



Study on the Intercultural Communication of Traditional Chinese Culture

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Abstract: In the era of globalization and the rapid growth of we-media, intercultural communication plays a crucial role in promoting traditional Chinese culture on an international scale. China has been actively engaged in advancing intercultural communication as a means to enhance its cultural soft power, fostering the high-quality development of its culture and contributing to the realization of the Chinese nation's rejuvenation. This study focuses on the intercultural communication of traditional Chinese culture, using Li Ziqi's vlogs as a case study, in order to provide updated insights for the promotion of China's traditional culture in diverse cultural contexts, effectively conveying a long-standing image of Chinese civilization. Through the analysis of themes and categorization of Li Ziqi's short videos, the study defines the cultural symbolism conveyed through these videos, explains the factors that contribute to their success, and draws conclusions that can enlighten the international dissemination of traditional Chinese culture. Furthermore, it serves as a model case for practicing intercultural communication of traditional Chinese culture. The study's findings emphasize the importance for Chinese cultural promotion to seize the opportunities presented by we-media development, accurately targeting the needs of overseas audiences to enhance the effectiveness of cultural communication, and facilitating a deeper understanding of the rich connotations of traditional Chinese culture among foreign audiences.

Keywords: intercultural communication, traditional Chinese culture, Li Ziqi's short videos

Introduction

Intercultural communication, which focus on how people from differing cultural backgrounds endeavor to communicate, looks for an understanding of the cultural nature of various countries and is eventually influenced by “affinity toward country and soft power (ideological and cultural influence)” [1]. Contemporary China has been dedicated to improving the intercultural communication, since international social exchanges have always been important to China's cultural soft power and image construction overseas.

Traditional Chinese culture has a solid historical and realistic foundation for its inheritance and development. The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China envisions that by 2035, one of the overall goals of China's development is that China's cultural soft power will have been significantly enhanced, during which the influence of Chinese culture to the world will be constantly increasing, enhancing the spirit of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation [2]. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, “To promote the cultural spirit that transcends time, space and the country is full of eternal charm and has contemporary values.” [3] Therefore, the intercultural communication of traditional Chinese culture can spread the achievements of contemporary Chinese cultural innovation that inherits the traditional excellent culture and carries forward the spirit of the times.

The era of we-media provides a new and wide operation space for the intercultural communication of China's national image. The study of intercultural communication to strengthen national image is an inevitable requirement to adapt to the transfer of public opinion, to adapt to the development trend of media and to strive for the international right of discourse. Will Baker asserts that social networking sites provide a new dimension for human interaction and communication, through which boundaries and barriers can be transcended [4].

This study focuses on an internationally renowned mega influencer Li Ziqi and her vlogs on YouTube. These orchestrated vlogs tell stories of rural Chinese life and “construct a desirable traditional Chinese rural culture for netizens at home and abroad” [5] Li Ziqi, the creator of we-media short videos in mainland China, has become a leading blogger at home and abroad with a series of short video. Li's short videos enable audiences with different cultural backgrounds to get a glimpse of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, thus realizing cultural output in a quiet way, and enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture. Li's short videos launch a new path of disseminating traditional Chinese culture abroad, which attracts foreigners to learn more excellent traditional culture from a new perspective in short video series [6]. Qi discusses the ways to enhance the influence of Chinese culture, including the ingenious dissemination and confident elaboration of Chinese culture, the micro-expression and poetic presentation of Chinese stories [7].

Methods and Materials

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The researcher searched CNKI in November of 2022. Supplemental searches on selected outcomes were searched through February of 2023. The researcher also identified additional studies in bibliographies of selected reviews and by suggestions from relevant experts. The researcher screened over 100 abstracts. 52 review articles on the intercultural communication of traditional Chinese culture, 39 on the characteristics of Li Ziqi short videos, 45 on the factors contributing to its success, and 50 systematic reviews or meta-analysis that covered approximately 100 individual studies on its enlightenment were included in this review.

The researcher included systematic reviews on the intercultural communication of traditional Chinese culture. Guo analyzes specific strategies of external dissemination of traditional Chinese culture, so as to promote western countries to learn traditional Chinese culture and enhance the external dissemination effect of traditional Chinese culture [8]. Wang discusses that the Belt and Road Initiative provide a valuable opportunity to enhance the soft power of China, and new path for the external communication of China's excellent traditional culture should be explored. [9]

The researcher also conducted systematic reviews on the impact of new media on intercultural communication among nations, while taking Li Ziqi short videos as a case study, especially on the characteristics and factors contributing to her success. Zeng stated that the Internet provides a convenient platform for foreigners to obtain information and more and more audiences choose new media to understand China [10]. Meanwhile, an increasing number of vloggers from China have opened YouTube channels, Facebook pages, and Instagram accounts. They broadcast and display Chinese image with various themes like farming, working, cooking, crafting, etc. The visual narratives make interesting storytelling and charming imagination about contemporary China [11]. As a leading figure in the communication of We-media, Li's short video communication has achieved considerable results both at home and abroad. The cultural symbols transmitted by each video will bring certain cultural symbolism transmission [12]. The inclusive reviews were selected systematically, most of which were data on the authentic and official journals and conference articles, taking the focus of the study into consideration.

Li Ziqi, the creator of we-media short videos in mainland China, has been planning, directing, acting, and shooting short video programs, especially on traditional Chinese culture, since 2016. She registered her account: Li Ziqi's personal channel with the video playlist of 7 issues about the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 13 issues about traditional crafts, 115 issues about Four seasons, including Spring Volume (17 issues), Summer Volume (43 issues), Autumn Volume (27 issues) and Winter Volume (28 issues). These videos are displayed on many foreign mainstream social platforms, like YouTube.

Results

The excellent traditional culture is the accumulation of wisdom and rationality of the Chinese nation for thousands of years. It radiates eternal vitality across the time and provides rich nutrients for the remodeling and improvement of cultural confidence of the Chinese nation. The contribution of Li's short videos needs to be highlighted when it comes to traditional Chinese cultural dissemination.

A Role model responsible to disseminate Traditional Chinese Culture

In the past eight years, Li Ziqi has become a leading blogger at home and abroad with a series of short videos, triggering the phenomenal topic of the spread of Chinese culture to the outside world [13]. Li's short videos enable audiences with different cultural backgrounds to get a glimpse of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, thus realizing cultural output in a quiet way, and enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture.

Food has always been the top priority in the hearts of the Chinese people, and it is the common language and symbol of people of all ethnic groups all over the world. In Li's short videos, issues about food accounts for 85%, and the videos represent traditional Chinese culture from some perspectives. First of all, Li Ziqi knows how to conform, respect and protect nature, especially in the selection and acquisition of ingredients, which represent the harmony of human beings and nature [14]. Li Ziqi follows the changing rule of the four seasons and adheres to the concept of "eating at the right time". When the peach blossoms bloom in spring, she boils a cup of refreshing peach gum sugar water; In midsummer, she boils lotus tea to clear away heat and detoxify; In the golden autumn, she bakes a pot of sweet and soft chestnut cake, sweet and attractive; When winter approaches, she cooks a pot of mutton hot pot to warm the body. Secondly, Li Ziqi adheres to the original and traditional production methods and pays attention to the inheritance of ancient craftsmanship. In Li's short videos, the ancient production techniques in Chinese food culture are fully recorded. For instance, in the video of Ancient Brown Sugar, Li Ziqi restores the multiple complex processes of making brown sugar by ancient methods, such as juicing, filtering, foaming, rushing water, shaking the ladle, condensation, watching sugar. She replaces modern machines with traditional stone gints, and follows the boiling rules handed down by the older generation to the greatest extent. Thirdly, Li Ziqi pays attention to dietary etiquette, and shows the charm of traditional culture in every movement. Food etiquette deeply participates in the normalized dietary activities of human beings, making it a symbol that conveys the cultural concept, hierarchical identity and reproduction of social order. In most of Li's short videos, there are scenes of sitting in the yard and eating with her grandmother. Even if she has worked hard to work on a table of good dishes, the first mold of vegetables will be given to her grandmother, and the first cup of tea will be given to her grandmother. These behaviors not only bring warmth to grandmother, but also show the fine tradition of the Chinese nation's filial piety to the elders.

Traditional handicrafts are also the focus of short videos of Chinese traditional culture. Li Ziqi attaches great importance to the protection and inheritance of China's traditional handicrafts. In the clothing side, she inherits the

traditional blue dyeing skills, using blue to make pigments for dyeing clothes, and dyeing indigo on floral cloth to make blue printed cloth. By learning from masters, she embroiders a figure painting with the Shu embroidery technique, one of the four famous Chinese embroidery, reflecting the characteristics of Shu embroidery, which is good at embroidering landscape characters. One needle and one thread embroider the meaning of Chinese traditional culture with the spring breeze under ten fingers. Adopting traditional methods to make handmade "thousand-layer sole" cloth shoes for grandmother is not only a nostalgia for childhood memories, but also a feeling of care for family and relatives. Intangible cultural heritage is an important symbol of the historical and cultural achievements. Li Ziqi manages to understand and learn the intangible cultural heritage, so as to contribute to the inheritance of excellent culture. In order to make the video of "Wood movable type printing", Li Ziqi spent more than three months learning the craft of wood movable type printing from the 34th generation. She restored many production processes such as seal engraving, typesetting and proofreading in short videos, released a long thesis and exchanged her own insights about the development history of wood movable type printing. Through delicate lens, simple language and sincere words, she called on the young generation to inherit precious traditional skills.

Her short videos invite audiences to feel the vivid and mysterious traditional Chinese culture, to enjoy the diverse and beautiful contemporary China, and to strengthen the image of the Chinese people: peaceful, benevolent, hardworking, and brave, thus attracting countless fans at home and abroad, and she is called "mysterious power from the East" by foreign fans and netizens [15]. Li Ziqi, with the help of a series of short videos on the traditional Chinese culture, conveys a long-standing civilization and humane Chinese image, and completes cultural output in a silent way, thus enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture.

The Factors Contributing to its Success

The advent of 5G era provides an opportunity for a new climax of the rapid development of short videos. We media short videos are characterized with diverse production, convenient channels and intuitive content. It meets the needs of the audiences and changes the living habits of the public, thus promoting the process of intercultural communication.

China's excellent traditional culture is fundamentally full of charm. Li's short videos embody Chinese national spirit and exert positive impact on the construction of the national image. Li Ziqi demonstrates the demeanor of traditional Chinese culture to young people in the new era. She condenses the excellent traditions of the Chinese nation in short videos, which deepens the understanding of Chinese culture among overseas people and strengthens the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese people [16].

Li Ziqi's success should also be attributed to her elaborate video content. Deng states that Li's short videos spread Chinese culture in a subtle way, express grand themes with ordinary characters and details in life. [17] For instance, in *The Life of Roses*, Li Ziqi made 8 kinds of food with roses, picking and drying roses into rose tea and jam, and then further processing into rose glutinous rice lotus root, rose flower cake and other delicacies, which amazed overseas netizens [18]. She knows how to use the details of the lens, and skillfully combine into the beautiful nature, and carefully select the background music.

Furthermore, Li Ziqi's short videos possesses magic power to attract overseas netizens, because they cater to the needs of foreign audiences. Li Ziqi disseminates traditional culture with Chinese characteristics. Li Ziqi, the creator of UGC short video ancient food blogger, is known as "Oriental gourmet" and "First Internet Celebrity in 2017" [19]. Li Ziqi is also called "mysterious power from the East" by foreign fans and netizens.

Conclusion

This study aims to provide an update for the promotion of China's traditional culture to land in different cultural contexts to convey a long-standing civilized Chinese image. The following specific guidelines and principle are strongly recommended to guarantee the validity of cultural dissemination.

To Carry forward the Traditional Culture

It is suggested that the excellent cultural resources should be dug more deeply whilst its intercultural communication practice. It is essential to display the charm of Chinese culture fully, to ensure the originality and quality of content production, and create more Chinese stories which can resonate with people.

To promote China's excellent traditional culture, we should disseminate high-quality cultural content. On the basis of respecting other heterogeneous cultures, we should look for the commonalities between Chinese and foreign cultures, avoid the conflict of spreading Chinese culture to the outside world, and at the same time have our own style characteristics, carrying the connotation of Chinese traditional culture and the value concept of the new era.

In the selection of communication content, it is also necessary to show the real three-dimensional China [20]: the image of Chinese people who love peaceful development, hardworking and brave. At the same time, we should pay attention to the artistic expression of aesthetic value, and improve the quality of content through the combination of audio-visual language.

To Seize the Development Opportunities of New Media

In the new media environment, cultural communication can be realized through various forms of communication carriers, communication platforms and channels. Therefore, China's traditional culture overseas communication should seize the opportunity of the development of new media, innovate the communication modes and broaden the communication channels.

The overseas transmission of traditional culture should be combined with the current popular transmission modes. At present, short videos have become the most popular way of communication in people's life for its short and concise characteristics, rich content and strong participation. It is through short videos that Li Ziqi realizes the overseas dissemination of traditional Chinese culture.

The overseas communication of China's traditional culture can be combined with the popular short videos, micro films, vlogs and other communication methods, and the traditional culture can be vividly displayed to overseas audiences through audio-visual language, so as to realize the effectiveness of communication.

Chinese culture communicators can obtain relevant cultural teaching resources from these international platforms or local social media^[20]. When spreading Chinese culture abroad, we should adapt measures to local conditions, select communication channels suitable for local audiences, and innovate cultural communication methods. In the process of spreading Chinese culture across cultures, we should make full use of local social networking sites in different countries to show the unique charm of Chinese culture in a way that is popular with foreigners.

To Position the Needs of Overseas Audiences Accurately

The external communication of culture needs to understand the needs of the audience. The overseas communication of culture should have a deep understanding of the audience. One of the reasons for the great success of Li Ziqi overseas communication is that her short videos can meet the needs of overseas audiences at different levels, such as the need to enjoy food and appreciate beautiful scenery, the need to learn and understand cultural knowledge, the need for the imagination of paradise life, etc. The phenomenon spreads the content that the audience is interested in and captures the real needs of overseas audiences. Similarly, the overseas communication of China's traditional culture should also be accurately positioned in the aspect of audience needs.

First of all, it is necessary to study the cultural value orientation of overseas audiences of different countries, different genders and different ages, so as to understand the emotional needs, values, thinking modes and cognitive ability of different overseas groups, and grasp the psychology and needs of different audience groups for the acceptance of Chinese traditional culture^[21]. We should be good at using big data to make a detailed analysis of the media preferences and content preferences of different overseas audience groups, and understand their media methods and habits in daily life, so as to facilitate China to choose appropriate communication modes and channels in overseas communication.

Secondly, China should formulate corresponding cultural communication plans according to the specific needs analysis of overseas audiences, and carry out targeted and planned cultural communication for different overseas audience groups. Since China is a collectivist country, we should pay attention to the selection of cultural communication content, so as to not only meet the cultural needs of overseas audiences, but also realize effective overseas cultural communication. When carrying out overseas cultural communication, accurate communication should be carried out for overseas audiences of different ages. For example, for young audience, our country can combine culture content and the be fond of young people, using AR, VR, 5D advanced technology for cultural content of live construction, so as to make them feel more authentic Chinese traditional culture, love traditional culture, ultimately to realize the overseas spread of culture^[22].

The study has several limitations. First, since there is still no relevant valid study on the audiences' feedback on Li's short videos, how do audiences respond to her videos is generally selected from comments on the specific social platforms, which is, in essence, a bit subjective. Second, the discussion aims to update the promotion of China's traditional culture to land in different cultural contexts, yet the related data on various cultural contexts are limited because of the difficulties of acquiring the information from as many diverse nations as possible. Third, since new media are evolving dramatically and is bound to be investment-and-finance reward oriented, whether short videos are capable of disseminate systematic and genuine traditional Chinese culture adequately and profoundly is still a topic to further prove. It is expected that the future study should overcome these obstacles and be conducted more thoroughly and systematically.

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