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## Did You Get My Text? How text emojis impact perceptions of appropriateness, likeability, social dominance, and creepiness

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## Did You Get My Text?

How text emojis impact perceptions of appropriateness, likeability, social dominance, and creepiness

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## Does Gender Influence Emoji Use? (Butterworth et al., 2019)

How is an affectionate emoji perceived when coming from a male versus a female?

Texas undergraduates (n=80) were asked to read texts that were sent from coworkers and were told whether the response was coming from either a male or female.

The response either had a flirty emoji or a less affectionate emoji.

The results showed that when male workers sent a flirty text it was seen as inappropriate vs a female. Less affectionate emojis that were still friendly were perceived more appropriate coming from males.



## Assessing Personality Using Emoji: An Exploratory Study (Marengo et al., 2017)

A study was conducted to see if emojis are related to the Big-Five personality traits. Participants were asked to answer a Big-Five personality questionnaire and a survey assessing their self degree of self-identification with emojis from Apple color emoji fontset.

**36 out of 91** emojis are related to the big *some* of the five personality traits (**emotional stability, extraversion, and agreeableness**) but emojis were **unrelated** to **conscientiousness or openness**.

# Emojis as Tools for Emotion Work: Communicating Affect in Text Messages

- Two experiments were conducted to assess if emojis of objects convey affect.
- Participants (n=185) were recruited online and asked to rate four messages, two of which were positively valenced and two were negatively valenced.
- The number of emojis present in the message were randomly selected, with the possibility of 0-3 emojis present. Participants were asked to rate the messages on a scale of -50 to 50 based on how negative or positive they perceived the message and rated the messages on eight emotions (joy, trust, fear, surprise, anger, sadness, disgust, and anticipation) and asked to indicate how much emotion was present in the text message.
- The overall results were that emojis of objects convey a positive affect (Riordan M. A, 2017).

## The Communicative Role of Non-Face Emojis: Affect and Disambiguation (Riordan, 2017)

- An experiment was conducted to see whether non-face emojis disambiguate messages and if they communicate affect in the same manner as face emojis do.
- Participants of the study rated the affective content and ambiguity of text messages that were either accompanied, or not, by a non-face emoji.
- Non-face emojis seem to disambiguate a message and also add affect.
- Essentially if a person sends a ambiguous message, and add an emoji to it, ambiguity decreases.



“Got a shot”

## Happy, sad or surprised? The impact of emojis in our life (Langlois, 2019)

- 156 participants from the University of Ottawa School of Psychology completed an online survey.
- Participants received one of three versions of the survey (no emojis, positive emojis and negative emojis) and recorded their reactions to text messages.
- Findings:
  1. People prefer to receive emojis from young people, women, and people who are not in a position of authority.
  2. “In a professional context, women react more negatively than men to negative emojis and those 25 and over react more negatively to emojis (positive or negative) than those 16 to 24 years old”



## **Research Questions/Hypothesis**

1. Does the presence/absence of certain emojis impact perceptions of the sender?
2. How do gendered combinations of sender/recipient impact perceptions of the appropriateness of emoji use?

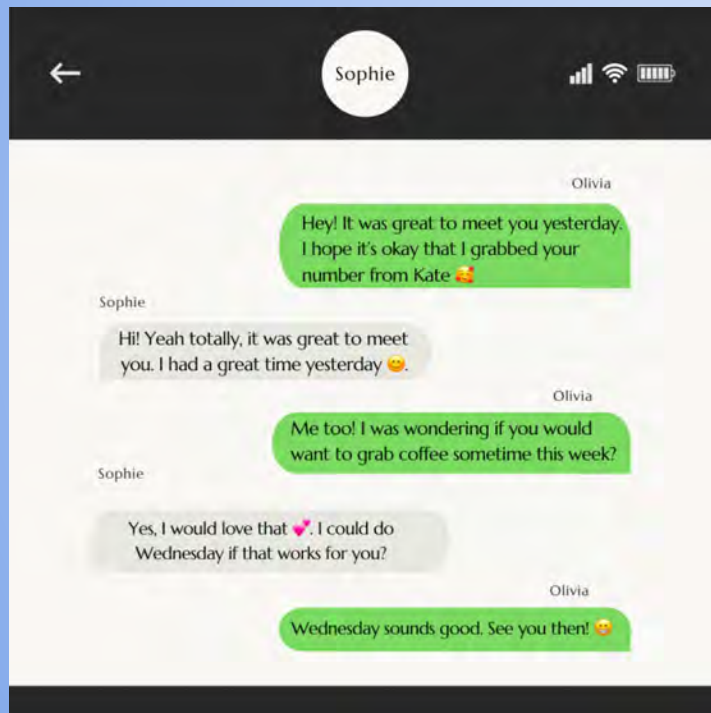
## Method

Six text message exchanges were composed by the lab members: a text message of a burgeoning relationship and text messages between two friends, roommates, or romantic partners.

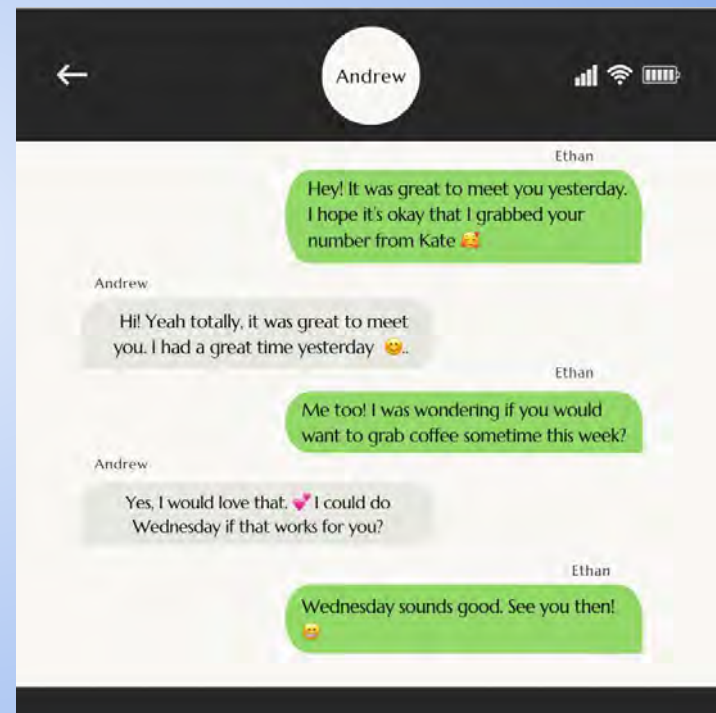
In a between-subjects design text messages were presented to one group with emojis present, and the other with different emojis or no emojis at all. The gender of the dyad (male/male, female/female, male/female) was also randomized in order to examine effects of gender on perceptions of emoji use.

# Scenario 1: New Friendship between people who just met

## Condition 1 Sophie/Olivia



## Condition 2 Ethan/Andrew



## Difference in Perceptions of Female/Female and Male/Male Text Interaction



### Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	0.690	88	0.492
Texting appropriately.	0.562	87	0.576
Popular.	1.091	87	0.278
Creepy.	-0.483	88	0.631
Intense.	0.017	88	0.986
Likeable.	1.292	88	0.200
Attentive.	-0.361	85	0.719
<b>Dominant.</b>	<b>2.297</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>0.024</b>
Easygoing.	0.161	86	0.873
Tying too hard.	-0.734	86	0.465
Show up for Coffee	-0.467	88	0.642
Become Closer	0.986	88	0.327
Text-Savvy	1.518	88	0.133
Global Favorability Score	0.600	88	0.550

Note. Student's t-test.

Findings:



- Olivia was rated as significantly more dominant in the female/female exchange compared to Ethan's level of dominance in the male/male exchange ( $p = .024$ ).

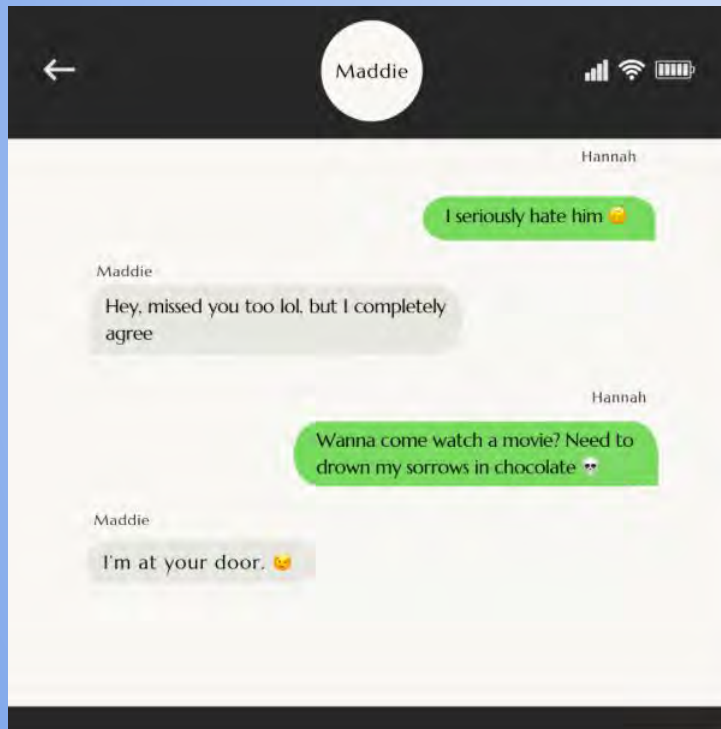
Dominant:

Olivia:  $M1 = 3.3$

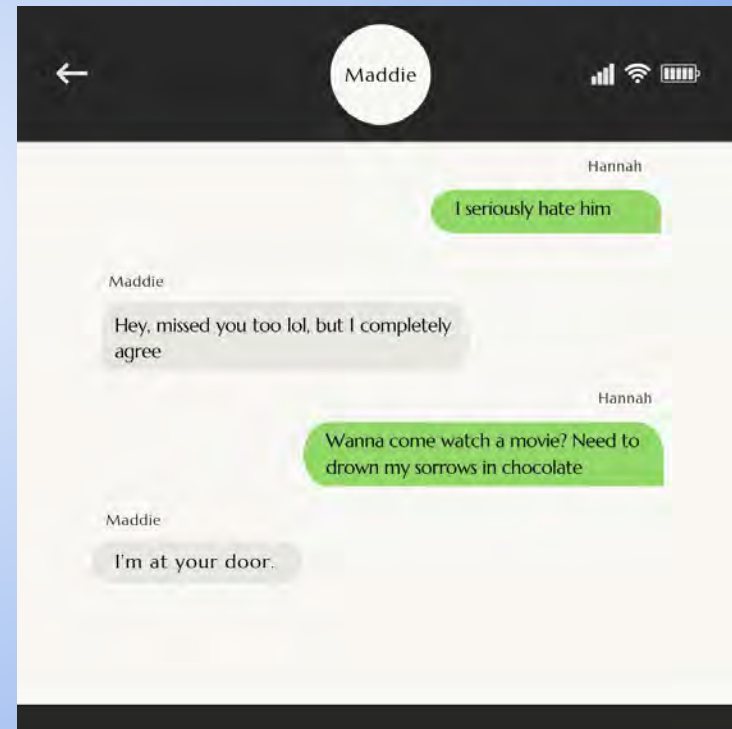
Ethan:  $M2 = 2.8$

## Scenario 2: Friends who are commiserating after they each have broken up with their romantic partners

Condition 1:  
Emojis **present**



Condition 2:  
Emojis **absent**



## Scenario two ▼

### Independent Samples T-Test ▼

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	1.054	88	0.295 <sup>a</sup>
Texting appropriately.	-1.219	88	0.226 <sup>a</sup>
Popular.	-0.788	86	0.433 <sup>a</sup>
Creepy.	-2.569	87	0.012
Intense.	0.109	88	0.913
Likable.	1.484	87	0.141
Attentive.	0.344	86	0.732
Dominant.	-0.471	87	0.639
Easygoing.	1.734	86	0.086
Trying too hard.	0.225	87	0.823
Closeness	0.115	88	0.908
Text-Savvy	1.568	88	0.120
Global Favorability Score	1.261	88	0.211

Note. Student's t-test.

<sup>a</sup> Brown-Forsythe test is significant ( $p < .05$ ), suggesting a violation of the equal variance assumption

## Findings:



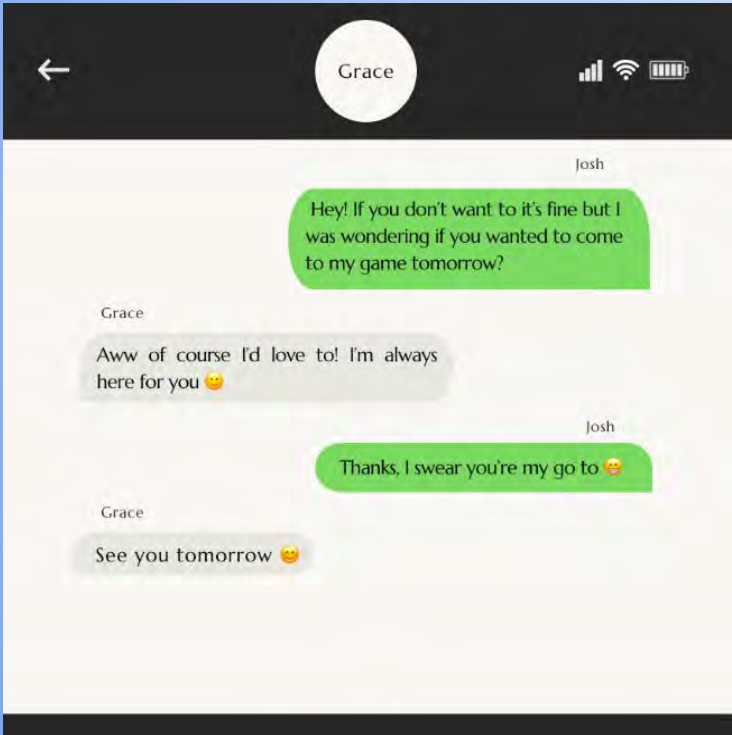
- The presence of emojis showed a significantly *lower* rating of the sender's creepiness. (🙄 🦴)
- The presence of emojis was found to approach significance in ratings of how easygoing the sender was.

Creepy:  
M1= 1.7  
M2= 2.3

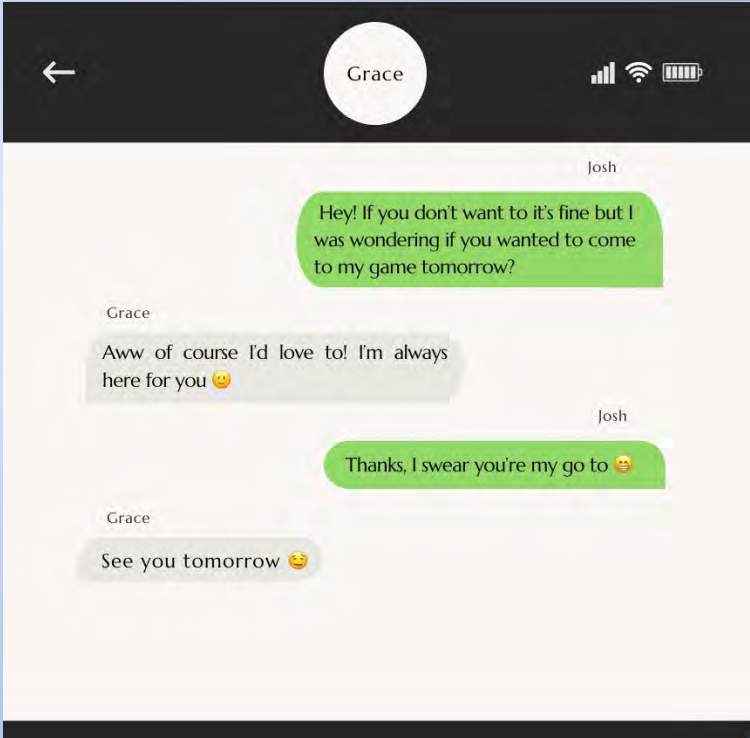
Easygoing:  
M1= 2.6  
M2=2.3

# Scenario 3: College athlete who is seeking a potential romantic relationship with their current friend.

Condition 1:  
**No** drooly emoji



Condition 2:  
Drooly emoji **present**



## Scenario Three ▾

### Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	-0.634	88	0.528
Texting appropriately.	3.299	88	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Popular.	-0.382	87	0.704
Creepy.	-3.112	88	0.003
Intense.	-2.362	87	0.020
Likeable.	0.496	88	0.621
Attentive.	-0.665	87	0.508
Dominant.	-1.284	86	0.203
Easygoing.	0.868	87	0.388
Follow-up Text	-2.260	88	0.026
Tying too hard.	1.892	87	0.062
Closeness	-0.396	88	0.693
Show up for the Game	-1.356	87	0.178
Text-Savvy	-1.500	88	0.137

Note. Student's t-test.

<sup>a</sup> Brown-Forsythe test is significant ( $p < .05$ ), suggesting a violation of the equal variance assumption

Findings:

Drooly face effects...



- Creepiness - strongly significant ( $p = .001$ ).
- Intensity - significant ( $p = .01$ ).
- Likelihood of showing up for the game without the drooly face ( $p = .089$ ) approaching significance

Texting Appropriately

M1= 4.1

M2= 3.4

Intense:

M1= 1.9

M2= 2.5

Creepy:

M1= 1.7

M2= 2.4

Follow-up Text:

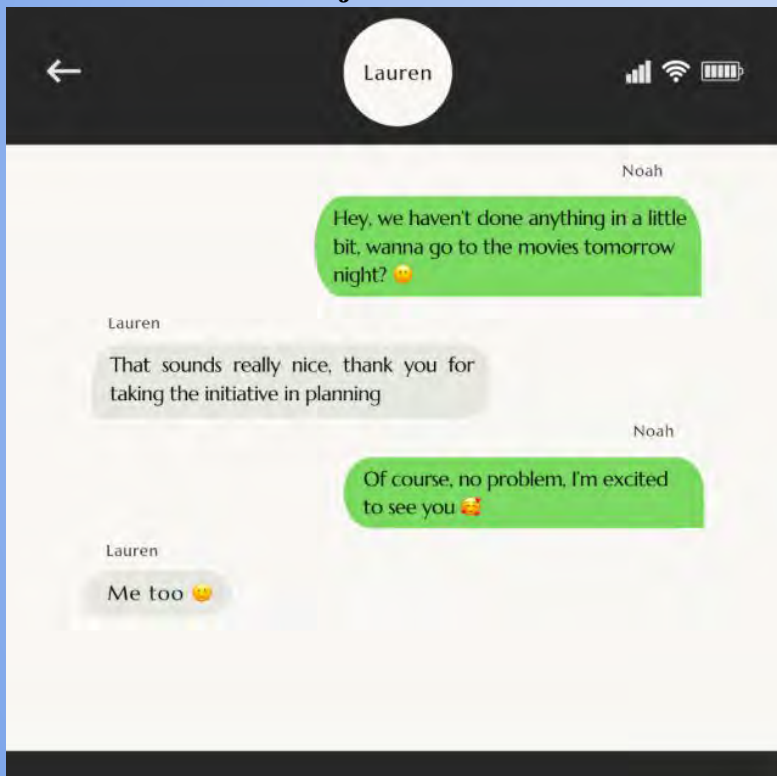
M1= 3.5

M2= 4.1

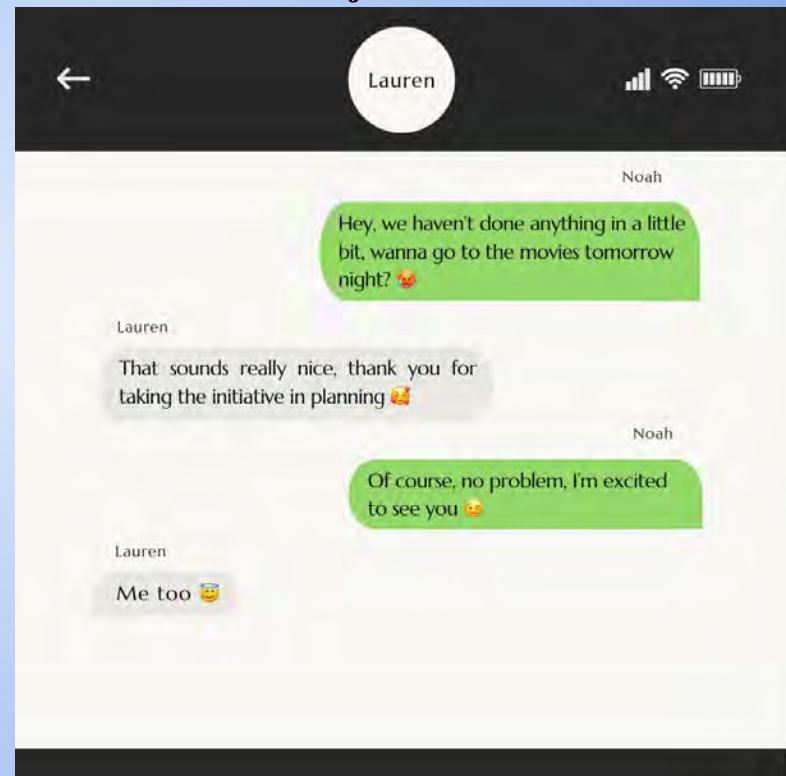


## Scenario 4: Two twenty somethings romantic relationship

### Condition 1: Emoji Pattern 1



### Condition 2: Emoji Pattern 2



## Scenario Four ▼

### Independent Samples T-Test ▼

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	0.589	88	0.557
Texting appropriately.	1.827	88	0.071
Popular.	-1.992	87	0.050
Creepy.	-3.530	87	< .001
Intense.	-3.868	88	< .001 <sup>a</sup>
Likeable.	0.830	87	0.409 <sup>a</sup>
Attentive.	1.827	85	0.071
Dominant.	-1.078	86	0.284
Easygoing.	2.368	86	0.020
Trying too hard.	-2.104	86	0.038
Likelihood of Lauren showing up	-1.112	88	0.269
How long will the relationship endure?	0.315	86	0.754
Text-Savvy	-0.045	88	0.964
Global Favorability Score	2.552	88	0.012 <sup>a</sup>

Note. Student's t-test.

<sup>a</sup> Brown-Forsythe test is significant ( $p < .05$ ), suggesting a violation of the equal variance assumption

Findings:



- Condition 2 (with the hot/sweating emoji) was reported significantly higher in being more creepy, intense, trying too hard, and popular.

Popular:  
M1= 2.9  
M2= 3.3

Creepy:  
M1= 1.8  
M2= 2.7

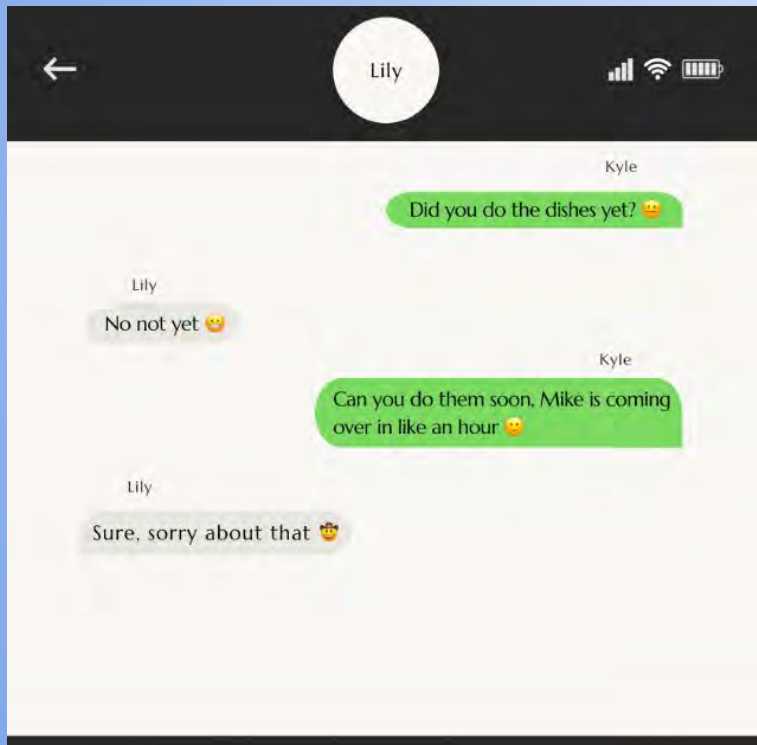
Intense:  
M1= 1.9  
M2= 2.9

Easygoing:  
M1= 3.5  
M2= 3.0

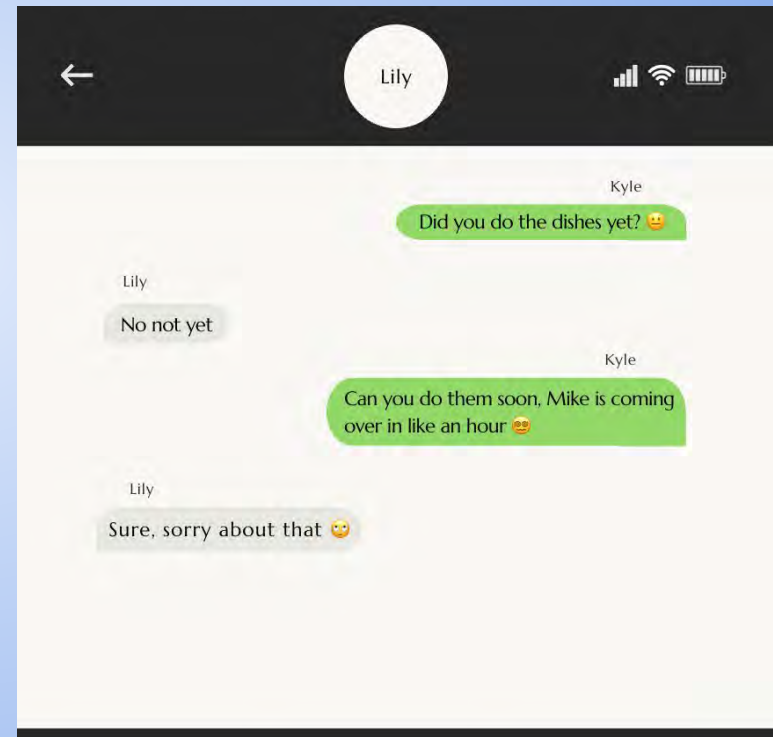
Trying too hard:  
M1= 2.4  
M2= 3.0

# Scenario 5: Two romantic partners trying to resolve a household disagreement

**Condition 1:  
Apologetic emoji**



**Condition 2  
Dismissive emoji**



## Scenario Five

### Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	-0.928	87	0.356
Texting appropriately.	0.379	87	0.706
Popular.	-0.309	85	0.758 <sup>a</sup>
Creepy.	-1.669	86	0.099
Intense.	-1.616	87	0.110
Likeable.	0.003	86	0.998
Attentive.	0.983	86	0.328
Dominant.	0.237	86	0.813
Easygoing.	1.267	85	0.209
Tying too hard.	-0.704	86	0.483
Will Lily do the dishes?	1.485	87	0.141
Will the relationship endure?	1.087	86	0.280
Text-Savvy	-0.834	87	0.407
Global Favorability Score	0.432	88	0.667

Note. Student's t-test.

<sup>a</sup> Brown-Forsythe test is significant ( $p < .05$ ), suggesting a violation of the equal variance assumption

## Findings:



- The dismissive emoji was seen to be more creepy and more intense compared to the apologetic emoji.

Creepy:

M1= 1.8

M2= 2.1

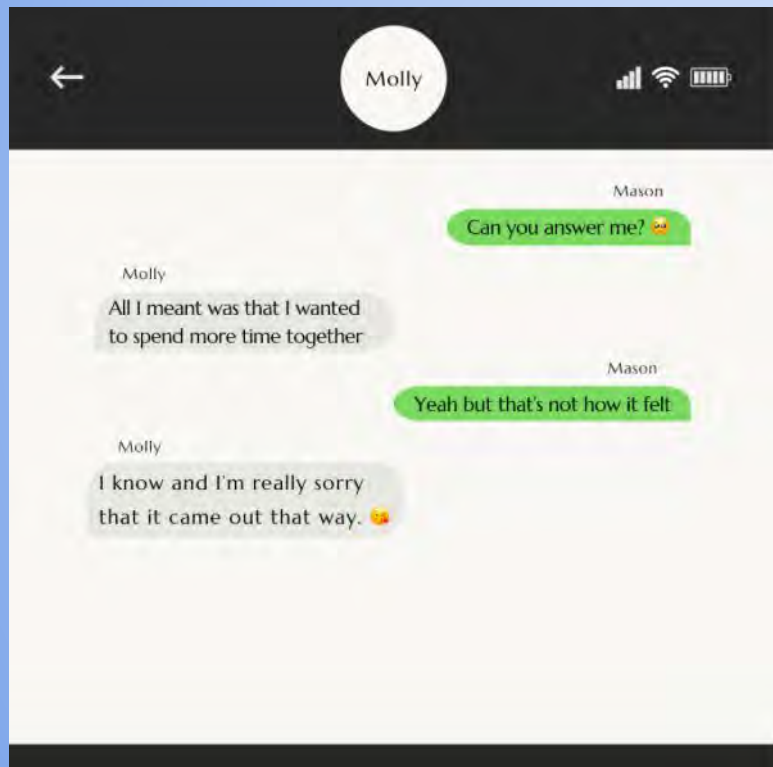
Intense:

M1= 2.9

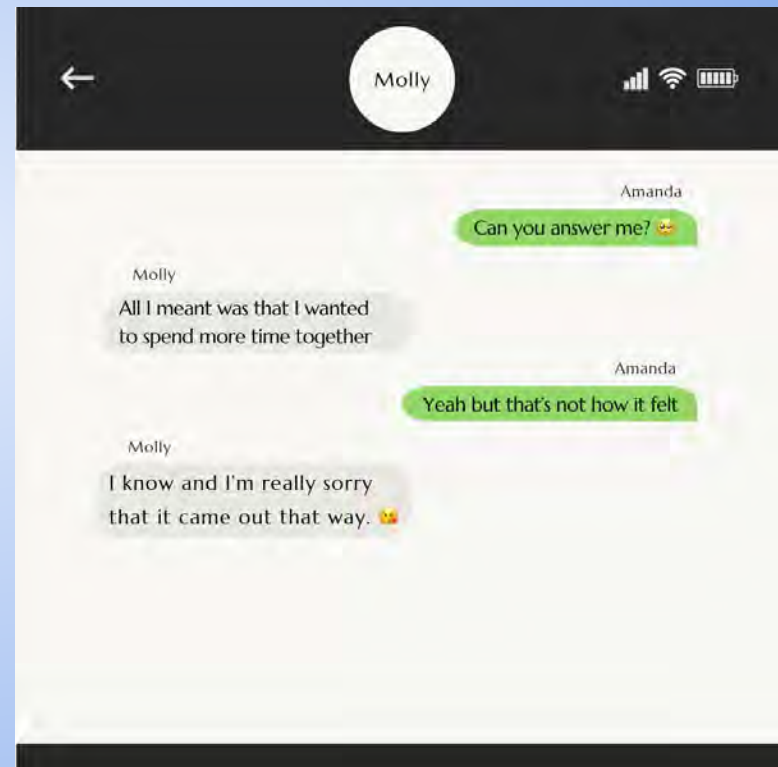
M2= 3.3

# Scenario 6: Two romantic partners resolving a previous argument they had

Condition 1  
Heterosexual couple



Condition 2:  
Lesbian couple



## Scenario Six

### Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
Socially skilled.	-2.859	87	0.005
Texting appropriately.	-0.718	87	0.474
Popular.	-1.426	86	0.158
Creepy.	0.828	87	0.410
Intense.	-1.721	87	0.089 <sup>a</sup>
Likeable.	-1.975	85	0.051
Attentive.	-0.671	85	0.504
Dominant.	-1.325	87	0.189
Easygoing.	0.497	85	0.621
Tying too hard	0.388	87	0.699 <sup>a</sup>
Is the disagreement resolved?	-2.038	87	0.045
How long will the relationship endure?	-1.558	86	0.123 <sup>a</sup>
Text-Savvy	-0.708	87	0.481
Global Favorability Score	-0.884	88	0.379 <sup>a</sup>

Note. Student's t-test.

<sup>a</sup> Brown-Forsythe test is significant ( $p < .05$ ), suggesting a violation of the equal variance assumption

## Findings:



- The lesbian couple was seen as significantly more socially skilled, and likable.
- Intensity approached significance
- Is the disagreement resolved? Statistically more likely in the lesbian couple condition

Social Skilled:

M1= 2.4

M2= 3.0

Likable:

M1= 2.6

M2= 3.0

Resolved:

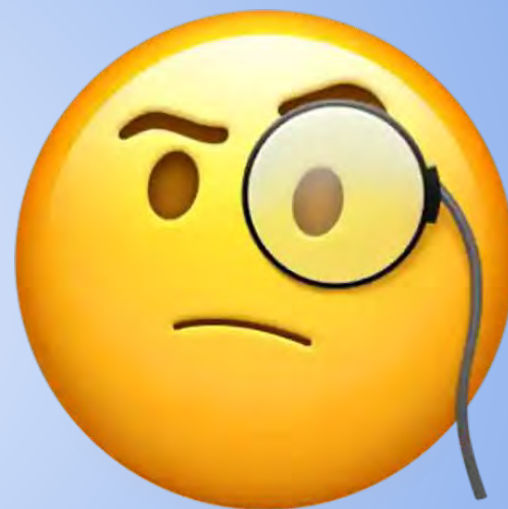
M1= 2.7

M2= 3.2

## Implications

- Emojis can change the perceived characteristics of the sender and can alter perceptions of situational outcomes.
- The gender of the text sender and in some cases the recipient also influences attributed characteristics from emoji usage.
- Each emoji carries the ability to change the perceived intent of the sender, with potent ones such as the drooly face, creating significantly different perceptions.

Questions?





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