The application of network buzzwords with "Pi" as the suffix

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Abstract: China's News Weekly announced the top 10 network buzzwords of 2021 at the end of 2021, including words that express the emotions of young people in the Internet age, such as "PoFang" (Be moved to tears), "EMO" and "YYDS", and words that contain policy changes in society, such as "Shuangjian" (Ease the burden of excessive homework and off-campus tutoring for students undergoing compulsory education), "Metaverse" , "Carbon neutrality" and "Zhurong". One particular Internet term, "Pi", dominates the Internet but has never been studied. Unlike the network buzzwords with "Zi" as the suffix, most of the words with "Pi" as the suffix have practical meaning, but cannot be expressed in public. This paper attempts to explore examples of the use of the character "Pi" in various linguistic contexts, and discusses from both linguistic and social perspectives why the use of "Pi" is so popular, and why the use of "PI" has never been studied.

1. Semantic exploration of "Pi"

A search on CNKI does not find any usage of the Chinese character "Pi" or "Bi". The Chinese Dictionary (Second Edition) shows that "Pi" has 11 meanings, most of which revolve around hitting and writing comments, while some indicate the use as a quantifier. The character "Bi" mostly means close or narrow, from which other meanings are derived. For example, in Zeng Yun · Zhi Yun, "Bi" means chase and drive out.   In fact, the etymology of "Bi" does not have the meaning given to it by the Internet environment. "Bi" is actually a homophone for "Bi" (a woman's external genitalia). In 2016, a master's thesis first involves the application of "Pi" and its homophones or letter substitutions on the Internet. The author of this thesis puts forward that there are 27 vulgar appellation terms related to "Bi" on the Internet in that year (Qin Liguo, 2016), among which "Bi" is not included. On Baidu, the word with "Bi" as its suffix can be traced back to a popular online sentence in 2017 "You Ju Hua Ma Mai Pi Bu Zhi Dang Jiang Bu Dang Jiang" (an expletive).   Prior to 2017, the character "Prior to 2017, the character "Pi" did not have any alternative meaning of the character "Bi".

2. Application of the network buzzword "Pi"

As early as more than 10 years ago, some scholars propose that one of the manifestations of network language is homophonic substitution (Wu Chuanfei, 2003). In the homophonic substitution, the use of **"Pi"** as an affix conveys different meanings in different online contexts. Li Qingyang states that there is a difference between crude terms and abusive terms, and that the form of expression of abusive language is to change with substitution words, which is only for netizens to express their desire for novelty and difference rather than to abuse or ridicule (Li Qingyang, 2013). However, I do not agree with Li Qingyang's understanding of crude terms and abusive terms and I always think that crude terms are included in abusive terms, which adopt homophonic substitution. However, from the network buzzword established by netizens, crude terms still contain certain insults and sarcasm.

2.1 Chinese homophone substitution

On Baidu, the application of **"Pi"** was first appeared in 2017 in a popular online sentence in 2017 "You Ju Hua Ma Mai Pi Bu Zhi Dang Jiang Bu Dang Jiang". In the Sichuan dialect, "Ma Mai Pi" is an extremely filthy term that means the mother of the reviled is a sex worker. When this online sentence suddenly became popular, it evolved into a habit for Internet users to say the whole sentence "You Ju Hua Ma Mai Pi Bu Zhi Dang Jiang Bu Dang Jiang" to express more excited emotions when they did not know whether to say it

properly on a sensitive topic. The most frequently mentioned pragmatic theory about understanding and respect in context is Leech's Politeness Principle and Grice's Cooperative Principle in 1983. On their basis, Brown and Levinson propose that politeness in interpersonal communication is to "Gei Mian Zi" (show respect to sb) and "Wan Hui Mian Zi" (Preserve one's honor or save one's dignity) to each other through different pragmatic strategies. In fact, the popular network phrase "You Ju Hua Ma Mai Pi Bu Zhi Dang Jiang Bu Dang Jiang", is a language strategy to "Wan Hui Mian Zi" and can be soothing in a situation where you don't know if it's offensive or when it's sensitive or awkward. From a linguistic point of view, the use of the idiom the idiom "Ma Mai Pi" can reflect that speakers are familiar with each other, and are mostly males. In fact, in this popular network sentence, whether there is "Ma Mai Pi", will not affect the semantics of the whole sentence, so it can be seen that most of the time, the character "Pi" does not have practical significance in this sentence, but is used to emphasize the mood, to render the atmosphere. But from the listener's point of view, these three characters "Ma Mai Pi" still have a certain ironic meaning. Thus, if the speaker is not to express a sarcastic attitude, he can directly delete the three characters and express as "You Ju Hua Bu Zhi Dang Jiang Bu Dang Jiang".

A scholar points out that from the perspective of pragmatic function, "Nei Juan" and "Tang Ping" are emotionally negative words with catharsis effect (Xie Xiaoxuan, 2021). Besides, another scholar claims that the popularity of "Nei Juan" is due to Netizens' psychology of following the crowd, and pursuing novelty and difference in language (Zhang Qian, 2022). However, in terms of linguistic meaning, "Nei Juan" itself is not vulgar or ironic, so it does not an abusive term. However, the usage of "Pi" as an affix appeared as early as 2017 and has been circulating for five years now, but no scholars have conducted relevant studies on it in the field of linguistics so far. This is probably because it is an abusive term, and scholars are embarrassed to mention it.

2.2 English transliteration substitution

In some Internet slang like "Wab Pen Pi", "Pi" is a transliteration of the English letter "P/p". CP is the abbreviation of the English word couple, which is interpreted in the Oxford Dictionary as: two people of things; a small number of people or things; and two people who are seen together, especially if they are married or in a romantic or sexual relationship. "Wab Pen Pi" evolves from two stars in a boy band who were combined by netizens, known as "Wab Pen CP". In a master's thesis, it is proposed that by pairing two people together, netizens can get the pleasure of vicarious participation, which is also a kind of emotional catharsis (Yan Yimeng, 2019). Moreover, it can be seen that the majority of netizens generally believe that "Pi" is not a particularly friendly word, so it can be understood that in the network context, "Pi" has a double referential meaning. And this kind of behavior of "Ke CP" (it means that fans show their support to screen lovers or couples they like) and the culture of chasing stars have been criticized by some netizens, which can prove that "Pi" in the application of English transliteration substitution also has a certain irony meaning.

3. Reasons for the popularity of "Pi" and the research status of Chinese "dirty words"

3.1 Pragmatic mentality of Netizens towards "Pi"

The popularity of "Pi" is not due to the introduction of foreign English words, nor to the expansion and extension of the original word, but a social and cultural reflection of the netizens' rebellion against the mainstream culture and pursuit of freedom of speech. Subculture refers to the negative resistance to and deviation from mainstream culture in the context of social transformation and contradiction, which makes network catchwords become an important linguistic feature of minors (Huang Ruolin, 2020). Most of the Internet buzzwords are derogatory. With network buzzwords, netizens can express their language freedom in the virtual world, vent their dissatisfaction with the society and release their pressure. "Pi", whether in the form of "Chinese homophone substitution" or "English transliteration substitution", is a network abusive terms conveying negative and ironic emotions.

3.2 Research attitude of scholars to abusive terms

Searching on CNKI, it can be found that there is a lack of researches on network abusive words and

Chinese abusive terms (dirty words), and the literature is cited no more than 100 times. It was not until 2007 that Chinese scholars for the first time discussed the appropriateness of dirty words in special contexts, affirming their linguistic value (Zhang Faxiang, 2007). Later Chinese literature on dirty words focuses on the following aspects: The influence of Chinese social culture and history and gender relations on the sexual consciousness of dirty words. For example, in 2009, a scholar argues that in semantic orientation, Chinese dirty words are of sexual consciousness, and most of them are oriented towards female sexual organs (Liao Deming, 2009).; The differences of dirty words are reflected in the cultural difference between China and the West, the difference of education level, gender difference and so on. Some scholars state that there is a lack of psychological research on dirty words, and there is almost no formal academic paper about it (Zhang Wanli, Hu Zhijun, 2010). In this context, this paper takes the character "Pi" as the research object to discuss its etymological meaning and related Chinese literature about it, hoping that has enlightening and educational significance for the later research. It is also hoped that more in-depth studies on abusive terms will appear in the future, especially in the fields of psychology, sociology and law, and reasonable coping strategies will be put forward to reduce their transmission.

4. Conclusions and reflections

A study on 169 women found that verbal sexual harassment of women has become an increasingly common social phenomenon and the influence of the network environment makes it increasingly difficult to exert the binding role of moral and social norms (Tang Can, 1995). In Hong Kong, in the case of a taxi driver abusing passengers, Hong Kong's High Court judge said that while the use of foul language by the taxi driver is protected by freedom of speech, freedom of speech is not unrestricted. If not in violation of Hong Kong's Basic Law, it is in violation of Hong Kong's Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) Regulations, which stipulate that drivers must be polite and obey the rules (Wu Xuejing, 2001). For different professions and pragmatic scenarios, whether in the real world or the virtual network world, relevant legal provisions provides that speech should be based on mutual respect and social ethics. Actually, Internet language is quickly eliminated from the online world, and words related to profanity and insults are not accepted by mainstream society. The study on Chinese abusive words not only reflects the need to seek a clearer and more sound system for the legal and moral constraints of the network world, but also has great significance for the correct cognition of the unequal treatment of women in the virtual and real world and the mutual respect between genders, and is an important field of future research.

Aside from the pragmatic function of "Pi", some scholars consider that Internet language is developing in a bad direction and even though some vulgar language has been banned in the Internet environment, from the perspective of language development, in fact, vulgar language will not disappear, and will even develop more and more fierce (Shan Xiong, 2020). Because the network world is virtual, language is replaceable, with the methods of symbols, transliteration, and form translation. Therefore, some vulgar language in daily life has been widely spread through the form of "homophonic substitution", which will affect not only teenagers, but also the quality of the entire network environment. As described in master's thesis, the deficiency of China's classification system for minors' online content is due to the lack of a unified competent department, a unified rating standard for online content and scientific and technological guarantee. For instance, the United States, South Korea and Australia adopt the means of combining content classification with age group (Ja Ge, 2021). It is hoped that China's network content classification system will be more and more perfect in the future. Also, it is expected that the application of all network dirty words including "Pi" in real and virtual environments and their expressions in virtue of harmonic substitution can be reduced as much as possible, so as to retain more purity of Chinese characters in the network environment. Purity here refers to the words' original meaning and the positive meaning their convey.

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