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Filipino Memes: Generation Z's Way of Indirectness

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Abstract –This study was conducted to analyze the Generation Z's Way of Indirectness regarding the societal issues through content analysis method. It aims to evaluate how memes affect Generation Z's in various aspects. In this study, the researchers scrutinized fifteen memes from internet that were selected through random sampling in connection with political, educational and social issues. The memes were analyzed to comprehend how Generation Z used it as a tool of expressing their insights over serious matter in a humorous way where it will look like but indirectly throwing their opinions and criticisms to some issues which is present in the society. Generally, this study focused on how memes become an effective tool of Generation Z in addressing their whereabouts with the presence of indirectness. This study found out that through memes Generation Z's are informed or aware of the current issues present in the society using memes that were circling in different social media sites. Anyone who uses internet could use memes to express their insights and opinions in an indirect way and the researchers found out that through memes Generation Z's might affect, enlighten or change the perspectives of some netizens regarding a certain issue.

Key words: Memes, Indirectness, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

Indirectness is a way of conveying a message through hints, insinuations, questions, gestures, or circumlocutions. Indirectness plays a vital role in the community that we are living. Specifically, we utilize memes to express our feelings, emotions and insights. As a way of indirectness, Generation Z utilizes memes to express their indirect opinions towards various issues. Hence, it becomes an avenue to know the motives or insights of Generation Z.

Various social media platforms become an avenue of expressions of the Generation Z in the current issues that we are facing. Memes are photos or texts with photos that expresses different emotions on different issue that we encounter. Memes are considered as an indirect way of expressions because these are expressions with humor and hidden messages that we must identify or unveil.

Societal issues are rampant nowadays and Generation Z's expresses them by making memes that represents many norms of digital media like peer-



sharing, recycling of ideas and facts. These factors help Generation Z's to express their side more and be able to help each other to realize and enlighten others to what really is happening now.

Several theories discussed about indirectness, the Theory of Politeness by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson this theory says, there are different perceptions in every interaction. The Negative face which highlights ones' idea without resistance or hesitation, the Positive face which is more of the need of approval coming from others. During an interaction, one's face can be vulnerable or not depending upon how they express ideas and intentions.

Theory of Paul Grice talks about conversational implicature, it plays a vital role in our interactions. We usually understand what others are saying even people don't express their intentions straightforwardly. He also elaborated that we interpret what others are implying by universal conventions in human interaction called cooperative principles.

These theories are useful in our research simply because they are tackling about indirectness that is our main topic. The Theory of Politeness expresses its two-faces the positive and the negative face, memes has hidden meanings that has good and bad meanings that we can analyze. The Theory of Paul Grice talks about conversational implicatures that helps us to know and understand others even when they express themselves in a sarcastic manner or offensive manner. In short, these theories play a big role in our research paper because they are the most suitable theories that our study will be relying on.

This research will serve as an avenue to understand the hidden messages that are underlying on the memes that Generation Z made or utilizes to express themselves. This will also highlight the memes as form of expression thru photo and texts that Generation Z utilizes. This will also serve as a bridge for new learning that will enlighten us to understand each other and how our society raises its standard and faces its imperfections that Generation Z's sees.

This study aims to evaluate how memes affect Generation Z's in different aspects:

1. To comprehend how memes help Generation Z's express their insights over serious matter.
2. To know how memes become an effective way of expression.
3. To scrutinize how memes become an indirect way of giving opinion of Generation Z.

METHODOLOGY

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used descriptive research design. This design describes the characteristic of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. It sought to answer, how Filipino Memes does become an avenue of Generation Z indirect expression.

The researchers gathered data on the internet based on the amount of shares and reactions of a particular memes in different social media platforms.

The researchers analyzed the data through content analysis method that uses two types: (1) Manifest content that takes on observable content and (2) Latent content that takes on the underlying meaning of content.

The content analysis method is an appropriate tool that helped the researchers to analyze the gathered data. Memes are images that contain various contents that ensure that the expression or insight of a person is being conveyed or sent in its desired manner. Memes must be analyzed through content analysis method since it has its contents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SOCIAL MEMES

The memes focused on societal issues showing that Generation Z netizens are more concerned regarding issues happening in the society. Theory of Politeness by Brown and Levinson asserts that there are two faces which are the negative and positive faces. As a result of globalization process, the politeness coincides with the rise of individual Terkourafi (2019).



In meme [1] it can be analyzed that the creator imposed a fact about himself yet, s/he tries to find personal space in the society's standard.

In meme [2] it can be analyzed that the Generation Z easily changes their mood in just a second because they are trying to fit in the society's standard.

In meme [3] it can be analyzed that in the social media world, the society is giving us the standard of beauty or appearance hence, the Generation Z is pressured to reach the society's standard.

POLITICAL MEMES

These memes focused on political issues. Grice's Theory is evident in this area. It says that people understand one's intention in just a simple context. Generation Z usually expresses their insights through memes with underlying meanings. Alhamidi (2019) said, forms of indirectness at large imposition, social distance, and the relative rights and obligations.

In meme [6] it shows how the Philippines hosted the 2019 Sea Games unprepared. To express their dismay towards the country, it used the Sea Games as a mirror to say that the Philippines has always been a shame.

In meme [7] the Philippine justice system is shown. As a way of indirectness, this meme shows the inequality between rich and poor people.

In meme [8] it addresses how the netizens show their dismay on politicians who are supposed to act right and makes a sensual opinion and be sensitive to think for the welfare of the Filipinos in serious matter.

Based on the gathered data, it can be found out that in different types of memes, there are hidden meanings. Memes that talk about serious matter in a funny way. but always have this underlying meaning within the content.

CONCLUSIONS

1. This study found out that through memes Generation Z netizens are aware of the current issues present in the society.
2. Anyone could use memes to express their insights in an indirect way.
3. The study found out that through memes, Generation Z netizens affect the perspectives of some netizens regarding a certain issue.

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