The Linguo Creative Character of Memes in Network Linguistics

By

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Abstract

The Internet, being the most popular media channel, the importance of which is constantly growing (since acquaintance with it and immersion in its information environment begins almost from early childhood), in addition to being informative, it also performs a recreational function. In this regard, the use of emotionally expressive images in the news feed becomes very relevant. The more shocking the picture, the more interest it can arouse among users, while the most popular images can later move from the rank of short-lived to the rank of "long-lived", repeatedly reproduced memes. Readers have a definite reaction to this or that visual image and there is a completely natural desire to view the message for confirmation of their feelings and expectations. In the modern digital age, the means and channels of communication are changing. Today there are several approaches to understanding the meme: reductionist, semiotic, communicative (meme as a component of communication), linguistic. The first interpretations of the meme as a replicator of cultural information belong to reductionists. As an element of mass communication, a meme is similar to a biological virus (media virus) and can be used in PR campaigns. From the point of view of linguistics, a meme is a stereotyped, stereotyped phrase or a dialogue replica, close to communicative. A communicative is understood as an inseparable stereotyped statement that carries information about the speaker's opinion, his emotional state, or his attitude to the subject of speech and the interlocutor. The linguistic approach assumes the understanding of a meme as a creolized text - a kind of formation that combines verbal and non-verbal elements that can affect the addressee.

Key words: words, memes, semantics, linguistics, Russian, the Internet, usage.

Introduction

In the modern media space, various means that have arisen and function within the framework of Internet communication are actively used. One of the tools of influence are Internet memes, in particular, such a variety of them as creolized text, which combines visual and verbal components. This genre is attractive because it quickly reflects the events of social, political and cultural life, realizing the creative and play functions of the author and addressee. With the help of a visual image in a meme, not only the subject of the message is set, but also a special emotional and expressive tone of communication is formed. The modern appearance of electronic media cannot be imagined without a visual component. The use of photographs, info-graphics, drawings not only speeds up and simplifies the perception of information, but also allows you to focus on certain elements of the message, to highlight the most important, in the opinion of the author, meanings. With all the variety of texts offered today by electronic publications, the reader's interest is inevitably determined by two factors: the presence of a catchy headline and an accompanying image of the article (Mechkovskaya, 2006).

A huge number of social platforms are contributing to the spread of unprecedented means used by people to express thoughts and ideas, one of which is the Internet meme. The potential of the Internet meme has not yet been fully disclosed, this phenomenon can find application in various fields, including teaching Russian as a foreign language. The purpose of this study is to study the specifics of the functioning of a meme in the media field. Meme is a very dynamic phenomenon. With the changes in cultural life, the social environment, new types of memes appear, the old creolized old ones are rethought. The scientific novelty of this study lies in the fact that the latest Internet memes have been analyzed, their essential characteristics have been identified, and the potential for using an Internet meme has been determined . The set goal determined the objectives of the study: to study approaches to the definition of the concept of an Internet meme; consider a meme in the media space: the mechanisms of its representation and perception; consider an Internet meme as creolized text; consider the Internet meme as an element of the language game; analyze the precedent in the Russian-language media space; explore modern graphic internet meme templates; consider the Internet meme as a linguistic and cultural material.

Methods

A common characteristic of a meme in all of these definitions is informativeness, that is, the fact that the meme contains information in one form or another. In addition, the above definitions indicate the ability of a meme to spread by copying. A meme is broadly defined as "anything that can be copied by one person from another" (Goryainova, 2010).

The positive features of this approach are the focus on the mechanisms for the dissemination of any idea, the expansion of the theory of mass communication However, such a too broad definition of a meme does not allow distinguishing it from an ordinary joke,

advertising message, phraseological expression, and therefore makes this approach unsuitable for analyzing Internet memes in communication.

Another approach to the analysis of memes is semiotic. In this case, the meme can be considered a myth in the understanding of Roland Barthes. Barthes defines myth as a communication system, meaning an idea that is a form for it. "Myth is a secondary semiological system. The sign of the primary system becomes just a signifier in the second system " (Chasovsky, 2010).

Then Barthes calls the signifier of the myth form, the signified - the concept, and the association of the concept and the form that forms the sign in the primary system - the meaning. The myth is parasitic on signs: it transforms the sign into its own form, impoverishing meaning and feeding on it. The form of a myth contains a concept - some vague ideas about reality that can be understood by a special audience. It is the concept that deforms the meaningful side of the sign. Perceiving the signifier of the myth as an indissoluble unity of meaning and form, we become readers of the myth and perceive it as a direct representation of the concept (Ismagilova et al., 2020).

If you analyze memes as myths, then you can explain the structure of almost each of them, since it is common for a meme to change the primary structure of its components and create a new one by introducing an idea. The meme is used in advertising and promotion of various goods as a Bart myth, as a myth it can represent the opinions of various groups about political and social problems.

This understanding of the meme highlights in it, first of all, the change in the meanings of other ideas, as well as the focus on a special audience. In addition, the semiotic approach allows analyzing the constituents of a meme, its form, denotative and connotative expression.

The advantage of this approach is that it can be used to analyze the ideological functions of memes, their influence on public opinion, as well as plans for the expression of a meme. The disadvantage is the lack of attention to the mechanisms of the spread of memes, their occurrence. As in the reductionist approach, there is a problem with the breadth of definition and separation of jokes, advertisements, ideologemes from the meme.

The term "meme" was first used by Richard Dawkins. Its definition was the first and gave rise to an approach to the study of memes as replicators of cultural information. This approach can be called reductionist, since it reduces the explanation of a complex phenomenon to the simplest units interacting with each other. It is also used by renowned cognitive scientists such as Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel Dennett (Campa-Figure, 2019).

It is in the linguistic approach that a meme is defined as a creolized text: an education that combines verbal and non-verbal elements and has a holistic effect on the addressee. Linguists involved in the analysis of memes are mainly interested in the ways of transformation

of memes, their structural elements, as well as the features of the humorous and emotional nature of the meme.

Results and Discussion

The features of the meme are its two-part structure, the ability to copy itself, ironic content, intertextuality, connection with the collective unconscious. These characteristics point to the national cultural potential of this type of creolized texts. Let's analyze these features using the example of the popular meme "How do you like this, Elon Musk"? Despite the fact that the hero of this series of memes was the American Elon Musk, he appeared in Russia. Musk is one of the symbols of technological progress, he is the creator of the global payment system PayPal, the founder of the space company and the manufacturer of the famous Tesla electric cars. In 2018, the innovator and businessman was at the peak of popularity, namely then the meme "How do you like this, Elon Musk?" In series creolized texts, in contrast to the high-tech achievements of the West, inventions of domestic craftsmen made from improvised means were put (Krongauz, 2012).

Many of us often see various memes on social networks, but have no idea how they appeared, and what they mean. Let's look at the most common memes in the following examples:

Wrong guy. The picture of the unfaithful guy was created for sale on stock photo by photographer Antonio Guillem from Barcelona. The popularity of the photo gained in August 2017, after being published on the Instagram account @_dekhbhai_ (2.3 million subscribers) (Results of the decade. 10 most important and funniest memeshttps: //2x2tv.ru/blog/memasiki/, 2019).

Bird with arm. A formidable bird of the spinning top with widely spaced legs and drawn hands expresses dissatisfaction with some event. Internet users were conquered by the formidable stance of the bird, and initially it was added to the photographs of gopniks, which is why they even nicknamed the "gopnik bird". And in 2017, the bird has already become an independent character.

Sensei troll. The same sage who gives serious advice, adding a snide correction to it. The meme did not appear entirely justified: in the photo it is not the philosopher Confucius, but the founder of aikido, Morihei Ueshiba. During his lifetime, he became the hero of many legends. In the last century, this outstanding Japanese was credited with the ability to rise above the ground and become invisible. Well, in the XXI century, Morihei Ueshiba has won world prestige, becoming the legend of the Internet.

Woman yells at a cat. As the most tenacious and most parodied meme of 2019. A meme with a puzzled cat in a broad sense can be used as a reaction to something strange, incomprehensible. In conjunction with a meme about women, this format illustrates unfounded

accusations. The women on the left represent parents, teachers, or someone who yells at you. The cat is you who know they are wrong.

Cheerful Leo. In 2010, Leonardo DiCaprio was filmed on the set of the film "Inception", when he took a break, leaving the image of a depressive kidnapper of other people's secrets and dreams of Cobb. situations. Or note that there are funny fools who do not understand anything (Results of the decade. 10 most important and funniest memeshttps://2x2tv.ru/blog/memasiki/, 2019).

In simple terms, these are emotions transmitted over the network. For example, you have a good mood and a surge of feelings, you came across a corresponding image, you made a certain postscript to it and sent it to your loved one. The recipient of your message receives not just some information, but he receives a part of your emotions. That is, memes are the transmission of emotions. To complete the transfer of emotions, there are so-called memes. As a rule, they consist of an image and a corresponding inscription.

If the reader was not initially focused on a certain heading, his attention is more likely to be drawn by articles with vivid visualized accompaniment. The combination of image and text has been used for many centuries in different countries as a means of influence. Nowadays, we are often faced with the fact that modern students sometimes find it difficult to explain the meaning of well-known phraseological units, and the wise words and sayings of the Russian people, catch phrases from classical works are heard less and less in the oral speech of the younger generation. But the slang words and expressions used in Internet communities, social networks, chat rooms, the blogosphere are understandable, as they say, without translation (Zheng & Zeng, 2016). Verbal and non-verbal "Internet viruses" instantly spread on the network, often going beyond its scope. So called memes have been added to similar sociolinguistic and cultural phenomena of the Internet language in recent times. Currently, the issues of studying memes from the point of view of their communicative features are becoming especially relevant.

Summary

One issue that may form the basis of other research is the language of self-description of the practices of using memes. It is interesting, in particular, to describe the emotions that memes evoke and the reasons for their exaggeration. Is a specific subculture formed around memes with its own slang and language of self-description? Of particular interest is the use of memes in small groups and communities of interest: it can be assumed that memes play a significant role in the integration of a group, their presence is necessary for successful communication within it. It is also worth checking the hypothesis that it is in small groups that memes fully perform all the functions described in the theoretical section.

Young people define a meme as a mutable template that contains something unusual that evokes emotion. Based on the results of the reconnaissance stage of the study, we can say that the definition of a meme that we proposed in the course of studying the scientific literature

on the topic does not contradict and even is very similar to the definitions of a meme that developed during the group discussion of this issue by the participants. Defining a meme for themselves, young people single out the most important emotional and phatic functions of a meme (Sroka, 2014).

Since the main thing in a meme is how funny it is, young people rate absurd memes and memes with high originality most positively. Contrary to initial assumptions, the connection between the time and the source of the appearance of the meme and its popularity among informants is not obvious. Evaluation of a meme is weakly related to its relevance, but this issue requires additional research.

Conclusions

Young people use memes in everyday life and on the Internet. The main purpose of using memes is to get emotion. There are slang expressions to describe these emotions, which are themselves memes. Also, when describing emotions, participants tend to use hyperboles. In everyday life, a meme serves as a communicative; it is used to connect words in sentences. It is important to note that young people use memes to identify belonging to a group of "friends", usually defined by age. Young people distinguish "local" memes that are spread within small groups, respectively, there are those that can be called "general" (Tyler, 2011). Memes are rarely used to represent opinions or ideas, as this role is most often assigned to "general" memes, while local memes are used in everyday communication. Further research of the Internet meme in the media field can be continued in the direction of considering the Internet meme as an element of the language game, actualizing the phenomenon of the precedence of the Internet meme in the Russian-language media space, the analysis of graphic templates used in Internet memes deserves attention. In addition, as a tool for youth Internet communication, as well as being associated with the collective unconscious, the meme has great potential for use in the process of research in philology.

Acknowledgements

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