



Mockery phenomenon of Putin's satire depicted on the Russian and Ukrainian memes

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Abstract. This paper observed the Russian and Ukrainian Memes as primarily focused on Putin's humiliation-related memes on Twitter. This research explores how visual and verbal elements are arranged as multimodal properties to assess the use of contempt of the resentment applied O'Halloran (2008) Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Generic Structure Potential (1989) proposed by Hasan. The study aims to reveal the concept of mockery portrayed in Russian and Ukrainian memes to show the connection between the visual and verbal elements. The data comprehend 15 Internet memes from Twitter, gathered on June 4, 2023, and were examined with a descriptive qualitative method because the data collection was conducted using documentation technique. The study determined that most of the verbal and visual resources depicted Putin's satire identified from attitude concepts which show the negative judgment categories (Martin and White, 2005). In addition, the concept of mockery is not just abusive humor, but it also carries social criticism in sarcastic contexts.

Keywords: Multimodal, Appraisal Theory, Meme, Twitter, Russian

INTRODUCTION

People in this globalization era, almost every person use the internet whether to find an idea, sharing information, or just get the entertainment. Internet being such a great source of social media which make people easier to build relation each other. When social media existed any kind of communicate is likely possible to do such as sharing their real-time activity, share their favorite picture, or share their favorite music. Those activities done by people to obtain varied purposes like influence people, promote something, or even simply spread a humour through a meme. That differents purposes also happened in the appearence of memes which people usually distributed on the social media. Social media offered the benefits of creating and shifting of contents by users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Memes can be a useful tool to spread information. Most internet users must be familiar with meme on the internet since it's consist a humour aspects. Meme have no exact form of meme even there are such a particular characteristic of meme on the internet. Information inside of memes traditionaly shares continuity of unique and differents elements under the language. Memes nowadays rapidly obtain its popularity on any forum or platform on the Internet which able to convey combination of idea, visual, and text. Since the social media existed, made the meme easily to duplicate and replicate to other person (Shifman & Thelwall, 2009). The term 'meme' itself first proposed in the

book “The Selfish Gene” as a concept to explain the spreadness of information which commonly used by people such as sentences, pictures, videos or mixture of those aspects that able to fastly shared, recreate, and duplicates (Dawkins, 2006). The circulated memes on the internet mostly design for entertain purposes but also in another types contain a critics inside. The number of public interest of meme is growing as a result of the distribution and combination through the aspects of memes. The spreadness of memes is rapidly fast on the social media such as Facebook, Reddit, Instagram, and Twitter (Behera et al., 2020). In which, Twitter will be given a certain discussion in this paper.

The writer aims to identify how memes portaryed satire to Putin as a mockery phenomenon depicted on memes at Russian and Ukrainian Memes. This paper serve as the alternative way in understand the memes contained Putin’s figure inside of it while analyzing the meme’s motive.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Meme

The term meme was coined by Richard Dawkins in 1976 in his book “The Selfish Gene”. Dawkins stated that the new name or the initial term of the new replicator thing in the form of noun which able to deliver the idea of the cultural transmission or as the part of imitation is in the urge to have. As stated in his book, he took the word “Mimeme” derivated from Greek which abbrevaite it into “Meme” then. Dawkins define meme as the modern age new replicator that means an imitation process since the concept of meme is the culture unit spread from one person to the others use the imitating or copying method.

Related with the technology development in the modern age, meme experience the evolution of its concept (Castaño Díaz, 2013). The meme concept being a text and image. This two combination aspects can contain jokes, expression, metaphor and so on which become the popular trend worldly

From the theories above, it can be draw that meme is a unit which able to imitate or duplicate which carrying an information or an idea that able to spread into the public.

Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL)

Systemic Functional Linguistic is a theory that analyse the verbal elements. According to Halliday (2004) proposed three metafunction including ideational metafunction (meaing encoded to deliver some idea or information), interpersonal metafunction (interaction encode), and textual metafunction (meaning encoding inside of the development of text which able to create text relevance). In addition, the systemic functional linguistic can be used to examine the meme caption and to determine language role which can be in the form of colour, position, and figure or picture.

Intersemiotic ideation also applied in this theory to revealing the meaning-making process which are transitivity relation (the relation process that contain the linguistic elements of memes) and color (which concern with how the use of colour in drawing the meaning) (O’HALLORAN, 2008).

Besides, a meme contain a color of the image and the text which is an important thing to reveal the meaning-making process and conctruct the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunction (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006).

Furthermore, in the systemic functional linguistic also revealing the representational and interactive meaning (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006) with images which involving three systems are 1) Information Value (dealing with the elements in an image position which

are left and right, centre and margin, and top and bottom. 2) Saliency (According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) saliency as relationship between size, focus sharpness, contrast, and specific factors. 3) Framing (this system concerns with the image elements that have the connection or not and revealing that whether is sharing an information.)

Appraisal Theory

Appraisal theory is related with the linguistic resources which developed from Systemic Functional Linguistic theory (SFL) which construing the interpersonal meaning. Appraisal theory consists of three main domains: attitude, engagement, and graduation. Attitude is related with the feeling of our own that “including the emotional reaction of behaviour and evaluation of things”. The attitude elements are divided into three aspects: ‘affect’, ‘judgement’, and ‘appreciation’ which in this study focuses on the judgement aspects. Judgement is concerned with the behaviour assessment related with the moral principle variation (Martin & White, 2005).

Previous several studies were related with this study. First, Gumilang and Juanda paper article. This study uses the qualitative descriptive-analytic method which studied about the memes interpretation meaning in 9GAG Instagram account applied multimodality framework (Gumilang & Juanda, 2018). This article also uses the language theory proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen to analyze the data. The second study is Okesola and Oyeboode. This paper analyzed the multimodal elements as appraisal resources in #EndSARS civil unrest-related memes about Nigerian on WhatsApp and Twitter app to express affective meanings and intersubjective positioning qualitatively. The researcher found that the object multimodal text was containing various appraisal expressions to create narratives in the meme, such as affection, judgement, and appreciation (Okesola & Oyeboode, 2023). The third study analyzed appraisal elements on the 27 students’ memes at the Foreign Language course. The aim of the research is to acknowledge the meme is an effective media for L2 students to analyze multimodality on the text. The result indicates that all of the students were capable to create the memes by containing a complete multimodal value such as meme’s genre, cultural references, and language aspects (Tashpulatova et al., 2022).

From the previous study there were different aspects to distinguish that the uses of Russian and Ukrainian memes mainly contained figure of Putin as the focus object of this paper. It focuses on visual and verbal mode analysis from Hasan’s advanced (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Also it discusses the transitivity and mood analysis from O’Halloran. The writer took the data containing verbal and visual mode inside of the meme from Twitter @uamemesforces. In this paper, the writer uses systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to examine the verbal and visual modes. This study applied qualitative-descriptive research in revealing the phenomenon of mockery in Russian and Ukrainian memes. Present study has several issues aimed to reveal 1) What visual and verbal elements are used in selected Russian and Ukrainian Memes? 2) How do verbal and visual elements create meaning-making of the mockery concept phenomenon in the selected Russian and Ukrainian memes?

METHOD

In this paper, the collected memes analysed in this study were captured online via social media Twitter account name @uamemesforces gathered in June 4, 2023. This social media account published a meme to indirectly show the support for Ukraine country. Among the total 15 collected data, three screenshots of related memes regarding

with Putin's satire picture were selected as the primary data because the dominated categories of memes in that social media platform. The preferred memes were uploaded on April-June 2023 which indicate a new case to be considered. This research will be studied the contained elements of the meme to analyze mockery phenomenon portrayed inside of Putin's satire meme. This research applied qualitative method within the use of descriptive analysis since the analysis data need to be in interpretation result (Baker, 2012). This research method will be used to revealing upon two main issues, which are 1) the visual and verbal element application 2) the meaning-making process in elaborating between visual and verbal element in the Russian and Ukrainian memes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result and findings is organize to answer the two issues in this study. There are there preffered memes were selected. Each of selected memes consist of visual figures and verbal caption.



Figure 1. Russian and Ukrainian memes “War criminals should be in prison”

On the first data in figure 1 is a screenshot from twitter account named @uamemesforces. The tweets posted a one picture of meme contained a Capture aspects as the main elements because it is related with its position on the central, which is a picture of Putin's wearing a black tuxedo and a neat tie. A Capture means in this picture is Putin have an important roles among the other people around him which are armies of Russia. It draws from Putin's appearance depicted in this meme such as obtain the number amount of light more than others and he is in the straight focus in this figure. The colour of Putins's tuxedo, black colour means a penitence (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006) since portrayed Putin's should feel sorry for his invasion in Ukraine. The color of the armies that was wearing a green uniform as a background dominates in this meme also denotes a meaning which represent 'unity' that the army is could not be separated from Putin's appearance in doing any kind of his policy especially in the Ukraine invasion commandment.

Figure of Putin's facial expression can be considered as the second element on this meme. Related with the analysis of verbal and visual elements in this picture contain a complete visual elements which Focus, Justification, and Capture aspect, meanwhile in the verbal element it is only put a Joke-line in the top of the picture and lack of the Punch-line aspect means that this memes show the incompleteness since only provide the jokes without provide any context in the bottom line. In this picture the figure of Putin is the part of the salient in this memes considered by the bigger size of the figure in the picture, the place compisition in the centre and Putin's figure show the contrast with the background itself. The putin's figure use the tuxedo while the others use the uniforms.

From the analysis of Transitivity and mood analysis on the clause “WAR CRIMINALS SHOULD BE IN PRISON” applies verbal process. This process is related with the process of saying. It has a purposes to deliver the utterance of the existed clause which state that the memes participant say something. Meanwhile in the interpersonal analysis, this clause belongs with imperative mood. It means that this memes provides an information to the readers and allows them to agree in the statement.

Based on the Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) it will be focused on the one type of the attitude aspect which is a judgement. In this memes, contain the negative judgements propriety which related with the ethics. In the figure 1, it make a clear that this memes show about the overall depiction of attitude of Russian Army and Russian Presidents which have immoral and cruel behaviour. From the analysis, it can be concluded that this meme shows about how cruel Putin and his Russian Army. The black colour which related with Putin’s outfit reveals that Putin’s owe an apology for Ukrainian since he and his army invade the Ukrainine. It also bravely stated on the joke-line aspect that stated that the meme creator show his mockery to quipping Putin and his army labelled them as a war criminals that should be put in the jail.



Figure 2. Russian and Ukrainian Memes “ Putin declares mobiliation be like (some of you may die, but it’s a sacrifice I’m willing to make)”

On this second data, this picture contain a complete elements of which are Justification, Close-up, and Focus. The close-up picture in this memes is the figure of Putin’s which cosplaying one of the Shrek’s character Lord Farquaad. Lord Farquaad in Shrek’s Movie is portrayed as the main antagonist character (also known as villain) on this movie which have imperious, arrogant, and temperamental personality (Dictionary. com, n.d.) This figure of Putin cosplaying on Lord Farquaad’s body character categorized as a Capture which organized in the central position of the memes and have a huge impact. According to Kress & Leeuwen (2006), the red colour denotes “energy” and “foreground” the in Putin’s body means that Putin’s have a high ambition to take over the Ukraine country by sacrifice his army and as a important figure of cruelty. The focus aspects of this memes is the shot of ‘non-transactive reaction’ on Putin’s expression which looking at something out of the frame which cannot see by the viewer. In this shot, the meme creator create the figure of Putin in the low angle shot to show his power and strength. The background have a different saturation, high and low saturation. High saturation mean ‘garish’ and low saturation means ‘repress’ which means that how the leader is have a high ability to show off and prove how big his impact.

From the transitivity and mood analysis, in the first clause “PUTIN DECLARES MOBILIZATION BE LIKE” categorized as declarative mood which give the readers a clue about when putin start the mobilization. This memes also use the verbal process that these clause indicate the creator said what was the circumstances of the memes was.

On the second clause "SOME OF YOU MAY DIE, BUT IT'S A SACRIFICE I'M WILLING TO MAKE". It shows that in clause 'some of you may die' is the goals projected by the clause 'but it's a sacrifice' that denote the mental process which express the cognition of that goals. The last clause 'I'm willing to make' use a verbal process which indicate the process of saying (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) which defined as a person who capable to have a special authority to speak.

Based on the appraisal theory analysis, this meme contain the negative judgements about Putin's policy in increase the number of army to doing the mobilization to Ukraine which never consider about his army's life by putting his ego first. To conclude in this meme the creator intend to show the meme readers' view toward quip and mock Putin's policy contain cruelty and crime depicted through the interpretation of each elements



Figure 3. Russian and Ukrainian Memes "Hey everybody, Vladimir Putin makes a new speech (see? Nobody cares

On this third data, the memes have a similar elements with the previous data such as Justification, Facial Expression, and Capture. The Capture of this memes is Putin considering from the different amount of exposure of light from his partner. The background on this meme is mixed with any other colours which are black and grey. Malevich stated Black colour indicates 'wordly view of economy' which means portrayed putin's background as a president of Russia that Russia has an oil which contribute as the the oil producer worldwide. The focus in this meme is the putin's face. From the representation aspect, this meme has the 'non-transactive' indicate the meme participants inside seeing something far away from the viewers can able to see.

From transitivity and mood analysis, on the first clause 'HEY EVERYBODY, VLADIMIR PUTIN MAKES A NEW SPEECH' indicate declarative mood means that the second spaker in that picture announce to people around their sorrounding that Putin has created a new speech. Therefore, this also identified as the materials attributes. The process 'makes' shows the indication of doing something at that time. In the second clause, 'see? nobody cares', indicate the relational process within the context that showing that between the conversation This clause means that at any chance people would not put their attention at all about what Putin's do.

From the appraisal theory, the negative judgement about the negative capacity which is show the weak of Putin's in even any kind of his plan such as in this picture is created a new speech. According to this theory that, the creator trying to show that how people impression indirectly through the representation of Putin's partner in that picture announce while others ignore it.

CONCLUSION

This study draws conclusion from the analysis of mockery phenomenon of Putin's satire on selected Russian and Ukrainian Memes. It is found that these memes using the dominant figure of Putin on the three collected memes. The main colour used in those memes were used the various colour such as black, red, green. Based on the GSP analysis, the obligatory aspect that always included in these memes are Focus, Justification, Capture which dominantly focus on the Putin's gesture rather than Putin's facial expression. This reason made the viewers easy to understand the meaning of the memes. From the text analysis as the verbal elements in Russian and Ukrainian Memes it contain the several aspect of Transitivity and Mood analysis which are declarative mood, verbal process, mental process, and material process.

The Russian and Ukrainian memes is used as the representation media for mocking Putin. This paper discussion provided a comprehensive explanation of Systemic Functional Linguistic and Generic Structure Potential in a memes structure through the visual and verbal elements. It was also giving a discussion about the use of Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Appraisal Theory in revealing the visual and verbal elements purposes inside of the memes.

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