as they had in the online context.

Of course, human emotions are not this simple. Each emotion can be accompanied by different types of feelings. Important as these modalities are, however, paralinguistic and non-verbal channels are insufficient for expressing the full range of human emotional experiences for several reasons. First, although non-verbal cues can indicate what general class of emotions a person is feeling, they typically do not provide detailed information about that

person's emotional state. By seeing that someone is crying, for instance, we might assume that s/he is sad; by the extent of sobbing we might even be able to infer the intensity of the sadness. But the tears in and off themselves provide no information about the particular experience of sadness. In the example adduced below cognitions go along with the sadness:
First off, shame on you for using a child in such a horrible situation to boost your "likes". Secondly, prayer isn't going to do anything for this child, donate some real money so the parents can pay the hospital bills people. Quit talking to yourself and thinking that helps people. And another thing, a like on fb is equal to a prayer!? That's pretty damn sad.

So cute - we had to bury a hedgehog in September - it was so sad. Sad indeed... But I hope you will find more of such friends, Allah bless him.

As we see verbal descriptions of emotional states can provide quite precise information about the specific form of an emotion, such as anger, depression, or happiness, that a person is experiencing. But interjections are not the only means to express emotiveness in the language.

All languages provide speakers with an array of verbal strategies for conveying emotions. In English, for example, we have an abundance of both literal (e.g., *irked, angry, furious*), and figurative (e.g., *flipping one's lid, blow a gasket*) expressions which can be used to describe a theoretically infinite number of emotional states (Ekman 2003).

Emotions are always situational and cognitive, that's why the choice of linguistic functions always depends on a situation, taking into consideration the fact that there exist at least two functions of expressing emotions: body language and the language of words. In the process of cognition of the world surrounding us, people evaluate the facts and the phenomena by expressing their own subjective attitude towards the reality, which, of course, finds its reflection in the language. These reflections are classified differently by different scholars. D. Apresyan differentiates such categories as predicates of emotion, as for example *to be sad*, metaphoric predicates of emotions as in the case of *stiffen*, explicit expressions of predicate emotions as in *sadness* or *to be sad*, implicit ones, including predicates of emotion with differentiated emotive syntactic expression, e.g. *fool*, and the emotive-expressives carrying emotive syntactic expression of an interjection like *ah, oh, oops*, etc. Words expressing emotions of these lexical types can also be expressed by such categories as nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

e.g.
***Beautiful!!** Love you girl.... You know you are one of my oldest and dearest friends..... God bless you...*

***Honestly** I didn't know what that means, i have to say because of copywrite laws I did take that from a dark looking gentlemen not too long ago.*
THANK YOU MY LOVELIES SOO MUCH!!!
Beauty!!!
Awesome! I love it and I am not even at a computer to hear it! Will watch when I am !!! I LOVE the Chipmanks! Thanks Hasmik
Truly magical...nice photography
Absolutely! Your family really helped me out!

As emotions are an indissoluble part of our lives, the investigation of expressive-emotive speech acts with a definite illocutionary aim can be of great interest.

In CMC we very often come across such emotions which contain an additional illocutionary purpose to express desire, compliment, commands or reproaches, warning. Speech acts of desire define positive atmosphere and create positive disposition and in most cases stipulate the effectiveness of the interrelation between the participants of communication.

> e.g.
> *Happy Birthday dear! Celebrate your life!!!*
> *Happy New Year oooooooooooooooooooooooo my dear, my faithful, my super puper, my gorgeous, my incredible, my unforgettable and sweet professor i wish all your dreams comes true, giant kisses and thanks for being in our lives!*

As for speech acts of compliment, it contains an emphatic purpose aiming at mentioning the positive features of the speaker.

> e.g.
> *- Wow, beautifully done! Great job.*
> *- Hellen u r so beaitful especially around choclate the best food in the world*
> *- How nice she was! There's freshness in her eyes... pretty and elegant! Missing you always.*

It is also worth mentioning that the speech acts of command or reproach serve to make the speaker act more decisively. In most cases this type is not regarded as emotive, but always realizes its pragmatic function:

> e.g.
> *- Dont you dare do that to your sister!*
> *- A foolish idea! Not at all funny!! He should be behaved to the same way!!*
> *- No sense of humors move on...that right there is awesome!!!*

In on-line communication the speech act of warning is made with the purpose of leading one's thoughts and actions to the desired direction. The level of emotiveness in this case depends on the subjective quality of the speaker, the situation and their attitude towards each other.

> e.g.
> *- I am a nurse and from experience I warn families to promote HOSPICE.....Comfort is going to be the ultimate last experience we have with our loved ones.........it allows us time to have "closure".....TIME...IN A PRODUCTIVE SINCABLE WAY......*

- This may be a joke but people really need to stop pictures like, especially dealing with children. Because its only giving the crazy people in this world ideas on how to deal with their children. Guaranteed this picture is gonna get to the wrong sick mind...

The intentional nature of the speech act of reproach stands for expressing dissatisfaction, disagreement or blaming. When using this emotive speech act the aim of the speaker is either to mention his attitude toward that situation or to show his/her dissatisfaction about that situation.

e.g.
- I'm still angry at you Whitney! I hate you cause I love you and always did!!!
- I hate this kind of things. That picture is over three years old, you stupids.

Reproach is used in both CMC and F2F interaction, and is considered to be a verbal act, in some cases it contains tone of demand. From this point, it is filled with negative emotivity (Bronnikova 2008).

Thus, it can be inferred from what has been mentioned that in communication we must take into consideration informative function as well as verbal activity, as it creates both positive and negative disposition.

Words are not emotions, they are representations of emotions. We do need to be careful because our words can mislead us about what our emotions are. The way we use words sometimes can be confusing. We each experience the same emotions, but we all experience them differently.

In conclusion, we can say that on the one hand emotions are reactions to matters that seem to be very important to our welfare, and on the other, emotions often begin so quickly that we are not aware of the processes in our mind that set them off. The expression of emotion is an inseparable part of any society and from this point of view the investigation of emotions in terms of different speech acts and other categories is of great importance. Expressing emotions, even negative emotions, is natural. Channeled appropriately, they help us move energy and take action. Only when they become habitual and destructive do they lose their positive power and become an obstacle to our well-being. Because of the various opinions on whether CMC is more or less personal than F2F communication, one must recognize that the personal or impersonal qualities of CMC are not inherent to the medium. And one more thing: the personality and circumstances of the users must also be taken into account when analyzing emotions either F2F or in CMC.

Notes:

1. Communication is a process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, feelings and emotions through speech, signals, writing, or behavior. In communication process, a sender encodes a message and then using a medium sends it to the receiver who

decodes the message and after processing information, sends back appropriate feedback/reply using a medium.

2. Chatgroups are on-going discussions on a particular topic in which computer users can take part in. The synchronous interaction takes place in real time (chats rooms) and the asynchronous in the postponed time (e.g. bulletin boards, newsgroups, mailing lists).

3. The word *short-lived* is, like the word *tall*, elliptic. *To be tall* is to be tall in comparison with some average or reference class. In affective science, *episode* is often used to refer to processes or occurrents of relatively short duration. The relevant maximum period of time seems to be the period in between two periods of dreamless sleep (Mulligan 1998).

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Հույզերի բառային և ոչ բառային դրսևորումները համացանցային հաղորդակցության մեջ

Հույզերը մարդկային կյանքում իրենց ուրույն տեղն ու դերն ունեն: Դրանք արտացոլվում են մարդու յուրաքանչյուր գործունեության ընթացքում, ինչն էլ արտահայտվում է նախ և առաջ լեզվում և լեզվի միջոցով ոչ միայն առերես, այլև համացանցային հաղորդակցության շրջանակներում: Հոդվածում կարևորել ենք հույզերի տարբեր դրսևորումները հենց այս երկու հաղորդակցական ոլորտներում` հաշվի առնելով հույզերի արտահայտման բառային և ոչ բառային առանձնահատկությունները: