The Narration of the Relationship between Developments of Memes Culture and the Internet and Analysis of Memes Advantages in Diffuse

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Abstract: With the rise of the Internet and the establishment of online social platforms, there are more and more online information exchanges among netizens. As a product of the rise of the Internet, Memes culture has made an indelible contribution to virtual communication. This paper focuses on the development of memes culture and comprehensively describes the development of memes by studying and comparing domestic and overseas kinds of literature. In this article, the development of memes is summarized in three stages, with a summary of three eras of web development. It is divided into the first generation of memes whose main elements are characters, the second generation of memes represented by emojis that imitate faces and expressions, and the third generation of memes with narrative features. The emergence and development of the first, second, and third generations of memes do not correspond to the emergence and development of Web1.0, Web2.0 and Web3.0, but they are inseparable. At the same time, the article analyzes the reasons for the popularity of memes from five aspects: fast communication, narrative, low creation threshold, entertainment and identity. This paper also points out two problems in the development of Memes culture, namely, the weakening and degradation of language expression ability caused by the excessive use of memes, and the proliferation of vulgar online culture caused by the prevalence of memes.

Keywords: memes culture, emoticon, web development, online information exchange

1. Introduction

With the progress of the Internet and the rise of virtual social platforms, the frequency of information exchange among netizens is increasing. The traditional way of information dissemination has been unable to meet the communication needs of Internet users. In order to increase the efficiency of information exchange and meet people's needs, meme culture arises and develops accordingly. Many articles have summarized the development of Memes culture from the perspective of communication, studied its significance and emotional expression, pointed out that memes play an indelible role in group identity authentication, and summarized the rise and development advantages of memes. Although these articles have shown that Memes culture is closely related to the network, they have not directly compared and studied the development of the network and Memes culture. This paper takes Memes culture as the research object and summarizes

the relationship between Memes culture and Web eras in the development of three generations. It also explains five reasons why Memes culture can be loved by netizens and spread widely. Finally, two problems with the development of Memes culture are pointed out. This paper uses the academic library of the network to collect the literature, compares and analyzes the data among them, and summarizes and supports the theme of the paper based on my own experience. A comparison of the relationship between the development of Memes culture and the development of the network can enrich the construction of the Internet and its derivatives in the field of communication. It summarizes the reasons why Memes culture is popular all over the world and points out that the problems brought by the development of Memes culture can help the better development of social popular culture.

2.   The Development of Memes

R. Rose, an American communication scholar, has pointed out that human facial expressions convey 55% of the information transmitted by nonverbal symbols, and nonverbal symbolic communication information accounts for 65% of the total information received by humans [1]. This means that the information consisting of only words is totally insufficient. In the case of offline communication, then 65% of the non-verbal symbolic communication information can be complemented by facial expressions and body language. But on the increasingly developed Internet, real-time, real-life facial expressions and body language communication still seem to be unattainable. To solve the problem of people's lack of information expression on the Internet, memes were born. In today's world, memes refer to images used in the Internet that convey a specific message in a straightforward manner. Usually, it can express one's emotions, moods and attitudes[2]. Emoticons can be composed of a variety of elements in different arrangements and can express different meanings when the components are the same. Common forms of memes are pictures with text, images, motion pictures, and so on.

It has been nearly forty years since the first emoticon was born, and great changes have taken place in meme culture during these forty years. The composition of elements gradually expanded from the simple character number to the current picture, and the content from the imitation of facial expression to the current narrative story. This chapter is divided into three generations according to the expression forms and characteristics of memes, and summarizes the development stage of the Internet at that time.

2.1.   The First Generation

The first meme from the United States was the digital smile ":)" created by professor Scott e. Fahlman based on a simple character arrangement. Professor Scott E. Fahlman originally wanted to help students identify messages on college bulletin boards using simple memes. If the ":)" meme appears at the end of the announcement, it indicates that the announcement is a joke. If it appears ":(", it indicates that the university is serious. The smiley created by Professor Fahlman came from ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange). ASCII is a coding system based on the Latin alphabet. ASCII memes are usually a combination of symbols on a hard disk to mimic a person's facial expression [3]. Such simple, quick, and accurate expressions of attitude quickly became popular around the world. On this basis, Japan developed a more abundant new type of expression package, "Kaomoji" [4]. Although the components of Kaomoji are also simple characters, different from Professor Scott E. Fahlman, there are usually many characters to form a Kaomoji, such as (in $\bigtriangledown$, ($\geqq \nabla \leqq$)/. The more complex and diverse components allow Kaomoji to be more expressive, to express more emotions, and even to add body language. At first, Kaomoji was mainly used for comic book websites, and many comic book writers used a lot of Kaomoji to

express their true thoughts and attitudes when communicating with readers. This language, which can imitate human facial expressions, emotions and attitudes, makes better use of the visual system in the communication process, expresses more elements, and can reduce the misunderstanding caused by pure text expression.

In the first stage, memes are usually composed of simple characters without the support of pictures. Meanwhile, the first phase of memes was in the Web 1.0 era, from 1989 to 2005. In this era, network information transmission is one-way. Users can search and read information, but cannot interact with the website [5].

2.2.   The Second Generation

Different from the abstract imitation of facial expressions in the first representative, the second representative pursues more concrete expressions. The emoji, designed in 1998 by Shigetaka Kurita, an employee of a Japanese telecommunications company, is often seen as the beginning of the second emoji. The Emoji is based on a yellow face shape, with winks and pouts to more visually express emotions. After Apple added emoji to the IOS system, emoji quickly became popular around the world and were widely used in a variety of programs and websites. During the installation process, the creative team changes or creates new emojis as appropriate. As the complexity of emoji mimics increases, cultural differences gradually emerge. People from different cultures have different opinions on the same emoji. Like the one below. In China, this expression conveys the content of smiling tears, expressing happy emotions; In the United States, this expression means "smile even though you have shed tears during life's hardships.

Figure 1: Emoji from IOS.

The second is the emergence and popularity of the web1.0 and 2.0 era. In the Web 2.0 era, Relationship Technologies, Breakthroughs in participatory Media and social Digital Technology made Web 2.0 participatory. Collaborative and distributed practices [5]. With the help of this trait, the number of conversations that netizens have on the Internet also increases; this is reflected not only in users' comments on the site but also in the emergence and development of social networks.

2.3.   Third-Generation Memes

With the progress of the Internet, memess have also undergone revolutionary changes. Compared to the simple use of characters in the first generation of memes and imitation of the face of the second representative of memes, the third representative of memes use pictures, words, and GIFs. At this time, memes are no longer confined to imitating life scenes and expressing users' emotions and intonation, but an emoticon itself has the function of complete narration. Memes are not just a lubricant for people to communicate on virtual platforms. They have their own content, just like articles and videos. Some memes can even tell a story quickly without adding background information. And memes are no longer "authoritarian". With the development of science and technology, it is possible for people to make their own memes. The material used to make memes has evolved from characters to pop culture. Celebrities, athletes and even ordinary people who have been recorded can be used as material for memes.

During this period, the relationship between Internet users and websites became more complex The user is no longer blindly accepting the media information, they joined the information dissemination process, user even begin to create their own content, express their ideas. The one-way

communication that began with media to netizens has evolved into two-way communication between Internet users and the media.

3. The Reason for the Development of Internet Memes

From BBS at the beginning to cartoon websites and virtual social platforms later, the rapid development and popularity of emoticon is not only caused by the absence of facial expression in online text communication. Memes can become part of the mainstream of popular social culture due to their characteristics, in addition to their development with the development of different media platforms.

3.1. Be quick and Direct

Memes can deliver content quickly and directly, which undoubtedly improves the efficiency of Internet communication. American communication scientist Albert Mehrabian once proposed that expression accounted for 55% of information expression, while intonation and voice accounted for 7% and 38% respectively [6]. In virtual social platforms, facial expressions are missing. In other words, without the use of memes, approximately 55% of online communication fails. At the same time, pure text output lacks the support of tone, so friendly comments are likely to be misinterpreted. In this case, memes were born. A smiley face made up of characters can effectively tell students that the message they are seeing is a joke. A friendly attitude can be achieved with a single emoji face. A meme picture not only contains more information but also enriches the visual experience of netizens, avoiding the monotony of pure text expression [7].

3.2. Narrative Ability

Many memes have complete narrative power. Sometimes a meme can tell a whole story without context. Take the following meme as an example. A kitten may be stretching on a sofa, but its languid appearance and posture fit the description - it was so hot that the cat melted.

Figure 2: Meme from Twitter example.

Of course, sometimes memes can tell a story quickly without words. The diagram below. The little boy had an open pizza and a whole, uneaten pizza next to his feet. Combined with the boy crying, the message most people can read from the meme is that the boy accidentally drops an uneaten pizza and starts crying.

Figure 3: Meme from Twitter example.

Other memes can tell a story in a specific context in a limited amount of space. Here are two memes that were used by fans of the on-screen couple Lexi and Fezco from Euphoria. The expressions of the three little girls in the two photos show excitement, joy, and even pride when they see their favorite lovers in intimate interactions. If this picture is used in the forums or comments, the audience's love and support for the couple will be evident.

Figure 4: Meme from Twitter example.

3.3. Low Creation Threshold

In China, the main audience of memes is teenagers aged between 21 and 30, which is also in line with the composition of Chinese Internet users. Young people at this stage are not only the disseminators of meme culture, but also the creators of meme and even network cultural ecology [8]. With the current state of science and technology, it is a simple matter to get or make memes. Emojis can be downloaded directly from major social media platforms for a price or for free. To create a simple meme in the form of pictures and text, you need to save the image and edit the text. Many phones even come with photo albums that can be used to make memes.

3.4. It's Entertaining

Memes and meme culture are closely linked. Meme culture mostly refers to the elements of comedy in the Internet, which is based on the Chinese comedy culture at the end of the 20th century [9]. Many memes are recreated based on popular Internet memes or popular stars. For example, during the Rio Olympics, Fu Yuanhui became famous for saying, "I have done my best." Since then, many

people have re-created the popular meme into a meme, usually to show that they have done their best at a certain thing or simply to spread a happy, fun atmosphere

3.5. Identity

The communication between people on the Internet is limited to virtual platforms, and netizens will create multiple specific images for themselves by using emoticons or words when communicating on the Internet [3]. In the past, people would find their role in society through family, religion, etc. [10]; However, nowadays, with the collapse of tradition and the reconstruction of society, the emergence of social networks and the development of memes also provide new platforms and methods for people to pursue their own identity.

4. Problems of the Development of Meme Culture

The emergence of meme packs has bridged the gap of emotional expression on social networks, but in the long run people will reduce their desire and ability to express themselves verbally and become addicted to using meme packs for emotional communication, resulting in alienation [11]. Compared with thin text, pictures are more visually stimulating and can express more content in a short time with relatively less space; especially attitudes, emotions, and other things that are difficult to describe in words. There is a great risk that the reduced frequency of language use will weaken the ability of language to express emotions. Moreover, as the frequency of emoji book use increases, people gradually give up describing their feelings and look for the corresponding emoji. This is the opposite of the original design concept of emoji packs - to make up for the information gap caused by the lack of memes on the virtual platform.

Secondly, the lowering of the threshold of meme packs is also a major reason for the proliferation of vulgar online culture. The rapid development of modern science and technology has made it easy and convenient to create and distribute an emoji pack; that is why vulgar emoji packs have entered the market. As mentioned earlier in this article, teenagers between the ages of 21 and 30 make up a large portion of China's Internet users. Young people in this period are not mature enough and are easily influenced by bad information. Specifically analyzed, the makers and distributors of vulgar emoji packs regard such unhealthy online information as a means to relieve stress in real life and achieve self-satisfaction through mockery and other forms, and as the number of reproductions and uses increases, the bad taste becomes more and more intense [8].

5. Conclusion

This paper briefly describes the three periods of development of emojis and the relationship between each period and the development of the network, and describes the reasons for the popularity of emojis in the Internet era from five aspects: transmission speed, narrative ability, creation threshold, entertainment and identity. Finally, two problems in the use of emojis are pointed out, namely, the degradation of language ability caused by the long-term use of memes to express emotions and the flood of vulgar Internet culture. However, there are many limitations in this paper. When discussing the development process and the advantages and disadvantages of memes, non-academic language is too often used, and the analysis is not given from a more comprehensive perspective. To solve the problem of weak academic language and insufficiently comprehensive content, we can start by reading more literature, not limited to communication but also mathematics, economics, finance, and other related articles that can be compared.

Finally, in the process of reading the literature, the research found that there are few articles about the relationship between cousin packets and the development of information technology, and the innovation of communication technology has a profound impact on the development of meme.

Therefore, I believe that future research can try to study the relationship between information transmission mode and the development of memes.

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