A Study on Metaphors of Network Catchwords from the Perspective of Cognitive Construal—Taking "Hustle and bustle" as an Example

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Abstract: *In the information age, the emergence of various network catchwords has enriched people's language and life. Based on the conceptual metaphor theory, this paper discusses the cognitive prominence of the metaphorical network catchword "Hustle and bustle". Research has shown that in the three new meanings of "Hustle and bustle", the metaphor addresser constructs metaphors by highlighting the similarities between the source domain, i.e. the smell of cooking, and the three target domains, "environmental atmosphere", "unique characteristics", and "interpersonal function" respectively. This research is conducive to revealing the role of cognition in the development of human language and helping people better understand and use network catchwords.*

Keywords: *network catchword; metaphor; prominence; Hustle and bustle*

1. Introduction

Metaphors are ubiquitous, and it is on metaphors that human conceptual systems are built. Everyday human language and behaviour are deeply dependent on metaphor, and metaphor exerts a decisive influence on human thinking and behaviour. The universal conceptual system through which human beings think and act is essentially metaphorical, and metaphor is the basis of all human cognitive activities[16].

Network catchword is a kind of fashionable language, which is commonly used in a certain period of time, reflecting the new world trend. Network catchwords not only show netizens' creativity in language use, but also reflect netizens' concerns. As the crystallisation of netizens' wisdom, it is humorous, interesting and distinctive. It is also one of the representative features of the current Internet life, with a high degree of recognition and use[14].

Network catchwords are generally divided into conventional and metaphorical catchwords[11]. This paper focuses on metaphorical catchwords, exploring and analysing the metaphorical phenomenon in Chinese network catchwords from a cognitive perspective, revealing the role of prominence in the construction of metaphorical similarity and the cognitive function played by metaphors in Chinese catchwords.

2. The Network Catchword "Hustle and bustle"

In December 2022, the editorial department of YAOWENJIAOZI announced to the public the "Top Ten Catchwords of 2022". Among them, the word "Hustle and bustle" ranked seventh. In recent years, this word has been used so frequently that it is worth exploring in depth.

The popularity of the word "Hustle and bustle" originated in a passage published in One Day One Zen, a column of Fenghuang Network: In a small kitchen, a handful of rice, a ladle of water, and a few red beans are slowly simmered. Rice and beans whisper in the jar, floating out the taste of happiness on earth. In the world of mortals, good days come from the smoke of cooking(Yan Huo). In this sentence, "Yan Huo" means "the smoke of cooking", and its extended meaning is the strong flavour of life. Later, the essence of this passage was summed up in a single sentence: The smell of cooking(Hustle and bustle) is the most soothing to the hearts of ordinary people. Since then, the word "Hustle and bustle" has become popular on the Internet as a symbol of "lively life", implying people's satisfaction with the current life of prosperity.

More and more people share photos of lively scenes, such as food stands and bustling streets, into

their friend circles, with the word "Hustle and bustle", to express the relief brought by the abundant, peaceful life beyond the stress of school and work. There are even a lot of films and television works named after this word, such as Wo De Ren Jian Yan Huo(Fireworks of My Heart), Zui Shi Ren Jian Yan Huo Se(Falling Before Fireworks), and Ai Qing You Yan Huo(Love Has Fireworks). The popularity of "Hustle and bustle" on the internet is largely related to the process by which people perceive this thing, in which metaphor plays a key role. Therefore, the word can be studied and analysed from the perspective of conceptual metaphor and cognitive construal in cognitive linguistics.

3. Evolution of the Word "Hustle and bustle"

3.1. Original Meaning

"Hustle and bustle" is a noun phrase consisting of the nouns "Yan Huo" and "Qi". "Yan Huo", a Chinese word, i.e. cooking smoke. It refers to the smoke and flames that are lit up by households and families when they make fires. Therefore, this word also extends the meaning of "cooked food". Here "Qi" means "smell". Combining the meanings of these two words gives us the original meaning of "Hustle and bustle" in Chinese, i.e. "the smell of cooking food", as in (1) from China News Network:

Example 1: 'The soaring *smoke(Hustle and bustle)* embodies people's vision for the new year and highlight the vitality of China's economy.'(January 13, 2023)

Another meaning of "Hustle and bustle" in Chinese dictionary is "earthly habits". As mentioned above, "Hustle and bustle" can be extended to refer to "cooked food". "Qi" also means "social climate" in Chinese. Everyone has to eat as long as they are on this earth. Therefore, when people say a certain place is permeated with "Hustle and bustle", they mean that residents here are integrated with this society, with various customs and mores of this society, just like the general public. An example sentence in ancient Chinese prose is as follows:

Example 2: 'There is not a refined system, but it is full of *earthly atmosphere (Hustle and bustle).'(Nan Tang Shu·Sun Meng Zhuan)*

3.2. New Meaning

There are mainly three uses of "Hustle and bustle" on the internet today, which can be explained as follows:

First, it means a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere of life. In a city with "Hustle and bustle", there will be lively crowds, dazzling night markets, and various snack streets, with vendors peddling and tourists chatting one after another, as in (3)-(4):

Example 3: 'The "Night Economy" fills the city with "*Hustle and bustle*".' [15]

Example 4: '"Small Store Economy" brightens the "*Hustle and bustle*" of Lianyungang city.'[6]

Second, this term is usually used to describe a person or thing that has a unique personality and temperament, leaving a deep impression on others, as in(5):

Example 5: 'But Zhen Zhen in her work is quite different from Teresa Teng. Zhen Zhen is beautiful, virtuous and *unique (having Hustle and bustle).'*

Third, it means the warmth between people, as well as society's care for people's life. The "Hustle and bustle" of a city is reflected in the timely awareness of citizens' needs by city managers and the provision of assistance to people in need, as in (6):

Example 6: 'Tangyin: Guard the "*Hustle and bustle*" of summer and be a good night watchman for the masses.'[9]

3.3. Previous Research

There has been research in the academic circle on the network catchword "Hustle and bustle": Using the conceptual metaphor theory as the framework, Zuo(2023) explains that the metaphorical meaning of "Hustle and bustle" is based on traditional Chinese culture, thereby proving the close relationship between metaphor and culture[17]. However, her research only focused on the first new meaning of "Hustle and bustle" and was not comprehensive enough. In addition to her, there are many

scholars who analyze network catchwords from the perspective of conceptual metaphor, such as Yan(2018)[13], Xue(2020)[12], and Li(2022)[5].

Wang and Xiong(2008) propose that metaphor is constructed based on the similarity between the two things represented by the source domain and the target domain, and the cognitive means of establishing this similarity is through prominence, a construal operation[10]. Since then, many studies have begun to analyze the working mechanism of metaphors from the perspective of construal prominence and which characteristics are made prominent behind those metaphors. The research mainly focuses on metaphorical animal idioms[4][8] or metaphors in English translation of literary works[7]. However, few studies have revealed the cognitive factors behind metaphorical catchwords from this perspective. Therefore, this paper will make up for this deficiency by exploring the construction process of the three metaphorical meanings of "Hustle and bustle" and the characteristics made prominent respectively.

4. Metaphor Analysis on "Hustle and bustle"

4.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Johnson(1980)[3] proposed in their work Metaphors We Live By that metaphors are ubiquitous in our lives, penetrating not only our language but also our thoughts and behaviors. In this book, the two authors first proposed conceptual metaphor theory, which holds that metaphor is a systematic mapping from a concrete source domain to an abstract target domain. Therefore, it is through metaphors that people could transform subjective feelings into objective reality thing in the world. Conceptual metaphor aims to guide people to break away from literal meaning and understand the complex cognitive thinking behind it. By concrete-abstract mapping, the connection between the source domain and the target domain could be effectively established.

Lakoff and Johnson classify conceptual metaphors into structural metaphors, oriental metaphors, and ontological metaphors. Structural metaphor refers to the use of a clearly structured concept to construct another structurally ambiguous concept, with the relevance of meaning and the consistency of structure between these two concepts. For example, Napoleon once led a battle at Waterloo, which ultimately ended in failure. People construct the concept of setbacks using the concept of Waterloo, which gave rise to the idiom "Waterloo of Life". Oriental metaphor means using directional words such as up, down, high, low, in, out to express abstract concepts within the target domain, which often represents changes in abstract concepts such as emotions, attitudes, and quantity. For example, "high" and "low" were originally directional words indicating height, but they were abstractly applied to indicate emotional state, as in "in high spirits" and "in low spirits". Ontological metaphor means reflecting intangible and abstract concepts through tangible and concrete objects. For example, in the idiom "All roads lead to Rome", the literal meaning of road is a place where pedestrians and vehicles need to pass to reach their destination, and its metaphorical meaning is the way to achieve goals. Here it uses the concrete "road" to map the abstract "way", and implies that different ways could be adopted to achieve a certain goal.

According to Lakoff and Johnson's classification of conceptual metaphors, the word "Hustle and bustle" does not construct one concept from another, and thus does not belong to structural metaphors; At the same time, "Hustle and bustle" is a noun phrase and does not belong to directional words, therefore it does not belong to oriental metaphors. As mentioned above, Ontological metaphor considers abstract emotions, feelings, experiences, psychological activities, and other intangible concepts as concrete entities. Based on the three new meanings summarized in 3.2, "Hustle and bustle" could refer to the lively atmosphere, unique personality, and warmth of society respectively, which are all abstract and intangible concepts. Those concepts are concretized through the concrete Hustle and bustle, i.e. the smoke of cooking. Therefore, it can be seen that "Hustle and bustle" should belong to the ontological metaphor in conceptual metaphors. It is worth noting that the new meaning of "Hustle and bustle" is not arbitrarily imposed, but has certain similarities with its original meaning as "the smoke of cooking" in certain characteristics. This similarity is made prominent in people's cognitive process, which is a necessary condition for metaphor to be realized. Therefore, understanding the concept of construal prominence is an essential step in the exploration of the metaphorical construction process.

4.2. Prominence

In Cognitive linguistics, prominence refers to the choice and arrangement of information conveyed by language[2]. Every object is multidimensional and may exhibit different attributes in different cognitive domains. In a specific cognitive domain, maybe only one of the different sides could be

activated, while the other sides may be weakened or hidden. This means that once one side is highlighted, it will have an inhibitory effect on the other side, and the highlighted side becomes the focus of attention[1].

According to Cognitive linguistics, language expression is a kind of motivated behavior, and the psychological activity and motivation of the speaker control the final layout of language structure to a certain extent. Ungerer and Schmid pointed out that prominence is the result of human subjective cognition, and this linguistic phenomenon is beyond logic and objectivity. Similarly, the construction of metaphors also relies on the motivation of the metaphor addresser, i.e. using the source domain to express the target domain. Therefore, metaphor is also the result of human subjective cognition. As mentioned earlier, metaphor is the process of understanding abstract and unfamiliar things through a specific and familiar thing. It is the mapping of the source domain to the target domain. The similarity between these two domains provides the foundation for metaphor, and the premise for establishing this similarity is prominence. In the process of constructing metaphors, the addressers discover the similarity between the source domain and the target domain in a certain feature, so they ignore the differences between the two domain and turn their cognitive attention to the similar feature, highlighting this feature through prominence. So in the three metaphorical uses of "Hustle and bustle", what are the similar features that are highlighted between "Hustle and bustle" and the three target domains respectively? This is a prerequisite for constructing this metaphor and a necessary condition for understanding the connotation of "Hustle and bustle".

4.3. Interpretation of "Hustle and bustle" under Conceptual Metaphor

4.3.1. Prominence of the characteristic of environment atmosphere

The reason why "Hustle and bustle", i.e. the smell of cooking, is usually used to describe a lively and vibrant atmosphere of life is that the smell is made from cooking, which means that where there is the smell, there are always clusters of people. Therefore, the rise of "Hustle and bustle" involuntarily reminds people of lively scenes where people gather such as family reunion dinner, food stands, and bustling streets. This conceptual metaphor maps the smell of cooking to the domain of social life. Although they belong to different domains, they have a certain degree of correlation and similarity, that is, a lively, boisterous and harmonious environment atmosphere. The metaphor addresser focuses on and highlights this characteristic of "Hustle and bustle" in the source domain, and maps it to the target domain.

Example 7:'The road is narrower, the houses are shorter, but *flavor of life(Hustle and bustle)* is approaching. The bustling street market is all in sight, with small town residents, in the supermarkets, restaurants and barbershops, living a lively and self-sufficient life.'

Example 7 takes "Hustle and bustle" as the source domain, focusing on the environmental atmosphere characteristic that "Hustle and bustle" is always surrounded by a group of people, so as to highlight the environmental atmosphere characteristic in the target domain that crowds gather in the small town and residents are self-sufficient. The metaphor is thus formed.

4.3.2. Prominence of the characteristic of sensory stimulation

In the countryside, when people cook, smoke rises from the chimneys of houses, hanging high on the roof like a veil, lingering for a long time. People can always see the ethereal smoke from afar, and even judge which family's smoke it is and which type of firewood is used based on the smell. In this way, the generation of cooking smoke has formed a strong sensory stimulation for people, and people gradually began to use "Hustle and bustle" to represent distinctive and impressive people or things. Here, the metaphorical feature of "Hustle and bustle" is the visual characteristic of "eye-catching" and the odor characteristic of "fragrant". Through mapping, the metaphorical characteristics of "Hustle and bustle" are mapped onto people or things. In this process, the "Hustle and bustle" is mapped from concrete and tangible domains to a more abstract domain, i.e. the personality of a person or the feature of an object, making the language more vivid.

"Hustle and bustle" can be reflected in many fields. For example, a singer with "Hustle and bustle" may have an excellent voice, the ability to touch audience's hearts, and great charm; A literary work with "Hustle and bustle" may have novel ideas, vivid narratives, and captivating plots; A company with "Hustle and bustle" may have distinct corporate culture, innovation capability, or a strong sense of social responsibility.

Example 8:'An actor with consummate *acting skills (Hustle and bustle)*· Chen Jianbin: a late bloomer who became famous overnight with the role of Emperor Yongzheng'

In the Empresses in the Palace, Chen Jianbin showed the image of an arrogant, lonely and decisive

emperor vividly with his excellent quality and acting skills. He is good at portraying the psychology of characters and expressing them through his movements and expressions, so his acting skills in the play are very impressive. The metaphor addresser focuses on the eye-catching visual characteristic of "Hustle and bustle" in the source domain and maps it to the target domain—the actor, highlighting the actor's exquisite and convincing acting skills.

4.3.3. Prominence of the characteristic of interpersonal function

In rural areas, whenever the smoke rises, it means it's time to have meal. The courtyards are at their busiest, with neighbors sitting together in the courtyard, eating and chatting happily. The harmonious relationship between neighbors is evident at this moment. In the city, on New Year's Day or other festivals, the smoke of cooking hangs in every household, filing the atmosphere with great festivity. This is an opportunity for people to temporarily put aside their busy work and sit with family and friends to chat, feeling the comfort brought by family and friendship. As a result, "Hustle and bustle" has the interpersonal function of maintaining relationships between neighbors, family, and friends. The metaphorical feature of "Hustle and bustle" is reflected by mapping the functional domain of gathering people together by taking the opportunity of dining to the social functional domain of maintaining interpersonal relationships. It is precisely based on this metaphor that playwright Huang Jisu once equated "Hustle and bustle" with the warmth of a city in one of his speeches. A city with "Hustle and bustle" should focus on people's livelihoods and strive to provide convenience for residents' lives.

Example 9:'Many elderly people still believe that old objects can still be reused after being sewn and patched. Those repair stalls repair not only the old objects, but also people's memories, and the *warmth(Hustle and bustle) of life.*' (April 17, 2023)

Example 9 is excerpted from a news in Zhangjiakou News Network, which records that the government responded to the call of the masses by supplying free venues to restore various repair stands, providing convenience for nearby residents. This measure not only serves the people, but also further activates the main vitality of small and micro markets, providing opportunities for experienced craftsmen to support their families. Taking "Hustle and bustle" as the source domain, the convenience provided by repair stalls for residents as well as the social care for people's livelihoods as the target domain, the metaphor addresser focuses on the similarity between the two in promoting interpersonal communication and reflecting social warmth, and carries out cognitive prominence.

5. Reasons for the Popularity of "Hustle and bustle"

First, the rapid development of the social economy. The development of society has promoted the prosperity of the commodity economy. Snack stalls can be seen everywhere on the streets, with a wide variety of delicious food. These small shops fill the city with a rich flavour of life. People have the opportunity to offload the burden of life and rally a few friends for food and drinks, feeling the warm hospitality of this city. The popularity of the word "Hustle and bustle" is closely related to the richness and prosperity of our country, and this word is a microcosm of social development in the new era and a reflection of people's satisfaction with the abundant and peaceful life.

Second, the networking of social life. In recent years, the internet has become an important way for people's social contact with its rapid development and popularization. More and more people begin to post photos on their social media to express their emotions. The term "Hustle and bustle" is increasingly being used as a caption for photos of street snacks on these websites. Besides, with the rapid rise of social platforms such as Tieba, Weibo, WeChat and webcast, people's interpersonal relationships are becoming increasingly close, which provides great convenience for the breeding and development of those network catchwords such as "Hustle and bustle".

Third, changes in people's attitudes towards life. The abundance of social life and the convenience provided by the government have brought great satisfaction to people. People's material and spiritual needs have been met. People are grateful for the comfort brought to them by the prosperous small stall economy in their daily lives which add "Hustle and bustle" to their life, as well as for the efforts made by the country to meet the people's leisure and entertainment needs. The frequent appearance of "Hustle and bustle" in people's social social networking sites reflects their love for life, positive and optimistic attitude towards life, and longing for a lively and peaceful life over time.

6. Conclusions

Nowadays, with the gradual popularization of the Internet, network language has been gradually used in daily life, playing a crucial role in cultural communication, mass entertainment, and other fields. Different network catchwords reflect various aspects of public social life. The emergence of network

catchwords is the product of people's cognition of the current social situation, so the study of those catchwords must be based on the the study of human cognitive processes. Moreover, conceptual metaphor is an important tool for language innovation and semantic expansion, so it is necessary to interpret network catchwords from this perspective. Therefore, studying the word "Hustle and bustle" from the perspective of metaphor is in line with the production rule of language phenomena and the cognitive law of people towards new things. This study helps perceive the essence of this word through its appearance, and understand its semantic expression ability which is strengthened through metaphor. The popularity of "Hustle and bustle" enhances the expressiveness of Chinese and demonstrates the richness of Chinese Language and Culture.

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