

Moroccan Local government's communication on Facebook : A simple dissemination or a dialogic communication. The case of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra municipalities' Facebook pages.

La communication des collectivités locales marocaines sur Facebook: Une simple transmission ou une communication dialogique. Cas des pages Facebook des communes de la région Rabat-Salé-Kénitra.

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Abstract

Like Moroccan public administrations, municipalities have been called upon by the state to redefine their relationship with citizens by considering them as active participants who need to be listened to and involved in local life. This implies, intuitively, a shift from communication whose main objective is transmission to communication that promotes interactivity and participation, through social networks like Facebook, if used in a dialogic manner.

The objective of this study is therefore to first analyze to what extent the use of Facebook in the public communication of municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region aligns with a dialogic approach. Then, to propose concrete actions that will help that this usage translates into the creation and maintenance of relationships with citizens.

To accomplish this, a case analysis of the Facebook pages of six municipalities in the region was conducted, based on the principles of dialogic theory. The results showed that these municipalities use Facebook primarily as a one-way communication tool rather than a true dialogic tool. Therefore, a guide for implementing dialogic communication strategies on Facebook was proposed to Moroccan municipalities.

Keywords: dialogic strategies; Facebook usage; interactivity; local government; public communication;

Résumé

À l'instar des administrations publiques marocaines, les municipalités ont été invitées par l'État à redéfinir leur relation avec les citoyens de manière à les considérer comme des participants actifs à écouter et à impliquer dans la vie locale. Cela implique, intuitivement, le passage d'une communication de transmission à une communication favorisant l'interactivité et la participation, à travers les réseaux sociaux comme Facebook, s'ils sont utilisés de manière dialogique.

Notre étude vise à analyser dans un premier temps dans quelle mesure l'utilisation de Facebook dans la communication publique des communes de la région de Rabat-Salé-Kénitra s'inscrit dans une démarche dialogique. Ensuite, de proposer des actions concrètes qui aideront à ce que cet usage se traduise par la création et le maintien de relations avec les citoyens.

Pour ce faire, une étude de cas des pages Facebook de six communes de la région a été réalisée, en se basant sur les principes de la théorie dialogique. Les résultats ont montré que ces communes utilisent Facebook principalement comme un simple outil de transmission plutôt que comme un véritable outil dialogique. Par conséquent, un guide pour la mise en œuvre de stratégies de communication dialogique sur Facebook a été proposé aux municipalités marocaines.

Mots clé: Communication publique; communes; interactivité ; stratégies dialogiques; usage Facebook

Introduction

In Morocco, as elsewhere, the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) represents a major strategic axis in the modernization of public organizations and the redefinition of their relationships with territories, users and citizens. Each of these relationships involves distinct communication actions that respond to specific logics, one diffusionist, another transactional and the last participative and dialogical (Carmes, & al., 2011).

In other words, these new info-communication devices make sense,

Firstly, by adopting a diffusionist, user-centric approach, they should guarantee efficient, fluid access to information services (Song .& Lee, 2013).

Secondly, these communication devices are intended to optimize and continuously improve the operation of public organizations, making administrative processes and public services more effective and efficient.

Thirdly, they are supposed to be part of a deliberative and socialization perspective, because they influence the way people engage online, encouraging citizen participation and fostering a climate conducive to discussion, collaboration and collective decision-making in public domains. (Kanane B.& al. ,2023).

These different orientations of public and territorial communication illustrate the diversity of communication actions to be undertaken by public organizations to better meet users' needs, improve their own operations and promote broader democratic participation.

It is in this context that social networks, and especially Facebook, with 17.3 million Moroccan users in January 2023 (Facebook, 2023), appear to be an essential solution for local authorities, given the possibilities they can offer in terms of dissemination and, above all, in terms of dialogue and interaction.

The question this research aims to answer is as follows:

To what extent the use of the Facebook social network in the public communication of municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region is part of dialogical communication strategy?

The aim of this question is twofold: firstly, to understand and describe the use of Facebook in the public and territorial communication of the municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region, depending on whether or not it meets the principles of a dialogical communication strategy. Then, where appropriate, to provide the municipalities studied, as well as other Moroccan municipalities seeking to make full use of this tool, with certain guidelines and

concrete actions that would enable them to maximize their ability to engage in dialogue with the population.

To do this, we based ourselves on Kent and Taylor's dialogical principles of communication (Kent and Taylor, 2002), and the methodology of Rybalko and Seltzer (2010) to calculate a dialogic capacity index for the Facebook pages of the municipalities chosen in our sample. This index will determine to what extent these municipalities are using dialogic strategies in their public communication.

To carry out this research, we begin by presenting a literature review of the various uses of social networks in public and territorial communication, and then highlight the empirical studies that have been realized in the same context, on the use of Facebook and which take into account the dialogical approach, since it is the theoretical framework we have chosen for our work.

Next, we describe the methodology used to carry out our content analysis of the Facebook pages of the municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region, with reference to the methodology of Rybalko and Seltzer (2010).

Finally, we present the main results of our analysis, on which we have capitalized to propose a guide for municipalities to make their public and territorial communication on Facebook more dialogical and therefore more effective.

1- Literature review on the use of social networks in local government communication.

In this section, we review the main theoretical and empirical works that have determined the various uses of social networks in local authorities. These works are presented after defining the key concepts of our research question, namely territorial public communication and dialogical communication strategies.

1-1- Definition of concepts

1.1.1- Territorial public communication

In order to better define the contours of territorial public communication and the parameters that characterize its operation, we propose the definition of its founding father Pierre Zémor (2008), who defines it as follows:

"Formal communication aimed at exchanging and sharing information of public interest, as well as maintaining social ties, and for which public institutions are responsible"... Its aims

are to "inform (make known, account for and assert), listen (to expectations, questions and public debate), contribute to ensuring social relations (sense of collective belonging, consideration of the citizen as an actor) and accompany changes in behavior and social organization".

The following observations can be drawn from this definition:

- It's a formal communication, which must be carried out according to the rules of the art, with a well-defined strategy and a plan to follow.
- It is an exchange of information of public utility, which means that it is not a one-way communication, and that it is horizontal, based on interactivity and dialogue with citizens.
- It aims to maintain social ties, which means it must be based on listening to stakeholders' expectations, reciprocity, a sense of belonging and trust.
- It must accompany changes in behavior and social organization, which in our context means integrating ICTs, the Internet, social networks, etc. into the communication strategy of local authorities, with a constant concern for monitoring and active listening, in order to adapt the communication offering to the expectations of citizens/users. With this in mind, local authorities are increasingly present on the Internet, and ICTs are now an integral part of the territorial communicator's "toolbox" (Doutrelot et al. 2012).

From all these elements, we can deduce that Zemor's definition, which is the most widely cited in the literature, has set the conditions for public and territorial communication to be considered effective. Indeed, it must foster interactive, open and balanced communication, in which stakeholders are listened to, respected and meaningfully involved in the decision-making processes of public life. In other words, this communication must follow what Kent and Taylor have called "dialogical communication strategies".

1.1.2- Dialogic communication strategies

"Dialogic communication refers to any negotiated exchange of ideas and opinions, in which the parties to a relationship engage in an honest, open and ethically based exchange." (Kent and Taylor, 1998).

Kent and Taylor (1998) proposed their theory of dialogic communication to serve as a guide for both researchers and professionals whose mission is to create and maintain fruitful relationships between individuals and their organizations.

As a result, their theory provides a useful framework for understanding how organizations, including local authorities, build and maintain social relationships online.

This theory is today one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks when it comes to explaining the interactive capacity of the Internet as a channel for establishing social relationships, improving communication frequency, user satisfaction and trust between organizations and their stakeholders (Bortree and Seltzer 2009; Bonsón, et al., 2014).

More concretely, the theory defined strategies from which the five principles of dialogic communication were derived, including mutuality propensity, proximity, empathy, risk and commitment (Kent and Taylor 2002). These principles have been widely endorsed and accepted (Waters et al., 2009; McAllister, 2012).

The propensity for mutuality; this dialogical principle refers to the willingness to build relationships based on mutual exchange and cooperation. This implies recognizing the value of other stakeholders' contributions, and seeking solutions that benefit all parties involved.

Proximity; this refers to the creation of an environment conducive to the establishment of close, trust-based relationships with stakeholders. This can be achieved by encouraging transparency, open communication and regular exchanges.

Empathy; this principle involves understanding and taking into account stakeholders' perspectives, needs and emotions. This requires active listening, empathy and responding appropriately to the concerns and expectations of others.

Risk this dialogical principle implies a willingness to take bold initiatives and explore new approaches to foster dialogue and engagement. This can mean making courageous decisions, stepping out of one's comfort zone and being open to feedback and innovative ideas.

Commitment; this principle refers to active and sustained involvement in interactions and exchanges with stakeholders. This involves being present, responsive and pursuing constructive dialogue over the long term, taking into account the needs and aspirations of stakeholders.

To measure them, these principles are translated, in the context of dialogic online communication, into « Dialogic Loop», «Usefulness of Information», «Generation of Return Visits», «Ease of Interface» and «Visitor Retention».

Table 1: Principles of dialogic communication

Principle Definition	Definition
(1) Dialogic loop	Provide users the opportunity to ask questions and obtain answers, generating feedback by incorporating interactivity.
(2) Usefulness of information	Provide users with information appropriate to their needs and in various formats.
(3) Generation of return visits	Present useful and attractive features to encourage users to revisit the website on a regular basis.
(4) Ease of the interface	Make the design and structure of the website intuitive so that users can easily navigate it.
(5) Conservation of visitors or visitor retention	Make websites well organized and motivate users to remain on the page.

Source: Kent and Taylor (1998)

These dialogical principles, although originally developed in the context of integrating websites into organizations' public relations (Kent and Taylor, 1998), were later applied to the context of social networks (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010).

Social media offer a platform for interaction between organizations and their audiences, fostering dialogue between both parties. As such, these dialogical principles remain relevant to organizations' approach to social media.

1.2- The use of social networks in the public communication of local authorities and the dialogic strategies.

1.2.1- Use of social networks in public and territorial communication.

With regard to the question of the use of the Internet and its tools in territorial public communication, the authors have divided themselves into two visions, one optimistic and the other pessimistic.

The optimistic view sees these tools as ideal for bridging the gaps in the democratic system by fostering engagement and participation (Ferro et al., 2013; Mossberger et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2013; Bonsón et al., 2014) in various forms. Indeed, thanks to the frequent exchanges and interactivity they enable, these tools promote symmetry between elected officials and citizens, to the point of making communication roles interchangeable and consequently equalizing power (Gingras, 2008).

What's more, the spread of information technologies throughout society and the increased flow of information to the public can help to correct biased public perception and affect expectations of trust by narrowing the information gap between the public and governments (Welch et al., 2005, p. 375). For the local authority, these tools enable greater proximity to citizens, encouraging them to interact with their community, express their needs and expectations, formulate their grievances and proposals, deliberate on issues of general interest and thus have a say in the public decision-making process.

As for the pessimistic view, it considers that these tools, in this case, the Internet, have not served the territories, since they have enabled the commodification of information, which represents a real attack on the freedom of individuals, who are easily tracked in every aspect of their daily lives. (Demers, 2000, 2001; Pélissier, 2001, 2003). This is likely to discourage them from using these tools to promote themselves.

Moreover, some authors accuse the Internet and social media of promoting hate speech and causing infobesity, insofar as communication, by invading public space, can turn into its opposite, i.e. "incommunication". (Huisman 1985; Boudon 1989; Galeano 1996).

Between these two visions, some authors, such as Sébastien Rouquette (2008) and Monnoyer-Smith- Laurence (2011), believe that it is quite wrong to reduce the issue of ICT deployment to an opposition between "alarmist" and "apologist" models of the digital revolution, instead of focusing on the possibilities of putting these tools at the service of territories and citizens via communication for important issues such as participation.

We, in turn, fully endorse the position taken by the latter authors, insofar as the deployment of ICTs at local authority level has become unavoidable, we might as well invest research in optimizing the use of the best features offered by these tools in order to achieve the objectives of territorial communication, particularly the dialogic features.

Indeed, work on dialogic communication fits perfectly into this logic, insofar as research has studied the dialogic potential of online communication to maintain relationships with stakeholders via the sites. (Taylor, and al., 2001; Kent, and al., 2003).

Later, studies in the same vein followed, but this time for more interactive tools such as blogs and social networks. (Bortree and Seltzer 2009, 2010, Bonson, et al., 2014). These authors examine dialogic strategies in organizational communication and their outcomes. They explore how organizations use dialogic communication strategies, such as active listening, stakeholder participation and co-construction of meaning, to improve relationships with their audiences and achieve positive outcomes. They also examine the effects of these strategies on

trust, stakeholder satisfaction, engagement and other organizational outcomes. The results highlight the importance of dialogical approaches in organizational communication for fostering mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders.

These studies demonstrate how dialogic communication can harness the interactive power of the Internet as a channel for improving social relations, user satisfaction and building trust between communities and their stakeholders.

The types of organizations that have been studied using dialogic communication theory include non-profit organizations (Lovejoy, and al., 2012), corporations (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010), congressional websites (Taylor and Kent, 2004), colleges and universities (McAllister, 2012). However, little research has been done to analyze the potential use of dialogic principles to improve online communication between citizens and local authorities.

1.2.2- Work on the use of social networks by local authorities according to dialogical principles.

As we have previously pointed out, ICTs, and especially social networks, have the capacity, to redefine the relationship between citizens and municipalities, by facilitating their communication and interaction so as to enable the public to become actively involved in public affairs (Sandoval, 2012). These networks can be seen as one of the most appropriate channels for dialogical communication (Smith, 2010).

That said, empirical studies carried out on the use of social networks according to the dialogic logic, have shown that municipalities do not make full use of the dialogic strategies offered by these tools, such as Facebook. (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010; McAllister, 2012); thus compromising their effectiveness. A summary with the main studies in this perspective is presented bellow (**Table 2**):

Table 2: Principal studies on the dialogic use of Facebook by local government organizations

Empirical studies	Aim and results
Sandoval, R. (2012)	This study analyzes the use of Facebook by governmental organizations in Mexico. The results show that most organizations focus on disseminating information rather than establishing dialogical communication with citizens.
Kim, Y., Wang, Y., & Oh, J. (2017)	This study examines dialogic communication on local government Facebook pages. The results show that dialogic communication is limited, with little interaction between governments and citizens on Facebook.
Alves, H., & Raposo, R. (2018)	This study analyzes dialogic communication on local government Facebook pages. It explores the communication strategies implemented to encourage citizen engagement, participation and interaction in territorial communication.
Chen, Y. R., & Hung, Y. C. (2016)	This study examines dialogic communication on Chinese local government Facebook pages. It highlights the dialogic features and communication strategies used to foster citizen engagement and interaction.
Rodríguez-Martínez, R., & Cruz-Martínez, G. (2020)	This research compares the dialogic practices on Facebook and Twitter of Spanish municipalities. It examines levels of citizen interactivity, engagement and participation on these platforms, highlighting the importance of two-way communication and information exchange in territorial communication.

Source: The authors

These empirical studies contribute to a better understanding of the nature of the use of social networks in public and territorial communication. Indeed, as we have already pointed out, the

use of social networks is mainly based on dissemination and still far from the dialogic perspective.

Based on the foregoing, we can establish our following hypothesis:

H1 the use of Facebook in territorial public communication in the municipalities of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region follows a dissemination logic rather than a dialogic one.

2- Study methodology

To answer our research question and verify our hypothesis, we opted for a quantitative study involving content analysis of the Facebook pages of municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region

The aim of this analysis was to verify whether the communication of these municipalities on their Facebook pages followed the principles of a dialogical strategy. This consists on calculating a dialogic index which is composed by a set of items that we scored, based on the Facebook pages content analysis, according to the method of Arturo haro-de-rosario, Alejandro sáez-martín, María del mar Gálvez-rodríguez(2017).

2-1- Presentation of the method for verifying the characteristics of dialogical principles

To verify the characteristics of dialogical principles, we adopted the method of Arturo haro-de-rosario, et al.,(2017), itself based on the methodology of Rybalko and Seltzer (2010).

According to these authors, a content indicator measuring dialogic communication capacity (CIDC) was calculated based on Kent and Taylor's (1998) principles of dialogic communication. However, it should be noted that the principle of "ease of interface" was not taken into account in the calculation of this indicator, given that it was initially designed for the analysis of websites and that, in the case of Facebook, this principle is already present by default on all pages. This decision was taken in line with earlier studies (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010), which also renamed the "usefulness of information" principle to "information of interest to stakeholders". Thus, the content index is composed of the following sub-indexes: "visitor retention" (CIDCCV), "generation of repeat visits" (CIDCGV), "dialogic loop" (CIDCDL) and "information of interest to stakeholders" (CIDCIS).

The constituent elements of each sub-index were extracted and adapted from Kent and Taylor's (1998) principles of dialogic communication and previous studies, such as Waters et al. (2009) and Lovejoy, Waters and Saxton (2012). This resulted in the observation of 27

items including: three for (CIDCCV), eight for (CIDCGV), six for (CIDCDL) and ten for (CIDCIS) column 1 of the Analysis Table).

Each item was coded as "1" if the corresponding information could be found on Facebook and "0" otherwise.

As in previous studies (Haro-De-Rosario et al., 2017), the content index of dialogic communication ability was calculated by dividing the sum of the scores for all items by the total number of items observed (27) and multiplying by 100 to convert to a percentage. The same procedure was applied to calculate the percentage of each dimension using the number of items in its subgroup.

For greater validity, coding was carried out in two stages by two different people, and the same scores were found for the different indexes.

2.2 Sample

We decided to analyze municipalities and not any other entity because it is at the local level that citizens' concerns coincide most directly with those of the government (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999), and it is here that the current process of strengthening participation is most evident. Moreover, citizens have a more direct involvement in local affairs, so it is at municipality level that they are more likely to participate (Bonsón, et al., 2014).

We have chosen to study only municipalities of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region . This choice stems from the fact that this work is being carried out on the bangs of a project focusing on public and territorial communication in this precise region.

The analysis of content, publications and comments on each page covered the months of April and May 2023.

Because of the nature of our research question, we were constrained to choose a non-probabilistic sampling approach to target only the municipalities convenient to our study.

For this, we posit that, the municipalities, to be included in the sample, must have, an official Facebook page and must be active on those pages at least during the period (April and May 2023), considered in our study.

According to the official website of the Moroccan local government (DGCT)¹, the region studied contains 114 municipalities but only 6 from them have official Facebook pages.

¹ La Direction Générale des Collectivités Territoriales (DGCT) (<https://www.collectivites-territoriales.gov.ma>) is responsible for preparing the decisions of the Minister of the Interior, within the framework of the powers conferred on him by the legislative and regulatory texts

However, after the observation of the 6 Facebook pages of the municipalities of our sample, we found that, we can only retain those that were active during the period under consideration, namely: Rabat, Salé, Kénitra and Temara. The two other municipalities of Khemissat and Sidi Kacem, were excluded from our study as their pages have been inactive since July 2022.

3- Results and discussion of the analysis of the use of Facebook in the public communication of municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region.

A first observation of the Facebook pages of the municipalities studied shows a diversified content and a rather regular frequency of publications. This first observation shows that there is certain dynamism in the municipalities studied, and gives reason to hope that this dynamism will also be perceptible in terms of interaction with citizens. This is what the analysis of dialogical communication capacity will enable us to verify, through an analysis of the characteristics of the various dialogical principles. (Tables 3 and 4)

3-1- Calculation of the dialogic communication capacity index of the municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region on their Facebook pages.

Table 3: Dialogic communication capacity index calculation

index	Rabat		Salé		Kénitra		Temara	
Conservation of visitors (IDCCcv)	1	33.33%	1	33.33%	0	0%	1	33.33%
1-Link to the official website of the municipality	1	33,33%	1	33,33%	0	0 %	1	33.33%
2-Links to other social networks in which the municipality participates (Twitter, YouTube, Instagram).	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
3-Regular updating (at least once daily, Monday to Friday).	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %

relating to local authorities, and for monitoring their implementation. It also provides legal, technical and financial support and guidance to local authorities, the bodies that report to them, inter-municipal cooperation establishments and local authority groupings. It is also responsible, in coordination with the departments and organizations concerned, for contributing to regional development.

Generation of return visits (IDCCGV)	2	25%	2	25%	1	12.5%	1	12.5%
4-Links to Web pages where additional information can be requested.	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0%
5-Calender of events or link to a Web page containing such a calender	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
6-Links to news related to the municipality, issued by external media.	1	12,5%	1	12.5 %	1	12.5 %	1	12,5%
7-Links to chats, Forums on the official websites of the municipality.	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
8-Use of other social networks to enter information (Twitter, YouTube, blogs, Instagram).	1	12,5%	1	12.5 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
9-Use of links or hyperlinks to add external information	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
10-Use of sharing to add information published by other users.	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
11-Use of hashtags .	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0%
Dialogic loop (IDCCDL)	1	16.66%	1	16.66%	1	16.66%	1	16.66%
12-Facility for the user to comment on a publication initiated by the municipality.	1	16.66%	1	16.66%	1	16.66%	1	16.66%
13-Response by the municipality to the publication commented on by users.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
14-Facility for the user to send a public message to the municipality's	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Facebook account even if it has made no previous comment								
15-Response by the municipality to a user- initiated message even if the municipality has published no prior communication.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
16-Opportunity to vote concerning local issues.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
17-Opinion surveys to allow citizens express their opinion about local issues.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
"Information of interest to stakeholders" (IDCCIS)	7	70%	7	70%	5	50%	6	60%
18-Press releases (issued by the municipality)	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%
19-Speeches by members of the municipality (text, audio or video).	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%
20-Audio-visual publications	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%
21-Statement of municipality's Philosophy, mission and objectives	0	0%	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%
22-Details of how to participate to activities or services organised by the municipality.	1	10%	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%
23-Logo or coat of arms of the municipality	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%
24-summary of the activities of the municipality	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%	1	10%
25-Email of the municipality	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
26-Phone number of municipality	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	10%
27-Name or Facebook profile of the administrator.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Dialogic communication capacity index	11	40.74%	11	40.74%	7	25.92%	9	33.33%
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Source: The authors

For a better visibility, we found it suitable to highlight the results of the dialogic communication capacity index and its sub- indexes as follows in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary table of the four municipalities

	Rabat	Salé	Kénitra	Temara
Conservation of visitors (IDCCcv)	33.33%	33.33%	0%	33.33%
Generation of return visits (IDCCGV)	25%	25%	12.5%	12.5%
Dialogic loop (IDCCDL)	16.66%	16.66%	16.66%	16.66%
"Information of interest to stakeholders" (IDCCIS)	70%	70%	50%	60%
Dialogic communication capacity index	40.74%	40.74%	25.92%	33.33%

Source: The authors

3-2 Analysis and discussion of results

In this section, we analyze the dialogic capacity of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra municipalities studied, by interpreting the results of the dialogic indicators.

Visitor retention

For this index, all municipalities are below average, with scores of no more than 33.33%, while the score for this index for the municipality of kénitra is zero. These low scores are the result of two main factors.

Firstly, there is the problem of not updating the data on a regular daily basis. Indeed, despite the fact that these municipalities publish frequently, there are days when they publish nothing. Note here that in the coding, the value "1" could only be assigned if the municipality updated regularly (at least once a day, Monday to Friday), something that was not observed for any municipality elsewhere.

Secondly, there was a lack of resources to enable these municipalities to retain their visitors, particularly links to other social networks.

That said, we would point out that, with the exception of the municipality of Kénitra, all the other municipalities provide links to their official websites, which is a good initiative for retaining visitors.

Generating new visits

The scores for this second dialogic index, 12.5% for Kénitra and Temara and 25% for Rabat and Salé, are no better than those for the previous index.

The reasons behind these low scores can be easily identified by observing the items with a zero value among the items of this dialogic index, in this case, the absence of a "visit".

- Calendar of events or link to a web page containing such a calendar,
- Links to chat rooms, forums on the official websites of the municipalities studied.
- Links or hyperlinks to add external information.
- Shares to add information published by other users.

The dialogic loop

We now come to the third dialogic principle, one of the most important for our study, namely the "dialogic loop" principle, given its potential to generate citizen feedback and interactivity.

As far as the latter is concerned, we can say that the municipalities studied still have a long way to go, given their low score of just 16.66%. It's a score on which it's essential to focus. To analyze the causes, we need to detect the manifestations of the lack of interactivity and feedback between the municipalities studied and their citizens through the zero value items, five of the 6 items of this principle, among the items of the "dialogic loop" principle. These are

- The community's failure to respond to user comments.
- The impossibility for the user to initiate a comment when the municipalities studied have not posted anything.
- Inability to vote on local issues.
- The absence of a survey to enable citizens to express their opinions on local issues.

These findings show that communication on the Facebook pages of the municipalities studied is still asymmetrical and vertical, not conducive to citizen involvement, let alone dialogue. These findings are in line with the empirical studies carried out on the use of social networks according to the dialogic logic that have shown that municipalities do not make full use of the dialogic strategies offered by these tools, such as Facebook. (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010; McAllister, 2012).

Information of interest to stakeholders

For the last dialogical principle, "Information of interest to stakeholders", we can say that the region's municipalities achieved fair scores, 50% for Kénitra, 60% for Temara and 70% for Rabat and Salé.

These scores, although fairly good, prompted us to look for what was missing in the "Information of interest to stakeholders" to bring them close to or equal to 100%. We pointed out

- The absence of a telephone number, except for the municipality of Temara.
- The absence of e-mail except for Rabat.
- The absence of the Facebook page administrator's profile for all municipalities.
- No statement of the municipalities' philosophy, mission and objectives, except for the municipality of Salé.

These missing elements are, in fact, basic elements that the municipalities studied can easily put in place in order to catch up with this dialogic principle, which is decisive in better meeting the needs and expectations of citizens, by providing them with relevant and useful information capable of enlightening their opinion, thus enabling them to participate or not, but with full knowledge of the facts, in the decisions that concern their local life.

Based on our analysis of the characteristics of the dialogical principles of the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region's municipalities' communication on Facebook, we can conclude that it's much more a question of transmitting information than of real communication with the citizen, in line with all the research on the dialogical communication of local authorities on social networks, which has shown that the latter are not making full use of the dialogical strategies offered by these tools, such as Facebook. (Rybalko and Seltzer, 2010; McAllister, 2012)

We can therefore say that our hypothesis "the use of Facebook in territorial public communication by municipalities in the Rabat-Salé-Kénitra region follows dissemination logic rather than the dialogic one", has been confirmed.

Conclusion and recommendations

As the study showed, the possibilities offered by social networks for territorial communication are not well exploited. This situation can be changed if municipalities start using these platforms as part of a dialogic communication strategy that incorporates several key principles which can be deduced from Kent and Taylor (1998) theory of dialogic

communication such as active listening, reciprocity, shared meaning, transparency, honesty, follow-up and commitment.

By adopting these principals, local authorities can truly exploit the possibilities offered by social networks for enriching and participative public and territorial communication.

The following guide table 5 could orient the municipalities studied to carry out concrete actions that would fit perfectly into the enchanted dialogic logic, given its various advantages and its impact on improving the relationship between the municipalities studied and the various stakeholders on its territory. We drew inspiration for this guide from the principles of dialogue, mutuality, proximity, empathy, risk and commitment.

Table 5: Guide to a better public communication on Facebook in the municipalities studied

Strategic direction	Corresponding dialogical principle	Actions to be undertaken by the municipalities studied
<u>Practicing active listening</u>	"Empathy"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carefully observe comments, private messages and discussions on your Facebook page. ➤ Provide prompt, attentive responses to users' questions, concerns and suggestions.
<u>Promoting reciprocity</u>	"The propensity for mutuality"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage two-way exchanges by asking questions, organizing surveys or soliciting the opinion of your community. ➤ Reply to every comment and message, demonstrating interest in user contributions.
<u>Co-constructing shared meaning</u>	"proximity"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use Facebook as a space for discussion and co-creation. ➤ Regularly share relevant information, business updates and engaging content that encourages users to share their own ideas, experiences and suggestions.
<u>Transparency and honesty</u>	«Risk»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sharing accurate information and acknowledging errors where necessary to demonstrate transparency and honesty. ➤ Capitalize on feedback and constructive criticism

		to improve practices and communication.
<u>Follow-up and ongoing commitment</u>	«commitment»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain an active presence on Facebook and participate in discussions, keeping the community informed of actions taken following previous exchanges. ➤ Communicate within the framework of a long-term relationship with stakeholders, striving to maintain it.

Source: The authors

The theoretical and managerial contributions of our study

Even if the use of the dialogical theory is very common when it comes to citizen's engagement in social networks in the context of western countries, it is almost non-existent in countries like Morocco. This makes our work a first basis for future researchers, who will try to explore this subject further and look forward reasons that may explain Moroccan local government communication problems with citizens.

For Moroccan local authorities, our work can represent a general guide for their public communication at two levels. It will give them firstly, a framework to evaluate their communication on social media, through the calculation of the dialogic index according to the method we previously presented. Secondly, it will inspire them concerning actions to be taken to address the imperfections post evaluation. These actions, as described above (Table 5), may help them improve their relationship with citizens and foster there engagement and participation.

Limits and prospects of our study

Like all researches, ours also has certain limitations that we must acknowledge. In particular, the fact that it was carried out only on four Facebook pages does not make its results valid for the other municipalities of Morocco.

What's more, the study was limited to a simple description of the content of the Facebook pages in terms of whether or not it was dialogical, and did not seek to understand why this content is the way it is. This opens the way for a future study that will attempt to understand why, if at all, Moroccan municipalities do not advocate a dialogical communication strategy.

It would also be useful to carry out a comparative study of the various Moroccan municipalities which are present on Facebook.

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