

The Impact of Songs, Movies and Plays on Adults Communication Humorously in Social Media: A Case Study of Jordanian Facebook Users

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Abstract

The paper reports the use of humor by Jordanian Facebook users. Data was collected from different Facebook pages especially the pages that concerns with the issues of students at the universities and the pages of young people. Two types of humorous posts are used either by using the exact words of Arabic songs and comic plays or by using parody and changing some words to suit the situation or people described. It is evident that the facial expressions of comic characters are used to prove laughter.

Keywords: Humorous expressions, Facebook users, Comic characters

1. Introduction

Humor can be defined as the “intentional verbal or nonverbal messages, which elicit laughter, chuckling, and other forms of spontaneous behavior taken to mean pleasure, delight, and/or surprise in the targeted receiver” (Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield 1991: 206). The humorous sense is favored and it helps people be more sociable. The use of humor is very frequent on the social media. There are different pages on Facebook that are specified only for funny posts and jokes. People prefer laughter to escape from life pressures. As Goldstein and McGhee (2013) stated “without humor, life would be unbearable” (xiii). It is not only used to make people laugh but to also to criticize social, political and economic problems. In this paper, there will be a brief discussion regarding a number of humor appeared in chats among adults on Facebook.

2. Literature Review

Many papers focused on the use of humor in social media. Holton and Lewis (2011) examined the use of humor by 430 journalists on Twitter and concluded that humor is mostly used to talk about opinions and personal matters and that humor is related to the number of tweets in a certain period of time, not to the followers or the how long the journalist has been using Twitter. Pennington and Hall (2014) employed a lens model approach to study the use and perception of humor on Facebook of 100 FB profiles used by students at Midwestern University and a snowball sample of FB users contacted by the researchers. The study suggested that humor appeared in daily life and cultural events as well as anecdotes, but it was not frequent in political issues. Stoll (2015) investigated the effects of humorous Facebook posts on credibility and social attractiveness. Four treatment groups used a questionnaire to measure the credibility and attractiveness of the posts. The study concluded that there is no significant difference between messages that use employ humor and messages that do not in terms of credibility and attractiveness. Additionally, it was evident that males who do not resort to humorous messages were rated as more attractive. Strain, Saucier and Martens (2015) focused on sexist humor in Facebook profiles by embedding jokes in the posts. The study revealed that men and women perceived anti-woman humor as sexist and less neutral and that men displaying anti-women jokes were viewed negatively. Coker and Dadugblor (2016) reported that visual humor can be gubernatorial, institutional, cultural, or grotesque, and often make fun of social issues in direct or indirect ways. In a recent study, Barry and Graça (2018) analyzed 2,911 videos and reported that humorous messages are preferred to serious ones.

The current paper is about the use of humor by Jordanians on Facebook. It attempts to answer the following question:

1. How is humor expressed by Jordanian Facebook users?

3. Methodology

Data are collected from different posts by Jordanians on different Facebook pages. The posts were in response to different political and economic changes, social events (holidays, weddings,

school and university exams, etc.) that are found in the Jordanian society. They are also used to describe personal experiences like going to a certain restaurant, fasting, describing academic courses, describing women, etc. The collected data are written in colloquial Jordanian Arabic, colloquial Egyptian and Syrian Arabic.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The collected data can be classified into two main categories. The first category is quoting the exact words of famous Arab singers or actors to provoke laughter. Below are some examples:

4.1 فين السؤال أنا أحط ايدي عالسؤال تلاقيني فريرة

fiin issu?aal ?anaa ?aHuT ?idii calaa ?issu?aal tila?iini furriirah Tell me what the question is and I will answer it quickly. This quotation is taken from a famous Egyptian play titled مدرسة المشاغبين Madrast Al-Mushaghebiin School of Mischievous. This play is one of the most famous plays which were produced in 1970s. Many famous actors performed in the play like Adel Imam Saeed Saleh, and Ahmad Zaki. It is said by Bahgat (a student at that school) in the philosophy class; the teacher discussed many ideas and topics regarding philosophy and by the end she asked them an unclear question, Bahgat gets confused at that time and could not understand what she exactly wants him to answer so he said this statement to explain that he does not get the idea. Generations after generations keep watching this play and nowadays many comic channels show it on Fridays and holidays. For these reasons, the words of the play are widely used by Facebook users to comment on any post that appears unclear and difficult to be understood or when it includes a huge number of details that could not be able to be handled.

4.2 العب يالا

Ilcab yalaa This expression is taken from an Egyptian song sung by two singers. It originally has a religious motivation; that is, it is used to stop the Devil from seducing humans into sins. The song spread quickly and was viewed by millions of people on YouTube and thousands of people download it from many music applications. The expression (when used) indicates that something weird or up normal happened. The meaning of the expression changed as it spreads between the youth and social media users. It is now used by Facebook users to describe unfamiliar changes either of Individuals or of groups.

4.3 لوتفي استنى يا لوتفي

utfii ?istannaa yaa lutfii Lutfi wait This sentence was produced by the Egyptian actress Rajaa Al-Jidawi as in an Egyptian film titled بوبوس Bobbos kissing. The words of the film spread on the social media because it is one of the films of the Famous Egyptian comedian Adel imam whom Arab audience admire and wait his new works impatiently. The written form of the name ridicule the madani dialect as the ط sound is T is replaced by ت sound t. The funny thing is that there is no matching between the huge body of the actress and her delicate way of speaking. The expression is said in the film to describe how confused the actress was because she tried many times to prepare a date between Mr. Lutfi and her friend to get married, but she could

not because of the bad circumstances which get her lost. In this example, not only the words are quoted but also the picture of the actress is included as well as a picture of a broken heart and a laughing smiley face. (see Appendix 1). The quotation is now used by Facebook users especially the students to describe teachers who jump from one topic to another and students ask them to wait. This highlights the idea that students nowadays cannot focus on their lessons as they are busy with the social media. They spend a long time on the Internet and they keep using their phones during the classes. Consequently, they feel lost and that the teacher is moving from one point to another so fast.

4.4 حبيبنا اللزم

Habiibnaa illazam Our beloved This expression is taken from a Syrian series of 10 seasons. A character who is called Al-Nims used it to thank anyone who offers help for him by saying “our beloved”. The expression spread quickly because the series was shown in Ramadan for 10 years and the actor repeated the expression many times in each episode. This helped the audience to memorize it and use it in other situations as well. So, people on the social media use this expression in similar contexts i.e. to show that they are grateful for those who lend them a hand. For example, one may use ‘our beloved’ in as a response to someone who helped him fix his car. The use of the expression extended to include show agreement and that people have the same opinions or ideas.

4.5 هوه ده

huwwa dah That is it. This expression was first used by the famous Egyptian actor and singer, Tamer Hosny in a film titled Captain Heema to flirt with girls in an obscene way. Hosny himself used the expression in many interviews and TV programs. It was one of the hashtags in The Voice Kids. The expression is widely used by the youth on the social media because Hosny is followed and liked by millions of Facebook users especially users from the young generation. The usage of it indicates a confirmation on something or someone. People nowadays use this expression to confirm a certain idea when they reach the climax and that this is what exactly they look for. For example, after suggesting different places to travel to, one of the people suggested Italy, the others show their agreement to go to Italy by saying هوه ده that is it.55.

See Appendix (5) for more examples

The second category includes examples in which parody is used. Parody is an intentional imitation of a text, style, genre or discourse-which includes an element of humor and which has an aim of interpreting its target in one way or another" (Korkut 2009:21). Some examples are as follows:

2. تعرف إيه عن النسوان يا بهجت؟

أعرف انهم لما ببلاقوا الراجل مبسوط بينكدوا عليه

Ticraf ?iih can iniswaan ya bahgat? ?acraf innuhum lammaa biylaa?uu irraajil mabsuut bynakiduu caliih What do you know about women, Bahgat? I know that when they find the

man happy, they make him in a bad mood. This example is also taken from the Egyptian play School of Mischievous. It sheds light on the fact that the relation between men and women is becoming worse because they do not understand that they behave and think differently. So, these differences results in problems that cause life to be dull and the couple to be in disagreement. (See example one for explanation for the frequent use on the social media). This is an imitation of a quotation taken from the same play. The original quotation is: 2. تعرف ايه عن ؟acraf innu lamma waahid yiDrab waahid cala dmaaghuu yu?ac mayHuTTish manTiq What do you know about logic? I know that when someone hit another on the head, he falls illogically. The photos of the two actors were included in the post as well as a laughing smiley faces (see Appendix 2).

This is an imitation of a quotation taken from the Egyptian play School of Mischievous. The original quotation is:

3. تعرف ايه عن المنطق؟

أعرف انه لما واحد يوقع على دماغه يقع مبحطش منطق

Ti^craf ?iih^can ilmanTiq?

?a^crafinnulammawaahidyiDrabwaahidcaladmaaghuuyu?acmayHuTTishmanTiq

What do you know about logic?

I know that when someone hit another on the head, he falls illogically.

The photos of the two actors were included in the post as well as a laughing smiley faces (see Appendix 2).

4. لانا قد الشوب وليالي الشوب

Lanaa ?ad ishshuub w layaaliishshuub

I cannot tolerate the hot weather.

This sentence brings into focus the recent weather changes that Jordan witnesses. Summerseason is becoming very hot.

This is a sarcastic imitation of the words of a song for the famous Egyptian singer Umm Kalthoom. The original quotation is:

لانا قد الشوق وليالي الشوق

Lanaa ?ad ishshuu? wlayaaliishshuu?

I'm tired of longing nights.

What made this statement appears frequently on Facebook is that Umm Kalthoom is very famous in the Arab world and her songs are known to all generations. Moreover, the expression is short and it is rhyming which make it easy to memorize.

The Egyptian singer appears in the photo holding a hose and there is a laughing face above the picture (Appendix 3).

It is worth noting that Facebook users did not only include the words of famous celebrities, but they also used their facial expressions to express their feelings. The facial expressions of actors were widely used to express the feeling of hunger during the holy month of Ramadan and how it appears on Muslims faces as time passes. (See Appendix 4).

The results of this study are similar to those of Coker and Dadugblor (2016) who reported that visual humor “often ridicule societal problems in either overt or covert ways” (101).

5. Conclusion

Humor is widely used by Jordanian Facebook users to highlight and mock different social, economic, and political changes that take place in the society. Two types of humor posts are identified. The first one is quoting the exact words of comic actors and Arabic songs. The second type is imitating the humorous words and changing them to suit the context in which it appear. Interestingly, the facial expressions of comic actors are also used in to express different feelings.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4



Appendix 5: Examples of quoting words of celebrities

	Arabic Expression	Transliteration	English meaning
1	أخبرهم يا صلاح	?akhbirhumyaaSalaaH	Tell them, Salah ⁽¹⁾
2	ديسباسيتو	disbaasiituu	Name of a Spanish song 'Decpacito'
3	أوره لقد انتابتني القشعرينة	uuhlaqadintabatnii ?alqash [°] ariinah	I'm shivering. The misspelling of the word evoke laughter.
4	أبشركم بسنة سودة	?ubashirukumbisanahsuudah	I expect the year to be the worst.
5	والنعمة كده كثير	w ini [°] mahkidahktiir	That is too much, I swear.

6	ايه التلوث الي انا سامعه ده	?ihittalawwuthilli ?anaasam ^c uu dad	what is the ‘pollution’ that I hear. ⁽²⁾
7	واضح انه في اجتماع علي كده	waaDiH ?inuufii ?igtima ^{cc} alayyahkidah	It is clear that there is

⁽¹⁾The sentence is taken from an Arabic story in which a Muslim sinner whose name is Salah went to Shaikh and asked him to help him seek forgiveness. After stopping the sin, the sheikh kept taking Salah to the Mosque with him asking him to tell the people his story.

⁽²⁾: This was first used by the Egyptian actor Ahmad Helmy in a film titled ‘Black Honey’ as he heard an English teacher teaching the kids wrong pronunciations of words. People use this expression to comment on ideas or opinions that they disagree

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