

# Research on the Rhetoricization Existence in Chinese Network Buzzwords: From Deviation to Visualization

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**Abstract**—Nowadays, network buzzwords have reached varying degrees of abnormality, but it remains unexplored how systematically deviation and visualization, as two rhetoric devices, are embodied in network buzzwords. Therefore, taking "the 100 network buzzwords" collected by Yaowen Jiaozi as the data and the categorization of deviation in poetic language done by Leech as a rationale, the present study identifies eight types of deviation of network buzzwords and interprets how visual rhetoric is embodied in each type of deviation and its function. In view of these findings, this paper argues for the systematization of deviation and the generalized visualization in deviation, proving the rhetoricization existence in network buzzwords, putting people in a better position to think heuristically about the deviation and popularity of network buzzwords.

**Keywords**—deviation; visual rhetoric; transference; ambiguity

## I. INTRODUCTION

At the present time, the fast development of network language has aroused the attention of many social sciences both in China and abroad. But as for the deviation of Chinese network buzzwords, only Chinese scholar Yu Quanyou (2001) generalized the deviation of Chinese language in seven types from the perspective of socio-culture, together with Cao Jin (2012), classifying network language into ten types based on their superficial linguistic deviant features. They devoted themselves to the categorization and description of the deviation of network buzzwords, but lacking theoretical support and adequate data. Therefore, taking the 100 most popular network buzzwords from the year of 2008 to 2017 collected by Yaowen Jiaozi (hereinafter shortened as "the 100 network buzzwords") ("Table I") as data and Leech's classification of poetic deviation as a rationale, this paper provides an approach that ties poetic deviation to Chinese network buzzwords deviation in style, categorizing and featuring "the 100 network buzzwords", making the "systematic violation" of the norm in the network buzzwords a style possible. And a further investigation on the deviant features of network buzzwords shows that visualization characterized all the eight types of deviation, proving the rhetoricization existence of network buzzwords.

TABLE I. "THE 100 NETWORK BUZZWORDS" COLLECTED BY YAOWEN JIAOZI

Year	Ten most popular network buzzwords
2008	山寨 (counterfeit), 雷 (shocking), 囧 (being embarrassed), 和 (harmony), 不抛弃不放弃 (Never give up), 口红效应 (lipstick effect), 拐点 (inflection point), 宅男宅女 (otaku boy and otaku girl), 不折腾 (no trouble making), 非诚勿扰 (don't bother if you don't mean it)
2009	不差钱 (having got too much money), 躲猫猫 (a hide and seek game, indicating the act of hiding the truth), 低碳 (low-carbon), 被就业 (being offered fake jobs blindly or irresistibly), 裸 (the thing itself, no any addendum), 纠结 (being upset, being torn between...and..., face the dilemma of), 钓鱼 (entrapment), 秒杀 (seckill), 蜗居 (dwelling narrowness), 蚁族 (ant tribe)
2010	给力 (forcefulness), 神马都是浮云 (nothing matters), 围脖 (micro-blog), 围观 (the act of looking on), 二代 (the second generation of...), 拼爹 (competition of family background), xx控 (to be under the control of xx), xx帝 (xx emperor), xx达人 (xx talent), 穿越 (pass through a certain time and space, symbolizing being abstruse, mysterious)
2011	亲 (my dear), 伤不起 (being too delicate to bear a blow), Hold住 (to deal with something confidently and leisurely), 我反正信了 (I believe it anyway whether it is true or not), 坑爹 (cheating, deceiving me, just like kidding your father), 卖萌 (the action of playing cute), 吐槽 (the act of disclosing or complaining other's secret), 气场 (one's charisma), 悲催 (be sad), 忐忑 (being mentally disturbed)
2012	正能量 (positive energy), 元芳, 你怎么看 (Yuanfang, what's your opinion?), 舌尖上 (delicious food on the tip of the tongue), 躺着也中枪 (to be swept up in), 高富帅 (gorgeous millionaire or billionaire), 中国式 (of Chinese style), 压力山大 (being under a lot of stress), 赞 (thumb up), 最美 (the best xx), 接地气 (being down to earth)
2013	中国梦 (Chinese dream), 光盘 (to eat up the food in your plate, symbolizing the saving spirit), 倒逼 (reversed transmission of the pressure to get something done), 逆袭 (the counterattack under unfavorable circumstances), 微×× (Micro-), 大V (big V, verified micro-blog users who have more than 500,000 followers), 女汉子 (tough girl or the cow girl), 土豪 (nouveau riche), 奇葩 (a person who is abnormal), 点赞 (give sb. a thumb-up)
2014	顶层设计 (top-level design), 新常态 (New Normal), 打虎拍蝇 (anti-corruption campaign), 断崖式 (a cliff-like)

	drop), 你懂的 (you should know), 断舍离 (cut off and abandon meaningless things), 失联 (being out of touch or contact), 神器 (the unique magical effect of some product), 高大上 (high-end, magnificent, classy), 萌萌哒 (being adorkable)
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ten most popular network buzzwords</b>
2015	获得感 (sense of gain), 互联网+ (Internet plus), 颜值 (face score), 宝宝 (from baby to all the people), 创客 (Maker), 脑洞大开 (the act of greatly enriching one's mind), 任性 (being deliberately provocative, or being naïve and willful or being decisive and bold in action), 剁手党 (Internet shopaholics), 网红 (online celebrities), 主要看气质 (one's disposition is more important than his appearance)
2016	洪荒之力 (prehistorical powers), 吃瓜群众 (Internet onlookers), 工匠精神 (craftsman spirit), 小目标 (a small objective), 一言不合就×× (being apt to do sth), 友谊的小船, 说翻就翻 (the friend-ship wrecks easily), 供给侧 (supply-side), 葛优躺 (Ge You-esque lying), 套路 (tricks or traps), 蓝瘦, 香菇 (feel awful, wanting to cry)
2017	不忘初心 (remain true to our original aspiration), 砥砺前行 (to forge ahead), 共享 (sharing), 有温度 (temperature dependent), 流量 (mobile internet data), 可能××假×× (the objective existence of something unreal or fake), symbolizing the feeling of inefficiency, paradoxicality), 油腻 (an middle-aged man's appearance of being oily, greasy), 尬 (being embarrassed in doing something), 怼 (dissing), 打 call (to support somebody)

II. DEVIATION AS A RHETORIC DEVICE

Deviation is generally supposed to refer to the special or unusual expression that deviates from the norms (Chi Ren, 2013). Deviance claims the reader's attention by its abnormality and sets him to ponder over, and the next minute will reveal to him an otherwise abnormal picture (Cui Jianshe, 1995). Geoffrey N. Leech did a very comprehensive categorization work on poetic deviation and analyzed eight types of poetic deviation, including lexical deviation, grammatical deviation, phonological deviation, graphological deviation, semantic deviation, dialectical deviation, deviation of register, and deviation of historical period.

III. METHODOLOGY

This paper deals exclusively with the 100 most popular network buzzwords from the year of 2008 to 2017 collected by Yaowen Jiaozi for the following reasons: firstly, Yaowen Jiaozi is a magazine specialized in the wording of media language in China; secondly, the network buzzwords collected by Yaowen Jiaozi are frequently used in both network media and paper media; thirdly, many experts and scholars in the field of linguistics are invited to do a careful and rigorous evaluation and selection work on these network buzzwords. So "the 100 network buzzwords "are representative and valid enough to study. The reasons why this study tries to apply the deviation theory of poetic language to network language lies in the fact that network language is in essence a stylized language, the intentional deviance from the norm, the same as poetic language in this sense.

IV. DEVIATION IN CHINESE NETWORK BUZZWORDS

Investigations on "the 100 network buzzwords" show that the characterization of network buzzwords is highly in conformity with the eight types of poetic deviation posed by Leech, as is shown in the following part.

A. Lexical Deviation

Lexical deviation refers almost exclusively to neologisms or the coinage of new words (Leech 2001, Wang Shouyuan 2000, Liu Shisheng 2006), which are made up 'for the nonce', i.e., for a single occasion only, rather than as serious attempts to augment the English word stock for some new need. It is misleading to suggest that neologism is a 'violation of lexical rule'; a more correct explanation is that an existing rule of word-formation is applied with greater generality than is customary: that the usual restrictions on its operation are waived in a given instance (Leech 2001:42). Investigation shows that in "the 100 network buzzwords ", there are as many of 18 percent borrowed new words and new coinages. For instance, "宅男宅女" (otaku boy and otaku girl) "xx控" (to be under the control of xx), "达人" (xx talent), "卖萌" (the action of playing cute), "吐槽" (the act of disclosing or complaining other's secret), "逆袭" (to counterattack under unfavorable circumstances), "断舍离" (the act of cutting off and abandoning those things which are not useful or meaningful), "脑洞大开" (the act of greatly enriching one's mind) are borrowed words from Japanese, and "新常态" (New Normal), "创客" (Maker), "秒杀" (seckill) are borrowed words from English language. "Hold 住" (to deal with something confidently and leisurely), "互联网+" (Internet plus), "大 V "(big V, verified micro-blog users who have more than 500,000 followers) "打 call" (to support somebody) are neologisms by means of blending and "高富帅" 高大、富有、帅气/gorgeous millionaire or billionaire), "高大上" (高端、大气、上档次/ high-end, magnificent, classy), "失联" (失去联系、失去联络/being out of touch or contact) are new coinages by abbreviation. The lexical deviation of network buzzwords is motivated by nonce formation, characterized by unfamiliarity, with the power of concept-making.

B. Grammatical Deviation

Grammatical deviation, or syntactic deviation, means the departures from normal grammar (Wang Shouyuan 2000:39), including the deviation in the surface structure and deep structure (Liu Shisheng 2006:31). Leech(2001:45) further pointed out that the interpretation of the deviation consists not in mapping the deviant form on to a single normal form which it most closely resembles, but rather in relating it to a whole class of normal forms which could replace it in that position. Investigation shows that among "the 100 network buzzwords ", 6 percent of which are featured by grammatical deviation, epitomized by the deviated use of parts of speech: firstly, expanded parts of speech, for instance, "雷", a noun originally, now can be used as a verb (e.g. 被你雷得外焦里嫩) and an adjective (e.g. 一个最雷的词语); together with "纠结" (v-n. a.) "忐忑" (a-n. v.), "赞" (v.-a.); secondly, being generalized in use, relating the asyntactic structure to a whole class of normal forms. Take "被就业" (being offered fake jobs blindly or irresistibly) for instance. Originally, in

the structure "被 xx" (the character "被" is an indicator of passive voice), "被" should be followed by a transitive verb, e.g. "被打", "被抢" etc. But in the network buzzwords "被就业", "被小康", "被和谐", "被" is respectively followed by an intransitive verb, nouns and an adjective. The same case is with "伤不起" (being too delicate to bear a blow). The grammatical deviation in "the 100 network buzzwords" alters the syntactic rule of some verbs purposefully and put them in general use with the purpose of achieving certain communicative effects.

### C. Phonological Deviation

In English, the only irregularities of pronunciation we need to note are conventional licences of verse composition: elision, apharesis, apocope, etc. and special pronunciation for the convenience of rhyming (Leech 2001). Phonological deviation is true of all languages (Leech 2001:46). In "the 100 network buzzwords", the only phonological irregularity needing to be noted is the unrelated homophony, for example "神马 [shén mǎ] 都是浮云" — "什么 [shén me]", there is no real relation between these two words "神马" and "什么" in meaning although these pairs of words are similar in pronunciation. The same case with "围脖 [wéi bó] — "微博" [wēi bó], "压力山大" [yā lì shān dà] — "亚历山大" [yà lì shān dà], "蓝瘦，香菇" [lánshòu xiānggū] — "难受，想哭" [nánshòu xiǎngkū]. The phonological deviation in network buzzwords is easy to see but is of limited importance, being easy to read and sound familiar, thus visually and aurally appealing.

### D. Graphological Deviation

By graphology is meant the encoding of meaning in visual symbols (Wang Shouyuan, 2000:30). Leech reckons, to the extent that spelling represents pronunciation, any strangeness of pronunciation will be reflected by a strangeness of written form. So graphological deviation can be embodied in two cases: the spelling representation for the deviation in pronunciation; the deviation in composition, punctuation, and type of printing etc. (Liu Shisheng, 2006:28). In network buzzwords, we can also see the traces of graphological deviation, which is usually the representation of the deviant pronunciation of some words. For example, "萌萌哒" (being adorkable), "哒" is supposed to be "的", but was always read as "da", aiming at sounding more lovely and sincerely. So the character "的" (read as "de") was replaced gradually by "哒" (read as "da"), which is a representation in Chinese character caused by the deviant pronunciation of "的".

### E. Semantic Deviation

Semantic deviation may be defined as "linguistic effects involving something odd in the cognitive meaning of a certain linguistic unit, e.g. a word or phrase" (Leech, 1969:131). Being thus defined, semantic deviation may include contradiction (oxymoron, paradox), transference (synecdoche, metonymy, metaphor), deception (overstatement, understatement, irony) and ambiguity (Wang Shouyuan, 2000:61-77). In Chinese network buzzwords, semantic deviation is obviously too central an aspect of network buzzwords to be dealt with in one minor section.

### 1) Transference

In literature, transference of meaning is the process whereby literary absurdity leads the mind to comprehension on a figurative plane (Wang Shouyuan, 2000: 64). Transference in network buzzwords is so important an element that it can be embodied in various figures of speech.

*a) Metaphor:* The most important type of meaning transference in literature is metaphor. It is associated, as Leech points out, with a particular rule of transference which may be called the "metaphoric rule" (1969:151), for which both simile, an overt comparison, and metaphors, some convert comparisons, can be easily found in "the 100 network buzzwords". For example, in "蚁族", a group of ants are compared to the group of people who are very hardworking, energetic, and ambitious although they live in the suburb of a city and are not in a good financial situation temporarily; in "打虎拍蝇", the tiger is figuratively compared to the corrupted officers in high places and the fly the corrupted officials in grass-roots. Other metaphorical expressions in "the 100 network buzzwords" are "蜗居" (dwelling narrowness), "接地气" (down to earth, being used to describe someone who is really easy to talk to, casual, sensible and unpretentious), "断崖式" (a cliff-like drop).

*b) Synecdoche:* The traditional figure of synecdoche is identified with a rule which applies the term for the part to the whole (Wang Shouyuan 2000: 64). A further illustration of the ambiguity of the term 'synecdoche' is its occasional use for the converse substitutions of the above two types: i.e. the term for the whole is used for the part, and the general term for the particular (Leech 2001:150). Some good examples of synecdoche can be found in "the 100 network buzzwords": in "主要看气质", "one's disposition" is used to refer to one's whole internal qualities and virtues; in "友谊的小船，说翻就翻", "the feature of being fragile between friends" is used to describe all the things being messed up easily, which can be seen in "油价的小船，说翻就翻" (the price of metro as a boat, will turn over easily); "婚姻的小船，说翻就翻" (the marriage as a boat, will break down easily) etc. Some other network buzzwords as "低碳" (means the reduction of the emission of carbon-dioxide, with "low carbon" being used to describe being environment-friendly), "气场" ("the gas field as an invisible power" is used to describe one's public appeal and influence) can also be categorized as this type.

*c) Metonymy:* Webster's Third New International Dictionary calls metonymy 'a figure of speech that consists in using the name of one thing for that of something else with which it is associated'. For example, "躲猫猫", a hide and seek game originally, was used to be an excuse for the sudden death of a prisoner in a prison firstly. But the investigation afterwards shows that the prisoner was beaten to death. So this hide and seek game "躲猫猫" is used to indicate the act of hiding the truth, or escaping from the supervision of others, or anything lacking transparency. "女汉子" (means the tough girl or the cow girl, being used to describe such abstract characteristics usually held by male

as being self-contained, tough and daring to do anything) is also characterized by metonymy.

*d) Symbolism:* As normally used in literary study, symbol suggests a connection between the ordinary sense of reality and a moral or spiritual order. And the practice of employing symbols is called symbolism, a term also used to describe a group of symbols within a particular text. Symbolism is a commonplace in "the 100 network buzzwords". For example, "裸" means "naked", symbolizing "the thing itself, no any addendum or additional conditions", as in "裸婚" "裸官"; "二代", means "the concrete person of the second generation", symbolizing "the abstract characteristics shown in a second generation" in "官二代" "富二代". Some other network buzzwords as "拼爹" ("爹", one's father, is used to symbolize the social status and power of one's father), "穿越" (means the concrete action of passing through a certain space originally, being used to symbolize the abstract concept of being abstruse, mysterious, profound and in great confusion) now, "光盘" (means to eat up the food in your plate, symbolizing the thought of saving grains or the saving spirit), "剁手党" (means the concrete people indulged in online shopping, symbolizing the concept of rational consumption.), "吃瓜群众" (means the concrete people who eat some melons while listening to other's talking in our real life originally, symbolizing people's indifferent attitudes toward one's proposal or something important), "一言不合就xx" (means the consequence caused by the disagreeable conversation, symbolizing "suddenly", "petulant" and "being apt to do sth"), "葛优躺" (Ge You-esque lying is used to symbolize the modern people's decadence, which meets people's needs to relax themselves), "可能xx假xx" (means the objective existence of something unreal or fake, symbolizing the subjective feeling, including inefficiency, paradoxicality, unexpectedness), "油腻" (an objective description of an middle-aged man's appearance of being oily, symbolizing people's attitude towards life, such as speaking in an unctuous tone, being slippery in manner, being neglectful of one's appearance and ways of action.) are always used symbolically.

*e) Allegory:* As a literary device, an allegory is a metaphor in which a character, place or event is used to deliver a broader message about real-world issues and occurrences. Allegory has occurred widely throughout history in all forms of art, largely because it can readily illustrate or convey complex ideas and concepts in ways that are comprehensible or striking to its viewers, readers, or listeners (from Wikipedia). A good example of allegory in "the 100 network buzzwords" is "钓鱼" or "钓鱼执法" (entrapment). This statement was originally derived from a historical event in Chinese Shang and Zhou dynasty, which is called "senior Jiang's fishing" (姜太公钓鱼), with the meaning "to hook the willing one". But as a network buzzword, "钓鱼" or "钓鱼执法" means "the enforcer lures a man who has no illegal intentions to engage in crimes".

## 2) Deception

Deception is another type of semantic deviation that is frequently found in literary texts. By deception is not meant the use of language that is intended to deceive people. It simply refers to the deliberate use of overstatement, understatement and irony, each of which misrepresents the truth in some way (Wang Shouyuan, 2000:70). In "the 100 network buzzwords", deception is mainly embodied by the frequent use of overstatement. There are as many as 17 examples of overstatement. For instance, "xx帝", referring to one's progress and influence in a certain field being as great as that of the emperor in Chinese feudal society; "最美xx", referring to a person who performs best in a particular field; "神器", being used to emphasize the unique magical effect of some product, which is as powerful as that of "the ten artifact relic" in traditional Chinese myths, such as the "sky axe" of Pangu and the "sky mending stone" of Nvwa. Other examples of overstatements in "the 100 network buzzwords" are "xx达人" (xx talent), "断崖式xx" (a cliff-like xx), "高富帅" (gorgeous millionaire or billionaire), "女汉子" (the iron lady), "土豪" (nouveau riche), "高大上" (high-end, magnificent, classy), "剁手党" (Internet shopaholics), "洪荒之力" (prehistorical powers), "蚁族" (ant tribe), "秒杀" (seckill), "微xx" (Micro-), "蜗居" (dwelling narrowness).

## 3) Ambiguity

In non-literary discourse, ambiguity is usually taken to be the opposite of clarity and is therefore normally considered a fault. In literature, however, it is regarded as a virtue, roughly correspondent to 'richness' or 'wit', for in literature we are ready to read extra-meanings (Wang Shouyuan, 2000: 77). In Leech's words, ambiguity means the case of "more than one cognitive meaning for the same piece of language" (Leech, 1969:205). In "the 100 network buzzwords", by the term ambiguity, we mainly mean the ambiguity in affective meaning, cognitive meaning and reflected meaning.

*a) Ambiguity in affective meaning:* Affective meaning reflects the personal feelings of the speaker, including his attitude to the listener or his attitude to something he is talking about. As an additional meaning attached on a word's rational meaning or conceptual meaning, which is more stable, the affective meaning is easy to be affected by the changing outside world. The change happened on both people's subjective consciousness and the objective world results in the change in the affective meaning of many network buzzwords. For example, "土豪" refers to local tyrants before 1950s, and is derogatory in the past. But now it is used to refer to that group of people who are badly rich and like to show off their richness but not well cultivated. People usually having a mixed feeling of rejection and envy to them, which can be seen in the following expression: "土豪, 我们做朋友吧" (Let's make friends). So it is not always derogatory; "套路" refers to a series of skills and tricks in Chinese martial arts, and is commendatory. But as a network buzzword, it sometimes refers to some elaborate lies, even some tricks or traps, being derogatory. The ambiguity in meaning also happens on "围观" (from a kind of social abuse to the act of looking on), "奇葩" (from excellent literary and art works to somebody abnormal), "网红" (from

instant online celebrities, a neutral word, to those online celebrities of low quality).

b) *Ambiguity in cognitive meaning and reflected meaning*: Cognitive meaning is the essential and inextricable part of what language is, and is widely regarded as the central factor in verbal communication. The semantic ambiguity can also be seen in the following network buzzwords: "尬", means to compete or fight for something on one hand, e.g. "尬舞", being embarrassed in doing something on the other. e.g. "尬聊" "尬唱" "尬煮" "尬谈" etc. "我反正信了" can be explained in various ways: first, the speaker really believes that something is true; second, the speaker doesn't believe something is true, with an ironic purpose; third, a farcical amusement, indicating that what the speaker says is simply a joke. The ambiguity of semantic meaning can also be seen in the other examples as "宝宝" (referring to people from baby to all the people), "你懂的" (you should know, implying that the speaker needn't say or explain too much since everyone else knows or the speaker is not willing to say, or can't say or it is inconvenient for the speaker to say since some sensitive topics are involved.), "任性" (being deliberately provocative, or being naïve and willful or being decisive and bold in action).

F. *Dialectal Deviation*

DIALECTISM, or the borrowing of features of socially or regionally defined dialects, is quite commonly used by story-tellers and humorists (Leech, 2001:49). Dialectism may serve a number of purposes, for example, for the purpose of humor, contempt, and sincerity (Liu Shisheng, 2006:30), promoting each other into a closer relationship. Dialectal deviation is also quite commonly seen in "the 100 network buzzwords", accounting for 5 percent. For example: "山寨" (Cantonese), "不差钱" (Northeast dialect), "坑爹" (Northeast dialect), "赞" (Taiwanese/Wu dialect/Shanghai dialect); "惹" (Henan dialect).

G. *Deviation of Register*

Leech pointed out that modern poets have asserted their freedom from constraints of 'poetical' language, the poets of the present century have exploited this device with an unprecedented audacity. Register borrowing in poetry is always accompanied by the further incongruity of register mixing, or the use in the same text of features characteristic of different registers. Sometimes an incongruity lies not so much in the relation of a piece of language to its linguistic context as in its relation to its subject matter. To the present age, the congruity of register in network buzzwords lies likewise not only in the relation of a piece of language to its linguistic context, or the transference of context, but also in its relation to its subject matter, or the change of the social status of the subject matter. The former can be seen in the following examples: first, from movie and TV drama lines to the common use, e.g. "不抛弃, 不放弃" (Never give up), "非诚勿扰" (don't bother if you don't mean it), "元芳, 你怎么看" (Yuanfang, what's your opinion?), "舌尖上" (delicious food on the tip of the tongue), "躺着也中枪" (to be swept up in), "中国式" (of Chinese style); second, interdisciplinary conversion,

e.g. "拐点" (inflection point), "流量" (mobile internet data); third, the interconversion between daily use and special use, e.g. "口红效应" (lipstick effect), "正能量" (positive energy), "倒逼" (reversed transmission of the pressure to get something done), "微xx" (micro-), "顶层设计" (top-level design), "颜值" (face score), "共享" (sharing), "亲" (my dear).

The latter can be seen in the following striking examples, fourth, from the national leaders to the common people, from important speech/significant activities/main media to general use, e.g. "中国梦" (Chinese dream), "获得感" (sense of gain), "不忘初心" (remain true to our original aspiration), "供给侧" (supply-side), were first proposed by President Xi Jinping; "不折腾" (no trouble making) by President Hu Jintao in the 30th anniversary of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee; "工匠精神" (craftsman spirit) by Premier Li Keqiang in "A Government Work Report". Other cases of this kind are "和" (harmony), "给力" (forcefulness), "最美xx" (the best xx), "小目标" (a small objective), "砥砺前行" (to forge ahead), "有温度" (temperature dependent).

H. *Deviation of Historical Period*

Leech noted the poet's ability to range over the multifariousness of the language without respect to boundaries of dialect and register. Poets have 'the freedom of the language', in the same sense that he is not restricted to the language of his own particular period, as is the case with more commonplace types of linguistic transaction. Some clear cases of anachronism can be seen in "the 100 network buzzwords": "囧", an abandoned old word, was pronounced as "jiǒng", with the old meaning "light" and "being bright". But for the reason that "囧" looks like a person's facial expression of being very embarrassed and troubled, with the same pronunciation as "窘", so it is endowed with the meaning of "being gloomy, embarrassed and helpless" now, the same as "窘". Other examples of this type can also be found in the following network buzzwords: "帝" (xx emperor), "悲催" (be sad), "神器" (xx artifact), "洪荒之力" (pre-historical powers).

TABLE II. THE PROPORTION OF EACH TYPE OF DEVIATION IN "THE 100 NETWORK BUZZWORDS"

Number	Types of Deviation	Proportion
1	Lexical Deviation	18%
2	Grammatical Deviation	6%
3	Phonological Deviation	4%
4	Graphological Deviation	1%
5	Semantic Deviation	33%
6	Dialectical Deviation	5%
7	Deviation of Register	28%
8	Deviation of Historical Period	5%
	total	100%

<sup>a</sup> The cases of overstatement are not accounted in semantic deviation since they are overlapped with other categories in semantic deviation.

All in all, investigation on "the 100 network buzzwords" ("Table II") indicates that each one of them has found its own type as is shown in the table below, reinforcing the validity of Leech's poetic language deviation theory in the systematic categorization of Chinese network buzzwords,

proving the generalization of deviation rhetoric in network buzzwords, maybe for the purpose of visualization.

## V. VISUALIZATION IN CHINESE NETWORK BUZZWORDS

A further observation on the eight types of deviation in network language indicates that they are all characterized by visual rhetoric.

### A. *Visualization as a Rhetoric Device*

The visual rhetoric is used to draw the reader's attention and seduce the persuasion of them toward the message recalled. An analysis of visual rhetoric considers how images work alone and collaborate with other elements to create an argument designed for audience choice to present information or argument through image (Nur Safinas Albakry, 2014). In visual rhetoric, the visual imagery must be able to serve as a sign, be symbolic, involved human intervention and the message must be communicated to the audience. Furthermore, throughout the rhetoric elements it may influence the people's way of thinking and belief by using strategic symbol systems (Foss, 2012). Therefore, visual rhetoric is actually fulfilled by two ways: document design and informative graphics. Text and graphics alike can be classified as visually configured information (Nicole Amare, 2007). Thus we have to admit that textual elements, or language, and graphics best serve the purpose of technical information while decorative and indicative strategies combine to serve the desired goal of persuasion. Nowadays, the recent advancement in network technology has enabled users to produce and share images by the means of network language on a mass scale, so in virtual communication, language is playing an increasingly important role in portraying information and serve the desired goal of persuasion in visual rhetoric. Thus Chen Rudong (2005) classifies the connotation of visual rhetoric into three parts, the first of which is visual rhetoric fulfilled by the means of language.

### B. *Visualization in Network Buzzwords*

Language visual rhetoric can be achieved by those traditional rhetoric devices, together with the change in form and meaning (Chen Rudong, 2005). Investigations on "the 100 network buzzwords" show that visual rhetoric can be fulfilled through the use of different traditional rhetoric devices on one hand: first, parody. A parody is a work created to imitate, make fun of, or comment on an original work — its subject, author, style, or some other target — by means of satiric or ironic imitation (from Wikipedia). Parody is a prominent genre in online culture. In "the 100 network buzzwords", grammatical deviation functions as a parody, created to imitate the existed syntactic structure, e.g. "被就业", strengthening its visual and ironic effect. Second, malapropism. A Malapropism (also called a malaprop or Dogberryism) is the use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound, resulting in a nonsensical, sometimes humorous utterance. An example is the statement by baseball player Yogi Berra, "Texas has a lot of electrical votes", rather than "electoral votes". The phonological deviation in "the 100 network buzzwords" worked as a

malapropism, which is equivalent to a Chinese figure of speech called "fēi bái" (飞白). Malapropisms often occur as errors in natural speech but are always the subject of media attention. Third, "bié jiě" (别解). The transference of meaning in the semantic deviation of network buzzwords (including simile, metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, symbolism, allegory, as well as overstatement and ambiguity) can be defined in another way "bié jiě", which means some old words are endowed with a new meaning temporarily in a certain context. Visualization can be well achieved by the use of "bié jiě", especially the use of metaphor, because in literature, it has long been observed that any metaphor is a picture and accordingly that all graphical images of visualization are based on metaphors and so are of metaphorical nature (Vladimir L. Averbukh, 2001).

On the other hand, the visualization of network buzzwords can be realized by the change in form, for example, the defamiliarization of neologisms in lexical deviation, the change in Chinese character in graphological deviation, the generalized use of dialect in dialectal deviation, and the pragmatic transference of some words in time and space as shown in the deviation of historical period and deviation of register.

### C. *The Function of Visualization in Network Buzzwords*

Visual rhetoric characterized by "the 100 network buzzwords" is utilized for a number of purposes: first, to serve for the special purpose of foregrounding in order to attract people's attention and the concern of mainstream media. Deviation broke the original balance of a language, foregrounding a specific feature from the background, creating a defamiliarization effect. Thus deviation is an efficient device of foregrounding, or the principle of rhetoric lies in deviation (Yang Jinsong, 2012); second, to express people's vivid and vigorous sensory experience since language itself is abstract and generalized; third, to transfer the covert words into overt words. The covert words refers to those words which are in accordance with the formation rules of a language, but still underly in the bottom of the language vocabulary, being not a fact of langue. But when certain socio-cultural pragmatic conditions are accorded with, those covert words may come out and become overt words (Wang Xijie, 1990). In "the 100 network buzzwords", some rhetoric devices, for example, parody, Malapropism, and metaphors, etc. play a very important role in the visualization of covert words into overt words; fourth, to persuade other to be cooperative. Persuasion began with the Greeks, who emphasized rhetoric and elocution as the highest standard for a successful politician. As a rhetoric device, the deviation in network buzzwords, by the means of media, can also form a speech act, achieve a certain persuasion effect, persuading others to take some actions or form a point of view, to arouse recipients' instinct of being cooperative.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In the light of the fact that the previous relevant research on the deviation of network buzzwords was conducted from the perspective of social-culture or linguistics, lacking theoretical support and adequate data, this paper provides an

approach that ties poetic deviation to Chinese network buzzwords deviation in style, which was conducted on the basis of 100 network buzzwords and categorized eight types of deviation under the guidance of the poetic deviation theory claimed by Leech and some other representative stylist, including lexical deviation, grammatical deviation, phonological deviation, graphological deviation, semantic deviation, dialectical deviation, deviation of register, and deviation of historical period. Each word in "the 100 network buzzwords" can find its own type, constructing a "systematic violation" of the normal Chinese. Moreover, visual rhetoric was found to characterize all the eight types of deviation by the use of such traditional Chinese figures of speech as parody, "fēi bái", "bié jiě" and metaphors and some transference in the following aspects: the defamiliarization of neologisms in lexical deviation, the change in form in graphological deviation, the generalized use of dialect in dialectal deviation, and the pragmatic transference in time and space of some words as shown in the deviation of historical period and deviation of register. The visualization of network buzzwords is in the service for the special purpose of foregrounding, expressing people's vivid and vigorous sensory experience, transferring the covert words into overt words and persuasion, to arouse recipient's instinct of being cooperative. All these analysis well explained the reason for the fast expansion of network language. But due to the limitation of data, which are only words, the pragmatic deviation and discoursal or textual deviation are neglected in this paper. This may be added when more data at discourse level are accessible.

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