**The communicative affordances of hashtags: the case of the humoristic uses of *#jesuis***

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In January 2015, the attack on the French satiric magazine *Charlie Hebdo* headquarters in Paris caused a lot of reactions on social media, including the appearance of the hashtag *#jesuischarlie* in order to express support and alignment with the victims. From then on, the stem *#jesuis* has been productive e.g. *#jesuisparis* after the November 2015 Paris attacks, but has also evolved into humoristic uses. In these, humor has an adversarial function (Veale et al. 2006): they ridicule the conveyed political or emotional load, underlining among others the superficiality of the massive social media protest (Kuipers 2002) and/or intentionally pushing the boundaries of the taboo of violent death. This poster will address from a linguistic-discursive perspective the hashtag *#jesuis* and its variants, specifically those used for humoristic purposes, with the aim of placing this strategy among other functions of hashtags (Zappavigna 2015).

Our analysis will be based on a database of tweets from 2015-2016 containing *#jesuis*. The hashtag is not only produced in French tweets, which is another proof of the creativity of its use. We will focus particularly on the evolution of hashtags that were initially supportive, such as *#jesuischien* 'Iamdog' (concerning the death of a police-dog), to the ridiculing by means of the playful breaking of the taboo of death, through hashtags such as *#jesuiscafard* 'Iamcockroach', *#jesuisfourmi* 'Iamant'. The latter use a parallel syntactic structure (Davies 1984), but refer to animals that are lower in the taxonomy, in terms of emotional connection, therefore questioning the pertinence of mourning.

With this study, we wish to explore the communicative affordances of hashtags in social media, which encourage their users to rapidly express themselves on sensitive societal topics, such as terrorism.

References

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