

VISUAL AND VERBAL HUMOR ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

This research discusses visual and verbal humor on Facebook and Instagram and the meaning of the humor found on it. It aims to analyze verbal humor on Facebook and Instagram using theory of Shade (1996) to analyze the verbal humor types and theory of Berger (2020) to identify the meaning of visual and verbal humor found in the object. The research method used in this study was a qualitative descriptive method. The researchers analyzed visual and verbal humor on 5 accounts on Facebook and 8 accounts on Instagram. The result of this research shows that there are 30 numbers of visual and verbal humors found in Facebook and Instagram. It is found in 8 out of 12 types of verbal humor and 3 out of 4 types of visual humor. It can be concluded that there are several types found on Facebook and Instagram social media. Researchers observed five accounts on Facebook and 8 accounts on Instagram in this study. From these accounts the researchers found verbal humor which are joke (4 from Instagram, 1 from Facebook), pun (1 from Facebook, 2 from Instagram), riddles (2 from Facebook, 1 from Instagram), sarcasm (2 from Instagram), satire (1 from Instagram), parody (1 from Facebook), wit (1 from Facebook, 1 from Instagram), and irony (1 from Instagram). For visual humor there are several types found, among others, impersonation (2 from Facebook, 4 from Instagram), practical jokes (1 from Instagram, 2 from Facebook), slapstick (1 from Instagram, 2 from Facebook). The researchers also found that there were several types of humor that did not exist in some of the selected accounts, such as limerick, anecdote, tall tales, farce, and mime. The researchers also found that the meaning of humor that make them funny are mostly the meaning of absurdity (7), accident (2), before/after (4), riddle (3), pun (3), imitation (4), repartee (2), ridicule (1), misunderstanding (1), satire (1), parody (1), and irony (1).

Keywords: Visual humor, verbal humor, Facebook, Instagram.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media is also one form of technological progress that has developed very rapidly. We can communicate with other people in the world. According to Tuten & Solomon (2015), social media is an online medium for communicating, delivering, collaborating, and developing networks in synergistic and interconnected communities, communities, and organizations developed by increasingly sophisticated technology. So, we can find various information on social media.

Nowadays, lots of people use social media in different ways, such as for education, marketing, communication, sharing, and entertainment. It is probably a good choice when people use social media for entertainment, because in social media so many things contain something funny and it can make people joyful. When someone laughs because of something funny and amusing it can be called humor. According to Martin & Ford (2018) humor is the phenomenon of expressing something amusing and funny with giving emotional reactions and vocal reactions such as laughing and smiling.

In addition, humor is very important in our life because of its ambiguity. According to Ross (as cited in Hassan, 2013) on television, there are a lot of comedies and variety shows and also on social media that have comedy value in everyday life. He also says that usually, the best seller book is a funny book. Spanakaki (2007) adds that humor has become an important thing in literary works because it has characteristics in human interactions in everyday life.

Most of the humor found on social media in different forms, there are using pictures only or using words only or both of them. According to Shade (1996), there are several types of humor, and then he divides them into four types: verbal humor, figural humor, visual humor, and auditory humor. The researcher then establishes two fundamental questions in response to this problem:

1. What are the types of visual and verbal humor found on Facebook and Instagram?
2. What are the meanings of visual and verbal humor found on Facebook and Instagram that make it funny?

Review of Literature

Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of language. According to Wardhaugh & Fuller (2015) sociolinguistics is the study of everyday lives. It explores how language works in our daily conversations and also the media that we are exposed to, and the appearance of societal norms, policies, and laws that address language. So, it is related to the social conditions and the way people use language in society.

Humor

Within the simplest words, humor is present in any experience that causes enjoyment. According to the theory of Raskin (1984) when someone laughs because of a phenomenon whether that is visually or audibly it can be called humor. It can be situations, stories, or something funny in everyday life. In addition to providing psychological relief for the audience, humor can also serve as a platform for social criticism of all types of inequality that exist in society. Humor in our society is so meaningful. According to Raskin (1985) Humor is a component of human behavior, ability, or competence, and it can take many different forms. These forms include language, morality, good judgment, religion, and other significant social and psychological manifestations of homo sapiens. Similar to all of these, humor can be described as partly innate and partially learned. Also, Bergen, & Binsted (2015) argue that humor, like speaking and instructing, is one of a small quantity of pervasive and popular language capabilities. Despite the fact that humor is familiar as established, cultural effects may be extensively visible in the methods humor is expressed and preferred.

Types of humor

1. Verbal humor

Verbal humor is humor that depends on language use to produce the humorous effect (Shade, 1996). In plain terms and with some simplification, verbal humor is created through puns, complete humor based on ambiguity, or humor based on the repetition of signifier components, like alliteration. These humor types make the most of signifier developments to bring disparate semantic or pragmatic meanings together. The most effective foundation for referential humor, in contrast, is semantic and pragmatic incongruity.

2. Visual humor

Humor can both be verbal or nonverbal. According to Ernida (as cited in Chaudhary, 2020) A simple humor told among friends or the complexity of Shakespeare's plays can both be considered humorous. Humor can be a subjective experience or serve a communicative purpose; it can draw on banal everyday facts or include fiction and imagination; it can charm or attack; it can be created spontaneously or be used as a well-organized technique of personal and professional interaction.

3. Figural humor

One form that can describe figural humor is cartoons. In addition, there are also comic books, comic strips, political cartoons, and caricatures, and often accompanied by description. Cartoons can be single panels, as in caricatures or political cartoons, or sequential, as in comic strips.

4. Auditory humor

Auditory humor is associated solely with sound and is a minor category. One of the most classic examples comes from the hit 1970s television sitcom "All in the Family." Although we never saw the bunker household bathroom, people were eagerly anticipating Archie Bunker's "toilet flush." Sound effects and imitations are another form of auditory humor. As a result, this type of auditory humor does not need to be associated with words.

Social Media

The term "Social media" refers to an online tool that runs over the internet. According to Allagui & Breslow (2015) the internet refers to an interconnected computer network around the world and mainly refers to the system infrastructure. Valentini & Kruckeberg (2016) argue that social media could be the center of public relations efforts since it may improve organizational-public relations by enhancing public relations.

Social media today has a lot of influence in people's lives. According to Juwita, Budimansyah, & Nurbayani (2015) social media is used as a means of communication and entertainment among teenagers today. The development of social media has both positive and negative impacts on its users.

1. Facebook

Individuals use Facebook for many purposes. According to Sheldon (2008, p. 2) Facebook usage was more prevalent among women to keep up with old friends, pass the time, and be entertained. Besides that, men preferred to use Facebook to find new friends or meet other people. Kaya & Bicen (2016) find that Facebook is usually used for entertainment, conversation, and the sharing of news, images, and music.

2. Instagram

Nowadays, Instagram is one of the most popular social media. According to Zappavigna (2016) Instagram is a social media application that can be accessed via smartphones where users can produce text or visual meanings that other users can view and take meaning from there. Additionally she says that Instagram, a mobile app launched in 2010, has been used to share at least 20 billion images. Instagram allows users to take photos, add digital photographic illustrations, and upload them to the social networking site with short captions.

METHOD

Design

In this study, researchers analyzed verbal and visual humor on Facebook and Instagram, so the researchers used qualitative descriptive methods. Several theories have been described above to support the validity of this study, and those theories were then elaborated to become such structured conclusions about the main causes or problems of this study. The researchers demanded that the descriptive qualitative method was deemed most appropriate for this study. According to Lambert & Lambert (2012), the least "theoretical" of all qualitative researchers techniques are qualitative descriptive studies. Qualitative descriptive studies are also the least constrained by a pre-existing theoretical or philosophical commitment when compared to other qualitative

approaches. These qualitative descriptive researchers were carried out in the hope of assisting the writer in obtaining accurate information for this study.

Instruments

The source of this research data was on social media platforms, namely Facebook and Instagram. Social media is a place where people can share anything like pictures and videos. This research was conducted with the main reasons; humor in social media is very existent in this era, humor has been widely spread on social media such as Facebook and Instagram. In this research, researchers explored some accounts from Facebook and Instagram that were related to my research which is about humor. There are 13 accounts, 5 on Facebook and 8 on Instagram. researchers chose the accounts by looking at the posts that have been uploaded whether they were related to humor or not. Usually, accounts on Facebook and Instagram have descriptions on the bio section.

Procedures

In order to conduct this research, the researchers collected data using a descriptive method, which is carried out through the following data collection procedures:

- a. Log in to Facebook and Instagram
- b. Choosing accounts related to the research
- c. Identifying data
- d. Categorizing data
- e. Making transcriptions

Data analysis

In this research, the techniques of analyzing data were based on Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) method as follow:

1. Data condensation

Data condensation or data reduction is the process of converting visual data into written data by sorting, simplifying, abstracting, and presenting it.

2. Data display

It is a visual format that presents information systematically so that the user can draw conclusions and take appropriate action (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

3. Drawing and Verifying Conclusion

This is the final stage in which the final conclusion is reached based on all of the data gathered.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The types and the meanings of visual and verbal humor found on facebook and instagram (research question 1 and 2)

This section is the answer to the research question 1 and 2. This section contains research results of the types of visual and verbal humor that have been analyzed from 5 Facebook accounts and 8 Instagram which is the research question 1 and then the researcher analyzed the meaning that made the humor funny which is the research question 2.

1. Verbal humor found on Facebook and Instagram

a. Joke

Extract 1: The picture is from instagram account, namely "bad_science_jokes"



The picture above is from an Instagram account namely bad_science_jokes. As seen in the post, there are doctor and patient. The doctor told the patient and the patient replied to him with a funny answer.

The meaning of extract 1

The joke in extract 1 is a joke with type; deep structure entails multiple interpretations of a word or phrase, because we focused on the word "AND" in the sentence, which is the climax of the joke. The doctor said that the patient's DNA may read backwards which means the patient's DNA is more fluid. In health science it can cause several diseases. The patient casually answered "AND?" because if the word "DNA" is read backwards, it would be "AND". It can be called that there is misunderstanding in that conversation that makes the humor funny.

b. Pun

Extract 2: The picture is from Instagram account namely, "justbadpuns"



From the extract above, there are two main sentences that have pun words; they are in bold word below:

"At the end of the day we are all human **beans**"

"And together, we will **rice**"

The meaning of extract 2

In extract 6 there is a play on words, the word that should replace the word “beans” is “beings” so, the right sentence is “At the end of the day we are all human beings” which means we are all the same human beings, we all have equal rights, but there is a pun word that make it funny; the word **beings** to be **beans**. It has the same sound but a very different meaning. The second sentence should be “And together, we will rise” but that people make it to be “And together, we will rice”. The first sentence and the second sentence bring up a word related to the two of them which is about food, so it is a very nice construction to make it funny.

c. Riddle

Extract 3: Video from Facebook account namely “Chron”

“Why’d the scarecrow win an award?”

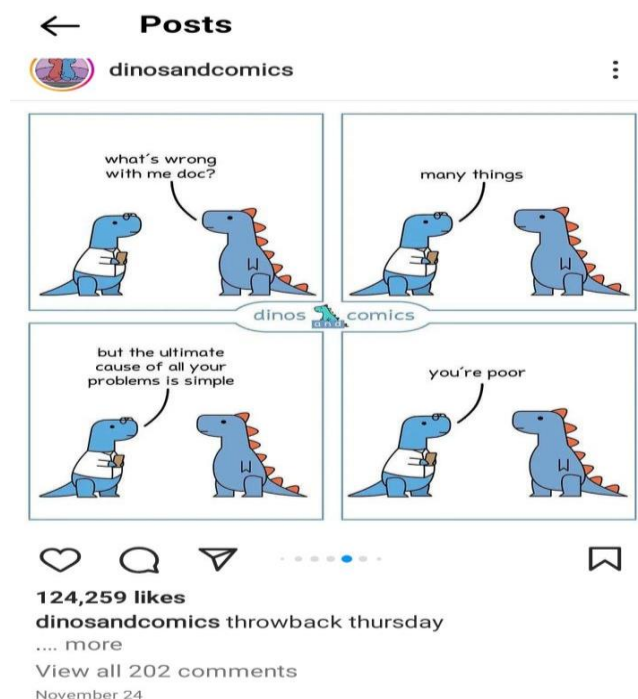
“Answer: because he was outstanding in his field”

The meaning of extract 3

From the riddle sentence above, we can get the punch line, where the question asks why the scarecrow was able to win the award and the answer says that he was able to win because he was outstanding. Outstanding here means that he can stand for a long time in his field, not extraordinary outstanding.

d. Sarcasm

Extract 4: The picture is from instagram account namely, “dinosandcomics”



“What’s wrong with me doc?”

“Many things”

“But the ultimate cause of all your problems is simple”

“You’re poor”

The conversation text in the picture above contains sarcasm type humor because it is in the form of mocking.

The meaning of extract 4

From extract 13, we can find the meaning that makes the conversation funny. From the conversation there is sarcasm humor. What makes it funny is when there is a repartee at the end of the conversation.

e. Satire

Extract 5: The picture is from instagram account namely, "dadjokescentral"



"What's the difference between a politician and a flying pig?"
"The letter f"

The meaning of extract 5

In the sentence above, we can see the question and answer about politics. The question is about the difference between a politician and a flying pig and the simple answer is the letter f. We can find the satire humor by eliminating the letter f, so the phrase becomes "lying pig." It means that the difference between politician and flying pig is only in the letter f. So, we can conclude that a politician is like a lying pig. Even though it includes satire humor, it is still funny because the question that compares the flying pig and politician is then answered simply but very critically.

f. Parody

Extract 6: The video is from Facebook account namely, "Hallo Aku Doracimin"



The video parodies one of the scenes in the Upin & Ipin cartoon film, which is when Upin & Ipin is lost in the forest but the way of presenting it is very different and funny.

The meaning of extract 6

The duration of the video is 3: 58 minutes. It is an imitation of the film “Upin & Ipin” which can be called a parody. It also has the same style of Upin & Ipin but different themes and the title is changed from “Upin & Ipin” to “Ucup & Udin.” The character in the parody has the same style as Upin & Ipin but has a different face, voice, and language. The video parodies one of the scenes in the Upin & Ipin cartoon film, which is when Upin & Ipin is lost in the forest but the way of presenting it is very different and funny.

g. Wit

Extract 7: The picture is from Facebook account namely, “superheromovie”



As seen in the picture above, there are people and texts indicating that the people are having a conversation.

Man 1: “I am fast at math”

Man 2: “then what’s 750*1920”

Man 1: “230”

Man 2: “that’s not even close”

Man 1: “but it was fast”

The meaning of extract 7

The first statement that says “I am fast at math” startled us at first. Then, the other person asks or tests to really give multiplication. The man answers with an answer far from the actual result, then the person that asked denies that the answer is wrong, the man also says “but it was fast”. In this humor, there are mistakes that make it funny and there is also absurdity. It becomes the peak of comedy in that conversation.

h. Irony

Extract 8: The picture is from instagram account namely, “dadjokescentral”



The sentences from the picture above have two meanings, the first is; "Give a man a plane ticket and he'll fly for a day" Where the sentence means that a ticket will take someone flying for a day. The second sentences are; "Push a man out of a plane and he'll fly for the rest of his life"

The meaning of extract 8

The extract 8 means that there is no need for a plane ticket, when you push a man out of a plane and he'll fly for the rest of his life, not just one day. The humor above is one of irony humor because it contains a sarcastic meaning but the statement is not direct but uses words that are opposite of the literal meaning.

2. Visual humor found on Facebook and Instagram

a. Impersonations

Extract 9: The video is from Instagram account namely, "edricjtandra"



The video is a form of humor in the form of imitation. Can be seen in the video there is someone who imitates the style of Korean artists.

The meaning of extract 9

In the video above, it shows someone imitating the style of a Korean artist in a funny and different style. He dresses like a Korean artist and adjusts his movements as the artist

does but his facial expression is very different because he exaggerates his expression and it looks very funny, the clothes and accessories used are sober.

b. Practical joke

Extract 10: The video is from Instagram account namely, "lucuabis.iq"

Filter nya bikin panik 😂



The video is a form of practical jokes, which is a kind of prank. In the video, a child and her mother are seen recording the video. In the video, the father's hand is stroking the child's face and it turns out that the father deliberately messed up the child's face because the video or recording uses an ugly face filter or effect where the child's face turns out to be scrambled, the eyes are arranged in an irregular manner, and one is below and the other is above.

The meaning of extract 10

The video on extract 10 has the meaning before/after which makes the video funny as in the video the facial expression of the child who was pranked before was very happy but after he saw it on the camera his expression changed and also his response. The child's reaction was very funny, at first she laughed happily when her father stroked her face but after that she was shocked and looked at her face and screamed while holding her eyes and then he hugged her mother.

c. Slapstick

Extract 11: The video is from Facebook account namely, "funny videos now"



In the video you can see a woman enjoying her bottle of milk, but suddenly she sucked hard on the bottle and finally her lips got stuck on the edge of the bottle, her friend who had recorded the incident was heard laughing out loud.

The meaning of extract 11

In extract 11 there is slapstick humor which invites laughter because of an accident experienced by someone. As contained in extract 29 of a woman whose lips got stuck in the bottle when drinking, this caused laughter because of the funny accident.

Discussion

This study discusses visual and verbal humor found on Facebook and Instagram. There are 12 types of verbal humor and 4 types of visual humor according to the theory of Shade (1996). In Azka & Hamzah (2019) the result of their research showed that there were 192 numbers of verbal humor found in *Ini Talk Show*. It is found that 10 out of 12 types of verbal humor found in *Ini Talk Show*. Different from this study, this study found 8 out of 12 types of verbal humor with 18 numbers of verbal humor. It means that the researcher found the types of humor that are in accordance with the shade theory even though the researchers only observed posts that were shorter in duration and posts that were in the form of pictures or sentences only, compared to research from Azka & Hamzah who did examine verbal humor on a television show that did present humor. From the data collected there were 30 extracts from all the accounts that had been selected, but researchers did limit the type of data in the form of very long videos because the posts being analyzed were both images and videos so the researchers took video data that was short in duration, under 10 minutes. But most researchers find humorous posts in the form of videos that are less than 5 minutes long. Especially for posts on Instagram, it is only under 30 seconds but even so, the humor that is displayed is still conveyed.

In addition, Vasquez & Aslan (2021) focuses on various forms of linguistic humor, which most often rely on multimodal interactions between textual and visual elements. Their findings reveal multiple instances of wordplay involving paronymy as well as register-based humor and humor involving the voicing of recognizable figures. In addition, multimodal play often involves semiotic blends of this particular meme with other popular memes. So their study uses multimodal analysis in analyzing the humor

contained in images and text. In contrast with this study, the researchers focused on all types of visual humor, the researchers found 3 out of 4 types of visual humor that were spread on selected Facebook and Instagram accounts. Researchers found that most of the visual humor posted on Instagram and Facebook is in the form of videos. It is rare to find visual humor in the form of picture posting. Even so, researchers found that there are 2 visual humor posts in the form of pictures and there are 10 visual humors in the form of video posts.

In this study, the researchers found that not all types of humor according to Shade were scattered in social media posts, as researchers had found, there were 4 types of humor that were not on the selected Facebook and Instagram accounts, there are limerick, anecdote, tall tales, and farce. And there was 1 type of visual humor which was not found, there is mime/pantomime. However, the researchers were looking for more information about humor that does not exist, it turns out that humor exists but it is very minimal in number and very few post it, only old accounts that have not been upgraded, like in the account with old posts, circa 2019 and years ago

In this study, researchers also used Berger's theory in finding and analyzing the meaning of humor that has been obtained. The researchers found that humor spread on social media accounts has a meaning that makes it funny as stated by Berger (2020) there are several things that make humor funny like, allusion, absurdity, before/after, chase, bombast, accident, burlesque, slapstick, definition analogy, caricature, speed, exaggeration, catalogue, eccentricity, facetiousness, coincidence, embarrassment, insults, comparison, exposure, infantilism, disappointment, grotesque, irony, ignorance, imitation, literalness, mistakes, impersonation, misunderstanding, repetition, mimicry, puns/wordplay, reversal, parody, repartee, rigidity, scale, ridicule, theme/variation, stereotype, sarcasm, unmasking, and satire. From 30 observed data, the researchers found that the meaning of humor was adjusted according to the type of humor itself, like in the extract 14, there is satire, in extract 15 there is parody, extract 18 there is irony, extract 6-8 there is pun, extract 9-10 there is riddle, extract 21-24 there is imitation. Furthermore, the researchers found that the meaning that makes verbal humor funny is mostly the meaning of absurdity which many words are witty with that meaning. It is found in extract 2, 3, 5, 16, 17, 19, and extract 20. Besides that, visual humor is mostly funny because of an unexpected accident like in the extract 29-30 and also the meaning of before/after which is found in practical jokes humor, in extract 25-28. There is also misunderstanding in extract 1, repartee in extract 11&13, ridicule in extract 12.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions the writer discovered some points that could lead to an easier comprehension about this research. From the analysis, the writer can conclude that among the types of humor proposed by Shade; 1996 there are several types found on Facebook and Instagram social media. Researchers observed five accounts on Facebook and 8 accounts on Instagram in this study. From these accounts the researchers found verbal humor which are joke (4 from Instagram, 1 from Facebook), pun (1 from Facebook, 2 from Instagram), riddles (2 from Facebook, 1 from Instagram), sarcasm (2 from Instagram), satire (1 from Instagram), parody (1 from facebook), wit (1 from facebook, 1 from instagram), and irony (1 from instagram). For visual humor there are several types found, among others, impersonation (2 from Facebook, 4 from Instagram), practical jokes (1 from Instagram, 2 from Facebook), slapstick (1 from Instagram, 2 from

Facebook). The researchers also found that there were several types of humor that did not exist in some of the selected accounts, such as limerick, anecdote, tall tales, farce, and mime. The researchers also found that the meaning of humor that make them funny are mostly the meaning of absurdity (7), accident (2), before/after (4), riddle (3), pun (3), imitation (4), repartee (2), ridicule (1), misunderstanding (1), satire (1), parody (1), and irony (1).

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