Is It Possible to Use Stickers and Emojis as a Separate Language?

Reading and writing short texts is a part of our daily life. Twitter, Intagram,Whatsapp,Viber are very popular social platforms one which we rely to communicate our emotions,interests,opinions and daily activities. Emojis and stickers let us describe objects,situations and even feelings with small pictograms and image versions, providing a visual and quick way to communicate. Although emojis and stickers can express our feelings in more active manner than texts, they create significant potential for mis-communication and quite difficult to introduce as a language as they only enhance the tone or emotions in the message. But,on the other hand, the rapid increase of the usage of emojis in this digitalized world has more opportunities to consider it as a language.

Emoji ambiguity is one of the main weaknesses in usage of emojis. There are some emojis which can be used for different purposes in different contexts. At the same time , as the categories and frequencies of emojis used by different users depend on cultural , geographical and demographical factors, there may be several interpretations to the same emoji. As an example , the emoji used to ask something , "please", can be used to indicate the action of praying or to highfive in different contexts.

Moreover , platform specificness and version specificness of emojis in different operating systems are also caused for misinterpretation of emojis , as they update their emoji fonts just as they update their operating systems. As an example , the unicode character with code U+1F606, name " smiling face with open mouth and tightly closed eyes" appears in two different ways in Microsoft windows device and Apple devices. So the emoji used by a twitter user when composing a tweet (on one version of platform) may very likely not be the emoji received by many followers when they read the tweet.(as they may be used in different versions).(Hich et al) Although, one emoji can replace one word and the number of words do not change in the texts , the human brain is naturally capable of predicting the missing part of a certain context. So if we remove a word and replace it with an emoji , the person interpreting the message might be predicting the missing word instead of analysing the emoji.

On the contrary, the rapid increase of emoji usage reflects the influence of people to use it as a language. The emoji oriented keyboard, "Kika Emoji Keyboard " was downloaded by 88 million of android users during one month. (Gang et al). Moreover, when a text message is composed with the built-in-keyboard,we get the regular auto correction suggestions combined with suggestions to replace the word with matching emojis. (Hech et al). So when the word "cake" is written, keyboard suggests to replace the word directly with " piece of cake emoji". It clearly reflects the extent of influence of emojis to our daily lives. At the same time, some stickers used in social platforms have morphological and semantic features as they carry small word phrases and animations with expressions.

So through the above social and linguistic features , we can argue that stickers and emojs have some language properties to a certain extent. But logically it is quite complicated to choose emojis and stickers completely as a language because social platforms are not the one and only place we express our ideas.