

“Insanity Literature” on Chinese Social Network Sites: Metaphorical Talk and Complaint Speech Act

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Abstract:

“Insanity Literature” is a new form of language popular on Chinese social network sites serving to vent emotions through words. It imitates the utterance of insane people who lose control and occasionally present paraphasia in conversations due to mental disorders. This language form has the following features that exclude it from literal truthfulness: a) they are neither the true description of the real world nor of the speaker’s thoughts; b) there is often redundant and repeated information; c) there are limited coherence and logic between sentences, some of which even digress. The three features are demonstrated through plentiful rhetorical devices, which define Insanity Literature as metaphorical talk. As this language use applies to various situations in online conversations, to investigate its pragmatic functions and communicative intentions, the present paper collected 200 posts of “Insanity Literature” on Weibo and conducted a quantitative and qualitative analysis in terms of its metaphorical use and speech acts. The findings show that hyperbole with simile and metaphor as supplements is the leading rhetorical device employed to produce the “insane” effect, and complaining is the most frequent speech act performed. Further examination indicates that seven pragmatic strategies involving accusation, interrogation, emotion and self-denigration, etc. are primarily adopted in Insanity Literature to directly express complaints, which seems to threaten the hearer’s face. Hyperbole, however, reduces this risk by explicating the falsity of utterances and thus implicating a lower severity. What’s more, self-denigration is proven to be a powerful strategy for expressing dissatisfaction with mitigation. The study also elucidates via relevance theory the understanding process of communication in the form of Insanity Literature, which acts as evidence for the universality of the relevance-theoretical framework.

Keywords: Insanity Literature; relevance theory; speech acts; rhetorical devices; pragmatic strategies;

1. Introduction

Nowadays, social events encompassing various communicative purposes largely take place through online conversation with frequently developed novel expressions and forms. In 2021, Insanity Literature (发疯文学), a new style of communication, stood out on the major Chinese social network platforms such as Sina Weibo and immediately set off a craze for imitation. It is an utterance containing a barrage of emotionally intense sentences which employ multiple rhetorical devices to intentionally produce an illogical presentation as if they are bursting from the insane who already lose control. This is also the origin of the name "Insanity Literature". An example is shown below:

- (1) 为什么要我等? 为什么? 你好狠的心啊, 你知道你的这一句话会让我整夜整夜的失眠吗? 想起来还要等这么久, 我的心像被凿了一个大洞, 你在乎吗? 你不在乎, 你只在乎你自己就像你不在于狮子头里没有狮子。

Why do I have to wait? Why is that? You are so cruel. Do you know that your words will lead to my sleeplessness night after night?

The thought of waiting so long is like gouging a big hole in my heart. Do you care about it? No, you don't. You only care about yourself as if you don't care that there's no lion in *the lion's head**.

* The lion’s head: Large meatballs, a classic dish in China.

As a unique language form, Insanity literature is a colloquial speech that the speaker deliberately lengthens to convey much stronger emotions than in normal utterances for particular communicative purposes. As shown in the example, the “insane” effect is achieved via a variety of rhetorical devices and strategies, such as metaphor, simile,

interrogatives and modal particles, etc. (In the example above, similes are used twice). This kind of language uses originated from the dialogue or monologue in the romantic fiction of the well-known Chinese woman writer Qiongyao. Heroines in her works express feelings of anger, sadness or despair with dramatic words and actions so as to impress readers. Insanity Literature is in essence the same regarding venting emotions, but its extraordinary popularity is generated by employing it in an apparently overreacting way in online social situations to convey communicative intentions. With this in mind, the purpose of this study is to explore this new language form as metaphorical talk, examining how it is comprehended and applied by the hearers to perform behaviors.

As the words of a madman cannot be trusted, the majority of sentences in Insanity Literature possess the following features that exclude them from literal truthfulness: a) they are neither the true description of the real world nor of the speaker's thoughts; b) there is often redundant and repeated information; c) there are limited coherence and logic between sentences, some of which even digress. All these features to different extents stem from the abundance of rhetorical devices, including metaphor, simile, metonymy, hyperbole, parallel structure, personification, etc. Findings show that among these phenomena, hyperbole, simile and metaphor are predominant ones used in utterances, which are also the focus of this study. Sperber and Wilson (1985: 153) conceive literal talk, loose talk and metaphorical talk as differing from one another in terms of the degree of looseness, where the use of metaphors especially involves a departure from literalness. Furthermore, they believe that metaphor and other figures such as hyperbole, synecdoche or metonymy show a continuity, some of which function between loose talk and typical metaphors. Although it is further investigated the differences in understanding and cognitive effects between these figures (Carston & Wearing, 2011), in this study, we will not consider their distinctions, but sort all of these figurative languages into metaphorical use for the convenience of further analysis of their comprehension. To explore how metaphorical talk is understood by the hearer without commitment to the literal truth of the utterance, Sperber and Wilson (1985) claim that there are two modes of representation which are in virtue of truth-conditions (description) and resemblance (interpretation) respectively. The metaphorical utterance is the latter one used to present the speaker's thoughts which it resembles in content. The comprehension of this kind of utterance should then resort to its relevance to the hearer. The present study will adopt Sperber and Wilson's perception, examining how Insanity Literature as metaphorical talk is understood by hearers from the perspective of the relevance-theoretic framework. Moreover, considering feature b) and feature c), we may also offer an explanation for the speakers' option of such a laborious communicative manner which forces the hearers to wrestle with the recognition of the speakers' intentions.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that the first case of Insanity Literature that appeared in the public eye was in a conversation with a seller on Taobao, one of the biggest e-commerce platforms in China, complaining about the slow delivery. The unexpectedly active response of the seller then led to a wide imitation of such obvious violations of communication conventions in conversation with customer services, and its application has been extended to various occasions over time. Therefore, apart from explaining the comprehension process of Insanity Literature, we cannot ignore the behaviors performed by it in the forms of speech acts. As statistics show that complaint is the primary speech act completed by Insanity Literature (see in Section 4), the present study mainly examines the Chinese complaint on social media to reveal the new pragmatic strategies adopted by it.

The organization of the rest paper is as follows: Section 2 reviews the major theoretical framework and related literature on relevance theory, rhetorical devices and complaint speech act. Section 3 introduces the methodology. Section 4 demonstrates the findings which are discussed in Section 5. Section 6 is finally the conclusion of the whole study.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Relevance Theory

Based on Grice's cooperative principle and violation of maxims (1989), Wilson and Sperber present their view

of the point that the search for relevance in information is an intrinsic trait rooted in the human psyche that governs the understanding of verbal or non-verbal communication (Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

Their theory notes that communication is completed through an ostensive-inferential model: the addresser first produces an ostensive stimulus out of his informative and communicative intention. The recognition of his informative intention relies on the hearer's attention to the ostensive stimulus. In other words, the addresser may have his own opinion of expressing what ostensive stimulus, but it must be relevant enough to the hearer to be worth the audience's attention so that the ostensive communication can progress and achieve its effects. (ibid.) When the stimulus is related to the hearer's original cognitive environment and interacts with it, creating contextual implications, strengthening or leading to the abandonment of old assumptions, the hearer's inference will yield positive cognitive effects. It is argued that the more positive cognitive effects a utterance produces and the less processing effort it requires, the more relevant that utterance will be (the maximal relevance principle). It is assumed that human thoughts are steered by the search for maximal relevance, but human communication is about seeking optimal relevance.

In most cases, this will still leave a wide range of possible stimuli. In the hearer's interest, the communicator should choose the most relevant stimulus from that range: the one that will call for the least processing effort to achieve his communicative intention. It is also in his interest to be understood and, therefore to make it as easy as possible for the hearer to understand him. (ibid.) The presumption of optimal relevance is then concluded as two parts:

(a) The set of assumptions **I** which the communicator intends to make manifest to the hearer is relevant enough to make it worth the hearer's while processing the ostensive stimulus.

(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate **I**.

The two principles of relevance can be applied to all ostensive communication, and *Insanity Literature* is no exception. It requires a great deal of processing effort from the hearer in terms of linguistic expression and compensates for it with rich contextual effects to maximize relevance. Nevertheless, no matter what way of expression the addresser uses, he first needs to attract the hearer's attention so that the hearer thinks that the stimuli are sufficiently related to himself and thus worth processing the information to understand the communicative intention of the addresser. The utterance itself, although it seems to lack relevance, is in the common interest of both communicators, which is the most relevant expression that the addresser is able to provide.

Moreover, the concept of cognitive environment is crucial in this theory. Sperber and Wilson (1995) claimed that the facts about the world are manifest to a person only if this person is capable of representing them mentally and accepting their representations as valid. The sum of all facts manifested to a person makes up his or her cognitive. An individual's total cognitive environment includes not only the facts they know but all the facts they can know at a given time and place. The amount of information manifested to both interlocutors in a specific situation is termed a *mutual cognitive environment*. The "*Insanity Literature*" requires both communicators to have a mutual cognitive environment and expand its scope on this basis.

2.2 Previous research of rhetorical devices from the perspective of relevance theory

Many scholars have tried to explain rhetorical devices in daily life from the relevance theory perspective. Metaphor is typical rhetoric. Sperber and Wilson (1985) noted that the use of metaphor by speakers leads to the departure from literalness. The speaker only guarantees the truth of some proposition in his utterance instead of the truth of the proposition expressed literally. In this case, he does not expect the hearer to understand all the propositions contained but the most salient in her mind. Within relevance theory, metaphor is one of the best ways to achieve optimal relevance in many situations. Listeners can efficiently infer the appropriate contextual meanings of metaphors by following interpretive strategies based on the principle of optimal relevance, even if verbal metaphors do not

represent a completely accurate state of affairs (Markus Tendahl et al., 2008). Carston (2011) compared metaphor with simile and hyperbole, concluding that some cases cannot be classified as metaphorical or hyperbolic. However, the difference lies in the denotation of the ad hoc concept by which a hyperbolic use communicated is more inclusive. In contrast, a metaphorical use either merely overlaps with the denotation of the encoded concept or entirely disjoint from it. As for metaphor and simile, in the former case, implications are logically implied by the ad hoc concept. In the simile case, they are derived by considering encyclopedic assumptions and accepting those that relevantly apply as implicated.

The use of puns also attracts much attention. Tanaka(1992) argues that puns can achieve optimal relevance because the ostensive stimulus is the most economical way for the advertiser to achieve many of the intended contextual effects. In Lazović's study (2018) examining the function of puns used in online bank advertisements, he analyzed four types of puns and how their positive cognitive effects are created. He also applied the AIDA model developed by Elmo Lewis (Strong, 1925) to describe the sequential mental processes that may occur when the consumer sees an advert. Composed of attracting attention, raising interest, establishing desire and initiating action, AIDA can to some extent explain the similar process that happens when a hearer receives a message in the form of "Insanity Literature". Yet the "establishing desire" should be replaced by "establishing guilty" or other feelings. Gan(2015) even probes into the humor aspect of puns from the view of relevance theory, claiming that when the context contradicts the usual interpretation, the audience will rebuild a new assumption and deduce the real implication of the utterance and appreciate the great humor effects of puns.

There are still many other studies on using the perspective of relevance theory, but no such linguistic use as "Insanity literature" that presents multiple rhetorical devices in the same context in a concentrated way and shows a relatively weak relevance. In particular, it is a unique communication mode limited to online social media, which can provide a new case for the study of cyberpragmatics (Yus, 2011).

2.3 Previous research of complaint speech act

A great deal of research has been done on the categorization of the complaint speech act. House and Kasper (1981) argue that if expressives have the features of "post-event/anti-X", they can be referred to as complaints. They conducted a comparative study on the complaining and requesting strategies in English and German in connection with politeness markers, dividing the strategies into eight levels from the most indirect to the most direct ones. Olshtain and Weinbach (1985) investigated native speakers of Hebrew, classifying their complaints into five distinct models according to the degree of severity from "below the level of reproach" to "warning, immediate threat". Trosborg (1995) explored the implementation of complaints among English and Danish native speakers and English learners in Denmark and summarized eight complaint strategies including hints, annoyance, ill consequences, indirect accusation, direct accusation, modified blame, etc. When more than one discrete speech act is performed to comprise a complete speech act, it is a speech act set (Murphy and Neu, 1996). They investigated the speech act set of complaints produced by American and Korean English speakers, concluding a semantic formula of four sections: an explanation of the purpose, a complaint, a justification and request.

Research on the Chinese complaints speech act is mainly from a cross-cultural perspective. Chen et al. (2011) asked 40 American and Taiwanese university students to fill out a DCT containing eight complaint-provoking scenarios to make comparisons between their strategy use. The result shows that the two groups share similar distributions in different strategy use, but the Chinese complaints seem more sensitive to social power. Yuan (2018) also made comparisons between complaint strategies used by Chinses and British university students, employing DCT to collect data from 60 participants. However, the research in this field still has great limitations, such as the lack of intralingual studies, and the participants are mostly limited to college students.

The study of complaints is not a new topic, but major research objects are limited to daily conversations that

occurred under the consciously obeyed politeness principle. Conversations that blatantly violate and break politeness and social distance are rarely witnessed in the real world, yet online social network sites provide a platform to develop unique language forms such as Insanity Literature. Therefore, it is a valuable opportunity to explore the new potential strategies adopted in the complaint speech act and the people's intentions behind them.

Therefore, the present paper tries to examine the following questions:

- a) What is Insanity Literature: the rhetorical devices used to achieve the effect of "Insane".
- b) How is Insanity Literature understood: explanation from the perspective of relevance theory.
- c) Why is Insanity Literature used: the complaint speech acts performed by it.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

In this paper, the data were collected from a major Chinese social platform Sina Weibo. It has up to 511 million active monthly users in 2020 (the latest official data), among which millennials and post-millennials account for around 78% of the users. The topic #Insanity Literature contains approximately 360 thousand related posts with about 350 million views.

We searched the keyword "Insanity literature (发疯文学)" on Sina Weibo and randomly collected 200 posts which have the keyword in the texts. Some posts collected as data are displayed in the form of pictures or screenshots of the use of "Insanity literature" on other social media platforms where the scene in which the conversation actually takes place. This paper only considers the platform on which the pictures or screenshots are posted and does not make a specific distinction on the platforms in them.

According to the data, only 5 out of 200 users are male, accounting for 2.5% of the total. Only two users offer their ages, which is not of great value. According to the calculation, the average number of words presented in each utterance of "Insanity Literature" is 78.53, with a maximum of 283 and a minimum of 56. The average number of clauses in each utterance was 7.13, with 32 clauses at most and 1 clause at least. The average word/clause ratio was about 11. The longest clause has 283 words whereas the shortest clause has 1 word.

3.2 Data analysis

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the communicative intention of "Insanity Literature" and the rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies it applies to achieve an effect of "insane" and the relevance. Therefore, this paper first identifies the rhetorical devices used in 200 posts, then categorizes the illocutionary acts based on Searle's speech act theory (1979), count the frequency of use of each subsection and then further analyzes the pragmatic strategies used to perform certain illocutionary forces. It is worth noting that the rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies are regarded as the specific devices employed by the hearer to achieve communicative intention, therefore the analysis of these two respects should be considered as related close to each other. With the analysis of these three aspects, relevance theory can be adopted to explain "Insanity Literature" in detail. As there has never been related categorization applying to Insanity Literature, the coding systems are tailored for the present study based on previous research. The data coding was completed by two researchers through scrutiny and several discussions.

4. Findings

4.1 Rhetorical Devices in Insanity Literature

There are especially dense and abundant rhetorical devices in "Insanity literature" with a flexibly combined and simultaneous appearance in an utterance. Thus, this paper first examines the forms of rhetorical devices (Table 1). The results show that the combination of two rhetorical devices or above appeared most frequently, accounting for 64.5%, followed by the use of a single device, accounting for 31.5%. And there were 8 cases with no rhetorical

devices.

Table 1. Forms of Rhetorical Devices in “Insanity Literature”

Form	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Combination	129	64.5%
Single	63	31.5%
None	8	4%
Total	200	100%

Table 2 introduces the frequency of each rhetorical device used in 200 posts. According to the results, the frequency of hyperbole is the highest, which is almost three times that of the second place. Other figures of simile and metaphor follow the hyperbole with frequencies similar to one another, which usually act as supplementary to the hyperbole (see details in 4.1.2 & 4.1.3). Parallel structure, repetition, and personification serve as supporting devices, while irony appears only in a few texts. In this paper, the first three metaphorical uses are analyzed in detail.

Table 2. Frequency of Pragmatic Phenomenon in “Insanity Literature”

Rhetorical Devices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hyperbole	148	74
Simile	42	21
Metaphor	37	18.5
Parallel Structure	29	14.5
Repetition	14	7
Personification	11	5.5
Irony	4	2

4.1.1 Hyperbole

The literal/hyperbolic distinction is an entirely quantitative matter (Carston, 2011). Speakers express but do not explicate the assumptions in Insanity Literature. Instead, they implicate a weaker one. Hyperbole is used to highlight speakers’ communicative intention by conveying strong emotions. Hearers may thus overestimate the severity of the situation and provide more active and quick responses, which fulfill the speakers’ purpose. Example (2a) demonstrates the speaker’s exaggeration of her feeling and behaviors.

(2a) 一切都是冰冷的恨意，一想到这我就手脚冰凉遍体生寒后背发凉宛若人间地狱的恶魔，气的我蹲在地下车库哭了三小时，仿佛处在真空中窒息两分钟，忍不住哭了，是真的一下子就涌出来了，很委屈很不知所措很无力很愤怒！

Everything is charged with icy hatred. Once I think of it, my hands and feet get cold, and I feel a chill coming over my body and my back. I’m like a demon of hell on earth. I was so pissed off that I squatted down in the underground parking lot, crying for three hours. It felt like being suffocated in a vacuum for two minutes. I couldn’t help crying. Tears welled up in my eyes. I was really aggrieved, confused, helpless and angry!

(2b) I feel uncomfortable and a little bit annoyed.

* The speaker caught a cold and had to blow her nose all day.

In this context, the speaker felt uncomfortable due to the illness and strongly implicated the feeling in (2b) with an exaggerated expression of (2a). “hatred”, “get cold”, “a chill” and “being suffocated” are the hyperbolic description of her real feelings; “squatted down in the underground parking lot”, “crying for three hours”, “tears welled up” are the exaggerated description of her response to the cold. The literal meaning of Example (2a) is not

reliable, but it presents some resemblance to the speaker's real thoughts in (2b). What's more, in the speaker's view, (2a) is ensured to be the most precise expression that can exactly convey her thoughts.

4.1.2 Simile

The simile is a rhetorical device that shows the similarity between two completely different things. The appropriate simile can highlight the characteristics of things and make the tone more intense (Zeng, 2001). Similes in *Insanity Literature* has a trait of hyperbole. In other words, similes are used to strengthen the hyperbolic effects. In (2a), the speaker compares herself to "a demon of hell on earth". "Demon" is conventionally conceived as the symbol of evilness and barbarity, but the speaker in this context tried to indicate her terrible situation of being in a cruel and inhuman hell. Additionally, the simile "it felt like being suffocated in a vacuum" is used to describe that the crying makes the speaker out of breath. It is noticed that the similarities are not truth-valuable between the tenors and the vehicles demonstrated in both two similes, but an exaggeration of the reality to enhance the effect of hyperbolic expression of the speaker's feelings.

4.1.3 Metaphor

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995), metaphor involves an interpretive relation between the propositional form of an utterance and the thought it represents. Any interpretation of metaphor cannot ignore contextual factors (Ortony, 1980). One of the typical structures of metaphor is "subject + predictive", as shown in example (3a).

(3a) 我都懂，我都明白，我是选项 E，我是 plan B，是分叉的头发，洗衣机流出的泡沫，超市里被捏碎的饼干，是吃腻的奶油，是落寞的城市，是地上的草，我是被踩踏的，是西装的备用扣，是被雨淋湿的小狗，是腐烂的橘子，是过期的牛奶，是断线的风筝，是被随意丢弃的向日葵，是沉默寡言的小朋友，所以能 v 我 70 吗？今天肯德基疯狂星期四。

I know. I know. I'm option E. I'm plan B. I'm the split ends of the hair, the foam from the washing machine, the crushed cookies from the supermarket, the cloying cream, the lonely city, and the grass on the ground. I am trampled. I'm the spare buckle for a suit, the dog wet in the rain, the rotten orange, the expired milk, the broken kite, the sunflower carelessly discarded and the taciturn child. So can you give me 50 yuan on WeChat? Today is the "Crazy Thursday" of KFC.

(3b) Today KFC has a discount, can you buy it for me?

* A girl was speaking to her friend.

This utterance contains 15 metaphors, all of which strongly implicate that the speaker is an unwelcome and abandoned person who desperately needs affection in the form of buying her KFC. The speaker believes that she possesses these characteristics that resemble the traits of these 15 things and that using metaphors is an appropriate approach to precisely express her thoughts. Thus, while the literalness of this utterance is ruled out, it is adequate for the speaker to convey her meaning. On the other hand, although the speaker indicates the similarities establishing the metaphor, she exaggerates them to shape a more pathetic image than her actual situation. These metaphors also achieve the hyperbolic effect. In *Insanity Literature*, the combination of hyperbole, simile and metaphor, as in Examples (2) and (3) is a common approach.

4.2 Speech acts in *Insanity Literature*

It is claimed that "*Insanity Literature*", benefiting from its flexible structure and expressions, can be applied to multiple occasions to perform different speech acts. All the speech acts of the 200 posts completed by "*Insanity Literature*" are represented in Table 2. It is observed that "Complaining" is predominantly used 130 times, followed by the sharply decreased "praising" and "Requesting" at 32 and 17 times, respectively. "Wishing" and "Asserting"

are used in a few utterances, while the others account for only around 1%. Therefore, it is reasonable to deduce that the effect of the Insanity Literature language form maximizes when it is employed to perform the complaint. This study then analyzes the pragmatic strategies used in this unique online conversation for complaining.

Table 2. Speech Acts of “Insanity Literature”

Illocutionary act	Frequency	Percentage
Complaining	130	65%
Praising	32	16%
Requesting	17	8.5%
Wishing	7	3.5%
Asserting	6	3%
Recommending	3	1.5%
Criticizing	2	1%
Thanking	1	0.5%
Warning	1	0.5%
Apologizing	1	0.5%
Total	200	100%

4.3 Complaint Speech Act

The complaint refers to the speaker's dissatisfaction or unhappiness with the behavior that has just happened or is happening that will have a negative effect on him (Liu, 2004). Different situations and social distance between communicators will influence the use of complaint speech acts. The first appearance of "Insanity literature" in public view was in the form of a complaint. It was born based on a variety of unmet needs in real life, which force speakers to achieve their goals in a dramatic way due to the commonly witnessed passive attitudes of the hearers. Insanity Literature features strong emotions, much information, and multiple short clauses, which are modeled on the spoken language in real life with a more distinct tone. All these features will be maximized when it is used to complain. Besides, the flexible content enables it to be applied to various complaining situations involving social distance from close to far, which is another reason for its popularity. Here are two examples of how Insanity Literature achieves "complaint":

(4) 你为什么不和我打游戏，我怎么也想不明白，辗转反侧夜不能寐寝食难安日渐焦虑，我跑到客厅砸碎了镜子还是想不明白，让我这么心力交瘁是你的目的吗？我在痛苦发疯绝望无助的时候你哪怕有过半点心疼吗？以前南湘说你百毒不侵的心是不锈钢做的，原先我不信现在我信了，我现在围着房子淋着雨边跑边哭，都是因为你，因为你！

Why don't you play mobile games with me? I cannot understand. I couldn't sleep but kept tossing and turning in bed all night. I had no appetite but gradually stretched nerves. I ran to the living room, smashing the mirror, but I still could not understand. Seeing my being drained by these feelings, is this what you want? Did you have any sympathy for me when I was in pain, when I got mad and when I felt desperate and helpless? Someone had said your impenetrable heart was made from stainless steel. I didn't believe it, but now I do. I'm running around the house in the rain and crying now. That's all because of you. Because of you!

* The speaker's boyfriend refused to play mobile games with her.

In this case, the first sentence indicates the reason for the complaint: the hearer did not play games with the

speaker. Then there is an exaggerated description of the speaker's feelings and reaction, followed by the blame for the hearer's indifference and refusal.

(5) 你肯定在想我是个疯子，我很麻烦，你在助纣为虐，你在和魔鬼做交易，你在伤害一颗伤痕累累的心，你不想解决我的问题，你不在乎我爱的主播，你只想着接下来要吃的午饭，你想着点炸猪排，你想着吃炸鸡。

You must think I've lost my mind, I'm troublesome. And you're helping a bad person. You're making a deal with a devil. But you have hurt a scarred heart. You don't want to solve my problems. You don't care about my favorite Youtuber. You just think about the lunch, think about fried pork chops and fried chicken.

* On the e-commerce platform, the buyer (speaker) kept urging the seller (hearer) to deliver the parcel, but the seller did not reply for a long time.

In this case, the speaker was complaining about the hearer's neglect of her requirements. She first assumed the hearer's thoughts and then blamed him for the indifference. The speaker hoped to attract the hearer's attention and arouse their guilt in the form of Insanity Literature, so as to urge him to respond in time.

In Examples (4) and (5), complaints occur respectively between friends and strangers, yet the Insanity Literature achieves the effect through similar strategies, which will be analyzed in the next section. These strategies to some degree reduce the social distance between the speaker and hearer, thus contributing to communication. In addition, some cases of Insanity Literature are context-dependent utterances. In Example (5), without having a mutual context with the speaker, it is impossible for the hearer to infer the specific reason for this complaint despite the vague statement "You don't want to solve my problems". On the other hand, this utterance is not limited to a single situation. Therefore, the expression and comprehension of Insanity Literature rely heavily on the hearer's sharing context with the speaker.

4.4 Pragmatic strategies of Complaints

This section introduces the pragmatic strategies in Insanity Literature to perform complaints on the Chinese social platform. In Insanity literature, complaints are directly addressed to the hearers (direct complaints), rather than the dissatisfaction expressed to a third party about somebody or something that are not present (indirect complaints) (Boxer, 1993). The complaint strategies include *accusation*, *interrogation*, *emotion*, *self-denigration*, *narration*, *threat* and *solution*. The former six are the strategies used to express complaints whereas the *solution* refers to the speaker's expectation of the hearer's subsequent behavior, which is performed in the form of *suggesting*, *requesting* (*begging*, *asking for*), *ordering*, *wishing* and *refusing*. In Insanity Literature, all of the strategies are used in free combination, which contributes to its flexibility. Meanwhile, as the hyperbole rhetorical devices discussed in the last part, all the strategies in Insanity Literature are used intentionally to increase the severity of the offense, with emotions expressed being overblown to different extents. The frequency of strategies is listed in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Frequency of Pragmatic strategies of 130 Complaint posts

strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Accusation	83	63.8%
Interrogation	73	56.2%
Emotions	41	31.5%
Self-denigration	38	29.2%
Narration	30	23.1%
Threat	9	6.9%
Solution	16	12.3%

Table 4. Frequency of Forms of 16 Solutions

Forms of Solution	Frequency	Percentage
Requesting (begging, asking for)	7	43.75%
Suggesting	4	25%
Ordering	2	12.5%
Wishing	2	12.5%
Refusing	1	6.25%

4.4.1. Accusation

Accusation refers to the speaker's direct expression of dissatisfaction which charges the hearer with having committed the offense. It usually mentions both the hearer and the offense. Using accusation, the speaker offers reasons for his anger and provides justifications for the complaint that directly threatens the hearer's face (Chen, 1996). It is the most frequently used strategy in *Insanity Literature* (63.8%), sets a tone for the aggressiveness that increases the degree of severity, and urges the hearer to give a quick response. In example (5), the charges that the hearer "hurts a scarred heart", "doesn't care about the favorite Youtuber", "just thinks about the lunch", etc. are typical accusations. Another example is shown below:

(6) “哈哈哈哈哈”你只会大笑你都不懂你不懂我现在有多么痛苦我在工位上坐立不安社交让我讨厌透了像是个发疯的猛兽在撕咬我的心我的肝我的身体工作在消磨着我的身心吃人它就是在吃人。

“Hahahaha”. All you do is laugh. You have no idea. You have no idea how much pain I'm feeling right now. I fidgeted in my office cubicle. I hate socializing. It's like a crazy beast tearing at my heart, my liver and my body. Work is killing my mind and body. Eating me, it is eating me.

* A girl was texting her boyfriend.

In example (6), the speaker accused the hearer of his improper laughing when she was pouring out her terrible experience. She explicitly pointed out her dissatisfaction, complaining that the hearer couldn't understand her feelings. In this case, the accusation strategy is followed by expressing emotion, which will be discussed later.

4.4.2 Interrogation

Interrogation is usually the *wh*-questions and yes-no questions used to ask the hearers about their offenses. In the complaint speech acts, interrogation is regarded as less direct than accusation since the hearers are allowed to provide explanations for their inappropriate behaviors. In *Insanity Literature*, however, the speaker often employs a barrage of interrogatives, which doesn't aim to offer a chance for the hearer's explanation but to play the same role as accusations. Therefore, it also has a relatively high frequency (56.2%). In addition, some questions end with exclamation marks instead of question marks, indicating that the speaker does not expect a specific answer but to intensify the tone. See example (7):

(7) 已读不回几个意思？是手滑了？既然点开你为什么人回复我？视而不见？你这是什么态度？这是上班该有的态度吗？客户邮件为什么还不回复？这么回复对吗？客户怎么想的？你了解客户吗？客户为什么不回复你邮件？什么时候下订单？你效率为什么这么低？你这么聪明应该不需要我教你吧？这个你为什么不会？是我教你少了吗？这个我没有教你嘛？为什么你还在这里？你错了！

What do you mean by reading the message but not replying? Did you accidentally "read" it? Why didn't you reply to me if you clicked on it? Did you ignore me? How can you do that? Is that the right attitude to take at work? Why haven't you replied to the client's email?

Is it a proper reply? What is the client's opinion? Do you know your clients? Why didn't the client reply to your email? When will you place the order? Why are you so inefficient? You're clever. You don't need me to teach you, do you? Then why you don't know that? Didn't I teach you? Why you are still here? Do you know you are wrong!?

* A buyer texted a customer service staff on an e-commerce platform.

This is a rare example that consists of 18 questions that complain about the customer service staff's neglect of the speaker's message. It is noticed that all the questions do not aim at acquiring information, and the hearer is impossible to answer all of them. With the use of exclamation marks in the last sentence, the speaker has already presumed a positive answer and only expects an apology and a quick response from the hearer. The strong emotions carried in the form of a series of questions will thus increase the directness of the complaint.

4.4.3 Emotions

In Insanity Literature, exaggeratedly expressing emotions is the third most frequent strategy applied to enhance the dissatisfactory tone of the utterance (31.5%). The emotions are primarily negative ones involving anger, sorrow, grievance, fear, anxiety and regret, etc. Through the detailed description of the emotions in a dramatic way, the speaker tries to emphasize the severity of the hearer's offense and then trigger a sense of guilt in him. In example (1), the speaker compared her sense of loss to a big hole in her heart. Examples (2) and (4) also contain the speaker's explicating of her feelings.

(1) ...想起来还要等这么久，我的心像被凿了一个大洞。

...The thought of waiting so long is like gouging a big hole in my heart.

(2) ...很委屈很不知所措很无力很愤怒！

...I was really aggrieved, confused, helpless and angry!

(4) ...辗转反侧夜不能寐寝食难安日渐焦虑。

...I had no appetite but gradually stretched nerves.

4.4.4 Self-denigration

Self-denigration refers to the linguistic expressions and strategies used by the speaker to lower his social status or personality (Kádár & Zhou, 2021). In collected 200 posts, all the communication happens between strange netizens or people with equal status but different social distances. It is observed that self-denigration applied to all the situations well.

Kádár & Zhou (2021) claimed in their research that apart from the deferential and ceremonial language use, self-denigration can be used in complaints to indicate, not a denigrated, but a dispreferred situation. In Insanity Literature, self-denigration neither intends to show humility nor enhances rapport (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Its function is mainly described as establishing a false weak position of the addresser, in order to gain interest from the strong one. To be more specific, the speakers' aim is to take advantage of a weak position to gain sympathy from the hearers or impose on them a position of strength along with a sense of responsibility to assist the weak, so as to gain interest from them in a justified way. They tend to create a false weak position to fulfill the goal. For instance:

(8) 我知道我配不上发货，大家都发货了，不像我，连催的时候都小心翼翼，成了一只可笑的热场笑料，现实生活不顺人人冷眼相待，哪怕是在网上我也知道我配不上提早发货的门槛，我想为自己发声，我向冷酷的夜冰冷的墙发誓，我要加入那里，但我不行，我的上帝，我就是玉米南瓜浓汤里一粒飘摇居无定所的南瓜籽。

I know I don't deserve delivery. Everyone has their parcels delivered, not like me, who is even cautious about urging the seller and becomes a joke to warm up the party. My real life didn't go well, and everyone gave me the cold shoulder. I know that even in the online

world I don't deserve an early delivery. I want to stand up for myself. I swear to the cold night and the cold walls that I will join them. But I can't. My God, I'm just a floating pumpkin seed in a corn-squash bisque.

In this case, the buyer describes herself as an inferior person who is neglected both in reality and on the network, raising the seller's status from a lower one to a higher one compared with buyers. Such change can give rise to a sense of responsibility and guilty in the seller, forcing him to fulfill his obligation of delivering goods as soon as possible. The weak positions in both cases are intentionally and dramatically established by the hearer.

4.4.5 Narration

Narration is referred to as a personal representative of an event that can be fragmented, open-ended and present (Guo, 2021). In "Insanity Literature", it is frequently used in the utterance, playing a vital role to enrich the utterance content so as to achieve a better effect (23.1%). Here, it acts as a supplement to the speaker's reason for complaining or increases the level of dissatisfaction by narrating the details of an event.

(9) 疯了 I 彻底疯了 早知如此你会这么冷酷无情的对我, 我就不会辗转反侧一晚上, 早上出门没注意踩进了深不见底的冰冷水坑里。现在鸿星尔克的鞋子都已经湿透的穿在我的脚上, 我心寒, 我无助, 可这一切都是无力的挣扎。

I'm crazy. I'm totally crazy. If I had known you would be so cruel to me, I wouldn't have been tossing and turning all night, I wouldn't have walked out the door in the morning and stepped into a cold, bottomless puddle. Now the shoes wearing on my feet have been soaked. I feel cold. I am helpless, but all these are useless struggles.

* The speaker liked snacks very much, but her boyfriend advised her to eat fewer snacks. Here is the speaker's reply.

In this example, the speaker narrated her lousy experience in detail and attributed her misfortune to her friend's offense. The story told by the speaker is not expected to be true. In most cases, the speaker will concoct or exaggerate stories to emphasize the speaker's dissatisfaction and thus seek apologies or compensation. However, the speaker will at the same time provide adequate evidence to inform the hearer of the story's falsity. Therefore, these narrations in complaints will not damage the rapport between interlocutors but instead fulfilling the communitive intention in a decent and amusing manner.

4.4.6 Threaten

In general, threats occur when the speaker is offended and tries to make the hearer submit. What offends the speaker is usually closely related to the reason for his or her complaint. In "Insanity Literature", the threat is mainly used to defend the speaker's interest.

(10) 我如此难过, 如此伤心, 你却觉得我在开玩笑, 丝毫没有悔意, 丝毫没有伤感, 这若是爱情, 那全天下的文人墨客都得以谋骗罪论处, 这若是爱情, 那什么关雎, 什么锦瑟, 都不过是一场空话。就这样与空中的雨一起降落吧, 就这样飘散在江南的烟雨中, 让我化成一缕青烟, 就这样, 再也让你在梦里找不到我的踪迹。

I'm so sad, so grieved, but you think I'm joking. You have no remorse. You have no sorrow. If this is love, all the literati in the world shall be condemned to defraud. If this is love, then *Guanju* and *Jinse* (ancient Chinese love poems) will all be empty talk. Let me turn into a wisp of smoke, let me fall together with the rain in the sky, let me drift in the misty rain of the south of the Yangtze River, so that you cannot find my trace in the dream.

* A girl complained to her boyfriend.

In this case, the speaker directly complains that her lover does not realize his mistake and does not take care of the speaker's feelings. Therefore, in order to protect her own interests, she threatened the hearer with her

disappearance as a wisp of smoke to gain more attention from him.

4.4.7 Solution

The solution here refers to the speaker's expectations of the hearer's following compensation or cessation of the offensive behavior. It is achieved in the forms of requesting (begging, asking for), suggesting, ordering, wishing and refusing. For instance,

(11) 就拜托你这一次！能不能丢掉该死的明天！

Just this once, please! Can we just throw away the damn tomorrow?! (asking for)

(12) 我觉得应该重新审视一下我们的关系了。

I think we should reassess our relationship. (suggesting)

(13) 以后别发这东西了。

Don't post this anymore. (ordering)

(14) 我是想说好想过无忧无虑的生活。

What I'm saying is, I want to live a carefree life. (wishing)

(15) 我才不要回头！

I'm not looking back! (refusing)

4.4.8 Combined Strategy Use

In Insanity Literature, all of the strategies are used in a free combination with no fixed order or amount. This enables Insanity Literature to perform behaviors in different situations. For instance, strategies in example (1) are [Interrogation + Emotion + Accusation]; in example (2a), [Narration + Accusation]; in example (8), [Self-denigration + Accusation + Solution (wishing)].

(1) Why do I have to wait? Why is that? You are so cruel. Do you know that your words will lead to my sleeplessness night after night? The thought of waiting so long is like gouging a big hole in my heart. Do you care about it? No, you don't. You only care about yourself as if you don't care that there's no lion in *the lion's head**.

(2a) Everything is charged with icy hatred. Once I think of it, my hands and feet get cold, and I feel a chill coming over my body and my back. I'm like a demon of hell on earth. I was so pissed off that I squatted down in the underground parking lot, crying for three hours. It felt like being suffocated in a vacuum for two minutes. I couldn't help crying. Tears welled up in my eyes. I was really aggrieved, confused, helpless and angry!

(8) I know I don't deserve delivery. Everyone has their parcels delivered, not like me, who is even cautious about urging the seller and becomes a joke to warm up the party. My real life didn't go well, and everyone gave me the cold shoulder. I know that even in the online world I don't deserve an early delivery. I want to stand up for myself. I swear to the cold night and the cold walls that I will join them. But I can't. My God, I'm just a floating pumpkin seed in a corn-squash bisque.

5. Discussion

"Insanity Literature" is a new linguistic use emerging on Chinese online social media platforms in 2021. It has unique characteristics and the ability to achieve special effects in communication, so in this paper, we make an attempt to study it from three aspects in the view of pragmatics: a) the complaint speech acts performed by it; b) the rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies used to achieve the effect of "Insane"; c) explanation from the perspective of relevance theory. Through the calculation and analysis of 200 posts collected from the social platform Weibo, we obtained some preliminary results.

5.1 Speech acts of the “Insanity Literature”

Based on the Illocutionary Act theory of Searle, this paper attempts to explore the communicative intention that can be achieved by Insanity Literature. The results show that there are 10 kinds of speech acts, which are “complaining”, “praising”, “requesting”, “wishing”, “asserting”, “recommending”, “criticizing”, “thanking”, “warning” and “apologizing” in descending order of frequency. While complaining is predominantly used (65%); thanking, warning and apologizing were the least frequent (0.5%). Due to the long and rich texts of “Insanity Literature”, it is also common to see combinations of multiple speech acts in one utterance. Although “Insanity Literature” has developed some other forms, their frequency of use is far from that of “complain” and lacks popularity. Therefore, we can basically regard “Insanity Literature” as a special form of complaint, with the purpose of venting emotions and trying to achieve a certain perlocutionary act. This result is not surprising, because its first appearance in the public view was in the form of “complaint” with a unique tone and style, so the use and acceptance of it as a complaint is much more frequent and higher among netizens.

According to pragmatization theory, people maybe literally relate “Insane” with “complaining” in terms of Insanity Literature. The complaining here, however, is different from the way we complain in our daily life, which is related to our second research topic, i.e., the development of the characteristics of Insanity Literature, including the long texts, high density of short sentences, mess of logic, excessive emotion, etc. In other words, how does Insanity Literature realize the Insane effect?

5.2 Rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies of “Insanity Literature”

In methodology, our aim of the analysis of rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies is to explore how speech acts are expressed in Insanity Literature. Thus, they should be considered as one entirety. We, however, distinguish them because the usage of pragmatic strategies is controlled by speech acts to a large extent while there is no such link for rhetorical devices. Therefore, pragmatic strategies are on a higher level than the other one. We hope to conduct deep analysis on macroscopic and microcosmic scales, to provide an overview of Insanity Literature.

At the micro level, among the analysis results, the common rhetorical devices include “hyperbole”, “simile”, “metaphor”, “parallel structure”, “repetition”, “personification” and “irony”. Among them, the frequency of “hyperbole” is the highest while “personification” and “irony” seldom appear and tend to be used in combination. Due to the limits of words, we only analyze the first three rhetorical devices. But it does not mean that other phenomena are not important. For example, the extent of “irony” will make various influences after the combination of “irony” and other features.

Hyperbole is the most noteworthy feature in “Insanity Literature” and an important method to achieve the insane effect. The authors stick to the principles of “extent maximization” and “quantity maximization” when they use hyperbole so that the text is full of expressions that are contrary to common sense, causing an “insane” effect on the audience. This point is due to the obedience of the authors to the features of Insanity Literature, as well as their own willingness to express their own emotions.

Similes and metaphors are closely related to hyperbole. The concept of hyperbolic simile indicates that compared with the tenor, the simile’s vehicle is obviously exaggerated. The boundary between metaphor and hyperbole, however, is not clear in some cases, for hyperbole is metaphorical in nature (Sperber & Wilson, 1985). Therefore, the simile and metaphor used in “Insanity Literature” are exaggerations as well, which emphasizes its hyperbolic characteristic of it.

At the macro level, the usage of the pragmatic strategy is strongly influenced by speech acts. Thus, we conduct a detailed analysis of the complaining pragmatic phenomenon. Complaint language is also a kind of “Face-Threatening Acts” (FTA). If the speaker’s speech or behavior violates the listener’s wish, it will pose a threat to his/her self-image. Influenced by the dominant Confucian culture, the Chinese conventionally adhere to respectfulness,

modesty, attitudinal warmth and refinement, four notions to achieve politeness in daily life (Gu, 1990). According to Leech (2016), there is a positive ratio between politeness and indirectness. Thus, according to the polite principle and Chinese culture, the Chinese generally use off-record complaints or positive or negative politeness strategies to seek redress. But instead of mitigating complaint, "Insanity Literature" adopted strategies such as accusation, emotion, self-denigration and threats to strengthen its illocutionary force, which is a rare phenomenon. What's more, interesting is that the listener is not easily offended by such language. The main reason is that rhetorical devices such as hyperbole and hyperbolic similes and metaphors make the text no longer truth-valuable, and the hearer no longer believes in the content of the words, and naturally, they will not care about the excessively strong complaints. On the other hand, hyperbole produces a joking tone employed between friends, which reduces the social distance when it is used among strange interlocutors. Therefore, it is assumed that hyperbole is an effective instrument for mitigating face-threatening complaints.

In addition to direct expression of dissatisfaction (accusation), "Insanity Literature" applies other supplementary strategies involving "interrogation", "self-denigration", "narration" and "solution", etc. Among them, the frequency of usage of "interrogation" is the highest (56.2%). The high frequency of interrogative sentences in a single utterance of mad literature is also rare among linguistic use. Its function is to express complaints. This interrogative sentence establishes the overall tone of "Insanity Literature" and is also the main reason for its colloquial characteristics. In order to show attitudinal warmth and respectfulness, Chinese people seldom explicate negative emotions. Yet showing emotions is a primary strategy (31.5%) here, deliberately used in a hyperbolic way to produce humor and thus relieve the pressure exerted on the relationship. The pragmatic function of self-denigration can be analyzed from the perspective of authenticity and strategy (Mai, 2021). In addition, self-denigration shows new usages in Insanity Literature, i.e., establishing a false weak position of the speaker to gain interest from the strong one. The pragmatic function of self-denigration can be analyzed from the perspective of authenticity and strategy (Mai, 2021). The self-denigration here is strategic and used to seek benefits. Self-denigration has a high frequency of use in "Insanity Literature" because the speaker's communicative intention is usually to make the hearer meet some of his own needs by complaining, then this is at the same level as seeking benefits. Finally, the narration also plays an essential role in "Insanity Literature". In Insanity Literature, the details are an important factor in expressing emotion, and the narrative is the part that expresses the details best. It also serves to maintain the coherence of the text. A text usually expresses only one theme, and the theme is contained in the story being told.

In general, rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies of Insanity Literature are relatively fixed in type but very flexible in combination.

5.3 Explanation of "Insanity Literature" from the perspective of relevance theory

Sperber and Wilson proposed two principles of relevance: maximal principle and optimal principle. People's cognition tends to pursue maximal relevance, which is determined by processing effort and contextual effect. To understand "Insanity Literature", people must pay plenty of processing efforts. Here are three reasons: first, the text of "Insanity Literature" is much longer, carrying more information; second, the relevance between the content and theme of the text is not solid or obvious; third, there are some illogical points in the language. This extra processing effort must be compensated for by contextual effects. Take example (9) as an example:

(9) 这样怎么啦？这样的我你不喜欢你爱不爱？当初说的那么好听要爱我一直到永远现在叫我别这样，你好狠心呐！疯了我彻底疯了早知如此你会这么冷酷无情的对我，我就不会辗转反侧一晚上，早上出门没注意踩进了深不见底的冰冷水坑，现在鸿星尔克的鞋子都已经湿透的穿在我的脚上，我心寒，我无助，可这一切都是无力的挣扎。

I'm crazy. I'm totally crazy. If I had known you would be so cruel to me, I wouldn't have been tossing and turning all night, I wouldn't have walked out the door in the morning and stepped into a cold, bottomless puddle. Now the shoes wearing on my feet have been

soaked. I feel cold. I am helpless, but all these are useless struggles.

* The speaker liked snacks very much, but her boyfriend advised her to eat fewer snacks. Here is the speaker's reply.

Contextual assumption: Snack is unhealthy; I love her and hope she can live a happy life; I should persuade her to correct this habit.

New assumption: She thought there was nothing wrong with eating snacks; The reason that I advised her to correct this was that I didn't like her anymore; She felt angry and heart-breaking about my behavior.

Contextual effect:

1) Contextual implicature - She didn't want to correct it; I don't love her anymore; I should apologize to her or comfort her at once.

2) Eliminate old assumptions - I shouldn't have tried to persuade her to correct this habit.

It demonstrates that the pragmatic effect of Insanity Literature is greater than that of ordinary expressions. Communication between people, however, is to seek optimal relevance. Accordingly, an addressee will take an utterance to be the most relevant one the communicator was able and willing to produce. Therefore, we can argue that this is the most relevant sentence the addresser of "Insanity Literature" is able to provide. And it has the stimuli ostensive enough to attract the addressee's attention. For instance:

(5)你肯定在想我是个疯子，我很麻烦，你在助纣为虐，你在和魔鬼做交易，你在伤害一颗伤痕累累的心，你不想解决我的问题，你不在乎我爱的主播，你只想着接下来要吃的午饭，你想着点炸猪排，你想着吃炸鸡。

You must think I've lost my mind, I'm troublesome. And you're helping a bad person. You're making a deal with a devil. But you have hurt a scarred heart. You don't want to solve my problems. You don't care about my favorite Youtuber. You just think about the lunch, think about fried pork chops and fried chicken.

* On the e-commerce platform, the buyer (speaker) kept urging the seller (hearer) to deliver the parcel, but the seller did not reply for a long time.

In this case, the first two sentences indicate the relationship between this utterance and the event that happen before. "Lunatic" refers to the buyer's keeping urging the seller and being troublesome. As a seller, he should be sensitive to it and thus seek the relevance of the utterance, though the rest part rather deviated from the topic. It also leads to another concept of a mutual cognitive environment. For Insanity Literature, it is only a form of expression, and the listener needs to explore the real intention behind the speaker's "Insaneness", which requires a higher requirement on the mutual cognitive environment. Only when the speaker and the hearer are completely consistent in the cognitive environment, at least to a certain extent, can the utterance be understood. As shown in example (5), it was only the seller who had just spoken to the buyer could understand what she was saying.

The relevance principle is different from Grice's theory. It does not consider the maxim of quality in the utterance. This shows, on the other hand, that hyperbole, metaphor and other rhetorical devices' damage to the text's authenticity does not affect its relevance. But the speaker still needs to choose between a variety of phenomena and expressions to achieve optimal relevance.

Although "Insanity Literature" is intuitively irrelevant, there are several reasons why it serves a communicative purpose: 1) The use of linguistic phenomena maintains relevance. For instance, when the speaker wants to convey his communicative intention, he also makes certain assumptions about the context in advance. In order to make the assumptions understood by the listener, he often adopts the form of simile to reduce the reasoning difficulty of the listener. 2) The frequent use of questions. This gives the hearer a strong sense of participation and a sense of responsibility to understand the meaning of the text. 3) Personal use. Insanity Literature uses a first and second-person, with very few third-person pronouns or pronouns indicating any third party, making the relationship clear

and relevant, making it easier to understand communicative intent.

6. Conclusion

This paper studies "Insanity Literature" on Chinese mainstream social media platforms from a pragmatic perspective. The results show that the main speech act of "Insanity Literature" is "complaint", and its effect is realized by a variety of rhetorical devices or strategies. The most influential ones are hyperbole and interrogative sentence. In addition, a new pragmatic use of self-deprecation is discovered. Moreover, focusing on the form of "Insanity Literature" itself, we explain the text from the perspective of relevance theory, which further proves the universality of relevance theory. It is not the end of the study of "Insanity Literature". There are still many rhetorical devices and pragmatic strategies that have not been analyzed in detail. Further research can focus on the reason for the female users' majority use and its popularity. But we can already appreciate from the present paper the diversity and flexibility of the Chinese language and the charm of language expression.

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