

Humour and Creative Language in English, Thai, and Multilingual Internet Memes: a mixed methods multi-modal corpus approach

Internet meme is one powerful communicative tool on the internet that people use to interact with each other. An internet meme renders itself through cultural transmission where sometimes more than what is presented is being communicated. Internet memes contain inside jokes, parodies, popular culture references or catch phrases that sometimes require background knowledge of those within the meme community (Bauckhage, 2011). This study explores humorous and creative language online using internet memes as to understand the creative language use in multilingual internet memes, specifically those which use English and Thai. 40 people, 20 Thai participants and 20 Irish participants participate in this study. Each participant provides internet memes that they have been used in the past year. They are required to complete a short questionnaire and to participate a follow-up interview. A corpus linguistics methodology is employed in this study. Internet memes from participants are curated and two corpora, one in Thai and one in English, are built and are analysed using the corpus and text analysis software. The linguistic and pragmatic features such as syntactic and lexical properties, as well as larger discursive of the internet memes are examined. The analysis is based on comparison between the two corpora. The findings show that people of two different backgrounds perceive memes differently. The result also confirms the hypothesis that internet memes are being used mostly to create humour among the users.

Reference: Bauckhage, C. (2011) 'Insights into Internet Memes', Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, available: <https://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM11/paper/view/2757/3304>

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