# *Analysis on the Expression Approach of Network Language from the Perspective of New Media*

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*Abstract:* New Media is a new form of media compared with the traditional one. In the context of the current development of new media, social activities based on mobile phones are becoming more and more frequent, and Internet slang is constantly evolving; from the earliest digital symbols, emotion icons and pictures to today's pictures and emoticons with text. This kind of change reflects that in the new media era, communicative language has entered an age of picture reading, and the ideographic function of language has been better interpreted in the form of "picture + text". Readability and visibility are combined in the perspective of new media, which better interprets the ideographic nature of Chinese characters and interprets the fresh vitality of Chinese culture.

## 1. Introduction

The era of omni-media is a big trend, and the development of media convergence is a big story. In the 21st century when technology and science witnessing rapid development, the improvement of the speed of network communication makes the transmission and reception of information appear faster, more diversified, more interactive, more multidimensional and so on. In this context, as the carrier of culture, language faces the tests from new media in terms of the stability of morphological form and the historicity of semantic connotation. On the one hand, from the perspective of grammar, some lexical structures with fixed collocations face the challenge of compactness. To be specific, homophony, abbreviation, metaphor and deconstruction are widely used, making the words such as" 疫不容辞"(one's obligation to fight the pandemic), "云吸猫" (appreciating others' cats online), "丧" (being depressed), "喵了个咪"(dog my cats) and "惊不惊喜"(surprised or not) etc. appear in a large number of media expressions, with a high frequency of use. For example, users of Bilibili (video website) have sent 1.4 billion real-time comments in total in 2019, among which "AWSL (literally means "I am dead" and is an expression of being amazed)" ranks first and had been sent for 3.29 million times.[1] These words and phrases may reflect that younger generations are seeking for spiritual comfort and identity. On the other hand, from the perspective of pragmatics, language supported by new media is often reorganized and integrated with other approaches of expression. For instance, in the age of picture reading, the expression approach of picture plus text not only breaks the single form of pure picture presentation, but also improves the visualization and visibility of pure text narration, and its effect of expression and meaning is more than either side of the two. Another example is the application of VR and AI technology in life. This multi-dimensional integration of vision, hearing and feeling can be said to be one of the most characteristic symbiosis

between language and culture of the times.

## 2. Background of New Media

New Media is a new form of media compared with the traditional media, and a kind of globalized media, supported by digital compression and wireless network technology, can cross geographical boundaries by virtue of its large capacity, real-time capability and interactivity. [2] Mobile phones, televisions and computers are the mobile terminals of new media communication, which are represented by digital newspapers, digital radio, digital television, short messages, network and other media. The perspective of new media means seeing the development of language and culture in new media. Everything is endowed with new vitality and characteristics by new media.

As of June 2018, statistics show that China has more than 800 million Internet users, of whom 98.3 percent are mobile Internet users. To some extent, those who grasps Internet will grasp the initiative of the times. [3] Among these mobile phone users, quite a few are younger generations. According to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics on January 17, China's inland population exceeded 1.4 billion by the end of 2019, among which 896.4 million people aged between 16 and 59 were working, accounting for 64.0% of the total population. Such a huge group of young adults are wrapped by media with their thoughts and actions influencing all aspects of the country. It can be seen that the development of new media is actually the demand and the trend of the times.

Currently, China's new media is taking an air of prosperity. According to the "Chinese Media Mobile Communication Index Report" published annually by People's Daily Online, in the past five years (2015-2019), the percentage of Weibo, WeChat, Juhe New APP, We Media APP and Video APP is on the rise year by year in the indicator system change of mobile communication of newspapers and websites. It can be seen that the new media is developing rapidly. [4]

## 3. Transformation of the Expression Approach of Network Language

Characters came into being after language. For a long period, the expression of culture relied on writing and speaking. With the emergence of convergence media, the traditional expression of language has been dismantled. The sound, shape and meaning can be aggregated or discrete, and can also be combined with the sound, light, electricity and pictures, showing the diversity of expression. Cultural expression approaches are diverse, which not only do not eliminate the ideographic function of words, but reflect the closeness of the combination of appearance and meaning of characters, and expand the multi-dimensional symbiosis and coexistence of language and culture.

The emergence of new media influences more on the expression approaches of language and culture. Traditional pens and paper were replaced by keyboards and screen input. Traditional oral language was recorded by keyboards, forming digital network language.

### 3.1 The Expression Approach of Traditional Language

For traditional expression approach, characters and pictures are independent. The expression approach of pure characters is precise and logical in grammar and can produce subaudition by changing the order of characters. Tang poems and Song verses are good examples in this regard. The change and the repetition of characters in poems can create beautiful artistic conception, such as "香稻啄馀鹦鹉粒,碧梧栖老凤凰枝" (The rice is left by the parrot, and the green Chinese parasol is where the phoenix once lived) and"寻寻觅觅,冷冷清清,凄凄惨惨戚戚"(I look for what I

miss; I know not what it is. I feel so sad, so drear, So lonely, without cheer). By reversing the order and stacking the characters, the poems create a beautiful artistic conception and arouse people's imagination.

## 3.2 The Expression Approach of Network Language

Great linguist Ferdinand de Saussure believed that language is a kind of symbol. Semiotics holds that everything in life is a symbol. Zhao Yiheng deemed that symbols are perceptions carrying with meanings. Since its birth, network language has paid much attention to the ideographic function of symbols. Network language had its debut as the expression form of Internet emoticons which replaced characters with numbers on the keyboard. Later, emoji appeared and also used by selecting keyboard buttons. This period can be called the period of emoticons. (see figure 1) The second revolution of network language is the use of graphic emoticons. In this period, impressing pictures placed characters and words, for example: "黑人问号脸" (the confusing face of a black man) and "小胖子"(the little fatty). This period can be called the period of picture seeing. (see figure 2) Currently, network language is experiencing the $3^{rd}$ revolution with the expression approach being "picture + text". In this phase, people enter an age of picture reading. (see figure 3)
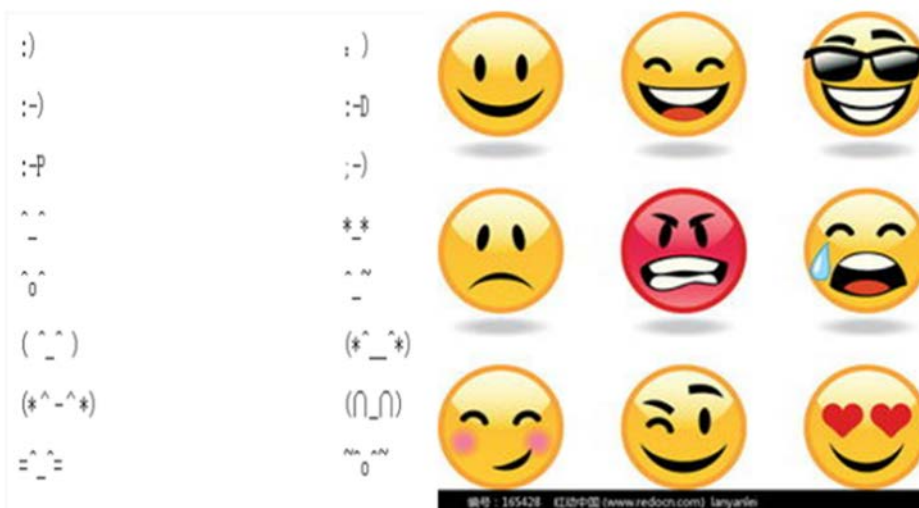


*Fig.1*



*Fig.2*

*Fig. 3*

## 3.3 The Expression Approach of Network Language in the Age of Picture Reading

In the age of picture reading, "reading" is the core and different with "picture seeing". That means it gives people a new way for interpreting the texts. Pictures have visual impact that can stimulate people's aesthetic imagination and make "flowers spill tears and birds feel soul stirring" ("感时花溅泪,恨别鸟惊心"). The following three questions are used to explain the transformation of language expression in the age of picture reading.

The first question: from picture seeing to picture reading, what benefits can this kind of transformation of expression bring? Some people think that with the development of the Internet, the age of picture reading is coming, sending a picture is more convenient and faster than typing a sentence. The picture is the way of aesthetic expression, whereas the text is the embodiment of logic. The combination of the two means the enhancement of logic and aesthetic. Therefore, the expression approach of "picture + text" can better meet the needs of people's cognition.

The second question: Does the age of picture reading mean the perish of the ideographic function of characters? the answer is no. On the contrary, the arrival of the age of picture reading just proves the strengthening of the ideographic function of characters. Just imagine, if a person who wants to express his mood to stay up late, if only send a picture to his friends without text explanation. They may feel confused. (see figure 4) But if his mood is presented by the combination of pictures and texts, (see figure 5) people can quickly and precisely know his mood and thoughts. In terms of effect, this kind of combination strengthens the accuracy and vividness of expression for the emoticon. "Cool and special" is the expression of each young person's individuality. The expression approach of picture reading can satisfy their appeals for being unique. The increasing number of downloads of all kinds of emoticons with pictures and pictures is the best illustration.

*Fig.4*



*Fig.5 Igure 5*

The last question: does language co-exist with culture in the period of picture reading? The answer is yes. The connotation of some picture emoticons itself needs to be interpreted in combination with certain cultural background. (see figure6) It requires people to take two approaches, namely reading and seeing, when using or interpreting pictures so as to find the best interpretation to combine pictures and words. This kind of expression approach combines the ideographic nature of language with the nature of pictures, and substituting different cultural elements into the content. For readers, only with certain cultural background knowledge can they understand the meaning of the pictures more deeply and thoroughly, and get a stronger reading pleasure at the same time.



*Fig.6 For Example, the Background in Figure 6 is Derived from the Outbreak of Covid-19 At the End of 2019.*

The Central Government of China Quickly Constructed Makeshift Hospitals Named Leishenshan and Huoshenshan in Wuhan to Treat Infected Patients. Academician Zhong Nanshan Also Called for Chinese People Staying At Home and Go out Less. as for the Images of Fire and Lightning and the Words of "Stay At Home Until I Allow You to Go out" ("我说动,才能动"), If People don't Know the Background of Covid-19, They can't Grasp the Meaning of These Pictures. Another Example is a Picture with Text, If People don't Have Enough Background Information, They can't Interpret the Meaning Behind the Picture.

## 4. Representation and Connotation of Network Language from the Perspective of New Media

Language is a symbol system that takes pronunciation as its physical shell (form), vocabulary as building materials and grammar as its structure. [5] For network language, such as words, pictures and emoticons, everything is the form and representation; and culture is the connotation hidden under the representation.

## 4.1 Representation and Connotation Are Rooted among People

People are the soil for nurturing language. Without people, language is like a tree without roots loosing vitality and nutrients. The occurrence of language is rooted in the people, and the inheritance of culture also cannot leave without the participation of people. The deposits of culture and language exist in every great folk fairy tales. The roots of language and culture can be found in every historical heritage. The inheritance and development of language and culture are presented in the intangible cultural heritages, and the vitality of language and culture is born under the breeding of new media.

The 3D "Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival" is an example of the successful transformation of traditional culture by the technology of Convergence media. Technologies such as 3D, streaming media and front-projected holographic display are combined to make every object and every person alive in the capital city of North Song Dynasty about 800 years ago. It's so vivid that making visitors temporarily absentminded, as if through time and space.

## 4.2 Representation and Connotation Enjoy Profound Historical Features

The greatest achievement of culture is the creation of characters. Through combining sound and meaning, characters are used to record language and serve as the explicit symbols of language. The reason for the lost Mayan civilization can be known and recognized by later generations lies on the existing Mayan alphabet. The once lost cuneiform created by ancient Sumerian was the important media of communication that was widely used in western Asia before Christ. But in the 19th Century, it was interpreted by people and became the best historical data for understanding the culture of Tigris and Euphrates.

It can be seen that the representation and connotation of language are intertwined. The coexistence of language and culture in essence is a relation of supplementing each other and can't be separated.

To sum up, new media is an emerging force. Convergence media is the general direction of the transformation of traditional media. By virtue of new media and network technologies, people reinterpret language as a communicative tool and hence usher in an age of picture reading, breaking the traditional two-dimensional form of language and showing three-dimensional effect. "sound + form + meaning" combines with pictures, becoming the comprehensive ideographical expression of "text + picture". It not only avoids the read-only nature of the pure text, but also avoids the unspeakable nature of the pure picture, which better interprets the core of the ideographic nature of the language.

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