

Student Workbook

Introduction



Name: _____

Date: _____

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Emojis: Not just cute, but important for communication

Smiley face emoji, you were born almost 20 years ago, and you have come a long way since then. You are art. You belong in museums in New York. You and your group of friends even have your own movie. The title of the movie is of course, "The Emoji Movie." You are on phones and T-shirts. In 2015, the Oxford Dictionary even selected "emoji" as the word of the year. Yet, many people still don't respect emojis very much.

Vyvyan Evans is a person from Britain who studies languages and communication. He says, "there's a lot of prejudice against emojis". Evans is a big fan of emojis. He even wrote a book called "The Emoji Code", which talks about all of those expressive little faces. We talked to Evans about the symbols that have taken over the world. Here are our questions and his answers to them.



Q: Most people would say that English is the global form of communication. But, you say that *Emojis* are actually the global form of communication. That is a pretty strong statement! Why do you say that?

About 340 million people speak English as their first language. Another 600 million speakers use it as a second language. People speak it in many countries around the world, from Canada and Cameroon to Malta and Malawi.

The big difference between English and Emoji is that Emoji is used by *everyone* around the world. 3 billion people use the Internet, and more than 9 out of 10 of them regularly use emojis. When you look at it this way, Emoji leaves English in the dust.

Q: What's the greatest strength of emojis?

Most people think that when we talk to others in person, language is the most important part of the process. But it's not. Language is just *one* way of telling people something. Body language is also another important way. Emoji is like a combination of your voice

and body language. It can be hard to show your emotions when you text. Sometimes, people do not understand what you meant to say. Emojis can help with this problem. For example, adding a smiley face to a text message can show that you're happy.

Q: Do emojis have a weakness?

The biggest weakness comes from the fact that the Emoji system is controlled by something called Unicode. Unicode is in charge of approving new emojis, and they have many rules and regulations to follow. One of these rules says that emojis have to look like what they are representing. For example, a smiley face for happiness, and a heart for love.

Q: How is that a problem?

The problem is that this limits the types of ideas you can create emojis for. For example, how would you show ideas like "memory" using an emoji? Unicode's strict rules would say that you can't!

Q: Is there a freedom of speech issue when it comes to using emojis?

Even though Unicode's rules and regulations are made for good reasons, they can also be too picky about what is "correct" or what is "good". This can lead to problems. For example, there have been many courts cases over the last 18 months or so. People were getting arrested for texting gun emojis. Some courts decided that texting a gun emoji was a threat. After these cases, Apple decided to change the gun emoji. The emoji used to look like a real gun, but now it looks like a water gun, a harmless toy for children. Even though these companies have good intentions, they are limiting what people can say through emojis. Unicode has the power of picking and choosing what people should be allowed to share with emojis.



Q: What's your favorite emoji?

My favorite emoji is the dancing lady in the red dress.

Text Notes

Should emojis be considered a language?

Article

Video





Glossary

Word	Definition	Spanish Translation	Mandarin and Cantonese Translations	Context
Language (noun)	Words used to communicate to others.	<i>lenguaje/idioma</i>	语言 yǔ yán 語 言 jyu5 jin4	Various languages include Spanish, Japanese, Vietnamese, Swahili, etc.
Vocabulary (noun)	Sets of words used in a particular language.	<i>vocabulario</i>	词汇 cí huì 詞 彙 ci4 wui6	In CLAVES, we study the vocabulary that shows up in the different texts we will be reading.
Morphology (noun)	The study of the way the shape of words can change when we add different word parts.	<i>morfología</i>	形态学 xíng tài xué 形 態 學 jing4 taai3 hok6	In CLAVES, we study morphology by playing with different word parts to make changes in word meanings.
Syntax (noun)	The way that sentences are formed in reading and writing.	<i>sintáxis</i>	句法 jù fǎ 句 法 geoi3 faat3	In CLAVES, we study syntax by studying nouns, verbs, and adjectives. We think about how to understand and connect them in our reading and writing.