

Original Research Article

Exploring the phenomenon of “short video going global” from the perspective of cross-cultural communication*Wenhui Tang**Communication University of China, Nanjing, Nanjing, Jiangsu, 210011, China*

Abstract: Under the background of the era led by science and technology, the speed and breadth of information dissemination are developing in an unprecedented trend. The increasingly open multicultural environment, supported by a wide range of media and advanced technologies, makes cultural exchanges no longer limited by time and space. Nowadays, with its unique advantages, short video has further changed the pattern of information dissemination, and the phenomenon of “short video going overseas” has become a new highlight of cultural communication. Based on the perspective of cross-cultural communication, this paper focuses on the phenomenon of “short video going overseas”, and obtains useful inspiration from its communication logic through in-depth interpretation, in order to improve the cross-cultural communication efficiency of “short video going overseas” and help Chinese culture better enter the world stage.

Keywords: Cross-cultural; Cultural communication; Short videos go to sea

1. Introduction

Cultural communication is an important way to achieve the common progress of all mankind based on cultural sharing and exchange, and it is also a key measure to promote cultural inheritance and innovative development. Cross-cultural communication brings regional and national cultures to the world, and is a journey across languages, values and cultural traditions. The diversified development of communication media has made the communication carriers more and more diverse, among which the media platform represented by short video has emerged in the new era, and even has a large audience around the world, successfully realizing “going overseas”, opening up a new way for cross-cultural communication. An in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of “short videos going overseas” will help promote the pluralistic symbiosis and prosperity of global cultures.

2. Overview of the phenomenon of “short videos going overseas”.

The rapid development of the Internet and short video self-media industry has opened up a new path for the dissemination of Chinese culture. Since 2019, short videos released by self-media such as “Li Ziqi”, “Office Ono”, and “Little Brother in Western Yunnan” on overseas platforms have attracted a large number of overseas audiences^[1]. Since then, the phenomenon of “short videos going to sea” has become a craze. Looking at the current phenomenon of “short videos going overseas”, the “soft” communication advantages of private individual forces have been fully revealed^[2]. For example, “Miss Qianmi”, since she went to France to study in 2018, she has successively shot more than 100 videos of traditional Chinese culture and accumulated more than 100,000 fans on the short video platform. Another example is “Joyful Sound Like a Dream”, which left performance footprints at many landmarks in Milan, Italy, and the shooting content revolved around traditional Chinese cultural elements such as Hanfu and pipa, attracting many overseas fans.

3. Analysis of short video communication logic from the perspective of cross-cultural communication

According to the 54th Statistical Report on the Development of the Internet in China released by the China Internet Network Information Center, as of June 2024, short video users accounted for 95.5% of the total number of Internet users^[3]. This creates good conditions for cross-cultural communication. At present, there are many excellent content creators who are showing the world a new face of China and telling moving Chinese stories. The phenomenon of “short video going overseas” has risen strongly, and the success of major Internet celebrities in overseas has fully demonstrated the potential of short video self-media in cross-cultural communication. As far as the current experience is concerned, the key to the success of short videos “going overseas” lies in whether they master the communication logic, and the communication logic is also a necessary condition for short videos to effectively achieve cross-cultural communication. According to the common characteristics of the phenomenon of “short video going overseas”, its communication logic is mainly reflected in behavioral language, spatial reconstruction, emotional connection, etc. Focusing on “Miss Qianmi”, the following will focus on analyzing the phenomenon of “short videos going to sea” from the level of communication logic.

(1) Behavioral language: with traditional skills as the core, integrating modern communication and expression

From the perspective of cross-cultural communication, although language symbols have social characteristics, their transformation is easily influenced by the translator’s personal influence or restricted by the social environment, resulting in unclear expression of ideas or concepts. In the short video of “Miss Qianmi”, her performance content revolves around the pipa, with the pipa performance technique as the main communication symbol, and the use of pipa art to overcome cultural and language barriers. Combined with modern short video storytelling, overseas audiences can not only appreciate the “charm” of traditional Chinese skills, but also rely on this traditional behavioral language to accurately grasp the meaning of music and understand the emotions behind music. This kind of behavior and posture language makes the image recording and dissemination more realistic, effectively reduces the language communication barrier, and can cleverly avoid the cultural misunderstanding and cultural discount of overseas audiences in the process of language decoding, so as to ensure the cultural communication effect of short videos.

(2) Space reconstruction: break the physical boundaries and build a new space for cultural experience

In the creation of short videos, spatial reconstruction refers to the use of short video platforms to organically connect spiritual space and material space, so that the two can blend with each other to form a space with infinite openness, so as to enhance the atmosphere of the video scene and provide the audience with an immersive sensory experience. For example, in the short video of “Miss Qianmi”, pipa performance is no longer limited by traditional stage performances, but uses the short video platform to transform the performance stage into multiple scenes such as overseas streets and cultural landmarks. Taking the camera in front of the Milan Cathedral as an example, “Miss Qianmi” is dressed in Hanfu, which contrasts with the traditional pipa and Gothic architecture, and this presentation method constructs a unique space where Chinese and Western cultures collide, creating a dual cultural impact of sight and sound. Users can immerse themselves in different situations through the screen and immerse themselves in the atmosphere of a variety of artistic interpretations, so as to enhance their intuitive feeling and understanding of Chinese culture and realize the effective transmission of Chinese cultural connotations^[4].

(3) Emotional connection

Empathy is mainly based on the common emotional needs of human beings, and in cross-cultural communication, empathy can play a role in dissolving cultural barriers. The embodiment of emotional connection in short video content creation can be divided into three empathy modes, namely cognitive empathy, emotional empathy, and behavioral empathy. In “Short Video Going Overseas”, the diversity, secularity and coexistence of its video content fully reflect and promote the empathy of overseas audiences. For example, in the short video of “Miss Qianmi”, she shared her emotional journey of adhering to the inheritance of traditional culture overseas, and recounted the emotional reactions of overseas fans to Chinese music during the filming of the roadshow, demonstrating the power of music to trigger emotional resonance across time and space, so that global audiences can establish a deep emotional connection when enjoying the video^[5].

4. Enlightenment of the phenomenon of “short video going overseas” from the perspective of cross-cultural communication

The change of new media technology has deepened the adhesion between communicators and audiences, and the audience has changed from the marginal position of communication to the center of communication activities, and the awareness of “audience-oriented” has gradually taken shape, which has become the main concept of information dissemination in the current network media ecology. From the perspective of cross-cultural communication, only by creating short video content from the perspective of overseas audiences and starting from the interests and needs of overseas audiences can we better attract the attention of overseas audiences and make them gain emotional resonance, so as to ensure the effective implementation of cross-cultural communication activities. At the same time, content creation should also follow local roots and common values. That is, we should not only carry out short video content creation based on Chinese culture, but also pay attention to the common culture and emotions of the world. The former focuses on telling Chinese stories and promoting Chinese culture, aiming to promote cross-cultural exchanges and show Chinese culture to the world, so as to meet the spiritual, cultural and aesthetic needs of overseas audiences. The latter emphasizes cultural understanding and integration, transcends the differences and prejudices between heterogeneous cultures, and seeks the common emotional pursuit and value pursuit of human beings, so as to narrow the emotional distance of the communication participants from the psychological level, so that overseas audiences can obtain emotional resonance from it.

Conclusion: To sum up, through an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of “short video going overseas” from the perspective of cross-cultural communication, it can be seen that short video has become an important messenger of today’s cultural communication, but in the journey of “short video going to sea”, it is far from enough to successfully “go to sea” by relying on the advantages of short video communication, and creators need to grasp the logic of short video communication. Excavating the current experience law of short video successfully “going to sea”, short video content creation is inseparable from elements such as symbol construction, scene reconstruction, and empathy shaping. Therefore, in order to use short videos to tell Chinese stories and spread Chinese voices, it is necessary to adhere to the audience-oriented, follow local roots and common values, and attach importance to non-governmental forces. Only in this way can we accelerate the promotion of “short video going overseas” and make it play a greater role in cross-cultural communication.

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