THE STUDY OF IMPLICATURE AND HUMOROUS DEVICES OF DARK MEMES

by Priska Meilasari

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Abstract

Memes are internet popular culture. They have so many topics, and one of them is dark humor. Dark humor treats some taboo matters such as deformities, murder, suicide, disease, tragedy, pedophilia, and other in a cynical way. This research focuses on analyzing types of implicature and the humorous devices found in the dark memes; therefore, this study aims to discover what kind of implicature is contained in the dark meme and what kind of humorous devices that is used in the dark meme. This research is descriptive qualitative research, and the data used in this research are dark memes and retrieved from reddit.com. The analysis shows that conversational implicatures and conventional implicatures are found in the dark memes texts. There are some topics that are implicitly mentioned in the dark memes such as deformities, necrophilia, sexual abuse, disease, murder, violence, stereotypes, pedophilia, death, tragedy, and suicide. Some humorous devices that are found in the dark memes are irony, satire, understatement, wit, aphorism, and sarcasm.

Keywords: meme, dark memes, humor, implicature, humorous devices

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 20th century, the internet became an inseparable part of our lifestyle because it has many convenient functions. It can be used as a communication media, as an entertainment media, as navigation tools, and many more make human life more comfortable and more convenient. Since the memes and humor synchronize quite well, various kinds and humor genres can create a hilarious meme in which dark humor becomes one of them. It is a humorous genre that focuses on taboo topics such as violence, gore, disease, racism and treats those topics in a cynical way. The previous study of memes conducted by Febrian Dwi Harsytani (2018) focused on speech acts found in Meme Comics, whereas this research focused on types of implicature in the dark memes

Several theories are used to analyze the data, such as pragmatics, implicature, humorous devices, and et cetera. Kroeger (2018:1) argues that pragmatics is concerned with the meaning that depends on or derived from how the words and sentences are used. Levinson, mentions that pragmatics studies the relationship between language and context fundamental to a language understanding (1983:21).

According to Mey (2001:46-49), there are two types of implicature. They are conversational implicature and conventional implicature. Levinson argues that conversational implicature is one of the crucial points in implicature (1983:97). A conversational implicature happened during a conversation where the speaker and the listener understand each other. Levinson (1983:127) also defines conventional implicature as a non-truth conditional inference that is not attached to superordinate pragmatic principles like maxims, but it is dependant on particular lexical items or expressions.

According to Berger (2011:2), humorous devices are techniques to generate a humorous text. There are several humorous devices that is classified based on Berger (1998) and

Hellitzer and shatz (2005) such as hyperbole, irony, satire, sarcasm, aphorism, understatement, pun, malapropism, oxymoron, wit, and et cetera. The theories of humorous devices is used to classify what types of humorous devices used in the dark memes along with the theories of implicature to determine what types of implicature used in the dark memes

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive-qualitative one, whereas this study emphasized the analysis of the types of implicature in the dark memes. This research is considered a pragmatic study since this research mainly deals with the meaning behind the dark meme and to categorize what types of humorous devices are used in the dark memes.

According to Santosa (2017:52), data is a research object and focus of the research based on the reality that encompasses the place, participant, and event, which correlates with the research data The primary data of this research is the dark memes. Data is limited to word only dark memes that contain humorous devices. The source of data is www.reddit.com. The writer chooses Reddit.com because it offers various dark memes with different genres.

The researcher is the leading research instrument, and the analysis that is going to be used is the document analysis. The data is downloaded form Reddit.com and coded based on the humorous devices and implicit topics that is used in the dark meme

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result and discussion are the most important part of this study. This part is aimed to present the result of the research. The theory of implicaure is applied to classified the types of implicature in the dark meme along with the humorous devices theory to determine the types of humorous devices used in the dark memes.

A. The implicature Types of The Dark Memes

### Chart 1:Implicature Types Found in The Dark Memes
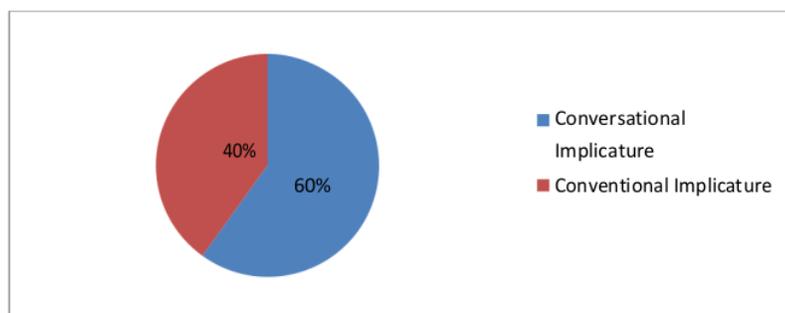
Fig 1. Implicature types in the Dark Memes

Chart 2: Dark Memes Topics
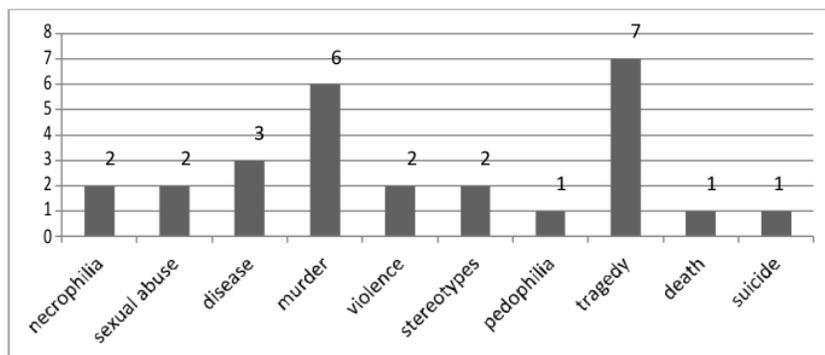
Fig.2 implied meaning that often found in the dark memes

Based on the chart, there are various kinds of implicatures found in the dark memes and the topics implicitly stated by the dark meme creator. The most used one is the tragedy, and the second is murder. The rest of the topics are commonly used by the dark meme creator.

a) Conversational Implicature

Conversational implicature is a kind of implicature that is generated during the conversation. Here are some conversational implicatures that are found in the dark memes.

a) Murder

Murder is an action where a man takes another man's life. There are several causes of murder, such as revenge, unintentional killing due to war, urges, and et cetera. Here are some dark memes that take murder as their topic.

(DM04/W/M)

Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/huk1dm/cursed_uranium/)

Search Engine Question: *how many calories in Uranium?*
Search Engine Answer: *20 billion calories*
A: *So you're telling me Uranium could end world hunger?*
    Let's go feed poor kids some uranium
B: *I think the US tried to do that in japan*

The DM04 is based on the second user replies. Implicitly means about an event in world war II, Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings. Those events are well known because of two nuclear bombs in Japan, in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. That event delivers a significant blow to Japan as it causes so many casualties and deliver a significant impact on them and forcing Japan to surrender in world war II. "I think the US tried it in Japan" is the punchline in DM04

b) Disease

The disease is one part of life. Some diseases have a unique characteristic, starts from the deadly one, infectious, to nonlethal disease. Here is the dark meme that talks about the disease.

DM02/Sa/Di)

Source: (https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/hv3p2p/cursed_news/)

A: Cousin tested for coronavirus and she came to our house just to say that

B: *"I've tested positive. I just came here to spread the news"*

"Thanks, we got it."

DM02 talks about latest disease, coronavirus. Coronavirus is a new outbreak that was discovered first in china and started spreading in early January 2020, well known for its high mortality rate, infection rate, and versatility. DM02 is started from someone's story. First-person tells about his relatives who come to his home to say that his cousin already contracted coronavirus. Then another user added a narrative concerning the story.

c) Tragedy

The tragedy is one of the unexpected things that happen in human life. Each tragedy contains some lessons that one may learn for the future. There are so many kinds of tragedies that one may save a man's life, and another may take many lives. Here is the dark meme that uses topics as its topics.

(DM29/W/T)

Source: (https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/k4t7nz/cursed_spongebob/)

A: Instead of paying $200 a month on cable, buy a plane ticket, go see what you're watching.

B: *What plane foes to bikini bottom?*

C: *Malaysia flight 370 if I remember correctly*

DM29 is started with a tweet that said, "Instead of paying $200 a month on a cable, buy a plane ticket. Go see what you're watching". Another Twitter user replies, "what plane goes to the bikini bottom," and it soon answered by taking a Facebook comment and said, "Malaysian flight 370 if I remember correctly". Malaysian airlines flight number 370 is a passenger plane that suddenly disappears on 8 March 2014 The main focus is located on the second, and the third replies in DM29. The second replies ask about what plane has a destination to the bikini bottom, and one of the users said that MH 370 is a plane that goes to

the bikini bottom. Bikini Bottom is a fictional city from the animated series "Spongebob Squarepants" and is located in the seabed.

b) Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicature is an implicature generated on a person's knowledge in a sentence. Here are some examples of a dark meme that contain conventional implicatures.

a) Tragedy

The tragedy is one of the saddest things that happen in human life. They give a lesson to anyone who experiences it, either with a significant loss of life or the loss of one's treasure. Here is a dark meme that talks about a tragedy.
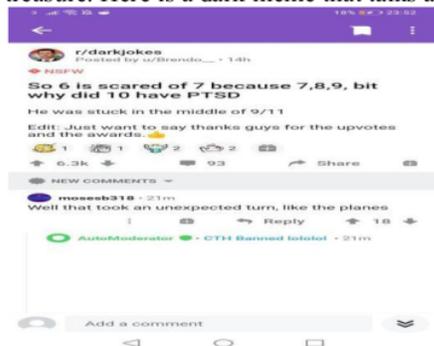
DM12/W/T)
Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/i8o83y/cursed_numbers/)

A: So 6 is scared of 7 because 7, 8, 9, but what did 10 have PTSD?
He was stuck in the middle of 9/11

The DM12 is about a tragedy. 9/11 is one of the famous tragedies in America. The attacks in the morning on Tuesday, 11 September 2001 are classified as a coordinated terrorist attack. DM12 is about a number. It started from 6 that is scared with 7, 8, 9, and continued with a question, why 10 have PTSD?. Then it was answered that the 10 is stuck between 9/11.

b) Pedophilia

Pedophilia is one of the disorders that cause a person to have sexual fantasies about prepubescent children. They are usually attracted either in young boys and girls, or both of them. The doer is called a pedophile. Here is an example of a dark meme about pedophilia.

(DM07/A/P)
Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/i0cxob/cursed_ageconsent/)

A: *When she's 8 but her mouth is 18+*

DM07 topic is about pedophilia. Pedophilia is defined as intense sexual fantasies and sexual urges to engage the sexual activities toward the prepubescent child. "when she's 9 but her mouth and 18+", that line talks about pedophilia as that user mention an eight years old girl who has 18+ mouth. 18+ is a symbol of something that is concerned with some sensitive matters, such as vulgar things.

c) Violence

Violence is the use of physical force and aimed to inflict injuries, cause damage, or destroy something. The case of violence may vary, such as beatings, gun violence, and et cetera. Here is a dark meme that uses violence as its topics.

(DM05/I/V)
Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/hvrs5f/cursed_youtube_commentor/)

A: *I once saw 2 guys beating up an old lady and using my experience I thought that I should jump in using my experience from the video. The old lady had no chance against the 3 of us*

DM05 talks about violence. The victim of violence and the culprit may vary, starts from the children to the senior citizen who most of them are unable to resist or fight back. DM05 is about a user who gives testimony to a streetfighting tutorial video. After that user sees the tutorial video, he insisted on trying his new lesson and was involved in that event, saying the old lady has no chance against the three of us. DM05 shows us that violence, especially towards the elderly, does exist.

2) Humorous Devices in The Dark Memes

After analyzing text-only dark memes, the writer has summarized the findings of the data. Here is the explanation

Chart 1: Humorous Devices
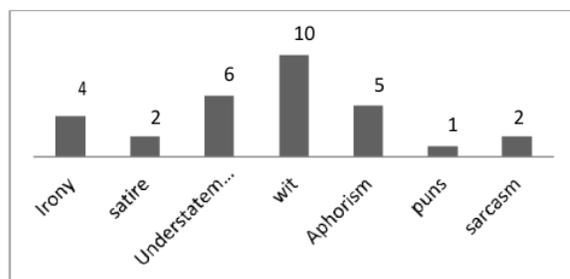
**Fig 1**. Most used humorous devices in the dark memes

Based on the humorous theories provided by Hellitzer and Berger, several humorous devices are contained in text-only dark memes during this research. Based on the diagram above, wit is the most used to construct the humor, followed by an understatement that subtly shows the humor, and the fewest are puns and sarcasm.

a) Conversational Implicatuure

Here some humorous devices that are found on the conversational implicature.

a) Wit

Wit is a humorous devvice that makes a clever and witty reply. Herre is an example of wit.
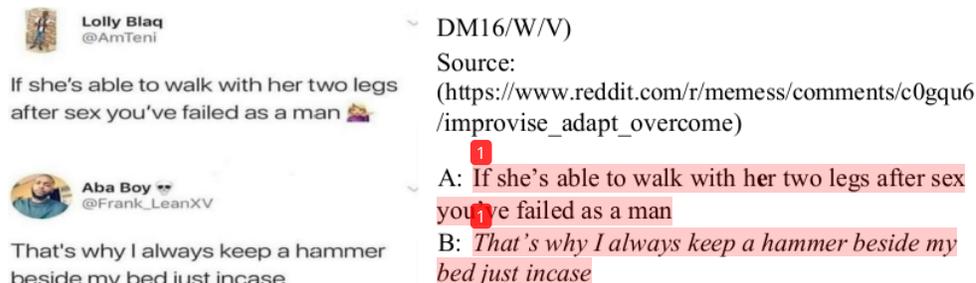
DM16/W/V)

Source: (https://www.reddit.com/r/memess/comments/c0gqu6/improvise_adapt_overcome)

A: If she's able to walk with her two legs after sex you've failed as a man

B: *That's why I always keep a hammer beside my bed just incase*

DM16 is started from a sentence from a user "if she's able to walk with two legs after sex, you've failed as a man". The user wants to bully the man's pride when they have sex with his partner. The second user replied, "that's why I always keep a hammmer beside my bed just in case", and his replies show how wit works. Preparing a hammer annd putting it beside his bed means that he will use that hammer if his partner is still able to move after having sex.

b) Understatement

Understatement is thee opposite of hyperbole. Hyperbole tends to enhance reality. Meanwhile, understatement teends to be subtle. Here is an example of a daark meme that uses understatement.
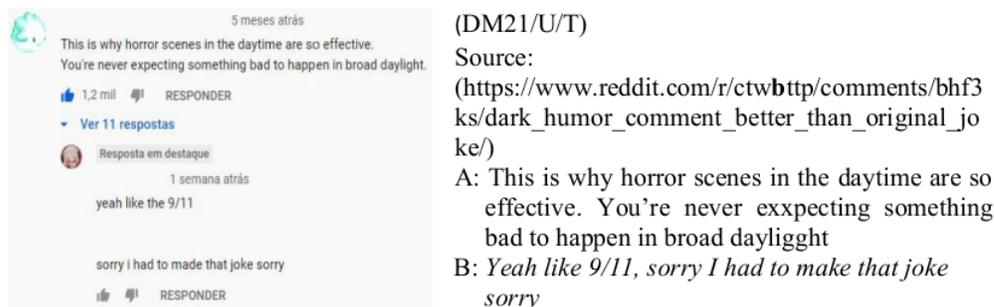
(DM21/U/T)

Source: (https://www.reddit.com/r/ctwbttp/comments/bhf3ks/dark_humor_comment_better_than_original_joke/)

A: This is why horror scenes in the daytime are so effective. You're never exxpecting something bad to happen in broad dayligght

B: *Yeah like 9/11, sorry I had to make that joke sorry*

DM21 is a thread thatt discusses the horror scenes. The user has an opinion, and he says, "this is why horror sceenes in the daytime are so effective. You're never expecting something bad in broad dayliight". The focus of DM 21 is on the threadd's replies, where a user replied humbly with 9/11. 9/11 is a horrible event that is happened in America and based on the fact that the accident happened in broad daylight, turning ordinary sight of the busy and lively city into hellish and chaotic sight, Hence the humorous devicess that are contained in that comment is an understaatement.

c) Irony

The irony is a humoroous device that makes one thing expected to happen is different from what is expected. Here iss an example of dark memes that use irony.

(DM01/I/SA)
Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comments/hvutbm/cursed_exorcising)

A: *Reminds me of the reverse exorcism when the demons take the priest out of the child*

The punchline of DM01 is based on the replies of a user. DM01 is started from a malapropism, and the topic is about exorcism. The punchline of DM01 comes from the first reply. That user ironically said, "Reminds me of the reverse exorcism, when the demon takes the priest out of the child". The irony is based on the demon and the priest's reversed role, while the demon acts as a "priest" and the priest acts as a "demon". Resulting in the irony that makes the demon become the savior and pulls the priest out of the children.

b) Conventional Implicature

The humorous devices that are found in the conventional implicature of dark memes are as follows.

a) Aphorism

Aphorism is a summarized little wisdom or truth. Here are some examples of dark memes that contain aphorism.
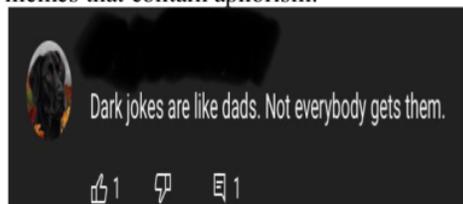
(DM18/A/T)
Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/imveryedgy/comments/k0ian2/not_everybody_gets_them/)
A: *Dark Jokes are like dads. Not everybody gets them*

DM18 topic is about parental matters. Some of the children are not lucky enough to grow up with their parents. His father and mother might have gone because of something, either is missing, died, or leave them Aphorism is humorous devices that have similar characteristics to "sayings". One of the user states, "dark jokes are like dads. Not everybody gets them". Since dark jokes treat taboo things cynically with bitter amusement since not everyone understands why they laugh at what is supposed not to be. Based on that fact, a user decides to compare it with a family member, that not everyone have full member of family.

b) Irony

The irony is a humorous device that makes one thing expected to happen is different from what is expected. Here is an example of dark memes that use irony.

(DM10/I/S0)

Source:
(https://www.reddit.com/r/cursedcomments/comment s/i3khvd/cursed_bestfriend/)

A: Hypothetically, if your besst friend tells you they're going to kill themselvves, they're going to give you 60 seconds to talk them out of it, what would you say to them?

B: Do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, do it, and upgrade.

C: *I'll kill him myself so he can have a higher chance of going heaven*

DM10 is started from a user fictional generated situations. That usser asks everyone if your best friend tells you thaat they will commit suicide, you only have 60 seconds to talk, what would you say to them. The advertising that popped out in lousy timiing in that sensitive thread as the advertising wordd does it and upgrade. The ironic joke on thee Samsung horrible promoted advertising makes that line look like the answer provided by Sammsung, but it is not. Another irony found in the usser's comment that he will kill him instead, so his chance to go to heaven is bigger. The ironny is on the statement that instead of stoppiing his friend from killing himself, he prefers he will kill his friend instead. Hence, that comment and accidentally popping out adveertising shows the irony.

c) Wit

Wit is a humorous devvice that makes a clever and witty reply. Herre is an example of wit.

(DM14/W/D)

Source
(https://www.reddit.com/r/ccursedcomments/comments/k042b4/cursed_flower/)

A: Males of reddit, how woould you feel if a girl gave YOU a flower?

B: *I would just be glad they came to my funeral*

DM14 shows us how wit works. A Redditor asks about how the maale Redditors feel if a girl gave him a flower. Thenn a Redditor answer that question and said, "II would just be glad they came to my funeral". A Redditor says that witty comment based on the fact that if a girl gives him a flower, it is supposed either in a happy situation or in a bad situation. He knows that he will never get a flowerr from a girl and said that other situations thaat make the woman give him a flower are only in his funeral, and he glad.

4. CONCLUSION

The writer discovers two types of implicature that are used inn the dark memes. Among two of them, conversational implicature is the most used in forrming the text-only dark memes. The topics that are frequently found are tragedy and murder. Wit is the most

used humorous device in conversational implicature and its popular topic is Murder. Concerning the conventional implicature, the most used humorous device is aphorism, and the frequently used topic is tragedy and murder.

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