

The signs, symbols. And interpretans found in the internet viral memes on the 9gag social media platform

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Abstract

The aim of this study were to figure out what the signs, symbols, and interpretants in the 9GAG memes meant. These symbols provide instructions or indications to the researchers in deciphering the meaning of advertising. Depending on the image, the framing approach is detected. The 9GAG Meme is an example of a Meme used to connect with people on social media. The 9GAG Meme is a meme that consists of a picture and a caption. The sign included in memes and how it is received were determined using a semiotics review in this study. The memes utilized as study data were acquired using qualitative visual materials obtained from 9GAGmemes.com as the data source. The visual semiotic theory established by Pierce (1931) was used to examine fifteen data sets. The research approach used in this study is qualitative data analysis. Each piece of data in this study is made up of a symbol and a meaning. The signs were identified using Pierce's triadic sign (Representation, Object, and Interpretant), and there are three phases in understanding the sign: nonverbal communication legisign, framing strategies, and communicative act. The result of this study were; (1) Based on the analysis, the researchers discovered 27 icons and 39 symbols from 15 (fifteen) memes data that had been previously picked using simple sampling; (2) The researchers also discovered that visuals (icons) influenced the researchers's perception of memes' implicit meanings.

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Introduction

Language is always changing. People's words about themselves and the world around them describe every aspect of their existence. The language evolves in tandem with the world as a result of invention, discovery, revolution, evolution, creativity, and human development. Symbols or signs in language can be defined in a variety of ways by anyone. Language is also a kind of communication in which we employ words in grammatically proper and conventional ways, whether we talk or write. According to Pickering, James H., and Jeffrey D (1981: 307) "Literature and language are created specifically for human activity and born of mankind's ability to learn, communicate, and share for everyone,". People's relationships are characterized by touch. In order to study a language you must understand about the field which is called linguistics.

Linguistics refers to the study of language theoretically. The word "linguistics" comes from the word "language" in the Latin word, which means "language" and "istics" means "know how." Linguistics refers to scientific study of form and of creation of languages in general or special languages,' according to the Cambridge dictionary. The study of linguistics is the inherent fascination of man about the specifics of the language that he speaks.

The study of macro-linguistics is concerned with the creation of languages in the brain, their use in a wide range of applications, linguistic and cultural interconnection, and the physiology and psychology of language activity. One of the most significant branches of linguistics is semantics. The study of meanings is known as semantics. According to Kreidler (1998:41), the components of language include reference and denotation, connotation, context relations, lexical and grammatical meaning, morphemes, homonymy, polysemy, lexical ambiguity, phrase and meaning. Furthermore, Chaer (2007:289) defines meaning as lexical, grammatical, and relational meaning, referential and non-referential meaning, denotative and connotative meaning, semantic and associative meaning, and lexeme. When we are talking about meaning, the field in linguistics that usually analyzes it is semiotic.

From all the meanings in the world, there is a phenomenon in social media where the motion whether it is a picture or video shows the reality in life which is called "meme". Meme (/ˈmi:m/) is a modern development in the cyber world, which has become one of Internet's most common types of satire. The biggest pioneer in the memes world is 9GAG. 9GAG is a Hong Kong-based

social network and online portal that allows its users to upload and distribute content created by users or other content on websites of external social media. The researchers chooses this platform memes because of certain reasons to be analyzed in this study. Namely: Appendix 9GAG Meme is the most common internet access such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Reddit on social media nowadays. Typically people do this in Messenger apps when modifying the display image on their profile image. It has a particular theme than other stories, which are generated by actual history and real life.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Linguistics

Chomsky (1957:13) defined linguistics as “a collection (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and formed from a finite set of elements” He goes on to say that this is true for all natural languages since they contain “a limited number of phonemes (or letters in its alphabet) and each sentence is representable as a finite sequence of these phonemes (or letters)” (Chomsky 1957:13). linguistic analysis of a language should seek to separate grammatical sentences from ungrammatical sentences and analyze the structure of grammatical sentences. Furthermore, a language's grammar will create all grammatical sentences but none of the ungrammatical ones. The question of what defines a sentence or a series of grammatically arranged words arises. In this regard, Chomsky relies on the intuition of a native speaker. As a result, if a certain string of words or a sentence creates a sense of wrongness in a native speaker, it might be characterized as ungrammatical.

2.2 Semiotics

A strong generic semiotic theory is one that can provide an appropriate formal explanation for any sort of sign-function, regardless of whether it has previously been specified and coded. The study of everything that may be regarded as a symbol is known as semiotics. A symbol is something that may be understood as essentially replacing for something else. The term "semiotic" comes from the Greek word "semeion," which means "sign." “Semioticism is concerned with all that can be taken as a sign,” Eco (1979:7) said. Anywhere may be a sign.

Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1859-1913) and American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce popularized modern semiotic study (1839- 1914). The linguist Saussure defined 'semiology' as a 'science that studies the role of signs in social life,' while the philosopher Peirce defined 'semeiotic' (or 'semiotic') as the 'formal doctrine of signs,' which was closely linked to logic (Chandler, 2007: 3).

In semiotic, language is viewed as a sign system that expresses thoughts, similar to a writing system, a deaf-mute alphabet, symbolic rites, respectful formulas, military signs, and so on. Copley, Paul (2001), Semiotic is described as the theory of the development and perception of meaning in Peirce's theory. The deployment of actions and objects that serve as "signs" in relation to other signs creates meaning. In general, no specific object, text, or method is thought to contain meaning.

2.3 Visual Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs, which are employed in many different domains such as communication, linguistics, psychology, and biology. A symbol is anything that has meaning and stands for something else. In this study, memes, which are images or snapshots with a commentary, are employed as data, therefore the indications are in the form of an image or visual material. The sign refers to the meme user's idea or emotion as expressed through visual images. Visual semiotic analysis is used because the sign takes the form of an image. Visual semiotic is a relatively new branch of semiotic that emerged in the 1990s. (Parsa et al., 2009, p. 847) Visual semiotic focuses on how visuals interact through the image or picture as a symbol. Any field of semiotic uses the word "sign" as a key term. According to Peirce, the sign is made up of three parts: a monad (icon), a dyad (index), and a triad (symbol). Icon is monadic because the character is independent of whether it has an entity or represents something, and because icon is a symbol that may exist or not exist (e.g. comic strip, painting figurative, etc).

Indexes, on the other hand, are modified by the existence of their items. It is difficult to give an index without the article (e.g. photographs, movies, etc). As a result, because the character structure is determined independently of the interpretant by an existent item, an index is

dyadic. A symbol is triadic because when the sign and object are united, they both require a more generic representation of something. In visual semiotics, the existence of a sign dictates the mark, although it does not in general; consequently, sign categorization is affected. In visual semiotics, a photograph is an index because its sign exists, yet in general semiotics, it is an icon because its sign resembles the thing. The various types of signs are; (1) rhematic iconic qualisign, (2) rhematic iconic sinsign, (3) rhematic indexical sinsign, (4) dicent indexical sinsign, (5) rhematic iconic legisign, (6) rhematic indexical legisign, (7) dicent indexical legisign, (8) rhematic symbol legisign, (9) dicent symbol legisign, and (10) statement symbol legisign.

2.4 Pierce's Semiotic Theory

Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1941) was the son of Benjamin Pierce, a Harvard professor of mathematics and astronomy and, at the time, America's foremost mathematician. In Sobur (2009, 2016: 41), Pierce defines a sign as "something that stands for something to somebody in some respect or capacity." These signs could include sounds, words, and anything else that may provide direction as part of a communication method, such as a home, shirt, or some other meaningful symbol. In linguistics and literature, the study of signs has become a serious field.

Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory addresses three major aspects of symbols, with the first element representing the second element and the third element representing the third element. "A symbol... [in the form of a representation] is anything that in some way orability symbolizes something to someone." It addresses someone by creating a comparable, or even a more constructed, sign in that person's mind. The first sign's interpretant is the sign itself. The sign's object is something. It stands for the item, not in every sense, but in relation to a type of notion, which I've referred to as the representation's basis." Pierce (1931:58).

The sign is then divided into three categories: mark, index, and symbol. The interpretant is divided into three types: rheme, dicesign, and claim.

1. A Qualisign is a sign that contains a standard. It can only function as a symbol if it is articulated, as in the case of the loud and pleasant sounds.
2. A Sinsign is an actual occurrence that is followed with a warning, such as a girl screaming, that signals she is in danger or about to be wounded.

3. A Legisign is a legislation that is written in the shape of a symbol. This rule, such as traffic lights, is normally created by men and has been decided upon.

Sign may be classified as an emblem, an index, or a symbol, according to Peirce in Vera (2014: 24-26) as mentioned below:

1. An icon is a symbol that refers to the entity that it denotes solely by means of its own characters, and which it possesses regardless of whether that object exists or not.
2. An index is a symbol that refers to the Object it denotes since it is directly influenced by it. Smoke, for example, is a fire indicator.
3. A symbol is a sign that refers to the object it denotes through the application of a law, typically an association of general ideas that causes the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object.

Things like traffic lights and national flags come to mind.

2.4.1 Representamen

The representamen can be (1) a qualisign (firstness), meaning a quality that functions like a sign; (2) a sinsign (secondness), meaning a specific spatio-temporal thing or event that functions like a sign; or (3) a legisign (thirdness), meaning a conventional sign. Examples of legisigns are passwords, insignias, tickets for a show, traffic signals, and the words of a language. However, legisigns cannot act until embodied as sinsigns, which are "replicas". For instance, the article "the" is a legisign in the English language system. But it can only be used within the medium of the voice or the text that embodies it. It is embodied in sinsigns (its occurrences, occupying different spatio-temporal positions), but also includes qualisigns, such as the intonation of the oral replica, or the shape of the letters of the written replica.

2.4.2 Object

A representamen can refer to its object by virtue of firstness, secondness or thirdness, that is, through relationships of similarity, contextual contiguity or law. Following this trichotomy, the sign is called (1) an icon, (2) an index or (3) a symbol, respectively. The reference between a sign and its object is iconic if the sign resembles the object. An icon may have as its representamen a qualisign, a sinsign or legisign. For example, the feeling (qualisign) produced by playing a piece of music is the icon of that piece of music.

2.4.3 Interpretant

As with the sign-vehicle and the object, Pierce thought we could classify signs in terms of their relation with their interpretant. Again, he identifies three categories according to which feature of the relationship with its object a sign uses in generating an interpretant. Further, as with the classification of the sign in terms of the sign-vehicle and the object, Pierce identifies qualities, existential facts, or conventional features as the basis for classifying the sign in terms of its interpretant. Further, just as we can think of a rheme as an unsaturated predicate, and a dicent as a proposition, we can think of the de lome as an argument or rule of inference. Our ability to understand a sign in terms of its place in some pattern of reasoning and system of signs enables us to derive information from it (by deductive reasoning) or make conjectures about it (by inductive and abductive reasoning). So, whenever we come to understand a sign as focusing our attention upon some conventional feature of its relationship with object, that is, enabling us to understand the sign as part of a rule governed system of knowledge and signs etc., we have an interpretant that qualifies a sign as a de lome (or argument).

2.5 Memes

Memes are derived from the ancient Greek mimema, which is defined as the character of a community that includes thoughts, emotions, or actions and is defined as a neologism (action). Ideas, ideas, hypotheses, applications, routines, songs, dances, and moods are all examples of mimema. Mimema has the ability to reproduce itself and form a culture; this process is similar to how viruses propagate, except it occurs in the cultural sphere. In 1976, Richard Dawkins created the term meme in his book *The Selfish Gene*. A meme is an image, picture, or animation that has been given a sequence of words to achieve a certain impact, such as hilarity.

A meme (/MIM/mim) is an idea, attitude, or style that spreads from person to person in a group (Dawkins, 1989). A meme is an image with a specific topic that communicates cultural beliefs, symbols, or behaviors from one mind to another via writing, expression, gestures, rituals, or other imitable occurrences. A comic is a genre of literature that mixes pictures and text and arranges them in a cumulative fashion to tell a tale or transmit details that might be hilarious, mysterious, or both, according to Gavigan and Tomasevich (2011). This phrase integrates the idea of comic books as literature and highlights their communal existence.

3. METHOD

In general, qualitative analysis was employed in this investigation. The use of words rather than numbers is the emphasis of qualitative research. "Qualitative research is a technique for exploring and analyzing the importance that people or groups attach to a social or human situation." Emerging questions and approaches, as well as data obtained in the participant's surroundings, data analysis that evolves inductively from particular to broad themes, and the

researchers' interpretations of the data, are all part of the study process. According to Neuman (2007:89), qualitative evidence includes documenting real occurrences, recording what individuals say, examining individual actions, studying written records, and evaluating visual imagery.

Since the data is in the context of a meme, qualitative audio and visual materials were used in this study. The researchers used the following procedures to gather the data:

1. Browse to the 9GAG homepage at "9GAG memes.com."
2. Browse to the March to April 2021 memes that are uploaded.
3. Screenshot of the memes that have been going around since March to April 2021.

In analyzing the data the researchers did the process as well :

A) Selecting

The data were chosen based on the research study, which was 9GAG memes posted on "9GAG memes.com" from March to April 2021

B). Focusing

Focus on the visual and verbal signs contained in the memes that were chosen as the data set after choosing the data to be analyzed.

C). Simplifying

The data were separated into visual and verbal signs to make semiotic interpretation of the memes simpler

D). Transforming

The data were transformed using the trichotomy model of Pierce. The researchers displayed the signs using the trichotomy model theory of Pierce.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Findings

Pierce's semiotic technique was utilized by the researchers to evaluate several memes at 9GAG in order to interpret the message given by the memes, which were aimed to represent broad thoughts and feelings and included a moral lesson to be transmitted to everyone. An icon, item, or symbol sign is a semiotic sign that is commonly used in 9GAG memes. The emblem and symbol depict the implicit meaning and message conveyed to the readers based on the study's findings. The messages are often known as satire and statements aimed at widespread happenings. Furthermore, based on the interpretation of the semiotic processes of the signals, such memes have moral consequences. Based on the data collected, the researchers analyzed the icons and symbols in memes at 9GAG using Pierce's semiotic processes. This study also

proved that Pierce's theory may be used to understand the process of producing meaning as well as to provide meaning encoded in memes.

Fifteen data sets were investigated to better understand the diverse interpretations of sign meaning among them. It is feasible to conclude that the memes on 9GAG send readers subliminal messages. It makes no difference, according to Pierce, if the researchers and anybody else have differing interpretations. People's interpretations may differ based on their culture, background, location, knowledge, and experience. In this case, a sign is an object that represents the opinions of others. Words, photos, scents, sounds, tastes, actions, or objects can all be signals, but they do not have inherent meanings and only become signs when we pour meaning into them.

The emblem and symbol depict the implicit meaning and message conveyed to the readers based on the study's findings. The messages are often known as satire and statements aimed at widespread happenings. Furthermore, based on the interpretation of the semiotic processes of the signals, such memes have moral consequences. Based on the data acquired, the researcher analyzed the icons and symbols in memes at 9GAG using Pierce's semiotic processes. This study also proved that Pierce's theory may be used to understand the process of producing meaning as well as to provide meaning encoded in memes.

5. Conclusion

The researchers concludes the icons and symbols discovered in the meme photos obtained from 9GAG.com based on the findings and discussion in the preceding chapter. There were 15 (fifteen) data points gathered in the form of icons and symbols derived from meme pictures at 9GAG.com. The Semiotic is divided into three stages: representaments, objects, and interpretants. These stages are explained using Pierce's triangle. Based on study analysis, the researchers discovered 27 icons and 39 symbols from 15 meme data that had been previously picked using simple sampling. The researchers also discovered that advertising visuals (icons) influenced the researchers's perception of memes' implicit meanings. These emblems offer the researchers with instructions or hints to decipher the meaning of advertising. The framing strategy is recognized depending on the image.

The linguistic indicators contained in the 9GAG memes are used to identify the communication act. The first person singular is used in all of the verbal signs. It indicates that the meme user is using the meme to convey and explain their own circumstance or sentiment. We grasp the meaning of the memes and what the meme users are attempting to express, explain, or transmit by studying the sign through the photo and description. The messages were derived from Pierce's triadic process's idea of semiotic of images and symbols.

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