

Analysis of Network Catchwords from the Perspective of Cross-Cultural Communication

Yaru Ben

School of Journalism and Communication, Beijing Sport University, Beijing, China

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Abstract: As a product of the Internet age, the research of network catchwords is very complicated. This paper mainly analyzes the network catchwords from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. Based on Saussure's linguistics and Bourdieu's field theory, the concept is analyzed. This paper analyzes the text characteristics of network catchwords from five aspects and explains the gains and limitations of different characteristics on the cross-cultural communication and transmission of network catchwords. This paper argues that the reasons for the emergence of network catchwords include the expression of emotions and ideas, resistance to the mainstream culture and power class, the carnival of language, and the construction of identity. Network catchwords are conducive to cultural exchanges and the birth of new language norms, but negative network catchwords will also harm Internet Ecology, impact traditional language, and affect people's mental health. It should correctly understand and use network catchwords.

1 INTRODUCTION

Driven by the wave of the Internet age, Internet catchwords, as an important part of Internet culture, have rapidly spread and become popular among netizens with the characteristics of simplicity, humor, novelty, and diversity. They not only enrich people's daily communication and expression but also reflect many changes in social culture and values. There has been a lot of controversy since the emergence of network catchwords, and there is no unified definition of the concept of network catchwords in the academic community. The generation, transmission, and extinction mechanism of network catchwords, as well as the cultural connotation and social impact behind them, have always been complex and worthy of in-depth exploration. Based on the perspective of cross-cultural communication, this paper analyzes the concept and characteristics of network catchwords, analyzes the multiple causes of their formation and development, and explores their value and significance in linguistics, sociology, culturology, and other dimensions.

2 THE CONCEPT AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NETWORK CATCHWORDS

2.1 Concept Discrimination

Network buzzwords are generally classified under the narrow definition framework of network language, which refers to the text form that is spontaneously created by Internet users, received and spread on a large scale, and reached a certain frequency and influence in a specific period. According to Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of "language and speech", network catchwords are a kind of "speech" rather than "language", which is the conventional way of individual speech of netizens participating in the production of network text content. They are vivid and personalized, which is different from the "language" as a norm, convention, and even social system.

Different from the real social catchwords, Internet catchwords are born in the network field. Bourdieu believes that this field is a network space with objective relationships among various positions, and has its unique logic and rules in this relatively independent social space (Bourdieu, 1998). The network field has the characteristics of

"decentralization". Network buzzwords can transcend time and space constraints, and realize information transmission and sharing more quickly and widely. Its origin and transmission node can be any netizen in theory. At the same time, cyberspace belonging to different platforms, countries, and regions has connectivity, and network buzzwords can often spread to all corners of the Internet, and gradually be closely linked with the lives of network participants to achieve cross-cultural communication and dissemination. Network catchwords not only exist in the network field but also are not born in a single cultural context. The boundary of the field is increasingly blurred.

2.2 Characteristics of Network Buzzwords

2.2.1 Popularity and Modernity

From the perspective of communication characteristics, network catchwords are popular and contemporary. The network catchwords are constantly updated and iterated. The network language is divided by popularity and forms the network catchwords. Jinsong, a linguist, believes that the future of catchwords is ultimately the disappearance and acceptance. "Disappear" means to be eliminated in use, and "accepted" means to enter the general vocabulary. No matter what kind of future, it can no longer be called "popular". Therefore, network catchwords often exist in a specific period, and can reflect the public psychology and social changes to a certain extent. The national language resources testing and Research Center (Chinese media buzzwords), the editorial department of biting words, language weekly, and other organizations will issue annual buzzwords every year, which can be seen as a highly condensed and refined summary of the annual Internet hotspots. For example, "loucuicui (it is used to describe shoddy construction)", "duo maomao (hide and seek)", "My father is Ligang", "Zhenxiang Law", "Tiktok Refugee", etc. In the globalized Internet field, such network buzzwords are conducive to the construction of unique cultural symbols.

2.2.2 Diversity and Compatibility

From the perspective of content sources, network catchwords cover a wide range from changes in national policies to individual trivia. Whether it is "CD-ROM", "double reduction", "carbon peaking and carbon neutralization", "digital intelligence",

"diking economy", "xianyanbao", "dazi", "banwei", there are both grand narratives selected by mainstream media and collective wisdom spontaneously created by netizens. Network buzzwords can come from different network communities and interest circles. Some of the words derived from the small circle layer can be applied to different contexts through the extension of meaning, and ultimately gain national recognition and achieve "breaking the circle". For example, the meaning of "C wei (center)" derived from the fandom has been greatly expanded from "stage position". The diversity of network catchwords is also reflected in the mixing of different languages, and the network catchwords that integrate multiple languages gradually occupy a place. For example, "Ni You freestyle Ma (do you have a freestyle)", "City bu City", etc. Taking "City bu City" as an example, this online catchphrase comes from blogger Baobao Xiong. As a multilingual user growing up and living in a multicultural environment, cultural differences bring differentiated experiences and trigger text production. Because the emotional concepts and interests contained in it can resonate with people from different cultural backgrounds, it can be spread in a cross-cultural environment (Zhang, 2024).

2.2.3 Innovation and Conciseness

From the perspective of word formation, Internet buzzwords are innovative and concise. To cope with the information society of massive data, shorten the time of receiving and decoding, communicate more conveniently and efficiently, and memorize and spread effectively and quickly, network text producers often want to refine a sentence into a short word or phrase. For example, the lyrics "life has been so hard, don't uncover some things" are abbreviated from "Ren Jian Bu Chai", and similar words include "Xi Da Pu Ben" and "Ye Qing Hui". In addition, Pinyin acronyms also occupy an important part in the current production of online buzzwords, which can improve the efficiency of keyboard input, but also increase the difficulty of text decoding, forming a certain barrier. For example, "yyds (describe someone or something that has been at the top for years)", "awsl (express one's great fondness for something)", "kswl (they are well matched)", etc. Some Internet buzzwords combine foreign languages with Chinese to form Chinese and foreign patchwork words, which are mostly used in spoken expressions in Hong Kong and other regions of China and can play a role in simplifying oral communication, such as "hold zhu", "da call", etc. This kind of Chinese and

foreign patchwork network catchwords often retain the original meaning of the two languages.

2.2.4 Vividness and Interest

From the perspective of rhetoric, the rhetoric of network catchwords is diverse, including homophony, metaphor, antithesis, thimble, intertextuality, etc. Among them, the network catchwords that use homophony are the most common. Some homophony words are caused by netizens' hand mistakes when using input methods, while others are deliberately associated with visual texts (such as expression packs). By simply re-coding the popular text content, humorous and interesting effects are formed, such as "beng bu zhu", "duo sun na", and so on. Homonyms can also be produced in the translation between China and foreign countries, such as Ruyi's translation of "no zuo no die", and the complete transliteration of "nao tai tao (not at all)", and "book si yi (incredible)".

2.2.5 Personalization and Entertainment

From the perspective of emotional color, network catchwords have the characteristics of personalization and emotional exaggeration. For example, "envy, jealousy, and hatred" expresses extreme envy through the stacking of synonyms, and "I am too hard/South" reflects helplessness. Some network catchwords refine the keywords of the characters in the hot events, which has the effect of satire and ridicule, or through the hot events, a familiar and common word is given new meaning. For example, "beating soy sauce" came from a TV interview. When the reporter asked a question, the passer-by said he didn't care about a certain event, but just came out to beat soy sauce. Therefore, "beating soy sauce" has been given a new connotation similar to "hanging high over nothing". There are also "I don't want you to think I want me to think" and so on. The network catchwords created based on the semantic method have barriers in the process of cross-cultural communication because they are multi-coded.

3 REASONS FOR THE FORMATION OF NETWORK CATCHWORDS

3.1 Expression of Emotions and Ideas

As a perceptual communication vocabulary, netizens use this to express their emotions and attitudes, obtain

psychological release and comfort, expect to reach more people's understanding and resonance and build an emotional symbiosis. Netizens use network catchwords to express their views on all aspects of life, such as work, life, and emotion. As the main body of Internet users, teenagers pursue exaggerated and personalized expressions and experience novel lifestyles. Internet buzzwords are undoubtedly a tool for their discourse construction. Internet buzzwords used by netizens to express their emotions are usually straightforward and strong, with clear love and hate. They tend to overreact in the face of strange news, which is the externalization of the "shock feeling" of the modern cultural industry. When the feeling of shock has become a universal and basic form of perception, the threshold of people's satisfaction with novelty seeking and stimulation has also increased imperceptibly, and the network catchwords inevitably become vulgar and boring.

3.2 Resistance to Mainstream Culture and Power Class

Network catchwords are the product of the integration of postmodern culture and popular culture. The core spirit of postmodernism is to defy all authoritarian metalanguage and attempt to eradicate the tyranny of words in the social and cultural fields (Lyotard, 1996). The postmodernity of network catchwords is reflected in the fact that there are few language expressions that look up to worship. In the production process, from the perspective of civilians, it changes and deconstructs the traditional word formation mode, is not limited to the production of patterned, standardized, and authoritative texts, pursues the communication perspective of equality, and advocates individuality and freedom. As a cultural symbol, network catchwords have a strong style to announce the differences from the mainstream society, convey unique styles and opinions, and vent dissatisfaction and exclusion. In addition, Internet buzzwords weaken the differences between the elders and children of traditional Confucian ethics, and cyberspace also blurs the differences in gender, identity, status, and age of netizens, making it difficult to abide by traditional etiquette and ethics, and building a relatively free and equal space for resistance. However, with the expansion of the spread scope of network catchwords and the increasing social influence, national institutions and commercial forces began to participate in the production and use of network catchwords, and the network catchwords originally classified as youth subculture gradually became the potential wrestling field between the

government and netizens, the mainstream culture and youth subculture.

3.3 Language Game and Carnival

Network catchwords are a kind of nonprofessional text with humor, entertainment, and ridicule. Through a variety of interesting changes to the traditional language norms, the game of communication is established in the network field. The text production methods of network catchwords mainly include the use of homophony, collage and disassembly, merger and abbreviation, and meaning assignment. There are parodies and adaptations of classics, as well as the creation of new words, the construction of new meanings, and the input of new contexts. Through subversive deconstruction, netizens can achieve the purpose of entertainment and ridicule. At the same time, in the face of various social pressures and social problems brought about by rapid economic development and continuous social progress, the anxiety of netizens can be relieved through relatively open and loose network catchwords, and some objective social problems such as corruption and bean curd dregs project can also be exposed and spread, thus highlighting the living conditions of netizens and the general public mentality. In addition, according to John Fiske's "productive pleasure" theory, netizens can stimulate their intelligence and gain a sense of pleasure and achievement in the process of text production by spoofing themselves or others (Fiske, 2003). Network catchwords are spread in the process of game writing, and its creators and users take this opportunity to "escape" from reality for a short time and express themselves freely and equally.

3.4 Construction of Identity

Internet catchwords are a product of people's Liberation from self-consciousness and attention to self-power and social hot spots (Man, 2023). It can help netizens build self-identity, identity, and social identity. In essence, it is an identity of resistance and negotiation.

First, is self-identity. Netizens can find their sense of existence, recognize their creativity, and achieve self-identity by creating and using network catchwords in the network field (Wu & Yin, 2023). This sense of identity is not only the affirmation of self but also the confirmation of the value and significance of individual existence (Cai, 2022).

Second, identity and group identity. Social constructivism believes that identity is usually shaped and constantly influenced by the social environment

(Berger & Lukman, 2019), which is given from the outside to the inside. Network catchwords can help individuals find their "tribe", obtain the strength and sense of belonging to the group, and feel the company, identity, and support. This identity is actively constructed by individuals themselves under the premise of external influence and is a self-advertised identity and label. For example, "da gong ren (migrant workers)" let the majority of office workers find resonance in self-mockery, and gathered netizens with common characteristics and experiences. Network catchwords can also be used as the symbolic representation of a subculture circle. Different subculture circles are condensed because of "interest". All styles and interesting cultures, to some extent, express a general tendency to seek and shape identity outside the field of work (Baldwin, 2004). Through the use of these symbols, individuals express their identity with the subculture, show their interests, and construct their subculture identity. The agreed shared language within the group is separated from the mainstream society and can be used to "call" each other in a larger space.

Third, social identity. The rise of network catchwords to social identity that can arouse the common feelings and collective memories of the public often depends on the reproduction of discourse practice by the mass media. Mass media and key opinion leaders (KOL) reach a universal standard in a sense by secondary construction, expansion, and distribution of the meaning of network buzzwords. First, according to the "markedness theory" of Erving Goffman, the purpose of "stigmatization" is achieved by linking some network buzzwords with non-standard ones, such as "xiao niu wen xue (chick literature)", "nv si ji (female driver)", "she chu", etc. The second is to rewrite the text with negative meaning through "semantic appreciation", to weaken the resistance and negativity of the text, such as "pain and happiness", or expand the scope of concepts, and raise the positive vocabulary to the values generally recognized at the ideological level, such as "zheng neng liang (positive energy)". Third, through "memory expansion", the memory of a group is raised to the memory of people of a time, and the group identity is shaped into social identity, which often appears in film and television works or cultural industrial products with diachronic characteristics. Some catchwords also reflect netizens' identification with mainstream society, which is often a social identity spontaneously formed based on patriotism and national pride, such as "Florist" (Wu, 2021).

Fourth, the coexistence of negotiation and resistance. Resistance identity is mainly reflected in

the resistance to the mainstream culture and power class mentioned above, which will not be repeated here. In some cases, network buzzwords are also used to negotiate and reconcile the relationship between different groups, to build a more harmonious social identity. Some network buzzwords were "incorporated" into negotiation and compromise. According to Herbert Dick's theory, the way of incorporation mainly depends on ideology and commercialization (Hebdige, 2002). The former mainly relies on the state machinery, media, schools, etc. to purge and weaken, while the latter, such as "sang wen hua (funeral culture)" and other negative cultural symbols, frequently appear in commercial advertisements and cultural industrial products, and resistance is blurred again.

4 INFLUENCE AND PROSPECT OF NETWORK CATCHWORDS

4.1 Positive Impact

From the perspective of cultural communication, network catchwords, especially multilingual network catchwords, are conducive to cultural communication and mutual learning. For example, the popularity of "LOL" and "emo" on the Chinese Internet has enhanced mutual understanding and integration of Chinese and foreign cultures, promoted friendship and cooperation between different cultures, and is conducive to the development of globalization.

From the perspective of pragmatic development, network buzzwords have also spawned new language norms in the process of network communication. For example, "good good study, day day up." and "you can you up, no can no bee bee." were originally nonstandard expressions in English, but they have gradually been recognized and incorporated into the vocabulary of daily use.

4.2 Negative Impacts

From the perspective of social stability, there are malicious insults in network catchwords, which will affect the communication ecology of network language and breed network violence. Negative network buzzwords often use homonyms, abbreviations, metaphors, or decomposition and reconstruction to turn praise into criticism, impacting the health and civilization of the network. From a cross-cultural perspective, some insulting Internet buzzwords have been eliminated and entertained due

to language barriers, which seems to have reduced their harmfulness and also contributed to the spread to some extent. The youth group among netizens, whose world outlook and values are not yet mature, are vulnerable to such words.

From the perspective of cultural development, network catchwords affect pragmatic norms and people's normal language communication and formal written expression. Some younger netizens are "rotten stems" when they speak. The unique word formation of Internet catchwords, although vivid, is often not accepted on formal occasions. On the one hand, the traditional culture adapted by the second innovation can be inherited and spread innovatively. On the other hand, it will lead to semantic distortion and ambiguity, improper use, and sometimes even the opposite meaning. In the process of dialogue between different cultures, some excellent traditional cultures also lost their "aura", seriousness, and self-discipline, resulting in misunderstanding and differentiation.

From the perspective of public psychology, decadent social culture is spread through negative network catchwords, which affect people's psychological state, such as "tang ping (lying flat)", "nei juan (rolling inside)", "kong xin ren (hollow man)", "jing shen nei hao (spiritual internal friction)", etc. Self-mocking network catchwords will affect people's self-awareness under social pressure, making it difficult to face life with a positive attitude.

This paper argues that, overall, there is a positive trend in the development of online buzzwords. As for the regulation and governance of negative Internet buzzwords, it is necessary to strengthen the constraints and restrictions of the corresponding rules and regulations and use algorithm technology to restrict and guide minor Internet users with a clean Internet communication atmosphere.

5 CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization and media, in an increasingly open and inclusive Internet environment, the integration and exchange of different cultures have become an inevitable trend. As an important part of the Internet text production process, network catchwords are a cultural phenomenon that is highly characteristic and can not be ignored in the Internet era. The research on their generation, dissemination, and development needs to be discussed in combination with different dimensions such as politics, society, and culture. As one of the distinctive and unique types of cross-cultural network catchwords, it has played an important role in cultural

exchanges, social harmony, and common development, and will evolve into more diverse forms in the future.

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