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# THE SEMIOTIC USE OF EMOJIS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Naif Abdulhadi Albarzan

May 2023

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2023

# THE SEMIOTIC USE OF EMOJIS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION

By

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Approved March 17, 2023

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# ABSTRACT

## THE SEMIOTIC USE OF EMOJIS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION

By

Naif Abdulhadi Albarzan

May 2023

Dissertation supervised by Janie M. Harden Fritz

Despite the emergence of social media as the primary tool for communication in social and business settings, research on effectiveness of communication using of emojis is limited. This project seeks to bridge the gap in understanding the effectiveness of the use of emojis in marketing communication. In particular, the dissertation will focus on an interpretive exploration of the use of emojis in marketing communication as a semiotic that supports persuasion.

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# PROPOSAL

## **Introduction**

Social media is increasingly becoming an essential corporate communication platform for many organizations. Organizations worldwide have embraced and adapted social media for many different purposes, such as marketing communication, internal communication, and customer relations. It has become a reality that social media is elevating an organization's and its stakeholders' daily communication. Therefore, according to Gomez and Soto (2011), "social media is conceived today in the corporate world as a strategic communication partner, driving new and unique possibilities for organizations to engage stakeholders in conversations" (p. 157).

On the other hand, social media is an important tool for adolescents and young adults who spend more time interacting digitally than face-to-face (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). In face-to-face communication, non-verbal cues are critical aspects of communication as they provide contextual information that allows the audience to process and understand verbal messages, social interactions, and the sender's emotional state. In essence, it allows one to connect with the other more deeply than just the words involved in the communication process. Face-to-face communication also allows one to gain insights into the other party's emotional state and personality traits during the communication (Hall et al., 2019). However, in digital and text-based interactions, it is particularly difficult for the parties to share non-verbal cues, making it challenging for them to express themselves in such a way as to convince their listener.

The embracement of digital communication by almost everyone in society, to some point, can make someone grow numb to their emotions since the mode of communication does not allow one to express their emotions physically; or rather, their respondents, on the other end of the communication may not take the intensity of the communication serious, compared to when

the communicators are communicating face-to-face (Lee et al., 2021). The lack of non-verbal cues, body, and facial expressions in digital communication resulted in the installation of semiotics and emojis by app developers and implementation that, to some extent, has helped people express themselves non-verbally through their text messages. As digital communications became the primary communication tools in social and formal realms, emojis and other emotional signs were introduced to compensate for this deficiency (Gawne & McCulloch, 2019). Hall et al. (2019) conceptualized emojis as picture letters, images, or icons used to express ideas and emotions in text communication. Emojis are considered a substitution for non-verbal communication (NVC) cues in internet communication. Emojis are also used to express the tone of communication and thus allowing the readers to understand their intended meanings and emotions better.

According to a Brandwatch report, over half of all digital communication is estimated to include emojis (Agnew, 2018). Emojis that mimic facial expressions or emotions have become popular in digital communication. Emojis convey the emotions of the users and thus making it easier for them to connect and communicate effectively. According to Brandwatch, the use of emojis helps to humanize online communication and helps attract the audience's attention (Agnew, 2018). Mathews and Lee (2018) argued that the swift growth in the publicity of emojis represents a considerable opportunity for marketers to incorporate them into their marketing campaigns and to increase consumer engagement with their online marketing strategies. Using emojis provides marketers with efficient tools to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Regardless of the digital marketing goals, the message content "must be relevant to the consumer, and emojis seem to be one of the most relevant responses" (Mathews & Lee, 2018, p. 48).

Despite the commendable embracement of the use of emojis across social media platforms, there is limited research on their appropriate use and effectiveness, especially in marketing. According to Vidal et al. (2016), scholars question emoji's suitability and effectiveness in business communication despite the widespread adoption of emojis as communication tools. While emojis in personal communication are generally accepted, their adoption in corporate communication is debated among scholars and other stakeholders (Giannoulis & Wilde, 2019). There is limited understanding of emoji appropriateness and effectiveness in corporate communication and marketing (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Nevertheless, most organizations have adopted social media communication to establish deeper connections and persuade potential and existing customers to use their products. Therefore, there is a need for thorough evaluation and understanding to build insights into emoji effectiveness as applicable to formal communication.

This project explores using emojis for social media communication as semiotics that supports persuasion in marketing communication. The emojis communicate information about the senders' effects. In this regard, senders try to use different types of emojis in the quest to appear warm in their communication. While some scholars argue that emojis replace non-verbal cues in face-to-face communication, others have highlighted the differences. Riordan (2017) argues that emojis can be considered strategic compared to face-to-face communication, which is a spontaneous representation of the emotions and internal state of the sender. Alshenqeeti (2016) argues that emojis fill the need for adding non-verbal cues in digital communication about "the intent and emotion behind a message" (p. 55). Emojis have embodied a more universal approach regarding language, focusing on emotions and conveying a deeper intent than can be achieved

without using them in digital communication. Thus, emojis are considered non-verbal communication cues in internet communication (Azuma, 2012).

Another notable difference is that non-verbal cues are straightforward and universal in many cultures. The initial work by Ekman and Friesen (1971) identified the six facial expressions by the emotion labels that were chosen by most participants in their study for Facial Action Coding System (FACS). These facial expressions are anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Also, these facial expressions have been used to create emojis as digital copies to extend their use in internet communication. Therefore, the recipient can immediately decode the non-verbal cue and steer the communication so that they can persuade the target audience. When the same argument is applied to emojis, hundreds of expressions are without a standard mechanism to decode their meaning (Jaeger et al., 2019). This lack of standardized interpretation raises the question of whether emojis and non-verbal cues play a similar role in communication (Feldman et al., 2017). However, (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017) there is a consensus that congruent emojis enhance comprehension of text messages, especially in social communication.

According to Molina et al. (2019), emojis can facilitate assertive communication among people and, therefore, can elevate a significant role in corporate communication and positively affect reliable building communication with customers. Kavanagh (2019) addressed that emojis act as a fence to soften an utterance that the writer may consider too assertive or strong. Emoji usage is considered as a code of “the cultural value of modesty in communication” (Kavanagh, 2019, p. 70). Hence, emojis can be a great communication tool for creating market-company relationships in relational marketing. Therefore, organizations tend to adopt a language similar to that used by customers, which humanizes the exchanged communication (Molina et al., 2019).

So, questions emerge on whether emojis are similarly effective in marketing communication. One may ask, should marketers embrace emojis in their marketing communication and their effects as semiotics that support persuasion in marketing communication?

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the advent of social media as the primary tool for communication in social and business settings, research on its effectiveness is limited. However, some researchers studied the use of emojis within internal virtual communication within organizations. For instance, Molina et al. (2019) argue that the use of emojis for corporate communication is a form that tests the formality and the public perception of the organizations. This research explores the corporate use of emojis for official functions. The same case is argued by Yokio and Jordan (2022), who argue that using emojis for corporate functions is an enticing undertaking that cannot be fully explored and used now because organizations are unaware of the target audience's interpretational differences. To avoid confusion, most organizations have not extended much effort into trying out the facet, so they overly reduce interest (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). However, organizations' lack of extension is slowly fading, with most organizations realizing how vital emoji utilization is in customer engagement. Casado-Molina et al. (2022) nuance that emoji utilization in marketing drives customer engagement by more than 25%. According to Yokoi and Jordan (2022), there is a growing use of emojis in the virtual workplace as an "alternative to physical cues." Emojis help deliver messages meaningfully and express emotions through virtual communication between a work team (Yokoi & Jordan, 2022, p. 2).

Another study shows that social media has created new "language modes" (emojis and animated stickers). Hence, social media rhetoric transcends the limits of traditional marketing rhetoric. Significantly, these language moods intertwine with social media users. Therefore,

according to Ge and Gretzel (2018), corporate companies must adopt these language moods to “formulate, implement, and manage their rhetorical strategies in a manner that can stimulate desirable consumer responses in this new persuasion domain” (Ge & Gretzel, 2018, p. 2).

This project seeks to bridge the gap in understanding the effectiveness of the use of emojis in marketing communication. In particular, the dissertation will focus on an interpretive exploration of the use of emojis in marketing communication as a semiotic that supports persuasion. Understanding the effectiveness of emojis in marketing communication as a semiotic that supports persuasion will be explored through various questions that shape this research’s structure, such as: How have scholars explored semiotics in the context of internet marketing? How have scholars explored the philosophy of communication through semiotics? How do emojis function ‘semiotically’ in social media communication? What are the practical implications of the adoption of the use of emojis in internet marketing communication?

### **Significance of the Problem**

This research can be used to enhance the use of emojis in marketing communication campaigns to achieve marketing goals productively. Organizations should understand the various elements of marketing communication messages using emojis, which relate to emotions, to build a productive bond with their customers (Arya et al., 2018). According to Casado-Molina et al. (2022), organizations that use emojis in their marketing communication messages on Twitter gained more consumer engagement (Casado-Molina et al., 2022). Colorful and high visual emojis help in understanding the consumers’ thoughts. Emojis attract consumers’ attention and bring them closer to the product (Koçak, 2022).

Emojis impact consumers’ attitudes toward the brand’s products, which has helped improve the brand names of many manufacturing industries worldwide. Emojis make online

communication more passionate because they are subtitles for the tone of voice, gestures, and needs (Feldman et al., 2017). Implementing emojis is one of the effective strategies that need to be adopted by most businesses to improve personality and relatability to their brands.

Organizations will be able to humanize their brands and relate to their target audience through text messaging and social posts during advertisements using emojis and signs (Molina et al., 2019).

The use of emojis in marketing is a way of adding context to a message. For example, on Twitter, where there is a limited character count, one can use an emoji to convey their message to the target audience (Bai et al., 2019). Email marketing incorporates emojis to emphasize a particular point. In this case, the emoji does not replace text. Instead, the emoji transmits more information about the particular product, such as flight deals or seasonal discounts.

According to Hsieh and Tseng (2017), the fundamental aim of semiotics is to design a sign that relates to a certain meaning socially. According to Danesi (2017), the Italian semiotician stated semiotics is “concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign.” Hence, according to this semiotics definition, the sign stands for something else, including words and pictures (Eco, 1976). Interpreting something is “to treat it as a sign” (p. 7). Chandler (2001) mentioned, “Signs mediate all experience, and communication depends on them” (p. 3). Furthermore, Distel et al. (2022) argue that semiotics provides a framework to study and analyze signs’ function within a specific environment. Signs can be expressed as “anything that conveys meaning” (Distel et al., 2022, p. 4).

Many types of research will help marketers develop the best signs to deliver their messages depending on the business they are carrying out. Emojis have qualified as being part of semiotics resources and are typically used by people to express signs and communicate their



ideas about life (Casado-Molina et al., 2022). Emojis can be used to design a utility framework for approaching, interpreting, and analyzing the market of a particular area and thus can be used as a marketing strategy by organizations.

Structuralism in social semiotics looks at the meaning of the signs in the context they occur. Also, structuralism considers the linkages and derives meaning in these contexts to a more multimodal elaborate system (Hodge & Tripp, 1986). Identifying structuralism will help users of semiotics address concerns about new technology and media, coming up with ways to ensure they are not left behind (Özbölük & Kurtoglu, 2019). Dynamic elements of emojis have been harnessed by users, which has led to the creation of interactive icons with different layouts, colors, and flashing technologies, coming up with keyboards that use emojis in communication.

The various issues facing the debate as to whether or not to incommode emojis in marketing undertakings reveal a serious issue related to the understanding of emojis in this context (Arya et al., 2018). Despite the arguments, emojis are seen as an evolution of language, simpler and more effective in successfully conveying feelings, information, and various marketing drives. Right-wing scholars and experts who believe that emojis can be effectively integrated into marketing inputs put emojis on the step as a more modern and developed expressive approach to communication (Gawne et al., 2019). Indeed, all organizations would want to be more expressive in handling their marketing attributes, but how do the problems with the flexibility and applicability of the emojis take over from this point?

It is challenging to rely entirely on emojis because of the importance and effectiveness they convey. Not everyone can perceive technology and communication trends well (Feldman et al., 2017). Fieldman et al. (2017) argue that “as with words, a core function of emojis is to convey semantic information” (p. 978). Although emojis perform a variety of functions to

support reading, however, it is unknown whether the same “cognitive and perceptual processes” that support “the identification and integration of words” through reading also extend to emojis (Fieldman et al., 2020, p. 978). As such, some individuals may be poorly endowed in understanding emojis, leading to the idea that the “expressive” facet of the emojis might lead to the downfall of some marketing approaches. Still, a large portion of the world population is not well exposed to emojis and their use (Danesi, 2017). The misunderstanding facet of emojis comprises individuals between 35–70 years and above who embrace the largest market for most brands’ products. Therefore, approaching the marketing ventures purely out of “success” and “expressiveness” will lead to an extensive issue that may lead to a drop in the market share (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019).

## **Methodology**

This project will discuss the review of current practices and the use of semiotics in advertising to persuade individuals to buy products from particular brands. A basic and comparative analysis of semiotics will be done from publications initially written by famous scholars to demonstrate these practices and concepts (Bai et al., 2019). The analysis from reports of these scholars, which is an interpretive approach, provides a clear framework for understanding the various shortcomings and advantages of using semiotics and emojis as it suggests the techniques used in social marketing, not just during consumer advertisement (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). The comparative semiotics analysis reveals more information about the messages transmitted by signs during social marketing campaigns and advertisements. The information revealed by the comparative semiotics analysis can assess a campaign’s failure or success and provide various measures to improve emoji-marketing input campaigns in the future.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **What Is Semiotics?**

Across subjects and disciplines, semiotics has been differently inferred and described from various sources (Bai et al., 2019). Semiotics is fundamentally described as “the study of signs”; however, this attribution and description fall short in the applicational front for emojis. The attribution “study of signs” falls on inconclusive ground. According to Deeley (2011), the basics of semiotics infer the action and outcome of the used signs. Emojis tend to this conclusion, with their current effect on shaping the physical attributes of digital communication (Bai et al., 2019). The perception of emoji shaping fits the semiotic phenomenology of rhetoric as presented by C. S. Peirce. Peirce argues that the use of emojis falls in the category of communicology as experienced under urban semiotics. Thus, there is a need for an explicit description and analysis of the signs as a patterned human communication behavior that attaches and implies meaning, just like any other approach to communication (Distel et al., 2022). The study of semiotics takes a deep historical route evolving from the era of Greek philosophers such as Plato and Socrates. Moreover, the use of semiotics and the idea behind semiotics can be traced to Charles Pierce’s idea of semiotics that decrees their use as “the doctrine of the essential nature and fundamental varieties of possible semiosis” (Bellucci & Mouton, 2020, p. 7). The definition of emojis as signs consequently falls into the concepts of semiotics, creating further insight into their use for official functions. Thus, I will go into greater detail about semiotics as the study of signs later in chapter one.

### **Emojis and Marketing Communication Analysis**

Understanding the emojis surge is best understood to have gained momentum recently, inspired by the rise in web design and the elevated use of social media. The emoji surge is amid

the universality of verbal and written communication on these platforms (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). The need to convey feelings and emotions without the necessary hustle of typing has led to the decreeing of emojis as a compensatory universal language (Bai et al., 2019). Most significantly, periods after 2010 have seen a surge in the rapid adoption of emojis for day-to-day applications (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). The functions of emojis cannot be effectively quantified. Still, the need to stay trendy and utilize the changing semantics necessitates the need for an insight into the use of emojis for corporate purposes. Questions about whether using emojis for corporate purposes is wise, sustainable, and approachable for organizational marketing studies. An ambivalent outcome in the exploit, application, and adoption of emojis for official organizational marketing inputs has been achieved so far, with more organizations taking a careful stance toward this trend (Lee et al., 2021).

The increasingly important role of social media has led to increased organizations adopting it as a communication medium. The number of companies that use social media has been on the rise (Casado-Molina et al., 2022). According to Buchholz, the number of United States companies using social media to carry out their daily activities, like communicating important meetings with employees and stakeholders, has reached an all-time high at 91.2% (Buchholz, 2022). Social media is used by small businesses and the largest organizations to communicate and work online, connecting people worldwide to a single platform where the members can strategize their plans and objectives. Social media platforms started as a means of connecting people socially (Lee et al., 2021). However, social media quickly evolved as a powerful tool that allows organizations to connect with their existing and potential customers and stakeholders. As a result, millions of small, medium, and large corporations adopted social media platforms to connect with customers and other stakeholders.

The use of emojis in communication is related to the historical evolution of humankind. Similar attributes to the simple signs used for communicative purposes, such as hieroglyphics, hold concerning the current worldwide application of emojis for communication (Koçak, 2022). The 21st century, specifically, has seen the most considerable enhancements in symbols and approaches for communication through emoticons and emojis. Most organizations are now entirely reliant on the virtual marketing exploits of the virtual communication facets available. Therefore, the debate as to whether to use emojis will still rage on for years (Gawne et al., 2019). It is essential, however, to understand that even in non-official communicative engagements, emojis never have and will never be attributed as a conventional language. However, the expressive nature of the emojis holds the key to their versatility and utilization. Several scholars have identified the emoji surge as the new lingua franca for the modern/digital age (Danesi, 2017). Organizations thrive on trends, and emoji use is one of the key trends that can be exploited for these purposes.

The mere flooding of emojis on the platforms can be viewed as a way that has revolutionized communication, making it better. The question of extending this communicative outcome into corporate executions, however, is poorly executed (Lee et al., 2021). It is clear that the use of emojis has become an inseparable aspect of formal and informal communicative purposes. The norm has been consistently conspicuous in corporate emails and press releases from notable outlets over the years (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). The use of emojis has been, in this regard, the key to mass appreciation, acceptability, and growth, as exhibited by the 2015 acceptance as a word in the Oxford Dictionaries. Therefore, emojis can be used and applied from semiotic and philosophical fronts, standing for something with a multi or mono-layered meaning. In addition, emojis can be labeled as signs; creating a further question as to whether they are

effective and applicable within the presets of corporate executions (Ge & Gretzel, 2018). Given the exploration of the effectiveness and applicability, using emojis as a semiotic discourse for corporate functions remains to be explored.

Modern organizations have adopted professional communication strategies and personnel to manage their social media platforms (Feldman et al., 2017). Most organizations only employ specialized firms to manage their social media platforms. Social media platforms have become an integral aspect of an organization's communication and marketing efforts, making it imperative for scholars and other stakeholders to develop communication strategies for business marketing communication (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017).

Moreover, adopting digital communication means for marketing and communicating amongst themselves, it is essential that organizations, in collaboration with their service providers and other stakeholders, put into consideration the various ways in which they can make the communication more authentic, such that people can be able to express themselves even behind the screens non-verbally (Gawne et al., 2019). Emojis are considered a tool to enrich a conversation and give insights into the senders' emotions and feelings. There is a need for detailed research to gain insights into the effectiveness of emojis in communication in formal and business environments.

Today, marketers agree that social media is a critical aspect of communication that hugely impacts their business (Ge & Gretzel, 2018). Social media platforms allow businesses to connect with existing and potential customers within their vicinity and across borders. Further, communication and social media are valuable platforms for customer service (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Through the platforms, customers can follow up on details about the products, warrants, reviews, and user-related issues, make recommendations about future improved

features, and share their experiences. It is indeed a powerful tool that has the potential to spur growth and inspire potential customers to decide on a product.

Following the many benefits accrued to the use of social media platforms in marketing, distributing, and selling products and services, organizations are spending massive resources to brand their social media and maintain visibility (Koçak, 2022). According to Statista, in the United States, companies spend over \$18 billion annually on social media (Lee et al., 2021). Most organization players agree that social media has transformed or has the potential to positively transform their businesses, widening their scope and increasing profits, thus facilitating organizational growth and development (Lee et al., 2021).

Companies and small enterprises, among other business organizations, invest in developing communication strategies and brand management through social media (Hsieh et al., 2017). There are diverse approaches used in social media communication, such as interactive communication, updates, trending, the use of influencers, and sharing options. The choice of approach is determined by the intended objective of social media communication (Lee et al., 2021). Businesses design social media communication based on their intended outcomes and the targeted audience. Therefore, the model and style of communication will be determined by the targeted audience and the intended outcomes.

However, despite the apparent rise in the number of companies using social media as the primary communication platform, scholars and stakeholders raise concerns over its ineffectiveness in specific settings and the ideal strategies that suit the organizational needs. One of the major concerns is the limitation of social media platforms on people, barring them from expressing their emotions or being themselves while texting or giving their ideas about the concepts under discussion (Gomez et al., 2021). In response to the limitation that social media

platforms pose, the idea of using semiotics and emojis is encouraged among individuals as a way of helping them express themselves non-verbally through media platforms (Hall et al., 2019).

Perhaps the best approach to understanding the scope of emojis in marketing communication executions is through the proper analysis of various perspectives that pin this development to the target audiences. Gomez & Soto (2011) argue that emoji use in marketing undertakings can only be understood through a careful exploration of the ideals of marketing. After carefully exploring the ideals of marketing, the implications of emoji use as well as the attributes, will be analyzed to validate and account for their use in corporate marketing effectively. Among the qualities of marketing are effective communication, integration, and engagement (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Also, effective communication should be set in optimal simplicity, drawing the proper flexibility and emotions from the target market. The marketing communication approach should have a long-lasting effect on the target audience, continually leaving a mark that will not be erased through time and engagement.

The main attribute of the use of emojis is simplicity, flexibility, and the totality of better and more accessible communication. Whether firms are willing to embrace the use of emojis for their marketing processes completely and conventionally remains to be a debated factor (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). However, most experts in the field who have been consistent with cautioning against the use of emojis or their feasibility will need a reassessment of their ideology. As of 2019, emoji use has invaded the internet, with more than 3,019 emojis available in Unicode (Jaeger et al., 2019). Likewise, Instagram reported that more than half of the advertisements and messages found on their platforms utilized emojis.

According to communication analysts, most individuals opt for emojis for communication because they are simple, convenient, and conducive to emotional expressions for



communicative purposes (Koçak, 2022). Furthermore, most people use emojis because they help them express themselves, build their identity, and relax their moods (Gomez & Soto, 2011). The research inputs that have been extended in this field still leave a gap between the personal use of emojis and the corporate use regarding their impact. For instance, it is difficult to directly paste the effect of emojis on identity building at a personal level to organizational purposes. Here, it is understood that organizations arise from various intricately and diverse set traditions and cultures (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Organizational identity is thus in the balance regarding that people have a prior inscribed perspective. Additionally, it is not feasible to predict whether emoji use will change the outlook of the organizational identity rather than instigating an interactive front where the clients interact with the organization.

Emojis are used to begin, promote, and inspire interaction as contextualization cues. The outcome of emoji usage to inspire interaction as contextualization cues, means that two parties must be in constant communication and be aware of the previous and predictive text messages (Hall et al., 2019). A series of emoji-guided communication inspirations for marketing purposes may be misunderstood if it falls on new customers at the wrong phase. Despite being in the digital age where people are likely to interact with marketing messages, it is still difficult, even for the most renowned brands, to achieve total population outreach control (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). The phase or segment of the information that reaches a new market using emojis is utterly vulnerable to personal judgment. The firms are entirely out of control regarding customer responses at this phase, with the reactions or perceptions wholly exposed to the public that characterize emojis. For this reason, organizations are likely to conform to the fundamental communication approaches in their marketing executions despite the extremity of the prospective impact of emoji use for such purposes.

The entirety of using emojis for corporate marketing is deeply situated in multi-facets of effective communication, ranging from the need to establish an emotional tone, enhance contextual appropriateness, and cut the likelihood of creating a discourse of ambiguity. Additionally, the organizations have to effectively articulate the emoji use, considering that emojis create a front that weakens or intensifies speech acts (Giannoulis & Wilde, 2019). For weakness or intensification of speech acts that emojis create, organizations have to pay extra attention to detail in their marketing executions (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). Mostly, most organizations shy away from overly demanding marketing processes that do not have a clear sight of outcomes. However, using emojis in some sections and divisions of corporate marketing is highly effective. In-app customer interactions within these platforms have proved to be highly effective in emoji use (Hall et al., 2019). Here, using emojis to interact and communicate with customers and clients in a one-on communication enhances the interactions and promotes more robust communication geared towards better social relations.

Environments surrounding emoji use play an integral role in the outcomes of emoji adoption for corporate marketing. The facet is deeply implied, especially since emojis are prone to malicious use for deception. Further, organizational marketing results from various issues stitched together and normally conveyed through communication (Koçak, 2022). Emoji use may create a varying cross-populational variation in understanding, especially since the target audiences have different characteristics, contexts, and cultural backgrounds (Jaeger et al., 2019). Such factors imply that the effect of emojis in corporate marketing cannot be predicted. Most organizations are likely to shy away from marketing undertakings that are likely to create varying responses and reactions from their target audiences (Mehmet, 2014). Primarily, marketing

undertakings are meant to trigger a homogenous response from the target population, enhancing a uni-understanding that is consistent with the organizational culture and value set.

### **Chapter One Preview: Semiotic and Marketing Communication**

Internet marketing, which is distinct from online advertising, entails client interaction. Internet marketers connect with their clients, explaining every detail about the offered items. Internet marketing connection contrasts traditional online advertising, in which marketers or suppliers promote their products in the media and leave prospective customers to find them. Sometimes, online marketers talk with their existing and future consumers about how they may enhance their services (Lee et al., 2021). Through conversations, parties can develop loyal relationships. Internet marketing campaigns promote product awareness and represent a new generation of advertising with advantages such as self-selection, interaction, integration of numerous media, and marketing capabilities aimed at particular persons, nations, or cultures.

It is crucial that internet marketing may be tailored to certain cultural groups since several groups may respond differently to the same stimuli. In addition, cultural expressions, such as values, heroes, rituals, and symbols, provide internet marketers with information on how to plan efficient internet advertising campaigns (Koçak, 2022). In such circumstances, the success of advertisements is boosted by ensuring that they are consistent with the target audience's culture and use the proper symbols (These symbols, referred to as semiotics, make communication more efficient, particularly when there is some human barrier).

Internet marketing includes a varied community of customers and suppliers who are not always of the same race or culture (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Therefore, when dealing with such a diverse population, online marketers need to identify the various general or specific

symbols, semiotics, and emojis that can be used effectively by customers and themselves, thereby facilitating effective interactions, which are crucial for online marketing.

Symbols are a large category of significant and distinctive artifacts of a specific group or culture. Depending on a group's language and cultural background, distinct symbols might activate alternative schemas, especially in circumstances of diverse civilizations (Mehmet, 2014). Consumers' cultural background is considered during the development of internet advertising techniques since it permits customization of local cultures. Website designers can provide standardized and culture-specific resources, which localize marketing communication process (Mehmet, 2014). "Cultural congruence" becomes vital for good internet websites when culture is considered a significant design aspect (Lee et al., 2021). Thus, incorporating verbal and nonverbal material coherent with the culture enables site architectures that adhere to and support existing cultural notions.

Frequently, thoughts and attitudes towards certain things are culture-specific. Even though their meaning is easily accessible, the internet marketer does not grasp the extent of their potential truths until the cultural context is included (Jaeger et al., 2019). In addition, as indicated by the semiotic analysis of a specific piece of communication, a variety of potential consumer take-outs is beneficial since it enables one to notice messages that they may unwittingly be sending in addition to the message that they intend to convey.

According to the theory of semiotics, Lee et al., (2021), addressed that a comprehensive semiotic examination of the components and signals of website advertising reveals that members of various cultural groups produce meaning in different ways (Lee et al., 2021). The institution's semiotic research reveals that alternate visual categories are pertinent to distinct populations.

Since semiotic categories influence perception even when viewed subconsciously, the inclusion of proper semiotic components is crucial for the success of internet marketing.

In support of the importance of using semiotics, symbols, and emojis in internet marketing, Koçak (2022) argue that consumers and companies utilize emojis for other purposes, such as the creative substitution of terminology to aid in relationship management or to play a sociopragmatic role. Emoji utilization helps people express their feelings and emotions about a particular service. In regard to people expressing their feelings and emotions about a particular service, an ideal example, according to Bai et al. (2019), imagined a series of emojis used by customers to communicate topics relating to items in the food and beverage business, for example, tied to food or the area where drinks were commonly consumed.

Brands seek to discover the most important themes for developing ties with each stakeholder and modify brand communications appropriately to create higher interaction with their consumers and assist in the development of lasting relationships (Maruthi, 2019). Engagement may be described as a psychological condition that emerges as a consequence of customer or consumer interactions that are interactive and co-creative with certain brands, people, products, or events (Arya et al., 2018).

The customer engagement study demonstrates that social networks provide the optimal environment for customers' social and interactive activities. In turn, Arya et al. (2018), in their recent research, discovered that brand communications utilizing emojis in social media could create engagement. Having brand communications utilizing emojis in social media that can create engagement, allows a new way to engage and connect with the brand audience.

Marketing communications are generally set in various personal and collective outcomes. Among these, personal and collective outcomes include strict adherence to individual and

cultural diversity (Jaeger et al., 2019). Also, it is necessary for all the activities to be structured to the correct platform and medium of marketing communication. The latter, most significantly, affects the marketing outcomes greatly since different marketing undertakings specialize in varying platforms. Whether a uni-modal advertisement, for instance, can use emojis uniformly across different platforms remains a questionable idea (Koçak, 2022); its feasibility and applicability will thus be subject to scrutiny from the marketing fundamentals. Individual diversity is influenced by individual psychological outcomes and demographic differences among individuals. First, it is clear that individual gender differences instigate different reactions to the understanding and the use of emojis for communication (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Hence, organizations have to contend with the idea of individual diversity, preparing for a possible gender and psychological appreciation or repulse of their communication.

Based on gender differences, male and female individuals understand the functioning and the formulation of emojis similarly (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). However, females use emojis more regularly and positively than men. The male population, on the other hand, uses more emojis than their female counterparts (Maruthi, 2019). The male and female outcomes will likely instigate different gender perceptions in corporate marketing emoji use. Also, females perceive emojis as a more precise, familiar, and meaningful attribute, with their use in private exceeding their public use.

Therefore, it is likely that corporate communications convey that in-app customer interactions are likely to yield varying reactions and meanings with respect to gender (Jaeger et al., 2019). Males are likely to use emojis purely as a way of expressing their emotional side. Enhancing emotional expression is thus a balance for corporate marketing ventures. Men who use more affectionate emojis in communication are seen as more appropriate than women in a

similar setting (Mehmet, 2014). The outcome of emoji use and gender appropriateness in this manner creates an inconsistency in gender-emoji perceptions impacting the decision of the corporate executives to market using emojis.

Individual psychological differences rooted in emoji use must also be carefully assessed regarding emoji use for corporate functions (Lee et al., 2021). Various research has shown a close association between emoji use and the perception of psychological differences. Individuals' emoji frequency use, self-monitoring habits, and the ensuing extraversion are all interrelated outcomes. Factors such as the frequency and type of emoji use reflect individualistic emotional stability (Koçak, 2022). Whereas plain communication intakes without emojis can be applied with similar emotional and psychological outcomes in the target individuals, emoji use triggers different outcomes in the emotional outcomes of the individuals. Emoji-based personality tests have consistently revealed that emoji use does not correlate with openness and conscientiousness among the Big-Five personality traits (Maruthi, 2019). Mehmet (2014) argues that emoji use in communication triggers the facets of emotional stability, agreeableness, and extroversion. Organizations aiming to use emojis for corporate marketing are thus exposed to the reality of losing the former and gaining miles over the other facets.

Additionally, emojis are prone to evolution and modification to suit personal preferences. It is clear that several emoji combinations are coined to affect a personal cause and outcome in interpersonal communication (Lee et al., 2021). As a result, regarding the personal effect and outcome in interpersonal communication, this facet creates the character and identity of emoji use. For organizations, attaining this front from marketing inputs might prove to be difficult since marketing entails are not customizable.

Close to personal issues surrounding emoji use is cultural diversity. Cultural diversity is an integral part of marketing. Emoji use is an outcome of cultural conventions, linguistic approaches, and social contexts (Maruthi, 2019). Therefore, cultural impacts and backdrops change the perception, use, and appreciation of emojis just as it makes marketing choices. Marketing should be adherent to cultural practices and settings. Emojis are, in this context, supposed to be carefully used for marketing because some specific emoji uses are sourced and closely tied to the cultural background from which they occur (Jaeger et al., 2019). According to Hofstede's model of cultural dimension, countries and regions with high power distances use emojis to convey negative emotions more than positive ones. In this regard, Finnish and Indian users are likely to use emojis that are adherent and specific to their traditions. The use of non-verbal cues such as emojis to convey negative emotions is widely spread among Chinese users as compared to their Spanish counterparts (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Therefore, gaining a working emoji-based marketing input in the Chinese population might be completely impossible. As a result, corporates in particular regions are likely to have different approaches to emoji use.

Furthermore, marketing research on user experience in restaurants, for instance, revealed that people from different regions use emojis differently to convey corporate feedback (Maruthi, 2019). Such instances are clear, especially in spaces involving culturally tied practices like food reactions. The differences are evident not only across various nations alone but within international and even regional responses (Koçak, 2022). Thus, this outcome presents volatility and flexibility that may initiate extreme organizational strain. Studies have also revealed that national developmental factors such as the GDP and tax rates affect the rate and range of emoji use. Organizations in developed and developing countries will have different outcomes in the use of emojis for marketing purposes (Koçak, 2022). Linguistic differences are implied in different



emoji use with specific language environments impacting the totalities in the outcome of emoji use. Emoji use has revealed a very consistent cross-context sensitivity in language communication. For instance, English-speaking nations, like Britain and the U.S., show consistency in emoji use (Lee et al., 2021). However, the research on linguistic differences has not rated other languages, such as Spanish and Italian. Despite not having adequate research on all languages, it is clear that emoji use is dependent on the language speaking similarities or lack thereof.

It is also necessary to account for emoji use across different cultural settings, as evidenced by wide variations between different cultures. People's cultural orientation influences how they balance emojis, text, and stickers (Mehmet, 2014). Due to cultural orientation effects, marketing initiatives will likely take a different meaning and understanding depending on the emoji use. Teenagers within the Asian region are, for instance, linked to the innovative use of emojis to enhance the aesthetic, subcultural, and meaning of the messages. (Lee et al., 2021). Emoji use is also linked to outcomes in interpersonal relationships. Such instances imply that emojis will instigate different and multiple reactions when used for communication within corporate marketing initiatives.

Finally, the platform diversity of emoji uses and application affects the outcomes in emoji-marketing orientations (Koçak, 2022). Research has shown that emoji presentation and style on different operating system platforms alter user preferences and perceptions. Therefore, organizations have to adhere to the preferences made on emoji use that frequency across platforms (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Despite all emojis being Unicode, various developers like IOS, Microsoft, and Android have different emojis (Saputra & Santoso, 2021). Consequently, varying aesthetics govern how these platforms initiate and move marketing

initiatives. Differences in emoji platform display will likely lead to different meanings and sometimes instigate divergence and misunderstanding (Wagner et al., 2020). Typically, organizations would not instigate a marketing campaign that will trigger different reactions on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and other platforms. Emojis are also limited for other platforms, such as email, where their use is decreed as inappropriate.

In closing, in chapter one, I will discuss semiotics in depth, including its historical background, theories, and most influential scholars. Moreover, I will clarify the relationship between semiotics and emojis with integrated marketing communication. In addition, identifying the importance of studying emojis in marketing communication through semiotics.

## **Chapter Two Preview: Emojis and Non-verbal Communication**

Visual language has dominated the conversation of internet users on social media. Visual language is extensively utilized in expressing messages in emojis. In one of Danesi's (2017) investigations, she suggested that emojis are crucial in communication since they add efficacy to conversational communications, emphasizing meanings. Additionally, emojis are an iconic kind of semiotics used to communicate emotions (Vangelov, 2017). Emojis are visual cues made from typographic symbols to indicate feelings, emotions, or thoughts, which cannot be transmitted by a plain text message. Hence, emojis' purpose in social media communication continues by arguing that emojis are intended to compensate for the inability to convey speech tones, facial emotions, or gestures in textual communication (Danesi, 2017).

Emojis' semantic role is to convey connotation meanings in dialogue. It is not sufficient for users to express their sentiments and emotions via spoken language; they must also employ the visual language of emojis (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). And since online communicators cannot display their gestures, facial emotions, or physical reactions to the circumstances of the

dialogue, emojis enable them to at least convey these nonverbal indications. In such settings, emoji pragmatics aims to demonstrate the interaction between persona (users) in communication.

As discussed above, emojis can be swayed to convey feelings and enhance the understanding of a specific message. However, as a form of non-verbal communication, emojis are seeded with numerous ambiguities that may lead to misunderstanding and complications in the process of communication (Wagner et al., 2020). The misunderstood process outcome leads to ambiguities in communication, and organizations that embrace emoji use are also susceptible to the downside. Despite similar visual presentations, emojis have different interpretations of cultural, personal, and technical differences (Riordan, 2022). The specific meanings the organizations aim to express through emoji use may parallel their initiatives and communicative purposes.

Lastly, there are differences and disparities in understanding negative and positive emojis. For instance, negative emojis have a disparity of 26% among recipients at any given instance (Vangelov, 2017). The disparity might impair the organizational goals for the particular communication. The high rate of emoji misunderstanding leads to a realized ambiguity threat affecting information efficiency. The emoji misunderstanding will result in marketing discourses and disturb customer relations.

### **Chapter Three Preview: Non-verbal Communication and Semiotics**

How signs and symbols create meaning and are used as a means of communication during interaction with another person is both strategic and non-strategic (Wagner et al., 2020). Emojis are examples of semiotics and how they can be used to relay information in a non-verbal manner giving the recipient of the information an extensive meaning about the message conveyed.

According to earlier studies, emojis are a visual language that transmits emotions and ideas, which are nonverbal communication signs. Moreover, users have adopted emojis to represent some of the components of phrases in writing, saving individuals much work in signaling some components, which may be challenging to put in suitable locations inside a sentence or paragraph. Corresponding to (Suntwal et al., 2021), 49% of social media content consists of emojis, a more practical visual language used for communicating messages and expressing sentiments and ideas.

Emojis are utilized as non-verbal sign language and in face-to-face encounters, as well as for self-expression via emoji language in conversation messages, according to the study of the cited authors (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Social media conversations employ verbal and non-verbal texts (emojis) to communicate emotions and clarify the sender's intent. In the opinion of Yokoi (2022), the linguistic phenomena discovered indicate that emojis have become an integral element of text structure and serve as a visual language for transmitting emotions and ideas. Punctuation is no longer observed in social media conversational speech. However, the sentences conclude with an emoji as the last word. Punctuation as a sign to convey the structure and organization of a text, the sender's tone, pauses, and punctuation marks that aid the recipient in understanding messages via sentences have been merged with emojis. Emojis, a social media conversational text phenomenon, are incorporated into the sentence structure.

Therefore, the understanding and principles behind language semiotics decree emojis as a language (Saputra & Santoso, 2021) are seen as a way of faster message sending and reception, and the backdrop of misunderstandings is reduced in interpersonal contexts. Emojis were initially designed as a fun communication method, with current extremes pushing their understanding to further developments and combinations (Yokoi, 2022). Emojis are also

increasingly becoming universal, a facet that underpins this development as a prospect for the new age and subject to further developments. The grammatical and pragmatic aspects of emoji use proponent them as integral to the dynamics of universal communication.

#### **Chapter Four Preview: Non-verbal Communication and Marketing Communication (Advertising)**

Communication fosters interaction among individuals and comprises different symbols and ways of conveying the message to the target audience. Gestures, facial expressions, and printed elements are some of the elements conveyed during communication (Mehmet & Clarke, 2016). Non-verbal communication in today's society fosters only one way of communication, where advertisers convey and display their messages, but customer feedback is not directly available.

Looking at advertising signs gives one an understanding of what the advert is about and entices curiosity to know more about what the advert is trying to convey (Riordan, 2017). Non-verbal elements of communication in advertising represent complex meanings that may seem obvious to the customer, making it easy to perceive the meaning of the message. Also, non-verbal communication becomes important because customers perceive advertisement messages through words and non-verbal communication (Wagner et al., 2020). The use of emojis, a form of non-verbal communication, gives the entrepreneur a chance to communicate effectively with the target population because there is a distinction in the semiotics used; hence it is a good way of persuasion during marketing communication.

Most customers understand the brand and personality of products through images. Customers' acknowledgment makes it significant that images used in promotional messages be relevant and carefully selected. The image will help the customer create a positive attitude

towards the product, increasing the amount of money the customer is willing to spend to purchase the product; thus, images are an essential form of non-verbal communication in advertisements (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). In mass media, developing an adequate promotional message; is the key to success, as it gives the brand a competitive advantage. According to Vangelov (2017), it has become increasingly important to attract customers' attention without using words making non-verbal communication a critical component in interpersonal communication, containing about 93% of the content conveyed to the customer.

Signs and emojis are also forms of non-verbal communication used in advertisements. Actual signs are similar to what is represented in reality (Maruthi, 2019). A good example is the use of the red rose mark by French cosmetics Lancôme which manufactures make-up products. The mark represents affection and the ability to make ladies lovable and attractive after using make-up on themselves. According to Saputra and Santoso (2021), the use of the red rose sign is a form of advertisement strategy. The red rose sign has made the French cosmetics Lancôme brand famous, giving it a competitive advantage over other brands. The red rose representation by Lancôme exemplifies that nonverbal communication is crucial during advertisements as it incorporates everyone because it is not language biased as not all people speak the same language.

The implications of non-verbal communication in marketing initiatives are thus clear and well realized. Based on the specific input and initiative of the organization, non-verbal communication can be used to augment the desired brand perception (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Several research inputs have validated the efficacy of non-verbal communication, especially in video and static commercials (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). Given the various research, it has been realized that specific non-verbal communication inputs influence the

client's impression and the overall response to the evaluations and rating of a product or service under advertisement.

Non-verbal communication is a great way to complement the advertisement undertakings, especially for individuals who do not understand the language of advertisement well (Wagner et al., 2020). Therefore, organizations using non-verbal communication undertakings such as emojis gain more ground over the fact that the non-language understanding audience can decipher the message (Vangelov, 2017). However, the fact that emojis gain more ground will only stand in cases where the non-verbal communication undertaking is non-contradictory and clear. Non-verbal communication in advertisement undertakings has also been revealed to have more immense effects on the memory influence of the adverts than verbal communication inputs (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). According to various communication and psychology experts, non-verbal communication regarding static images such as emojis has enough elements to instigate accurate consumer impressions (Yokoi and Jordan, 2022). Emoji instigation of consumer impressions is notably true, especially in targeted advertisements in movie and television scenes and their long-lasting impact on the customer experience.

## CHAPTER ONE

### SEMIOTIC AND MARKETING COMMUNICATION: INTRODUCTION

Advertisements have taken a considerable leap of consistent, continual, and defining improvements in recent years. Wagner et al. (2020) argue that the 21st century has seen extensive technological improvements marked by wide variations in the normative executions of daily target audience outreach. It is safe to note that the cumulative changes in technology have not only affected the marketing and communications entail of organizations but have also diversified all other processes in production, management of products, and human resources management. In attribution to this understanding, Mehmet (2014) exemplifies that social media is the most significant influence on reaching customers; - potential and existing ones. The growth and advancement of social media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have seen extensive progress and improvement in the various factors of production, outreach, and even the elevated level of sharing new technologies and information.

The relevance of social media is extensively explored through various forms of advertisements and customer outreach campaigns. However, the considerable detail in the undertakings is that social media has taken over all forms of marketing, production, and product influence. Riordan (2017) argues that simplicity, efficiency, profitability, influence, appeal, and all other positive details in any product trajectory have all been vital aspects propelled by the elevated use of technology in the production process. Most importantly, Lee et al. (2021) noted that advertisements and marketing communication had been inherently affected by the proceeds of the growth of social media and technology, but what are the main details of this craze? Furthermore, how does social media influence the semiotic approach of marketing?



First, it is vital to outline the aspects of social media, its entails, and the accurate definition. However, social media is the culmination of all websites and applications that enable users to create and share content, as found by Gawne and McCulloch (2019). Likewise, social media denotes a platform where individuals can independently participate in social networking. The sharing of ideas and information through social media is entirely virtual. The reference “social media” is attained and referred to because all the platforms used for virtual communication are user-centric and structured to enable communal activity. Therefore, social media is a way that enhances and facilitates the totality of virtual human networks where webs of individuals enhance social connectivity.

Secondly, social media marketing is the application of social media websites, networks, and platforms to promote a service or product (Feldman et al., 2017). The terms associated with social media marketing combine other attributes and formerly used terms, such as e-marketing and digital marketing, which are now fading in popularity and reference due to increased social media use. For both research and practitioner purposes, social media marketing has become more common than ever (Gawne & McCulloch, 2019). However, the primary purpose of social media marketing has always been connecting with the audience and building attention to the brand, increasing sales, market presence, and driving website traffic.

The form of communication applied and favored in any social media platform is vital to the final influence and achievement of the intended goal. Given the vitality of influence, social media marketing is selectively used and applied by subject organizations about their needs, target market, and product type, among several other details, as analyzed by Danesi (2017). With several advantages and disadvantages, social media is gaining traction daily, cementing its position as a relevant source of clients, loyalty, and market control. Creating a strategy for

marketing is the first step in any marketing process. A clear strategy per platform utilized is always effective when acceded with the correct level of consistency. Chandler (2001) fronts that the content used in the entire marketing program must be engaging and interesting. Finally, among several other details, consistent adjustments are applied through tracking and analyzing the ensuing metrics, customer feedback, and the outcomes in market dynamics (Feldman et al., 2017). The need to stay afloat in the market operations is the most incredible drive to adjust the processes and engagements as per the customers' needs. Thus, it becomes necessary to use various forms of communication, giving rise to ideas like semiotics used in marketing communication.

Semiotics refers to the systematic study of sign processes and meaning marking. Semiosis is, on the other hand, any activity, process, or conduct that entails using signs. Casado-Molina et al. (2022) explain that a sign is defined as anything or any property that leads to the communication of something, usually denoted as meaning. The sign's interpreter (or the intended receiver) is generally in charge of interpreting the sign's meaning. Thus, the study of how meaning is created from signs, symbols, and signification builds the meaning and attribution of semiotics, as extended in Feldman et al. (2017). The study is, however, necessary, linked to what the details, properties, or symbols mean and not what they are.

Furthermore, a simplified understanding of semiotics refers to using all symbolic language in communication. Semiotics in marketing communication may entail attributes like signs, gestures, and logos (Hall et al., 2019). The vital entail of the use of semiotics in communication is that the communication method takes any other form apart from linguistic communication. Semiotics is derived from the Greek word *sēmeiōtikós*, which refers to interpreting signs (Koçak, 2022). The most explicit and daily applications of semiotics include

traffic signs, emojis, and emoticons. Also, logos used by all brands, despite their stature and market control, detail the real-life applications of semiotics.

In marketing communication, the concept of semiotics relies on the explanations of subconscious elements at work (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). The conception of semiotics is enhanced and integrated by the elevated use and application of brand communications and the relevant advancements in market research. Semiotics is not only a way of communication, but through leveraging the ever-growing power and influence of social media, it has created the relevant introspect in a subtle way that organizations can use to “subtly communicate with their customers” (Jaeger et al., 2019, p. 4). With semiotics and their relevance in marketing communication rising, it is only effective that the relevant organizations understand how to effectively use the various components of semiotics in marketing communication for their best interest (Gomez & Soto, 2011). First, the subject organizations have to account for the analysis of verbal signs, visual signs, and symbolic messages. Thus, the totality of marketing communication in semiotics infers to and accounts for what the target market sees, hears, and interprets.

According to Deely (2011), it is argued that there are various insights into understanding the use, application, and even the sustenance of semiotic language and its entails in marketing. Using semiotics in marketing reveals several issues that do not contemplate the service providers alone but transcend the entire industry. For instance, how does an organization or an outfit effectively create influence using semiotics? Are semiotic entails of communication language in marketing supposed to be independently applied? Are there specific details that are supposed to be semiotic-marketing language ingrained? Are these issues uniformed across marketing, or do they conform to an industry or a specific field?

However, the biggest issue with using semiotics in daily life, especially in marketing, is the worry if *embracing any form of semiotic advertisement and marketing can create the necessary impression, persuasion, and influence* in the target market (Wagner et al., 2020). It is more complicated, even as the necessary research on the use, effects, and application of semiotic language in marketing is severely limited. Fewer researchers have actively studied semiotics and linked their use to marketing communication (Riordan, 2017). Organizations have to gamble between various aspects of marketing, such as formality, public perceptions, traditions, and culture (Hall et al., 2019). Interpretational differences among different populations are vital to the complete swing application of semiotic language like emojis in marketing (Vangelov, 2017). Wary of the effects that may arise, especially with extensive social media use, most organizations are hesitant to integrate semiotics into their marketing fully.

Whether it remains a profitable venture for organizational needs, semiotic marketing language is slowly on the rise to see its full potential. Age differences and gaps between the tech-savvy and earlier generations are slowly closing in (Wagner et al., 2020). Most organizations' target market is now comprised of individuals within an age bracket that fully understands the dynamics and entails of social media. Social media marketing is now on the rise as the most effective approach, and according to Wagner et al. (2020), earlier stereotypes of the "immaturity" and "non-officiality" of modern semiotics like emojis are being replaced with total embracement. The research nuances that approach like emoji use in marketing elevate customer integration and engagement. Saputra & Santoso. (2021), estimate that emoji use, for instance, raises customer integration by over 25% (Saputra & Santoso, 2021). The result of emojis as alternative physical cues helps detail a message within the specific uniqueness of the marketing details resulting in the expression of self-integrative and explorative understanding.

Furthermore, there are inherent gaps in understanding social media language modes. In the case of understanding language modes, the rhetoric of social media marketing heavily transcends and parallels traditional advertisement inputs (Mehmet, 2014). Using semiotic language is at the heart of social media advertisement, and care should be taken in the choice, implementation, management, and inception of various online marketing semiotics (Mehmet & Clarke, 2016). The key is to create a satisfying and intended ending that can stimulate the view for attributes and outcomes in customer reactions.

Due to the extensiveness and development of semiotic applications in marketing, there is a need to connect the how, when, who, and how in semiotic marketing language (Riordan, 2017). The reality of the development of semiotic applications confounds the need to offer practicability in understanding the effective, efficient, and sustainable use of emojis and other semiotic languages in marketing. The marketing research will focus on semiotic language use in all forms due to marketing sensitivity and the need for resounding and effective marketing outcomes (Özbölük & Kurtoğlu, 2019). However, understanding the semiotic application of various marketing inputs comprising semiotic details in various contexts is essential. Moreover, it is vital to understand how the relevant emojis are applied in marketing to carry the semiotic logic alongside the implications associated with adopting and using various semiotic attributes in marketing.

### **How and to What Extent Is Semiotic Language Marketing Significant?**

The primary motive behind any marketing incentive and undertaking is the dire need to reach as many people as possible, create a positive impression, and, most importantly, elevate the sales and profitability of any business venture (Vangelov, 2017). Such is an extremely sensitive undertaking that marketing takes up a considerably enormous chunk of corporate funds.

Marketing communication is seeded in emotional persuasion intended to leave the desired impression and influence the customers. Over time, the bond created should be consistently irrigated through effective and outstanding marketing moves (Yokoi & Jordan, 2021). Simplicity and high-influence marketing are then used in this stage, and the basic features of semiotics prove them the right fit for marketing.

Customers are, thus, more attracted, bonded, and directed to the product's specific improvements and details over time. Semiotic marketing language is an effective way of earning the correct traction for futuristic marketing because they are simple, dictates meaning, directs attention, and is inherently widespread (Saputra & Santoso, 2021). However, the critical details in semiotic marketing language are related to issues with applicability based on the difference in culture, individual perceptions, structuralism, and other complex details in marketing. Thus, weighing on the insufficient research on the impact of semiotics in marketing, it is only effective for keen analysis of various concepts of this detail. Most importantly, a conclusive proposition should be made on whether or not to embrace semiotics in marketing.

### **Part One: Historical Background of Semiotics**

The academic and philosophical historical attribution and understanding of semiotics trace back to the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Semiotics was described as “the study of life signs within society” (Pierce, 2003, p. 2). The contents reveal a link to one of the founders of semiology, Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist who was heavily linked with the use of this description. Despite these early attributions of meaning and understanding in semiology, a more profound, confounding, and elaborate meaning of the concept was mentioned in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, notations and mentions of semiology are linked to literary works by prominent individuals like the English philosopher John Locke (Pierce, 2003). The

independent works by Saussure and other philosophers like C. S. Peirce led to the attainment of the concept's meaning, output, and understanding in these early periods.

Peirce's work in the field and understanding semiotics was interred in a seminal approach. Peirce is famed for heavily relying on logic and pragmatism to elucidate the outlooks of semiotics. According to Peirce, a sign was the center of semiotics which, according to his description, means "something which stands to somebody for something" (Byrne, 2017, p. 9). Peirce then categorized signs into three main domains, which he viewed as the fundamental entities to sign language. First, Peirce analyzed icons, a form of sign language that bears a close and, sometimes, accurate resemblance to its intended referent. The icon entail is especially true in semiotics, such as a road sign showing a bear or a sharp decline. Next, Peirce described an index, a semiology feature associated with its referent. For instance, smoke and fire or the existence of clouds signify rain. Finally, Peirce described the concept of a symbol related to its referent only through the convention. Peirce attributed words and their connections to the intended referents in this stage. Words can, for instance, be used to reflect meaning at traffic stops (Cobley, 2016). One of the most vital details in Peirce's explanation of semiotics is that no sign can ever have a definite meaning. Peirce's explanation of the argument that signs do not have a definite meaning was ingrained in the fact that meaning had to be continuously qualified.

On the other hand, Saussure explained sign language as a sign system. Saussure used the proceeds of his work, concepts, and methods to link sign systems across languages. Of the most basic concepts is Saussure's explanation of the inseparable components of a sign (Noth, 1990). Saussure explained that a *signifier* is an attribute and where language is seen as a set of speech marks or sounds on a page (Noth, 1990). The next concept, the *signified*, explains the concept, idea, or intention behind a given sign. Saussure also distinguished the concept of *parole*, which is

the actual individual utterances from langue, an underlying “underlying system of conventions that makes such utterances understandable; it is this underlying langue that most interests semioticians” (Cobley, 2016, p. 13). Perhaps Saussure’s interest in the structure underlying the use of particular signs created the link between semiotics and the methods of structuralism.

Structuralism details were meant to analyze the relations between the structures associated with various entails in semiotics. Saussure’s theories were fundamental to semiology as they were to the concept of structuralism. Furthermore, Saussure ideas and works were borrowed and ingrained into the later executions of structural linguistics and poststructuralism (Houser, 2020). In linguistics, structuralism implies the totality of entails that decree language as an entity of a “self-contained relational structure, the elements of which derive their existence and their value from their distribution and oppositions in texts or discourse” (Byrne, 2017, p. 4). Interestingly, the linguistic principle and understanding of structuralism implications were first coined by Saussure.

Although the highly diverse outcomes in later developments and executions of structuralism, basic ideas such as intension and extension were widely used across various platforms, and they simplified the field of semiotics. Intension was a term coined to indicate the internal concept of a term that adds up to its formal definition (Houser, 2020). On the other hand, the term extension refers to the range of applicability associated with naming the particular objects that a specific name denotes. For instance, the term “plane” can substantially be viewed as “a medium of movement in air” (Peirce, 2003, p. 12). Its extension can, however, be implicated and expanded to mean cargo planes, passenger planes, and combat planes. However, care should be taken to understand that the distinction between extension and intension lies in the understanding that separates the principles of denotation and connotation.



It is widely understood and proposed that Augustine (c. 397 AD) initiated the awareness of semiotics. Augustine's era was marked by the entails and inputs from John Locke, and later, the influence was deepened by John Locke. Shortly, Peirce (analyzed above) discovered the categories of semiotics, idealism, and realism. According to the initial attribution by Augustine, a signum is a tool or front that can be used to carry out various levels and types of communication (Pierce, 2003). It is vital to note that Augustine's view and reasoning oddly resonated with the day's confounding perceptions. It is understood that the era (397 AD) was dominated by extremes of Greek and ancient Roman philosophy (Pierce, 2003). Famous works by other philosophers like Aristotle in Boethius, among other many works, affirm the tendency to favor Augustine's opinion about the unity of signs. Augustine falls among the stoics who believed in the theory of signs. However, only a handful of these individuals openly acknowledged Augustine as the founder and inceptor of semiotics (Byrne, 2017). Philosophers like Lambertini and Marmo were among the first and few individuals to acknowledge that Augustine was responsible for the general doctrine of signs.

The development of semiotic awareness was not fully embraced throughout history. Most philosophers were subjected to extreme rejections, rethinking, and reevaluation. For instance, William of Ockham vehemently rejected the various ideas of all logicians who existed pre and during his era (Byrne, 2017). However, William is widely famed for having accepted Augustine's definition. Here, William acceded to the definition that each sign in semiotics is seen as a medium, vehicle, or connection to something immortal (Noth, 1990). William's basis of rejection of the ideas of most logicians was related to the fact that external signs, such as words and signs, and the inner approach to understanding these concepts were seen as part of the sign's perspective.

William leveraged the long-established rejection of the relationship between the perceived meaning and sign to explain his reasoning. William's entrails were explained through the concept of *signum naturale*. Further down the history line, Petrus d'Ailly (c.1372) created the understanding of the difference between the internal and external way of viewing society in concepts commonly known as *signal formalia* and *signa instrumental*, respectively (Cobley, 2016). William further argued that the controversy of semiotics was inceptioned in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, William nuances that the key issue was whether or not to attribute signs to what can be felt (Deely, 2011). It is more important, however, to consider the impact and role of words and thoughts from the perspective of the sign doctrine.

Another important historical milestone and association of the understanding of semiotics were set in the Iberian connection. The understanding of the semiotics attribute began with Dominicus Soto's rejection of the relationship between the presence of an active function alongside a sign (Cobley, 2016); this argument led to the creation of a new problem: how did the dependence on objectivity relate to the functioning of the signs? Owing to this viewpoint, the function of the sign was seen as extremely limited regarding what can be seen and experienced directly as an object. True to the ancient understandings, the sign is still seen as a Janus mask because of its duality in faces (Peirce, 2003). Thus, using the duality-in-faces approach implies that a sign is relative to the relevant cognitive powers of the involved individuals on one side with the contents on the other. Therefore, signs can be understood to function from within the cognitive powers of an organism and signs that are connected to influence those forces from without.

*A Theory of Semiotics by Umberto Eco*

The current understanding and position of semiotics are still viewed as an incredibly unexpected development within today's society. The development is seeded in the traditional entails and entrenchments of disciplinary specialization (Cobley, 2016). Thus, there is a need to reexamine the relationship of modern thought in its mainstream development, especially in the Latin times (more significantly in the Iberian Latin development) (Eco, 1976). Such is the reason to redress these outcomes using recent theoretical executions and understandings to depict the differences entailed in both aspects. For instance, *A Theory of Semiotics* by Umberto Eco (1976) critiques the meaning and details of signs or signals where they are determined by the objects they refer to (Noth, 1990). The objects, in this case, may be the events or things that the signals or signs reference. *A Theory of Semiotics* mainly rejects the idea that "iconic" signs must bear likenesses of their objects.

Eco borrows from the Peircean attribution of unlimited semiosis to explain the proceeds of the theory of Semiotics. It is vital, however, to note that unlimited semiosis refers to the signs and how they refer to other signs, with both of them open to infinite interpretations. Eco capitalized on this loophole of unlimited semiosis to seek a middle ground between univocal meaning and infinite meanings (Eco, 1976). Semiosis, according to Eco, is a meaning incepted by the reference to the reference to various conditions and situations of possibility (Cobley, 2016). Further, Eco explains that a univocal code involves translating one system's elements that are transposed into another system. One of the best explanations for this scenario is the Morse, where systematic dashes and codes are crafted to correspond to the alphabetic letters.

The interest in semiotics from Eco is concentrated on the need to create a detailed understanding of the language-parole language constitution. According to the theory of

semiotics, the code corresponds to the structure of the language and the “expression plane” (Byrne, 2017). Thus, the outcomes in the code attribution align with the “content plane,” giving rise to the S-code, the equivalent of the organization of elements in parole (Houser, 2020). It is crucial, however, to note that S-codes may take a denotative or connotative meaning in a sentence (Eco, 1976). The connotative meaning implies the beneath detection of another code, while the denotative meaning involves the direct meaning implied from such a sentence or statement.

Eco further proponent that the meaning of a sign-vehicle (the word associated) must be treated as independently as the referential fallacy, which is, in this case, viewed as the supposed real object. The codes used in this case are attributed to various and diverse cultural and social contexts. An individualistic response to a particular sign vehicle is a source of information imparted in particularity to a specific social or cultural context (Noth, 1990). It is safe to conclude from this series of Eco’s arguments that *signs can take on a multiplicity* of meanings. Each of the different meanings reached upon and agreed upon by a particular user is crafted per the individual’s competence. Signs do not only stand for a detail, object, or something. Rather, Eco nuances that these signs must be interpreted (Cobley, 2016). Additionally, Eco tries to the proponent that language as a code’s efficiency is reliant and equivalent to the outcomes in the competence of the user, giving rise to the idea of a dynamic understanding of various codes.

Eco also sought to explain linguistic creativity and its relation to semiotics by using the Q-model of the code (Deely, 2011). The Q-model nuances a “system can be added to, and that further data may be inferred from incomplete data” (Deely, 2011, p. 7). The modification of the code is, therefore, dependent on the competence of the language user as opposed to the attribute of being defined or determined by the code itself. Owing to this explanation, Eco’s theory can

further be broken down into a sign of production that analyzes the effects and outcomes of “Ratio Facilis” and the “Ratio Difficilis,” where the latter accounts for the elements that can easily be assimilated by the code (Byrne, 2017). The ratio difficilis, on the other hand, offers reference to the components that the Peircean icon cannot quickly assimilate. Instead, the sign of the object is motivated and propelled by the nature of the project itself.

To conclude, the semiotics theory of Eco connects even the most motivated signs to their relevant conventional elements. In the connection approach, any outside sign is gradually conventionalized at the onset of familiarity due to increased usage (Deely, 2011). Eco’s theory of sign production includes physical labor as the effort required to produce the sign. Also, recognition is observed, as the event or object must be identified as expressing sign-related content (Cobley, 2016). Next, Eco suggests that the sign production outline must account for ostension, where the object must be symptomatic or exemplary to the totality of the ideas and acts. The replica aspect is the following detail where Eco directs that more difficult signs, such as mathematical symbols and musical notations, gain conventionalization (Byrne, 2017). Finally, the Eco model presents an invention where a new sign, unavailable in the convention or code, is gained; thus, the Eco model is the basis of creativity. Owing to the set of executions and details in the Eco model, it is clear that the key emphasis is on the need for endless creativity and the perpetual adaptability nature of the language and code itself.

#### *The Archaeology of Knowledge: Michel Foucault*

According to Michel Foucault (2013), semiotics is a theory of signs and beings whose identity is not an idea in itself but rather to represent or signify something else. Foucault’s Thomistic intentionality theory represents a similar idea and perceptions when applied to the realistic theory of knowledge (Houser, 2020). Furthermore, Foucault’s theory of moral

subjectivity comprises a latent semiotic theory of self-knowledge. According to Foucault, the formation of a moral subject can be interpreted as a sign system and given the technology entity, can be placed in a broader context of non-semiotic and semiotic paths of knowledge (Al-Daghistani, 2016). The in-between space of binaries emerges as a vital methodological element in self-knowledge, and a semiotic argument ensures the epistemological role of culture in the outcomes of language modeling.

Foucault argues that signs are definable and attributed to an individual where one can assign meaning and relevance in more than two domains (Cobley, 2016). Signs, according to Foucault, relate to the exact nature of things and their introduction in various scenarios. Foucault further proponent that God has enriched nature with signs, and as figures to be deciphered, they are subject to given interpretations (Houser, 2020). According to Foucault, the antiquity of the people in sign interpretations gives rise to the hermeneutics of erudition and divination in a broad space.

Furthermore, Foucault believes that the truth of signs in nature or on parchment is tied to an archaic similarity, just like God's institution. Thus, the truth of signs further proposes no distinction between the accepted and the observed, as it is in the signs and words (Houser, 2020). Consequently, Foucault seeks to argue that signs and words can be subtly interchanged between and in accepted verifiable authority or tradition (Byrne, 2017). Foucault's argument makes it easier to connect between the availability of a sign, the distinctions that make it a sign, and the range of instituted signs. In addition, Foucault's view of signs makes it easy to relate the signs to the laws of their concatenation.

Most ancient Arabic studies affirm that early Arabs were aware of the science of semiology. However, the relevant studies further elucidate that the references attributed to the early knowledge were scattered in various sciences, including rhetoric, grammar, mysticism, and interpretation, among several other details. In Arabic heritage, the term semiotics, as used and viewed, derives from “Seemia” in the Arabic dictionary. The word “Seemia” is indicated by the verb mark (سام), which is centered in the saying “the man marked his horse; that is, he made a mark on the horse with a specific sign that makes it clear to everyone that this horse belongs to this man” (Al-Jāhiz, 1956, p. 35). This definition gives a front to the lexical definition that assigns semiotics the meaning of a sign or mark. Thus, the definition proves semiotics is an accurate convergence of the concepts and terminologies of semiotics in Arabs and other nations.

The term “semiotics” is mentioned in several phrases with vast inferences in the Qur’an. In the Qur’an 48:29, the phrase “سَيِّمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ” is mentioned, and it implies the marks on the faces sourced from the traces of prostration (Ibn Kathir, 1997). Furthermore, Alhilali and Khan argue that the mark of their faith is “on their faces from the traces of their prostration during prayers” (Jāhiz and Mulhim, 2002). Allah, which is the Arabic translation of God, further infers to the concept in Qur’an 7:48 (وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْأَعْرَافِ رَجُلًا يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ). This Quranic phrase (7:48), according to Ghali (2002), implies the meaning of “and the companions of the battlements will call out to men they recognize by their mark. The companions will say, “In no way has your gathering (like your amassing, and your multitude) availed you, neither whatever you used to wax proud of” (Ghali, 2002, p.11). These two inferences can consequently be used to create a correlation between the English and Arabic definitions of semiotics, creating the attribution of the same significance and understanding.

According to the Islamic philosophical heritage, semiotics is regarded as a discipline with vast applications. In the book *Al-Dur Al-Nazim in The Conditions of Science and Education*, Avicenna (Ibn Sina) argues that semiotics is meant to understand the forces in the interest of a global mix that propels the need for a strange action (Laalawi, 2013). The understanding of semiotics attribution imparts the impression that the world is filled with signs that are incepted and operate in strong meaning thus, acting like the guides for an action based on the meanings held.

The Western influence on the theoretical and philosophical understanding of semiotics does not strip Arab scholars' belief that Al-Jāhiz is an integral figure in semiotics (Montgomery, 2013). The understanding that Al-Jāhiz is an integral figure in semiotics is gained, especially since he presented semiotics several decades before Ferdinand de Saussure in 845 AD. In fact, Laalawi (2013) notably relates the genesis of semiotics to Arabic and Greek thinkers. Fatiha's claims point out that Al-Jāhiz (1956) explained the meaning of semiology in the book *Albayan WaAltabiyn (The Book of Eloquence and Demonstration)*. Al-Jāhiz is also credited for further explanations in the book *The Book of Eloquence and Demonstration*, where he detailed the features of semiology and explained it as "a comprehensive name for everything that revealed the mask of meaning to you" (Al-Jāhiz, 1956). Al-Jāhiz's definition created the perception that signs derive meanings in both verbal and non-verbal situations. Pointing with various body organs such as limbs, eyebrows, and other body parts among people may also be used to disguise meaning from others.

## **Part Two: Integrated Marketing Communication**

### *What Is Integrated Marketing Communication?*



The marketing scene in the modern business world is changing. Several inputs, advancements, and entails all relate to the viewed for ending in marketing demands of various firms. For this reason, the developments have led to a process that unifies the existing marketing communication elements and entails an approach referred to as integrated marketing communication (IMC) (Widjaja, 2022). IMC combines the attributes of public relations, social media, business development principles, audience analytics, and advertising: factors that combine to create consistency in marketing across various and distinct social media platforms. IMC allows individual forms and organizations to offer and detail seamless consumer experiences related to a specific good or service (Meha et al., 2022). IMC is also responsible for creating the necessary environment for optimizing the relationship between organizational brand image and the customers. The relationships with stakeholders are also improved and enhanced through effective IMC undertakings.

The accurate understanding of IMC takes many forms, and as analyzed by Diaconu et al. (2016), it is the most vital detail due to increased communications in modern business undertakings. Diaconu et al. (2016) further proponent that organizations “must constantly communicate with current and potential stakeholders, to offer high quality products and / or services, to establish attractive prices and to facilitate their access to customers” (p. 5). Most importantly, Diaconu et al. (2016) borrow from Kitchen and Schultz (2009)’s argument that IMC should be extensive and ever-changing. The dynamism in IMC is explained per Schultz’s initial perception that it should account for not only the needs and interests of consumers but also the integration of the value of the organizations. Furthermore, Diaconu et al. (2016) present the perception of IMC’s importance, especially since the market is already saturated with products

and services. Thus, precise IMC executions are not only efficient in transmitting rational but also emotional values that are integral in making firms stand out.

Accordingly, Kitchen and Burgmann (2010) relate the historical details of IMC and the current importance that they hold in the marketplace. Kitchen and Burgmann (2010) point out that the concept of IMC and “the attempt to present a consistent message across the available promotional mix elements has always been important to successful organizations, even during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century” (p. 3). Kitchen and Burgmann (2010) further state that the multiplication of the existing media channels during the mid-century has imparted marketing and holds a special responsibility for the uniqueness of marketing processes (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010).

As a norm, professionals in the various fields of IMC may seek to use their IMC-related backgrounds to pursue employment by leveraging their skills to the organizational demands in different fields (Kitchen & Tourky, 2022). Such fields can be considered as digital media, social media marketing, journalism, public relations, public research and consultations, radio and television, and entertainment, among several other related fields. Thus, IMC is an outcome of multi-disciplinary engagements combining traditional and modern media executions to detail the best outcome in marketing (Meehan et al., 2021). The outcome leads to the holistic detail of marketing that emphasizes the existing marketing policy in the context of organizational maintenance needs and business aims set for business/organizational development (Kitchen & Tourky, 2022). The effectiveness of IMC is sourced from the fact that it integrates all communicational entities (marketing, public relations, analytics, social media, and many more) into simpler disciplines that are more efficient and powerful and creates the relevance of a centric and concentrated approach.

Using IMC theories and strategies, various creations, and integrations of brand managers, and managing public relations directors and media professionals can be an effective way to incept, execute, and assess (track) various targets and audiences (Widjaja, 2022). The influence of IMC is no longer a myth or theory in the modern world, but it is marked by extensive executions that make it a daily attribution (Camilleri, 2018). Recently, there has been an increased market reliance on data-directed and driven marketing strategies that are executed alongside the correct multi-faceted marketing details. General mass media advertising has been improved to better marketing targets and inclusivity, enhance public relations, leverage consumer attitudes and shopping patterns, and impact choices, tastes, and preferences, among several other details.

#### *What Is the History of IMC?*

According to many scholars, Don. E. Schultz is seen as the father of IMC. Acknowledging the tribute to Schultz's attribution as the father of IMC, it is imperative to analyze the various situations and conditions that led to this perception (Kitchen & Tourky, 2022). "Integrated marketing communication" as a term was coined in 1989, and its invention was set on the need to focus advertising endeavors across various promotional methods. Using integrated communications allows firms to have their presence across multiple marketing platforms (Yang et al., 2019). Also, businesses discovered that each single individual brand message could be persuasive to reinforce the others.

Further, Schultz et al.(2020) argue that IMC combines a variety of disciplines that provide clarity, consistency and impart a maximum communication impact. Schultz and Kichen (1999) opined that the growth of IMCs can be seen as a natural evolution resulting from mass-marketing advertisements. The advertisements are, in this case, supposed to attract more masses

through a targeting strategy. The rise of electronic media has altered advertising and marketing executions creating the best conditions for the development of IMC.

Kitchen et al. (2004) handle the emergence of IMCs as a “norm of business that has swept across the world and earned reference and dependence” (p. 19). Furthermore, IMC is analyzed on the grounds of its extreme impact on development, marketing communications details, progress, and the barriers associated with the relative developments. The promotional elements in IMC are only functional, and they are correctly tuned to work together and supplement each other (Batra & Keller, 2016). With several options available for communications and marketing, IMC is viewed as a practical guide to combining, integrating, and synergizing all the entails into a common functional and efficient unit.

Correspondingly, Kliatchko (2005) confirms that the conceptualization and inception of IMC were formally initiated in the late 80s. Kliatchko further confirms that despite the long decades of IMC’s existence, IMC still faces several contentions and theoretical issues. Kliatchko believes that IMC is not a revolution in marketing thought but a facet that has resulted from three main areas. Like Schultz’s perception, Kliatchko relates the marketplace, consumers, media, and communications as the primary facets that have enabled IMC to take root. However, the totality of the building factors is driven by technology (Kliatchko, 2005). The eventual developments in IMC were a major determinant of the fate of the market-centered theories and mass marketing concepts of the 50s and 60s. Schultz and Kitchen (1999) further propose that four elements have been responsible for the route and executions around IMC. According to Schultz, these elements are digitization, information technology, communications systems, and intellectual property.

According to the American Association of Advertising Agencies, four general strategies were crafted in formulating integrated marketing communication, dubbed the “4As” (Widjaja,

2022). In the 4As description, IMC was defined as an outfit that “recognizes the value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines, advertising, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion, and combines them to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact” (Hewett & Lemon, 2019, p. 2). The need for businesses to recognize and integrate more efficient and cost-effective ways to reach their customers and influence their stakeholders made it necessary to develop the attributes of IMC (Yang et al., 2019). Advertisement attempts were, more than ever, concentrated on prioritizing economic growth, reaching more customers, and maintaining the consistency of the created image.

During early times, businesses sought to achieve consistency and create strong common brand entities that traversed all their marketing communication entails (Lusch, 2007). For business growth, it was more necessary than ever to account for basic aspects of advertising, such as a brand voice, style, and tone that would be conspicuously attributed to the subject organization (Schultz, 2020). The styles, tones, and brand voices created and supported were brought together in a unifying attribute that combined several marketing approaches into one uniform entail. The unification of styles, tones, and brand voices was the basic idea behind the inception of the modern-day IMC integrations and executions. At the beginning of the IMC entails, only a section of the IMC principles was included. Some of these entails include PR, direct marketing, and the details in advertising and events (Kitchen, 2020). As technology evolved, however, electronic media progressed to become one of the most strategic aspects of IMC, and the subsequent additions meant that this field gave more opportunities to business communications (McFadden, 2017). Moreover, firms could now utilize technological

advancements to shift their marketing strategies, continually crafting this detail into an essential aspect of marketing methods.

### *Understanding Modern Integrated Marketing and Its Components*

In recent times, integrated marketing communication entails all forms of marketing, from blogging and content marketing to inbound and outbound marketing. Also, modern-day IMC includes public relations (PR) and events, social media marketing, and search engine marketing (SEM), among many other attributes (Hewett & Lemon, 2019). However, the elevated activities and scope of IMC executions imply that organizations have to, more than ever, tightly bind their processes and executions to visual and brand consistency. Brand consistency, for instance, allows firms to experience and garner tremendous success (Schultz, 2020). The success of brand consistency is measurable by utilizing the available (and vast) number of leads that instigate increased revenue and e-commerce sales. IMC is by far the most significant, lucrative, boundless, and effective marketing means that appeals to and reaches the highest number of subjects within a specific marketing target audience.

It is not easy to fully understand and comprehend the primary aspects that form the essential components of IMC due to the wide variability and the complexity of associations and integrations that may arise from what IMC entails (Kitchen, 2020). Furthermore, IMC is only partially based on being creative or original. As much as creativity and originality score highly with relative associations with IMC, organizations must embrace diversity, especially in product and service marketing (Schultz, 2020). IMC's simplicity and ease of integration might be confused as a single entity, but the multiple platforms and their relations to self and traditional methods complicate this concept further.

Print marketing is the first key aspect of IMC campaigns in the modern world. The effect and attributes of print marketing cannot be exonerated even in the digital age. Print is, therefore, an important detail even in modern times, as the engagements in all other media platforms are cemented and impacted by outcomes in print media (Camilleri, 2018). Print media is a primary setting of IMC because it allows organizations the necessary platforms to establish their presence before integrating other forms of marketing communication. Close to print media is the use of banner ads in IMC. Banner ads are heavily seen to have gone out of position because of recent advancements in communication technology (Chou et al., 2020). The banner advertisements, however, create awareness and help brands to facilitate inquiries by prospective customers. Further, targeted advertising through banner ads is an effective attribute to attending to certain demographics at specific times (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020). Thus, organizations are likely to create and enhance interest in their products by selective banner ads to demographics that are most likely to form part of the target market.

Advertisements on social media platforms should be created in ways that allow them to carry the right message (Perevozova et al., 2020). As such, the right message should be preceded by suitable availability, and any target customer clicking the message should lead to the correct message. Landing messages in social media are targeted to create meaningful relationships with the clients in accurate and specific ways (Chou et al., 2020). Among the components of IMC, landing messages allow the subjects to create a great first impression regarding the target market and also create other possibilities, like signing up for various organizational needs.

According to Chou et al. (2020), email marketing is another form of IMC that allows for the most convenient and personalized approach to marketing communication. Email marketing enables organizations to keep in touch with customers and update them on everyday

developments. Email marketing is suitable for allowing individuals to have exactness and subject-tailored communication (Acquah et al., 2021). For instance, customers may want only specific tastes through their tendencies and ultimate preferences. Email marketing is closely associated with social media marketing, and the latter allows for the creation of relevant content for a specific customer demographic. Moreover, social media advertising is the best front to create and strengthen customer ties with an organization. As such, social media advertising allows individuals to establish dialogue and gather attributes that would foster a special following with their followers.

On the other hand, organic search engine marketing allows for the manipulation of search engine results on the basis of their relevance (Acquah et al., 2021). The relevant pages are specifically tied to search words and phrases, implying that one can tailor the pages to bear more relevance to popular search words. Organizations can, thus, leverage the principle of using search engines to move their websites up the ranks of online presence and advertising. The entirety of these entails is referred to as Search Engine Optimization (SEO) (Kasireddy et al., 2019). SEO is a delicate science that allows organizations to improve their incomes, save marketing costs, and have an effective market presence. SEO is considerably connected to paid search engine marketing which is used in cases where organizations buy rights to a specific search phrase. By doing so, all ads relevant to the organization will always appear before, below, and beside the search results.

Finally, IMC is integrated with direct mail marketing, where time and effort are invested in getting the results intended in building brand perception (Kasireddy et al., 2019). As with other IMC inputs, direct mail marketing has different eligibility to efficiency, and in most cases, it is the best attribute to incept personal effects. Overall, effective marketing entail can integrate



a variety of tactics or, in some cases, all the above-discussed elements to result in a specially woven marketing detail that allows for the best outcomes in identity improvement opportunities.

### *Why Is IMC Important?*

A clear and well-invested IMC campaign allows organizations to apply different promotional methods within the presets of adequate consistency and goal-focused approaches (Acquah et al., 2021). For instance, IMC use is the best attribute to spread the same message and gain branded experience across different platforms. Using traditional and current executions in IMC allows organizations to build brand recognition and trust (Saxena & Biradar, 2022). Reaching the intended customers and target market consistently and across various platforms allows parent organizations to create recognizably and quickly delivered information for various executions. The intended audience will then have proper access to the information and attribute effective message translation to such messages.

Next, the primary target of any marketing intervention is to create the necessary contact to reach as many people as possible (Acquah et al., 2021). IMC inputs allow advertisers and subject firms to reach a larger audience. IMC components are widely varied, allowing the organizations to tailor the messages intended for different audiences, which is assured if the advertisers get in contact with the correct channel determination. The higher the number of people reached, the higher the benefits and yields associated with IMC executions (Khan et al., 2021). Naturally, the amount of revenue gained by organizations is directly related to the number of individuals reached. Thus, IMC inputs, where correctly used and determined, impress the right audiences creating a market base, loyalty, and customer contact, the aspect that is inseparable from brand efficiency.

One of the greatest issues associated with brand marketing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has always been the imperative costs (Chukwu & Ahumaraeze, 2022). IMC offers the subject organizations a front to carry out marketing at minimal costs. A similar message simultaneously reaches all the firm customers and the intended target audience, creating constant awareness at a minimal cost. In addition, well-communicated ideas in different platforms and media allow organizations to have a grasp of the market. Along the same line, IMC is also seeded with the advantage of being a convenient way to win new customers and, at the same time, nourish and retain the relationship between the subject organization and the already existing customers (Khan et al., 2021). IMC gains control of customer relationships and integration by being comprised of many methods that provide for a two-way communication approach. Getting feedback and reactions and responding to various customer concerns in real-time offers organizations the best chance to form a sense of attachment. Overall, winning and retaining existing customers through effective communication and interaction leads to brand loyalty.

Sometimes marketing tools used in various marketing engagements create disparities in marketing and make it impossible to have the best marketing outcome. A wrong marketing tool choice may impair the entire process and make it challenging to have resounding outcomes since the marketing may lack appeal and specificity (Khan et al., 2021). IMC, however, allows marketers and brands to have control of their marketing executions through a clever and effective blending of marketing tools for a better response. Thus, the targeted audience and customers get the correct message at the correct time and through the correct means. Advertisers and marketers can persuade the details and inclusions of integrated marketing communication to connect with their customers easily and intended clients.

### *Creating, Implementing, and Running an IMC Plan*

The process of creating an integrated marketing drive is set in the accuracy of determining the target audience's specific needs and determining the right channel, message, and even the correct executions in branding. On the other hand, customers will have the right information, connection, and information to remember the brand, associate themselves with the brand, and forge the right brand perceptions (Karpava, 2022). All organizations interested in creating an integrated marketing drive need to remember the correct statistic on the resources and time they have in connection to a particular marketing drive. Thus, the first stage concerns the correct budgeting and clear marketing plans.

Organizations must gather as much information as possible, integrated with relevance to the marketing campaign. The brand features, company customers, the target possible audience, and other aspects like the brand expectations must be correctly studied prior to any organizational execution (Karpava, 2022). The organizations will then have to decide on the steps to take within the marketing campaign to account for necessary adjustments. The most vital marketing attribute should be the correct explanation and analysis of the marketing tools and the specificity of the tools and methods to create the necessary brand awareness.

Implementing an IMC strategy calls for the correct decisions within the marketing process, such as clear, purposeful, and meaningful communication. It is essential to understand the target customers' expectations and needs (Karpava, 2022). The products and services entailed in any marketing plan should be simultaneously provided at multiple places to allow for a unison of access and feedback by the end users. The end users' concerns should be king in the marketing plan, and all the IMC executions should provide fixed time and resources in the marketing process (Chukwu & Ahumaraeze, 2022). It is significant to carry out effective data

analytics to allow for attention to the best customers and avoid spending maximum expenses on customers who are unlikely to return optimal revenues.

Managing IMC not only allows firms to have a clear outline of their expectations but also exposes them to exemplary executions and decisions in case there is a need for change.

Managing IMC is pivotal because all the elements and components of marketing communication must be aggregated to work together in unison. End users are also supposed to get the best results from the set of decisions made in IMC and increase the average potential of such execution (Kasireddy et al., 2019). Effective communication through advertising, online promotions, hoardings and banners, the internet, e-mails, and other attributes results in the best outcomes for various organizational entails in product marketing. In IMC management, however, the most indispensable attribute is finding the best ways to measure the results of any component and execution undertaken (Khan et al., 2021). Determining whether the combinations agreed upon are effective in reaching and influencing a broader market is the most crucial part of management, and organizations should continually evaluate this attribute to ensure such inclusions.

### *Trends in IMC*

Integrated marketing communication has always been set in the principles of consistency, coherence, complementary, and continuity (Chou et al., 2020). All the campaigns and components must be innovatively and uniquely combined to result in the best gains on any marketing front. All the recent trends and future implications in IMC are set on these principles, commonly called the 4Cs of IMC (Camilleri, 2018). The need for various adjustments in IMC is tied to the rapid rate of changes in the corporate world, a move that has impacted all the components associated with IMC.

There has been extensive growth and improvement in conversational AI. Customer service automation is now taking communications marketing to another level, seeded in simplicity and automation (Yang et al., 2019). More companies are now seeking the services of smart assistants such as voice bots and chatbots to answer the most frequently asked questions and inquiries. The attribute of conversational AI has become a frequent question and executes simple and repetitive questions. The increased need for all-round the clock customer service and increased global population has necessitated the elevated use of smart conversational AI systems. Various studies have shown that over 50% of customers using conversational AI systems find them useful (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020). Most customers are willing to get service from chatbots and voice bots instead of waiting for real people whenever they have questions regarding simple responses.

The current world of IMC has seen further personalization in marketing and e-commerce. Marketers heavily utilize the attribute of personalization to reach many users and execute tailor-made messages for their consumption (Schultz, 2020). More customers visit online stores, and personalization engines have become integral to AI-related machine learning. Using machine learning, organizations have the extended ability to exploit the algorithms to make accurate, user-tailored, and compelling recommendations. Research has shown that 91% of customers are likelier to associate shops and form partnerships with brands that recognize, remember, and provide relevant recommendations and offers (Kitchen, 2020). Machine learning has been integral in the recognition aspect because it allows for specificity in customer experience. Additionally, machine learning is highly versatile, so it has become more successful in offering unlimited personalization of various entails.

IMC is currently experiencing the growth of more omnichannel strategies. More businesses are trying to simplify and make keeping track of their customers' communications easier. As such, it has been established that 86% of customers are more likely to opt for conversations and interactions with agents that involve seamless movement across various channels (Yang et al., 2019). Organizations are also now opting for a cookie-less world, as evidenced by Google's web browser's move to make third-party cookies obsolete. Firms and marketers are now looking for new ways to reach target customers through entails like increased account-based and contextual-based marketing, and as a result, these inputs are becoming increasingly valuable.

Various social media platforms are making it easy to realize social commerce outcomes. For instance, over 200 million companies are connected to social media platforms. With over two billion active users, social media platforms are becoming an inseparable part of commerce, and platforms like Facebook have allowed organizations the ability to create and run online stores conveniently (Karpava, 2022). Facebook shops, for instance, allow organizations to showcase their products, divide them into categories, and allow customers to place and track orders directly on their social media platforms. Studies have shown that over 78% of American consumers discover retail products and make their purchases through Facebook; this statistic alone shows that social media is no longer a platform for fun but a component where marketing communication interactions can occur freely.

More households and individuals are making more purchases and using more voice search and voice commerce-related inputs. Over 50% of homesteads possess a smart speaker. With more integration and improvement of voice assistants such as Google's assistant, Apple's Siri, and Amazon's Alexa, it is only expected that voice-backed commerce will advance

(Widjaja, 2022). Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) have made it easier for customers to get accustomed to the products they intend to buy (Karpava, 2022). For instance, furniture companies like IKEA use AR and VR to allow customers to inspect their intended purchases. Further details in the retail industry have seen great potential in AR and IR, and the scope is currently widening due to the high efficacy and efficiency of the method.

Recently, the growth of push notifications has seen a more aggressive approach to the set of available marketing executions. Push notifications are the next big thing in online marketing because of their extreme versatility (Chou et al., 2020). If the subject organization has a website, promoting services, sharing important news, and interacting with customers becomes more effortless. Also, push notifications are easy and quick to use because they initiate straightforward campaigns within a brief time (Karpava 2022). With software, the push notification exploitation does not require additional software, apps, or even cookies to run. Together with the above-discussed and other daily inventions in IMC inputs, it is only becoming relevant to predict a highly integrative tech world full of IMC efficiencies in the coming days.

### *Theories That Explain IMC*

The philosophy of IMC is an attribute that can centrally position an organization's demands alongside customer satisfaction in the most effective platforms. As coined in 1989, the features of IMC were set in an “overarching philosophy that unites marketing, advertising, and public relations with centralized goals, strategies, and brand consistency” (Kasireddy et al., 2019, p. 16). IMC was crafted as the future tearing down the cumbersome traditional marketing inputs to a world of seamless and boundless communications (Khan et al., 2021). Tactic reinforcement in IMC was also accounted for because they incepted a unified approach that would instigate inter-relations of support across all the aspects of communication marketing. The philosophy of

integrated marketing is set in the heart of a needs-based approach, meaning that organizations get the best out of their customers when the customers get the best out of the organizations.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the understanding of various needs and their order is paramount to the best outcomes in customer satisfaction. The hierarchy proponents that five categories of needs should be accounted for in any marketing drive. First, the communication entailed in marketing should account for the physiological needs of the intended customers (Karpava, 2022). The advertisement or product promotion should adhere to the notion that the target individuals cannot do without them. Next, marketing communication should be provided for safety and social needs. Product marketing should create the notion that the products are safe for the customers, and they can attend to their esteem needs where they are respectable and reputable (Karpava, 2022). Finally, the marketing theory seeks to show that the needs are supposed to aggregate to self-actualization, where the individuals realize that the potential of the products stands out from the rest of their kind in the market.

Maslow nuanced that if marketers wanted to know the wants and needs of their subject market, they needed to carefully study their customers' habits and predict their desires. Marketing-oriented research should be propelled toward the segment, target, and position, and in this case, the client's demographics, social classes, preferences, and other attributes should be primely and accurately executed (Acquah et al., 2021). Various classes of customers require different entails in their tastes, and according to Maslow, marketing should exhaustively account for these differences.

#### *Issues Associated with IMC*

Despite the several advantages tied to the rise and execution of IMC, a host of challenges still make this approach a bit complex for firms. The main challenges include the problem of the



adoption and integration of IMC in companies. Alongside the adoption and integration feature is the difficulty of determining the proper executions that organizations must employ or adjust to as they seek to have the best returns in IMC (Chukwu and Ahumaraeze, 2022). Further, it is also complex to understand how to allocate responsibilities best and structure the leadership entails of IMC. The problem associated with centralized communication marketing is the lack of a clear outline of top management, advertising agencies, and brand managers and the collaboration of the roles and responsibilities in their respective relations. Furthermore, it is also difficult to understand how to make IMC more strategic rather than tactical, run agency compensation for IMC services, and measure ROI (Karpava, 2022). Currently, there is a problem regarding the shift in marketplace power from manufacturers to retailers through wholesalers.

#### *What Is the IMC Connection to Semiotics?*

How does the rapid growth in IMC techniques change the general outcomes in semiology-marketing inputs? The use of more tech-savvy advances in marketing communication reveals just how extensive the marketing industry has evolved, and so are the integrations in the communication components (Chukwu & Ahumaraeze, 2022). Brands and organizations have been keen to execute technological improvements with the ease of extending symbols, signs, and icons to their subject targets. In various marketing entails of IMC, semiotics serves as the simplest way to deliver visually presented messages to their customers.

Most important, however, is the association between semiotics and IMC entails; brands are seeking to be identifiable and unique (Khan et al., 2021). The necessity of identifiable and unique brands implores the concept of originality and innovation, which primarily entails any marketing process. The need to stand out and yet leave a lasting image, association, and influence on the customers makes it necessary to set successful marketing campaigns that

persuade localized image assets using semiotic exploitations and techniques. Organizations use semiotic features across all marketing entails because they drastically improve the communicative potential of any given brand and aid in ensuring that the brands reach wider, diverse, and larger audiences (Chou et al., 2020). Different IMC details and platforms call for using different semiotic procedures, so it is normal for different logos, images, emojis, and semiotics to be used across different communication platforms for a similar marketing intake.

### *IMC and the Future of Business Operations*

Several propositions and studies have been made to evaluate the efficacy, efficiency, and even the place of integrated marketing communication in modern business operations. The details for this undertaking are analyzed against several entails of ethical business and organizational running. According to Hall and Knapp (2013), IMC is a series of over-time integrations of marketing evolutions characterized by the highest exploitation ability to extend the organizational mission to target audiences. However, IMC is an outcome of current and past inputs in marketing communication, propelled to its current optimal state by revolutionary technological and social media communication advancements. The likelihood of better inputs in the future, like the prospect of the metaverse, may greatly diversify communicational approaches making it impossible to see IMC as the pinnacle of marketing communication.

However, according to Diaconu et al. (2016), the current relevance of integrated marketing communication indicates what the future holds for organizations. Diaconu et al. (2016) bank on the ever-growing influence of digital communications to prove that IMC will be riddled with inevitable growth that will transcend the current status. Globalization is, according to Evans (2022), reaching new heights, and owing to the need to integrate the customers, employees, communities, shareholders, and all other individuals affiliated with business

operations to a common and effective communication strategy; IMC exploits are only poised to grow and advance. Chou et al. (2020) state that “an integrated communication strategy helps businesses deliver a cohesive message across digital and traditional channels to engage audiences, build and sustain trust and provide a positive brand experience” (Chou et al., 2020, p. 24). Owing to the assumption that an integrated communication strategy helps businesses, it is also nuanced that the future will be riddled with more demographic shifts in the workforce and the marketplace and, with it, will result in the consequential need for organizations to adapt to the changes and establish integrative approaches to communicate effectively across all channels.

It is unlikely that the future will cause detrimental effects on the field of IMC, its execution, the professionals, and the totality of processes that have been put in place. According to Camilleri (2018), “Most millennials, who now make up the largest living adult generation, grew up using technology. These digital natives expect to interact with, buy from and get support from companies and their employers across various channels and often prefer digital communication methods” (p. 34). The balance of this outcome is realistically reasonable with the idea that the millennial generation is seeded with immense purchasing power and market control. Given that the millennial generation is seeded with immense purchasing power and market control, implications are demonstrated that most of the marketing decisions will be made in their favor, and since their tastes in interaction and communication resonate with IMC-based practices, they are likely to experience marketing executions in inputs that collaborate with their wants.

### **Part Three: Marketing Semiotics**

The vast number of marketing inputs implies that the semiotic inputs in marketing will vary along the same line. Semiotic techniques used by marketers involve the use of metaphoric

understanding: the direct use of semiotic elements such as logos, colors, and emojis to reflect a specific message. The metaphoric use of semiotics in communication marketing traverses the tagline and messages to affect verbal marketing communication (Jukić, 2021); so, the outcomes of semiotic communication marketing have the likelihood of high reasonability with the intended target audience. There are various insights into the correct use of semiotic entails in marketing (Paul & Dutta, 2022). The biggest drive is not in the method used but the innovative, integrative, and appealing components of semiotic nature applied in the marketing entails. In addition, it is necessary to have the correct details of semiotic knowledge and preferences for all the clients across all marketing platforms (Jukić, 2021). Semiotics entails marketing, thus, presents a very complex idea that requires not only dire precession in choice, managing, and progress measurement but also detailed attention to the cumulative effects extended on the target audience.

The role of semiotic advertising is so vital that it is inseparable from all outcomes of all marketing inputs in the current business world. Marketing communication is all about extending the right message to the right people at the right time (Poulsen, 2022). The combination of these attributes creates the likelihood that the response achieved would be positive and the intended target audience would react positively to the marketing details in a specific message. The role of semiotics in marketing is tied to understanding the semiotic theories that precede all the marketing processes (Manolica et al., 2021). According to Paul and Dutta (2022),

Semiotic theories and methods can be used to identify trends in popular culture, to understand how consumer attitudes and behavior are formed in relation to popular culture, including brands, and how marketing and advertising programs can best meet the needs of consumers by improving communication with the end user. (p. 2)

The reality of the semiotic essentiality of advertising is getting as much influence and stakes as possible while creating a lasting impression of the subject organization in the marketplace.

Perhaps the most subtle detail in understanding the entails of marketing semiotics is an insight into how much semiotic branding influences sales and configures the outcomes in marketing statistics (Medek, 2021). Apple Inc. is, for instance, one of the most profitable organizations in the world with a keen adherence to the semiotic marketing entails. The Apple organization has capitalized so much on its semiotic features, and everywhere, people want to have an association with the Apple logo (Manolica et al., 2021). However, not most organizations (and subtly so) can grow from the unknown to running the show in the product market presence, sales, and market control (Jukić, 2021). There are vital aspects that organizations need to pay attention to if they seek to control their insights, objectives, engagements, and the outcomes of various semiotic marketing communication entail.

First, the subject organizations must conduct effective semiotic analyses on the populations and the messages they intend to communicate. Like any other marketing tool, words, gestures, signs, and other semiotic components are created to persuade customers. A semiotic analysis should account for the various entails of the signifier and the signified through a three-step semiotic analysis process (Kiper & Ulema, 2021). Organizations should incept the semiotic marketing process by analyzing the verbal signs in any communication, accounting for what one can see or hear. Next, the visual signs are accounted for, and finally, the analysis should account for the interpretation of the symbolic message. Semiotic analysis is the best campus for attaining the most excellent direction and execution front for communication marketing because it allows the organizations to outlay the expected path in decoding the messages (Andini et al., 2022). Understanding semiotic analysis places marketers in the best position to understand how the

intended audience would resonate with the message held (Fowler et al., 2022). With the knowledge of semiotic analysis, organizations can incorporate various decoded elements into the marketing plan and brand to guide communication executions. It is necessary for marketers to form and adhere to a given checklist when deciding on a specific semiotic marketing entail.

#### *How Can Organizations Run a Semiotic Analysis?*

The art of running the correct semiotic analysis is integral to the long-term outcomes of marketing communications. Running a semiotic analysis process parallels all the other forms of qualitative research (Senivongse & Bennet, 2022). Organizations can utilize open-ended questions to gather as much information on the existing interpretations as possible. For this cause, it is plausible for the organizations to use interviews or surveys prior to their marketing executions, where they will identify the dominant answers and reactions. The isolated commonalities will be integrated into the organizational executions to propel the intentions and changes achieved in the communication process (Andini et al., 2022). Moreover, organizations can use abstract questions to expand the hidden symbols and meanings to pick interpretations that might have been missed easily. Hence, focus groups or holding brainstorming sessions would be the best way to attain the view for insights that would help propel the various marketing insights.

Net organizations can execute probing questions into the set of marketing entails associated with semiotics (Senivongse & Bennet, 2022). Rethinking and expanding the answers gained from the semiotic surveys using mind gaps and content matrices would effectively uncover more meaning and run a more profound analysis (Mohamed et al., 2021). The answers and conclusions reached upon this deliberation pave the way for the accounting of projective techniques where insights into psychological attitudes are sought.

It is necessary to understand that the entails of a semiotic analysis incommode boundless questions. Thus, within subtlety, the entire process of semiotic analysis should be guided through basic foundations and questions (Hagbini et al., 2022). First, the semiotic feature used should be subjected to a basic scrutiny that details if the component grabs the necessary attention, attitude, and emotional entails. Next, the semiotic entail should be viewed on the grounds of whether it reaches the specific income levels, culture, age, and various elements that define the given target audience (Evans, 2022). Applying the findings from the semiotic analysis implies the need for organizations to view their brand as a sign.

Additionally, significant adjustments should be crafted, considering the demographic responses while balancing them with the specific organizational needs (Medek, 2021). Balance and specificity are a delicate entail that connects organizational needs with the ensuing market demands. Thus, the analysis outcome should be applied to making an implicit and explicit statement that resonates with the market demands and the associated organizational needs (Evans, 2022). The brand identity should, in this case, entail the set of missions, brand stories, values, and employees. Also, the brand identity should be inclusive of the product or service itself. Next, brand identity should include brand communication in the marketing communication content, the slogans, and the logos used (Poulsen, 2022). Finally, all organizations should also incept brand ethos into marketing communication entails. The marketing aspect of brand ethos goes a long way in determining how consumers perceive the brand created.

Furthermore, organizations should seek ways that would aid in incorporating meaning into the brand identity created (Andini et al., 2022). The attributes of incorporating meaning into brand identity are only accounted for if the organizations adopt the cues and integrate the responses gained from the analyses of customers. Symbolic elements such as logos, brand colors,

advertisements, websites, cultural symbols, and the brand's physical environment should be firmly and effectively adhered to (Kiper & Ulema, 2021). Organizations must pay close attention to the psychological and emotional attachments of the components of semiotic influence when carrying out advertisements.

### *Semiotics in Advertising*

Semiotics is crucial in all advertisement entails because of their ability to impact the message, the marketer, and the recipients of such marketing executions. As such, the introductory details should be considered for the time, money, and execution in ways that impart communication marketing (Shukla et al., 2022). Most importantly, semiotic marketing should be dedicated to creating the intended association between the brands and the images utilized.

Advertisement details should be objective, flexible, and highly versatile in cases where any semiotic detail has been favored. It is critical for advertisers to integrate the complete application of leitmotifs as they continually seek to use semiotics (Fowler et al., 2022). The recurring symbols and repetition of the semiotic features used in advertising should have a close correspondence and correlation with the aspects of the desires of brands choosing their association.

Another underlying aspect tied to semiotics in advertising is the need to understand that any element of a semiotic advertisement does not have to be connected or related to visionary elements; instead, it can take an audio form (Monbec, 2022). For instance, most advertisements in audiovisual media like television bear music, which in itself is a language of expression. Like semiotic features, music can be enjoyed by all targeted audiences regardless of their cultures and traditions, alongside creating the tone and mood of the advertisement message. Some brands are associated with specific catchy music that resonates with their inputs and activities in ways that



allow customers to instantly relate to the sounds as soon as they come on (Ilonga & Mapunda, 2022). Mobile phone numbers are, for example, related to geographic semiotic sounds in radio advertisements allowing customers to always relate the specific radio advert to the location or organization.

#### *How Important Are the Cultural Attributes of Semiotic Advertisement?*

All semiotic advertisement inputs should be made with enthusiastic adherence to the ensuring traditions and cultural practices of the target individuals. Understanding that a wide variety of the target market implies a wide cultural variety is essential. Some signs and components of semiotic executions can be upsetting to a specific sect of people, appealing to another, and so on (Wu & Cheong, 2021). It is, thus, critical to carry out extensive cultural awareness campaigns with specificity to the need for effective and respectful use of emojis and other forms of semiotic communication marketing (Hashim et al., 2022). Signs and symbols are the basis of all social and cultural changes, and by doing so, they include a realized connection to social practices and traditions, etiquettes, and practices. The psychological connections created within the individual perceptions are altered by the semiotic components used, the mood they instigate, and the tone relation.

Approaching new markets is, most importantly, tied to the need to understand how people's social and cultural needs will shape semiotic exploits (Hashim et al., 2022). The combination of social needs and cultural perspectives influences how individuals welcome or engage with the specific advertisement input. It is characteristic of all semiotic messages and entails to be implemented in ways that bear a holistic approach, complete with an eager adherence to all social and cultural issues. In this regard, it is realistic that the various semiotic methods and theories can be used to pick out the details in popular culture (Hemais et al., 2022).

The attributes of semiotic methods and theories are quintessential because forms can also bank on its engagement to understand how behaviors and attitudes are formed in popular culture concerning brands and, thus, be applied to create an outline of how various marketing and advertising entails can be persuasive to best meet the needs of consumers (Wu & Cheong, 2021). Meeting consumer needs is incepted from initiating contact; thus, choosing the correct semiotic exploits is a plausible and recommended execution.

Business marketing communications should be crafted in ways that bear adherence to the ensuing cultural shock that is prone to result from any advertisement input. The use of semiotics in the modern-era technological fuzzy world implies that business communications are bound to traverse borders and reach as many people as before (Monbec, 2022). And corporates can easily forge, run, and maintain international associations and engagements than before (Shukla et al., 2022). The ease of creating international and wide-scale impacts and associations in marketing reflects, inversely, on the relative ease of creating advertisement upset for the intended target audiences. Cultural shock emanating from poor semiotic component choice may not only lead to embarrassment, but it is a fact that can hold the business entails and progresses hostage, botching development, and growth deals (Hemais et al., 2022). The mistakes in semiotic components choice come in many formats; sometimes they may be from subtly simple entails like improper greetings, conundrums in social media, and the commitment to the production of disrespectful marketing communication materials, among several other entails (bin Nordin et al., 2021). Poor perceptions and understandings of the local business customs may also be a big issue because such entails may create a widespread upset among potential and existing customers. Cultural formality mishaps are, thus, a close-knit associate of the choices made in semiotic marketing communication choices.

### *Business Etiquette in Semiotic Marketing Communication*

The leading aspect of all semiotic-guided communication in the international organizational marketing stage is the need to keenly adhere to the ensuing issues in the variety of styles of communication (Wu & Cheong, 2021). The choice for the correct semiotic detail in any international stage marketing entails in any dimension should be acceded by territory awareness of the communication style. Also, the resulting negotiation or communication styles that exist in the selected domains should bear the attributes that resonate with the constructive responses and reactions to organizational entails (Hemais et al., 2022). For instance, the American culture welcomes the interest in direct communication that does not pay close attention to hierarchies and positions. In Asian locations, however, their culture is entirely different, with most Asians preferring devoted attention to personal details and noticeable differences in their communication styles (Naghizadeh, 2021). Various semiotic entails of communication are likely to instigate different meanings in both of these traditions, and thus, the need for attention to the “how” and “when” should be central.

It is significant for organizations to extend terrain-specific research on various traditions in ways that make it easy for individuals to resonate and identify with the communication and the messages (Wu & Cheong, 2021). Research on ethics and preferences of the target population is prime because it hooks the semiotic marketing exploits to the language and customs of the target population. Cultural shocks have considerable variability across the world. The vast differences in cultural choices across demographics should be the means to analyzing the outcomes in semiotic entails use. Gaining new customers or retaining existing customers should be a feature of careful understanding of the choice and impact of various semiotic exploits.

### *The Choice of Color in Semiotic Marketing Communication*

In any business marketing campaign, various basic elements affect how the process is executed and what should or should not be included. According to bin Nordin et al. (2021), all organizations have different visions and overarching objectives that guide their choice of marketing details, among other issues. However, it is uniformly agreed across all organizations that the choice of color in any marketing communication is among the essential details in marketing (Hashim et al., 2022). Color and its choice in marketing is a fundamental entail that connects the semiotic concerns with the target audience. The color correspondence of this ideal is ingrained in the intricate correspondence to the ideas, objects, and emotions that result in beneficial or potentially helpful marketing. Color semiotics is a powerful image-building feature of any organization (Monbec, 2022). Most notable organizations have a strong correlation and relationship with the ensuing color outcomes. For instance, the Coca-Cola brand is inseparable from its semiotic red color and Pepsi from its blue color. Brands deliberately use colors to project their presence and positive influence on various consumers and customers.

According to Ilong and Mapunda (2022), it is necessary to realize that establishing a strong semiotic color association with an organization takes considerable energy, time, and effort. Color semiotics is relevant in determining how easily or quickly the customers recall or associate the organization within various settings. Selecting the right color that will run throughout the totality of all marketing entails is an important aspect to master, and this process intricately attributes the individual psychology to the link created (Monbec, 2022). As such, color semiotics psychology is crucial because it resonates with social and cultural experiences, as colors trigger different meanings and connections in different people. The vast differences in

color semiotics imply that firms must pay keen attention to a holistic approach to marketing communication's social and cultural aspects.

## CHAPTER TWO

### NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND EMOJIS

The most significant concern at the moment is whether non-verbal communication is worth the traditional definitions or whether it should be changed (Alshenqeeti, 2016). In addition, most scholars and linguists are having difficulty conjoining the details in non-verbal communication with the relative developments in the tech world. What is true, however, is that the advancement of social media has not entirely changed the definitions of non-verbal communication (Suntwal et al., 2021); so, the definitional analysis and understanding of non-verbal communication can be used to deductively link the persuasion of emojis as to whether they fit the descriptions or not. Also, the analysis can be extended to account for whether the extensive use of emojis in the tech world and social media can be depended upon (Knapp et al., 2013). The question of emojis and non-verbal communication traverses an extensive ground where organizations and individuals as well, need to understand the “how,” “what,” and “when” in emoji use (Elder, 2018). It can be argued that extensive emoji use bears a link to outstanding social praxis. The relative transformations correspond to extensive practical-critical thoughts and, thus, create a relevant and realistic question for marketing communication.

#### **Understanding Non-verbal Communication (NVC)**

Perhaps it is subtle to note that the majority of all human communication is connected to the outcomes in behavior and that all the extruded reactions (relating to behavior) comprise unspoken components (Krohn, 2004). The majority of human behavior and communication is, thus, relayed through non-verbal signals. The ability to understand any form of communication, verbal or otherwise, is a clear indicator of the intended outcomes (Sadiq, 2019). Such is the need for accuracy in the choice of non-verbal communication cues and timing, alongside other

significant attributes. It is argued that non-verbal communication is the antidote to breaking down all the language, personal, and perception attributes of communication (Troiano & Nante, 2018). Most scholars point out that non-verbal communication entities can help individuals and organizations steer through delicate marketing communication scenarios and deal with difficult situations and people, among other important influences.

In itself, non-verbal communication entails various components that traverse what is being said in case it is preceded by verbal communication (Sadiq, 2019). The totality of these complex associations formed in non-verbal communication includes gestures, facial expressions, body movements, tonal pitches, and even eye movements (Sadiq, 2019). The combination and outcomes of non-verbal communication are so delicate and varied that it is easy to misinterpret them. The totality of non-verbal communication, however, aids in easing the process of inferring meaning from the information being communicated (Maloney et al., 2020). Most commonly, it is realistic that one cannot easily decipher the meaning in written messages at first glance or even extract complete understanding in a call.

It is important to note that non-verbal communication is an inseparable part of daily human communication; this aspect is inherent to all forms of communication, and the need to learn how to correctly extend or interpret it is fundamental to the basics of communication (Maloney et al., 2020). Communication is significantly impacted by the extent of the application of non-verbal cues in communication. Getting the proper outcomes in any communication undertaking is inspired by the relative efficiency in the use of cues to stir, guide, and even influence basic human emotions (Sadiq, 2019). There are several human emotions, most of which are not well-explained or understood. However, non-verbal communication's relevance is evident in universal emotions; anger, sadness, envy, love, fear, and happiness (Troiano & Nante,

2018). Thus, the choice of non-verbal cues of communication traverses the application and the consequential responses and reactions, which are highly volatile due to several issues; some of the issues include cultural backgrounds, exposure, and personal differences, among other issues.

### **Cultural Issues NVC in Marketing Communication**

Non-verbal communication, within the marketing context, is used by individuals and professionals who have the right skills and market grasp to fully integrate customers without losing the meaning and intent of the marketing. According to Knapp et al. (2013), one of the most realistic issues in all forms of marketing communication is the correct inclusion of cultural contexts. Non-verbal communication cultural differences occur because of how different cultures and people interpret the set of non-verbal communication entails in the world. Non-verbal communication, use, detail, and meaning vary across cultures and individuals.

Chin (2022) argues that cultural attention to non-verbal communication use within professional contexts is marked by the likelihood of increased satisfaction and relationship building. The research involving cultural attention to non-verbal communication further underlines the sheer importance of this attribute in modern business by stating that in the current “dynamic business environment, organizations need a good form of communication to strengthen their business performance” (Chin, 2022, p. 5). The analysis and attention should be integrated not only with the appropriate fields but into the processes and actions that executives use to communicate with their colleagues and stakeholders. However, acknowledging and implementing cultural attention in professional contexts is difficult because non-verbal communication behavior is still heavily underestimated and understood.

In another study, Yang et al. (2022) pin specific global cultural differences in reactions to non-verbal communication on how various people and individuals perceive non-verbal



communication. The study identifies various attributes as differences in global non-verbal communication. First, Wang et al. establish eye contact as one of the most diverse global features of non-verbal communication. Eye contact, according to this study, exemplifies confidence in the West. However, individuals might interpret it as challenging or rude in parts of Asia and the Middle East. Furthermore, the study notes that several gender and cultural rules guide eye contact use in cultures, with “many Eastern cultures discouraging women from making eye contact with men as it conveys authority or sexual interest” (Yang et al., 2022, p. 7). Inappropriate use of eye contact in marketing scenarios in this context may lead to extremes in understanding and interpretation.

Nevertheless, Ravenet et al. (2013) argue that touch is another frequent feature in non-verbal communication. The importance of the touch feature is so vast that it is difficult to exclude it from official and professional organizational contexts. With customs like handshakes, touch is a frequent non-verbal communication tool that fits most communication contexts. However, touch is considered inappropriate in other communities. In Asia, for instance, touch is accorded a more conservative approach; in most cases, a bow replaces handshakes. Another relevant example, according to Yang et al. (2022), is head patting, which in the U.S. is seen as endearing or affectionate for children. Conversely, this detail is seen as disrespectful, especially by Asian adults.

Khan et al. (2021) analyze the power and influence of gestures in the professional realm and how it influences various outcomes in marketing and organizational executions. The study of the power and influence of gestures in the professional realm established that gestures are an intriguing and complicated aspect of marketing that is carefully used or, in other stages, not used at all. According to Ravenet et al. (2013), many international establishments opt not to use

gestures because of the possibility of being misinterpreted. For instance, pointing at someone may be seen as a sign of reference, but it is interpreted as an insult in some organizations, which might hurt the organizational reputation. A subtle reference is made to the Polynesians who stick out their tongues to greet people, an action that is heavily contrasted and understood elsewhere. Studies establish that the only familiar gesture in the world is a nod which is also interpreted differently by different people.

As a rule of thumb, it is recommended that no matter where one is in the world, giving as much space as possible to people than one thinks they need is vital. Kakharov and Usmonova (2022) argue that the etiquette of communication and interaction only allows one to move closer if invited. Despite different regions and people viewing distance and space differently, it is only necessary to avoid entering personal space as communicational intents may be rendered useless where proximity comfortability is compromised. On the other hand, however, facial expressions bear an easier route to global use and applications. All facial expressions are universal (happiness, sadness, anger, and fear), making communicating easier. However, not all cultures permit their use within a business context like Japan, where showing emotions “burdens the other party” (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019, p. 87). Together with facial expressions, physical appearance is seeded with the need to be acceptable; it is necessary to ensure that conservative attire is always encouraged, no matter the situation or the overarching organizational requirements. When combined with the correct posture, conservative dressing allows for organizational executions to be accessible and facilitative.

Finally, the cultural details of non-verbal communication bear a distinctively different approach in paralanguage exploitations. It is extensive to understand that different cultures will take different paralanguage entails, like the tone of voice, speed of speech, and loudness are tied

to various cultural perceptions and differences. According to Horgan et al. (2022), paralanguage is critical to understanding the context of the words used. As the context of words is not discernable in emails and texts, it is wise to ensure that in-person communication details align with the expected contextual reactions. In a deeper evaluation of intercultural exploits of non-verbal communication, Houser (2020) nuances that understanding high-context vs. low-context cultural outcomes of communication affects the perception of non-verbal exploits of communication. In high-context cultures, specific detail is concentrated on the culture's heavy reliance on non-verbal communication to affect their communication. In the high-context culture scenario, individuals are likely to use and understand non-verbal communication better, as explored in their personal relationships, social hierarchies, and cultural knowledge. Unlike low-context settings, it is easier to communicate and rely on non-verbal exploits for individuals from this setting. Likewise, organizations' communication and marketing drivers must acknowledge that low-context societies have more direct relationships that begin and end quickly, with the hierarchies extremely relaxed.

### **NVC in Advertisements: Is It That Simple?**

As preconceived in the several arguments pinning the basic rules of applying and using non-verbal communication in marketing and professional entails, it is possible to over-estimate or under-estimate the ease of application and use of non-verbal cues in marketing. Whereas it is easy and conventional to reach as many clients as possible without verbal commitments, several practical issues should be accounted for, like everyday language and detailed marketing.

According to Honcharova (2016), non-verbal marketing for official communicative purposes, like advertisements, is filled with primary challenges that puzzle any advertisement. First, the communicating parties need to conduct relevant analyses and make accurate educated

guesses on what non-verbal communication details will appeal to the given audience, meaning that, unlike verbal-based communication, research has to run deeper into all the aspects that impact informational and communicational perception. Next, Hewett and Lemon (2019) caution that organizations must be eager to analyze the physical attractiveness of the models or persons selected to convey or appear in the messages. The detail of analyzing physical attractiveness can inflate the advertisement costs and budgets as most organizations are likely to seek the services of famous people like celebrities who are likable or have an extensive public appeal.

Hasyim (2019) further analyzes the outcomes of various non-verbal communication details, and according to his analysis, the people used in the ads must infer a positive reflection, facially, on the target audience. The market should envision and account for the expected facial reactions, and this undertaking would likely call for market impact pre-checks, a facet that is also likely to inflate the non-verbal marketing communication cost. Yang et al. (2022) also argue that any non-verbal communication exploit should be backed by the intention to understand the proxemics portrayed in the advert alongside the non-verbal touch messages portrayed by such an advert. In addition, the accessories or lack of them in the advert, such as clothing and artifacts, should be accountable; and the envisioning and handling of all these matters should be in harmony with the environment created or utilized in the advertisement process. Lastly, all the non-verbal communication details applied in any marketing message should account for the appearance of written words. Hall et al. (2013) argue that the words should be selected in ways that complement the message and avoid repetition or contradiction. As such, garnering a successful non-verbal communication-based advertisement drive is not easy as it requires comprehensive approaches and inclusions from the psychological, physical, social, mental, financial, creative, and all other communication entails.

### **NVC and HR: What Attributes Should Be Integrated in Management?**

According to Kurniadi and Mahaputra (2021), non-verbal communication, like other entails of organizational interest, must be integrated carefully and effectively into management. The study of careful integration of non-verbal communication ludes to the extensive applications and positive effects of introducing non-verbal communication in communicative instances. However, care should be taken to ensure that the full benefits of non-verbal communication are gained within organizational management. Diligent and deliberate actions from the managers can be leveraged as necessary action points for the effective attainment of streamlined activities in non-verbal communication contexts.

Furthermore, Chin (2022) argues that the place of non-verbal communication within official communication, especially in employee-employer relations, is an underrated detail that could lead to extensive gains for overall efficiency and management. The journey to being an impactful manager begins with careful attention to the smallest of details. One of the major proponents, however, is the understanding of communication dynamics, and for managers who have mastered integrating non-verbal communication into their skills, effective communication will never be a problem. Hall (2017) argues that what and how managers say do not conform to the ideals of effective communication. Rather, effective communication within the management details, especially in human resource attributes, relies on the proper reading of “inadvertent cues we give off with our body language affect how our messages are received by our audience, which can, in turn, affect relationships” (Khanna & Robins, 2021, p. 2). The study further states that an emphasis on non-verbal communication “in the workplace builds strong teams that learn to understand each other beyond verbal messaging.” (Khanna & Robins, 2021, p. 4). Thus, the

implication in any official or non-official use of non-verbal communication is that non-verbal communication exuded gives the most prominent chunk of meaning, as it is in the workplace.

In a bid to attain the highest degree of success in non-verbal exploits within HR-related management contexts, Chin (2022) cautions that leaders are supposed to account for several factors, among them being the possession of a high degree of situational awareness. Situational awareness in organizational execution and application of non-verbal cues of communication does not only to foster more understanding, but it allows for the conveyance of leadership skills such as emotional intelligence. Leaders must have a grasp of their emotions and understand that non-verbal communication cues given emanate more information than what they actually say.

Owing to the need for practical application of non-verbal communication within the presets of adequate and accurate HR management, Sumer (2017) recognizes that non-verbal communication exploitation from within the organization is directly reflected in the external outcomes of marketing. Further, Khanna and Robbins (2021) present a framework that offers insight into the correct executions from within management stakeholders to ensure that organizational processes fall in tandem with effective communication. The article on organizational effective communication nuances that all leaders must mind their gestures and posture; this is an essential aspect because the gestures and postures adopted by the managers indicate their willingness to learn and listen. According to Hall and Knapp (2013), body language is an important pointer of the expressions people cannot exude verbally. Managers should practice positive body language as it extends their willingness and openness to receive and learn new information. As such, it is decisive for managers to identify that positive body language input is a constant fight to balance between listening and contributing to a communicative context such as a concern-raising conversation. The fundamental aspirations of

managers should be tied to the reality that positive gestures and postures encourage employees and subjects to share their insights easily and freely. Furthermore, a positive and meaningful execution of good postures and gestures allows leaders to contribute to communication from the onset directly.

Regarding the consequences of non-verbal communication within organizational contexts, Harrison and Knapp (1972) infer that individuals should integrate effective eye contact and adopt an appropriate tone in their communicative exploits. It is clear that in modern-day management, most managers, like all individuals, struggle with incepting the right eye contact. In contrast, the situation of effective eye contact might be worsened by personal and cultural differences in eye contact use, and it is still seen as a considerable detail of non-verbal communication that must be available (and accurately so) within employer/manager-employee contexts. In remote working situations (which are more common nowadays), Horgan (2020) advises that managers should integrate effective eye contact into their communication and coordination of remote teams by looking directly into the camera during meetings. Eye contact correlates with the choice and application of the correct tone in communicative details. It is far-reaching for managers to understand that specific intonations are applicable and effective in different areas; this way, it is vital for the associated individuals to understand that some intonations are impractical and conducive to productivity. Thus, according to the recommendations made by Gozalova et al. (2016), it is necessary for any manager to adapt the tone of voice with optimal regard to contextual factors. Furthermore, care should be taken to ensure that at all times, the communication details should be exuded using a balanced tone seeded with the intent to create confidence and trust in the subjects.

Within the internal organizational contexts, Fielding (2015) argues that it is vital for managers to check out for exaggerated signs in communication contexts with their subjects; this attribute can help managers identify boredom, stress, fatigue, or signs of anger and frustration among the employees. The greatest rule of thumb governing the above reactions is checking the quality of communication and establishing a bond that allows the individuals to express their choices and voices. Sometimes, cases with extreme sighing may be indicative of a situation where the employees have an opinion or suggestion but do not know how to express themselves clearly. It is the role of the managers to ensure that they take the necessary steps to understand their employees.

Additionally, managers should be willing and efficient in maintaining openness and receptiveness within communicative contexts. In receiving information and submissions, for instance, managers should be aware that their body language gives more feedback than what they could actually say. To account for the effect of body language on information received, Khanna and Robins (2021) argue that “whether we’re sitting with our arms and legs crossed, or leaning back in our chair, away from the person who’s speaking. On the surface these mannerisms might have to do with circumstantial aspects” (Khanna & Robins, 2021, p. 8). For instance, uncomfortable employees are likely to fold their arms or lean back. Yet, these subtle signs may indicate disinterest, upsetness, or tiredness within a given context.

Various studies have suggested the need for managers to be mindful of their facial expressions. According to Feniger-Schaal et al. (2018), the information given by the communicating party, especially for the managers, should fall in tandem with the set of facial expressions selected. It is further suggested that managers should be mindful of their expressions, stay present, and adapt to the facial expressions needs. Managers who observe



mindful facial expression features in their day-to-day organizational communication exploits establish cohesiveness in their workplaces because they can understand others better, including their key messages. The details of this undertaking go deeper than subtle exploits in communication because facial expressions are involuntary reactions to shocking, unexpected, disgusting, sad, and several other types of news. Managers must also consider several details to ensure they do not radiate negative information or impressions. To avoid extreme reactions that may negatively affect the employees or subjects, Khanna and Robins (2021) argue that managers must take time, pause, and ask meaningful and thoughtful questions before giving accurate facial expressions.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that pins the efficacy of non-verbal communication to optimal management and operational efficiencies, several details impact the correct perception and application of its official use. Feniger-Schaal et al. (2018) argue that false impressions during a non-verbal communication context are inevitable; thus, according to this study, one can secrete false impressions even without meaning them. False impressions might then lead to extreme disparities between the management and employee perspectives. Where the managers are unable to extend the correct reactions, it is likely to result in negative outcomes. For instance, an employee might place his face in the palm of his hand. In normal circumstances, placing a face in the palm of a hand is interpreted as being bored, but this action might be relieving to the individual or an assistive behavior to foster more concentration. Thus, caution is projected to the managers to ensure they take time to isolate instant reactions to any inference of non-verbal communication.

In the analysis of business semiotics and non-verbal communication, Evans (2022) fronts that employees inevitably learn from their managers. Thus, managers need to ensure that they

lead by example in all aspects and matters concerning organizational non-verbal communication. Evans (2022) suggests that managers should always be willing to schedule 1-on-1 time to talk and engage employees who display negative or disengaged body language across different contexts. Better still, managers are tasked with the role of steering the creation and continuation of a positive work culture. Hence, it is necessary to ensure that managers grasp, understand, and extend meaningful reactions to all factors of non-verbal cues. Sometimes, it is essential to take further steps in analyzing the cultural, environmental, and personal concerns that may alter the execution of non-verbal communication. Understanding how these factors interact and affect communication outcomes in the individual employees may be essential in curtailing group conflicts; this is an essential detail, especially in the modern business world where most organizational roles are remotely executed, creating vast environmental and circumstantial differences. Furthermore, managers should understand that the exploits, understanding, and projections of non-verbal communication vary from individual to individual, and this reality is likely to be extreme in cases where workplaces are highly diverse. Thus, managers should take the correct steps to create harmonious workplaces that are mindful of various non-verbal habits of others and, in turn, identify the individual needs of the employees and build better relationships with the teams and stakeholders.

### **Gesture, Rhetoric, and Their Relation to NVC**

According to Aristotle, the entails of non-verbal communication, like verbal communication, should be preceded by appropriate behavior. “Appropriate behavior,” in this case, infers to the executions made by the speaker in relation to non-verbal details (Hall & Knapp, 2013). In fact, Aristotle nuanced that a speaker who did not pay attention to non-verbal communication cues made the entire speech and self “susceptible to the questioning of their

credibility” (Lotfinejad et al., 2020, p. 3). Furthermore, Aristotle argued that appropriate behavior was difficult to attain even if the communication details “accounted for even when one is speaking the truth.” (Lotfinejad et al., 2020, p. 4). In Aristotle’s phenomenology, a gesture is regarded as a universal language that can avail meaning even when the target audience does not understand the communicated language (Horgan et al., 2022). The idea of gesture as a universal language is seen as an inheritance from classical rhetoric, and the new importance coined around this concept in the renaissance period sticks to date.

During the classical period, various philosophers like Aristotle sought to link the outcomes and executions of non-verbal communication to the reforms that could, later, extend the deep meaning to the concept of effective use of voice and gesture (Lotfinejad et al., 2020). In Aristotle’s Poetics, non-verbal communication has been attributed to the ability to possess a catalyzing effect that vastly affected contemporary rhetoric. Further, Aristotle nuanced that this effect carried an emphasizing influence and extended the reach of non-verbal arts and the rhetorical theory (Ravenet et al., 2013). According to Aristotle, the outcomes of non-verbal communication were tied to adding a dynamic physiognomics based on his basic principles of psychology.

Regarding the arguments by Aristotle, he claimed that the need to persuade the audience using non-verbal communication (as it is in verbal communication) rests on the stress and attention paid to the various “appeals” of communication (Ravenet et al., 2013). The appeals range from the ethos (ethical appeal), intricately related to the outcomes in credibility within the communication. Next, Aristotle analyzed the feature of pathos (emotional appeal), arguing that this facet of communication relates to the relative outcomes in putting the audience in the right frame of mind to appeal to their emotions (Pavalanathan & Eisenstein, 2015). Finally, Aristotle

viewed the entails of logical appeals, better known as logs, in the details of the communication process (Gozalova et al., 2016). In this regard, Aristotle argued that the outcomes and the procedural executions of non-verbal communication should be integrated into using facts to resonate with and trigger an appeal to reason. Effective use of logos in the communication process propagates the communicating parties to accrue to the entail of authority.

Like Aristotle's claims in the appeals of communication, applying non-verbal cues of communication requires one to effectively apply the gestures, facial expressions, and any other forms of communication with acute adherence to logic, emotional appeal, and with engagements that create and foster credibility (Tubbs & Carter, 2020). Aristotle's arguments lay the foundation for the correct applications and engagements in understanding non-verbal communication. It is essential to understand that the application of the correct non-verbal cues in communication must relate to good balance, and in most cases, this entailment must be ceded with verbal cues of communication (Gozalova et al., 2016). Overuse of non-verbal components of communication may, for instance, turn out to be ineffective and off-putting.

Effective non-verbal communication is congruent to the relative ease of better connections and outcomes. Properly executed non-verbal cues, such as gestures and body movements, greatly influence other forms of communication (Rustamovich, 2022). It is possible for individuals and organizations to leverage the extensive power and influence of non-verbal communication to create connections without even saying a word. Most important, however, is the need to avoid poorly organized communication or appeals of communication and, instead, decide to emphasize the effects and attributes of non-verbal communication (Geladó et al., 2022). Positive vibes and appreciation are some of the attributes that are aided by non-verbal communication.

Furthermore, the efficacy and efficiency of communication are handled by analyzing Aristotle's appeals, where communication is narrowed down to the need to persuade and influence (Kakharov & Usmonova, 2022). In reality, non-verbal communication is detailed as a set of components rather than verbal communication that engage the audience to believe that the details held are more valid, logical, and credible than other parties. According to Liu et al. (2022), the ability to influence through ethos is, for instance, tied to the fact that the audience can view the message without the "I." Hence, communication must therefore be availed through deliberate measures that support a sense of common interest.

It is necessary to use pathos and all the emotional entails of communication in attributes that direct the recipients of the non-verbal communication toward an emotion. One of the challenges tied to pathos as an emotional appeal of non-verbal communication is the likelihood of the recipients avoiding associating themselves with entails and aspects of cues that do not flatter their interests (Gelado et al., 2022). Lastly, the logos aspect may benefit the communicator because it creates the attribute of changing attention from general to specific truths. Liu et al. 2022, mentioned that, it is distinguished, however, to ensure that the communication process carefully analyzes real factual effects on the use of various components in a bid to evade scenarios like a post-hoc fallacy, which can instigate faulty cause-and-effect relationships in communication situations.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to analyze the range of issues and attributes related to gestures and body language in non-verbal communication (Del Giacco et al., 2019). The application of any non-verbal cue of communication is weighed against the interest created and the emotions triggered in the subject audience. Non-verbal cues of communication can be an essential attribute of emphasizing and clarifying the information detailed. Further, gestures, and body language,

alongside other non-verbal cues of communication, are vital components of reinforcing sincerity and enthusiasm in the communication process (Liu et al., 2022). In non-verbal communication, all the entities are supposed to be well-coordinated and handled in a communication entail enriched with accuracy and intention. Eye contact, for instance, should be effectively used as this attribute creates a lasting and immediate bond with the audience, in case it is a live performance or a communication scenario.

Non-verbal communication should circulate in ways that trigger effective handling of communication mannerisms (Feniger-Schaal, 2018). In this regard, the communicating party should be wary of the issues such as involuntary hand movements and signals. It is argued that non-verbal cues can effectively detail a speaker's relative confidence level, and how they handle these issues resonates with the kind of attention and interest the audience will likely give them. Using filler words such as *uhm* or *ah* can strip communication, compromising credibility and rendering the speaker vulnerable to being continuously judged (Feniger-Schaal, 2018). Excessive nodding is another example of an inappropriate non-verbal communication cue. Most important, however, is the need to use actions in verbs during any communication or rhetorical detail. Non-verbal cues may benefit the speaker more in cases where there is an intentional action connected to the non-verbal cues, such as movements and other entails (Liu et al., 2022).

Overall, ensuring that the set of inferred gestures and other non-verbal cues carry meaning in sincerity is fundamental. Facial expressions should, for instance, be construed to match the applied facial expressions and the body movements. The issues addressed should bear relevance to the verbal and non-verbal communication entities (Del Giacco et al., 2019). A keen analysis of these issues within the spectrum of personal or organizational communication infers a

clarity of connection and understanding to any detail of carefully and accurately applied non-verbal communication component.

### **Theories that Explain NVC**

The theoretical concept of non-verbal communication relates to an expansive backdrop of advancements and inputs that have been passed down the generations for ages. Non-verbal communication is regarded by many as an entail of evolutions that involves many generations where communication entails “interpreting emotions through non-spoken means” (Sapitri et al., 2019, p. 2). Therefore, the outcomes in non-verbal communication would imply a close correspondence between various components of non-verbal communication like facial contortions or precise body movements with a universally applicable reaction (s) to uniformly represent a particular emotion (Cameron et al., 2020). Understanding the theoretical perspectives and entails of non-verbal communication requires an introspective approach to the historical and natural attributions tied to language development.

One of the most widely approached and applied theories related to non-verbal communication is the Darwinian theory which states that “nonverbal cues for specific emotions can be traced as far back as the first humans and can be seen in some closely related animal species” (Feniger-Schaal et al., 2018, p. 2). The Darwinian theory relies on the various historical findings and connections to decree that the totality of non-verbal communication entities contains and reveals a message that is sometimes universally tied to a range of outcomes in human emotive and relational situations (Cameron et al., 2020). Given the Darwinian theory, psychologists and linguists have taken steps to study the behaviors and engagements of animals that bear genetic similarity to human beings in a bid to explore and explain the hypothesis. Individuals like Sauter and Snowden set their studies on the need to carefully observe macaques,

seen as members of the primate genus that bears a close resemblance to human beings (Horgan, 2020)..

In the Sauter and Snowden study, an evaluation of macaques, it was established that animals could exhibit several modes and components of non-verbal communication typically tied to human beings (Horgan, 2020). In Sauter's and Snowden's study, the psychologists established that macaques let out shrills and shrieks when faced with a predator with frequencies and likeness to the screams of human beings (Cunha et al., 2018). Sauter's and Snowden's study also established that the macaques would let out utter cries that reflected joy, similar to human beings when they landed food or fruits. According to Cameron et al. (2020), the Darwinian theory proves that as animals and organisms of the same primal lineage, getting the right reactions and engagements in non-verbal communication is tied to the range of reactions traversing generations and various levels of development.

The contextual theory of non-verbal communication nuances that the origin of non-verbal communication is contextual in most cases and scenarios, just like verbal communication (Cunha et al., 2018). Various studies and research entities have been made over the years to argue for several cases and allow for a plausible connection between these details. One undertaking includes studies to establish whether facial expressions and vocal tones are easily recognizable in different settings across different cultures (Sapitri et al., 2019). In the case of recognizing facial expressions and vocal tones, various suggestions were made relating to independent deductions or the outcomes in the hypothesis of the theory (Cameron et al., 2020). Here, suggestions (and relative outcomes) relate facial expressions and emotions to extremities, like the use of facial contortions applied to express happiness, anger, disgust, and contempt bear inherent features of universality.



It is possible, to connect strong and appealing evidence to the basic human emotions on the praxis of facial expressions (Cameron et al., 2020). Thus, it is concluded that there is a reality in the depth and extensiveness of non-verbal cues of communication employed (Pfeifer et al., 2022). It is possible to pick out universal feelings and cues from basic attributes like applying a photograph from completely parallel cultures and backgrounds. As a result, the outcomes in getting a target emotion are tied to the contextual facial expressions, and regardless of the location, background, or even understanding, it is possible to pick out the relative contextual realities in the communication process.

Albert Mehrabian was among the most conventional linguists to develop non-verbal communication theories (Cameron et al., 2020). According to Mehrabian, analyzing the facets of communication in one progressive and inclusive entail is possible. Mehrabian argued that there are three core elements in effective face-to-face communication of attitudes or emotions. Mehrabian grouped these entails into non-verbal behavior, tone of voice, and the literal meaning of the spoken word (Sapitri et al., 2019). According to Mehrabian (2017), these three elements were vital in accounting for how individuals convey their liking or disliking of another person (Sapitri et al., 2019). Subtly, the essence of communication and the reactions of such an undertaking are reduced to, in this case, the set of appeals, credibility, and influence. Mehrabian's focus in the communication process was on the importance of non-verbal cues within any communicative detail and how they affected the literal meaning of the spoken words.

Mehrabian's interest in non-verbal communication was fueled by his intense interest in non-verbal communication and the eventual founding of the 7-38-55% communication rule (Pavalanathan & Eisenstein, 2015). The 7-38-55% communication rule was founded and fronted in his first experiment, where he partnered with Morton Wiener to decode inconsistencies in

communication. Mehrabian's second experiment was dedicated to studying the relative effects of the conclusions gained in the first experiment. In the second analysis, Mehrabian partnered with Susan R. Ferris, and together they sought to study the inference of attitudes to various non-verbal communication entities (Cunha et al., 2018). The latter was performed in adherence to two channels, and the findings were used to craft the relative inferences and reactions to the modern-day understanding of non-verbal communication.

Notably, the range of Mehrabian arguments constituted findings from his major experiments in 1967. Mehrabian would then use the findings from his two experiments to formulate the 7-38-55% communication rule. According to the 7-38-55% communication rule, only 7% of communication is affected verbally (Cameron et al., 2020). The rule further details that the nonverbal entities of daily communication, such as body language and tone of voice, make up 38% and 55%, respectively (Pfeifer et al., 2022). The baseline for this rule is that strong non-verbal skills and communication cues matter most in any communication process, no matter how one expresses issues using verbal skills (Cameron et al., 2020). The essentiality of Mehrabian's research holds extreme importance even in today's life and situation. In today's corporate executions, for instance, where most issues are handled through online and remote approaches, non-verbal communication may be used to detail trust and authority (Pfeifer et al., 2022). The image created per the 7-38-55% rule allows one the autonomy to have favorable and better judgment. A master of non-verbal communication exploits is likely to be seen as authentic, authoritative, and influential; these three features are the key aspects of any communication detail, and most individuals would rather be good communicators if they understand how to persuade such entails to their best interest.

In the desire to be understood and to effectively influence, the totality of details in the 53% component of Mehrabian's theory should be adhered to (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). Good listening skills seeded in active and engaging attributes make one likable and predispose individuals to an increased likelihood of being understood better. However, listening might only be effective in cases where attributes like pitch and tonality of voice are accounted for (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). Instead, as words carry only 7% of the meaning and intentions in communication, it is imperative to study the body language (53%) of the communicating parties to attain the reflections and deeper meanings seeded in the various communication entails.

### **Understanding Emojis as a Form of NVC**

The tremendous advancement and spur in the growth and use of social media in the past century has been marked by several adjustments that have made it possible for various entails to be applied and utilized daily (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). Almost everyone who has grown in the digital era is aware of emojis and their relevance in easing communication processes. The growth of emoticons and emojis have taken complete control of social media activities. Emojis were originally created as a carrier of emotions and affective states. The details of any emoji were based on non-verbal attributions in real time (Cheng et al., 2020). The physical indicators of virtual communication are affected by reactions, facial expressions, and other attributes.

Emoji use is, however, carried out by using different frequencies and extents across different platforms (Cheng et al., 2020). Platforms like WhatsApp have an elevated incidence of emoji use, coinciding with a 49.65% of belief in the general public that these emojis are the most used (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019). Emojis are currently seen as conduit pipes that officiate the display of emotions and reactions in computer-mediated non-verbal communication. Emojis arise from a set of details that allow individuals to communicate while traversing the

challenge of exposing tone and non-verbal cues in virtual communication (Bai et al., 2019). In digital communication, emojis bridge the gap between the messages (written) and the contexts of tone and mood of the messages. Additionally, emojis act as flair; in this case, they aid people in showing their personalities and integrate fun into the communication process (Bai et al., 2019). The impact of emoji introduction into the digital world of communication has been intense since its official introduction in the last decade.

The application of emojis can be related to the arguments of Aristotle on non-verbal communication and the inference of non-verbal cues of communication in any communication process (Etumnu et al., 2021). There are debates surrounding the understanding of emojis, as some individuals point out that they can convey human emotions and allow written messages to express the exactness of intended meanings. The current use of emojis is only expected to rise because the use of written messages is advancing more than ever (Gawne & McCulloch, 2019). The incidence of face-to-face communication use in casual and official states is declining, and the number of people evading verbal communication is ever rising. The number of people confident about making phone calls or engaging in various aspects of non-verbal communication is rising; for this reason, the developments around emoji use are likely to advance to new levels (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019). Emoji understanding and use is thus progressing on the enviable ranks of a unique set of social skills, that individuals need to accumulate.

In their advent in the 1990s by a Japanese communications company, the use of emojis and the scale of their executions was not preconceived to reach the current targets, let alone exert the influence experienced across major social media platforms (Burgoon, 1980). It is important to note that the extensive and rapid advancement of the growth and use of emojis was set on course by the Japanese communications company's introduction to IOS 5 in 2011 (Etumnu et al.,

2021). At the end of 2017, it was estimated that over six billion emojis were sent through smartphones alone daily. The great number of emojis sent is likely to soar because of the increased access to smartphones and the influence of emoji use that continually makes their use carry a standard of appeal and conventionality (Heiskanen, 2022). Emojis are the new phase of language, and the users are at a new age where several emojis are used as tools to express tone better, extend emotional cues, and thus, put individuals in control of managing information flow and interpretation.

Despite the heated attention to the use of emojis in conventional communication, it is decisive to note that emojis are not a self-contained language. Emojis are attributes used when the typed words are unlikely to hit the mark (Beattie et al., 2020). Using emojis in any communication detail may also be a way to express more than an individual is willing to say. In the current state, emojis are heavily executed to replace, reinterpret, or modify various details of linguistic communication (Godard & Holtzman, 2022). Based on the current advancement and exploitations, it is highly likely that the set of future developments will allow for more accuracy in the correct use of emojis and the exactness of facial expressions. Currently, platforms like Facebook have a series of emoji-like options in their posts (Beattie et al., 2020). The Facebook emoji-like feature can be used as a replica of conventional communication entails, for instance, such as the pain level scale charts in healthcare facilities.

It is estimated that more than 70% of interactions in all human communications are derived through non-verbal communication (Beattie et al., 2020). Attributes like physical touch, proximity of closeness, gestures, and body language are so integral in human communication that missing out may alter the intended influence or meaning of the communication process (Harrison & Knapp, 1972). In recent times, however, advancements in technology and the

changing scope of humanistic interactions imply difficulty in implicating non-verbal cues of communication into various communication scenarios. Technological limits in allowing people to express their emotions and reactions in actual communication situations have been replaced by emojis.

The current technological craze in the use of emojis is tied to the increased need for user-specific emojis that can convey emotions and reactions relevant to the fast-paced changes in linguistics (Etumnu et al., 2021). Here, the key attribute is to connect that just like the changing sphere of interactions, so is the process of handling various demands that arise from personal differences connected to emoji use (Marengo et al., 2017). High specificity and modification of the emoji systems have thus come into play with attributes like Google's messaging app, Allo, which can change selfies into emoji stickers. More than ever, machine learning and algorithms are now being utilized to offer a personalized experience to emoji users and their relative outcomes.

Interestingly, machine learning has been connected to its incredible ability to generate 563 quadrillion different faces. For the machine learning execution, Google has been credited with ingeniously using a computer program that stimulates a human brain to build a human face in emoji-use scenarios (Pavalanathan & Eisenstein, 2015). iPhone makers have also capitalized on the extensive AI-related executions of machine learning to create Animoji, a component that uses 3D face sensors to craft custom 3D animated emojis that mimic facial movements and the set of facial gestures. iPhone's Animoji can be described as "custom animated messages that convey your voice through a digitization of your facial expression" (Beattie et al., 2020, p. 4). The necessitates of these smart emoji applications are contained in face tracking 3D sensor hardware that picks any facial expressions and animates them in real time. The face-tracking 3D

sensor attribute is a direct clone of real-time humanistic interactions, and the ability to send non-verbal communication through emojis represents the pinnacle of modern-day interactions and technological communication.

Of concern is that emojis offer more than just a virtual communication detail. More accurately, they offer entertaining and interactive getaways detailing contextual information that cannot be written in a user-mediated way (Heiskanen, 2022). Emojis, as aforementioned, cannot be viewed as a full-blown language, but they are closer to the entails of non-verbal communication than any other conventional entail of non-verbal communication. The language limitation paves the way for emojis' strength: the ability to match non-verbal cues to written messages to influence meaning, impact, and the portrayal of credibility (Wu, 2022). Likewise, it is indispensable to understand that the demands of online communication are not being changed by emojis alone. True to the developments, emojis are not changing how, when, and how various interactions occur. Rather, developments in language and increased outreach and scope of demographics in social media increase the relevance of emojis and other non-verbal attributes of communication.

### **Components of Emojis: What Makes Emojis?**

The understanding of the need for an emoji account for either a pictogram, ideogram, logogram, or a smiley ingrained or embedded in a text and applied in web pages or any form of electronic communication (Gawne & McCulloch, 2019). An emoji's definitional and executional attributes account for filling and presenting emotional cues that are otherwise excluded from the message or the communication detail (Liu et al., 2022). Most people are likely to have issues differentiating emoticons, but the primary attributes entail the inclusion of a range of specific emotions using faces and actions in the utilized symbols.

It is vital to note that emojis and emoticons, however, bear striking differences that set the two attributes apart (Pavalanathan & Eisenstein, 2015). The emoticon application and use came into sight in the early 80s. Forming an emoticon involves a set of characters woven together to display an emotion or sentiment. The features in the characters are used to combine and create the emotion icon, offering the basic definition of an emoticon, an “emotional icon” (Liu et al., 2022). Despite the reduced use of emoticons, emojis are still used up to date to reflect various emotions and communicate sentimental details of messages and chats in electronic media.

### **Understanding Emojis: History of Emojis**

The history of emojis can best be understood by examining attributes that led to their creation, widespread use, and advancement in the general world (Alshenqeeti, 2016). Owing to the intricate historical means that characterize emoji use, it is vital to analyze how emoticons came into being. It is argued that Scott E. Fahlman invented the first emoticon. It is unclear who was the first to use emoticons. Still, it is widely recognized that Fahlman was the first to start popularizing emoticons (Suntwal et al., 2021). A computer science professor in Pennsylvania, Fahlman is famed for first using the sideways smiley face with two eyes and a nose on September 19, 1982 (Horgan, 2020). Fahlman’s execution of emoticons was adherent to a full range of emotions, such as seriousness, sarcasm, and anger, among other emotions. At the earliest time, most students and the faculty had difficulty understanding Fahlman’s intent for making and using emoticons.

Attributes in the emoticons-emoji history might not bear a valid congruence, but it is important to note that these concepts co-exist and can be used alongside each other. Most importantly, attributes in the emoticon-emoji relation pinpoint the facets, such as the introduction



of the clarity of sentiments and emotions, which are otherwise impossible to detail in message types and shared across electronic media (Li & Wang, 2022). The word emoji, however, just like the actual invention of the emojis in the 90s, is tied to a Japanese heritage. The “e” in emoji is the Japanese word for a picture. “Moji,” on the other hand, reflects a character, thus giving birth to the emoji meaning as “symbols or images that can replace a word in digital communication” (Suntwal et al., 2021, p. 2). The use of emojis date back to 1998 when Shigetaka Kurita, an interface design engineer, created a set of 176 characters meant for his telecom employer, DoCoMo. In 2010 however, Unicode (the industry standard for text-writing systems) integrated emojis. Later, Apple Inc. also adopted emojis and added them to various software appliances (Maloney et al., 2020). The advancement in the spread of emoji use across major brands would see Google Android phones adopting them in 2013.

Since the formal recognition and application of emojis in daily use, their popularity has grown, and various advancements have been reached. For instance, emojis became so popular in the early stages of their invention that the Oxford Dictionary chose the “face with tears emoji” as the word of the year (Sadiq, 2019). Statistics that led to the word of the year decision indicated that this specific emoji accounted for one out of every five used emojis. Emojipedia accounts that since the release of the last new emoji in 2018, more than 2,823 emojis have been in active use in daily communication.

Owing to the growth in emojis, extensive historical relations have been fueled to criticize or support the perception that emojis are not a thing of the past, inherently crafted into human culture (Knapp et al., 2013). One of the concepts continually fronted is the idea that emojis closely resemble hieroglyphs. It is vital, however, to note that emojis have a similar aesthetic appeal and extension compared to hieroglyphs. Both components use graphic symbolism and

language attributes directed at conveying meaning. However, it is difficult to subtly tie the elements of emojis and hieroglyphs together because of the intent in their use and creation (Sadiq, 2019). Emojis are susceptible to numerous deductions and interpretations owing to contextual use and tone. However, hieroglyphics have a specific meaning attached to their use. Each symbol in hieroglyphics infers a word, figure, or phrase. Thus, the totality of the outcomes of using emojis is logographic, implying that, unlike emojis, hieroglyphics are not open to interpretation.

Furthermore, the details in the emoji and hieroglyph components are explored on the grounds of objectivity and specificity. Emojis are universally subjective in meaning and use as opposed to the objectivity integrated with hieroglyphics (Lotfinejad et al., 2020). Ancient emoji-like attributes like hieroglyphics and other paintings are also understood to correspond to logographic and phonographic meanings. The duality of meaning extortion and use is specifically tied to the components of hieroglyphics, making them more precise than emojis. The arguments and understandings that traverse emoji use can be tied to the conclusion and connection of emojis to being pictograms, and their presence can be realistically traced back in time to the very first appearances of any written form of communication. The relevance of these details as pictograms can be inferred to a multitude of modern-day entails like street signs, which can be decreed as modern pictograms using this logic.

### **Understanding Emojis: Can They Replace NVC/Human Gestures?**

The use of emojis in the recent past has dramatically transformed the way various communicational processes are executed. Of most importance has been the debate as to whether emojis hold the same weight as any other form of non-verbal communication or whether they can sufficiently replace the entails of gestures and non-verbal communication (Troiano & Nante,

2018). The debate around this matter can be linked to the outcomes in emoji use, relevance, impacts, and the universality of the applied emojis. Most studies, however, implicate that electronic-media-mediated communication lacks the best non-verbal communication entities (Sadiq, 2019). The use of emojis, however, is disputed to some extent and has been argued for as an assistant to better communicational practices.

Despite the overall challenges in the use, understanding, and application of emojis, their use in virtual and electronic media communication stems from an increased ability to communicate the right emotions and sentiments and, at the same time, allow the intended audience to perceive the right “emotional, attitude, and attention-based intents” (Horgan et al., 2022, p. 2). Various brands have realistically approached several consumer needs with care and attention that has seen emoji use traverse the current world entails. For instance, Snapchat has consistently added emojis that show people icons rather than pictures (Nexø & Strandell, 2020). Moreover, the increased use of emojis by top brands can be an effective way of making the brands “like the clients” and, thus, allowing for more accessible interactions.

Part of effective human communication and engagement is bounded to the clarity of the message. Emojis are easier to entail meaning succinctly, implicating emotions and attending to sentiments using symbols (Elder, 2018). Research shows that various linguistic limitations make it difficult for human beings to easily perceive feelings and attitudes and extend necessary attention to communication when it is availed through written means. The use of gestures, at this time, becomes relevant and valid to the weight of non-verbal implications on communication; these details are inseparable (Ravenet et al., 2013). Emojis are the best front to extend non-verbal communication, such as gestures in social media-propagated communications. Without emojis, most electronic media communicative engagements would have been ineffective. Therefore, a

correctly and effectively used emoji in any communication scenario can convey meaning, influence, weight, mood, and tone, just like gestures (Liu et al., 2022). Succinctly proven, emojis can be viewed as the detail in communication that fulfills the extensive need for gestures and non-verbal communication to any extent.

### **Impacts of Emojis on Communication**

Nearly 90% of online users in the current world use emojis as a primary foundation of their communication entails (Geladó et al., 2022). The extensive use of emojis in daily communication may indicate various adjustments in the social paradigm and as a game-changer to communication's previous, current, and future implications. Business communication is the first aspect that the increased and extensive emoji use has severely impacted. As early as 2014, studies by major business entities connected as high as 76% integration of emoji use into official use (Rustamovich, 2022). The result attributes American workers increased use of adopting emojis to the totality of professional digital communications. According to various studies, emojis in the business world are included in emails with co-workers, managers, and various stakeholders in the corporate world. Businesses took the attributions and awareness of the elevated emoji use seriously, and since its officialization in digital platforms, almost all companies are actively trying to capitalize on the marketing opportunities fronted by emoji use in communication (Gozalova et al., 2016). The earliest emoji use in communication was and still is marked by creative advertising tendencies. For instance, various fast-food joints such as Domino's Pizza creatively expanded their marketing by allowing customers to order their favorites by tweeting or texting the pizza emoji. Most important, however, is the impact of such a simple campaign that reflects just how much potential the use of emojis accounts for in the business world (Geladó et al., 2022). The specific Domino's Pizza emoji campaign resulted in

over 1.2 billion media impressions and increased the company's online presence by over 60%, 10% more than the company's initial online presence.

The outcomes in enhanced cross-cultural interactions evidence the universality of the effect of emoji use in conventional communication. It has long been argued that the outcomes of any communication are inherently down to the mood, tone, and the impact of the extremity of understanding the communication detail (Rustamovich, 2022). In ordinary conversation situations, gaining the necessary control is difficult if non-verbal communication cues are not accounted for in those conversations. Most importantly, it is even more challenging to account for communication meaning where the information is written and, worse still, in virtual entails. Different issues across individuals heighten the complexity of communication effectiveness, including cross-cultural and background differences (Kakharov & Usmonova, 2022). It is hard to attain adequate understanding in communication, even when it involves individuals from the same culture. A different cultural background will, thus, complicate the situation further. Some emojis have the attribute of being universally understood and, as a consequence, encode a meaning(s) identified and conversant with all global cultures (Cunha et al., 2018). The emojis are likely to be almost immediately understood by anyone, and this outcome has aided in blurring the cultural line of differences in various scenarios. However, care should be taken in emoji use because of the thin line between "universality" and cultural disagreement. For instance, Western cultures widely use the thumbs-up emoji as a sign of approval, but this emoji conveys negative connotations in areas of the Middle East and Greece (Sapitri et al. 2019). Furthermore, the angel emoji conveys a different meaning in China as locals associate it with death, unlike in Western areas where it is regarded as a sign of innocence and peace (Cameron et al., 2020). In the

absence of noticeable cross-cultural differences, however, emoji use in communication is a detail that heavily favors cross-cultural communication.

Various theories have been incepted to explain the effective management, propulsion, and handling of public relations. Managing the attributes of public relations in firms is an important detail because it exemplifies an organization's relationship with its market and the general public. Of all the necessitated theoretical and practical approaches to public relations (PR), management is simple and effective communication (Tubbs & Carter, 2020). The growth in emoji use has advanced the details of PR interactions. Using emojis that correspond to texts and various public communication has spurred increased results and positive outcomes in marketing communication. A well-crafted and entailed emoji alongside complementary texts is seeded with a greater likelihood of having the correct responses from the intended audiences (Liu et al., 2022). Likewise, the correct emoji use in corporate scenarios has increased engagements and made the customers and intended clients feel like part of a firm. Feeling "more welcome" and "ingrained" allow positive exploitation of the optimal stakeholder experience and increase a strong presence and impact in the market.

### **Digital Age and Emojis: What Are the Objective Statistics?**

Emojis are now a daily entail of communication, and it is impossible to separate them from any form of communication in electronic media. The usage of emojis in communication has significantly advanced and grown to cove more customers than in the years before (Wu, 2022). It is important to note that the growing popularity of emoji use and application in various situations is correlated to the relative increase in the number of emojis themselves and the increased access to the software dedicated to making personalized emojis. Software dedication to making personalized emojis is especially true because platforms like Twitter offer users access to over

3,245 emojis in their engagements. However, various platforms vary in the amount and extensiveness of emojis used (Geladó et al., 2022). For instance, Twitter has about 20% of its users utilizing emojis. The tweet-user platform relation reflects close to a 38% like ratio for all tweets with emojis (Kakharov & Usmonova, 2022). Despite the outcome in tweets, emojis have increased use and application across other platforms.

Nowadays, emojis are represented in various consumer products such as games, toys, and clothes. Emoji use is also growing in other fields, such as entertainment and advertising. However, emoji growth is more universal and explosive on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Emoji use across various social media platforms is not only tied to the convenience of personalizing messages and communication or easing the understandability of mood or tone (Sapitri et al., 2019). Rather, most individuals who have reported using emojis attribute their elevated use to the ease of communication in an engaging manner. For instance, a report from Emoji Research Team relates 92% of the online population to emoji use. As well, heavy mobile phone users are attributed to using emojis in 56% of their communications (Geladó et al., 2022). Illustrating effective and widely used emojis in messaging, it has been established that light mobile phone users utilize emojis in 37–49% of their communicative entails. The utilization outcome illustrates a thin margin in the emoji use rate and device usage incidence (Tubbs & Carter, 2020). There is a constant linking emoji use to every usage of social platforms, whether light or not.

It is significant to note that the increased use of emojis is associated with the likelihood of increasing the attention of researchers. In mobile communication, emojis have been used to accurately collect public opinions regarding various topics and issues (Feniger-Schaal et al., 2018). The sentiments of tweets, messages and other reactions gained in online communication

are consistent with emoji-backed research, for instance, opinion polls in various dimensions. Compared to other online discussion movers in research or opinions, emojis are attributed to greater extensiveness and represent a faithful representation of the relevant user's emotional state.

### **Cultural Entails of Emoji Use**

One of the most critical aspects of emoji use has to be its relation to cultural and social details. There is a clear cultural attribution to cultural differences that influence how people interpret emojis. The critique affecting cross-cultural emoji interpretation and understanding does not stall on the differences in culture alone but also includes persona differences (Sapitri et al., 2019). Emoji application has huge dissections and divisions, even in organizations where inside jokes and organizational culture may concern emoji understanding and use. Owing to the various sources of discord in the uniformity of emoji meaning extraction, it is important to have relevant measures to handle the likelihood of discords and upsets in their use.

Emojis are an impeccable feature of modern-day communication. However, most platforms have a separate emoji set that is uniquely set to embrace their identity and appeal to their users (Cameron et al., 2020). The difference in the palates of emoji varieties offered aside from the Unicode emoji versions elevates the likelihood of misunderstanding and misinterpreting the emojis. Thus, emojis look different and expose the users to an increased chance of mix-ups (Wu, 2022). The increasing usage of emojis in personal and professional details necessitates increased apprehension for operative attribution of cultural and personal emotional cues translation.

Among most cultures, various issues are conveyed more through non-verbal cues in communication. As a reliable replacement for missing nonverbal cues in communication, emojis,



like the cues, are disposed to misinterpretation (Tubbs & Carter, 2020). It isn't easy to clearly establish why people use emojis in various situations or are drawn to use emojis in the first place. Moreover, different cultures are uniquely integrated with independent behavior entails (Liu et al., 2022). Understanding cultural differences that set people aside and using the results to predict the actual and theoretical outcomes of different emojis are focal.

American culture is, for instance, entwined to a high correspondence to independent, unique, and direct forms of communication (Horgan, 2020). Unlike the American culture, East Asian cultures such as China and South Korea are identical with intragroup harmony, place a high value on social relationships, and encourage indirect (passive) communication forms. Based on the cultural differences between Americans and East Asian individuals alone, it is likely that people in China and South Korea will use more emojis in situations of communication (Sapitri et al., 2019). The central aspect of American and East Asian differences is interrelated to the apparent differences in sensitivity and concern for others in the two cultures. Greater use of emojis is, thus, likely to be a standard detail of individuals from societies that encourage interdependent values (Cunha et al., 2018). The basic attribution of emoji use in communication mirrors the applications of non-verbal cues in face-to-face communication. Unlike the outcomes in direct, written communication, emoji use reflects the necessity for positive social relationships.

As mentioned above, cultural differences affect how an individual or a demographic will likely interpret a message (Tubbs & Carter, 2020). Such is the difference in the cross-cultural perception of tone and mood in the messages ceded with emojis. Another clear example of the cultural difference is the attenuation of the differences brought about by emoji use across different topics. Studies have linked Western cultures to incorporate more emoji use in situations

that do not encourage positive socialization (Liu et al., 2022). The Western culture outcome is different from the Eastern cultures, which tend to be more direct on non-emotional issues and encourage a variety of emotive or concern-based emojis (Kakharov & Usmonova, 2022). Diseases or medical conditions are likely to be described using numerous emojis in the Western world, unlike the Asians who use healthcare-related emojis like pills or needles alone.

Other than culture, issues like religion will likely influence emoji choice and use. Religion and social media iconography are attributes that co-exist alongside cultural influences (Liu et al., 2022). The selection of deities in cross-cultural communication may, for instance, upset particular individuals who result from parallel religious settings than the ones used in communication detail. People will likely resonate with emojis that connect to their religious settings (Cameron et al., 2020). Despite factors like cultural awareness coming into play when determining how the interpretations are made, ensuring that the right emojis are used on a target population or individual is relevant. For instance, the laughing emoji has been attributed to severe hurtful implications for Muslim internet users as non-believers knowingly or unknowingly mock the concept of “haram” in Islam.

### **Emoji Use Case Studies: Effectiveness and Applicability**

The growing speculation surrounding the flexibility and likelihood of extensive application of emojis is related to the need to pin relevant successful emoji-based campaigns in marketing. The application of emojis for marketing purposes can be drawn from the continued per-platform use. Gaining the correct insights into emoji use for organizational executions is a vital attribute of any modern business since social media, marketing, and communication entails of the modern-day cannot be exonerated from emoji use. Emojis are inseparable from any personal or official organizational communication as well. To elucidate the importance of emojis

for marketing purposes, Yokoi (2022) notes that emojis have grown in essentiality and relevance, whether it is a customer service engagement or big announcement, brands usually feel that a tweet is not complete without an emoji added to punctuate it. Because of emoji popularity, more than ever, organizations are trying to incorporate their marketing communications with highly creative and customized emoji bases.

The wave of increased organizational emoji use is interconnected with high creativity and customization, as witnessed over the years. According to Yang (2020), it is significant to note that using emojis for marketing purposes is not, in any way, organization or industry tied. Instead, just like in conventional communication situations, emoji use in organizational situations is backed with high flexibility and ice-breaking factors that ease the communication process, allow for clarity of communication, and create a meaningful marketer-client interaction; for this reason, several instances of different industry, personality, or field use of emojis are on the rise.

Gilland (2017) credits Kim Kardashian for being the first to use custom-made emojis. But just as a twist of showing how infectious and influencing emojis are, the research recounts U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's creative emoji-based campaign. According to Vangelov (2017), Clinton seized the opportunity regarding the then trending customizable emoji use to introduce "Hillarymoji," a set of iOS-app based emojis that entailed 30 emoticons, GIFs, and stickers that could be used in conversations and interactions on major messaging apps like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

Unlike the traditional approach of incorporating emojis into marketing messages, custom-made emoji keyboards have been integrated into common messaging apps, making it easier to create and use personalized emojis. According to Tsotra et al. (2004), simplifying the creation

and personalization of emojis has been vital in necessitating the likelihood and ability of organizational infiltration of dark social, garnering a considerable outreach of target individuals.

The use of customized emoji-based keyboards has not reached its heights yet, but it is vital to note that this development has been around for a few years, and affiliations have grown with major big firms. Disneyland also created its emoji keyboard and added a gamification element which implied that users could only access the emojis by winning prizes and points in “Disney Blast Blitz” (Shukla et al., 2022). The Disney emoji keyboard undertaking was risky on paper, but on practical grounds, it is an ingenious advertisement and marketing trick that exploited the likelihood of reaching customers with maximum emoji-based engagement.

In 2016, Dom Carter mentioned that Pepsi, one of the world’s largest non-alcoholic beverage organizations, inceptioned a completely emoji-based campaign that was themed “Say it with Pepsi.” The idea behind Pepsi’s marketing detail was drawn from the need to assess the market and increase sales. The cans and bottles included emoji themes to personalize and identify with the customers’ moods. Most importantly, the campaign carried out a country or region-specific analysis that adhered to cultural-based emoji attributes to encourage people to share their images on social media platforms. The Pepsi campaign, being simplistic in design and execution, transcended the common executions of any marketing program, allowing the target audience to communicate and interact with their favorite Pepsi drinks without linguistic barriers. According to Sadiq (2019), this Pepsi-led campaign is one of history’s most successful international campaigns.

Across fast-food franchises, emoji use for their marketing campaigns has been the norm. Organizations have applied emojis to navigate or engage their markets creatively to attain a more extensive marketing push. Increasing the sense of fun and interaction, inceptioning

convenience, and staying relevant are some of the subtle reasons why emoji use is fast-growing in fast-food outlets. Despite the perceived efficiency and effectiveness of emoji use in this context, most critics feel like this is a marketing gimmick that does not offer the customers any value (Yang, 2020).

In emoji-marketing research, Pijak (2015) analyzed the influence of emoji use for ordering, marketing, and interactional purposes in McDonald's; it was discovered that emoji use is an important aspect that creates positive outcomes in marketing entails. In emoji-marketing research, the emoji-based approach in fast-food marketing strategies is seen as a method that illustrates the companies' understanding of young customers. Further, it is argued that the importance of in-depth detail of the target audience is critical. For this research, Pijak (2015) recounts that "conceived by the creative team at TBWA Paris, these fast food emojis include Big Mac, fries, ice cream and Happy Meal icons that are accented with musical, happy face and thumbs up graphics" (p. 5). The statement on fast food emojis implies that emoji-based campaigns in organizations should be creative, careful, and managed just like any other marketing detail. In determining the relative long-term outcomes of emoji use for marketing purposes, Rustamovich (2022) argues that it is, in itself, a "bold brand identity" that "will appeal to millennials who are likely to communicate with emojis via text or on social media channels like Instagram" (p. 3). Getting a limited range edition on the branding of fast-food marketing creates simple, eye-catching, and appealing marketing approaches.

Perhaps the best detail in analyzing the effect and approaches of emoji-, marketing executions is a deliberate analysis of the world's greatest and most outstanding marketers. Coca-Cola Inc., in this case, becomes a worthy analysis point because it spends a colossal \$193 million on its flagship beverage (Overall, the organization spends 10% of its sales on marketing drives.)

According to Moussa (2019), Coca-Cola became the first company to get its own emoji as a strategic partnership with Twitter and allowed them to use the emoji in its marketing campaigns globally.



*The Coca-Cola emoji*

The Coca-Cola campaign was ingeniously crafted so that tweets with the hashtag “#ShareACoke” automatically generated the two-bottle emoji. However, in the two-bottle emoji study, Moussa (2018) sought to establish consumer emotions toward the Coca-Cola brand using an emoji-based metric. It was also established that “consumers tend to use more positive emojis when expressing their feelings toward Coca-Cola. They also show that the new metric is highly and positively associated with the ACSI, hence supporting its validity” (Moussa, 2018, p. 12). Similar campaigns involving Coca-Cola emoji—based marketing have been carried out in other regions of the world. Such a campaign was the “Say it with Emoticons” in Thailand. In this campaign, Coca-Cola used emojis to appeal to the youthful population in the face of the ever-growing competition.

In another study, Shekhar (2020) sought to identify the different psychological effects implicated on the customers out of marketing drives focused on emojis. The study of different psychological impacts established that “happiness and attribute of taste associated with the brand were found to evoke better responses among the consumers as compared to the advertisements without emoji” (Shekhar, 2020, p. 8). Furthermore, Shekhar (2020) recounts that “happiness and

taste are the two key propositions of Coca-Cola which see a favorable consumer response, thus displaying the impact that emoji creates when used in a carefully designed manner” (p. 8).

Therefore, the associations that Coca-Cola, like any other marketer, imparts to the users or target audience depend largely on market presence, relevance, and outcomes in organizational reputation.

Sumer (2017) researches the relativity and accuracy of emoji use for commercial services. In the study of relativity and accuracy of emoji use, it is established that emojis conform to the array of “special, certain factors that may extend the likelihood of a special experience” (Sumer, 2017, p. 4). Like aura, packaging, and setting of different attributes, emojis are seen as outlets for “evoking positive and active emotions and acting as a catalyst for the well-being” (Sumer, 2017, p. 4). According to Yang (2020), emojis can help create a necessary discriminatory factor between various food products, and in this interest, it is possible by linking the attained responses. Another study established that emojis had an extensive connection with food-related responses; consequently, emotional associations linked with food products could easily be extracted to attain the profiles tied to pure reactions.

### **Trendy or Trying Too Hard? Are Organizations Forcing Emoji Use for Commercial Purposes?**

The impact of using emojis for modern-day business executions is filled with the elevated likelihood for success in marketing and customer-engagement strategies, especially since emojis appeal to the younger generation. The younger generation population forms the largest target pool in most industries in their employment and expertise extraction. Given the younger generation’s large target pool, managers will likely have issues having exemplary practices and engagements to control emoji use and its extensiveness. Thus, emoji use in specific organizations

is highly likely to override the intended purpose and, in most cases, be offending. Emoji-based campaigns that have been poorly executed have been dropped, and organizations have been forced to apologize due to inaccuracy and non-appealing outcomes. Studies have also shown that organizations and individuals, especially in the older age brackets above 60, are likely to use emojis wrongly and excessively to appear relevant and appealing. The underlying risk is that despite being modern and heavily relevant, not all situations require emojis; in extension, not all situations require emoji backup.

In a study by Lahey (2020), she argues that “emojis haven’t actually reshaped communication” (p. 7). To validate the outrageous claim that emojis have not reshaped communication, Susan counters that emojis are just symbols meant to convey a message, and humans “have been communicating in symbols for millennia” (Lahey, 2020, p. 7). Lahey infers to the 2017 excavation that led to the discovery of a 4,000-year-old pot buried near the border of Syria and Turkey with a smiley face. According to Lahey’s study, the catch in this discovery is the striking resemblance between the smiley face found on the pot and the ones being used today. Hence, a conclusion is drawn that emojis are not a modern invention but a cultural artifact incorporated into written communication ages ago. It is only fair, however, to relate the relative success of modern exploits in introducing new and vast attributes to emojis. Unlike smiley faces (obviously an ancient invention), modern emoji and emoji-based communication contexts “can wink and blow kisses, represent religious symbols, cake, or little piles of poop. It’s only natural that this visual language has migrated from our personal communication into our business communication” (Lahey, 2020, p. 7). Lahey’s analysis aligns with the modern exploits and applications of emojis; due to this, the stage and era of non-verbal communication in human history face several challenges as well. As predisposed by the article, one of the challenges is



that emojis are “open to interpretation, and the context in which they are used matters.” (Lahey, 2020, p. 9).

According to Pfeifer et al. (2022), words have consequences in every communicational context; and just like words, all symbols used within communication have consequences, even if they are used to replace or complement the words themselves. According to Moussa (2019), emoji use’s biggest issue is not professionalism. Most scholars acknowledge that different organizations have varying levels and ideals of professionalism. Moreover, communication constantly evolves, so emojis’ onset and rapid growth in the 2010s propelled most organizations to integrate them automatically into daily executions.

The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic propellants of emoji adoption for official purposes is guided by several details interrelating contextually, professionally, culturally, and through several other entails. Despite the preconceived advantages of emoji use in the modern era, several indications point to possible devastating outcomes with carelessly executed projects. As mentioned earlier, emojis have inspired lawsuits and criminal charges against individuals and organizations depending on how individuals interpret them. According to Lahey (2020), one of the instances was in Israel, where prospecting tenants included celebratory emojis on a marked property when they expressed their interest in acquiring the property. The owner, wowed by the interest and the “inevitable” sale, stopped advertising, and shortly after, the prospecting customers vanished. The owner then sued and won against the individuals for using emojis that “tricked him” into pulling down the property from the market; whether a thumbs-up emoji or a smiley face constitutes a binding agreement remains a matter of serious contention, but this issue is viewed differently, primarily when contextual factors are assessed.

Each new emoji used carries a risk of attaining the reward of unintended message extension. For instance, using blowing kisses or heart emojis to a group may be interpreted as evidence of “sexual harassment.” The entire professional context of emoji use is complicated because of the social issues that rock the modern world. For instance, Van Dam et al. (2019) argue that even the skin tone opted for in an emoji message may be perceived as ethnic or racist misappropriation. For instance, Clorox got into trouble for using white skin in its advertisements. The insinuation rising from Clorox’s uproar was the reality that “unbleached” skin tones (darker skin) are less clean. Innocently or intentionally executed, this detail of using white skin led to a backlash that put the organization in the spotlight; with this in mind, it is always tricky for advertisers to honestly know how the targeted audience will perceive a given emoji-based marketing approach.

All emotion-based emojis are backed by a face, and according to Riordan (2017), this is “the bad news about emojis” (p. 4). Despite emojis’ ability to convey emotion at a go, it is argued that a great chunk of personal and professional communication is executed through mail or text. As a result, it is complicated to convey the tone, and with a paucity of words, communication in this detail comes out as casual and shorthand. Emojis help avail the personal intent in the various communication contexts where suitable approaches and entails are applied. Emojis are perceived to be very important in benefiting personal intent, especially in situations like extending regret for a possible late run in finishing some work. In most cases, people might respond with an “okay” and succinctly analyze, which might be overwhelmingly ambiguous. However, if the individuals decide to use “okay” with a smiley emoji (😊), it signifies a better position in understanding the situation.

### **Pros and Cons of Emoji Use**

The elevated use of emojis is tied to several advantages, as explained above. In the corporate world, emoji use boosts customer service and outcomes (Beattie et al., 2020). Emojis offer an effective way that organizations can enhance effective advertisement, improve customer and personal engagement and increase interest in the message or information (Beattie et al., 2020). Elevated emoji use is also linked to time-saving communication executions laced with accuracy and efficiency. Despite the advantages of emoji use, however, emoji use is linked to various disclaimers that may concern the message reception, including confusion. Next, emoji use in official situations may water down the formality due to roasted vocabulary (Godard & Holtzman, 2022). Emoji use is also a determinant of the age gap in communication. The communication gap between different ages is a severe block in communication purposes.

### **Trends in Emoji Use**

According to official statistics from Emojipedia, there are over 3,633 emojis in use as verified and approved under the Unicode standards as of September 2021 (Etumnu et al., 2022). The emojis include gender, skin tone, various flags, and the totality of components used to create keycaps, flags, and other sequences. The latest emoji update release is Emoji 15.0, a predecessor of the previous Emoji 14.0. as it has been over the years of emoji advancement and use, each year has been marked by various emoji awards (Godard & Holtzmann, 2022). The 2022 emoji awards awarded the “Heart on Fire” emoji as the most popular new emoji. According to these awards, the most anticipated emoji was the “Melting Face” emoji (Talarico, 2022). As of 2021, when the COVID-19 pandemic was at its height, the most used emoji was the “Syringe,” awarded based on apparent reasons (Talarico, 2022). Currently, the “Loudly Crying Face” emoji holds the lifetime achievement as the most used emoji.

Furthermore, the statistics reveal that the relative use of positive smiley emojis has experienced a 5.63% decline (Yang, 2020). The top ten Twitter emojis have, however, maintained relative stability. The relative emoji use incidence is rising, and one in every five tweets is broadcasted with emojis. Additionally, smileys and people are still the most dominant emojis in the popular emoji category (Talarico, 2022). However, the use of symbols as emoji forms is declining. In the travel and spaces category, the last two years have experienced more than the expected decline in their use; this outcome is understandably linked to the COVID-19 era-induced travel restrictions. The same COVID-19 period also saw a sharp increase in healthcare-related emojis such as pills, syringes, and needles. Five billion emojis are shockingly shared across Facebook Messenger daily, and this figure resonates with more than half of the Instagram posts containing an emoji. The peach emoji is voted for and still perceived as the most controversial emoji. According to Yang (2022), only 7% of the users view it as a fruit, as most people associate it with non-fruit purposes.

### **The Future of Emojis**

With the advancement of various communicational needs in the social sphere, it is only likely that the use of emojis will rise (Suntwal et al., 2021). More people are also likely to access electronic media communication gadgets, which will propel the application of emojis even further. However, it is difficult to predict the future as emoji use relies on global trends. According to Geladó et al. (2022), the essence of guiding communication and reactions in non-verbal communication in the new digital age, alongside all the advancements expected to be made, heavily rely on emojis. More adjustments will be made to emoji use and handling in the coming years, and necessary knowledge, understanding, and executions should be integrated

with the changes. It is exciting to see what tech companies will come up with in the future of emojis.

## CHAPTER THREE

### NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION, INTERACTION, AND GESTURE: SELECTIONS FROM *SEMIOTICA*

Non-verbal communication has an intricate connection with semiotics in relevance and origin. As argued above, non-verbal communication is one of the branches of semiotics, and it encompasses a variety of people's motor behaviors in communication. Some of the most inferred and understood attributes of non-verbal communication in semiotics include facial expressions, body movements, gestures, and various conversation adjustments (Siregar, 2022). Moreover, non-verbal communication in semiotics entails attention to various attitudes, attires, postures, facial communications, gestures, artifacts, music, places, and other factors. The input extended to any aspect of non-verbal communication is tied to six basic functions: complementing, repeating, denying, emphasizing, controlling, and substituting.

Complementing	Substituting
Contradicting	Accenting
Repeating	Regulating

*The six basic functions of non-verbal communication*

The primary necessity of various non-verbal communication details evolves around the abovementioned details. For instance, complementing is an integral non-verbal communication behavior that combines verbal details to emphasize the meaning of the entire message (Shukla et al., 2022). Simple details are extended to the detail of compliments, especially in communication that requires a display of emotive behaviors. For instance, complementing behavior can include a face like jumping up and down while shouting, "I am so excited!"; the body language, in this

case, imparts the meaning and extent of being excited, generating both attention and the expected impact in the receiver.

Sometimes, non-verbal communication may be used to surface the facet of contradiction. An individual's behavior may occasionally contradict verbal communication in a given scenario. Non-verbal cues of communication, such as the tell-tale instances that depict discomfort, tardiness, anger, confusion, and other details, are important communication essentials (Saunderson & Nejat, 2019). In cases where verbal communication does not offer the correct implications, non-verbal communication is vital in elucidating the underlying message. Contradicting behaviors between verbal and non-verbal communication offer the right atmosphere for a message receiver to read incongruency. Incongruent details in communication impact message and communication awareness and, thus, make it challenging to pick out the intended communication information.

Another use of non-verbal communication is accenting, a feature that encompasses emphasizing a word or part of a given message. Picking out instances of accenting in a message allows the receiver to understand the alteration of the message. However, various types of non-verbal communication may be incepted to attain a given accenting target. For instance, various gestures may be paired with the word or phrase in target to bring out accenting (Schultz, 2020). For example, an individual can say "no!" followed by slamming their hand on a table. A similar feature can be achieved by introducing other aspects like pauses to verbal communication. Often, pausing before saying something of critical importance is seen as accenting.

Nevertheless, non-verbal communication can be used as a guide to repeating a given piece of information. Repetition aids the sender of a given message in reinforcing the words intended for the receiver (Saputra & Santoso, 2021). When paired with verbal communication,

various inputs of non-verbal communication, like nodding while saying “yes” or affirming something, counts as repetition. Alongside repetition, non-verbal communication may also serve a regulating function. Ekman and Friesen (1972), alongside other integral communication theorists, agree that regulators are details and “acts which maintain and regulate the back-and-forth nature of speaking and listening between two or more interactions” (Ekman & Friesen, 1972, p. 46). Some subtle details of non-verbal communication include entailing like head-nodding when someone is talking. Nodding of the head counts as a regulatory detail of communication alongside other details like eye contact, leaning or moving, eyebrow-raising, and posture change, among other executions (Cheng et al., 2020). The regulatory details of communication serve to regulate the flow of the conversation. Sometimes, non-verbal regulatory attributes are used to exit a conversation. The behaviors are referred to as *leave-taking*, and they ease the burden of interruptions; when the communicating party fails to note the regulators, verbal communication can be employed.

It is widely argued that non-verbal communication sometimes falls short of extending the right and accurate meaning. The argument for inaccurate meaning in non-verbal communication is especially valid because most entails of non-verbal communication may come out as ambiguous and unclear (Knap et al., 2013). However, some instances allow non-verbal communication to replace verbal communication completely. Substituting behaviors must be understood and applied within a given context; this is especially important because of the varied effects and outcomes of several non-verbal communication cues. Shrugging may, for example, imply a “no” or “don’t care attitude” in different contexts.

Substituting in non-verbal communication entails various aspects like emblems, a specific type of substituting behavior that has a direct verbal translation. Emblems carry



considerable flexibility, making them easier to be understood outside of the context in which they are applied. Some commonly recognized emblems include the okay and peace signs (Chukwu & Ahumaraeze, 2022). Emblems are generally understood, and most have made an appearance and relevance in popular culture. Emblems imply that non-verbal communication, like verbal communication, is proven to adapt and changes when applied globally with enough support, resources, following, and attention, especially in the social media era.

### **The Communicative Value of NVC**

Various dissecting issues underlying the effectiveness and the essence of non-verbal communication exist. According to Deely (2011), impacts of non-verbal communication, like any communication type, incommode the need to create meaning. Perhaps the role of non-verbal communication cannot always be separated from verbal communication, but their co-existence creates a platform for better understanding. Similar information can convey different meanings when preceded with or without non-verbal communication. Body movements, gestures, tonal variations, and other entails of non-verbal communication all combine to create accuracy of communication. For example, emotional information may present extraordinarily diverse and different meanings where non-verbal cues are used or not used.

Therefore, non-verbal communication plays a pivotal role in creating successfully engaging interactions. However, all the involved parties need to be aware of non-verbal communication and believe its use is valuable (Diaconu et al., 2016). The understanding and recognition of the importance of non-verbal communication are preceded by deliberate trials to use it for communicative purposes. The value of effective non-verbal communication cannot be understated, and in typical situations, it is an essential piece of effecting proper communication, creating the correct bonds, and the perceptions required in the communication process.

## **NVC and Relational Purposes**

Non-verbal communication is crucial in initiating and guiding relations among people and organizations. Various communication scholars believe non-verbal communication is often the first way individuals invite a conversation. Likewise, non-verbal cues such as body posture and eye contact are distinctively related to making, creating, or conveying some expectations (Distel et al., 2022). Therefore, it is feasible to note that all relationships are built upon specific settings of non-verbal invitations. In addition, the greatest extent of human communication and relations is stimulated by scent, touch, hand gestures, and physical appearance, among other descriptors of non-verbal communication.

All individuals depend on non-verbal communication to extend or communicate interest to others. The situational application of non-verbal cues can be integrated into leaving, continuing, or joining a conversation (Cobley, 2016). For example, constantly looking at the watch or clock may indicate the need to leave a specific conversation. Communication of emotion, a central part of human communication and relations, is also easily conveyed through non-verbal communication. Most scholars argue that it is easier to convey specific emotions like sadness, happiness, or confusion through non-verbal cues of communication. The non-verbal expression of emotion allows others to understand how, when, and what to communicate at given times and instances.

## **Specificity and Setting of NVC**

One of the most established and realized issues with non-verbal communication is set at its extreme ambiguity. Some linguistic scholars in the 70s fancied the idea of reading non-verbal communication to read “others like a book” (Harrison & Knapp, 1972, p. 34). However, it is still difficult to understand various aspects of non-verbal communication, mainly where it is applied

out of context. An example is drawn from a crossing of arms. Whereas one can cross arms as a sign of not wanting to be involved in something, it is also possible that arm crossing can be a sign of feeling cold, sad, angry, or upset. As well, non-verbal communication intended for intense situations like flirting is most likely to be misunderstood based on experience, willingness, attractiveness, or even contextual outcomes. Hence, there can never be an outright communicational purpose aimed at non-verbal communication without necessarily being executed alongside verbal communication (Hall et al., 2019). The importance of specificity in non-verbal communication is fundamental. Instances of non-verbal communication may be ambiguous and evoke the wrong responses or implicate wrong meanings in cases where they are applied out of the proper context. The behaviors evoked from non-verbal communication may misalign with the intended outcomes, as is the range of attained responses.

One issue that aggravates the ambiguity of non-verbal communication is that most non-verbal communication entities are culturally based. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the exactness of non-verbal interactions in cultural contexts to have meaningful and successful interactions. Successful interactions with people of various traditions and cultures require outsiders to integrate communicative instances with the ability to adapt and understand non-verbal communication cues associated with the given contexts. Thus, the essential aspects of understanding non-verbal communication are tailored to recognition and acknowledgment (Floyd, 2006). The need to be flexible, non-reactive, and ask questions is the most extensive guide to any meaningful and effective non-verbal communication between different communities. Different aspects of non-verbal communication, such as touching and spatial distance, vary significantly across different traditions and cultures. Getting the correct reaction or

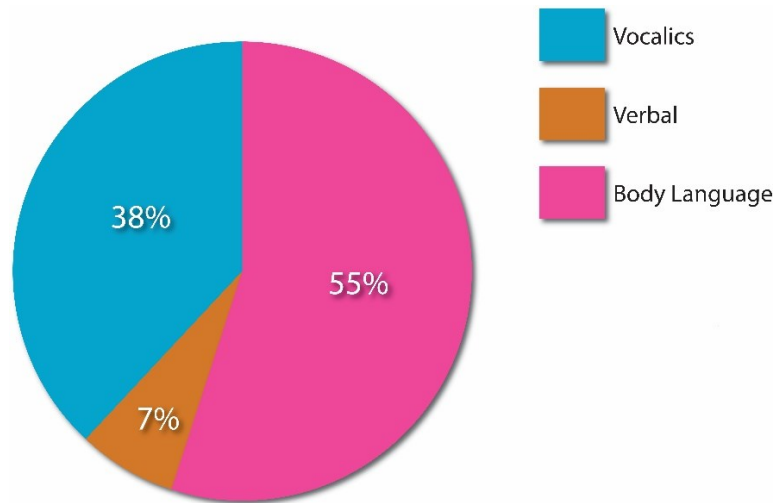
response requires effective reactions, and therefore, researching and understanding these attributes pre-contact envisions a smoother likelihood of interactions.

Attribution error is widely viewed as a leading issue in understanding non-verbal communication. An attribution error is defined as “the tendency to explain another individual’s behavior in relation to the individual’s internal tendencies rather than an external factor” (Gomez & Soto, 2011, p. 3). Further, scholars argue that it is “easy to make an error when trying to attribute meaning to the behaviors of others, and nonverbal communication is particularly vulnerable to attribution error” (Gomez & Soto, 2011, p. 5). It is difficult to pick out the specific intended information in non-verbal communication, and this issue sometimes implicates other-oriented communication behavior. Gestures may be made from habit, and this might rule out the communicative attributes ingrained. While it is difficult to land on attribution errors in day-to-day communication, it is feasible to note that non-verbal communication makes it difficult to understand its intention.

Various scholars believe that non-verbal communication can be viewed and analyzed on its omnipresent backing; this is especially true because aspects of non-verbal communication, such as walking, posture, eye contact, gestures, and other aspects, are inseparable from all daily activities. The extremity of non-verbal communication is wide and varied and viewed from this aspect, making the omnipresence valid. An analysis of this aspect of non-verbal communication sits in Paul Watzlawick’s assertion that humans cannot communicate (Godard & Holtzman, 2022). The axioms of the interactional view and value of communication are, thus, exhibited in the daily communication entails and behaviors through all non-verbal attributes, whether or not within communicational contexts.

The executions of non-verbal communication are secured to the ability to form a universal code. It is important, however, to note that the push or understanding to create a universal form of non-verbal code is contextually limited. Ekman and Friesn (1972), however, notes that several exceptions can be accounted for in the bid to universalize non-verbal communication (Hagbhin et al., 2022). The description's shortcoming is dragged by the inability to secure all forms of non-verbal communication from the range of misunderstandings that are prone to rise in various contexts. The extremity of the issues in non-verbal communication is compounded by instances out of human control, such as Tourette's syndrome. Tourette's syndrome affects all voluntary and involuntary body movements and gestures, rendering any form of non-verbal communication useless. Most of the misunderstandings in non-verbal communication can easily be mitigated. However, it is still realized that non-verbal communication mishaps greatly impact interpersonal and professional relationships.

The ambiguity issues and clarity in non-verbal communication may be the ultimate deterrents to its communicative purposes. However, non-verbal communication stands out because it is usually trusted. Despite the common downfalls, most scholars agree that non-verbal communication is attributed to the most understanding in any communication setting (Houser, 2022). In professional status, non-verbal communication is used to gauge the accuracy of experience and qualifications. Job interviews, for instance, garner most outcomes and responses based on various communication giveaways exhibited by the interviewees. Research links 93% of any meaning in communication to non-verbal cues; thus, the Mehrabian (2017) analysis of the meaning is tied to the following presentation:



### Understanding NVC: A Semiotic Guide

According to Hall et al. (2019), the field of non-verbal communication is a wide-set area that incommodes a long history with “many cue modalities, including face, voice, body, touch, and interpersonal space; different levels of analysis, including normative, group, and individual differences; and many substantive themes that cross from psychology into other disciplines.” (p. 4). NVC has a different perspective and effect when viewed through personal and social situations pertaining to how various attention is extended to the meaning and accuracy of the information in circulation. Various frameworks have been identified and presented to imply the conceptualization and understanding of sending, receiving, and reacting to non-verbal cues. Various measurement issues are analyzed concerning the theoretical and existing developments in personal and interpersonal inquiries into non-verbal communication.

According to Hall and Knapp (2013), senders encode many auditory, tactile, visual, and olfactory communication channels. Scholars also indicate that the communication channels include “their emotional, cognitive, and attitudinal states; and the nature of their interactions with others” (Hall & Knapp, 2013, p. 32). It is further established that sender cues within non-verbal communication may be spontaneous or deliberate, accounting for the receiver’s informative

quality (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020). Furthermore, the informational value of each sender cue may be contradicted, augmented, reinforced, non-impacted, or minimized within the communicative contexts. Sender cues or the contextual factors surrounding the sending of the information can be referenced to explain the outcomes of non-verbal communication.

Cues that are extruded or seen in non-verbal communication contexts are significant in creating an understanding of human cognition. The potential informational value of any communicative detail is heavily impacted by the sender's deliberate or spontaneous cues. Senders unconsciously exude information about themselves in the cues they extend. These cues fall into the categories of their identity, social abilities, personal attributes, developmental entails, biological sex, and learning factors, among other details.

Understanding the semiotics of non-verbal communication cannot be effectively executed without a grasp of the categories of non-verbal communication. The functions of non-verbal communication can effectively be understood on the precedents of categorical elucidation highlighted by various factors like haptics. According to Hall et al. (2013), haptics is the study of touch as a form of non-verbal communication. Studying touch and its relation (with effects) in non-verbal communication is vital because touch is present in all aspects of daily life. Extents like greeting, showing comfort, task accomplishment, and affection are details that cannot be attained without touch. With non-verbal communication being omnipresent, touch is essential to detailing how deliberate or spontaneous non-verbal communication cues impact all sections of life.

It is imperative to understand that touch's viability in non-verbal communication acts as a heavily vast subject (Khan et al., 2021). Here, several factors influence how touch is perceived as a form of non-verbal communication. The mere extent of the factors that influence the perception

of haptics implies just how extensive the field is. For instance, factors like duration, intensity, and touch frequency implicate different messages. Individuals must understand when it is necessary to apply specific extents of pressure, duration, and intensity to attain a positive message reception. Well-timed handshakes with the correct execution (intensity and frequency) may be ideal for dispelling negative thoughts and establishing trust with the involved parties.

Touch is an essential piece of non-verbal communication that may build, strengthen, and influence associations on its own or in combination with other non-verbal or verbal communication (Kitchen, 2020). Touch can be used to communicate a wide range of messages beginning from comfort to power; for this reason, the deliberate or spontaneous use of touch in communicative contexts may be harmful or beneficial to the entire communication intention. Therefore, touch is a dynamic interpersonal tool, especially when combined with body movements and voice. Different logistics come into play when considering how touch changes communication. First, the absence or presence of touch alters the perception of the touch execution. Second, all individuals long for touch, and when effectively executed, it attains the highest degree of non-verbal communication effect. Lastly, different individuals have different desires and longings for touch, and these extents may be detrimental or effective in facilitating communicative activities.

How words are spoken in any communication context explains the concept of vocalics. Vocalics in nonverbal communication cues entail facets like timbre. Timbre is the quality given to sound by its overtones, such as resonance. Pitch is also an attribute of timbre, although not commonly analyzed or considered in non-verbal communication unless an individual's pitch stands out. Also, the tempo is a central facet of vocalics which infers to "the rate at which one speaks" (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010, p. 2). Variations in tempo can be obvious tell-tale signs of



emotions such as anger, excitement, physical well-being, and other attributes. Additionally, intensity explores how loud or soft an individual speaks. The loudness or softness of any communication context can be used to show any emotion or, sometimes, information urgency or confidentiality. The latter is best explained through attributes like whispering when extending sensitive information or taboos.

Other vocal features of non-vocal communication, such as pauses and silences, act to extend extreme diversifications in communication, understanding, and perception of the given message. Paralanguage details such as pauses and silences have a vital role in meaning creation during communication (Kiper & Ulema, 2021). Pauses and silences draw attention to specific communication needs depending on their length and use in communication settings. Other attributes like vocal fillers, verbal surrogates, and dysfluencies affect how the message is communicated or perceived.

The attributes of non-verbal communication are the totality of facial expressions and eye behavior in communication contexts. The facial and eye behaviors are collectively known as kinesics, which, according to Ekman and Friesen (1972), are “considered any visible movement of the body” that “stimulate meaning” in the minds of others.” According to Ekman and Friesen (1972), facial expressions are “likely to communicate ‘affect’ or liking” (p.6). Ekman and Friesen’s analysis came up with seven basic emotions that are universally recognized through non-verbal communication entities. The emotions identified by Ekman and Friesen were happiness, disgust, anger, interest, fear, and sadness. Various elements of facial communication are used in basic day-to-day interactions to extents extreme than identified with extreme volatility and flexibility. For instance, a smile might be used to represent satisfaction or used to ease tension in some situations.

Countless studies have been extended to exhibit the preferences of facial expressions, especially in light of the Big Five personality traits (Ghali, 2002). Most results show that individuals are likely to prefer communicating with individuals exhibiting facial expressions that provide extraversion and agreeableness. Facial expressions and oculusics, the study of how individuals communicate through eye behavior, form an essential part of non-verbal communication; this field analyzes various perspectives of eye interaction, such as gaze, and how they influence information extension and perception. Concerning oculusics, there are established “acceptable” practices and executions that fall within various personal, interpersonal, and professional grounds (Laalawi, 2013). Applying eye behavior in communication takes completely different forms in professional and informal situations.

Gestures form a colossal threshold of communication influence and meaning in non-verbal communication situations. Most of the gestures are emblems that are culturally determined. Thus, the effectiveness of simple gestures like shrugging of the shoulders may embody extreme variations of meaning when used out of context. Illustrators like the letter “L” for “loser” may also be applied as a form of non-verbal communication. Illustrators, emblems that are direct substitutions for words, help emphasize to explain a word. Illustrators also relate with other elements of non-verbal communication, like regulators and proxemics, to impart meaning.

Affect displays, for instance, allow individuals within a communicative context to detail their feelings and emotions. However, like all other non-verbal cues, affect displays are likely misunderstood when used out of context (Liu et al., 2022). For example, jumping up and down to show excitement in sports cannot be substituted in formal situations. In addition, regulators like head nods, winking, smiling, looking at the clock, and other aspects act as in-hand conversational

regulators. The regulator signs that are used effectively serve as valuable attributes for guiding the intensity, depth, and even duration of a communicating party. Proxemics, conversely, implicate a field of linguistics that studies the relationship between space and various communication inputs. According to Edward T. Hall (2017), space communication is an important attribute of any communication context, and it can independently be grouped into four main categories. Hall (2017) called these categories “distances” and believed that the effects of self-distancing or positioning in communication fundamentally affect communication.

The first space, according to Hall, is the “personal bubble” that ranges between 0 to 18 inches of body space. This space is reserved for those with close relationships with the communicating party. Moreover, Hall analyzed the “personal space,” a facet that ranged from 18 inches to 4 feet from the subject. The personal space created is used to run interactions and associations between friends and family members. The “social distance” is the following attribute marked by a distance between four and twelve feet and typically preserved for acquaintances. The social space in the Hall model is preceded by “public distance,” a range of 12 to 25 feet, preserved for public interactions with strangers.

The range of non-verbal communication elements and features does not cease based on traditional entails (Batra & Keller, 2016). The field of non-verbal communication is vast and extends to other facets, like artifacts. In addition, many scholars argue that the items that individuals carry with them or adorn their bodies can be used to interpret various messages. Aspects like glasses, canes, shoes, clothing, and jewelry are outlets that give away much about the individual before the actual communication (verbal or otherwise).

Further, the time used to communicate chronemics is indispensable to non-verbal communication. Chronemics is culturally tied, and different cultures have different ways to extend their communication through monochronic and polychronic entails. Lastly, non-verbal communication can be tied to olfactics, the influence of scent on perceptions. Scents can draw or repel individuals; where they are culturally concerned, they change the entire communicative context. The importance of “smelling good” cannot be underestimated, as the air freshener and perfume industries gross over \$60 billion annually (Bai et al., 2019). The growth of air freshener and perfume industries underpins body scents’ importance and influence on the messages communicated.

### **The Semiotics of the Message and the Messenger: How NVC Affects Fairness Perception**

Non-verbal communication is the single detail in communicative situations that determines how people perceive explicit verbal messages. Affinity and conformation, the primary attributes of understanding or perceiving information, are impacted and shaped by non-verbal cues of communication through details such as facial expressions and social touch (Byrene, 2017). The facet between semiotics and verbal information is a sensitive detail in the field of psychophysiological entails where the meaning of the message is decoded. Likewise, the psychophysiological field entails analyzing how the totality of interpersonal touch and facial expressions affect the outcomes in non-verbal communication.

It is widely believed that nearly two-thirds of the interaction meaning is derived from non-verbal engagements in every social encounter; this attribution is sourced from the Mehrabian linguistic understanding, where attributes other than verbal details are analyzed in importance and effect on communication. Most studies relate to communicating attitude (the liking or feeling), which accounts for 55% of body language, 38% of tone, and 7% of language (Camilleri,

2018). However, the equation falls short of the accuracy and efficacy of various communication circumstances because of the sheer complexity and extensiveness of language, culture, and other factors associated with communication. Emotional communication responses are hinged on attributes such as color, motion, effect, personal characteristics, and other factors that make it difficult to place all communicative efforts within established specificity.

Consequently, the semiotics of any message within non-verbal communication contexts relies on innumerable contextual factors and modalities that extend extreme reliance on a network of neural structures that define and control an interplay of cognitive functions. For example, the language used within a given communicative detail can integrate extreme emotional perception to the affected and involved parties (Burgoon, 1980). Emotional contexts are responsible for earmarking the brain areas that are supposed to be activated to understand literal and ironic sentence settings. Also, the facial appearance of the communicating parties, the mood of the context and the receivers, and the content of the message to the expectations fundamentally alter how the message is processed.

The interplay between personal-cognitive issues and semiotics paves the way for fundamentals such as social categorization. Here, the potential informational value of the given information relies entirely on the sender's cues, thus necessitating the accuracy of research inputs within the domain of non-verbal coding. The analyses in both aspects should be crafted to be responsible for explanations leading to the best understanding of both the traditional and emerging domains (Cameron et al., 2020). Traditional domains include facets like psychiatric diagnoses while emerging ones entail attributes like biometrics and human-robot interactions, and together they impact the markers and the consequences of any communicative detail.

Perceptions in non-verbal communication are also crafted from individual identity. According to Hall et al. (2019), the sender's unique identities are varied, and they can entail "a number of nonverbal channels, including their gait, the iris of the eye, and body odor" (p.276). However, the attributes are limited to biometrics, a domain of computer science, and they are not generalizable. Likewise, biological gender, and sex, are essential aspects of the perception of non-verbal communication. Differences in bodily expressions in different genders, gazing, gait, and voice is used to create inter-gender differences in communication. Attributes like the face of women, regarded as more expressive than men, are considered relevant items that influence how individuals are perceived and judged in communicative contexts.

Lastly, perceptions in non-verbal communication are inseparable from the range of psychological and developmental problems associated with various individuals. As analyzed above, conditions like Tourette's syndrome can severely alter how individuals perceive non-verbal cues (Byrne, 2017). Psychological issues, developmental issues, and any range of cognitive issues affect the statuses of various individuals, and so does the relative perception they receive; despite this shortcoming, other non-verbal cues are dynamic in the way they are sent and received, consciously or non-consciously, and in response to specific situational factors. Substantial evidence is associated with how faces and gestures affect individuals' perceptions. Evidence shows that more masculine individuals, for instance, have a "greater propensity for violent behavior due to androgens' other effects on their developing brains" (Eco, 1976). The evidence that masculine individuals project more violent behavior is a wildly contradicting factor since many other factors like social and cultural background and facial morphology create different non-verbal interpretations in different individuals.

## **To Dance Is Human: A Theory of NVC**

Communication has been part of human history, innate and interconnected to the totality of life events within various contexts. Non-verbal communication history advancement forms a wealth of human history. It is argued that the evolution of communication and language stems from the evolution of non-verbal cues of communication attached to various communicative instances. Kinesics is the analysis, perception, and understanding of how “body movements and gestures serve as a means of nonverbal communication” (Birdwhistell, 1952, p. 214). Different ideas of kinesics are related to cultural, social, and interpersonal communication factors, and all are extruded in communicative contexts.

A variety of linguistic and communication theories have been identified and incepted to explain the position, influence, and affluence of non-verbal communication in communication. Hanna (1987) considers dance “an essential human activity of non-verbal communication with personal and community dimensions, also supported by neuro-biological attributes” (p. 4). Hannah explored various dances from rural African villages and analyzed their outcome and influence as a form of non-verbal communication. In the theoretical build-up, Hanna centered her argument on the human touch in its ability to spur building, learning, and fighting, among other aspects. Like communication, Hanna’s theory of dance suggests that dance entails thoughts and feelings expressed through the body (Evans, 2022). At an organized physical movement level, dance can be used to extend the language and a system of rules appropriate for various social situations.

The proceeds of Hanna’s theory reflect the primary attributes of non-verbal communication and the social organization associated with its use and perception. Hanna’s theory of dance draws upon semiotics, anthropology, communications, sociology, psychology,

and science to explain how non-verbal cues may effectively influence communication, information, and perception in response and attribution (Fowler et al., 2022). Music and dance are enduring arts that convey extreme embodiment (and the likelihood of) human emotions. The vital aspect of music and dance in non-verbal communication is in the extensive application of the facets in personal, industrial, entertainment, and professional parts of life. Hanna believes that dance is an integral aspect of human engagement and, by extension, non-verbal communication. Hanna further argues that the intricate connection between dance and non-verbal communication is inseparable from “personal and community dimensions, also supported by neuro-biological studies.”

Several studies and analyses have been explored to pin the perception and understanding of non-verbal communication to the universal qualities in different studies. The underlying factor is the need to conjoin the styles established by the fundamental, overarching semiotic systems. There are several features of dance-non-verbal communication entails that can aid in highlighting the differences and specificities (Feldman et al., 2017). The analysis of choreography can be applied to understanding how “choreography would facilitate the description of movement-based meaning-making processes for communicating parties” (p. 48). However, it is not easy to mirror when the studies attempt to use grammar concepts borrowed from verbal, structural grammar. The limitation is set on the grounds of the non-achievability of a systematic description of dance as a semiotic system.

Alongside Hanna’s theory of dance are vital non-verbal communication theories that have consistently tried to explain this factor. One of the most common theories is the Darwinian evolutionary theory of non-verbal communication which states that “non-verbal communication is an evolutionary mechanism making it adaptive” (Evans, 2022, p. 22). The Darwinian theory



further details that all mammals show emotions through facial expressions, and this behavior is universal, thus, attaining its evolutionary status. The Darwinian non-verbal evolutionary theory fronts that various types of non-verbal communication persist in human communication and situations because they have been acquired throughout history.

Some theorists and scientists believe non-verbal communication is innate, which has fueled extensive research to help explain this concept. It has been established that individuals who have been blind from birth display the same facial expressions as sighted individuals, creating a common understanding that the totality of human facial expressions is innate and similar across all individuals. According to Matsumoto (2008), a study on a group of athletes established that blind athletes display facial expressions similar to sighted individuals in specific instances. However, some scientists still hold that non-verbal communication is a learned response. In this theoretical perspective, non-verbal communication and behavior are seen as an outcome of observing and imitating people within a specific cultural setting, and the understanding is best supported by learned behaviors such as bowing and kissing on the cheek.

Despite the several overarching differences and similarities in the formation and argument of various non-verbal communication theories, it is clear that the understanding of non-verbal communication is drawn from essential characteristics and settings. Any insight into speechmaking and non-verbal communication should be guided by the context, individuals, and the message intended to be made by such communication. Bruce Perry, a pioneer in non-verbal communication, states that “human communication starts when words have no meaning” (Elder, 2018, p. 78). Here, Perry breaks down communication and the meaning intended for the acts of gazing, rocking, kissing, stroking, and humming; through these non-verbal interactions, Perry argues that all human communication starts to make sense. A similar understanding is drawn

from Birdwhistell (1952) work, where he argues that “most human communication occurs through gestures, postures, position, and distance” through a 65%:35% split (Giannoulis & Wilde, 2019, p. 7). Therefore, the totality of non-verbal cues imparts more meaning and influence on the message, the communicator, the receiver, and the feedback in a more excellent ratio than verbal communication attributes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

#### **Understanding Non-verbal Cues in Marketing: What Do They Entail?**

Marketing research is an essential aspect of organizational execution and is a critical strategy-making section. Blakeman details that understanding and insight into consumer needs “be a key component in both the short-term and long-term success of a product or service” (p. 23). Further studies in the field attribute non-verbal cues to be just as valuable as spoken words. An inference is drawn from the psychology of human behavior, where an individual’s behavior has more to do with non-verbal cues than spoken words.

Facial expressions, for instance, convey a vast majority of emotions that may be confusing, especially where they are used out of context. According to Knapp et al. (2013), facial expressions convey six basic emotions: anger, disgust, happiness, surprise, fear, and sadness. It is crucial, however, to understand that facial emotions are displayed in various extremities and experiences. In marketing research, analysis and understanding of the diverse implications of facial expressions offer insight into the participant’s mood. Analysis of body language also argues that eye blinks, contact, and stares are effective analysis points to understand a range of emotions, including approval, disapproval, willingness, or unwillingness (Heiskanen, 2022). Nevertheless, the torso, legs, arms, and general body postures and how they are used within communicative entails may be used to judge whether a marketing exploit is effective.

Communication is the backbone of all the details underpinning all marketing operations; marketing is a vital tool, inseparable from any commercial undertaking. Several philosophers and marketing theorists argue that the essentiality of marketing traverses all organizational activities. In primary settings, marketing may absolve, retain, or even extend the organizational image

(positive or otherwise) in ways other executions cannot. Phillip Kotler, one of the founders of marketing, argues that marketing “identifies unfulfilled needs and desires” (Horgan, 2020, p. 83). According to him, “It defines, measures, and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential. It pinpoints which segments the company is capable of serving best, and it designs and promotes the appropriate products and services” (Horgan, 2020, p. 85). The importance of marketing, thus, depends on the correct decision-making and planning. Communication falls among the aspects of marketing that need to be explicitly and effectively planned (Hashim et al., 2022). Communication does not only form the right image but allows the target customers to have all the information they need accurately.

Many theories of marketing communication dictate the need for efficiency and efficacy of choice, method, and continuity of a given method. Some figures in marketing communication, like Elmo Lewis, claim that creating meaningful marketing communication rests on prioritizing and optimizing necessities. In Lewis’s theory, he believes that an influential marketing campaign comprises ideologies and interests that optimize awareness, interest, action, and desire.

The importance of marketing communication serves to bring all stakeholders on board. However, marketing communication can only occur where exemplary communication executions are incepted (Hewett & Lemon, 2022). Non-verbal communication is, in this case, a focal attribute of marketing communication, as analyzed and (explained above). Non-verbal communication helps move services, ideas, and products from manufacturers to end users. Also, non-verbal communication, like verbal communication, allows for building and maintaining meaningful relationships between all the associated stakeholders.

## **NVC: The Biggest Brand-Building Asset in Modern Marketing**

Fielding (2015) states that new advancements and inclusions in modern marketing have changed fundamental operations over time. Fielding (2015) believes the changes are necessary because marketing is “defined by multiple touch points with customers and a variety of protocols in many channels” (p. 1). The roles of marketing directors and experts are also, according to Fielding, changing with the advancement of communication inputs. Currently, the role of any typical chief marketing officer (CMO) requires a shift in the marketing focus “away from messaging and towards non-verbal communication” (Fielding, 2015, p. 1). The organizational marketing experts’ first role is to define and elucidate the most precise brand strategies and then inspire organizational efforts toward achieving that goal. Secondly, the marketing experts need to build the “brand by means of congruent non-verbal equities, as opposed to a focus on verbally based messaging about the brand’s unique selling proposition” (Fielding, 2015, p. 4). Fielding believes brands must define, identify, and leverage various non-verbal attributes.

Fielding believes that CMOs must account for the resonant visual assets that influence marketing communication while trying to eliminate the clutter of irrelevant ones. In addition, Fielding argues that marketing communication entails should check on the tone of voice and the attitude and emotion that best serve the brand’s interests (Horgan, 2020). Brand behavior, an attribute of organizational culture, and relational details should also be effectively accounted for (Hsieh & Tseng, 2017). The non-verbal communication executions should clarify what the firm is willing to do or should not do. Fielding’s perception supports the need to generate resonating brand soundtracks and sounds. Nevertheless, the non-verbal communication entailed in corporate marketing should, according to Fielding, account for a brand smell that reasonably attaches to and identifies with the brand. Most important, however, is the need to understand how to execute

brand related aspects congruently with marketing situations, brand strategy, and stakeholder interests.

Brand building entails the need to develop efforts that are not purely verbal. The most identifiable attributes of brand-building include non-verbal cues that are easily picked out on top of verbal communication entails. Here, it is easy to associate big brands like Apple Inc. with their famous non-verbal communication entities like brand colors and the range of logos they embody (Jaeger et al., 2019). The improvement and advancements in technology imply that there are increasing non-verbal attributes and platforms that organizations can use. The increased options and varieties imply that it is easier for firms to be judged on various outlets. Thus, the pressure piles upon the various organizational CMOs to adequately use the extensive options in non-verbal marketing communication in their best interest. The holistic approach of all marketing communications is put under extreme pressure, forcing brands to develop the right tactics that create a pleasant experience in integrating non-verbal communication into marketing.

Considering the different touchpoints that accrue to non-verbal communication, several necessary steps must be employed to ensure proper and effective management of all executions (Jukić, 2021). The subject organizations must set aside enough time to audit and organize non-verbal marketing communication content. The correct steps in auditing and organizing marketing operations in non-verbal communication will ensure that non-verbal communication is used as an asset. Three categories, physical, personal interactions, and digital settings, should be at the forefront of guiding any non-verbal communication decisions (Impara, 2018). For this front, non-verbal communication is central because it includes aspects like products, life cycles, environments, and roadmaps in physical entails. Digital connections such as organizational websites, apps, social media interactions, and mobile adverts form the digital entail of non-verbal

communication. Personal interactions like recruiting, talent, customer relations, and organizational culture are some of the details that need to be accounted for to draw the optimal benefits of non-verbal communication as an asset.

Integrating non-verbal communication as an asset requires a practical and accurate assessment and synthesis of all intended changes. All the non-verbal cues applied in marketing communication should offer substantial evidence and practicability of improving customer experience through accurate communication, quality provision, and relational advantage. Non-verbal communication is essential in allowing organizations to “show and tell” (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019). Marketing communication and its related benefits have evolved from when megaphones just told their customers how and why their offers were good. In today’s world, online reviews, stricter policies, and social media reviews have greatly improved marketing transparency. Customers have an incredible vastness of choice and access to various non-verbal marketing communication attributes. Marketing claims in brand activities must match the products’ quality and effectiveness. Non-verbal communication allows for more fronts where organizations can “show” without saying a word; numerous brands have capitalized on this facet to elevate their brand visibility and overall market presence.

### **NVC in Marketing: Toward a Communicational Analysis**

Like in communicational contexts, non-verbal communication is crucial in marketing communication. Non-verbal communication components of interactive behavior are inseparable from any complete market analysis. According to Bonomo and Felder. (1977), “a major function of nonverbal indicators for marketing application is seen to be the ‘triangulation’ or validation effect, whereby unobtrusive and difficult to ‘manage’ nonverbal behaviors can be used as a check on the validity of more easily distorted verbal measures of consumption behavior” (p. 5).

Bonomo and Felder. (1977) identify three significant non-verbal behavior types that can be applied to fact-check the validity of commonly distorted verbal consumption-related behavior. Also, Bonomo and Felder. (1977) argue that a psychological approach to non-verbal communication outcomes is an important aspect of marketing because it unearths more compatibility with verbal communications favored by organizations. Thus, a theoretically incepted compatibility not only influences the totality of the marketing communication process but also creates a progressive understanding and collaboration between all the associated stakeholders.

In any corporate organization, non-verbal communication can affirm or belie the actual verbal communication intents. In cases where organizations employ inconsistent or inaccurate non-verbal communication cues, the informational flow and, thus, the communication will be hindered (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010). In organizational confirmation, non-verbal communication occurs daily. Many signals may indicate the relative comfort or discomfort associated. For example, work associates who agree with each other tend to sit close together compared to those who don't agree. Also, ideologies like crossing the legs or folding the arms during a meeting may be used to reflect resistance or relaxation (Kiper & Ulema, 2021). Eye contact may, on the other side, be used to indicate various details like interest and attention. In totality, tactile communication may hinder or propel numerous business operations. Firm handshakes may be interpreted as confidence, while other physical attributes, such as a lingering shoulder touch, may consequently be viewed as an invasion of personal space.

The corporate world is assured of extensive gains in cases where managers and the associated stakeholders learn about its benefits and potential. Perhaps the most incredible influence of non-verbal communication lies in the increased potential for more progressive and



meaningful interactions (Khan et al., 2021). The opportunities to interact with colleagues, clients, competitors, and potential stakeholders using explicit executions of linguistic picks that fit their interests is single-handedly an overwhelming advantage for non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is an intricate field that requires organizational CMOs to account for all the details, such as posture, eye contact, and tonal variations; understanding when and how these details are applied to non-communicative extents impacts the trustworthiness and consistency associated with the subject firms.

In other situations, non-verbal communication exploits may convey confidence, professionalism, and enthusiasm. According to advertisement experts, the correct choice of attire, active listening, and the ability to accurately mirror the verbal communication detail in non-verbal approaches underpin organizations to be trendy, accurate, and up-to-date (Kasireddy et al., 2019). Where these attributes are integrated with quality and effectiveness, such establishments garner extensive profits and control of the market. In international business, non-verbal communication allows for natural awareness about the accuracy of their details, offers, and marketing intentions.

### **It Is More Than What You Say: Assessing the Influence of NVC in Marketing**

As argued above, non-verbal communication plays a tremendous role in creating meaning and extending the intended communication. The Mehrabian ratio is one of the details that independently underpin the importance of non-verbal communication in professional or casual situations (Kitchen, 2020); whether used intentionally or inadvertently, non-verbal communication significantly influences all communication engagements. Marketing communication is a sensitive undertaking that requires extreme accuracy and understandability. Non-verbal communication is entwined with influencing factors, such as culture, elevating

complexity in familiar situations. It is expected that non-verbal marketing would be more complex than interpersonal situations.

Innocent commitments to employ non-verbal communication aspects like emojis with contradicting meanings and regional perceptions would lead to extreme upsets that might negatively impact intended projections (Koçak, 2022). Often, prominent organizations have been forced to retract or withdraw various non-verbal communication-backed marketing campaigns with high costs. In 2019, for instance, IKEA inaccurately used an emoji for its Arabic market. The inaccuracy of emoji use in the Arabic market led to considerable upset among its Arabic customers, who felt disrespected. Consequently, IKEA had to apologize to the Arabic market and retract. Marketing missteps, especially cultural-backed errors and insensitivity, will likely affect market standings, perceptions, and control. In international organizations, for instance, an organization can lose an entire region's backing out of a single non-verbal communication detail execution. Such is the dire need for organizational accuracy for non-verbal communication executions and aspects like truthful research and proper follow-up details to combat expected and unexpected missteps.

Yokoi and Jordan (2022) argue that non-verbal entails such as emojis are understood where leaders take time to understand physical cues. In the study, Yokoi and Jordan (2022) propose that physical cues such as facial expression and body language can “gauge and communicate emotions or intent” (p. 1) In a remote workplace, however, facial expression and body language attributes are challenging to attain as the leaders are not physically present to deduce the range of non-verbal cues exuded. Non-verbal communication is a reliable attribute that can independently expose the needs and requirements of the entire group while paying attention to how the stakeholders are feeling.

## **NVC and Cognitive Empathy**

Several authors have come up with ideas and explanations that have accurately fronted the ability of cognitive empathy to increase marketing performance. Empathy influences the way various people interact with brands. The current marketing world is full of changes and several adjustments that require professionals with a high degree of autonomy in the pricing and selling of goods. The performance of field agents in marketing, for instance, rests on several attributes; among them is their ability to understand and relate with the target markets effectively (Bonoma & Felder, 1977). The ability of the salespersons to see the world from the customer's perspective modifies the pricing, service quality, and even the volume of the goods and services provided. What the customers or subject targets feel (emotional empathy) also relates to cognitive empathy to breed high organizational autonomy that fits the market and the expected adjustments in their favor. As argued above, one of the best ways to integrate cognitive and emotional empathy in organizational marketing is paying proper attention to active communication, which entails accurately identifying all non-verbal cues.

Non-verbal communication is not only related to the message's accuracy and effectiveness but also the delicate ability to build cognitive empathy. Understanding the employees, customers, and other clients' emotions effectively determines matters that motivate and propel them to do more (Lee et al., 2021). Non-verbal communication cues, where effectively used and understood, may aid in creating a perception of an understanding leader focused on creating solutions and motivating individuals. Leaders who pay attention to non-verbal communication cues in organizational communication (whether in marketing, advertising, or even leadership) have it easier to form cognitive empathy.

According to Vasquez et al. (2011), cognitive empathy is the ability to “understand how a person feels and what they might be thinking” (p. 2). Cognitive empathy is further attributed to the ability to “make us better communicators because it aids us to relay information in a way that reaches the recipients in the best way possible” (Vasquez et al., 2011, p. 6). Current marketing entails rapidly moving to social media platforms, which implies that it might not be possible to grasp non-verbal communication cues fully. However, organizations must identify practical approaches in the colors, emojis, and all other marketing details. Vasquez et al. (2011) argue that empathy is critical in social media marketing because it connects all stakeholders. Marketing philosophy nuances that all customers have an innate need for a connection. Capitalizing on the connections from simple attention-paying skills to non-verbal communication allows customers to “feel safer” (Diaconu et al., 2016) and integrate “meaning into their interactions” (Casado-Molina et al, 2022). The act of “feeling safer” draws clients and retains them to the brand, translating into more sales and success. The process of integrating empathy-guided communication is slow and time-consuming. According to Yokoi and Jordan (2022), it “doesn’t necessarily mean that you get a lot of sales overnight” (p. 2). Emotional empathy is generally connected to safety and the perception of feeling “like part of the group” (p. 4).

Gaining an understanding of cognitive empathy in social media non-verbal communication detail might be confusing. It is challenging to comprehend empathy accurately in social media advertising. The line may be blurred from simple take-on details like encouragement, positivity, and support. It is important, however, for firms to ensure that their moves to promote empathy through non-verbal communication marketing are guided by the need to “hold space for the intended individuals without bias or judgment” (Diaconu et al., 2016, p. 12). The importance of not being biased or judging in non-verbal communication marketing

cannot be understated, especially where emotions are involved. Empathy in marketing communication takes place in different shades, and one of the most important details is to ensure that the marketing team does not take things personally. Being kind and understanding implies that the totality of the marketing decisions made using non-verbal communication executions must conform to the specific customer demands, regardless of the contradictions that may arise. The prime guide in effective customer relations using non-verbal entails is using the customer perspective in decision-making.

Cognitive empathy closely relates to the ability of the marketing teams to trigger the proper responses in NVC-emotional empathy outcomes. The cause of non-verbal communication in marketing executions and outcomes is a broad field of interest to neuroscientists and psychologists. Whereas empathy building is the Golden Rule to morality, emotional empathy is seen as “a key ingredient of successful relationships because it helps us understand the perspectives, needs, and intentions of others” (Laurent & Hodges, 2009, p. 89). Laurent and Hodges (2009) argue that emotional empathy creates the ability for the marketing teams to impart the experience of being moved by or responding in resonance to another person and, in this case, the variety of marketing initiatives. The first feeling in using non-verbal communication exploits to incept emotional and cognitive empathy is the ability to portray feeling the same emotion as another person. Secondly, the marketing teams should resonate with the plight of the target customers in ways that allow them to “feel the distress” (Lotfinejad et al., 2020). This way, the marketing teams will be adjusted to entail the various demands in the target market’s quality, quantity, and volume. Finally, empathy is an important detail in NVC because it fronts the possibility of feeling compassion for the clients.

It is essential, however, to note that feelings of distress associated with cognitive empathy may not necessarily mirror the customers' emotions. Nevertheless, it is a significant outlet for organizations to consider their client's needs (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). A positive response to clients' NVC details would be a noteworthy aspect of drawing positive reactions to brand aspirations. A positive correlation exists between extending an empathetic response to various clients with increased fortunes.

Organizations may employ the Simulation theory to understand what clients want and how it can best be infused into marketing. The Simulation theory argues that "empathy is possible because when we see another person experiencing an emotion, we 'simulate' or represent that same emotion in ourselves so we can know firsthand what it feels like" (Shanton & Goldman, 2010, p. 527). Many scientists have established preliminary evidence that relates 'mirror neurons' when humans experience and observe emotion. Brain parts like the medial prefrontal cortex also show an overlap of activation of self-focused and other focused judgments and thoughts.

### **Why Is NVC Cognitive and Emotional-Related Empathy Important in Marketing?**

In human relations and marketing psychology, empathy in all communication (verbal and non-verbal) is an important detail. Individuals (and consequently marketers) with a high level of empathy are deemed with the elevated ability to function well in society and, in turn, have better outcomes. These empathetic individuals are unique assets in organizational contexts because they have an innate ability to form "larger social circles and more satisfying relationships" (Krohn, 2004, p. 73). Empathy is inseparable in building and incepting successful interpersonal relationships in family, workplace units, and beyond. Lack of empathy in non-verbal communication giveaways like poor body language and inappropriate gestures indicates negative

associations like antisocial personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder. These individuals are unlikely to trigger positive reactions from their clients, and in reality, they are prone to driving away potential clients. Marketers with high cognitive and emotional empathy offer customers unforgettable experiences seeded with greater understanding and in-depth connections to the subject brands.

### **What Is NVC Empathy-Based Marketing?**

Non-verbal communication empathy-based marketing is an important aspect that dictates all the NVC-marketing details to be crafted through the eyes of the customers. Here, prior research should be carried out on who the customers are, their challenges, and the attributes that motivate them to act. Simple online marketing executions like emoji-based voting or reaction campaigns are important non-verbal communication cues to collect information. According to research by Petra et al. (2015), emoji use based on being positive, neutral, and negative is one of the most accurate online-based fact-finding with extreme simplicity, accuracy, and versatility.

Upon understanding what clients want and how they perceive their demands to be shaped, organizations must provide content, educational resources, and reactions that extend the proper responses to client demands. The clients should always come first, with consistent interactions fueled by active listening coming next (Koçak, 2022). Organizations should be wary of the non-verbal communication cues that trigger client reactions. Fear, trust, or guilt-related non-verbal communication cues should be integrated with non-verbal communication exploits selected by the firms for an overall, effective, and integrative response. It is significant to recognize that communication-related empathy (cognitive or emotional) is more important than the data from market analysis. The market, in general, is not a data point but a demographic

compromising of real humans with emotions. Tapping into emotions allows organizations to have well-compounded decisions for marketing exploits.

### **NVC and Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture is a vital aspect of all marketing executions. Organizational culture affects marketing, dictates the expected results, and exposes the organization's qualities to the clients. Non-verbal communication forms a considerable chunk of what marketing entails, and the choice of facets reflects the organizational qualities and attributes, whether or not used intentionally. Napoles et al. (2023) state that organizational culture is “the values, behaviors, and shared vision that contribute to the environment of an organization” (p. 12) Organizational advertisement and marketing decisions heavily reflect on the attributes of values, behaviors, and shared visions. Organizational culture plays an integral role in creating and enhancing a cohesive brand and allows the clients and customers to relate freely to the decisions and approaches made with ease and transparency. Marketing also entails offering prospective customers an idea of what it is like to do business with a brand, thus, enhancing the organizational-client interaction.

Non-verbal communication is single-handedly a vast and extensive force in marketing. Most organizations are setting their insights into non-verbal communication, and the general landscape of marketing choices is changing towards non-verbal entities. Non-verbal communication may be difficult to understand within organizational contexts (Manolica et al., 2021). The hiring process and criteria for organizations are continually changing, and at the moment, organizations opt for a highly diverse workplace for obvious reasons. However, one of the supreme shortcomings of a highly diverse workplace is the employees' inflexibility and inability to blend well. Because non-verbal communication is culturally indicted, extensive cultural and relational studies alongside proper orientation of the workmates should be highly



encouraged (Medek, 2021). The ensuing cultural organization is an infusion of all the issues related to organizational relations, and for this reason, the reception, attitudes, and approaches of non-verbal communication in the firms are reflected in the outcomes of organizational marketing.

It is encouraged that organizations have effective approaches to managing the set of non-verbal communication details within and outside their organizational context. Non-verbal communication is a wide detail involving subtle entails like active listening to the correct cues (Maloney et al., 2020). Organizations should be willing to pick employees with high emotional intelligence to read and react effectively to various non-verbal communication cues. Simple details like encouraging and steering proper workplace eye contact evoke positive feelings of appreciation and value among coworkers. Interestingly, these feelings are exposed in the range of marketing and customer relations outcomes (Maruthi et al., 2019). Happy workers emit positive energy and willingness to exploit non-verbal details with creativity and motivation, allowing clients to feel part of a progressive, cohesive, and responsible group. In face-to-face customer interactions, organizations that value positive interpersonal relations among their employees benefit from better customer relations. Coworkers are also encouraged to ensure that they turn on their cameras when remotely linking with their colleagues or clients. Organizations with a robust positive communication culture do not lag in-house collaboration and collaboration across competitors and prospects.

The tone of voice is an important input in non-verbal communication situations. According to Rita et al. (2022), the tone is important when speaking to others because it “clarifies and conveys meanings” (p. 14). The essentiality of having organizational-distinct voices is inseparable in modern marketing as most organizations are continually seeking to have

persuasive voices that are brand-identifiable, just like logos and other non-verbal communication details. Distinctive voices in modern marketing are distinguishable, and careers like voice models are quickly transcending the marketing industry. Employees are encouraged to maintain cheerful tones when communicating with coworkers or clients. Personal appearance is also a crucial detail of non-verbal communication, and organizational culture prompts a given attire choice for specific engagements. The official wears, artifact choice, and even color have been crafted to fit into various organizational presets; for this reason, most organizations have succeeded in creating a following with a ubiquitous connection to their specific emblems.

Other work-related entails like appropriate touch, practical facial expressions when dealing with clients and coworkers, personal space, and hand gestures have been broadly established and integrated to fit specific organizational needs. The latter, for instance, is integrated into casual and official workplace interactions. The threshold for professionalism has dramatically evolved, and simple details like the position of hands during conversations are seen as a big deal. According to Knapp (2008), hand gestures can be used to inspire individuals to be more interested in what is being communicated. When used correctly in employee-employee interactions, the totality of these cues is likely to surface in customer relation situations with a positive bearing. Therefore, positive customer experience in marketing using non-verbal cues reflects the organizational approach and application of non-verbal facets of communication.

### **NVC and Advertising**

While marketing is the overall approach of initiating contact with the customers concerning the brand, advertising is paid-for messaging designed to increase sales volume. Advertising can take several forms, and usually, the intended or expected result relies on the period, extensiveness, and appearance desired by the organization. A variety of factors, such as

the required (and available) financial investments, the demographics, and the type of product, influence advertising approaches to different extents. Technological advancements in communication and social media development have impacted advertising inputs. In the same understanding, it is clear that more organizations are opting for diverse non-verbal communication approaches as their importance and relevance grow.

An insight into the attributes of non-verbal communication reveals just how extensive and intricate the applications of non-verbal communication in advertising are. According to Wu (2022), non-verbal communication in advertising is supposed to show the people “where to look.” (p. 9). Wu nuance that all advertisement decisions that use non-verbal attributes must have a “central focus-an action step.” (p.10). These non-verbal details are usually psychologically tied to pointers such as “Click Here” for online advertisements. There is always a non-verbal trick intended to lure the customers toward the intended advertisement feature. According to Putra et al. (2022), “Humans instinctively want to look at what someone else is looking at” (p. 39). and details like “Buy Now” are always persuasive to attract customers toward the main message. It is also common for the models utilized in various commercial advertisements to look at the main target or message. Nevertheless, most advertisements are psychologically crafted to use eyes as a clue. Pictures of models in the advertisements control and hold the gaze of their customers. Putra et al. (2022) argue that “we tend to look at people’s eyes,” and the target audience is likely to follow if their eyes are focused or pointed elsewhere (p. 42).

Pointing is one of the heavily used non-verbal cues in advertising. Almost all organizations have used points at least once to get the customer’s focus. Pointing is so essential in marketing advertising that “stock image photos of people looking, gesturing or pointing in every direction are so popular” (Makhmudova, 2022, p. 32). Gesturing towards the main

message automatically creates interest in the target market, making them pay more attention to the right message.

Another critical aspect of marketing is the use of facial expressions. Happy faces are, for instance, a ubiquitous detail in almost all advertising campaigns. Abdumutaljonovna (2022) argues that humans have mirror neurons that create the encouragement to mimic or mirror happy faces highlighted in advertisements. Making faces tends to create emotion in human beings, and according to Abdumutaljonovna, this phenomenon, called Facial Feedback Hypothesis, is used in ads to influence buyers positively. Another closely associated mental-NVC advert exploits the use of babies. Adverts with a baby in them attract more attention because babies invoke moods of warmth, compassion, and care.

Although facial attributes are not subtly identifiable in most advertisements, dilating pupils is an old psychological trick of non-verbal advertisement that significantly alter perception. The Darwinian theory of non-verbal communication confirms that fear makes human beings expand their pupils to help in more of their surroundings. In 1965, Eckhard Ess established that arousing the pupils dilates them as a direct attribute of the mental willingness to take in more of the surrounding (Conejo, 2013). Most advertisements are extensively created on this front, encouraging more interest and associations.

Color use is one of the most intriguing attributes of NVC marketing. Warm colors such as orange, yellow, and red are widely used by food joints like McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken because they elevate appetite. Cooler colors like blue that emphasize peace and serenity are widely applied on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. On the other hand, money is also an exploit to attract more customers psychologically. Removing the zeros, replacing them with nines, and removing the dollar signs, help "remove the financial sting from

the customers” (Conejo, 2013, p. 14). The money attraction in marketing is correlated with various visual exploits that signify readiness. That is why most advertisements with food are always ready to eat.

## SUMMARY

### **Semiotics and Internet Marketing**

The knowledge of semiotics and its approaches in internet marketing entails one of the most outstanding and widely studied topics in the current economic world. Most scholars echo the vast importance of semiotics in overall marketing and the implications that precede the reasonable adjustment to correct semiotic infusion in marketing. Also, other individuals have elaborate connections between the results of semiotics and the associations in marketing using approaches that front the most profitable or questionable influences on internet marketing.

Şerban (2014) recounts that marketing behaviors have consistently evolved to reach levels dedicated to unearthing and satisfying consumer behavior. The main idea, according to Şerban, is the organizations gaining traction in marketing inputs in ways that attend to how customers acquire their products. According to Şerban, consumer behavior is an integral part of semiotic marketing, and it is implied by outcomes in the semiotic paradigm in the marketplace.

The idea of symbols in marketing has been intricately studied and revealed to have an in-depth relation to semiotics. Understanding that semiotics entails a totality of symbols that evoke meaning and understanding is essential. Earlier philosophers in marketing predicted the extensive effect of symbols on the overall outcomes of marketing. Individuals like Levy (1999) said symbols were more likely to increase influence because people wanted more leisure, money, possessions, and pleasures. The analysis of symbol increase influence can imply the psychological entails behind all the semiotic marketing exploits because tapping into the right mindset allows maximum gains in marketing drives. Levy (1999) further detailed,

This idea needs some examination because it means that sellers of goods are engaged, whether willfully or not, in selling symbols, as well as practical merchandise. It means

that marketing managers must attend to more than the relatively superficial facts with which they usually concern themselves when they do not think of their goods as having symbolic significance. (p. 25)

As predicted, the current semiotic influence-internet marketing allows for modifying the emphasis related to the standards set by the demand market.

The analyses around the efficacy of semiotics in marketing trickle down to the perceived effectiveness of internet marketing. According to Tsotra et al. (2004), the hype behind semiotics and its integration into internet marketing will only improve and propel marketing executions to extensive heights. Tsotra et al. point out semiotics offers a dignified approach to communication as they are “based on the interpretations of the individual” (p. 211). From the signified personal interpretation, semiotics can be divided into three parts, and according to Hall (2017), these parts are fundamental in the final understanding through denotation, connotation, and mythical aspects.

Honcharova (2016) agrees that semiotics is gaining traction and considerable influence on marketing insights, that most current marketing is semiotically geared towards the exploits that would locate them on the best track in understanding and perception. Oswald and Oswald (2015) seek to explore the factors that place semiotics on the precipice of the importance they attract in today’s marketing exploits. Also, Oswald and Oswald (2015) established the reason for semiotics’ growing popularity and importance in marketing (especially online). First, Oswald and Oswald (2015) point out that semiotic inputs in marketing are complements of big data. Big data increasingly offer more and more data with a decreasing insight and approach to how the data is interpreted. Semiotic inputs act as the most reliable link to break the misinterpretation

data trend by helping clients understand how various insights are shaped and where the opportunities lie.

Like in Oswald and Oswald's (2015) analysis, Honcharova (2016) underpins the importance of semiotics in internet marketing to their ability to act as a "complement to social listening." The ability to gain control of social listening allows organizations to have more insights from analyzing conversations from various open forums and other sources of digital settings. Using semiotics in social media marketing increases the chances of creating a deeper understanding of the voices and sentiments from social listening.

Subtly, the intent of organizations using semiotics within social media marketing is to appear unique and different. That is why most firms have different approaches seeded with creativity and extensive uniqueness to impart brand and advertisement differentiation aesthetically and practically. Semiotic exploits place firms in unique positions that allow them to effectively pursue their courses in online marketing. O'Rourke et al. (2022) analyze the importance of brand differentiation in today's world. Brand differentiation (whether or not gained through semiotic engagements) offers an insight that can be used to empirically validate the impact of brand differentiation, leading to a long-lived debate in regard of whether it is a necessary condition for brand success. The further brand study nuances of social media and internet marketing through semiotics relies on metacognition and the decision process theory. This idea is reflected in Oswald and Oswald's (2015) analysis which claims that the relationship between perceived differentiation and purchase is "stronger when there is a weaker match between the brand's perceived position and consumers' purchase goal (i.e., between what the brand stands for and what consumers are seeking)" (p. 13) Therefore, the semiotic inference of internet marketing should reflect congruence with incepted customer confidence and their



judgment that the brand's position acts as an additional contingency factor in the relationship between differentiation and purchase.

Nevertheless, the increased need for semiotic evolution in internet marketing is guided by consumer drivers changing. The economic market analysis illustrates that market demands change over time with tastes and other entails. According to Bladt (2022), the ability to retain customers and profitability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is attached to the need to analyze and effectively respond to consumer drivers and social changes. Social media marketing inputs result from changing personal tastes and preferences in social and cultural contexts. Recently, social changes have heavily impacted consumer behavior, culture, mindsets, lifestyle, and ideological shifts; this detail also correlates with studies that show people's desires to consume goods to create, enhance their identities, and creatively mix them.

The changing sphere in personal entails, such as tastes and preferences, have been manipulated by several firms to create products and services that conform to trends. Most firms have resorted to extreme internet marketing exploits like greenwashing, which according to Bladt (2022), leads to corporate deception and manipulation. Despite the dangers of wrong exploitation, the semiotic facet of internet marketing is projected to advance and traverse its current stature. The necessity to improve brand messaging, communicate with the desired meaning and impact, influence customer decision-making, and enhance brand development are some of the subtle advantages that will propel semiotic advertising to the next levels.

Statistically, the exploits of semiotics in internet marketing are apparent. Lourenção et al. (2020) analyzed the effect of semiotic advertising on the number of clients gained. Applying an internet-based advertisement using semiotics to lure customers, Lourenção et al. noted that visual attention and the perceived effectiveness of an advertising move are congruent. Moreover, the

study established that the country-brand logo and slogan have a positive influence on visual attention. The analysis of semiotic advertising correlates with Honcharova's (2016) study, which concluded that induced communication had greater perceived ad effectiveness than the combined one. Tourist responses can, in this case, be viewed as the overall market responses from target customers, and through the semiotic influence, it can be concluded that higher visual attention results in higher interactions and outcomes.

### **The Semiotic Function of Emojis**

Most scholars have been interested in exploring the aspects that make emojis semiotically sound. The primary debate in social media interactions has been on the semiotic effect that emojis translate in formal and informal situations. As analyzed above, the semiotic entails of marketing (which include emoji use, among other entails) are applied across all entails, such as advertising and customer messaging.

In the bid to validate the applicability of emojis as a semiotic feature, Hasyim (2019) argues that the linguistic application of emojis in various social media conversations creates this relativity. Logi and Zappavigna (2021) further agree that emojis create meaning both individually and in interaction with language. This outcome is the primary classification unit that can be used to determine any communicative detail's semiotic ability. Furthermore, the purpose of emojis in typical realizations of particular semiotic features is noteworthy because they "interact with language to realize meaning" (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021). In this situation, a case is argued for the emoji's likelihood to jointly construing ideational meaning realize intermodal taxonomies (where hyper/hyponyms are distributed across modes) and particular fields of discourse "domains of experiential meaning" (Logi & Zappavigna, 2021, p. 1) and "how resources in one mode can serve to foreground particular regions of meaning potential in other

modes” (Haysim, 2019, p.11 ). The studies also relate the social media use of emojis and how they relate to the attitudinal realizations in the meaning of emojis and how it differs from the prosodic patterning of linguistic attitude.

Perhaps the simple rules that qualify an item to be semiotic are the most basic detail that can be applied in gaining control over the expected associations of emojis to being of a semiotic influence. According to Parkwell (2019), the “[s]emiotics of Emoji is an important reminder of the limitations of language and sound, and how much visual symbols can aid human interaction and add to the richness of communication” (p. 28). It is further argued that emojis have semantic and emotional functions concerning computer-mediated communication. Various researchers have also studied emoji use from the perspectives of other fields like science, communication, marketing, behavioral, psychology, and medicine, all of them clarifying the importance and value of their semiotic detail.

Danesi (2017), a well-known expert in semiotics, states that “semiotics is an important reminder of the limitations of language and sound and how visual symbols can aid human interaction and add to the richness of communication” (p. 7). Also, emojis have gone from “being virtually unknown to being a central topic in internet communication” (Danesi, 2017, p. 8). Emoji use has grown to be a compensatory universal language that is, at the same time, the world’s fastest-growing form of communication.

### **Practical Implications of Using Emojis**

The practical implications of emoji use in the world of work are related to the likelihood of extensive success or the risk of labored interactions. According to Parkwell (2019), the reliance on text-based communications in workplaces is laced with risks like misunderstandings and misinterpretations. However, anecdotal evidence reveals that the growing use of emojis in

the workplace is an alternative to physical communication cues. This way, it can be argued that emoji use within workplace communication creates more meaning and allows for progressive interactions; this attribute is also reflected in organization-client interaction as emojis, alongside other non-verbal attributes of communication, extend more understanding and encourage closeness.

According to O'Rourke et al. (2022), emojis are a semiotic entail that can be used to enrich text-based communication virtually. With the growing use and application of emojis across other fields, it is only practical to note that applying emojis in marketing inputs will consequently extend a similar reaction. Where applied effectively, emojis can be used to augment leadership, advertisement, and even relational skills. Team leaders can use emojis to connect their teams, interact meaningfully with clients, and influence the correct details in their developments. Emojis can also be used to motivate employees because they bear a direct connection to the emotional well-being of the employees. Emoji use clarifies the emotional detail of the communicating parties, and emojis can allow leaders to craft real-time solutions to emotional issues facing employees.

Several issues, however, transcend emoji use in formal workplaces. With most individuals and scholars disagreeing on the effectiveness of emojis, it is only essential to understand that inappropriate emoji use can be disastrous to the intended organizational fortunes. One of the most remarkable implications of emoji use in formal workplaces or vast marketing expeditions with a broad cultural base is the danger of inappropriate emoji use. The detail of inappropriate emoji use solely makes it challenging to understand the “when” and “how” emojis can be effective. Some individuals and cultures will automatically feel targeted and disrespected for specific emoji use.

To ensure respected emoji use, it is only practical that the choice and handling of emojis are sensitively executed. Cultural issues aside, it is subtly implicated that individuals from a similar niche or culture are likely to interpret emojis differently. However, over time use of emojis within the workplace may contribute to the organizational culture as most individuals adopt their uses and meaning for emojis out of continued internal communications. It is crucial, however, to ensure that the use of emojis in official functions adheres to the culture and beliefs of the target population, as it can lead to extensive implications that may harm the organizational reputation.

### **Area(s) for Future Studies**

The implications for emoji use in conventional marketing communication include several aspects of varying importance. However, it is vital to establish the importance and appearance of semiotics in public relations, human resource management, and interactive marketing. Understanding how emojis impact public relations, marketing communication, and human resources management would be a significant, ground-breaking achievement that will create unity between internal and external organizational entities. Research must also be accountable for the outcome of online marketing and semiotics and how they relate to interactive marketing. Data available will be important in bridging the gap in the physical, psychological, cognitive, and behavioral effects of the selected communication entities to emoji use for corporate functions.

### **Conclusion**

Semiotic exploits are an inseparable feature of communication. According to theories, semiotics and non-verbal communication facets incommode more meaning within interactive situations than verbal exploits; the Mehrabian and Darwinian theories of non-verbal

communication help explain this detail. Most meaning is drawn from the exploits of gestures, movements, artifacts, smells, eye movements, and other non-verbal cues of communication.

Internet marketing is gaining relevance due to the effectiveness and efficacy of relaying information across people. The only way non-verbal physical cues can encode the greatest importance is through personal relations like face-to-face marketing, customer relations, and workplace interactions. Otherwise, most organizations are slowly shifting to non-verbal communication exploits such as IMC and emoji use. As a facet of semiotics, organizations are now exploiting color use, emojis, psychological advertising, logos, and emojis to facilitate their marketing appeals. As argued, the primary concern for all advertisements is to create visually enhanced features that allow for more engagement and positive reactions from the target audience. The most outstanding feature is the expected creativity of semiotic marketing, which has skyrocketed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With elevated internet use, personalized emojis, and the extensiveness of emoji personalization and understanding, the semiotic facet of marketing communication is only expected to rise. More than ever, most businesses are moving to primary virtual operations, implying that the semiotic-internet interaction will diversify and advance. It is incredible to imagine what the future holds for the field of semiotic marketing.

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