

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five sections: the background of the study, the second is research questions, the third is the objectives of the study, the fourth is the significance of the study, and the last section is the scope and limitations of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

As a human, language is essential in forming an interaction between people in society. It is a skill to use language to communicate and interact in the pretence of exchanging information on a daily basis. This definition is aligned with the statement that language is universal and fundamental to all human interaction (Salmon, 1969, p. 528-550) and (Zadeh, 1971, p. 199-249). It is a major distinction between humans and other animal communication systems. Language has its principal benefit to humans: to understand and share the information broadly.

This principle was studied by researchers to be discussed and shared; this in-depth language study phenomenon is called linguistics. Based on this, linguistics is the scientific study of language (Saint-Jacques, 1995, p. 213) and Scargill, M. H., & Avis, W. S. (1960). Linguistics works on specific languages, but the goal is to understand the nature of language in general. Linguistics is a field of study that consists of many categories of theories, approaches, and methods applied in conducting the studies. The studies have to be specific languages and applied in various manners that suit the data. This statement aligns with Francis (1958, p. 15-17); linguistics, as the scientific study of language, must follow requirements such as having subject matter and objective descriptions like the method of observation. Sunubi agrees that linguistics increases our knowledge and understanding of the world based on many practical applications (Sunubi, 2016, p. 5). Hence, linguistics benefits human interaction and understanding its content of information recorded or written. The recorded data could be in the form

of news, video, podcasts, music, and anything related, whereas written data could be something like a pamphlet, newspaper, script, book, or memes. Memes are one of the written data that spread throughout internet spaces, adding a new experience in communicating and socialising on social media.

Memes have become a tool to entertain and share information on social media. The information comes from captions combined with images to make it relatable for the internet users. These images and captions take on the symbols of the information that carry the memes; this symbol represents the meaning of each image in the meme. It mostly comes from the type of language netizens use in their memes and the picture, emoticon, or video that attracts the viewers. Despite their easy characteristics, memes have complexity in their concept because they happen to be a form of teasing or humour that appears to spread from one person to another by copying or imitating small cultural transmission units. Shifman said that a meme is a group of texts with shared characteristics, a shared core of content, form, and stance (Shifman, 2013, p. 448). Therefore, it has a structure and form that can distinguish it from other subjects on social media.

Asia has the most number of users on social media based on Singh (2025) research statistic, which has 26 percent of users in East Asia, which makes them active and updated on many issues around the internet. Information spread on social media takes any form of speech from spoken, written, or sign languages. The information takes the shape of news, comments, and memes. Memes in Asia have many subjects, from lifestyle, politics, ethnicity, and critics. The shape of a meme in Asia comes from the behaviour or traits of Asian people because it is relatable. This type of meme is bound to some humour or comedy cross to sarcasm, spreading to be consumed by others on social media. Memes have many topics, from politics, economics, education, lifestyle, culture, or socials. These topics come from variational problems that happen on the internet, which makes memes a form of rebellion against a society. However, there is also another side of memes that reaches hate and leads to criticism spiraling around the internet.

Looking at recent years, Asia has been the main focus of social media worldwide, surrounding a pandemic that happened in 2020. This phenomenon

occurred for the first time on Twitter; former President Donald Trump publicly used the term "China virus" or "Chinese virus" in various tweets between March 16-18, 2020 (Fallows, 2020). Chiu (2020) argues that such terminology is both racist and xenophobic; hence, it promotes anti-Asian bias and exclusion. Meanwhile, this throwing blame event occurs many times in the media; it is the consequence of minority groups having often found themselves erroneously blamed for spreading germs, terms like "dirty" or "sickly" often used by insiders to perceive them (Taylor, 2019). Hating towards Asians after this particular viral outbreak could plunge into cyberbullying or crime, especially in Asian-American. Hate crime is an old problem with a relatively new legal status (Jenness & Grattet, 2001). This leads to Asians being the target of hate on social media; therefore, memes are created from this phenomenon all over social media.

Instagram is one of the platforms to produce memes all over the internet, it is a platform that has many users who share their info, hobbies, and moments. In the recent years, Instagram memes became a trend as a media to share an idea in a playful way. Users on Instagram can interact with each other with these memes in their comments section, some users also dedicated their account as a meme account to accommodate the interaction. These memes become a media to mock or criticize a community, politics, ideologies or even a religion.

This research will focus on memes, especially, Asian hate memes from Instagram account @politicallyasianpodcast from their posts of memes in 2023. Each selective Asian hate meme will be studied based on their caption #stopasianhate using an implicature by Grice (1975). Then the researcher will compare these two findings to see the difference and similarities between the two data. Therefore, the researcher would like to up these subjects to be the researcher's central issues of this study.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, this research would like to answer the following questions:

1. What types of implicature are found in the captions of the selected Asian hate memes?
2. How are the implicatures used to convey meanings in the selected Asian hate memes ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This part of the introduction will provide the goals and ideas that would be useful for conducting the studies; the researcher intends to accomplish the project, summarise the project's approach and purpose and help focus on the research.

1. To discuss types of implicature are found in the captions of the selected Asian hate memes.
2. To discuss the implicatures used to convey meanings in the selected Asian hate memes.

1.4 Significance of the Study

By conducting this research, the researcher hopes to be able to provide valuable information both theoretical and practical about implied meaning and sign on selected Asian memes to the readers. Theoretically, this study is expected to give contribution to discourse analysis in implicature on selected Asian hate memes; therefore, it can be another complete source of information to collect for other researchers who are interested in the same subjects.

This study also practically analyzes the data results of selected Asian hate memes using implicature by Grice (1975) in analyzing the captions of the memes on instagram, context and presupposition are essential in this study to fully

capture the implicature of the memes. The researcher hopes this research will increase interest in conducting other research on the same topics .

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is the theories used in conducting the study, which are implicature (Grice, 1975) to analyze the captions of the memes. The researcher conducted this study purposely to identify the meaning in each captions and images of selected Asian Hate Memes. The researcher limits the study to the memes topic about Asian hate memes on instagram posts by @politicallyasianpodcast from January 25 2023 to April 29 2023 with ‘#stopasianhate’ as the key word in their posts. The reason for the theme is that there is no other article that studies this specific topic.