Libyan Teens in Cyberspace: A Study of Computer-Mediated Discourse

Ethelb, Hamza

(Department of Translation, University of Tripoli, Tripoli, Libya)

h.ethelb@uot.edu.ly

Nadia, Nusier

(Department of English, University of Tripoli, Tripoli, Libya)

n.nuseir@uot.edu.ly

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates some linguistic, social and cultural features of the newly practiced variety of cyber language dialect used by Libyan ado-lescents to shorten electronic communications through mobile phones, e-mails and computers. The study also explores the influence of using the cyber language dialect on the Libyan youngsters' language and interac-tion skills online and via texting. Cyber language is used through social media, and the other means of texting involving SMS (short-messaging services). The study utilized discourse analysis of some collected texts from social media, mainly Facebook as used by Libyan young people. The present research study is qualitative and the data collected includes English linguistic chunks of cyber language with some Arabic letters, emojis symbols and emoticons used by 20 Libyan adolescent speakers as a creative way to convey, enhance, and support everyday life com-munication between them. The findings showed that Libyan interlocu-tors create a set of nonstandard linguistic form to interact and communi-cate effectively using cyber language.

Keywords: cyber language, text messages, SMS, discourse analysis

الملخص

تبحث هذه الورقة في بعض السمات اللغوية والاجتماعية والثقافية للتنوع الذي يمارس حديثا من اللهجات السيبرانية التي يستخدمها المراهقون الليبيون عبر منصات الاتصالات الإلكترونية عن طريق الهواتف المحمولة والبريد الإلكتروني وأجهزة الكمبيوتر. وتستكشف الدراسة أيضًا تأثير استخدام لهجة اللغة الإلكترونية على مهارات اللغة والتفاعل لدى الشباب الليبي عبر الإنترنت وعبر الرسائل النصية. تُستخدم اللغة السيبرانية من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ووسائل الرسائل النصية الأخرى التي تتضمن الرسائل القصيرة (خدمات الرسائل القصيرة). استخدمت الدراسة تحليل الخطاب لبعض النصوص التي تم جمعها من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، وخاصة الفيسبوك كما يستخدمها الشباب الليبي. هذه الدراسة البحثية دراسة نوعية والبيانات التي تم جمعها تشمل أجزاء لغوية إنجليزية من اللغة السيبرانية مع بعض الحروف العربية والرموز

التعبيرية التي يستخدمها 20 متحدثًا من المراهقين الليبيين كوسيلة إبداعية لنقل وتعزيز ودعم التواصل في الحياة اليومية بينهم. وأظهرت النتائج أن المحاورين الليبيين ينشئون مجموعة من الأشكال اللغوية غير القياسية للتفاعل والتواصل بشكل فعال باستخدام اللغة السيبرانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة السيبرانية، الرسائل النصية، الرسائل النصية القصيرة، تحليل الخطاب

Introduction

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) such as emails, instant messages (IM), Facebook posts and comments, and cell phone texting represent today's preferable, widely- used means of communication. A particular electronic writing style called Netspeak, Instant Messaging or cyber language is mainly used by teens and adolescents in their texting, instant messaging and in other forms of CMC. Cyber language forms a "discourse' according to Gee's definition of discourse in which he sees it as "language-in-use" (Gee, 1999, p 7). This discourse involves both the linguistic aspect of the cyber language and the social networking praxis. Discourse is a tool to investigate and analyze the particular variety or dialect of cyber language. In this study, Libyan adolescents' use of cyber language is examined through linguistic communicative tools and discursive social practices. This is to interpret and explain the way such Libyan cyber language is taken up by Libyan teenagers. The use of discourse analysis shows how useful Libyan cyber language is to Libyan teenagers as a social networking tool and how it impacts the sociocultural aspect of this language.

Cyber language, in general, is a discourse that is typical for the internet use (Crystal, 2001). This discourse is taking place at the linguistic to social levels. Linguists criticize such use and deem it a threat to the formal language (McNeil, 2008). However, Crystal (2001) thinks that it is a creative linguistic change that strengthens teens' linguistic abilities and interactivity. In general, teens find cyber language "cool" and get engaged in their social networks using it. This cyber language, which is used by native speakers of English, is considered as a standard cyber language. However, Libyan teens, being non-native speakers of English, find cyber language a flexible way to use English with no fear of being not really good at the English language. They exchange ideas by code-switching between English chunks, acronyms, standard cyber language, Arabic expressions and written numbers to replace the Arabic sounds that do not exist in English. By using this very Libyan cyber language, Libyan adolescents keep the flow of the communication with full satisfaction of using the English chunks they know, using standard cyber language with each other. This study sets out to investigate the

extent of representation of the linguistic form of cyber language to Libyan teenagers.

Research Questions

This research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the distinctive features and patterns of nonstandard linguistic forms observed in the cyber language used by Libyan adolescents?
2. How do Libyan adolescents employ code-switching between English and Arabic in their online communication, and what factors contribute to this linguistic practice?
3. What is the role of nonverbal cues, such as emoticons, symbols, and punctuation, in shaping the communicative dynamics and expressions of emotion within Libyan adolescents' cyber language?

Research Objectives

This research is conducted to fulfill the following objectives:

To examine the representation of the linguistic form of cyber language among Libyan teenagers.

To investigate the connections between the social practices of Libyan adolescents using cyber language and the sociocultural and/or sociopolitical statuses in Libya.

To identify the social functions of cyber language employed in texting and instant messaging among Libyan teenagers.

To analyze the influence of Libyan cyber language on the linguistic performance and social interaction of teenagers in their communication through social networks.

To explore the style, spelling, and content characteristics associated with cyber language used by Libyan adolescents on the internet.

Thus, the study looks at the social practices of Libyan adolescents using cyber language to see if there are connections to the sociocultural and/or sociopolitical statuses in Libya. The study uses discourse analysis in the employment of texting and instant messaging in order to figure out the social functions of cyber language. This discourse analysis will investigate the impact of Libyan cyber language on the society and among the adolescents. The study also aims to analyze the discourse at hand with both linguistic and social aspects to explore the influences of the Libyan cyber language on those teenagers' linguistic performance and social interaction in their communication through social networks.

Computer-mediated discourse employed in this study will look at issues related to style, spelling, and content. This will help understand the social and cultural practices associated with cyber language used on the internet. In fact, cultural practices are usually associated with discourse which differ among cultures even if the same genre is adopted (Ethelb, 2019). Although it is informal and unconventional, cyber language, in general, develops very fast and can contribute to changes in literacy and educational norms. In Libya, although technology is not utilized in the general educational system and only used by private schools and with personal efforts, social media and communication literacy are creatively changing under the influence of technology since the internet was launched to the public in Libya in 2000 (Eid, 2004). Thus, Web 2.0 is playing a role in linguistic, communicative and social interests and needs of Libyan adolescents. Therefore, discourse analysis of Libyan cyber language needs to be studied being an existing and fast developing aspect of social media. The results of the study can provide better understanding of the influential role of the social networks on the Libyan youngsters' literacy, knowledge. They can be used by educational researchers to explore the importance of web 2.0 and social media in the future pedagogies and in teaching and learning English in Libya.

Literature review

This section discusses the relevant literature of computer-mediated discourse and cyber language. It brings to the fore recent studies applied in the field of technology-based interaction. The section handles Computer-mediated communication, cyber language, Facebook Messenger, text messaging, and computer-mediated discourse analysis.

Computer-mediated communication

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) simply means using computerized devices to interact and communicate with people on various topics. CMC emerged in the 1980s to cover various communication modes such as "e-mail, chat systems, video conferencing, instant messages, blogs, wikis, etc." (Altohami, 2020, p. 81). Naveed & Aziz (2014) elaborates that CMC endorses the use of abbreviations, short forms and reduction of long syntactical structures. Clearly, analysis of CMC discourse distinguishes it from face-to-face communication on several grounds, including absence of eye contact, facial expressions and gestures (Altohami, 2020, p. 81). December (1996) states that CMC enjoys a number of modes of interaction which were adopted by scholars, researchers and people involved in discussions and debates on

the web. These computer-mediated activities have resulted in use of a different discourse on the Internet. Users of such platforms have found ways to express opinions, interests and exchange information using a language of their choice (Altohami, 2020). In fact, synchronicity is a common feature of CMC as it signals interaction and conversations happening in real times among interlocuters (Sykes, 2005). Asynchronicity, on the other hand, is a CMC mode that reflects a time gap in conversation where users are not responding simultaneously (Baron, 2008). In all cases, CMC supports personal and group interactions, discussion, arguments, conversations, learning, etc. (December, 1996; Altohami, 2020).

Previous studies

Thorne (2006) focused on the phenomenon of code-switching, where individuals seamlessly shift between different languages within a single conversation. The study specifically examined this practice in the context of online platforms. It highlighted how language learners and users blend their native language (L1), second language (L2), and foreign language (FL) in their online interactions. This suggested that online spaces provide a unique environment where language boundaries become more fluid and individuals feel comfortable experimenting with multiple linguistic repertoires.

Gonzőlez-Lloret (2011) explored the role of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in language learning. The study emphasized the significant role of the native language (L1) in supporting L2 acquisition. It suggested that learners often rely on their L1 for various reasons, including pedagogical support and entertainment, while engaging with L2 content online. This highlighted the importance of understanding the interplay between L1 and L2 in online learning environments and how CMC can facilitate language development in a dynamic and engaging way.

Tudini (20023) explored the use of "cyber language" in online debates. The study focused on how online platforms, particularly those facilitating social chatting, provide opportunities for users to engage in discussions and arguments. Cyber language, with its unique features and conventions, becomes a tool for expressing opinions. His research shed light on how online communication fosters a different type of debate, one that is shaped by the specific characteristics of cyber language.

Freiermuth (2002) looked at the potential of online chat as a tool for language learning. The research highlighted how online chat

environments can encourage greater participation from language learners, particularly those who might be hesitant to speak in traditional face-to-face settings. The study suggested that online chat provides a more comfortable and accessible space for learners to practice their language skills and engage in meaningful interactions with others.

Smith (2006) examined the interactional practices that occur within social chatting platforms. The study focused on how these platforms allow for friendly and engaging conversations across different types of discourse. It suggested that online chat environments adopt a sense of community, where users can connect with others and engage in meaningful exchanges. This research highlighted the social and communicative aspects of online chat and how it can contribute to the development of online communities.

Christopherson (2020) investigated the emergence of non-standard English features within online gaming communities. The study focused on the popular game World of Warcraft and examined the chat interactions of players to understand how online gaming environments are contributing to the development of new linguistic patterns. He built on previous observations regarding the increasing use of the internet and the rise of online social interaction, which has led to the development of distinct online communication styles.

Crystal (2008) focused on the specific characteristics of cyber language, a distinct form of communication that has emerged in online environments. The study identified key features of cyber language, including initialisms, abbreviations, contractions, vowel omissions, non-conventional spellings, emoticons, and repetition of letters and words. Crystal provided a detailed analysis of the linguistic elements that contribute to the unique nature of cyber language and its impact on online communication.

Cyber language

Christopherson (2010, p. 1) states that cyber language is "abbreviated and often pictographic representations of concepts where layers of meaning are packed into a few simple keystrokes". It is generally used in online platforms and is employed to tailor specific "medium and the situational aspects of the conversation" (Christopherson, 2011, p. 3). Internet-based conversations are featured with abundant employment of cyber language, especially by adolescents, as this study shows, as it seems to free conversers from complying to linguistic rules, spelling, and it makes response to be times quicker. Further, cyber language contains an element of entertainment that could be restricted to specific groups in terms of age and class.

Research on cyber language involves linguistic analysis (Cherny 1999; Werry, 1996) which looks at "evaluation of play and performative aspects of the language" (Christopherson, 2011, p. 3). Moreover, there are a number of studies of cyber language which had dealt with discourse analysis (Smith, 2006; Nardi et al., 2000; Collister, 2008). They investigated the social aspects of using language in certain contexts (Christopherson, 2011, p. 3). Further, Naveed & Aziz (2014, p. 9708) elaborates that cyber language is of consequential importance as it enjoys typographic, orthographic, morphological and syntactic variability. In fact, this is evident in the data collected for this study. One of the typographic features in the data is the use of English numbers for Arabic letters with no English equivalent such as '3' for 'ع'. This study observes Libyan adolescents' use of cyber language through Facebook Messenger within the realm of discourse analysis.

Facebook messenger and text messaging

Facebook Messenger is a social media platform that allows communication and interaction between Internet users. This place is the hub for many businesses and social groups. Baruah (2012) argues that this social media service is of high use among teenagers. It is a resort to different social actors and users through which they can express their ideas with no restrictions (Naveed & Aziz, (2014). The language used on Facebook Messenger is characterized with features of cyber language. This is also the case with text messaging which is a very popular messaging application used on mobile phones and has been integrated with Facebook Messenger in a number of mobile operating systems.

Text messaging has witnessed an exponential expansion in recent years, especially with the fast-growing mobile industry. The application is inexpensive, uncomplicated and features personal use (Naveed & Aziz, 2014). In fact, it could be argued that this application receives high use from teenagers due to their accessibility to technological advances. Text Messaging application has been under scrutiny by various studies including Grinter & Eldridge (2001) who examined the reasons why teenagers love using the application on their mobile phones, and Goggin (2005) who also seeks to understand the attractiveness of text messaging and mobile use in New Zealand. Grinter & Eldridge (2001) illustrate that the application raises the interest of youth due to the functions it offers - such as endorsement of social relationships. Their study indicate that the application is used for arranging chat times, coordinating meeting with friends and family, chatting and gossiping. It is also used for grooming, greetings and offering help (Naveed & Aziz, 2014). Due

to the special languages used in the app, it is sometimes referred to as 'textese', or 'texting' (Tagg, 2009), and 'celllinguistics' (Goggin, 2005). They have the feature of cyber language.

Computer-mediated discourse analysis

Discourse is commonly known as conventionalized pattern of spoken or written texts. It usually has a thread of segments that perform stipulated functions intended by certain users and social actors. Discourse can be present in a number of linguistic genres. However, in our case study, it features use of technology and computerized adoption of language. The language of social media platforms that takes place on the Internet is somehow following unconventional rules created by the nature of computer-mediated discourse (CMD). Herring (2001) sees SMD as an approach that operates within the field of CMC with a special focus on language that is analyzed in cybernated domains of interactions. CMD is also called 'netspeak' (Crystal, 2001), and 'SMS speak' (Freudenberg, 2009).

Computer-mediated discourse analysis explores the expansions and development of online linguistic practices. Herring (2004) observes online behavior of Internet users through micro-level and macro-level discourse analyses. This is where non-linguistic phenomena are exhibited under the characteristics of cyber languages. The pattern that we discern and observe in online social conversation platforms display special linguistic habits that employed by, mostly, teenagers. The analysis section in this study demonstrates various characteristics of cyber language that fostered by Libyan adolescents.

Materials and methods

This study uses discourse analysis within the framework of computer-medicated communication to explore the practice of cyber language by Libyan teenagers. Ethelb (2016) mentions that discourse is usually analyzed in segments of dialogue rather than separate disconnected sentences or ideas. For this purpose, a sample of 10 chat dialogues taken from synchronous and asynchronous conversations from Facebook Messenger was gathered: 7 chat dialogues involving cyber language in English and 3 involving chatting in Arabic. However, the Arabic version involves use of English letters and with some code switching of cyber language. A number of 40 participants took part in the conversations. The number of the short text messages analyzed is 75 messages from the 10 dialogues. All these texts are conversations between Libyan adolescents who can be classified for the analysis of this study into

two groups. The first group consists of adolescents who started studying English at the age of 5 in the kindergarten year of their basic education in the American and British schools in Tripoli. They had the opportunity to learn all their school classes in English, in addition to English class as a foreign language. Typically, they gained a fair grasp of the four skills of language. The second group consists of adolescents who started studying English at the age of 12 in the middle school of their basic education in Public Arabic schools in Tripoli. They had the opportunity to learn simple English as a foreign language, so full communication online in English will be somehow difficult for them, yet they enjoy typing in English letters even for their Arabic conversation. They switch to the cyber language symbols and acronyms from time to time. Analysis of the texts demand coding of the 75 online messages. The collected data was categorized into themes in relation to the practice of cyber language. These themes are identity, relationships, and power. They are adopted to reflect social practice of discourse. The examination of the themes is described below with inclusion of the analytic procedures.

Results

The linguistic analysis of the data takes the form and function of the short messages of the chats collected for the study. To secure the precise transcription of the short messages chosen, the messages were taken as a snapshot from the display screen of the computer. According to the typology offered by Shortis (2001), nonstandard linguistic forms of cyber language are tabulated and discussed in Table 1 below. The data of this study is also discussed in Table 2 below which includes some other nonstandard linguistic forms of onomatopoeic nature (the pronounced sound is the same as the sound of a word). Further, Table 2 shows non-conventional punctuation situations or situations with ignorance of punctuation, in addition to the nonstandard cyber words that are homophones with some sounds or moods. On the other hand, Table 3 is added to contain all the forms and terms related to Arabic language and typical to Libyan cyber language. When using English letters to represent Arabic words, Libyan adolescent texters use numbers to reflect and compensate the letters which are not available in English. This corresponding number or the Arabic letter is widely used in the Arabic texting and turned to be conventional and agreed upon. Amazingly the shape of the number chosen has some similarity with the shape of the Arabic letter it represents. Table 4 shows all the forms and terms related to Arabic language whether they were Arabic word written in English words or vice versa. This Table includes the code-switching that Libyan adolescents tend to adopt in their chatting between English and Arabic.

They were broadly used as an Arabic variety or version of cyber language.

Type of Nonstandard linguistic form	Number of Entire data	Number of each items / data	Meaning or standard form
Initialisms or Abbreviations	n= 17	OMG or omg = 1 lol= 7 - Lol'd= 1 - btw= 2 - fb=2 ILY or ily= 2 - Jk= 1 lmfao or LMFAO= 1	Oh, my God - "laugh out loud"- Past tense of "laugh out loud" - By the way. - Face book - I love you - Just kidding. - Laughing my fu**ing a** off
Shortenings	n= 5	pic= 4 nic= 1	Picture Nice
Contractions of words	n= 13	Wat= 1 - thts= 1 - nd= 4 - nt= 3 - ppl= 1 - K= 1 - Gd = 1 rly= 1	What - that's – and – not – people – OK – Good - Really
Omission of letters "G clippings"	n= 4	goin= 1 - borin= 1 studin= 1 - nothin= 1	Going - Boring Studying - Nothing
Mixing two words in one	n= 1	Smaxy= 1	Smart & sexy
Letter/number homophones	n= 10	4= 8 2= 2	for too
'Misspellings' and typos	n= 1	delevish= 1	devilish
Non-conventional spellings	n= 38	ur= 2 - ur = 3 - urs= 1 - fcbk= 1 - reeelii= 1 - no= 1 - their= 1 - dats= 1 - luv= 1 - dis= 2 - hun= 3 - guyz= 1 - ma= 2 -nyt= 1 - thnx, tnx or 10x= 7 - cuzn= 1- knw= 1- dat= 2 - beta or betta= 2 - dan= 1 - da or de= 3	"you are" – your – yours – facebook – really – know - they're - that's - love - this - honey - guys – my - night thanks - cousin – know – that – better – than - the
Accent stylization	n= 8	gotta= 1 - "cuz" or "cuze"= 1 - Yea or - yeah= 1 - gonna= 1 - yep or	Got to - means "cause" – yes - going to – yes – No - You "at the end of phrase

		yup= 1 - np or nope= 2 - ya= 1	

Table 1. non-standard linguistic forms according to Shortis's (2001) typology

Table 2 below shows some other non-standard linguistic forms with number of the entire data used for each category, as well as the items under analysis and their meaning in correct spelling. It also presents the use of punctuation which are used to reflect o the term, meaning that cyber words in a form of homophones with some sounds or moods e.g. hahah to represent laughing and oh to represent surprise or denounce something. Initialism or abbreviation is a characteristic of cyber language that seem to be heavily used by Libyan adolescents. Table 1 illustrates that initialism or abbreviation are used 17 times in the data set, shortening is used 5 times, contractions of words appeared 13 times. However, non-conventional spelling occurred in 38 occasions and seems to be the most frequently resorted to strategy in cyber language. Accent stylization happened 8 times which refers to the way that words are spelled as per their regional pronunciation within a dialect. The finding in Table 1 indicate that there are new features of online chatting. This cyber language is a new mediated communication that is happening on social platforms and find a way among adolescents.

Nonstandard linguistic form	Number of items in the entire data	Number of items / each piece of data	Meaning or standard form
Emoticons, emotions and symbols	n= 67	☺ or :) = 6 - :)) = 2 - !!!= 10 - x=10 - ?!= 1 - :p or :-p= 9 - ☹ or : (= 4 - </3= 1 - :s or :-s= 1 - ♥= 5 - :* or :-*= 1 - XD= 5 - ;) = 3 - xo= 1 - @= 1 - :x= 1 - :D or :d = 4 - XP= 1 - :'(= 1 - (A)= 1	Smile - Rolling on the floor – exclamation – kiss - Wondering, exclamation. – tongue – frown - sad or frown - broken heart - worried, confused heart, love – kiss – wink - kiss & hug – at lovestruck teethy smile – crying - angel
Non-conventional punctuation	n= 31	i= 12 - sam= 2 thats= 1 - asian= 1 - the= 1 - kila= 1 - arent= 1 - its= 3 - lujeena= 1 - acelya= 1 - dnt= 1	i instead of I - proper name "Sam". - Missing contraction & capital letter. - To mean Asian - To mean "The" - Kila- proper name - aren't -

		- avnt= 1 - is = 2 - what= 1 - america= 1 - this= 1 - good= 1	it's - proper name "girl" - proper name - don't - hanen't – Is – What – America – This - Good
Elision	n= 2	avnt= 1 av= 1	haven't have
word/sound homophones	n= 16	Muwah= 1 - hahaha= 14 - Ah= 1	Kiss – laughing - Ah means u see?
Word to express mood & response	n= 6	Wow= 2 oh or Oh= 3	Surprise, admiration Surprise.
Letter /word homophones	n= 8	R or r= 2 U or u= 6	Are You
Repetition of letters	n= 39	Sooo= 2 - xxxxxxxxxx=1 - Noooo=1 - ????????????= 1 - Looooooooool= 2 - hahahahah= 19 - heheheheh= 7 - xoxoxoxo= 1 - waaaaaay= 1 - thnxx= 2 - sexyyyyyyy= 1 - ooh=1	So - Many kisses – no - Curiosity - laugh out loud - laughing - fake, sarcastic laugh - kisses & hugs - way Thanks - sexy "nice" - surprise
Repetition of words	n= 1	Cool cool cool= 1	Emphasis, excitement
Capital letters for emphasis	N= 6	"..but Nusa, U BECAME FAT but sweet"= 1 HAHAHA= 5	

Table 2. additional cyber language nonstandard linguistic forms

The non-standard linguistic forms of Table 2 show that emoticons, emotions, and symbols are of frequent use in online chatting. The data shows that they occurred 67 times. Illustrations with their standard form are present in Table 2. The data also shows examples of use of homophones, elision, non-conventional punctuation, expressions of moods, repetitions and capitalization. All these linguistic forms have been found to have deviated linguistic forms that Libyan adolescents adopt in their text messaging and online chatting. When using English letters to represent Arabic words, adolescents use numbers to replace the letter which does not exist in English. In fact, the corresponding number of the Arabic letter is widely used in platforms where Arabic is uses as a means of communication but with English spelling. In other words, the Arabic words is written with English orthography. This

general representation or coding of Arabic letters is given in Table 3.

Arabic letter	Number representing letter
أ - ح – خ – ع – غ – ق – ط – ظ	2- 7- 5- 3 – 3′ or 3, – 9- 6- 6′

Table 3. numbers representing Arabic letters

The Arabic letter 'ح', for example, takes number '7' when writing an Arabic word with English letters. By way of illustration, the Arabic word 'يحجز' is spelled as 'ya7jaz' in English. Table 3 presents the Arabic letters that have no equivalents in English and the numbers given to them on cyber language usage. Table 4 depicts all the forms and terms related to Arabic language whether they are Arabic words written in English words or vice versa. The Table includes the code-switching of Libyan adolescents who tend to adopt in their chatting when communicating in English and Arabic.

Type of Nonstandard linguistic form	Number of entire data	Number of each items / data	Meaning or standard form
Word to word		ani good= 1	I'm good
Phrase to phrase	n= 2	وشكلها آخر مرة هههه =1 Enjoy enshaallah yatla3 zy emta3 emtennan. = 1 hahahahah amta hia tnx for the tag = 1	means: "It seems to be the last time" Enjoy, I hope it turns to be like Emtennan's. Laugh, when is it? Thanks for the tag
Word to phrase	n= 1	Private lessons 'ya' nerdy = 1	Private lessons you are nerdy.
English numbers for Arabic letters with no English equivalent.	n= 31	5= 4 - 3= 13 - 7= 10 3′, 3, or 3.= 3 - 9=1	ق غ ح ع خ
Arabic letters for English words	n= 1	لول = 1	Lol "laugh out loud

Repetition of letters or numbers	n= 5	7777=1 enamm= 1 koulhaaaaaaaaaaa= 1 Lala= 1 A33eeeeeeeee= 1	Repeated letter Shi* all of it no, no eww
Repetition of Arabic letters	n= 3	هههههههه = 2 اتهبللللللللللللللل= 1	hahahah driving me crazy

Table 4. code-switching between Arabic words (in English letters) and English words

The data illustrates that analysis of cyber language used by Libyan adolescents indicates use of social practice when communicating within a code that only cyber language users may understand. This means that some expressions of cyber language need to be comprehended only when users deeply engage in such social practice. The data also shows that the expressions and items used may reflect the identity cyber language usage. The description and text analysis of the data on Libyan cyber language indicate social activities among users of social platforms. The data evidently presents depictions of language in use which is the core of the examination of discourse (Ethelb, 2016).

Discussion

This study explores the distinctive linguistic features of online communication among Libyan adolescents by focusing on nonstandard language forms, code-switching between English and Arabic, and the use of nonverbal cues. The research reveals a variety of creative linguistic adaptations, including abbreviations (e.g., "OMG," "lol"), shortenings (e.g., "pic" for "picture"), contractions (e.g., "nd" for "and"), and unconventional spellings (e.g., "ur" for "your"). Additionally, letter omissions (e.g., "goin" for "going") and homophones (e.g., "4" for "for") were common. These patterns highlight the flexible and evolving nature of digital language, shaped by the need for speed, informality, and stylistic expression.

A significant aspect of Libyan cyber language is code-switching between English and Arabic. Adolescents often use English letters to write Arabic words, substituting unavailable Arabic characters with numbers (e.g., "7" for the Arabic letter "ح"). This hybrid practice reflects the influence of both languages and creates a unique online dialect. The study connects these findings to broader research on computer-mediated communication (CMC) by showing how digital spaces facilitate linguistic blending and innovation.

Nonverbal cues, such as emoticons, symbols, and unconventional punctuation, play a crucial role in conveying tone and emotion. The study documented 67 instances of such cues. It demonstrates their

importance in compensating for the lack of face-to-face interaction in digital communication. These elements help users express humor, sarcasm, and emphasis to enrich online conversations.

The research demonstrates how Libyan adolescents' cyber language serves as both a linguistic and social practice, which may reflect the concept of reinforcing group identity and cultural belonging. The findings align with previous studies on CMC by emphasizing the dynamic and adaptive nature of online communication. Educators and linguists can benefit from these insights to better understand youth digital literacy and develop more effective ways to engage with young people in virtual spaces. The study highlights the creativity and fluidity of language in the digital age, where traditional rules are constantly redefined by users.

Conclusion

This paper deals with discourse analysis of some cyber linguistic usages by Libyan adolescents. Despite this kind of language has been used and developed by Libyan youths for almost two decades now, this newly existing linguistic phenomenon has proved its significant importance for shortening telecommunications and establishing a new social communicative trend which increased in ubiquity. The study also shows how Libyan users of the cyber telecommunication systems have successfully used some of the English language chunks in there L1 daily communications. This is in fact a reflection of the flexibility of these users with accepting new words and expressions from another language. Further, it is noted that these Libyan teenagers have added some of the alphabets of Arabic language with English chunks to maintain communication with their partners. Sometimes, even whole Arabic words have been added to fulfil meanings. This act indicates creativity and innovation by the young language users. Moreover, this new linguistic trend also reflects the principle of solidarity between young groups who have developed this kind of language trend to informally communicate with their friends and with other members in their communities. This principle of solidarity is increasingly affecting the society in general and imposing some new linguistic chunks and expressions that will continue to affect the Arabic language used by these youngsters for many coming years as long as telecommunication technologies are in use. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the use of cyber language in the Libyan context. However, it is important to note the limitations of this study, as the scope is confined to the specific linguistic practices observed in Libyan cyber language. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of cyber language across different Arabic dialects, further research is needed.

Exploring the use of cyber language in other Arabic dialects would contribute to our knowledge of how linguistic phenomena manifest in diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. It would enable us to identify similarities, differences, and unique characteristics specific to each dialect within the Arabic-speaking online communities.

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