

opci3n

Revista de Antropologfa, Ciencias de la Comunicaci3n y de la Informaci3n, Filosoffa,
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 36, 2020, Especial N°

27

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

Symbolic violence, social media: A sociological analysis

Maissa Nasser Alrawashda

Department of sociology, The University of Jordan, Jordan.

M_Rawashdeh@ju.edu.jo

Abstract

This article provides a sociological vision to explain how social media contributed to renewing and spreading the discourse of violence by using the Content Analysis approach. As a result, social interaction in the virtual space through social media applies the same principle of social interaction that occurs in the real society. In conclusion, academic and educational institutions set their sights on establishing the foundations of a societal culture based on the values of human rights and on the principles of equity and gender equality among their students.

Keywords: Social media, Symbolic violence, Digital.

Violencia simbólica, redes sociales: un análisis sociológico

Resumen

Este artículo proporciona una visión sociológica para explicar cómo las redes sociales contribuyeron a renovar y difundir el discurso de la violencia utilizando el enfoque de Análisis de contenido. Como resultado, la interacción social en el espacio virtual a través de las redes sociales aplica el mismo principio de interacción social que ocurre en la sociedad real. En conclusión, las instituciones académicas y educativas se enfocan en establecer las bases de una cultura social basada en los valores de los derechos humanos y en los principios de equidad e igualdad de género entre sus estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Redes sociales, Violencia simbólica, Digital.

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Wide Web has contributed to changes in cultural systems and organizational structures through the digital culture generated by the dynamic environment created by Internet users with their various programs. The individuals who use the Internet create their societies based on their natural cultural backgrounds, meaning that through the identities of individuals, they are perceived and used as a cyberspace that is used as a playground for self, forming the cultural, economic and social context in which we live (BENOUARGLA, 2013).

With the increasing application of modern communication technologies, the Internet generation has emerged that interact with social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumbler, LinkedIn and YouTube, which attracts members of societies, especially the youth. These sites have become an area for intellectual and cultural exchange between the largest possible number of society members. This is evident, as the number of social media users in 2018 reached 3.196 billion, an increase of 13% annually, according to the latest global digital data for 2018 from the media company. We are Social, the Hootsuite social media account management platform.

Despite the active role of the media in interacting with others and the positive change and benefiting from the experiences of others, the role of negative impact began to appear in the social media progressively., Especially in spreading the discourse of violence and

hatred among users, where violence is one of the most dangerous social phenomena in societies. This, especially in light of the spread of virtual culture and the consideration of social media sites as one of the most important tools for social change.

Therefore, this study will provide a sociological vision to explain how the content carried by social media contributed to the renewal and dissemination of the discourse of violence. This is reflected in pictures and symbols, words, images, suggestions, inclusions, referrals, threats, the use of insulting statements, or surnames to designate members of society based on their race, religion, or sexual orientation, intentionally or accidentally. This allows the damage of certain social forms or concepts by creating new social definitions of the social existence or new forms. The goal of this research through interactive symbolic sociological is to analyze the language of social media sites in the dissemination and use of speech violence and its impact on the individual, group and the community, and to provide some of the proposed solutions to address them.

The phenomenon of spreading violence speech in the content of social media is considered one of the most prominent phenomena of the twenty-first century, and as a lesion that moved from actual social reality to virtual reality. This, with a symbolic nature that has taken many dimensions and patterns flowing between individuals and groups easily and quickly. It carries a set of value assumptions that clarify the relationship between social media as a dynamic medium and individuals as actors and interact with its content. Given the growing

globalization in the horizons of the world of modernity and beyond, and the political threats and increasing social movements and sectarian pluralism witnessed in the social reality, the crisis in the moral system and the prevalence of emancipation and democracy.

The hidden symbolic violence on the social media platforms increased between the yeas and nays, leftists and rightists, conservative and liberal, and the characteristics of individuals and their commoners, overshadowed by the characteristics of the culture of the virtual society in the light of the absence of social reality control. This has sometimes led to its translation on the ground of social reality and its transition from immaterial reality to material reality threatening social security and peace and mourning ruin.

2. METHODOLOGY

To understand several of the implications in Sociology that this propagation of digital culture involves, especially the digital culture in the world of social media, and through a bibliographical review that discussed symbolic violence in sociological and media studies, especially in the Arab World. Furthermore, by using the Content Analysis approach, an approach that social researchers have been interested to understand the behavior of individuals on the Internet, through which individuals are represented by their mechanical identities and interactions. Issues of the symbolic interactive theory were used as a guide to analyzing the phenomenon of violent discourse

in the content of social media to determine its causes and understand its dimensions. Bibliographic research was carried out in the Internet Portal (HIP) Horizon Database on this subject with the following terms: —digital + sociology and —violence + digital — violence + Social Media in the publications 'abstract (DANIELS, WILLIAMS, & BUGGS, 2017).

Social media means a set of technologies and applications available on the Internet for communication and interaction between members of society through audio, written and video messages, instant messaging, video, chat, file and photo exchange, discussion groups, email, and blogs. Therefore, they represent a dynamic social structure for the information age and the network society age consisting of production networks, strength, and experience (AL-HUSSEIN & OBAID, 2017).

It goes without question that the social media brought about a real social revolution in the lives of individuals and fundamental changes in the cultural and social structures of different societies as it succeeded in addressing the disease of ignorance in the collective consciousness and in changing laws. It also contributed to the creation of new social phenomena that had a clear impact on the social interaction of individuals and social organizations and structures because it allowed them to convey their ideas and discuss their political, social and cultural issues and directed their feelings and thoughts towards specific psychological, social and political issues. So, it became an authentic tool for individuals to express themselves, their

problems and ideologies, not only individuals, but it also became a platform for governments and civil society organizations to communicate their ideas, achieve their goals, and mobilize the masses in their favor (ARICAK & SIYAHHAN, 2008).

By communicating information by the social media distinctly and intensely, its impact on the behavior, knowledge, and conscience of its users' increases, especially in the event of structural instability in society due to conflict and change, as it contributes to shaping and reshaping the vision of individuals for themselves, for others and their society by overwhelming them with presentations about the shape of others and their feelings, lives, food, clothes, and drinks, and control the attitudes and patterns of consumption and creativity, as well as forms of expression and cultural diversity, it is only a situation fact and affects the processes of self-identification at the individual and group levels (AYKURT & SESEN, 2017).

The social media has a set of features that increased the individuals' turnout to it such as interactive media based on the Internet that is easy to use and participate and chat, openness and globalization, chat, ease of interconnection and overcoming barriers, the ability to create groups and personal profiles, where users can create service-specific profiles and identities for the website or app that are designed and maintained by the social media organization. It also contains a tremendous amount of events and news, whether political, economic, social, sports or artistic, and transmitting them as they occur,

entertainment, especially through video games and digital games (ALFAILKAWY, 2017).

Social media has varied among sites specializing in exchanging and finding information, communications, group building, and cooperation websites, multimedia sites, polling and opinion sites, and social and entertainment sites. Among the most popular and attractive sites or means for individuals are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, LinkedIn, YouTube and WhatsApp. They are easy to use and available through any website and via various mobile applications, and they are economical in the effort, time and money considering a free subscription and logging in without monopoly of a group or someone. They allow the creation of electronic political groupings and are able to be used as marketing channels.

They also have the SMS service Twitter and provide users with the service of linking their accounts with their accounts on other sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram which have the feature of adding Emoji symbols and GIFs to user's posts. Besides, the users can quickly post multimedia posts, especially from mobile devices, make blogs in form of text, image, video files, links, sayings, chat or even audio files, and follow the other users (BOURDIEU & WACQUANT, 1992; AL-MUHTASEB, 2017; BOURDIEU, PASSERON, NICE, BOURDIEU & BOTTOMORE, 2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The symbolic interaction theory is a psychosocial theory that arose as a sociological work guide to the pragmatism which addressed the human experience as a source of knowledge, and the human behavior where it indicated that it develops and changes due to the influence of the social and natural environment surrounding the individual in a way more than he is influenced by the physical environment of the human body. It stressed that the society has the greatest influence on human behavior (AL-RAHAMNEH, 2018).

Symbolic interactionism has nearly a hundred-year history as an approach to understanding human communication. With its roots in pragmatism (Dewey), social theory (Mead, Blumer), and later social psychology (Goffman), symbolic interactionism contends that humans interpret and assign meaning to events via an elaborate set of symbols. The meanings of these symbols originate and evolve through human social interaction. These interactions form the foundation for people's notions of self and society. Thus, the material world, as well as concepts of self, is constructed through an interactive, communicative process. Observing neither idealist nor materialist suppositions about ontological precedence, symbolic interactionism is a micro-level theory addressing how the social world is created and sustained through continual and varied interactions among people. It is useful in the study of communication because it explains meaning creation among interlocutors; symbolic interactionism is a theory of language, communication, and socialization (DAMANI, 2011).

The concept of symbolic interactionism refers to the interaction that arises between different minds and meanings, which is a distinctive feature of human society, that is, the symbolic interactionism interacts with the subjective interpretation of meaning by individual actors. This social interactionism is based on that the person considers himself, and at the same time must respect others. Therefore, the image of human society can be formulated which expresses an honest expression of interaction, support and mutual dependence between the individual and society, and between external behavior and social self.

Symbolic interactionism theory is often applied primarily to the micro-level, the structuring of interdependent lines of behavior at the micro and macro levels also involves shared definitions developed through interaction. The overall culture of a society is the objective outcome of these shared social definitions whereby subjective meanings are created, often expressed in material artifacts of various types, and either sustained or transformed through interaction. Symbolic interactionism does not deny that institutional structures possess social importance; rather, they attend to the act of meaning construction—how repeated, significant interactions among people, within themselves, and with environments construct the social order.

So, the theory of Symbolic interactionism focused on Symbols and their meanings, which represent a group of artificial signals used by people to facilitate the process of communication, which is a special feature of the individual. It includes the language (Mead),

meanings (Bulmer), and impressions and mental images (Goffman), (CREPE, 1999).

The individuals behave according to the exchange of symbols and meanings so that their self-responds and agrees through the forms of communication and interaction between them. To understand the behavior, the meanings and symbols through which individuals communicate must be revealed. Symbolic communication is the basis of every social behavior, and the appropriate systematic method to gain knowledge about behavior. Society members achieve their mutual compatibility through situations in which they interpret the behavior in a symbolic interpretation, and communication is the essence of the act and must form the appropriate basis for a realistic perspective from which social events are addressed (AL-SAWALQA, 2016).

Symbolic interactionism also focused on the self because it is the primary axis in the processes of social interaction, by which the individual turns into a social actor who has a connection with others. It is through the self that the human being creates the image of himself and the image of others that are fundamental subjects of mutual interaction between the self and society, so society is the outcome of a continuous interaction between the human mind and the human psyche. That is, the self includes the mind, the soul, and society, so the mind enables the individual to understand symbols and signs that have social and cultural meanings according to which behavior is possible, whereas the soul consists of two sides (both sides of the self); the first is the ego (I) and the second is the part that looks at the ego (Me), and

(Me) represents the social conscience arising from social values, standards and expectations, i.e. that the self is the individual through his reciprocal relations with others, and the self is an object and an object, and the ego is the self that thinks and works, i.e. the active ego, while the self-ego is the awareness of the self (the individual) as a subject in the external world to others.

During the social interaction, the individual receives symbols and social signs, and the process of internal interpretation occurs at the individual (a conversation between the two sides of the self), where the symbol provokes the same reaction that it provokes in others, so he can look at himself as others see it, but the external interpretation is due to the language that emerges from verbal and dialogue verbs which works to develop an awareness of the idea of the self, and from this, we find that the inner self is the response of the individual to the directions of others, while the external self is the directions of others and their positions as understood and envisioned by the individual, as these trends work to form the ego. The effect, so the individual turns when interacting with her I am an internal look to see an integrated internal and external to the other, that the individual's behavior is the result of perceptions of mental and assessments of human behavior from others who interact with them (AL-SAWALQA, 2016).

DANIELS, WILLIAMS & BUGGS (2017) Explain cyber self-ing through Symbolic interactionism, beginning of the cyber self is the emergent product of social interaction in which the self-masters the ability to be both the subject and object of interaction. In this way,

cyber selfing creates the virtual 'I/me' couplet. Online, the homepage allows the 'I' to present the self to the cyber other; in fact, the very construction of the homepage presumes the expectation of the virtual generalized other. In Goffmanian terms, the 'I' constructs the homepage with expressions given by choosing text, photos, and digital formatting with the other's reaction in mind. The 'I' solicits the other's gaze through links to email, tabs to post comments, hit counters, and membership in webrings. Each of these indicates the 'I's' expectation of the other's presence and eventual appraisal. Once the 'I' perceives the cyber other's reaction, this reflexive constitution produces the cyber me. In virtual communities such as eBay, links to the all about me page is embedded in interactional spaces called boards. These links move users between textual interactions and spaces of identity construction; this is just one permutation of the homepage. Furthermore, in weblogs or blogs, as well as online diaries, virtual spaces enlarge the conception of the homepage with interactional space. Blogs allow the same presentation of the 'I' as do homepages, but they also expect the other to interact with the 'I' in the same virtual space. The blogger presents the 'I' both through constructing the page and maintaining a dialogue with other 'I's' that post reactions and commentary. In blogging, each manifestation of the 'I' is predicated on the self-ing of other 'I's' who form the cyber other. The 'I' is constantly redefined as the 'me' in response to this interactional commentary. Offline self-ing is built on interrelated interactions that do not stand in isolation. In parallel fashion, blogging requires sequential interactions that inform each other, such that interactional flows result from contributions from both bloggers and audiences that

are predicated on each other. In Median terminology, this process of self-ing is the result of the collective construction of the cyber 'I' and 'me' with the cyber other.

Social media clarifies the symbolic interactive hypothesis, which states that we find meaning in a situation that depends on thinking about our actions through social media. We define our identity based on our perception of how others view our communications. This identity is validated, strengthened, or changed with tweets, post comments, and replies. This process creates what is called a social looking glass as our communications in the digital space act as a mask that reflects us the self that we want to photograph. Through continuous communication, the gap between who we are and who we are is narrowed when we communicate in the digital space to bring ourselves closer to others. Therefore, social interaction in the virtual space through social media applies the same principle of social interaction that occurs in the real society, because the virtual community contains a huge amount of meanings and symbols for it and another group of meanings and symbols that individuals transfer from their actual reality to their virtual reality. Symbols aiming for taunting through social media, from which the individual creates - through himself during the virtual interaction - the image of himself and the image of others with negative meanings that have dire effects. Symbolic violence through social media, like the real world, is characterized by disguise and flow in the mind, and it is programmed without awareness, the aim of which is to generate beliefs, mental images, and ideologies that take hold in the minds of individuals.

4. CONCLUSION

Violence through social media has become one of the main challenges facing societies, as it results in a threat to the security and fundamental rights of citizens all over the world, and because of its dire effects on individuals' psychological and mental health, and affects their level of behavior and emotions. Some of them expressed the risk report issued by the (International Economic Forum) in 2013 with (digital fires) to indicate the danger of symbolic violence and its discourse that spreads hate, sedition, and rumors that have a devastating effect on the actual social reality. UNESCO also conducted a study on youth and violent extremism on social networks to research on the assumed roles that social networks play in spreading the seeds of violent extremism, especially as they affect young people and women. Which recommended to address it by encouraging youth participation in decision-making processes, deepening cooperation between countries, civil society organizations and local communities, enhancing media and informational education strategies, supporting research in this field, and ensuring professional press coverage that takes into account the sensitivity of conflicts, controlling forms of expressing hatred through the Internet without compromising the rights to freedom of expression, or educating Internet users about the ethics of using the Internet in addition to several privacy issues. Not only that, but the role of those responsible for managing social media platforms must be activated in deleting posts and videos promoting extremist and fascinating ideas and rumors and working to educate users about how to activate these platforms for their benefit through

the same platforms. Furthermore, that academic and educational institutions set their sights on establishing the foundations of a societal culture based on the values of human rights and on the principles of equity and gender equality among their students, especially since most of the social media users are children, adolescents, and youth and their hours of use are high, so they must be sensitized through courses and seminars curricula on how to interact and communicate in the virtual world.

REFERENCES

- ALFAILKAWY, H. 2017. "The effect of mobile addiction as a means of communication on some psychological variables among students of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in the State of Kuwait". **Journal of Educational Sciences**. Vol. 3, N^o 1: 151-206. UK.
- AL-HUSSEIN, B., & OBAID, I. 2017. "The practice of electronic violence among university youth". **Journal of Educational and Psychological Research**. N^o (55), pp. 100-124. USA.
- AL-MUHTASEB, C. 2017. **The role of social media in calculating: Twitter as an example, (1st edition)**. Dar Al-Muhtaseb Publishing and Distribution. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- AL-RAHAMNEH, N. 2018. **Hate Speech on Facebook in Jordan: A Survey Study, Unpublished Master Thesis**. Middle East University. Jordan.
- AL-SAWALQA, R. 2016. **Social Support for Sexually Abused Juveniles**. Noor Publishing House. Germany.
- ARICAK, T., & SIYAHHAN, S. 2008. "Cyberbullying among Turkish Adolescents". **Cybersycology & Behavior**. Vol. 11, N^o 3: 235-261. USA.
- AYKURT, A., & SESEN, A. 2017. "Social Media in Social Organization". **European Scientific Journal**. Vol. 13, N^o 20: 1-22. USA.

- BENOUARGLA, N. 2013. "The role of social networks in developing political and social awareness among Arab youth". **Journal of Studies and Research**. Vol. 5, N° 11: 200-217. India.
- BOURDIEU, P., & WACQUANT, L. 1992. **An invitation to reflexive sociology**. Chicago, Il.: University of Chicago Press. USA.
- BOURDIEU, P., PASSERON, J., NICE, R., BOURDIEU, P., & BOTTOMORE, T. 2013. **Reproduction in education, society, and culture**. Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington, D.C.: Sage. USA.
- CREPE, I. 1999. **Social Theory from Parsons to Habermas, Muhammad Hussein Ghuloom (translator)**. Knowledge World. P. 244. Kuwait.
- DAMANI, P. 2011. **Digital Violence: How do we protect our children from it?** Translation: Omar Khalifa, portal of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. USA.
- DANIELS, J., WILLIAMS, A., & BUGGS, S. 2017. "Digital media technologies in everyday life". **Information, Communication & Society**. Vol. 20, N° 7: 947-949. UK.



**UNIVERSIDAD
DEL ZULIA**

opción

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 36, Especial N° 27 (2020)

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.

Maracaibo - Venezuela

www.luz.edu.ve

www.serbi.luz.edu.ve

produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve