

Research on the Factors Influencing the Spread with High Popularity of Internet Buzzword

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Abstract

By collecting and sorting out 45 typical and representative buzzwords data from 2011 to 2018, using the clear set qualitative comparative analysis method (csQCA), we can explore the key influence factors to the high popularity of buzzword channels, events and structural characteristics Influencing factors, and then determine the deep mechanism by which Internet buzzwords become strong memes. The study found that there are 9 effective ways of high-temperature communication, which can be summarized into four modes: public figure channels, ordinary people channels, authoritative forwarding channels, and non-appealing expressions.

Keywords

Internet Buzzwords; Memetics; Strong Memes; Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

1. Introduction

The change from the traditional passive sharing mode of Internet information to the active sharing mode of network information dissemination mode led by social media has brought huge changes to the entire Internet language, culture and even behavior. Some buzzwords, such as "the power of the predecessor" and "make call", have quickly become popular after being spread through social networks. For a long time, they have been used as common words in the Internet.

Internet buzzwords have become more and more influential, and more and more Internet hotspot events are spread through simple popular vocabulary. The form, transmission speed, transmission effect and user's dissemination initiative also have certain advantages over traditional network event dissemination. Why can some buzzwords become popular in a short time? What factors are driving them and under what conditions are they spreading? What factors influence the popularity and breadth of Internet buzzwords? These are the problems that need to be studied in this paper.

2. Literature Review and Model Construction

Internet buzzwords have brought together the collective memory of the public in a certain period or stage of society and gained collective recognition. Individual discourse has expanded with the help of Internet media and has become a special cultural symbol [1]. Leisure and entertainment, expressing personal opinions and sharing information are the main purposes of using online buzzwords [2].

Judging from research at home and abroad, most scholars believe that the formation, dissemination, and development of buzzwords belong to the category of cultural evolution. The evolution of culture is similar to the evolution of genes in biology [3,4], so they use memetics to Explain [5]. It is defined as a unit of cultural transmission, and produces similar results to genes in the transmission process such as language, ideas, beliefs, and behaviors [6]. Memes

follow the rules of competitive selection and reproduce through various imitations. Diffused from the micro level, and then shaped the macro structure of society [7]. In the Internet, many Internet buzzwords conform to the nature of memes. The pop culture phenomenon that exists on the Internet is also called Internet meme (Internet explosion). Internet meme refers to the fact that someone or something has been widely publicized and spread on the Internet in a short period of time and has become the object of attention.

If language can have advantages in terms of fidelity, fertility, and longevity, then it must win in this competitive relationship and become a successful meme [8]. Successful memes can be called strong memes. The strength of the meme carried by the basic unit of the language determines the spread or vitality of the language. Powerful memes have three characteristics: accurate reproduction, and meaning and form generally do not change in the process of communication; widely distributed, and can be touched and used in daily life, and suitable for a wide range of occasions; permanent reproduction, once produced, it will be used by people for a long time, and will not die out in the short term. From another perspective, memes can succeed because of their adaptability [9], and adaptability features also include longevity, fertility and accurate reproduction. From the perspective of the memetic concept and the memetic cycle theory, there is a process of generation, copying, dissemination and meaning evolution [10]. Strong memes have undergone the evolutionary process of direct use, semantic generalization and format box filling, and have evolved through social environment, pragmatic subjects, text content and communication media [11]. From the perspective of meme types, social pragmatic memes, abbreviated memes and harmonic memes are the main sources of Internet buzzwords, and they are also more likely to become strong memes [12].

Based on the definition and characteristics of strong memes, it is necessary to explore what factors have caused the high popularity of buzzwords to spread, and then determine the deep mechanism of Internet buzzwords becoming a strong meme.

In this research, the selection of conditions mainly adopts a problem-oriented approach. By studying the basic characteristics and various attributes of Internet buzzwords, this research analyzes how they affect the popularity of Internet buzzwords together. The main factors that make language information become buzzwords include mental intention, contextual conditions, pragmatic functions, information representation and communication validity [13]. According to the characteristic attributes of popular Internet buzzwords, this research summarizes the variables into three parts of content, namely media characteristics, event characteristics and content characteristics. Channel characteristics indicate the way buzzwords are generated and the environmental factors through which they are spread. Media characteristics, memes must have a bearing medium, and the medium itself has certain characteristics. The characteristics of the media indicate that buzzwords themselves serve as the carrier of language information in the process of dissemination [8], which is a key factor affecting the efficiency, scope and effect of dissemination. From the perspective of innovation diffusion theory, media or communication channels are also key elements for language to become a network meme [12]. Event characteristics are similar to Internet group events. The generation and development of Internet buzzwords are also dependent on Internet hot events [14, 15], reflecting the essential attributes and characteristics of buzzwords. Therefore, this article also introduces event characteristics as the source of variables. The content characteristics of Internet buzzwords are the characteristics of the buzzword language itself. It has various characteristics of memes, which are the same as the characteristics of certain information that become fashionable buzzwords after being copied and spread. A distinctive feature of language information becoming a buzzword is information representation [13]. According to the characteristics of the above three aspects, we studied its influence on the high heat propagation of memes.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Method and Case Selection

Due to the small sample size of buzzwords, this study uses qualitative comparative analysis methods to conduct research. Qualitative Comparative Analysis(QCA) is a method developed by Charles C. Ragin on the basis of set theory [16]. This method integrates the strengths of case-oriented and variable-oriented analysis methods, and can better solve complex causal relationships and the universality of case studies. The emergence of this method makes systematic comparison between cases possible. The core of the QCA method is the configuration comparative analysis technology, which analyzes and handles complex cases through configuration. QCA methods can be divided into three types according to the types of variables: clear set qualitative comparative analysis (csQCA), multi-value set qualitative comparative analysis (mvQCA), fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA).

The number of cases suggested by the QCA analysis method is between 10 and 60 [17,18]. Due to the large number of Internet buzzwords that appear every year, it is necessary to select cases with complete conditional data and a certain degree of representativeness. By referring to authoritative media, research documents and reports, this article selects 45 internet buzzwords from 2011 to 2018. The buzzwords are listed as follows:

Confirmed eyes, skr, Official announcement, freestyle, There is this kind of operation, Won't your conscience hurt, Heartbroken old iron, Call, Buddha XX, The boat of friendship, Blue Skinny Shiitake, Routine, Ge Youlai, Small goal, Awkward dance, People eating melon, Pippi shrimp let's go, Eat soil, Dog leash, The world is so big, I want to see, Tell the important thing three times, My heart is almost broken, duang, Mainly depends on temperament, I am so surprised, Supply side, Prehistoric power, Lost contact, Cherish what you have at the moment, Straight male cancer, Rich is willful, no for no father, High-end atmosphere, Concubine can't do it, Local tycoon, Tough girl, China's tongue, Yuan Fang, how do you see, Big V, I think I would not love anymore, You know, Hold, Can't afford to hurt. The deadline for obtaining buzzword data is August 31, 2019. During this time period, the comprehensiveness of the case and the integrity of the dissemination are guaranteed.

3.2. Variable Selection and Assignment

3.2.1. Media Characteristics

a. Creation subject, The meaning of the subject of creation refers to the type of group created by the buzzword. The groups are public figures and ordinary people. The subject of creation is the source and source of buzzwords. The buzzword was created by public figures or by ordinary people. Different creators have different audiences and impacts. The buzzwords generated in the incident to which the case belongs may come from the parties, the netizens' creation, or the re-creation and development based on the original language. No matter who created the buzzwords, they can be clearly divided[14] In the case, the proportion of ordinary people is 56%, so the item whose condition belongs to ordinary people is assigned a value of 1.

b. Starting platform. The initial platform defines the platform on which online buzzwords or online events appear for the first time. The initial platform includes self-media and non-self-media. This variable mainly examines whether the source of online buzzwords can affect the spread of buzzwords. Self-media generally refers to individual or individual communicators who deliver normative and non-normative information to the public through the Internet. It is also called "personal media". Self-media has the characteristics of individualization, convenience, strong interaction and rapid dissemination. Compared with non-self media, it is more flexible and approachable. In the case, the self-media accounted for 67%, so the value is 1.

c. Authoritative forwarding. The important factor for language memes to become buzzwords is the effect of public figures and media hype[13]Therefore, it has become the reason for the popularity of online buzzwords which is the involvement of high-influential users and traditional media in social networks. The setting of this variable is designed to examine the influence of online opinion leaders and official media on the event, or the direct or indirect quotation of buzzwords on the spread of buzzwords. In the case, the proportion of authoritative forwarding is 62%, so the value is 1.

3.2.2. Event Characteristics

a. Event source. The source of the event is defined as the type of media created by buzzwords. The media types created by buzzwords include the personality creation of users in social media, event reports in news media, and creation in film and television literature. Different media have different effects on events. A typical example of the type of event reporting in the news media is that in the 2016 Rio Olympic swimming competition, after the Chinese athlete FuYuanhui reached the finals, he spoke to the media in an interview with "the power of the wild." This buzzword won widespread attention through news media channels and quickly became popular on the Internet. In the entertainment program "China New Rap", which was launched in July 2018, the mantra "skr" created by a certain artist on the program. After several months of popularity, in December, the term was selected as one of the "Top Ten Internet Terms in 2018" issued by the National Language Resources Monitoring and Research Center. The proportion of events originating from personality creation is 56%, so the value is 1.

b. Event type. The meaning of event type is the type of event source generated by the buzzword. Learn from existing research on the classification experience of network focus events [19], and the classification of hot events [14].On the basis of the above research, this research combines the source of events generated by Internet buzzwords and classifies the types of events into natural events, social events, current affairs and politics, entertainment events, and commercial events. The types of events are classified from a macro perspective to classify the cases to which different buzzwords belong, and the basis for classification is relatively intuitive. The classification basis is usually qualitatively divided according to the hot events to which Internet buzzwords belong. Entertainment gossip accounts for 62% of cases, assigned a value of 1, and other types are assigned a value of 0.

c. Emotional expression. Buzzwords in the Internet usually reflect a certain strong emotion of Internet users. Users not only use the buzzword as the basis of information exchange, but also use the buzzword as a bearing of certain emotions. Internet buzzwords often reflect the attitudes and emotions of netizens towards something or a person [20]. According to different emotional content, this article divides the emotional expression of netizens into joking and non-joking. For example, in 2016, a user posted a self-recorded video on the Internet, expressing the emotional "uncomfortable and wanting to cry" after being broken in love. Because its language has a relatively heavy dialect accent, it was ridiculed by netizens as "blue thin mushrooms" and quickly became popular on the Internet. "Uncomfortable, want to cry" is used to express uncomfortable feelings, but it also contains ridiculous feelings. The more formal buzzwords such as "official announcement" belong to the non-joking type. The banter type accounted for 69%, which was assigned a value of 1.

d. Appeal. The causal variable of whether there is a demand is defined as whether the buzzword carries a certain demand of Internet users. Use buzzwords to express dissatisfaction with a certain phenomenon and try to attract more attention. In hot events on the Internet, users create buzzwords and spread them. One part of buzzwords is based on the association of events, and the other part is created by gaining more attention and expressing certain demands through buzzwords. The public's expression of network events constitutes the deep-seated reason for the popularity of network buzzwords [14].For example, the 2017 buzzword "Will

your conscience hurt?" was used to target many hot events. For example, in some social injustices, users express their heart-wrenching feelings by quoting this buzzword in comments or reposts, and expect followers to pay attention to solve the problem. The non-claim type accounted for 82% of the cases.

3.2.3. Content Characteristics

a. Performance type. Language memes can be divided into two types: genotype and phenotype. The genotype is expressed as the same content in different forms, and the phenotype is expressed as the same form and different contents [21]. Genotype Internet buzzwords are directly or indirectly conveying the same content in different forms. Genotype Internet buzzwords can also be divided into synonymous homomorphism (such as rich and willful) and synonymous heteromorphic (such as gods and horses are clouds). The phenotype network buzzword refers to a horizontal grafting of the same form of expression but different content. The language form and structure remain unchanged, and the content changes. Divided into homomorphic associations (as you know) and isomorphisms with different meanings (such as textbook XX). The genotype accounted for 60%, so the genotype was assigned a value of 1.

b. Form change. The various forms of Internet buzzwords conform to the needs of the modern Internet society for the diversity of language expression, which has also led to a large number of online buzzwords being copied, imitated and disseminated in fission style. On the other hand, no change in form means that the buzzword exists independently and will not be combined with other words. Variable form means that the buzzword is the core of other phrases. We believe that if the form of online buzzwords is simple, the chance of being changed is small, the easier it is to be copied and imitated, the stronger the vitality, and the easier it is to be spread. Therefore, whether the form of buzzwords has changed is measured. An example of a change in form is "skr", which was originally an onomatopoeia, imitating the sound of rubbing against the ground when a car tires drifting or turning suddenly, and then used as an onomatopoeia in car-related rap music. After the word became popular, it was used as a core component of other phrases and was interpreted by Internet users as "skr person laughing", "you really skr (a little clever ghost)" and so on. 78% of buzzwords have no change in form, so the feature is assigned a value of 1.

c. Form of composition. Most buzzwords are composed of words or phrases, so this causal variable indicates the expression form of buzzwords. For example, "official announcement" and "skr" are expressions of words, while "confirmed eyes" and "does your conscience hurt?" are the forms of phrases. 56% of buzzwords are made up of vocabulary, so the feature value is 1, and the short sentence feature value is 0.

3.2.4. Outcome Variable

The definition of the result variable reflects whether the buzzword can be popular on the Internet. This study uses the value of the Baidu search index as the result variable. The degree of popularization of buzzwords is measured from the time that the buzzword has data records, after the Baidu search index exceeds 5000 to the deadline for data acquisition (2019-08-31), or the time period when it falls below 5000. The average value of the search index within.

3.2.5. Coding and Assignment of Variables

According to the variable design above, the value of the core variable is assigned and calibrated according to the weight of the condition. For the determination of the anchor point of high heat transmission, we do not simply use the average of all cases to determine. This is because some buzzwords have a very high spread index, and the average method will change most of the case results to 0, so we use the mean value of the logarithm as the anchor point, and the value of the index logarithm is greater than the average value of the case result code. It is 1, otherwise it is coded as 0. Through calculation, the average value is 9.28, and the result greater than or equal

to 9.28 is assigned the value 1. According to the above calibration method, the core variable and the result variable are calibrated, and finally the truth table is obtained.

4. Analysis and Results

4.1. Analysis of Necessary Conditions

The meaning of necessity analysis is whether antecedent conditions are necessary conditions for results. A corresponding necessity analysis of the existence and non-existence of a single condition is needed [22]. There are two indicators to determine the necessity of causal variables, namely consistency and RoN. The necessary consistency analysis calculation formula is:

$$inclN_{x \Leftarrow y} = \frac{X \cap Y}{Y}$$

The higher the value of RoN (Relevance of Necessity), the stronger the relevance of the necessary conditions. It is generally considered that the value of RoN greater than 0.6 is more ideal [23]. The calculation formula of RoN is as follows:

$$RoN = \frac{\sum(1 - X)}{\sum(1 - \min(X, Y))}$$

The coverage calculation formula is:

$$covN_{x \Leftarrow y} = \frac{X \cap Y}{X}$$

Through the necessity analysis of univariate and combined variables, whether it is univariate necessity analysis or combined variable necessity analysis, no variable is a necessary condition for the occurrence of the result (conditional consistency is greater than 0.8, RoN value is greater than 0.6). Therefore, the popularity of Internet buzzwords is not caused by a single antecedent condition. The influence of various condition variables on the popularity of buzzwords is interdependent, and the influence of the combination of condition variables needs to be further investigated.

4.2. Configuration Analysis

Table 4. High heat propagation configuration

Configuration	H1a	H1b	H2	H3	H4a	H4b	H5	H6a	H6b
CRE	⊗	⊗	●			•	●		
PLAT			•		•	•	•		
AUTH			⊗	⊗				●	●
SRC					●	●	•		
EVE	•				●	●	•	•	
EMO		•	•			•	•	⊗	⊗
APE	•	•		●	•	•	●	●	●
STY	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗			•
REC		•	•		•		●		•
WORD	●	●					●	●	●
Consistency	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Original coverage	0.09	0.18	0.05	0.18	0.14	0.09	0.23	0.18	0.23
Unique coverage	0	0	0.05	0.09	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.23
Overall consistency	1								
Total coverage	1								

Complex solutions, concise solutions and intermediate solutions are obtained by operation. This article combines the conditional combination of concise solutions and reports intermediate solutions on this basis. According to the existing research paradigm [24], the core conditions and auxiliary conditions are listed. The core condition is the antecedent condition that appears in both the concise solution and the intermediate solution, and the auxiliary condition is the antecedent condition that only appears in the intermediate solution. Table 4 shows the configuration analysis results of high heat propagation.

For the spread of high heat, the key factor combination mode of the high heat spread of buzzwords can be analyzed through the combination analysis of condition variables. It can be seen from the configuration analysis that most of the buzzwords that can be spread with high popularity are generated and popular through a specific channel. Based on the core conditions, this research summarizes four high heat transmission modes: public figure channels, ordinary people channels, authoritative forwarding channels and non-claim phenotypes.

(1) Public figure channel mode (H1a, H1b) refers to buzzwords derived from public figure expression words. The core conditions for configuring H1a and H1b are derived from public figures, phenotypes and vocabulary. The auxiliary conditions for H1a are entertainment events and no appeals. The auxiliary condition of H1b is to make fun of emotions and the form remains unchanged. From a configuration analysis point of view, the creative ability of public figures is weaker than that of ordinary people. Only phenotypic words in entertainment events are easier to get widespread attention, and then form Internet buzzwords. A typical example is SKR, which is derived from the mantra said by the host in the domestic variety show "New Chinese Rap" in 2018. It does not carry any meaning, but it is used by Internet people to recreate and combine words with other meanings. It became popular quickly.

(2) The common people channel model includes phenotypic buzzwords (H2) created by the common people that have not been forwarded by authority, and word buzzwords (H5) created by the common people without appeals and changed form. The core condition for configuring H2 is creation by ordinary people, unauthorized forwarding and phenotype. The auxiliary conditions are self-media, ridicule emotions and unchanged form. The core conditions for configuring H5 are common people's creation, no appeal, unchanged form and vocabulary. The auxiliary conditions are self-media, personality creation, entertainment events and ridicule emotions. From the analysis of this model, it can be seen that buzzwords created by ordinary people can be easily spread with high popularity through self-media and in a fixed form. A typical example is the buzzword "Can't afford to hurt" that appeared in 2011. It was originally published by ordinary netizens on the Internet, expressing the difficulty of learning with ridicule emotions, and was later quoted by other netizens, and appended to the end of the sentence to express the ridicule about other difficult things.

(3) The authoritative forwarding channel mode (H6a, H6b) refers to the buzzwords of non-ridicule and no appeal words forwarded by the authoritative. The core conditions for configuring H6a and H6b are authoritative forwarding, no ridicule, no appeal and vocabulary. The auxiliary conditions of H6a are derived from entertainment events, and the auxiliary conditions of H6b are the same genotype and form. From the results of pattern analysis, relatively neutral and mild words are more likely to be forwarded by authorities, and then become popular on the Internet. A typical example is "call", which was originally a niche language, and was later used by the official media to express cheering emotions. It appeared in the public eye on a large scale and became popular.

(4) Non-appealing expression buzzwords model, including non-appealing expression buzzwords (H3) that have not been forwarded by authority, and phenotypic buzzwords created by personality in entertainment events (H4a, H4b). The core conditions for configuring H3 are unauthorized forwarding, phenotype and no appeal. The core conditions for configuring H4a and H4b are derived from entertainment events, expression and personality creation. The

auxiliary conditions for H4a are that it will be published in the self-media first, without appeal and the form remains unchanged. H4b's auxiliary conditions are created by ordinary people, first published in the self-media and have no appeal. From the perspective of model analysis, the form and structure of buzzwords without purposive appeal or personalized creation of netizens in entertainment events remain unchanged, only the content changes. Such buzzwords are generally interesting and easy to be reproduced by netizens, and then promote its own dissemination, and finally formed a high popularity buzzword in a short time. Examples of this mode interpretation, such as "you know" and "hold", belong to this type, have no appeal and can be used to form other sentences.

5. Conclusion

There are many factors involved in the spread and popularity of Internet buzzwords. This article starts from the three basic characteristics of Internet buzzwords: channels, events and structure. Based on the analysis of 45 Chinese network buzzwords from 2008 to 2011, this paper systematically and extensively discusses the influence mechanism of ten conditional variables, namely creative subject, initial platform, authoritative forwarding, source, event type, emotional expression, appeal, expression type, form change and expression form, on the high popularity and long-term continuous transmission of network buzzwords. The study found that there are 9 effective paths for high-profile communication, which can be summarized into four modes: public figures channels, ordinary people channels, authoritative forwarding channels and non-appealing expressions. For the high-profile communication model, public figures' speeches in entertainment events are easier to get widespread attention and form Internet buzzwords. Ordinary people often have to use the self-media platform to create a hot event in order to produce popular buzzwords, If the buzzwords created are of high interest, it can greatly increase the possibility of popular dissemination.

The research in this article clarifies the relevant condition combination of the spread of Internet buzzwords, using qualitative comparative analysis method of clear set, starting from the channels, events and structural features of Internet buzzwords, the simultaneous interpreting of ten variables, namely, the creative subjects, the first platform, the authoritative forwarding, the source, the event type, the emotional expression, the appeal, the expressive type, the form change and the manifestation, exploring the influence mechanism of two different modes of propagation of the Internet buzzword's high fever and persistent transmission. The research has found an effective path of high-heat spread, which provides a useful reference for the spread and management practices of Internet buzzwords. In the later research, more buzzword data needs to be collected for verification and prediction.

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