NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION OF THE SIMPSONS MEMES IN "MEMES.COM" INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

The research aims to identify the nonverbal communication especially kinesics aspect in the Simpsons memes in "memes.com" instagram. The nonverbal communications in the Simpsons memes convey the meme users' emotions, feelings and messages through expressive actions. By analyzing the non verbal communication, the meme users are able to understand the meaning of the meme and the meme readers are able to understand what the memes senders try to communicate. The research was conducted by means qualitative descriptive analysis. The data of the research was the Simpsons meme and the source of data was "memes.com" instagram. The data collection was qualitative audio and visual material because the data is a picture. The sample of the research was forteen Simpsons memes. Facial expression, posture and gesture are the kinesics aspect that found in the Simpsons memes in "memes.com" instagram. The results of the researchwere one meme showed posture and gesture, two memes showed facial expression and gesture, three memes showed facial expression and posture, memes only showed posture and five memes showed the character's facial expression in conveying the message.

1. Introduction

People communicate with others to share information, ideas, opinion and so on. In this digital era, people mostly communicate through social media by making status, sending text with emoticons and sending memes. Meme is an idea, concept, catchphrases, picture, video that spread from one person to other through social media for communication and humorous purpose.

The meme word itself was coined by Richard Dawkins in his book *The Selfish Gene* (1976) as a self-replicating cultural information label, but by the internet development meme becomes a hottest trend in a social media as a means of communication and information sharing. Meme may become viral because it appeals too many good points (Berger and Milkman, 2012; Cataldi et. al., 2010), it is eye catching with the humorous purpose but still delivers good message. Memes may viral depends on the timing, social network, randomness, etc. (Centola, 2010; Weng et al., 2014; Pinto et al., 2013).

Baumgratner (2008) classified meme into two categories: one is typically a snapshot with a caption on it while the other one is anything else related to popular internet videos,

hashtags, tweets, posts, jokes or trends. One of the examples of memes is the Simpsons meme of which categoryis a snapshot with the caption on it. The Simpsons actually is an American Sitcom that has aired for a long time with 646 episodes by Matt Groening. The topics and catchphrases of the Simpsons reflect the current situation and its characters that easily recognized are often used in memes.

Memes usually spread in facebook, twitter and instagram. There are so many accounts in those social media that post or share memes in particular. One of Instagram accounts that particularly post memes with 3.7 million followers is "memes.com". "Memes.com" shares the memes that are shared by its followers, made by their own admin and also taken from other memes sources. "Memes.com" also has its facebook account with 15 million fans.

Meme communicates someone's idea through nonverbal communication. Therefore, the research focuses on the nonverbal communication in the Simpsons memes that are posted in "memes.com" Instagram.

2. Literature Review

Nonverbal communication is the way of communication that is expressed by expressive movements not by words (Watzlawick et. al., 1967, Wiener et. al., 1972). Nonverbal behavior includes everything from facial expression and gesture to fashion and status symbol, from dance and drama to music and mime, from flow of affect to flow of traffic, from the territoriality of animals to the protocol of diplomats, from extrasensory of violence to the rhetoric of topless dancers (Harrison, 1989). It also includes bodily contact, posture, physical appearance, and direction of gaze and the paralinguistic variables of emotional tone, timing, and accent (Argyle, 1973). Body movement or kinesics behavior, proxemics, olfaction, skin sensitivity, and the use of artifacts (Duncan, 1969), physical characteristics, eye movement, touching behavior, and environmental factors (Knapp, 1972) also belong to nonverbal behavior.

This research only focuses to the kinesics aspect. The word kinesics comes from the root word kinesis, which means "movement," and refers to the study of hand, arm, body, and face movements. Specifically, kinesics is about use of gestures, head movements and posture, eye contact, and facial expressions as nonverbal communication (Hans, 2015).

2.1 Gesture

Gesture is communicating by using the body movement. There are three main types of gestures: adaptors, emblems, and illustrators. Adaptors are touching behaviors and movements that indicate internal states typically related to arousal or anxiety. Adaptors can be targeted toward the self, objects, or others, example: shaking legs, clicking pen, looking above. Emblems are gestures that have a specific agreed-on meaning. Emblems can be still or in motion."Emblems are gestures that have a specific meaning. Example: thumbs up means good job or "OK". Unlike emblems, illustrators do not typically have meaning on their own and are used more subconsciously than emblems.

2.2 Head Movements

Head movement is communicating by the movement of head. In terms of head movements, a head nod is a universal sign of acknowledgement in cultures where in Indonesia head nod means agreeing but in India agreeing someone shown by head shake.

2.3 Posture

There are four general human postures: standing, sitting, squatting, and lying down. Posture can indicate someone's state along a tense-relaxed dimension.

2.4 Eye Contact

It is said that "The eyes are the window to the soul". It is actually accurate, an eye contact may convey information, monitor interaction and establish interpersonal connection. For the example eye contact may intimidate someone, make someone fall in love.

2.5 Facial Expression

Faceis the most expressive part of our bodies, it may indicate someone's emotional state. From our facial expression we may express our feeling whether we are happy, sad, angry and so on.

3. Research Method

The research was conducted by using qualitative descriptive analysis with the data were 14 the Simpsons memes that were posted in "memes.com" instagram as the source of data. The data were collected by means qualitative audio and visual material since the data is memes that take forms of picture. In collecting the data, the Simpsons memes were screenshot from the "memes.com" instagram homepage. The Simpsons memes were identified and analyzed based on the nonverbal communication especially kinesics aspect.

4. Results and Discussion

The kinesics aspect found in the Simpsons memes in "memes.com" instagram mainly are facial expression, posture and gesture. But in some memes, there are a meme that show two or three kinesics (facial expression and gesture, facial expression and posture, posture and gesture, and also facial expression, gesture and posture).

There are 5 memes that convey the idea from facial expression, one of the examples is

(Figure 4a meme's message from facial expression)

From the figure above Homer Simpsons facial expression shows that he is sleepy by his half-covered eyes. The meme's caption is person: "did you sleep well? Me". The caption is a question word between person and me. The picture is the answer of the question did you sleep well. So, the meme users want to answer they do not sleep well because they are still sleepy.

There is no meme conveys its idea through gesture, but there is three memes convey its idea through posture. One of the examples is

(Figure 4b meme's message from posture)

From the meme above, the caption is also conversation with the question "so what do you like for fun?" and the answer is the picture. The picture of Homer Simpsons that is sleeping means the meme users sleep for fun.

For facial expression & gesture and facial expression & posture has each one memes that conveying those kinesics from the memes.

(Figure 4c meme's message from facial expression & gesture and facial expression and posture)

The first meme in figure 4c conveys someone's idea through expression and gesture. From the facial expression, the character shows he is depressed. Depressed people tend to look down more than they look up. A typical body language gesture of depression is tilting the head forward slightly so that the person ends up looking a bit down. In the picture Hank slap his own forehead. Self-slapping is a form of self-punishing as one inflicts a small amount of pain. This tells others that they do not need to give you any extra grief and that you understand your mistake. The caption of the meme is "When you suffer from depression and somebody tells you just to cheer up". The sentence is a statement begin with "when" word, so it shows a situation. And there is another caption which is "my goodness, what an idea. Why didn't I think of that?". The self slapping happens because he feels wrong to tell others. He depressed because other people just would respond with cheer up word while he himself knows he would cheer up. Therefore, the meme users who are depressed feels wrong to let other people that they are depressed.

The second picture of figure 4c conveys its idea through posture and gesture. Homer facial expression shows he is scared from his widened eyes staring at the threat and in fear

the hands clutch things. From the caption, homer is scared when he saw a pile of clothes that looks like a person, so the meme user wants to say that they often experience that kind of situation.

The last one is meme conveys its idea by posture and gesture.

(Figure 4d meme's message from posture and gesture)

Based on the meme, the meaning delivered through posture and gesture. Homer Simpson is standing besides a messy thing with his hands behind. Hands behind the back means someone is feeling confident because he is a confident person or he believes he is on top of matters in the current situation. The caption of the meme is "me, presenting the project I finished the same day at 2:00 am. The caption is begun with the word "me" and followed by a statement. The caption tried to emphasize the "me" who is presenting the project that is done on the same day at 2:00 am. With the picture of Homer Simpsons that being so confident, the meme gives the feeling of "it is better than nothing".

Table 4:
Numbers of Kinesics found in The Simpsons memes in "memes.com" instagram

No.	Kinesics	Number of memes
1.	Facial Expression	5
2.	Gesture	0
3.	Posture	3
4.	Facial expression and Gesture	2
5.	Facial expression and Posture	3
6.	Posture and Gesture	1
	Total	14

5. Conclusion

Nowadays, people use memes to communicate with others by conveying someone's idea or situation through the picture and caption that are potraid in the memes. The memes users and senders understand the message of the memes by identifying the nonverbal communication which are shown on the memes. The non-verbal communication found is based on the character's facial expression, posture and gesture; therefore, a meme is usually used to express somone's feeling and situation.

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