University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Communication on the Internet: Memes and Participatory Culture, PG_00205922						
Field of study	Chinese Studies						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026		Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027			
Education level	Bachelor's studies		Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Optional subject group			
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery	at the university			
Year of study	1		Language of instruction	Polish			
Semester of study	2		ECTS credits	2.0			
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form	credit			
Conducting unit							
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr Aleksandra Klimkiewicz				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30		2.0		18.0	50
Subject objectives	The course aims to familiarize students with the mechanisms of contemporary online communication understood as a form of participatory culture (Web 2.0), in which content is not merely transmitted but is continuously created, transformed, remixed, and reinterpreted by users. Particular emphasis is placed on: the analysis of internet memes as units of cultural communication; understanding the concept of folklore in both its traditional sense and its transformation into digital (online) folklore; identifying the mechanisms underlying the creation, circulation, and dissemination of viral content, including memes, copypastas, and hashtags; examining phenomena such as absurd memes, non-linear humor, and post-ironic forms of communication.						

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[SINL3_K01] Is ready to critically evaluate the knowledge acquired during Sinology studies and the content corresponding to that knowledge.	The student is able to critically assess their own knowledge and is capable of reflectively relating it to the content analysed within the field of online communication and digital culture.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion
[SINL3_U08] Is able to plan and organize work both individually and as part of a team.	The student is able to plan and organise both individual and team work in the analysis and development of issues related to online communication and digital culture, including memes, digital folklore, and other forms of online communication.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion
[SINL3_W03] Knows and understands, at an advanced level, the methodologies, theories, and terminology that constitute the fundamental general knowledge in the field of the humanities and related disciplines.	The student knows and understands the methodologies and terminology from the fields of communication studies and digital culture necessary for the analysis of online communication phenomena, including memes, digital folklore, and other forms of contemporary online communication.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[SINL3_U05] Is able to present various opinions and positions in both oral and written form, evaluate them, and engage in discussion.	The student is able to present various positions and interpretations concerning phenomena of online communication, as well as to analyse, evaluate, and discuss them using basic concepts from communication studies.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion

Subject contents

1. Communication and online participation: interpersonal communication in digital environments, virtual spaces of communication, transformations of communication models from Web 1.0 to Web 5.0, participatory culture and Text 2.0.
2. Carnivalesque communication in digital culture: Bakhtin’s concept of carnival, laughter as a social practice, inversion of hierarchies, grotesque, parody, and transgression of norms in online communication.
3. Folklore and internet folklore: classical and contemporary approaches to folklore, digital folklore, memes as units of internet folklore, hashtags and collective narrative formations in online spaces.
4. Internet memes and their typologies: simple, complex, and absurd memes; Polish and global meme cultures; image macros, rage faces, demotivators, and copypastas.
5. Language and emotions in online communication: transformations of internet language, emotional communication, aggression and vulgarization in online environments, emoticons, emojis, and kaomoji.
6. Intertextuality and cyberculture: cultural remix, intertextuality and intervisuality, circulation of images and symbols online, functions of hashtags.
7. Memes as tools of social discourse: stereotypes, representations of social groups, political, media, and religious discourse in internet culture.
8. Internet humor: theories of humor and comedy, absurd and post-ironic humor, “dad jokes” and copypastas, online communities of laughter, and mechanisms of virality in humorous content.

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Knowledge Test	51.0%	100.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature

1. Bachtin M., Twórczość Franciszka Rabelais'go a kultura ludowa średniowiecza i renesansu, przeł. A. i A. Goreniowie, Wydaw. Literackie, Kraków 1995.
2. Bergson H., Śmiech. Esej o komizmie. Tł. S. Cichowicz, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1977.
3. Brodie R., Wirus umysłu: Nowa nauka o memach, przeł. P. Turski, Te Ta Publishing, Łódź 1997, s. 41.
4. Burkacka I., Intertekstualnosc współczesnej komunikacji. Memy a teksty kultury, „Poznańskie Spotkania Językoznawcze”, 2016, nr, 32, s. 75–91.
5. Camus A., Mit Syzyfa, przeł. J. Guze, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1999, s. 21-29.
6. Dawkins R., Samolubny gen, przeł. Marek Skoneczny, Warszawa 2006.
7. Gajewski K., Mem internetowy jako gatunek wypowiedzi, [w:] Z teorii i praktyki komunikacji społecznej. Stan i rozwój badań w Polsce, Libron, Kraków 2018.
8. Godlewska E., Emocje w sieci. Ekspresywność wybranych memów internetowych. [w:] Odkrywanie słowa – historia i współczesność. Sokólska U., (Ed.). Białystok 2015.
9. Shifman L., Memes in Digital Culture, The MIT Press, Cambrige, Massachusetts, London 2014.

	Supplementary literature	1. Juza M., Memy internetowe – tworzenie, rozpowszechnianie, znaczenie społeczne. „Studia Medioznawcze” 2013, nr 4, s. 44–60. 2. Piskorz K., Internetowe memy – hieroglify XXI wieku, [w:] Współczesne media. Język mediów. Hofman I., Kepa-Figura D., (Ed.). Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin, 2013. 3. Śliz A., Demotywator — emblemat kultury uczestnictwa? (wokół problemów definicyjnych memów oraz memów internetowych), „Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich”, LVII z.1, 2014, s. 152–165.
	eResources addresses	
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed		
Work placement	Not applicable	

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