

The Socio-cultural Psychology of Adolescents Reflected in Chinese and Japanese Network Catchwords

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Abstract. Nowadays, the Internet is indispensable for people to transfer information and communicate with each other. Network catchwords appears in both China and Japan several decades ago, which reflect the social development of China and Japan. Adolescents are the main group to use and spread network catchwords, and they leave a lot of characteristics and imprints belonging to the youth as well. The present thesis searches and counts the Chinese and Japanese network catchwords in the past ten years, and analyzes the common points and differences of their characteristics. Additionally, the socio-cultural and psychological characteristics of Chinese and Japanese adolescents are dissected from the perspective of cultural psychology.

Keywords: China and Japan, Network Catchwords, Socio-cultural Psychology

1 Introduction

Language is a way to show culture and a part of culture. Culture is spread and transferred by language. Language originates from society, and the evolution of history and society prompts the development of language. Catchwords show the issues and things that people pay attention to in a country and a region in a period, including the culture at that time. With the birth and development of the Internet, network catchwords come out. The changes of modern network social culture and the socio-cultural psychology are directly reflected and contained by network catchwords. Network catchwords attract much attention both in Japanese and Chinese. To study network catchwords in the two countries, the present thesis analyzes their characteristics of the age, their differences, their influence on the adolescents of the two countries and the socio-cultural psychology they embody.

Japanese linguists have been studying catchwords for a long time, and there are many researches on catchwords in society, culture, human psychology and other aspects. Miyagawa Akihiko (1989) discusses the catchwords of a century after Meiji from their causes, the form of the words, the incongruity of the words and the popularity of words, so as to find out the reason why they came out. He also discusses their influence on social condition, world state and customs^[1]. The *Emergence and Spread of Catchwords* (1997) written by Koichi Shinazaki concludes that the essential factors of catchwords' emergence are novelty, temporality, social reflection and coordination consciousness, which were studied from the perspectives of psychology and society^[2]. With the deepening of research and the change of the age, Japanese scholars have been studying on the language of the youth. According to Miyagawa's opinion (1997), the language of the youth is used from middle school students to young people around 30 years old, which is flexible and entertaining^[3].

In China, the classics on catchwords are relatively few, while more and more websites count and sort out the annual network catchwords after 2000. Moreover, research papers on catchwords, social culture and psychological factors have been published. For instance, Wang Qinrong (2005) researches the state of the world reflected in Chinese catchwords^[4]. Shi Aoying (2015) studies the characteristics of adolescents' language from pronunciation, text, vocabulary, grammar and choice of words, and explores what socio-cultural psychology it reflects^[5]. Shen Huixia (2020) makes a concrete analysis of the text of catchwords and interviews young people, and concludes the life attitude of adolescents, that is the spread of their feelings^[6].

Generally speaking, the research on network catchwords in China is not as substantial as that in Japan. It is an immature field, especially the research on adolescents' language. Some scholars analyze the socio-cultural psychology of adolescents through network language. However, they fail to combine with the current network catchwords closely, so they cannot get a timely result. Although the research on adolescents' language related to network catchwords in Japan has developed for many years, it lacks the analysis of current socio-cultural psychology. Meanwhile, few scholars conduct the comparative study of Chinese and Japanese network catchwords, to say nothing of taking the perspective of adolescents' socio-cultural psychology.

The present thesis is based on the previous studies of Chinese and Japanese network catchwords, and takes award-winning words selected from the network catchwords awards of China and Japan in the past decade as the research objects. After studying the definition of network catchwords, the thesis finds out the common points and differences according to their meanings. Besides, the thesis analyzes the state of China and Japan and explores the socio-cultural psychology of Chinese and Japanese adolescents reflected in network words from the perspective of socio-cultural psychology.

2 The definition of network catchwords and the relationship between network catchwords and adolescents

2.1 The Definition of Network Catchwords

Literally, network catchwords are phrases and sentences that are used on the Internet. "Internet users constantly rack their brains to create 'new words' based on their own knowledge and the social events^[7]." In other words, it is a kind of special language expression which is popular on the Internet for a short time and is only loved and used by people in the network society. Network catchwords reflect the development of modern society. In addition, network catchwords not only have the characteristics of general catchwords, but also have their own characteristics.

2.2 The Relationship Between Network Catchwords and Adolescents

Hu Mingyang (1990) pointed out that catchwords refer to the language which is popular in a certain period, especially among adolescents, and are gradually replaced by other languages at the end of this period^[8]. Young people make use of new media technology skillfully to gain wider and freer "writing space" for themselves. In the virtual and anonymous Internet, young people can avoid the surveillance from their parents and express themselves freely. Adolescents are the creators, communicators and users of network catchwords, and they are deeply influenced by network subculture.

3 A comparative study on the characteristics of the chinese and japanese network catchwords

With the boom of network society, network catchwords come out frequently. The reference indexes for network catchwords in major portal websites are slightly different, so the yearly Top 10 Network Catchwords are different. Therefore, this thesis browsed and searched many well-known authoritative Chinese websites, and sorted out China's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020 (refer to Table 1.).

Table 1. Table of China's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020

An Overview of China's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020	
2010	1.给力(awesome) 2.我爸是李刚(My father is Li Gang. To show off one's family background.) 3.凡客体(VANCL style) 4.神马都是浮云(Everything is Nothing.) 5.非常艰难的决定(a tough decision) 6.羡慕嫉妒恨(green with envy) 7.鸭梨(Yali stands for pressure, which shares a similar pronunciation with the fruit pear in Chinese.) 8.蒜你狠(expensive garlic, to show the inflation of prices) 9.菲警(Philippine police, refers to those corrupt and incompetent policemen) 10.我勒个去 (what the hell)
2011	1.亲(dear) 2.伤不起(vulnerable) 3.Hold住(control the situation) 4.我反正信了(Anyway, I believe it.) 5.坑爹(cheat someone) 6.卖萌(act cute) 7.吐槽(find a loophole or key word from the others' words or behavior as a breakthrough point, and sigh or doubt with a sly humour) 8.有木有(Is there any...) 9.悲催(something miserable happened) 10.忐忑(be in a rather nervous state)
2012	1.正能量(positive energy) 2.你幸福吗(Are you happy?) 3.元芳,你怎么看(Yuanfang, what do you think about it?) 4.我能说脏话吗(Can I speak rudely?) 5.中国式 (Chinese style) 6.XX style 7.高富帅(a man who is tall, rich and handsome) 8.躺着也中枪 (being attacked by others without rhyme) 9.压力山大(under great pressure) 10.赞(like)
2013	1.土豪,我们做朋友吧(Rich man, let's be friends.) 2.我和我的小伙伴都惊呆了(We are all shocked.) 3.高端大气上档次(to describe something as high-end) 4.摊上大事了(get into trouble) 5.感觉不会再爱了(I think I would not love anymore.) 6.中国大妈(Chinese Dama) 7.点赞(thumbs-up) 8.女汉子(tough women) 9.待我长发及腰,xx娶我可好(Will you marry me until my hair is long enough?) 10.帮汪峰上头条(help Wang Feng make the headline)

2014	<p>1.且行且珍惜(Cherish what you have at the moment.) 2.你家里人知道吗(Have your family known about it?) 3.画面太美我不敢看(The scene is too horrible to look at.) 4.萌萌哒(so cute)</p> <p>5.现在整个人都不太好了(I feel not so good.) 6.也是醉了(cannot comment on something) 7.我只想做个安静的美男子(let me alone)</p> <p>8.什么仇，什么怨(what hatred on something) 9.No zuo, no die (If you do not look for trouble, you will not in trouble.) 10.有钱，就是任性(You can do everything if you are rich.)</p>
2015	<p>1.我的内心几乎是崩溃的(I am close to emotional breakdown.) 2.Duang(an onomatopoeic word) 3.世界那么大，我想去看看(I want to appreciate the great world.) 4.怪我咯(My fault?)</p> <p>5.你们城里人真会玩(tease each other on the Internet, comparing yourself to a farmer lacking knowledge and experience) 6.我妈是我妈(My mom is mine.)</p> <p>7.重要的事情说三遍(Important issues should be emphasized 3 times.) 8.吓死宝宝了(I was scared.)</p> <p>9.明明可以靠长相，偏要靠才华(You can rely on your excellent looks, but you choose to rely on your talent.) 10.主要看气质(Style matters.)</p>
2016	<p>1.蓝瘦香菇(feel upset) 2.洪荒之力(great power) 3.猴塞雷(excellent, great)</p> <p>4.老司机(a person who is an expert in a certain field) 5.狗带(go die) 6.葛优瘫(a sitting posture to show decadent status)</p> <p>7.友谊的小船说翻就翻(Friendship can break down in any moment.) 8.撩妹(flirt girls) 9.套路(a series of routine to trick and tease someone) 10.感觉身体被掏空(exhausted and in a state of prostration without any motivation)</p>
2017	<p>1.freestyle 2.打call(support) 3.diss 4.皮皮虾，我们走(Let's go, Pipixia.)</p> <p>5.求锤得锤(get the truth that you want to get) 6.扎心了老铁(It is hurt, mate.)</p> <p>7.撸起袖子加油干(Cheer up and do it.) 8.比心(hand heart) 9.尬聊(embarrassing conversation) 10.大吉大利，今晚吃鸡(to be the winner to-night)</p>
2018	<p>1.锦鲤(koi, fish that brings luck) 2.杠精(a person refutes every opinion)</p> <p>3.skr(an onomatopoeic word in rap) 4.佛系(be at the mercy of nature; be chilled) 5.确认过眼神(confirm with each other through expression in eyes)</p> <p>6.官宣(announce officially)</p> <p>7.C位(the center) 8.土味情话(cheesy pick-up lines) 9.皮一下(up to mischief) 10.燃烧我的卡路里(burn my Calorie to lose weight)</p>

2019	1.996(a work system extending the legal working hours) 2.盘他(joking, scoring off or refuting) 3.雨女无瓜(a similar pronunciation; it's none of your business) 4.不忘初心(remain true to our original aspiration) 5.柠檬精(Green-eyed Lemon) 6.断舍离(To cut off, to let go, and to move on.) 7.我太难了(It is so difficult for me.) 8.好嗨哟(What an exciting atmosphere!) 9.硬核(hardcore) 10.社畜(the slaves of society)
2020	1.集美(Jimei, a similar pronunciation of girl friends) 2.去爬山吗(Shall we climb the mountain?) 3.u1s1(to tell the whole truth, to be frank; a similar pronunciation of plain speaking) 4.上海名媛(Shanghai social climber) 5.七夕蛤蟆(Chinese Valentine's Day Toad) 6.九漏鱼(people who missed the nine-year compulsory education, which means low-educated) 7.爷青回(My youth is back.) 8.打工人(Corporate Slave) 9.突击式尽孝(to do one's filial duty on a rush) 10.深藏blue(keep one's own counsel; blue has similar pronunciation with "bulu(hidden)" in Chinese.

Besides, the following table is Japan's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020 collected and sorted out from well-known authoritative Japanese websites (refer to Table 2.)^[9].

Table 2. Table of Japan's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020

An Overview of Japan's Top10 Network Catchwords from 2010 to 2020	
2010	1.そんな装備で大丈夫ですか？ (Is there any problem of the equipment?) 2.流出 (leak) 3.The invader comes from the bottom of the sea! 4.本田 (Honda) 5. \ どや / \ 怎样 / (showing triumphant on one's face) 6. ~真的饶了我吧www (Please have a heart and let me.) 7.ゲゲゲの~ ("gei gei gei ~", a mood particle) 8.いい質問ですねえ(It is a good question.) 9.ととのいました(be ready) 10. ~なう(a similar Japanese pronunciation of ~ now)
2011	1.ポポポポー("Popopopo-"to use magic) 2.なでしこJAPAN (Yamato nadeshiko JAPAN refers to Japanese women's football team. Yamato nadeshiko refers to amazing women such as Hua Mulan.) 3.僕と契約して、○○になってよ！ (Make a contract with me to be ○○!) 4.マル・ マル・ モリ・ モリ ("maru maru mori mori" derived from Roman pronunciation; climax of a song) 5.ヤシマ作戦 ("Yashima battle plan") 6.いいね！ (Like) 7.どや顔 (an expression of triumphant) 8.こだまでしょうか(Is it an echo?) 9.風評被害(damage caused by harmful rumors or misinformation) 10.ラブ注入 (love injection)

2012	<p>1.ステマ (stealth marketing) 2.(「・ω・」)うー!(/・ω・) / にゃー! ((「・ω・」)うー!(/・ω・) / nya!) 3.ワイルドだろお (It is wild enough.)</p> <p>4.「(「^o^」)ホモオ... (「(「^o^」)homoo...) 5.ナマポ (livelihood protection) 6.(震え声) (vibrato) 7.ゴリ押し (steamroller)</p> <p>8.てへぺろ (Kaomoji is “(・ω<)”. Someone giggles and sticks out their tongue after making a mistake) 9.きゃわたん (so cute) 10.どうすろう! ? (What's the matter! ?)</p>
2013	<p>1.いつやるの? 今でしょ! (When shall we start? Now!) 2.激おこポンポン丸 (state of extreme rage) 3.倍返しだ! (answer blows with blows)</p> <p>4.お・も・で・な・し (hospitality) 5.じえじえじえ (exclamation of surprise) 6.アベノミクス (Abenomics) 7.後でしょ! (to put off until sometime later)</p> <p>8.おこななの? (Are you angry?) 9.それな (exactly) 10.ふなっしー (Funassyi)</p>
2014	<p>1.STAP細胞はあります (STAP cells exist.) 2.ダメよーダメダメ (No way ~ I'm afraid not.)</p> <p>3.ビットコイン (Bitcoin)</p> <p>4.壁ドン (壁咚 slamming one's hand into the wall in front of somebody) 5.彼ピツピ (boyfriend) 6.ありのまま (let it go) 7.ほんとこれ (strongly agree) 8.レジェンド (legend)</p> <p>9.ごきげんよう (wish you well, a phrase of blessing and respect) 10.妖怪ウォッチ (monster watch)</p>
2015	<p>1.五郎丸 (Goromaru) 2.ばよばよちーん (Good Morning Darling) 3.ISIS/イスラム国 (ISIS) 4.爆買い (shopping spree)</p> <p>5.トリプルスリー (Triple three) 6.まいにち、修造! (Building every day!) 6.安心してください、履いてますよ。 (Don't worry. I am wearing.)</p> <p>7.ラッスンゴレライ (Lassen Gorelai) 8.あーね (Oh, I see.) 9.SEALDs 10.やっべえぞ (That's too bad.)</p>
2016	<p>1.PPAP / ペンパイナッポーアッポーベン (PPAP) 2.ポケモンGO (POKEMON GO) 3.聖地巡礼 (pilgrimage to sacred place)</p> <p>4.保育園落ちた日本死ね! (If my kid unable to go to the nursery, Japan will be destroyed!) 5.センテンススプリング / 文春砲 (sentence-spring) 6.神ってる (like being assisted by God)</p> <p>7.(僕の) アモーレ (my love) 8.マジ卍 / まじ卍 (Really?) 9.よき (good) 10.トランプ現象 (Trump phenomenon)</p>
2017	<p>1.Nintendo Switch 2.72時間ホンネテレビ (TV of telling truth in 72 hours) 3.このハゲ——! (You're bald!)</p>

	4.インスタ映え(being instagrammable) 5.忖度(hypothesize) 6.〇〇み (〇〇mi) 7.熱盛(warm soba noodles) 8.〇〇ファースト(〇〇first) 9.35億 (3.5 billion) 10.マ? (Really?)
2018	1.バーチャル(YouTuber / VTuber) 2.平成最後の〇〇 (the last 〇〇 in the period of Heisei.) 3.大迫半端ないって (Osako is excellent.) 4.そだねー (OK.) 5.よいちよまる (happy) 6.すこ(like) 7.ぶちよへんざ (put your hands up) 8.#MeToo 9.ポーっと生きてんじゃねーよ! (Wake up. Are you a zombie?) 10.草 (laugh)
2019	1.NHKをぶっ壊す (to defeat NHK) 2. N国党 / NHKから国民を守る党 (to protect the people from being harmed by NHK) 3.タピる(A verb means drinking pearl milk tea.) 4.〇〇ペイ (〇〇pay) 5.ONE TEAM 6. # KuToo 7.り (understand) 8.とりま (in short) 9.フロリダ (Florida) 10.乙(Thanks for your hard work.)
2020	1.鬼滅の刃 (Demon Slayer) 2.密です!(That's dense and dangerous!) 3.あつ森 / あつまれ どうぶつの森 (Animal Crossing: New Horizons) 4.パリピ(clubber) 5.コロナ / 新型コロナウイルス / COVID-19 6.3密(It refers to poorly ventilated confined spaces, crowded places and close contact with people.) 7.ぴえん (boohoo) 8.きゅんです (be moved and like) 9.チー牛 (a certain group of people, gloomy and unsociable otaku) 10.時を戻そう (Let time go back!)

3.1 Common Points of the Chinese and Japanese Network Catchwords

① Lingo

Lingo means that the real meaning of the language cannot be directly obtained as literally. For instance, there are “盘他 (joking, scoring off or refuting)” and “九漏鱼 (people who missed the nine-year compulsory education, which means low-educated)” in Chinese network catchwords. And in Japan, there are “マジ社” (Really? It indicates a surge of emotion and the intensity of things)”, “てへぺろ (When you do something wrong or fail to do something, you smile shyly and do a cute movement of sticking your tongue out.)”, etc. Additionally, to make the conversation private and unintelligible, “Martian Language” in China and “ギャル文字 (Hottie Language)” in Japan were created. They are the language that only can be understood by partners, and the sentences and language are created by decomposing and deforming the characters. Lingo of network catchwords form a natural barrier between the users and other people. With these language “codes”, the adolescents accomplish their internal “precise social intercourse” and build a closed social circle that only belongs to them.

② Creativity

Both Chinese and Japanese network catchwords use negative, critical and satirical language to describe some feelings and phenomena. They use hyperbole and have the characteristics of vivid language. For example, Chinese network catchwords include “躺着也中枪 (being at-

tacked by others without rhyme)”, “感觉身体被掏空 (exhausted and in a state of prostration without any motivation)”. There are many network catchwords that exaggerate feelings in Japan. “激おこぶんぶん丸” derived from “おこ”, which is a word in the language of the youth and means angry. It is a phrase expressing extremely angry and upset. Besides, some new vocabulary is created by changing the structure of language, such as “no zuo, no die (If you do not look for trouble, you will not in trouble.)”. There are also cases in which new meaning is given to the original vocabulary without changing the way to be formed. In Japanese network catchwords, the Chinese character “草” is equal to “笑” because it looks like grass grow on it from the shape of the character. In my opinion, all kinds of character transformation embody the vivid creativity of adolescents in both China and Japan.

③ Entertainment

There are two definitions of entertainment in this thesis. One is that adolescents make the use of the Internet to pursue entertainment and enjoy convenience, the other is that they carry out entertainment activities on the Internet. For instance, “你们城里人真会玩” is commonly used to tease each other on the Internet, comparing yourself to a farmer lacking knowledge and experience. In addition, based on diverse interests and social demands, young people have established various network circles, forming a huge network circle culture. As a result, a variety of unique network catchwords come out. For example, there is “去爬山吗?” and “Freestyle” in China, and “僕と契約して、○○になってよ! (Make a contract with me to be ○○!)”, “どうぶつの森 (the forest of the animals)”, etc. Adolescents enjoy this process of communication on the Internet.

④ Sociality

Catchwords come from life. It is because they are closely related to social life that they resonate strongly with a certain group or circle in society, thus transcending the restrictions of group and stratum and gaining widespread dissemination. Whether in Chinese society or Japanese society, the issues of work, family relationship, education and life and culture of adolescents are all of great concern. Therefore, a large number of network expressions and catchwords related to these fields have been coming out. For example, the Chinese network catchwords “996”, “突击式尽孝 (to do one's filial duty on a rush)”, etc. The Japanese network catchwords such as “なでしこJAPAN (women's football representatives in Japan)” and “インスタ映え (Instagram photos)” are representative network catchwords reflecting sociality. Therefore, the trend of social development in a certain period can be obtained from the research and analysis of network catchwords in previous years.

⑤ Openness

Chinese and Japanese network catchwords include many combinations of “English”, “English + Chinese” or “English + Japanese”. For example, “Hold住”, “diss” and so on. As can be seen from these catchwords, the influence of European and American culture has been going on for many years. In the meantime, the development of network catchwords in recent years also reflects the exchange and integration of Chinese and Japanese cultures. The word “吐槽” comes from Japanese Mancai (a platform comedy in Japan, similar to cross talk). The Chinese translation of “ツッコミ” refers to finding a loophole or key word from the other's words or behavior as a breakthrough point, and sighing or doubting with a sly humor. “タピる” refers to

4 The socio-cultural psychology of adolescents reflected in chinese and japanese network catchwords

As a branch of psychology, cultural psychology can be traced back to the research of anthropologist G.A. Devos and A.E. Hippler. They mentioned the term “cultural psychology” in an article entitled “Cultural Psychology: A Comparative Study of Human Behavior”. Its basic proposition is: human psychology and behavior are determined and restricted by culture, so the research task of cultural psychology is to investigate the restriction and influence of culture on human psychology and behavior^[10]. As a new breakthrough point in current psychological research, cultural psychology focuses on exploring people’s ways of thinking and behavior from the perspective of “culture” and “cognition” compared with traditional psychological research. The main researches are as follows. First, they study the mechanism through which thinking mode influences individual psychology and behavior. Second, they study the relationship between thinking mode and personality. Third, they study the thinking mode, self-relation and their performance in different interpersonal situations. Culture has an important influence on people’s psychology and behavior, and our individual personalities in society are branded with culture. Therefore, it is feasible and necessary to analyze the current situation and characteristics of Chinese and Japanese young people’s language from the perspective of cultural psychology.

4.1 The Common Socio-cultural Psychology of Adolescents in Chinese and Japanese Network Catchwords

4.1.1 Psychology of Pursuing Economy

The widespread popularity of catchwords is inseparable from the help of the Internet. But the reason behind it is that it’s short and concise which makes it easy to express. This is especially true in the era of fragmented information networks. On one hand, catchwords are short and concise. They focus on expressing people’s inner thoughts. On the other hand, the specific source behind it or the emotion contained in it can also resonate with the general public and be widely spread. At the same time, in the process of communication, or when it is created, there is already a tendency to simplify. “そだね~ (same as “そうだね”, exactly)” is elliptical, which can even give people the illusion that the sentence is omitted to the vocabulary. Nowadays, both China and Japan are highly information-based societies. People will exchange their feelings and information. In the age of relying on computers and mobile phones, it is possible to transfer more information as easily as possible to make the exchanges go smoothly. Therefore, omitting serves as an effective means. Because of this, catchwords can be both short and able to express new connotations beyond the basic meaning of vocabulary, and also be easy to understand and spread.

4.1.2 Peer Awareness

“Lingo” has the function of keeping secrets within the group and strengthening psychological integration. Due to their puberty psychology, adolescents tend to get together in groups, trying to gain a sense of identity and find their own identity. The use of network catchwords with “lingo” meanings can identify peers, reduce communication barriers, and strengthen the intimacy of members within the group. With the declining birthrate in Japanese society and more only child occupying the majority of the younger generation in China, this is also one of the

ways for lonely adolescents to find more resonance on the Internet and communicate with others.

4.1.3 Pan-entertainment Psychology

Entertainment is a way of emotional experience for people to pursue happiness, relieve stress, and delight their body and mind. With the continuous development of new media technology, the function of entertainment has been gradually enlarged. With the help of capital-controlled information globalization, entertainment has exceeded its own limits and has begun to penetrate into all areas of social life, resulting in a “pan-entertainment” trend. The generation of young people who grew up under the influence of “pan-entertainment” has naturally become the main audience group of it. Nowadays, the world enjoys an era of peace and both material and spiritual richness. Young people in this era grow up with the blessings of the times, therefore they will pursue spiritual entertainment.

4.1.4 Rebellious Psychology

When young people are in adolescence, they will fall into a rebellious psychology. In terms of language, they also want to seek the characteristics of freedom. So, they create a new word and use it freely with new meanings and ways. The most distinctive feature of Chinese and Japanese young people is that they value individuality and pursue distinctive styles. Adolescents have a strong sense of resistance to established social rules and restricted traditional models. Taking the network catchwords as a way to challenge traditional terms is a means of advocating their own personality and promoting the sought-after subculture. Therefore, the etymology of network catchwords comes from the fields that young people are interested in, and they use simple and direct expressions to express themselves full of personality.

4.2 The Socio-cultural Psychology of Adolescents only Reflected in Japanese Network Catchwords

Through the analysis of the characteristics and cultural connotation of “Kaomoji”, it can be known that “Kaomoji” is an important embodiment of the traditional communication method of “heart-to-heart” in network communication that emphasizes visual information. The communicative characteristics of the Japanese are described as “experiencing culture” and “heart-to-heart”, which means that people control verbalized information and reduce it to the minimum in communication, and the other party’s intention can be guessed by observing their expressions, eyes, and body movements. They communicate in speechless and ambiguous language expression. Therefore, it is not important to be able to eloquent. But it is important to be able to detect the other’s mood and intentions from the words and subtle expressions at all times, and to respond accordingly. There is a Japanese proverb “目は口ほどものをいう (Eyes could speak as a mouth.)”. Visual information has a very important and unshakable position in Japanese communication.

4.3 The Socio-cultural Psychology of Adolescents only Reflected in Chinese Network Catchwords

From the comparison of network catchwords between China and Japan, compared with Japan, China has more network catchwords in terms of self-evaluation. And almost all of them are

self-deprecating words, such as “柠檬精(Green-eyed Lemon)”, “七夕蛤蟆(Chinese Valentine’s Day Toad)”, “打工人(Corporate Slave)” .

Self-deprecating means criticizing oneself, which is a verbal strategy adopted by people in a dilemma to ease the embarrassing situation. The self-deprecating person releases depressed emotions by dwarfing and degrading his own image to obtain psychological relief and spiritual pleasure. Currently self-deprecating phenomenon has extended from the real society to the online society. The main users are online subcultural groups who are active on social media platforms. It presents a popular trend of collective self-deprecation among adolescents.

In essence, the youth self-deprecating culture belongs to the network subculture, and it is a secondary culture that competes with the mainstream culture of the masses. Starting with the popularity of “屌丝 (plebeian)” and “废柴 (loser)”, catchwords like “真香 (A Slap in The Face)” and “柠檬精 (Green-eyed Lemon)” have emerged one after another. This deeply reflects the current anxious and depressing attitudes of online young groups towards social life.

5 Conclusion

As mentioned above, this present thesis concludes and analyzes common points and differences of Chinese and Japanese network catchwords, and dissects the socio-cultural psychology of Chinese and Japanese adolescents from the perspective of cultural psychology.

Nowadays, globalized society is full of information. Both China and Japan, which are in the East Asian cultural circle, have a lot in common in the characteristics of network catchwords, and adolescents’ cultural psychology is relatively similar as well. In the aspect of adolescents’ cultural psychology, there are psychology of pursuing economy, peer awareness, pan-entertainment and rebellious psychology. However, from the perspective of comprehensive factors such as national character and public opinion environment, Japanese adolescents show ambiguous psychology when using network catchwords, while Chinese adolescents show self-deprecating psychology.

As the representatives of the new forces, Chinese and Japanese adolescents’ speech and behavior are not only affected by their families and environment, but also deeply rooted in their traditional culture, regional culture, political culture and economic culture, which have a subtle impact for them to form and develop network catchwords. Network catchwords represent the ideological and psychological state of young people. Through the research on the current situation of the language of the youth in China and Japan, it can provide some reference value for exploring the current situation of social and economic development in the two countries .

Authors’ contributions

Guo Zixin contributed to the conception of the study, data analysis and manuscript writing.

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