A study on linguistics of memes and jargons in the Simplified Chinese Internet

In an era where the internet deeply permeates daily life, many around me use memes or niche jargon in everyday communication.
I conducted an in-depth study of meme usage in the Chinese internet culture and created a performative wearable device as the final output.

MEME MASTER

INSPIATION

An attractive internet topic.

During my internet surfing, I discovered an interesting community from a Douban group. The members of this community are dedicated to interpreting and teaching each other the jargon and memes from various circles, which seems very intriguing.

Internet Jargon Guide

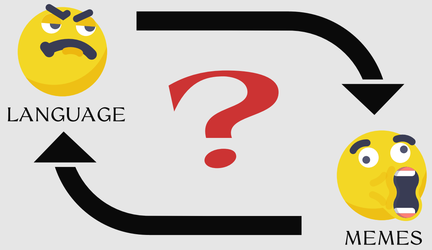
INCLUDING:

- EMOJI
- ROCK
- ACGN
- LANG
- ABBR
- ...

A. LITERATURE REVIEW

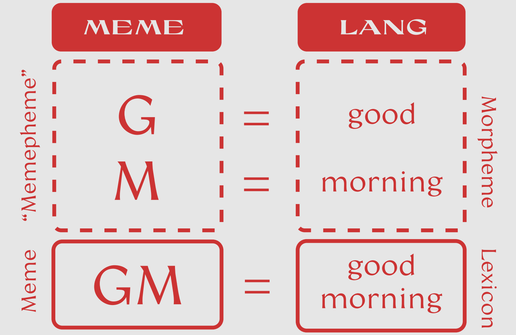
I started to do some research about this topic, in this part, I summarized four points from my review.

1 MEME is basically a language.

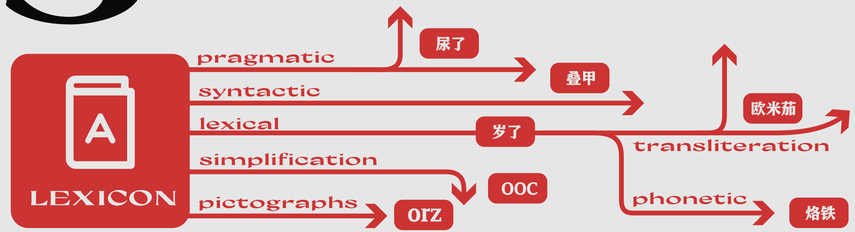


2 MEME shares the same construction and rules with natural language.

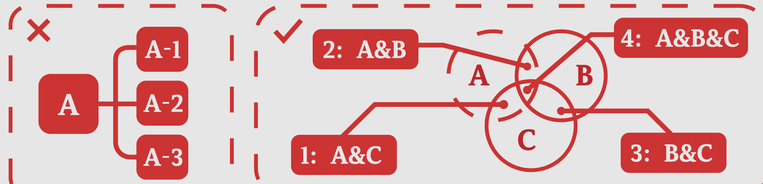
- ALL features of language
- Shared morphology rules
- Same phonology, phonetics, etc.
- Similar syntax, pragmatics, etc.

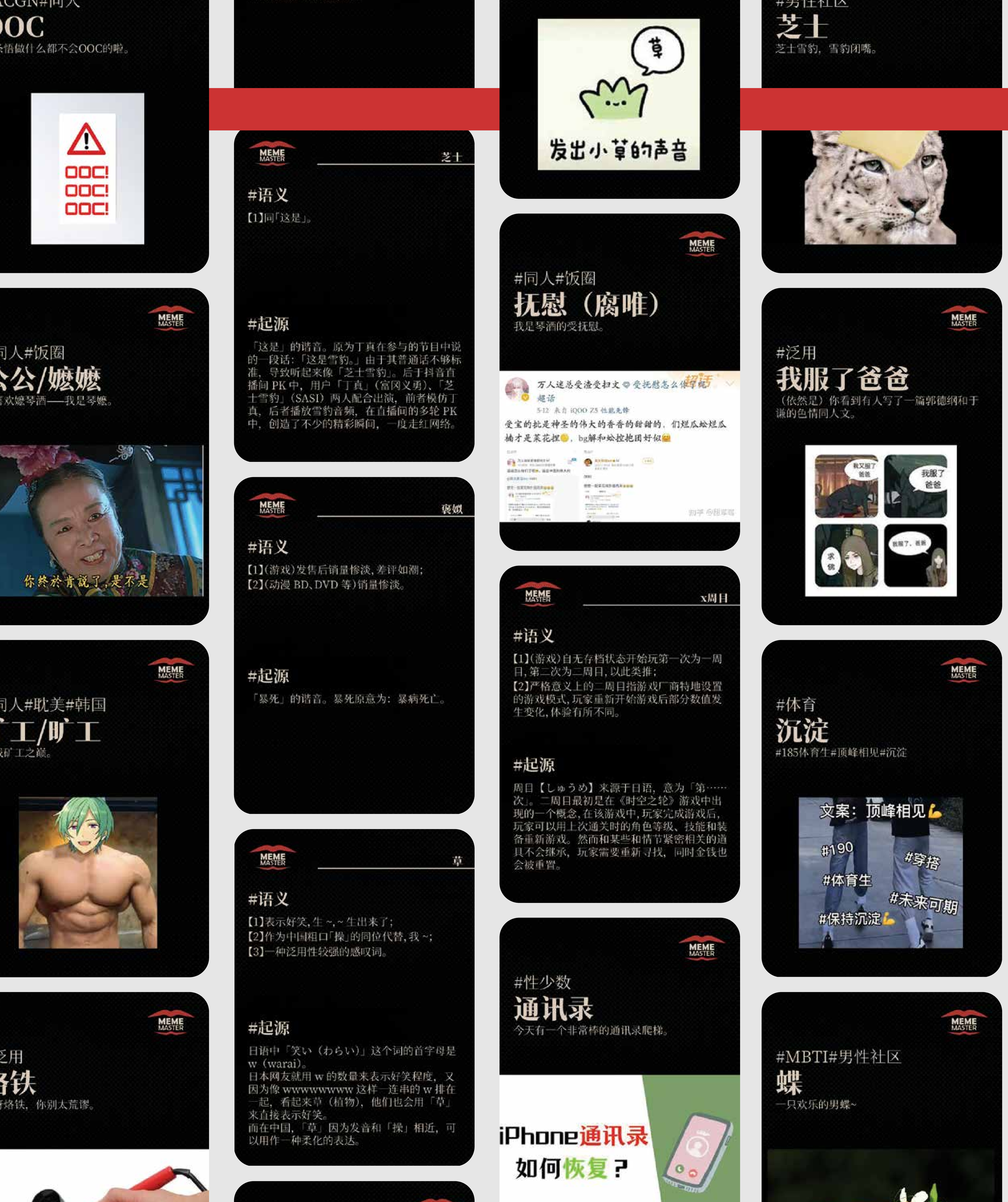


3 Language mutates into memes at the lexicon level.



4 It's nearly impossible to classify in one parameter, which lead to the next research.





B. CARD GAME

I designed a set of 40 cards, each recording different types of memes. The cards are used in a card game where players are asked to categorize them and freely express their opinions. This process deepened my understanding of meme classification.

Collection: A Notion page contains my collection of memes.

Some Rusults:

HOW

is the mutation works?

- incomplete existing vocabulary;

  饭圈 | 云玩家 | 开席 | 现充
- limited existing vocabulary;

  笑口 | 口死那个石家庄人
- expressing specific extended meanings;

  他真的，我哭死 | 男大 | 女大
- convenience of expression;

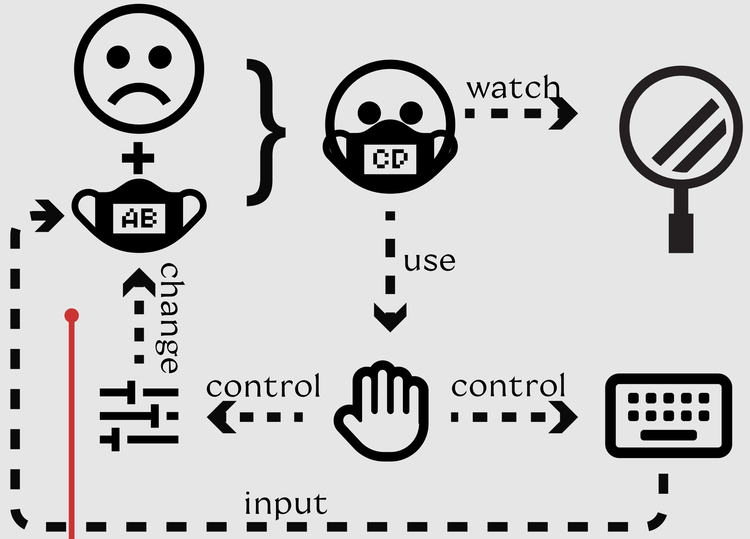
  男凝 | 姐姐好A | 机自投
- defining circles;

  李涛 | 8u | 厕宝
- expressing humor or kitsch.

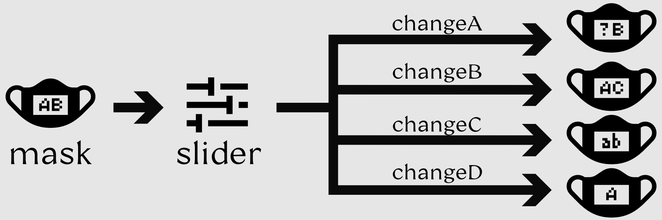
  我真的会谢 | 皮套人 | （爬行）

CONCEPT

Route to imitate the language mutation.



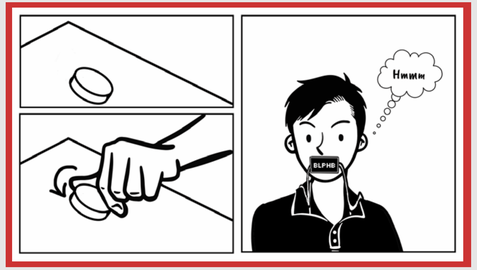
How the knob(slider) works



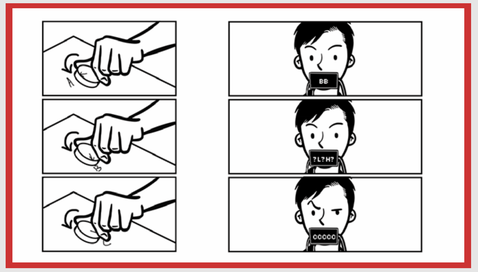
1.Discovery

2. Curiosity

3. Exploring



4. Thinking



5. Learning

6. Understood

SELECTED MEME GENERATION PATH

I choose three of them as examples.

BASE WORD — **你傻吗？孩子**

APPROVED — **你口吗？口口**

This varient uses a placeholder to replace the bad characters relying on the Chinese forbidden vocabulary.

SIMPLIFIED — **傻**

This varient deletes every single character in the stop words list to make words extremely short.

HOMOPHONED — **拟傻妈？骸紫**

This varient replaces every character with its first homophone character in the dictionary.

TECHNICAL PATH

How to make my design into reality.

Technical Stack

This project primarily utilizes TouchDesigner for procedural visual effects, Python for data processing, Arduino for input, and Blender combined with Fusion360 for 3D printing modeling.

Touch Designer

The visual component employs an ASCII-style displacement map effect, using a large amount of ASCII characters as the base texture to replace Chinese glyphs. This approach is intended to showcase the relationship between technology and language.

Original Text

Motion & screen fit

Post-effect

Data Processing

sensitive.txt

文件(F) 编辑(E)

亵
人
仇
仑

APPROVED

Replace all sensitive characters with '口'

baidu_stopwords.txt

文件(F) 编辑(E) 格式(O)

anyways
anywhere
apart
appear

SIMPLIFIED

Delete all the stopwords

homophone.

文件(F) 编辑(E)

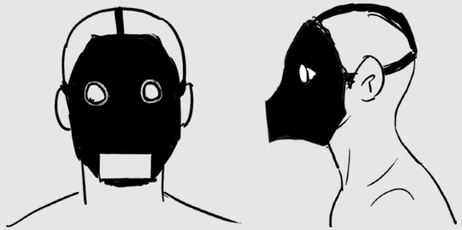
弋,亿
乂,已
艺,刈
忆,以

HOMOPHONED

Replace with the first homophone

Modeling

Prototype Sketch



Three-view Drawing

Top View

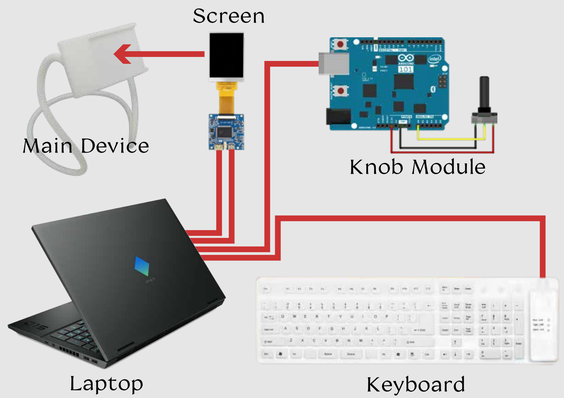
Front View

Left View

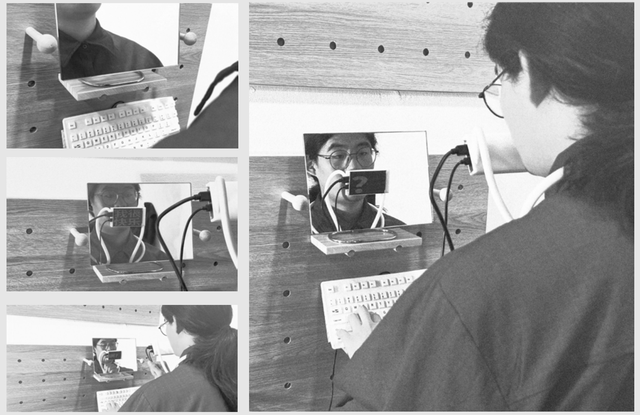
Assemble & Test

Pack everything up.

Main Module



How it Works



The assembly process proved to be more challenging than anticipated. The transition from TouchDesigner to addressing screen resolution issues forced me to stretch the fonts to fill the screen. Additionally, frequent errors during the use of ultra-light clay and glue resulted in repeated problems with the screen's interface.

Cutscene

Simulating a possible circumstance.