

The derivation of the lexical meaning for “Shenshou” in the context of Internet

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Abstract: “Shenshou”, a popular word in the Internet language environment, has the typical characteristics of noun can serve as the subject, object, attribute and headword. Under the Internet context, “shenshou” has expanded a new meaning category to refer to “primary and secondary school students or children”, which has the semantic features of [+people] [±males] [-adults] and the characteristics of innovation and popularity. The formation of “shenshou” is mainly influenced by social and personal discourse expression, and its use has not been extended to all fields of society, so its productivity is not high.

Key words: Internet context; “Shenshou”; Word meaning derivation

“Characters and words are the barometer of social development and national mentality”. Although the word “Shenshou” has existed since ancient times, in recent years, with the development of Internet social media, the word has expanded its new usage and meaning category, and has been endowed with a new connotation of “primary and secondary school students or children”. Influenced by language memes, the “Shenshou” continues to clone and spread in the context of the Internet, and its popularity remains high. Catchword is a new kind of speech symbol. Due to the strong instantaneity of the word “Shenshou”, the predecessors’ interpretation of it lacks the level of real-time Internet context. From this point of view, the article uses the real-time data of Weibo and Douyin as the main real-time corpus sources to discuss the “Shenshou” and its cultural origin, and the motivation of the word meaning derivation of “Shenshou” in the Internet context, In order to reveal the context of the derivation of the word “Shenshou”.

1 “Shenshou” and its cultural origin

1.1 The origin and interpretation of “Shenshou”

1. origin of “Shenshou”

The Shenshou, also known as the holy beast, is a creature in ancient Chinese mythology. Its image originated in prehistory, developed in the pre Qin period, and shaped in the Qin and Han Dynasties, mainly referring to the four spirits of heaven. According to the records of the book of rites, Liji : “the first is zhuniao, and then Xuanwu. The left is a blue dragon and the right is a white tiger. It is ostentatious.” Later, the four spirits of heaven gradually evolved into four Shenshou. Because the word “beast” is homophonic with the word “Shou”, people often use these Shenshou to pray for happiness, longevity and well-being, and they are widely used in traditional Chinese architecture to ward off evil spirits, avoid disasters and pray for blessings.

2. textual research on “Shenshou”

“Shenshou” in Chinese is a disyllabic compound disyllabic word with a partial structure. According to the Chinese dictionary, it is defined as “supernatural beast”. Generally, it is used to refer to the four ancient Shenshou. Its use cases in ancient literature are as follows:

Dujin said to Guang, “the dragon is a Shenshou, and it is an image of the king’s interests.”——Records of Lu Guang in the history of Jin

In most of the time from ancient times to now, people’s understanding of “Shenshou” is a Shenshou. In recent years, because the “Shenshou” symbolizes happiness, longevity and well-being, netizens use it to metaphor or substitute for primary and secondary school students or children in the flowering season to express their ardent expectations and good wishes for the children.

1.2 The cultural origin of “Shenshou”

The “beast” was closely related to the life of ancient ancestors. Later, the primitive ancestors had totem worship, and the “Shenshou” became the easiest badge for all tribes and clans. Such as the book of songs·Shang song, It was said that “the mysterious bird of heaven’s destiny descended and gave birth to Shang”. It can be seen that the mysterious bird is the totem of Shang clan; According to Guoyu · Zhouyu Shang, it is said that “Zhou Zhixing is also famous for the sound of Zhuo in Qishan”. It can be seen that Zhuo (another name for Phoenix) is a totem of Zhou people; The 86 volume of the book of the later Han Dynasty, the biography of the southern barbarians and the Southwest Barbarians, said that “when Lin Jun died, the soul of the world was a white tiger. Ba Shi drank human blood with a tiger, so he used a human shrine as an excuse”. It can be seen that the white tiger is a totem of the Cuban people; Wait.

The interaction between the Shenshou (Holy beast) and the ancient and modern Chinese people is a process of continuous strengthening of information. From the north and south of the Yangtze River to the inside and outside of the Great Wall, from literature and art to architectural design, the ancient dragon and Phoenix totem and the images of the four gods and beasts are widely used by people, expressing

the yearning of the ancient and modern people for a better life, indicating that this socialized worship of gods and beasts has become a profound cultural tradition in the blood of the Chinese people.

2 The function of “Shenshou” in the context of Internet

2.1 Basic functions and usage

1. act as subject

When “Shenshou” is used alone as a noun, it often refers to or refers to primary and secondary school students or children in the flowering season. One of the main functions of the noun is to act as a subject. For example:

The animals will start school tomorrow!

“Shenshou” is stuck again!

The Shenshou even likes to eat this kind of hard bread.

2. act as an object

“Shenshou” can also be placed after the verb as a separate component and act as an object. For example:

Having a divine animal at home is like offering an ancestor. You can't beat or scold it.

After waiting for more than 8 months, parents in Wuhan finally sent the beast back to school.

The beast has abused me thousands of times, and I love the beast as if it were my first love.

3. act as attribute

It is common for “Shenshou” to act as an attribute in a sentence. When “Shenshou” is used as a modifier as an attribute, its form and meaning begin to have a certain degree of adjective function, but its part of speech has not changed. For example:

You never know what the beast will say next.

How can you be the mother of three Shenshou without these two sons?

4. act as the central word

Like other nouns, “Shenshou” can also be used as the head of a sentence. For example:

These lovely animals are too lively.

Finally sent the sick beast back to the kindergarten.

In modern Chinese, the main grammatical feature of nouns is to act as subject, object, attribute and head in sentences. therefore, from the basic function and usage of “Shenshou”, it is a typical noun.

2.2 Semantic features and specific functions

1. semantic features

In daily life, when we talk about “Shenshou”, we generally associate them with the four great Shenshou in ancient Chinese mythology. However, “Shenshou” has become a new network word popular in real-time social platforms in the context of the Internet, and has been given a new meaning category by people in the world trend that has not changed in a century. Although the original meaning of the word has not been banned or abolished, its new meaning has had a significant impact in a certain range. Just like people's good wishes for “Shenshou”, primary and secondary school students or children in the flowering season are also metaphorically or metonymically referred to as “Shenshou”, and even directly call these children “Shenshou”, so as to express the positive praise and good subjective evaluation of parents, teachers and the public for them. From the perspective of lexical nature, we can analyze the semantic characteristics of the word “Shenshou” in the context of the Internet as follows: “Shenshou - [+ human] [± male] [- Adult]”, which has obviously broken away from the original meaning of “Shenshou”, making it a word that tends to have a commendatory or neutral emotional color.

In the context of the Internet, the “Shenshou” given a new meaning category is often limited to single use, and can not form a large-scale compound word or phrase format of “Shenshou X”. The only construction existing in social networks is “Shenshou”, which shows that the productivity of the word is not high. This also reflects that the meaning category of “primary and secondary school students or children” is only a metaphor or metonymy of “Shenshou”, rather than a formal and stable meaning. The word originated from the network social platform, with the instant characteristics of the network; In other words, its meaning category of “primary and secondary school students or children” has the characteristics of temporary convention. This temporary meaning category has not yet become the universal norm of the whole society. Finally, whether this temporary meaning category can officially enter the vocabulary system of modern Chinese needs a very long test process.

2. specific functions

In the context of the Internet, the word “Shenshou” has the characteristics of innovation and popularity, and its meaning category of “primary and secondary school students or children” has a vivid, lovely, implicit and euphemistic expression function. When we use the “Shenshou” as a metaphor or a substitute for primary and secondary school students or children, the novice will often feel refreshing, while the user will feel very friendly and lovely.

For the speaker, such a lexical meaning category makes up for the defect of the original address for children, enhances the emotional color of the speaker, and enriches the speaker's language expression and emotional output; For the hearers, such a lexical meaning category makes them feel the care and love from their relatives, teachers and society, and can better understand the ardent expectations of their elders for their own success; For language researchers, such a category of lexical meaning provides them with a new entry point to study vocabulary. Instant language phenomena and lexical usage can become a new research object for researchers, thus helping researchers further improve the structural framework of modern Chinese Lexicology; For sociologists and historians, the development and change of vocabulary often reflects the development and change of society. The development and change of such a lexical meaning category has profound significance for the study of micro sociology and micro history. Wait.

3 The motivation of semantic derivation of “Shenshou” and its standardization

3.1 Motivation of semantic derivation

1. positive response of young parents to external pressure

“As an important part of human life, language also shows the distinctive characteristics of this era.” “As the subject, people always play the most central role in the process of understanding the world, forming meaning and constructing language”, so the young parents group represented by the post-80s and post-90s created and widely spread the use of this new meaning category in order to relieve the huge pressure from outside society, As the first generation beneficiaries of the great achievements of China's reform and opening up, their words are more rational, positive and optimistic, reflecting the youthful demeanor and positive energy of the young people in the new era; In the process of inheriting the excellent traditional Chinese culture, they constantly sublimate, dare to innovate and are good at innovation. The new meaning category of “Shenshou” reflects the above aspects, reveals the love of young parents in the new era for their children, expresses their aspirations, and forms a positive response to the external pressure of society.

2. the influence of language memes in the context of Internet

Richard Dawkins put forward the concept of meme in his book “selfish gene”, which refers to a kind of material in the transmission of language, ideas, beliefs and behavior. This material is similar to the role played by genes in the process of biological reproduction and evolution. How can some Chinese linguists naturally introduce meme into the field of linguistics and call the spread and evolution of the field of language memes. Language meme reveals the law of discourse spread and language spread. Its “popularity process is the process of its proliferation. In this process, many factors such as the subjective cognition of meme host, social time and space context will affect it, making it mutate in the process of replication and spread.”

“The spread of network catchwords arises from the appropriate social and cultural context, and the social and cultural environment also restricts the formation and spread of catchwords.” The new meaning category of “Shenshou” has the economy, conciseness and innovation of language, which is in line with people's cognitive psychology of subjective love for gossiping. In addition, the efficient communication function of the Internet is conducive to its large-scale replication, citation and dissemination by people. This word has become a popular metaphorical new word for people to gossip and vent. In the process of copying, quoting and spreading, language memes also play an important role. It imperceptibly affects language users, and controls the language cognitive mechanism of language users to copy and spread popular new words in the same way as gene transmission, laying a good interpersonal foundation for the spread of the new meaning category of “Shenshou”.

3.2 Word normalization

“Network language life is a unique language life”. Although “Shenshou” has been given a new meaning category by people, it is not a standardized modern Chinese vocabulary. “Due to the particularity of the network context, the network catchwords show their unique characteristics”. The word “Shenshou” has both the original meaning and the new meaning category, which leads to the inconsistency of the motivation of the word. The original meaning of “Shenshou” reflects the reason or basis for the name of things, and the motivation is relatively strong, so people can understand the meaning of the word through its literal meaning (morpheme meaning); Its new meaning category is just a figurative meaning or metonymic meaning, but its motivation is relatively weak. If the meaning of the word is deduced from the literal morpheme meaning, it may make people misinterpret its true meaning, or it is difficult to obtain the true meaning.

4 Conclusion

“Language is the carrier to express the form of social development. In the process of social development causing changes in economy and civilization, it will also lead to the gradual transformation of language into an innovative language mode.” In the context of the Internet, the word “Shenshou” has typical nominal characteristics; From the perspective of semantic features and specific functions, “Shenshou” has already possessed the semantic features of [+ human][± male][- Adult] and the functions of vivid, lovely, implicit and euphemistic expression. The formation and development of the new meaning category of “Shenshou” meet the needs of language innovation and economy, but its final entry into the vocabulary system of modern Chinese needs to abide by the basic development laws of modern Chinese

and its vocabulary system, and adapt to the general norms established by convention.

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