

**USAGE OF SLANG WORDS FOUND ON TIKTOK MEME VIDEOS**



**A THESIS**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin  
University as Partial Requirements to Obtain Bachelor Degree in  
English Literature Study Program*

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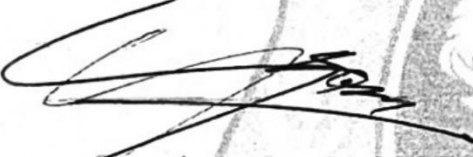
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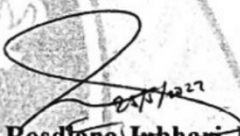
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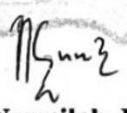
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**THESIS**

**USAGE OF SLANG WORDS FOUND ON TIKTOK MEME VIDEOS**

**BY**

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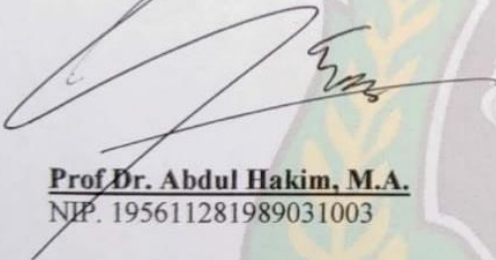
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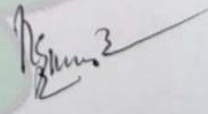
  
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**AGREEMENT**

On August 10<sup>th</sup> 2023, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Muh Agung Rimba Maha Putra (F21116309) entitled *Usage of Slang Words Found on TikTok Meme Videos* submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, August 10<sup>th</sup> 2023

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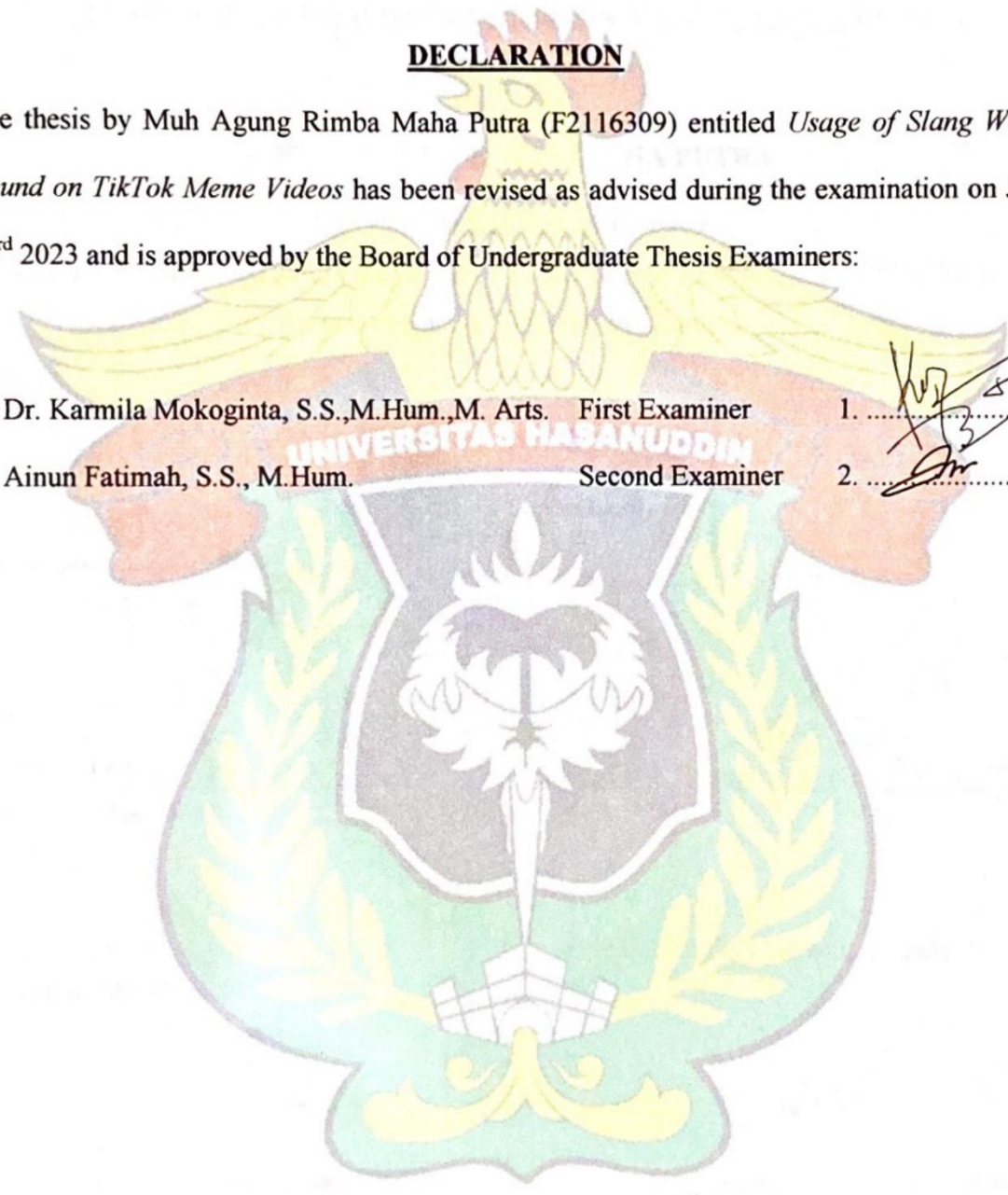
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The thesis by Muh Agung Rimba Maha Putra (F2116309) entitled *Usage of Slang Words Found on TikTok Meme Videos* has been revised as advised during the examination on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

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Muh. Agung Rimba Maha Putra

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The Researcher

Muh. Agung Rimba Maha Putra

## ABSTRACT

**MUH. AGUNG RIMBA MAHA PUTRA.** 2023. *Usage of Slang Words Found on TikTok Meme Videos* supervised by **Abdul Hakim Yassi** and **Ria Rosdiana Jubhari**.

This research aims to; (1) identify the types of slang words used as seen on TikTok meme videos, and (2) elaborate the function and purpose of each slang word that is found on TikTok meme videos.

The researcher used the theory by Sumarsono and Zhou and Fan in analyzing the types of slang words. Furthermore, this research also uses qualitative methods. The qualitative method was used to describe the types and functions of the slang words, while also defining the meaning of each slang words. The population of this research was taken from random TikTok videos which must use English.

The findings of this research show that : (1) there are 2 types of slang words found on TikTok meme videos, including: newly interpreted slangs, and newly created slang; and (2) among the 33 data found, it is classified into three different functions (Zhou and Fan, 2013), which are: pursuit of self-identity, emotive feelings of user, and achieving politeness.

Keyword: Slang Words, TikTok, Meme

## ABSTRAK

**MUH. AGUNG RIMBA MAHA PUTRA.** 2023. *Usage of Slang Words Found on TikTok Meme Videos* dibimbing oleh **Abdul Hakim Yassi** dan **Ria Rosdiana Jubhari**.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk; (1) mengidentifikasi tipe-tipe bahasa gaul yang ditemukan dalam video *meme* TikTok, dan (2) mengelaborasi fungsi dan tujuan tiap kata bahasa gaul yang ditemukan dalam video *meme* TikTok.

Peneliti menggunakan teori oleh Sumarsono dan Zhou dan Fan dalam menganalisis tipe-tipe bahasa gaul. Selain itu, penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Metode kualitatif digunakan untuk mendeskripsikan tipe-tipe dan fungsi dari kata bahasa gaul, dan juga mendefinisikan kata bahasa gaul tersebut. Populasi dari penelitian ini diambil dari video TikTok secara acak yang harus berbahasa Inggris.

Hasil penelitian ini memperlihatkan bahwa: (1) ada 2 tipe bahasa gaul yang ditemukan di video *meme* TikTok yaitu: *newly interpreted slangs*, dan *newly created slang*, dan (2) 33 data yang ditemukan telah diklasifikasikan dalam 3 fungsi (Zhou and Fan, 2013), yaitu: *pursuit of self-identity*, *emotive feelings of user*, dan *achieving politeness*.

Keyword: Slang Words, TikTok, Meme

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

A few decades ago, instantly communicating with people from across the world seemed to be, if not, (nigh) impossible. Everything changes when Internet became popularized and commercialized among the average person. Nowadays, even 5 year old kids are capable of reaching out halfway around the world, through the tip of their fingers. The researcher himself has had the privilege to make friends around the world, without ever visiting their place of origin beforehand. This was indeed possible even in the early 2000s, but it has become faster, cheaper, and more convenient through technological advancements and the ever-so-evolving internet. Other than the nonexistent medium to communicate, another challenge that prevent people from communicating cross-cultural is language boundaries.

In this modern era, Language boundaries are soon to be irrelevant entirely, through the help of, once again, technology. We all know that on a global scale, English has been the de facto lingua franca in cross cultural communications. However, for the past decade, a shocking phenomenon blew up on the internet which became popular among millenials and zoomers, becoming the lingua franca of the age of intrnet. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as Internet Meme, or simply, Meme.

The internet meme started as a series of funny pictures with captions, serving as an entertainment source for the people who surf the internet out of

boredom. What makes meme so popular is because often times not only are they funny, but they are also relatable to a lot of people. People keep re-posting memes after memes through a variety of social media platform, namely Twitter, Reddit, Facebook, Instagram, et cetera, or even through online messaging platform in which they share it among their friends and family, namely WhatsApp, Telegram, Line, and many more.

Slowly these internet memes are starting to evolve from mere funny pictures, into a medium where people can communicate with each other, where people can spread awareness of an issue, where people can criticize even the governments. Meme initially exist on one singular format, a picture as a background and a text overlay as the caption. Nowadays, memes are not limited to pictures, but it can also exist on the form of videos, GIFs, and even text. Due to this phenomenon, English slang words are embedded more and more into the internet culture, as internet memes often used informal or even inappropriate languages, which includes slang words.

In this day and age, one of the most popular social media platform to create and share those memes is *Tiktok*. Through the existence of *tiktok* more and more people are further exposed with this meme and therefore increasing the spread of English slang words worldwide. Not only that, the newer generation, particularly gen z, often creates a new slang word that is then only understood by people within the same generation or people who share the same basic knowledge of internet culture.



Through this thesis, the researcher aims to identify the various slang words that are found in Tiktok meme videos, and to also identify what are the purpose of these slang words.

### **1.2 Identification of Problems**

According to the background above, the researcher identifies the problem as follow:

1. How frequent do people use, produce, or interact with meme in their daily life
2. The usage of slang words due to exposure towards internet memes

### **1.3 Scope of Problems**

This research will be focusing on how slang words are used within social media, particularly tiktok.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following are the research questions formulated based on the background above:

1. What type of slang words can be found on TikTok?
2. What is the purpose of the usage of said slang words in TikTok?

### **1.5 Objective of the Research**

The objective that the researcher aims to be achieved by conducting this research are as follows:

1. To identify the types of slang words that can be found on TikTok
2. To expand towards what the slang words means and what purpose it serves over the usage of conventional English language

### **1.6 Significance of the Research**

This research is expected to provide further information about internet memes and slang words that are used by the younger generation. On top of that, the researcher is also hoping to expand towards the usefulness of slang words and how its existence is not a redundancy but instead expands the usage of the English language beyond what is conventional.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Previous Studies**

Several studies related to this topic have been previously conducted by researchers who are also interested in the topic of internet memes and the use of internet memes as a media of communication

2.1.1. **Murtaisah (2020)** conducted research entitled **“Semiotics Analysis of Meme for Woman at @9gaggirly Instagram Account”** The samples of her research were images found from said Instagram account. She described, explained, and analyzed the meanings of signs and investigated the semiosis process. The researcher found 27 icons and 39 symbols from 19 meme images, and also discovered that images and the language used in the memes direct the meaning interpretation of the signs.

2.1.2. **Siregar, Gurning, and Santoso (2018)** wrote a journal article entitled **“Stereotyped Language about Women on Internet Memes of Meme Comic Indonesia (A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis”**. The researchers examined 21 Internet memes taken from the instagram page of Meme Comic Indonesia (MCI). The study applied Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis promoted by Van Leeuwen to conduct the research, and found five kinds of stereotypical language about women.

2.1.3. **Handayani, Sari, and Respati (2016)** wrote a thesis “**The Use of Meme as A Representation of Public Opinion in Social Media: A Case Study of Meme About Bekasi in Path and Twitter**”. This research was aimed to explore the connection between meme in social media and public opinion representation. The result shows that opinion expressed in meme could carry more than one issues, such as distance, bad traffic, extreme temperatur, damaged roads, etc. The result also shows that responding to a meme by retweeting or repathing do not necessarily mean agreement with the issues.

2.1.4 **Kilpeläinen (2021) ‘Memeingful’ Language – Sociolinguistic Analysis on Internet Memes.** This research highlights and examines a small-scale meme corpus gathered from various social media platform between 2017 and 2020. Language of interned memes is attached to the idea of three metafunctions of language; ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions , through which meanings arise. It affects the way online language is used as they serve as the basis for all linguistic manifestations. What has not been research is on the personal use of Memenglish and the perception of such language usage in everyday life by other people.

2.1.5 **Sindangsari, Amirah, et al. (2021)** wrote a journal article entitled “**Indonesian Generation Z’s Perspective on Memes as A Representation of Their Communication on Media Social**” that is aimed to find out Gen Z’s perspective on using meme and how do meme affects the way they communicate on social media. The research turns out that memes have positive and negative

effect on the way Indonesian Gen Z communicate on social media platform (WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, etc) used for various function such as conveying information, opinions, criticism, entertainment, and breaking the tense atmosphere.

2.1.6. **Denisova & Wiggins (2019)** managed an essay entitled **“The Importance of Memes”** that defined meme as a daily part of our digital lives, whether they be ‘political’, ‘branded’, or just a bit of fun. They claim consider the political and media context memes parody and satirise in order to understand the meanings a meme articulates. Both authors offer detailed surveys of research done not just on memes, society, ideology and politics, but also on much wider theoretical terrains such as the democratising potential of the Internet and social media, filter bubbles, relations between social media and society/politics/culture and more.

2.1.7. **Huntington (2017)** conducted research entitled **“The Affect and Effect of Internet Memes: Assessing Perceptions and Influence of Online User-Generated Political Discourse As Media”**. In this study, the researcher focuses on memes’ Influence, as well as perceptions of internet memes’ persuasiveness to look for evidence of motivated reasoning in consuming political memes. The result demonstrate that meems reduce positive affect, and political meme s increase aversion compared to non political memes.

2.1.8. **Petrova (2021)** wrote a journal entitled **“Meme Language, Its Impact On Digital Culture and Collective Thinking”**. The study proposed a hypothesis about

the influence of the internet on changes in society's thinking, the formation of the internet culture and language, using the example of meme language, which is confirmed by the analysis. Memesis represents the process of creating a community by the spread of a new language, culture and thinking, in the communication model. So, language is a meme, not only showing how digital communities are changing the traditional structures of united people in a single space, but the way it indirectly adds people to the production itself, showing them as social beings, their thinking and culture.

2.1.9. **Murfianti, Fitri (2019)** wrote a journal entitled “**Meme di Era Digital dan Budaya Siber**”. In this study researcher highlighted the process of consumption, production, and distribution of internet memes and the formation of cyberculture. Today Meme internet develops into a new communication style as a form of participatory digital culture. Cyber culture that is formed is the result of the construction of virtual identities that combine to form a new culture.

2.1.10. **Patel (2013)** wrote a journal entitled “**First World Problems: A Fair Use Analysis of Internet Memes**”. Patel positing that internet meme share many characteristics with actual memes as described by Dawkins, the writing goes on to show how those memes serve the function of the theoretical concepts that ground the fair use defense (cultural interchange, market failure, and productive consumption). The writing ultimately argues that a meme user will likely prevail if he asserts the fair use defense.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, the researcher has conducted a research that further explores what memes are in the modern space, and Generation Z utilized memes as a means of communication, as opposed to only analyzing the linguistic structure of the memes itself.

## **2.2 Theoretical Background**

The following section will give an overview of the most important literature concerning the term *meme* and its development in time. Starting with the term's origin in biology, the focus will be on Dawkins' definition on *memes*. This will be followed by Blackmore's third replicator theory, which she explains elaborately in her book *The Meme Machine*. Next up will be, Shifman's (2014) critical approach about the previous definitions of the term *meme* in her book *Memes in Digital Culture* (Hnedirck 2018 Cp. 7), which gives a different view on *memes* than the preceding definitions. Finally, the focus will be on Wiggins & Bowers' (2014) suggestion about looking at *memes* as a genre of online communication. But first let us take a closer look at the roots of the term *meme*.

### **2.2.1 Meme**

Dawkins (1976) in his book “*The Selfish Gene*” says that a meme is a natural human spreading, replication, & modification of ideas and culture. Memes allow us to portray a thought or idea, with a totally unrelated picture and shortest possible text.

It is also fast, universal, efficient method of communication. Memes are popular amongst millenials and Gen Z

The following are various characteristics of memes that we can in :

1. Go hand-in-hand with pop culture
2. Have become a part of social interaction
3. A way to share feelings, humour, and ideas
4. Simple, low quality, mundane style
5. Easy to make
6. Universal
7. A form of Self-Expression
8. Are like inside jokes
9. Relatable
10. Promote participation culture.

The term meme derives from the Greek word μίμημα (mīmēma) and it means 'something that can be imitated'. It might be also related to the French word môme, which means 'same' or 'alike', and to the English word 'memory'. However, the word meme is a shortening modeled on gene (Dawkins 2006: 192) .

Ewald Hering, who is an Austrian sociologist, coined the term die Mneme in 1870 for the very first time. Richard Semon, a German biologist, adopted this term for using it in the title for his book Die Mneme als erhaltendes Prinzip im Wechsel des organischen Geschehens, published in 1904, which was translated into English in



1921- under the title *The Mneme* (Hull 2000: 50). His focus lies on acquired features, which are transmitted, and their implementation in social evolution. Despite the fact that *The Mneme* was translated into English, which shows the international appeal of this topic, this research area found its great recognition only one century later. In the late 90's, more scientists were interested in this topic. The research field of Memetics was born.

Although the concept of memes was discussed by earlier scientists, it was made popular for the first time by Dawkins in his 1976 bestseller *The Selfish Gene*. Unintentionally, he used an expression ( *meme* ) that was similar to existing terminology ( *die Mneme* ), which shows a successful imitation in itself.

In *The Selfish Gene* he states the following:

Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain. (Dawkins 2006:192)

Dawkins tried to emphasize the similarities of the two concepts - genes and memes – with respect to evolution in this book. As a biologist his focus fell on genes and cultural transmission, but at the same time he made the term *meme* popular , which is also referred to as the second replicator . According to Dawkins, evolution occurs not only on the physical level, but also on the mental level. This means that not only genes spread from organism to organism, but also ideas from one brain to another. He gave the example of scientists who read about an idea and talk about it

with their colleagues (2006: 192). This is an example of propagation of an idea by itself. Other examples of memes given in his book include “tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches.” (Dawkins 2006: 192). Thus, memes seem to be the cultural counterpart to the biological concept of genes.

Memetics has been defined as “the theoretical and empirical science that studies the replication, spread and evolution of memes.” (Heylighen & Chielens 2009: 2). This field began to be organized and became more specific in the 1990s. It attracted scientists from many fields, such as Psychology, Philosophy, Cultural Anthropology, and Linguistics. Important contributions were made in this area, for example, by Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel C. Dennett, the *Journal of Memetics* and various books including the topic of memes. One of the most influential books is Susan Blackmore's *The Meme Machine* from 1999.

Susan Blackmore has expanded the theory of Memetics by doing more research in this field. In 1999, she wrote her book *The Meme Machine* where she tried to constitute the controversial theory of Memetics as a science. There she asserts:

Just as the design of our bodies can be understood only in terms of natural selection, so the design of our minds can be understood only in terms of memetic selection. (Blackmore 1999: 171)

What she meant by this is, when the ability to imitate occurred for the first time, a second kind of natural selection began in addition to the first one which refers to

the concept of evolutionary genetics. For example, learning and using a language happens through selection and imitation. Which accent is preferred, either a British or an American, depends on one's own choice. Which language people will pass on to their children - German or English - depends on their own choice, too. This is why Blackmore said at the TED conference: "We are the meme machines." (Blackmore 2008a: 8:41). Memes spread through our minds. Moreover, she said memes "are using you and me as their propagating, copying machinery ..." (Blackmore 2008a: 8:41). According to her, people are just vectors for memes. But some works within the field of memetics reject this statement.

Rosaria Conte, for example, suggests in her article *Memetics through (social) Minds* that people should be seen as actors instead of vectors. For her, the usage of the term vectors is for people with an "inadequate understanding of the role of agents ...". She prefers to call them actors behind cultural transmission, which is why Blackmore's statement about people as "the meme machines ..." is not quite correct. Following Conte, memes are created by people and their active participation is needed to keep the process of propagation running.

Furthermore, at the TED conference, Blackmore talked about the so called third replicator, which she is also referring to as *teme*. According to her, further differentiation was necessary between memes, which we copy, and technological phenomena, which started with the Internet. When the Internet became popular, information started spreading from one computer to another. This process needed a new expression, which is why she called it "techno-memes or *temes*" (Blackmore

2008a: 12:23). Meanwhile it turned out as a challenge for some people to spell memes understandably. As a consequence, Blackmore decided to use the term tremes from 2014 onwards.

Another well-known researcher in the field of Memetics, called Limor Shifman, has her own and different point of view on Internet memes than her predecessors. In her book *Memes in Digital Culture*, she writes that Internet memes were “utterly ignored in the field of communication ...” (2014: 6) and that “communication researchers felt comfortable overlooking memes ...” (2014: 6) because they were absolutely “irrelevant for understanding mass-mediated content” (2014: 6-7). But they should be seen as “socially constructed public discourses ...” (2014: 8). Therefore, she encourages researchers to look at memes from a communication-oriented perspective, too. For her, Internet memes are “units of popular culture that are circulated, imitated, and transformed by Internet users, creating a shared cultural experience ...” (2014: 367).

Moreover, Shifman suggests defining an Internet meme as

“(a) a group of digital items sharing common characteristics of content, form/and /or stance; (b) that were created with awareness of each other; (c) were circulated, imitated and/ or transformed via the Internet by many users.” (2014: 7-8).

In her definition she took account of the digitalization in this world. She added to the primary meaning of the term an additional feature, namely, the Internet and its

users. It is not just that cultural units propagate from brain to brain as Dawkins put it. These cultural items also spread rapidly from computer to computer as well as through the whole digital world. Therefore, it is important to look at Internet memes from an additional perspective.

Bradley E. Wiggins & G. Bret Bowers (2014), for example, view Internet memes as a discrete genre of online communication. In their article they state that Internet memes are “remixed and iterated messages which are rapidly spread by members of participatory digital culture.” (2014: 18). In other words, Internet memes are small messages which are used for continuing a conversation within a digital culture.

In addition, Wiggins and Bowers (2014) mention the expression image macro in their article. An image macro is the technical term for an image meme. It involves, for example, a photograph and a text addition. Image macros are one of the various categories of Internet memes on the Internet. The next section will demonstrate a brief overview of Internet memes and their key features.

### **2.2.2 Internet Memes**

Memetics, notably, we developed far before the advent of the Internet, and many claim that the popular term “Internet meme” does not actually refer to real memes, except perhaps to the extent that the term has become a meme itself. Memes begin with originators, people who create new memes or the underlying images that will become memes at someone else's hand. The originators' work is then taken by

derivative authors who create new posts that are similar but slightly different from the original memes.

An Internet meme evolves through imitation, reproduction, and mutation. It is this constant spread and alteration that makes Internet memes so popular. Over the years, memes have proliferated "by means of email, instant messaging, forums, blogs, or social networking sites."(Bauckhage, 2011). Internet memes take different paths, with some memes developing differently than the original trajectory would have suggested. Likewise, as discussed above, Internet memes eventually achieve such popularity that simple references to the meme can automatically trigger certain expectations as to what point an author is trying to convey.

This section will give a brief overview about different Internet meme genres based on Shifman's list of genres in her book *Memes in Digital Culture*. In addition, key features of Internet memes are presented and explained in the following section.

## 1. Genres

*Genres*, defined by Wanda J. Orlikowski and JoAnne Yates as "socially recognized types of communicative action ..." (1994: 542), have common aspects as to their form. Not only stylistic features are shared, but also different topics and contents are similar. This is also true for Internet memes. Different kinds of Internet memes share the same structure. Some features are typical for some memes and they are clearly recognizable. In what follows, I will give a brief overview about various types of Internet memes.

### 1.1 PHOTOSHOP MEMES

*Photoshop memes* have been popular since the early 2000s. An example for a photoshop meme is the *Tourist Guy* meme. This photograph shows a young man with sunglasses and a backpack standing on the World Trade Center observation deck. In the background, a plane is heading toward him. The photo has the same date as the World Trade Center attack of September 11th, 2001. This hoax triggered a series of photoshopped images showing the tourist in other famous historical tragedies. For instance, the sinking of the Titanic or the John F. Kennedy assassination. This works with any picture. Other examples are the *Disaster Girl* meme or the *Mari Balotelli's Goal Celebration* meme.

### 1.2 PHOTO FADS

*Photo Fads* are photographs which show people in particular positions and various settings. These photographs are often staged. They have the purpose of sharing the picture with others on the Internet just for fun. Notable examples are *Planking*[2] or *Owling*[3] as well as *Playing Dead*[4] and *Batmanning*[5]. Another purpose of such a funny idea is of course amusement. People share their pictures on the Internet seeking for the confirmation to have the best picture at a special place. In most cases it is just for fun and to make other people laugh.

### 1.3. FLASH MOB

A *Flash Mob*, emerging as an Internet phenomenon in 2003, is an online-coordinated event. A group of people, mostly strangers, comes together at a central

location and performs an act suddenly and simultaneously. After that they disappear very fast as if nothing has happened. *Flash Mobs* include several subtypes. One of these is a *Flash Mob* with the intention to send a political or commercial message. But still, *Flash Mobs* are organized predominantly for amusement.

#### 1.4 LIPSYNCH

*Lipsynch*, also called *lipdub*, describes the phenomenon in which people match their lip movement to a popular song or a film clip. Recorded and uploaded on social networks, this phenomenon gained great popularity. There exist two subgenres, namely, *bedroom lipdubs* [6] and *collective lipdubs* [7]. Both versions are widespread.

#### 1.5 MISHEARD LYRICS

*Misheard Lyrics* is a genre about phonetic translation videos, which involve amusing mistranslations of spoken sounds to written words. It works by transcribing what the word sounds like and ignoring the true meaning. This phenomenon has no special use and is just for fun.

#### 1.6 RECUT TRAILERS

*Recut Trailers*, also known as *trailer mashups*, are trailers made by Internet users. Pieces of a film from one or several movies are collected and edited to create a new trailer for a film that does not exist. In most cases the original film genre is replaced by an utterly different one. That means, for example, that a comedy may change



into a psychological thriller. Sharing it on social networks, the purpose is the same as the other memes have, namely, amusement.

### 1.7 LOL CATS

The name for this genre is a mixture of the Internet acronym 'LOL' and the word 'cat'. *LOL Cats* are humorous images showing one or more cats. The image's text is grammatically incorrect. This form of broken English is also known as *lolspeak*.

### 1.8 RAGE COMICS

A *Rage Comic* is an amateur-looking comic. It uses cartoon faces or rage faces which express emotions. Famous characters are *Forever Alone* [8], *Me Gusta* [9], *Troll Face* [10] and *Poker Face* [11]. This genre emerged for the first time in 2008 on *4chan* [12].

### 1.9 STOCK CHARACTER MACROS

A *Stock Character Marco* is an image representing a character who shows stereotypical behavior. A little text is centered at the top and bottom of the image. Frequently, they are used for parody and to criticize cliches. Notable examples, which I will also use in my analysis, are *Successful Black Man*, *Successful White Man*, *Ordinary Muslim Man* and *High Expectations Asian Father*.

But before heading toward my analysis, I will name some key features, which successful Internet memes involve, in the next section. Besides the three main key

features I will present an additional features which provides a basis for the other ones. This additional feature is humor.

## 2. Key features

Richard Dawkins names in his book *The Selfish Gene* (2006) three main features of successful memes, namely, *fidelity*, *fecundity* and *longevity*. There he focuses on human interaction from a biological perspective. But his ideas can also be transferred onto Internet memes. A fourth and more important key feature is humor, which can be seen as the basis for the other three features.

### 2.1 FIDELITY

According to *Merriam-Webster* (2016), *fidelity* is defined as “the degree to which something matches or copies something else.”. Memes are copiable. They are passed from mind to mind with slight differences. But the gist is always the same. The same goes for Internet memes and their variations. Some small details are different, but it does not change the message. For instance, the *Tourist Guy* meme always shows the tourist guy. The small difference in this Internet meme is that this guy is located in different historical tragedies. But the aspect of humor is the same. People who are not familiar with the tourist would not understand the humor of the vast number of variations.

### 2.2 FECUNDITY

*Fecundity* is defined as “capable of producing.” (*Merriam Webster* 2016). As mentioned above, Internet memes have different variations. The frequency at which an idea is copied is one of the main features of memes, called *fecundity*. In other words, Internet memes must have many copies in order to be called successful.

### 2.3 LONGEVITY

*Merriam-Webster* (2016) defines the term *longevity* as “the length of time that something or someone lasts or continues.”. Some memes, for example myths or legends, last longer and others again last shorter. Internet memes show the same feature. Copies of Internet memes must last a long time, because the longer they last the more they can be copied and shared. *Longevity* is the third key feature of successful memes and can be checked on *Google Trend*. Everyone can look up the durability of Internet memes at any time, including the starting point when specific Internet memes popped up as well as their popularity over time. Most Internet memes are durable.

### 2.4 HUMOR

According to Knobel and Lankshear (2007) as well as Shifman (2011), *humor* is a further important key feature and a central component of Internet memes. The researchers found in their analysis that *humor* is the foundation for memetic success. Internet users expect that Internet memes are humorous in some way. If they are not funny, they will neither be copied and shared nor exist for a long time. This means lucidly that *humor* has a higher priority while talking about key features

of Internet memes than the other three, namely, *fidelity*, *fecundity*, and *longevity*. Without *humor* the other key features have hardly any chance of being fulfilled.

## 2.5. The Importance of Context

Denisova & Wiggins (2019) insists the importance of context in trying to understand the meaning in memes. The reader of meme must consider the political and media contexts memes parody and satirise in order to understand the meanings a meme articulates. It is this common knowledge among meme makers and those who like, share, comment and/or alter them which gives memes meaning. In other words, memes are ‘half-baked jokes’, which require us to ‘finish the sentence’ (Denisova, 2019: 10). It needs understanding ‘the references to the cultural and social issues, popular and alternative culture, general knowledge and media awareness, Internet and political literacy, and the ability to connect the disconnected . . .’ (Denisova, 2019: 11)

### 2.2.3 Slang Words

Harared (2018) defined various conversations are formally and informally separated. Diversity in the formal language typically exists in the formal or official sense of regular variety, circumstances, and contexts. Meanwhile, informal language diversity typically exists in a number of non-standard languages, as well as the circumstance and meaning of an informal or casual matter. Conversations and experiences in culture or the environment can produce different types of diversity and a variety of languages. It represents the ways in which the language is used. Variations in language are based on the person's identity as a social user,

gender, age, ethnicity, and the form of social networking in which they participate. Variations arise as a result of the language situation in an informal setting. Slang is one of the many variants that can be found in various societies.

The slang is made up of special terms that not everyone knows the words' exact significance. Alimemaj (2012) stated the rapid evolution of new words in a language, particularly slang words, plays a very important role in 16 informal communication. Many people prefer slang terms in their casual talk because they think it is easier to communicate that way. Consequently, slang has become a phenomenon because the people who use it do not want other people in their community or who are not friends to know the message behind their conversation. Slang makes this aim possible because slang is only a meaningless word for certain people outside the group.

In a non-formal setting, slang is used. It can make a conversation get more personal. Nearly every slang word is used and typically used for expressing the emotions and creating feelings of people. Coleman (2012) also added that slang is a subject that brings up a lot of feelings in people. It can also bring people closer together in a community. When the slang term "bitch/bish please" is used by group members, it evokes feelings of warmth and loyalty. When said by people outside the party, on the other hand, it elicits animosity.

Slang refers to speech expressions that are employed by a speech community (e.g., youths, criminals, etc.) in order to demonstrate its allegiance to a

favoured social identity; this usage is not always approved of by other social groups (Shahraki & Rasekh, 2011). It is a manner of speaking that is not acceptable in situations outside of the group and is unpleasant to the wider public.

Slang is also used by younger speakers and other special interest groups (Yule, 2014). Many forms of humorous wordplays contain words known as slang. In short, slang is a non-standard language, usually used for internal communication by a certain social group.

The virtual world is a world that uses the Internet to facilitate communication and intimacy among groups or communities, in which slang is used. Slang divides people into in-groups and out-groups and serves as a sign of belonging (Coleman, 2012). In the 21st century, social media such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube have often created new words and expressions. Youth have a better chance of using new words to substitute the existing ones. For instance, they use the word 'GOAT' "stands for greatest of all time" And 'lit' to express their amazement about something, and current usage is actually a compliment, instead of 'amazing' because the words 'lit', and 'GOAT' are a more recent innovation. Thus, the next generation is able to create and use more new words. Age is one of the factors affecting slang use—youth, in particular.

The primary consumers and slang language makers are teens, high school students, and college students (Zhou & Fan, 2013). They frequently challenge convention or break their creativity with the rule of language. The slang terms

created by artists, pop stars, popular actors, and performers appear to be well utilized. Youth will change context sometimes, spelling or pronunciation of words (McCrinkle & Wolfinger, 2011). Slang terms can also have useful short-sighted ways of communicating your thoughts and concepts. Consequently, young people tend to use slang to demonstrate their identity and innovation.

Young people prefer to use slang because they have new ideas. They always search for language novelty—the student society outside of this 18 community (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2003). Slang is related to young people or an effort to project a youthful image. Slang is the language for young people worldwide, which reflects their preferences in music, art, fashion, and entertainment (Eble, 2009). In addition, social media helps most young people of this age to develop and exchange slang terms.

#### **2.2.4 The Function of Slang**

According to Zhou and Fan (2013) when the function of slang is examined, the intricacy of the language becomes instantly obvious. Sociolinguistically speaking, the interpersonal function of language is the most fundamental. When it comes to slang's social purposes, the most critical aspect is that language is used to communicate amongst individuals. there are several functions in slang according to Zhou and Fan (2013).

## 1. Pursuit of self-identity

Due to the fact that different social and professional groups use distinct slang, it is regarded as a symbol for differentiating society's professional groups. Individuals are classified in society according to their social background, occupations, interests, gender, and age. Each group may have its own slang terms. For instance, if a student uses college slang in a sentence, he or she must want to express and reinforce the emotion that he or she is a member of the teenager group.

## 2. Emotive feeling of the slang users

The emotive function of a sentence indicates the speaker's attitudes toward his or her subject. The emotive function is one of the most powerful uses of language because it is so significant and important in changing the emotional status of an audience in favor of or against someone or something. The acceptance expressed in the conversation may be favorable or negative, depending on the emotional response provided by the speaker. This emotional state has a significant impact on the surrounding psychological situations. Everyone from the public to intellectual groups such as doctors, attorneys, and politicians use slang in their everyday conversations. When it comes to this, slang is used by them not only to emphasize their identity or group membership, but also to meet the psychological requirement of expressing emotion, which is also one of the most fundamental uses of language.



### 3. Achieving politeness

Discussing achieving politeness cannot be separated with the register, It refers to a specific mode of communication, such as a particular function or a particular realm of communication, and it is defined as a special mode of speech or writing specific to a certain function, that is, a particular domain of communication. When deciding on a conversational register, three variables are taken into consideration: the occasion (formal versus informal), the audience (age, gender, occupation, degree of acquaintance), and the content of the conversation. The three characteristics also limit the use of slang. Using slang inappropriately, addressing the wrong person, or having inappropriate content in speech might sour friendship and good connections with interlocutors. Consequently, effective slang usage helps create a certain mood or preserve social contacts. Slang is widely employed in casual settings and is vital in phatic functions. Slang can help maintain closeness and intimacy amongst friends.