

Use of Memes: A Comparison Between Japan and America

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Outline

- Research Questions
- Research Background
 - Definition of a Meme
 - Examples of Memes
 - History of Memes
 - Memes & Social Media
- Bibliography

Research Questions

1. What are the differences in Japanese and American students' perceptions and opinions on memes?
2. What cultural differences influence the variety of memes created in Japan versus America?



Definition of a Meme 1

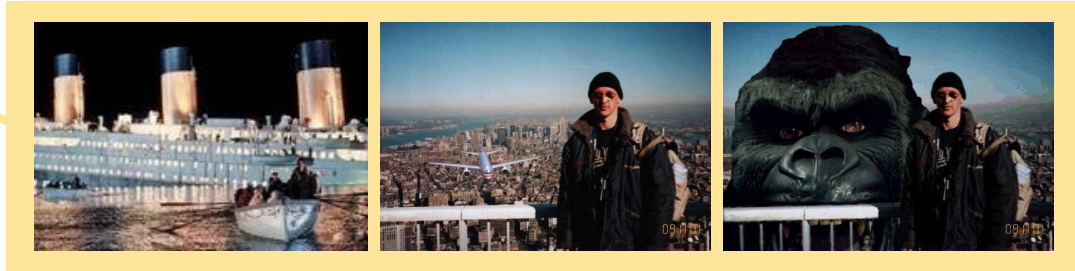
Mimema = Ancient Greek, “something imitated” (Börzsei, 2013)

Internet Meme = the posting, sharing, and remixing digital content to communicate jokes, emotions, & opinions

(Rosa-Carrillo, 2015)



1. **High fidelity static memes** = replicated with very little variation
2. **Remixed memes** = replicated via evolution, adaptation, & transformation of original (Knobel, 2005)



Examples of Memes

Successful memes = ‘meta-memes’ (aka memeplexes); memes that construct the overall belief system & fall within a currently acceptable set of norms, standards, beliefs, or practice for a given context (Waddock, 2015)

Example: “Qi Attack” aka “Makankosappo” aka “Hadokening” (Know Your Meme, 2016)



Based on the invisible qi-force attack used by characters in the game *Street Fighter* and anime *Dragonball Z*.

Began in Japan, but became an international internet meme.

Variation Process

“Qi Attack” Meme



Original Photo (posted on Twitter)



Western Adaptation



Gamer Version



Star Wars Version



Music Version

History of Memes



1980s

First meme = emoticon (Börzsei, 2013)

Use of word “meme” to describe units of cultural evolution (Dawkins, 1989)

1990s

Photoshop makes creation of memes easier

Modern remixed memes appear (Börzsei, 2013)

2000s

Increased use of Internet = increased number of memes (Börzsei, 2013)

“Meme” emerges in mainstream language (Rosa-Carrillo, 2015)

Websites dedicated to cataloging Memes arise (Börzsei, 2013)

History of Memes: 1980s

1980s

1982

First meme = emoticons created by Scott Fahlman

Entertain as well as convey complex ideas & emotional states

:DD	Happy smiley face	:- (Don't take it seriously
+< -)	Knight	5:-)	Elvis Presley
:-F	Bucktooth vampire with a missing tooth mustache,	C=};>*{))	Drunk, devilish chef with a toupee, & a double-chin

1989

Richard Dawkin's *The Selfish Gene* = first use of the word "meme"

Meme = Units of culture hosted in minds of more than one person and can reproduce itself, therefore jumping from mind to mind

History of Memes: 1990s

1990s

1990-4

Adobe Photoshop released
Layers make **manipulating images easier**



Adobe
Photoshop

1997

First modern remixed meme = “Bert is Evil” by Dino Ignacio



1998-9

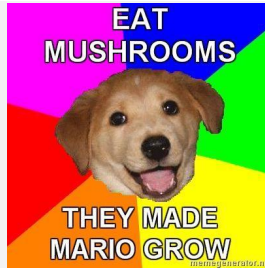
Easily add text to images in Photoshop
“**Save for Web**” **adjusts image size & quality** for Internet use

History of Memes: 2000s

2000s

2000 Improved Ps interface makes it easy for anyone to make a meme
Widespread access to Internet begins (Börzsei, 2013)

2006 Large number of pet photos leads to animal-based memes (Börzsei, 2013)



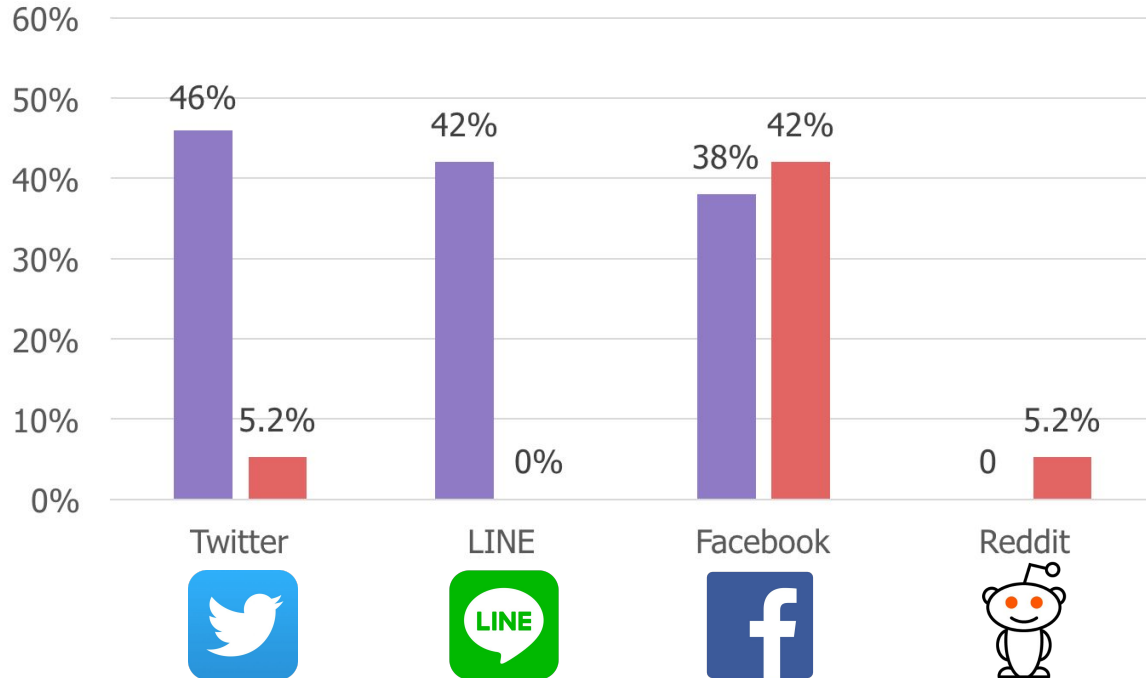
2009 Word "meme" emerges in mainstream language (Rosa-Carrillo, 2015)

2012 Websites dedicated to cataloging Memes arise (Börzsei, 2013)

Mememes & Social Media 1

Top 3 Social Media Platforms

■ Japan ■ America



Americans mainly use:

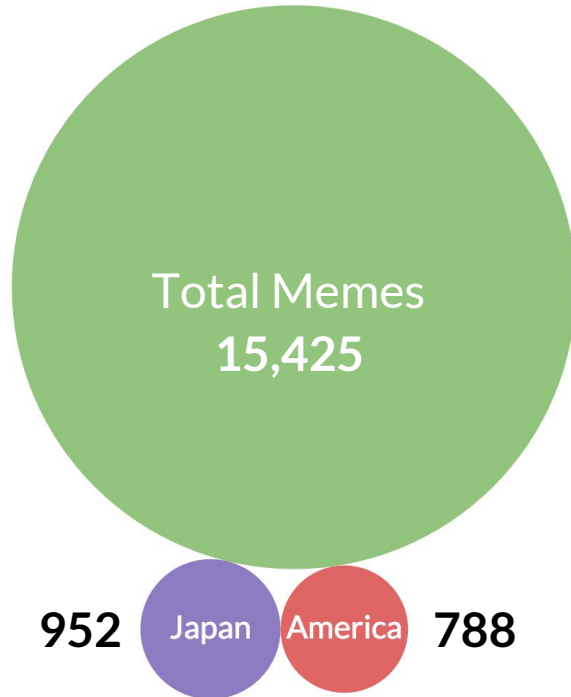
Facebook

Japanese use **multiple** sites:

Facebook, Twitter, & LINE

Mememes & Social Media 2

Mememes Tagged “Japan” & “America”



Of 15,425 documented mememes, only a small percentage are acknowledged as “Japan” or “America.”



Not much consciousness on where mememes originate.

Research Method

Respondents

- Total: 60 University Students (ages 17-32+)
 - 30 Japanese
 - 15 Male
 - 15 Female
 - 30 American
 - 15 Male
 - 15 Female

Survey

- Google Forms survey
 - English survey
 - Japanese Survey
- Total: 23 questions

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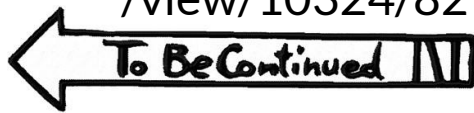
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4

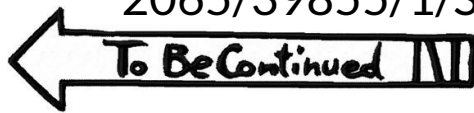
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