

# **Memes and Meme Communication within Online Game Communities on Social Media: Reddit and Facebook**

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## **ABSTRACT**

With their increasing popularity, memes have been extensively studied in academia but mainly refined to a single context, such as politics and gender. In this regard, this study examines meme interactions within online game communities that encompass complicated contexts to get deeper and more comprehensive insights into memes and meme communication through a theoretical lens of information domains (Burnett, 2015) and boundary objects (Star & Griesemer, 1989). Two online game groups related to League of Legends on Reddit and Facebook were chosen, considering their global popularity and diverse sociocultural in-game content. To reflect both creators' and readers' perspectives, 1,671 memes were directly collected through a two-month observation of the communities, and 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the student-run online game organization members at the Florida State University. The quantitative and qualitative content analyses were conducted for the collected memes and interview data. The results showed similarities in topics, major information values, and the typical format of memes between the memes and interview analysis. However, there was a difference in users' information behaviors with memes, such as reactions to offline events. The findings also showed that even communities centered on the same online game can differ in scale and culture, involving various contexts. Consequently, the themes and content employed in memes, as well as the patterns of information behavior around their use, can vary significantly.

# **ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Social media; Information use; Specific populations.

## **AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Memes; Online game communities; Information domains; Boundary objects.

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