



Memos In The Digital Age: A Sociolinguistic Examination Of Cultural Expressions And Communicative Practices Across Border

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the sociological impact and linguistic characteristics of memes, focusing on their prevalence in online social media platforms. Utilizing content analysis, a diverse collection of memes was systematically analyzed to identify themes, linguistic elements, and cultural references embedded within them. In the age of information, memes are cultural units that are replicated and widely disseminated from one person to another through jokes, rumors, videos, animation, photographs (Dube, et al (2018)). The data collection process involved gathering memes from various online sources, while the data analysis encompassed thematic exploration and linguistic examination of the memes. The findings reveal insights into how memes serve as mirrors of societal trends, generational disparities, and cultural dynamics. Memes emerged as potent vehicles for social connection, self-expression, and cultural commentary within digital communities. This study underscores the multifaceted nature of memes and their significance in contemporary digital discourse, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of their sociological and linguistic dimensions.

Key Words: Communication, Content Analysis, Cultural Significance, Digital Culture, Linguistic Characteristics, Memes, Online Discourse, Sociological Impact, Social Media, Vernacular Usage

Introduction

The need and demand for fluency in English have significantly grown in this age of globalization and international trade. Despite disparities in social activities, customs, areas, practices, other quirky elements, the English language is utilized as a mutual language. Consequently, the global population of the twenty-first century has become increasingly compact, amiable, shared, and well-known to all people on Earth. Since English is considered an international language, everyone needs to become familiar with it in order to communicate effectively (Akhter, 2020). A unique form of communication based on the Internet as a medium, with its own unique traits, is only to be expected in these times when the Internet is the place people spend the most time. People who use social networks, Internet portals, forums, web pages, blogs, and other platforms have created their own distinct communication system, which may be difficult for older people to understand and have minimal to no online presence. With this technique, people can freely express their ideas, thoughts, jokes, and humorous tales as well as their criticisms of their communities and political leaders in a way that is far more inventive than they could with a traditional method. The aforementioned online messaging system mostly makes use of memes, GIFs, and emoticons. Memes, as defined, are part of the online culture; mostly jokes, that are presented through mediums such as image+text or GIF+text combinations or just plain text and are spread virally on all Internet-based platforms, changing along the way. Memes are currently seen as a

common social media browsing activity, especially on Facebook (Ayyaz, 2022). Memes spread cultural and social information through parodies, imitations, and sometimes offensively humorous parodies. This paper only focused on memes that are a blend of a certain image and a piece of written text, as they are the most popular category.

These memes take a remarkable level of expertise to understand and are full of references. They include allusions to popular culture, political and religious themes, references unique to a nation or region, and references pertaining to particular professions or fields. Meme's sharing has currently become the hallmark of the 21st century in the social media online culture Siuda, et al (2022), indicating that the online discourse surrounding internet memes is a unique social discourse. Understanding and deciphering these references—found in both the written portion of the meme and the base image—is essential to comprehending and eventually recreating memes. Understanding these allusions is mostly associated with a particular age group, known as millennials, who, as a result of spending so much time online, are most adept at understanding, creating, using, and sharing memes.

Apart from the references, they contain and the age-group they usually target, in their textual part, memes contain many features that are extremely interesting from a linguistics' point of view. Memes use vernacular English, phrases from specific English dialects, puns and punning riddles, jargon, slang, shortenings and neologisms as well as patterned way of incorrect spelling and multiple, intentional or unintentional grammar and syntax mistakes.

Memes are now made in Macedonian as well. Individuals use social media extensively to share their everyday activities and involvements in both online and offline transactions (Ayyaz, 2022). Despite having some linguistic and sociological elements unique to the Macedonian language, memes in that language generally possess the same abilities as their English counterparts. Because of all these characteristics, memes are a very sophisticated, practical, and inventive form of online communication that has drawn the attention of numerous academics in recent years.

Literature Review

Richard Dawkins, an English evolutionary biologist and writer, first used the term "meme" in 1976. Dawkins coined the term "meme" in his book *The Selfish Gene* to refer to any non-genetic behavior and cultural concepts that are passed down from person to person, from language to football customs (Davison). The word "mīmēma," which roughly translates to "something that is imitated," is the basis for the name itself. Dawkins uses the concept of "replicators" to identify a meme. He mentions that by a process of forging, memes spread throughout the meme pool by bouncing from brain to brain (Dawkins, 1976). Years later, the same term was used to name a totally different thing – something crucial to the ultimate understanding of the digital culture nowadays; a cultural digital artifact of a sort, that is gaining new meanings and functions as it is breaking rapidly into the mainstream, more and more with each passing day.

The modern Internet meme propagates from user to user via many Internet-based venues, much like the original meme. In 1982, what is regarded as the first internet meme surfaced. A meme on the internet is defined by (Davison, 2020) as "a part of a culture, usually a joke which obtains impact through the online communication". It is believed that Scott E. Fahlmanii invented the first Internet meme, which is today known as "the smiley face" emoticon. The ":-)" meme, which consists solely of punctuation marks, was initially developed to indicate humor and sarcasm in formal, official internet email correspondence. Many people found the notion appealing, and in just a few weeks, the smiley-emoticon shot to enormous popularity. Within a few months, the memes went from one emoji to several. Many people found the notion appealing, and in just a few weeks, the smiley-emoticon shot to enormous popularity. Within a few months, the memes went from one emoji to several. While emoticons gained popularity well before the year 2000, memes in the form covered in this study didn't emerge until much later. Furthermore, although while the term "memes" was first used in biology in 1976, the term "academically riotous" or the definition of Internet memes didn't emerge until much later, in 2009. An Internet meme is a piece of culture, usually a joke, that gains influence through online transmission (Akram, 2022).

Memes are now thought of as a kind of virtual, online entertainment that can be shared and imaginatively recreated. This study will exclusively concentrate on memes that are still images with text, even though they can also appear as animated GIFs, plain text, movies, or a combination of text and image. An online meme is a word, picture, or video that goes viral on the internet. Memes help people comprehend the contextual meaning of a communication more clearly (Ayyaz, 2022).

Objectives:

1. To analyze the sociological impact of memes on different age groups, focusing particularly on millennials' engagement and understanding.

2. To examine the linguistic characteristics of memes in both English and Macedonian languages, including vernacular usage, slang, and linguistic innovations.
3. To explore the cultural significance and evolution of memes as a communicational tool, considering their role in shaping online discourse and reflecting societal trends.

Research Questions:

1. How do different age groups, particularly millennials, engage with and understand memes, and what sociological factors influence their interpretation and creation?
2. What linguistic features characterize memes in both English and Macedonian, and how do these features contribute to the humor, creativity, and effectiveness of meme communication?
3. How have memes evolved over time, and what cultural and societal factors influence the content, spread, and reception of memes across different regions and communities?

Data Collection

For this study, a diverse array of memes was systematically gathered from online sources, including social media websites, forums, and meme databases. **a. The sampling strategy** prioritized inclusivity to capture a broad spectrum of meme content across different themes, styles, and linguistic features. Memes were selected based on relevance to the research objectives, considering factors such as popularity, virality, and thematic diversity. The selected memes were compiled into a structured dataset, categorizing them based on criteria such as theme, language, and cultural context. **b. A coding scheme** was developed to analyze the content of memes, focusing on linguistic characteristics, cultural references, and sociological themes. **c. Quality assurance measures**, including pilot tests and inter-coder reliability checks, were implemented to ensure the reliability of the coded data. **d. Ethical guidelines** were followed throughout the data collection process, respecting copyright laws and user privacy rights.

Data Analysis

The collected memes were subjected to **a. content analysis** to investigate their sociological impact and linguistic characteristics. Through systematic examination, themes, linguistic elements, and cultural references present in the memes were identified and categorized according to predetermined criteria. Linguistic features, including vernacular usage, slang, and linguistic innovations, were analyzed to understand their role in meme communication. **b. Sociological themes** such as generational differences, cultural trends, and social commentary were explored within the meme content. The analysis focused on uncovering patterns and insights into how memes reflect and influence societal discourse and cultural dynamics. **c. Ethical considerations** were upheld throughout the analysis process, ensuring respect for copyright and user privacy rights.

Characteristics of Memes from a Sociological Perspective

The last 10 years have seen the emergence of memes as a sophisticated online communication phenomenon, drawing the interest of numerous eminent academics who investigate their sociological and linguistic components. Sociologists find memes particularly fascinating because of the characteristics of the internet users who (re)create, share, and interact with them through comments (Flecha-Ortiz, 2020). These characteristics include the users' age group, occupation, and place of residence, as well as the references that turn the memes into "inside jokes" within the group. The linguistic analysis was conducted based on these parameters, and the ensuing results and their discussion will be broken down and discussed for each parameter separately.

1. Characteristics and Composition of Still-Image Memes

These memes are frequently of poor quality and are typically basic. This is because the purpose of these still-image memes is not to be commended for their unique visual elements. They can be single or multimodal, and they frequently include extra text or even other images to increase the meme's appeal, comprehensibility, and potential for virality. The image itself can be anything at all; memes can be based on nearly anything, including drawings, movies, TV episodes, political arguments, and pictures of celebrities, pets, or animals in general. These memes' textual portions may include non-fixed text, phrases written in an anticipated style, or fixed phrases. The content can be as lengthy or short as the meme's author desires, and occasionally it can consist of only one word, such "Me." The writing can function as a type of caption or as a made-up conversation. It's crucial to remember that memes promote engagement by "inviting" internet users to make their own, drawing inspiration from earlier memes, and adding to the overall humorous or critical intent of the original memes. A piece of culture, usually a joke, which gains influence through online transmission (Shamir, 2022). Another thing to note is that in the majority of cases, the original content and/or context of a specific still-image used in a meme, is vastly different than the one in the memes though it has at least one linking segment that makes the original context important for the overall understanding.

"Subject ko jitni marzi takleef dedo
kabhi react nahi karta"



The indifferent figure depicted in this meme serves as a symbolic representation of the prevailing sentiment among Pakistani politicians, scholars, and even the general populace. It reflects a perception that regardless of the negative actions or injustices inflicted upon the country by external forces, there is a pervasive lack of proactive response or outcry.

This portrayal highlights a sense of resignation or apathy towards the state of affairs, suggesting that there is a collective acceptance or expectation of adversity without corresponding action or resistance. Internet memes offer fresh ideas and inspiration for various facets of life, and they have become an essential component of the online environment (Rousan et al., 2023). It implies a disillusionment with the efficacy of political leadership, intellectual discourse, and societal mobilization in addressing external challenges.

A comparison between some of the oldest memes and those made more recently reveals how much more sophisticated modern memes are in terms of language and style, how many allusions they contain, and how much background knowledge they demand.

2. The Ideal Setting for Making and Disseminating Memes is the Internet

Modern online communication tends to focus on maximum effectiveness, content simplification, and conveying as much information in the fewest feasible words. Because of this, internet users frequently utilize acronyms, words with multiple meanings, set phrases that may be employed in a variety of contexts, and numerous graphic representations of their emotions and reactions in daily communication. Meme creation, as a type of rhetorical construction, allows students to include their own experiences, viewpoints, and knowledge into the process of interpreting data, as noted by Vacca et al. (2022). Internet memes have been soaring to prominence in this online environment, which favors content and information that can be understood in a matter of seconds, as well as straightforward, quick communication. Their guiding ideals are exactly in line with those of the online community.

The memes' popularity can be attributed to their great degree of customization to individual demands, in addition to their simplicity and complexity, which keeps the audience engaged. Memes are being utilized more and more in marketing campaigns in addition to being utilized purely for amusement. According to (Chaleff, 2018), the online meme has developed into a potent, frequently undetectable force for globalization. Memes are a wonderful online tool for establishing an eye-catching and profitable online campaign because they are quite popular these days. Fendi was among the first businesses to realize that memes might be used for marketing. The marketing team at Fendi has frequently capitalized on the popularity of memes. Each time, the outcome was a very popular Instagram post with thousands of likes.

FENDI BOOTS.



Only real ones are gonna know what I mean but these look exactly like the boots my Bratz dolls wore and I absolutely need them

The statement in the meme suggests a nostalgic connection between the boots depicted in the image and the boots worn by a Bratz doll, a popular toy from the early 2000s. The use of the phrase "only real ones are going to know what I mean" implies a sense of exclusivity or insider knowledge, appealing to individuals who share similar memories or cultural references.

The meme likely aims to evoke a sense of nostalgia and whimsy, tapping into the childhood memories of those who played with Bratz dolls. By associating the boots in the image with something from the past, the meme creates a relatable and sentimental connection for the audience.

Furthermore, the statement expresses a desire or longing to acquire the boots depicted in the image, suggesting that they hold personal significance or appeal to the individual's sense of style or identity. This conveys the idea that fashion choices can be influenced by personal nostalgia and cultural references, showcasing the multifaceted nature of meme communication. Overall, the meme combines elements of nostalgia, humor, and fashion appreciation to create an engaging and relatable message for its audience.

Memes are indeed highly customizable to individual demands, allowing people to create and share content that resonates with specific audiences. Memes on the Internet can spread through mutation because of how simple it is to alter and modify them (Beskow, 2020). They can be simple or complex, depending on the context and the message being conveyed, which helps keep the audience engaged.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned meme illustrates how memes are increasingly utilized in marketing campaigns. By referencing a popular toy from the past (Bratz dolls) and expressing a desire for a product (the boots), the meme effectively combines elements of nostalgia and consumerism, which are often used in marketing strategies to appeal to target demographics.

Overall, this meme exemplifies how memes can be harnessed not only for entertainment but also as a powerful tool for marketing and engaging with audiences.

3. The Role of Macedonian Language and Culture in Memes

The standard variety of the Macedonian language and the official language of North Macedonia used in writing, in formal contexts, and for communication between different dialect areas. Memes in Macedonian language utilize the linguistic and sociocultural characteristics of the language, similar to memes in other languages. They reflect the unique vernacular, slang, and cultural references specific to the Macedonian-speaking community.

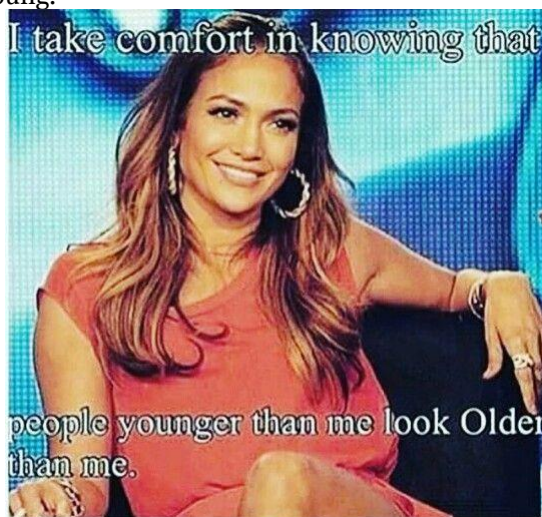


The phrase "SORI AMA SE STORI" in Macedonian means something like "Sorry, but that's just how things are." It's used to express acceptance of a situation, even if it's not ideal. It's like saying, "I'm sorry, but that's the way it goes," acknowledging that sometimes things happen beyond our control. Additionally, Macedonian memes contribute to the global meme culture while also addressing local topics and issues relevant to Macedonian society. (Fernández, 2023). claims that some memes—like sarcasm or jokes—are also seen as speech acts by internet users. This is one of the main reasons memes are useful for communication since, to internet users, they are essentially speech acts.

Memes were exclusively made in English for the longest period of time. All of the popular memes were in English, no matter where they came from. Although this greatly facilitated comprehension, it also introduced numerous terminological problems for other languages, particularly minor ones. Regrettably, there is no official translation for the phrase "meme/s" in Macedonian. Despite the fact that Macedonian internet users frequently view, distribute, and create memes, there is no phrase in the official Macedonian language dictionary that is equivalent to the English word "meme/s." Due to the lack of a suitable resolution for this terminological problem, Macedonian Twitter users have taken to using the phrases "меме/мемѝа," which are currently accepted as correct, at least on that specific network. Conversely, there isn't a single terminological solution on Facebook. Facebook users also use phrases like "мим(с)", "меме(с)", and "мимови" in addition to "меме/мемѝа". There is still not a definitive answer to this problem. Internet users in Macedonia will have to wait until then to find a suitable word for what they see on a daily basis on the internet.

4. Who Uses Memes: User Demographic by Age?

Recent research has revealed that a certain age group—millennials in their teens to early 20s—is the main user base for memes. This is mostly because younger members of the aforementioned age group spend a significantly greater amount of time online than do senior members of society. They are accustomed to the new communication norms that internet correspondence has established because they have had access to the Internet since they were very young.

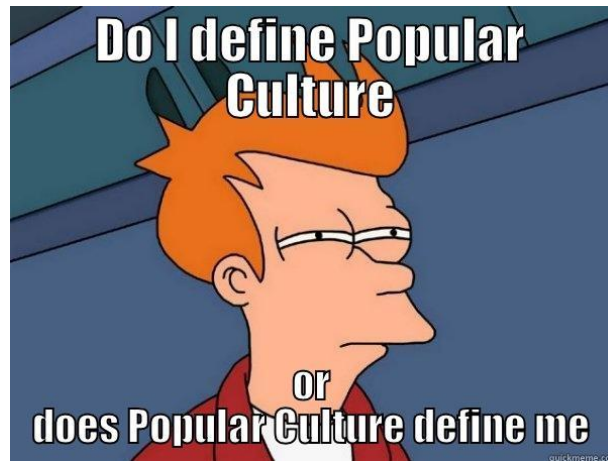


A meme with the text "I take comfort in knowing that people younger than me look older than me" to illustrate the idea of the generational gap and the different perceptions of age among different age groups. This meme conveys the sentiment that even though someone may be older, they find comfort in the fact that younger individuals may appear older than them, highlighting the unique perspectives and experiences of different generations.

Additionally, they have little trouble comprehending the meaning behind memes and pop culture allusions. Young people everywhere have comparable interests, pastimes, issues, and daily lives. They seem to communicate in a common tongue. They frequently read a lot of the same books, watch the same popular TV series, reality shows, and movies, listen to the same music, and follow celebrities, politicians, photographers, influencers on Instagram, and other similar people. As a result, they are able to comprehend one another and one another's memes. Memes are a reflection of the diversity of society, best summed up by perplexed parents attempting to figure out why their children find a comic-like post so humorous. (Das, 2023) claims that memes on the Internet are utilized for social connection, self-expression, and amusement.

5. The Impact of Pop Culture on Memes

A lot of pop culture references may be found in memes. Memes can contain references to anything from popular movies to music, artists, celebrities, television, and reality shows. Comprehending these allusions is pivotal in the process of deriving meaning from a meme, contributing to its reputation as an "inside joke" within a particular community.



The phrase "Do I define popular culture or does popular culture define me?" is indeed related to pop culture. This meme explores the relationship between an individual and the broader cultural trends and influences around them. It prompts reflection on whether one's personal tastes, preferences, and behaviors shape popular culture or whether they are shaped by the prevailing trends and norms within popular culture. (Courtois, 2022) believe memes are propagated and spread through mutation and evolution.

This meme touches on the notion of agency and autonomy within a cultural context, questioning whether individuals have the power to influence or contribute to popular culture, or if they are merely products of it. It's a thought-provoking commentary on the dynamic interaction between individuals and the broader cultural landscape in which they exist.

As such, this meme is a meta-commentary on pop culture itself, making it highly relevant to discussions about the nature and influence of popular culture.

Some webpages, like Know Your Meme, provide a thorough explanation of the meme itself, the context, the reference, and the subtleties required to derive proper meaning for those who lack the background knowledge necessary to understand the content and implications of a given meme. Memes become more comprehensible and therefore more reachable for all age groups with the help of such explanations. Even so, it's believed that explaining the joke lessens its humor, even if it's very simple to find. Memes are incredibly popular since part of the fun is figuring out the meme's meaning and content and trying to come up with something similar.

6. Memes Containing Mentions of Specific Professions

Context plays a critical role in comprehending a meme. Understanding the context ensures full content comprehension regardless of the context, such as whether it has to do with popular culture, a particular career, or a field. Memes created by persons in a certain field often contain terms and phrases that are typical of that field, just as people in that field or profession would use jargon and specialized phrases and words in their daily conversation. Dandigier and Vandelanotte (2017) contend that internet memes cannot be researched as discrete pieces because they typically build chains of subsequent reactions and reframing, repurposing initial combinations as allusions to styles, current events, and emerging developments, among other things.



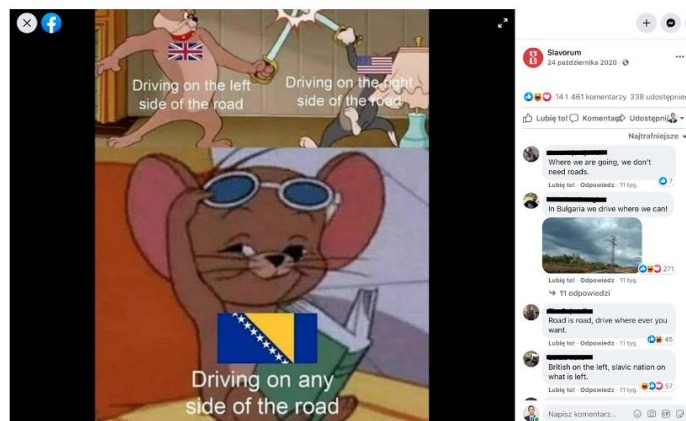
The meme "Found my resume in the printer, what'd you think of it?" is related to memes containing mentions of specific professions. In this meme, the individual is jokingly suggesting that their resume was accidentally printed and asking for feedback on it. It is likely to resonate with individuals in various professions, particularly those who have experienced the process of job hunting or resume writing.

This meme highlights the humorous aspect of professional life and the common experiences shared among individuals in the workforce. It plays on the relatable scenario of accidentally printing personal documents in a shared printer and injects humor by framing it as a job application. Therefore, it fits within the category of memes containing mentions of specific professions, as it directly references the act of job-seeking and resume writing.

This further demonstrates that memes are in fact "inside jokes" because those who are ignorant of a certain professional field would not be able to appreciate the memes made by one "member" of the field. This is best illustrated that this specific meme, much less find it hilarious.

7. Memes from Around the World: Recognizing the Context Related to a Particular Nation or Area

Knowing the history and context of a certain meme brings us to yet another significant category: memes related to a particular nation or area. People from all across the world produce memes. The meme is a kind of narrative that embraces change and adaptation while being enmeshed in identifiable patterns and motifs (Blank, 2014) as referenced in (Way, 2021). There are particular traits, customs, food, politics, and religious backgrounds, as well as moral and ethical standards, in every corner of the world, city, town, and nation. These characteristics are distinct and vary greatly around the globe. Therefore, to someone who does not live in that country or region, a meme that makes reference to that country or place may occasionally make no sense.



The meme "Driving on the left side of the road, driving on the right side of the road, driving on any side of the road" is related to the theme of memes from around the world and recognizing context related to a particular nation or area. This meme plays on the variation in driving norms and rules across different countries or regions.

In countries where driving is on the left side of the road, seeing someone drive on the right side would be considered unusual, and vice versa. The meme humorously suggests that regardless of which side of the road one drives on, it can be seen as unconventional or even chaotic from the perspective of someone accustomed to a different driving orientation.

Therefore, this meme highlights the importance of recognizing cultural and contextual differences when interpreting memes from different parts of the world, as what may seem normal or logical in one context can be perceived quite differently in another. Internet memes, according to (Shifman, 2013) concentrate more on the process of creating meaning.

Every facet of a person's daily existence in a particular region of the world, when combined into a meme, makes the overall material more difficult for others to understand. The so-called Slavic memes make this quite clear. There are several references in these memes that may seem strange to someone who doesn't live in a Slavic nation. The example below demonstrates how meaning can sometimes be understood without the use of words when the proper context is understood and the relevant background information is available.

8. Memes with Allusions to Politics and Religion

Another area that meme creators get inspiration in is politics. Every significant political gathering these days is accompanied by hundreds of memes. (Grundlingh, 2017) contends that non-verbal memes can still be considered speech acts in the absence of vocal communication as long as the recipient understands the context. Memes all throughout the world also feature recent elections, bad party policies, dubious choices, and new laws. For example, literally hundreds of memes surfaced online following the recent summit of two of the greatest leaders in the world: Kim Yung Un of North Korea and Donald Trump of the United States.



The meme "Learn from me: I never unfriend anyone over political differences, I just never mind" is related to memes with allusions to politics and religion.

This meme humorously addresses the common practice of unfriending or blocking people on social media platforms due to disagreements over political or religious beliefs. Instead of taking offense or engaging in conflict, the individual in the meme adopts a nonchalant attitude by saying "never mind."

The meme subtly comments on the divisive nature of political and religious discussions on social media and suggests an alternative approach of indifference or apathy towards differing viewpoints. It reflects a lighthearted perspective on navigating contentious topics in online interactions, which is a common theme in memes that touch on politics and religion.

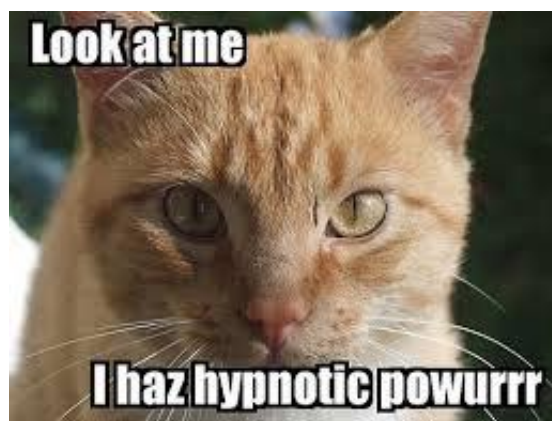
Memes' Linguistic Characteristics

The textual portion of the memes covered in the paper has distinctive linguistic characteristics that draw in modern linguists from all over the world who study the language used in memes, errors made, sentence structures and their correctness or incorrectness, orthography, abbreviations, linguistic patterns, etc. The linguistic component of the meme, which is crucial for understanding memes and for carrying on the meme chain by producing new ones, needs to be carefully examined (Malodia, 2022).

Creativity in Language

Even by itself, the phrase is inventive. We speakers regularly use language inventiveness since we use the language on a daily basis. Memes, which typically mirror everyday language, are another way in which this inventiveness is portrayed. Memes' producers frequently invent their own words, or neologisms; they also make deliberate switches between lexical items; they use associative tactics; and cleverly use metaphors, slogans, and fixed phrasal expressions (Petrova, (2021). Each of these components demonstrates the degree of linguistic inventiveness used in meme material.

Memes with their own word order and spelling conventions that deviate from Standard English regulations are a particularly striking example of linguistic inventiveness. The so-called LOLspeak makes this clear. There are specific guidelines for this kind of online vernacular that they must be followed. LOLspeak is described by the Urban Dictionary as intentionally misspelling words and writing them with a different letter than how they were originally spelt. The intriguing thing about LOLspeak is that, despite the words having various spellings, they sound the same when spoken aloud:



The phrase "look at me I haz hypnotic powurr" in this meme is a classic example of LOLspeak, which is the humorous and often grammatically incorrect style associated with LOLcats memes. This particular phrase features intentional misspellings and grammatical errors for comedic effect, which are characteristic of LOLspeak. LOLspeak exemplifies creativity in language through wordplay, grammar flexibility, and imaginative expression. Users manipulate words, bend grammar rules, and imagine cat-like perspectives to craft humorous content. This communal language evolves over time through contributions from internet users, incorporating cross-cultural influences and fostering experimentation. LOLspeak features not just purposeful misspellings (teh, ennyfing), but also unusual verb tenses (gotted, can haz) and strange word repetitions (fastfastfast).

2. Common English Usage in Memes

A vast number of internet users from both English-speaking and non-English speaking nations worldwide develop English-language memes. These people speak informally, using a dialect of casual, daily English that is rife with slang, profanity, neologisms, and other odd phrases. The memes they make reflect the language they use on a daily basis. Memes' textual patterns seldom adhere to Standard English standards, which is particularly beneficial for non-native speakers and English language learners who may appreciate the beauty of real-world English and its dialects through these memes (Kayali, 2021).. This might aid in improving their vocabulary and comprehension of the English language.



The meme "MARKETERS Y U NO JACK MEMES" is a humorous expression of frustration directed towards marketers who attempt to exploit internet memes for commercial purposes. This meme, employing the "Y U No" format, demonstrates linguistic aspects of memes through semantic shifts, pragmatics, and intertextuality. The phrase "Y U No" undergoes a semantic shift to convey frustration or criticism, while the meme's pragmatics involve understanding the implied critique of marketers' actions. Intertextually, it references both the "Y U No" meme format and broader meme culture, showcasing the interconnectedness of memes within online communities. Linguistics analysis reveals language variation, as memes incorporate slang and internet-specific language, contributing to linguistic innovation. Memes like this serve as a form of community language, fostering communication and identity within digital spaces while reflecting the dynamic relationship between language and internet culture.

Abbreviations

Another crucial aspect of the colloquial language employed in memes is the use of acronyms (Lubis, 2021). Memes frequently use acronyms to express information in the fewest words or symbols feasible. There are several categories of acronyms utilized in memes:

A. Abbreviations, like:

- As Fast As Is Practical
For Your Information, FYI
Laughing Aloud, or LOL

B. Abbreviations having the ability to function as independent words

Flu - Influenza Application - Application Ad - Promotion

Abbreviations that lack the ability to function as independent words

February – February



The meme "N. Never U. Underestimate T. Teacher N. U. T. All over your school!!!!" belongs to the abbreviation-based meme category, where each letter represents a word forming a humorous or unexpected phrase. Linguistically, it illustrates the creative manipulation of language structures for comedic purposes, showcasing the role of wordplay in meme culture. Through the ambiguity of abbreviations and semantic play, it generates humor by subverting expectations. Understanding this meme necessitates familiarity with meme formats and cultural references within online communities, highlighting how memes establish their own language norms and contribute to online subcultures. Furthermore, the intertextual references within memes provide insights into how language and meaning are constructed within specific cultural contexts. Overall, analyzing linguistic aspects of memes, such as abbreviation, wordplay, semantic ambiguity, community language, intertextuality, and cultural context, helps unravel the complexity of meme communication and its significance in online discourse.

Both Deliberate and Unintentional Errors

The numerous linguistic errors that occur in the textual portion of memes are one of their most noticeable linguistic characteristics (Stojchevska et al. 2018). Either purposeful or inadvertent errors may have been made. The author purposefully created the former in order to maintain the integrity and format of the original meme. This is the case with the meme "One X boi," which is displayed below. In order to heighten the humorous and ridiculing element, the word "boy" is purposefully misspelt. Conversely, the latter are the result of inadvertent mistakes.

The latter are either straightforward errors or the result of the author/creator of the meme's inadequate linguistic proficiency. The majority of inadvertent errors are produced by non-native English speakers, who also frequently make comparable errors when speaking the language aloud.

These errors consist of:

- Using do in place of does for the third person singular in Present Simple (He goes to work);
- Using a verb in Past Simple after did or didn't (Did you eat?).
- When using the third person singular, use have rather than had;
- Mistaking who for whom
- counting the uncountable nouns
- using double negatives (I didn't eat nothing), and mispronouncing words like they're for their
- he's for his, you're for you're, and vice versa.



The phrase "MASK U PUTHA MASK UP UTHA MASK U PUTHA" appears to be an intentional linguistic distortion, mimicking a particular accent or speech pattern for humorous effect. While it may contain intentional grammatical errors and phonetic representations, it also suggests a playful engagement with language. In the realm of memes, intentional mistakes like these often serve as comedic devices, leveraging linguistic deviations from standard norms to create humor. However, it's important to note that while this particular meme may involve intentional linguistic distortions, unintentional mistakes can also play a role in meme creation and dissemination. These mistakes could arise from typographical errors, misunderstandings, or misinterpretations, which can sometimes contribute to the humor or virality of a meme. Therefore, both intentional and unintentional mistakes can contribute to the linguistic creativity and appeal of memes, showcasing how language is constantly evolving and being reimagined within digital culture.

Conclusion

This study delved into the sociological impact and linguistic characteristics of memes, focusing on their manifestations in online social media platforms. Through content analysis, a diverse array of memes was systematically examined to uncover themes, linguistic elements, and cultural references embedded within them. The analysis revealed insights into how memes serve as a reflection of societal trends, generational differences, and cultural dynamics. Memes emerged as a powerful communicational tool, facilitating social connection, self-expression, and cultural commentary within online communities. The study highlights the significance of memes in shaping contemporary discourse and fostering digital culture. This study underscores the multifaceted nature of memes and their significance in contemporary digital culture. By understanding and embracing the sociological and linguistic dimensions of memes, we can harness their potential for constructive social interaction and cultural expression in the digital age.

Recommendations

1. It's crucial to develop programs that enhance digital literacy skills among users, enabling them to critically analyze the sociological impacts and linguistic nuances of memes in online communication.
2. Initiatives aimed at fostering cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration in meme creation should be promoted to facilitate greater cultural exchange and understanding within meme culture.
3. Platforms and communities need to implement policies and guidelines that advocate for ethical meme practices, including adherence to copyright laws and responsible content creation, thereby ensuring the integrity and inclusivity of meme culture in the digital realm.

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