

Advantages and Limitations of New Media Platforms in Cross-Cultural Communication: A Literature Review

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Abstract

In the context of deep integration between globalization and digitalization, new media platforms have become the core arena for cross-cultural communication. Their algorithmic recommendations and user-generated content (UGC) have fostered diverse communication phenomena. This paper systematically reviews relevant literature to analyze the current research status, strengths, and limitations of cross-cultural communication through new media. The study reveals that new media platforms demonstrate significant advantages in cultural diffusion, including high communication efficiency, strong interactivity, diverse content formats, and pluralistic communication entities. However, challenges persist, such as the lack of systematic theoretical frameworks, overemphasis on online versus offline embodied communication, weak practical integration, and risks of cultural misinterpretation. The professional expertise in broadcasting and hosting arts—particularly in vocal symbol transmission, non-verbal communication, and narrative techniques—can be interdisciplinarily integrated to support cross-cultural communication through new media. Based on this, the paper proposes recommendations to strengthen theoretical frameworks, prioritize embodied communication, enhance practical guidance, and reduce cultural misinterpretation. These suggestions aim to deepen cross-cultural communication from "cognition" to "empathy," providing actionable insights for frontline communicators.

Keywords

New media platform; cross-cultural communication; broadcasting and hosting art; communication advantages; communication disadvantages.

1. Introduction

In the current era of deep integration between globalization and digitalization, new media platforms have become the core arena for cross-cultural communication. The traditional "grand narrative" communication model dominated by national and official media is gradually losing its effectiveness, while "micro-narratives" and "everyday life narratives" based on user-generated content (UGC) and algorithmic recommendations, with their strong cultural penetration, are emerging as prominent forces in cross-cultural communication. Phenomena such as the "account reconciliation movement" and "foreign influencers" spawned by platforms like TikTok, Xiaohongshu, and Bilibili provide new practical samples and theoretical challenges for cross-cultural communication research. Currently, related research both domestically and internationally exhibits a thriving trend with multiple dimensions and methodologies. Foreign studies earlier focused on the relationship between social media and international students' cultural adaptation, finding through quantitative analysis that social media usage is positively correlated with psychological and sociocultural adaptation. Domestic research, on the other hand, aligns more closely with the China context, producing numerous platform case studies, such as Bilibili's multilingual user research and Xiaohongshu's account reconciliation function

research, and proposing locally distinctive theoretical concepts like "emotional community" and "reciprocal understanding". Methodologically, these studies integrate various approaches including data analysis, LDA topic modeling, sentiment analysis, and case studies. Existing research demonstrates significant advantages, featuring micro-level perspectives focused on everyday life scenarios, diversified methodologies that balance quantitative and qualitative analysis, and growing attention to the interactive relationship between platform algorithms and users. However, the shortcomings are also quite prominent: Firstly, most studies remain confined to descriptive phenomena and case analyses, lacking theoretical elevation and failing to establish a systematic explanatory framework. Secondly, there's an overemphasis on online communication at the expense of offline interactions, neglecting the crucial role of "embodied communication" (such as body language, voice, and facial expressions) in cross-cultural communication. Thirdly, practical integration remains weak, particularly lacking practical guidance for professional communicators (e.g., hosts and journalists) to effectively utilize new media for cross-cultural communication. In the realm of cultural dissemination, broadcasting and hosting arts hold significant practical value. Through authoritative information delivery, mainstream value guidance, and vivid interpretation of cultural connotations, they effectively promote cultural transmission. Therefore, this study conducts a systematic review of existing literature to clarify strengths and gaps, integrating interdisciplinary knowledge from broadcasting and hosting arts. The aim is to bridge the gap between research and practical communication, providing actionable methodological guidance for frontline international communication professionals, and advancing cross-cultural communication from "cognition" to "empathy".

2. Definition of Core Concepts

2.1. New Media

New media, leveraging emerging technologies such as digital, network, and mobile communication technologies, utilizes the internet and mobile devices as communication channels to provide diversified information and services to audiences. It represents a new form of communication with the following key characteristics: -Strong interactivity: Breaking away from traditional media's one-way communication model, audiences can interact with content creators and peers in real-time, sharing opinions and feedback. For instance, on social media platforms, users can comment, like, and share content while participating in discussions. -Instant accessibility: Information is disseminated instantly, allowing audiences to access breaking news and curated cultural events through social media platforms. -Decentralized nature: No single media organization controls communication authority. Individuals can become content producers and disseminators, resulting in broader and more dispersed information sources.

2.2. Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication refers to interactions and exchanges between people from different cultural backgrounds who possess distinct cultural perceptions and symbolic systems. Throughout human development, cultures continuously absorb beneficial elements from others to achieve self-renewal, enrichment, and evolution, forming historical and cultural phenomena. Through cross-cultural communication, different cultures recognize their unique characteristics and acquire new intellectual resources via exchange.

2.3. Broadcasting and Hosting Arts

As an interdisciplinary field, this discipline is rooted in language, centered on the creator, grounded in programs, and oriented toward audiences. It combines artistic qualities with journalistic attributes in communication. In cross-cultural contexts, broadcasting and hosting

arts facilitate effective cultural transmission through linguistic expression, non-verbal communication, and narrative techniques.

3. Analysis of existing literature research findings

3.1. Platform Algorithms and Communication Level

Platform algorithms play a key role in cross-cultural communication in new media, influencing the scope of information push and dissemination. The algorithmic recommendation mechanisms of platforms such as TikTok and YouTube will accurately push cross-cultural content to users based on their browsing history, interests, and other data. For example, TikTok analyzes user behavior through algorithms and recommends short videos related to China's culture that match users' interests to overseas users, enabling China's cultural content to spread more widely globally. However, algorithms also have certain limitations. Some platform algorithms may lead to the "information cocoon" phenomenon, where users are long-term exposed to homogeneous cross-cultural information and find it difficult to access diverse cultural content, which is detrimental to the comprehensiveness and depth of cross-cultural communication. For instance, in cross-cultural communication, if a platform only pushes one type of cultural content to users, it will limit users' understanding of other cultures.

3.2. User Behavior and Adaptation Level

Foreign studies have shown that the use of social media is positively correlated with the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of international students. Chinese students studying abroad establish local social networks by using non-Chinese social platforms (such as Facebook and Instagram) overseas, enhancing their adaptability to local culture. Domestic research focuses on multilingual user behavior. Bilibili's multilingual user videos exhibit characteristics of short timeliness, high frequency, and rapid output, with shared video themes covering food experiences, exploration, and revelations, and officially certified multilingual users show higher participation and activity levels. Young people exhibit a "weak ties preference" in emotional expression on social media, tending to confide in strangers. This behavior is influenced by factors such as offline self-image maintenance, the disinhibitory effect of the internet, and group loneliness. While it can alleviate stress and strengthen self-identity to some extent, it also carries risks like information leakage and emotional cocooning.

3.3. Content Narrative and Empathy

Successful cross-cultural communication content often evokes audience empathy. Influencers like Li Ziqi and Dianxi Xiaoge, through focusing on universal themes such as food and rural life, reduce cultural barriers; they employ visual techniques like negative space and suggestive shots to minimize cultural discount; and they replace grand narratives with individual stories to enhance authenticity and immersion, building a "cross-cultural emotional community". "Foreign influencers" achieve cultural exchange and dissemination through cultural adaptation strategies like language adjustment, symbol fusion, and social construction, as well as innovative dimensions such as theme reconstruction, form innovation, and creative integration. For example, Guo Jierui triggers deep emotional identification by experiencing Chinese snacks and interpreting policies through "transcultural communication". The art of broadcasting and hosting holds unique advantages in content narrative and empathy. Skilled broadcasters convey emotions and attitudes through tone, rhythm, and timbre, while using non-verbal cues like facial expressions and body language to build affinity, reduce cultural distance, and transform cultural elements into universally emotionally appealing content through narrative techniques.

4. Advantages of New Media Platforms in Cross-Cultural Communication

4.1. High dissemination efficiency and broad coverage

New media platforms rely on digital and network technologies, breaking through the limitations of time and space in information dissemination, enabling cross-cultural content to be delivered globally in a short period. Platforms like TikTok and YouTube have massive user bases, allowing cross-cultural content to reach a wider audience. For example, Li Ziqi's videos have numerous subscribers on YouTube, and her content is widely disseminated globally, helping more people understand China's traditional culture.

4.2. Strong interactivity and promotion of cultural exchange

The interactive nature of new media platforms provides favorable conditions for cultural exchange in cross-cultural communication. Audiences can interact with content creators and other users through comments, likes, shares, and other means, expressing their views and feelings about cross-cultural content. This interaction not only enhances the audience's understanding of different cultures but also promotes cultural collision and integration. For instance, in the comment sections of Bilibili's multilingual videos, users from different cultural backgrounds can discuss the video content and share their cultural experiences.

4.3. Diverse content formats and diverse needs

New media platforms support various content formats such as text, images, videos, and audio. Cross-cultural communication content can be presented in diverse forms based on audience needs and preferences. Short videos, live streams, and Vlogs are vivid and engaging, better capturing the audience's attention and stimulating their interest in different cultures. For example, "foreign influencers" showcase China's culture and social life through real-life documentation, interviews, and dialogues, meeting the audience's diverse cognitive needs for Chinese culture.

4.4. Empowering Individual Communication and Enriching Communication Subjects

The decentralized nature of new media platforms enables individuals to become subjects of cross-cultural communication. Ordinary users can participate in cross-cultural communication by creating and publishing cross-cultural content, diversifying the types of communication subjects. Individual communicators such as "foreign influencers" and "overseas influencers" inject new vitality into cross-cultural communication with their unique perspectives and vivid content, breaking the traditional communication pattern dominated by official media.

5. Limitations of new media platforms in cross-cultural communication

5.1. Insufficient Theoretical Research and Lack of Systematic Framework

Current studies predominantly focus on descriptive phenomena and case analyses, with inadequate theoretical exploration of cross-cultural communication in new media. This has resulted in fragmented research outcomes regarding platform algorithms and dissemination, user behavior and adaptation, content narratives and empathy, lacking integration and synthesis that hinders effective interpretation of overarching patterns in cross-cultural communication.

5.2. Overemphasis on Online Over Offline, Neglecting Embodied Communication

Existing research predominantly concentrates on online cross-cultural communication phenomena and behaviors, while insufficient attention is paid to offline "embodied

communication." Elements such as body language, voice, and facial expressions in embodied communication play crucial roles in cross-cultural transmission, helping audiences better comprehend cultural connotations and enhance emotional resonance. For instance, intonation, rhythm, and facial expressions in broadcasting arts can transcend language barriers to convey emotions and attitudes, yet current studies rarely explore these aspects.

5.3. Weak Integration with Practice and Lack of Practical Guidance

Existing research shows insufficient connection with cross-cultural communication practices, particularly lacking practical guidance for professional communicators (e.g., hosts, journalists) utilizing new media in cross-cultural communication. Research findings often remain theoretical, failing to translate into actionable strategies and methods that meet the practical needs of frontline international communication professionals. For example, in broadcasting fields, there is a notable lack of practical guidance on how to integrate new media technologies with broadcasting arts to enhance cross-cultural communication effectiveness.

5.4. Cultural Misreading Risk, Affecting Communication Effectiveness

In cross-cultural communication through new media, cultural misreading is prone to occur due to factors such as cultural differences and language barriers. Some cross-cultural content, lacking a deep understanding of the target culture, may convey incorrect cultural information, leading to audience misunderstandings and affecting communication effectiveness. For example, some "foreign internet celebrities" in cross-cultural content creation, due to their biased understanding of China's cultural symbols, have resulted in improper use of cultural symbols, causing cultural misreading.

6. Interdisciplinary Integration: Incorporating Broadcasting and Hosting Arts

6.1. Cross-cultural Transmission of Sound Symbols

In the art of broadcasting and hosting, sound symbols such as intonation, rhythm, and timbre can transcend language barriers to convey emotions and attitudes. In cross-cultural communication, the appropriate use of sound symbols can enhance the emotional impact of content and help audiences better understand cultural connotations. For example, when narrating traditional Chinese stories, broadcasters and hosts can adjust their intonation and rhythm to create the appropriate atmosphere, allowing audiences from different cultural backgrounds to feel the emotions in the story. Future research could delve into the mechanisms of different types of sound symbols in cross-cultural communication, such as the cross-cultural recognition of different intonations in expressing emotions like joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness, and the impact of different rhythms on audience attention, to distill sound expression techniques applicable to cross-cultural communication.

6.2. The Empathetic Role of Non-verbal Symbols

Facial expressions, body language, clothing, and makeup, as non-verbal symbols, play a significant empathetic role in cross-cultural communication. Excellent broadcasters and hosts can build affinity through non-verbal symbols, reduce cultural distance, and strengthen emotional connections with audiences. In cross-cultural communication through new media, the experience of using non-verbal symbols in broadcasting and hosting can be referenced to enhance the empathetic effect of content. For example, in short video creation, creators can convey positive emotions and evoke resonance among audiences through natural facial expressions and appropriate body language. Subsequent research could systematically analyze the differences in the effects of various non-verbal symbols in cross-cultural communication,

identify truly effective non-verbal expression techniques, and develop transferable and learnable guidance schemes.

6.3. Cultural Adaptation of Narrative Techniques

The narrative techniques in broadcasting and hosting arts can provide references for cross-cultural communication content creation in new media. By employing storytelling techniques to transform cultural elements into narratives with universal emotional appeal, the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication can be significantly enhanced. For instance, when introducing traditional festivals of China, a narrative approach can be adopted to recount the origins of the festivals and the stories behind their customs, making it easier for the audience to accept and understand. Further research could explore how to adjust narrative techniques according to the cognitive habits and aesthetic preferences of audiences from different cultural backgrounds, achieving cultural adaptation of narratives and making cross-cultural content more readily accepted and recognized by the audience.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1. Research Findings

This study's literature review on cross-cultural communication through new media platforms reveals that these platforms play a crucial role in cross-cultural communication due to their advantages of high efficiency, strong interactivity, diverse content formats, and facilitation of individual communication. However, challenges remain including insufficient theoretical research, overemphasis on online platforms at the expense of offline engagement, weak integration with practice, and risks of cultural misinterpretation. The professional knowledge of broadcasting and hosting arts in voice symbol transmission, non-verbal communication, and narrative techniques can provide theoretical support for refining cross-cultural communication theories and optimizing practical applications in new media.

7.2. Recommendations

7.2.1. Strengthen theoretical research and establish systematic frameworks

Scholars should deepen theoretical exploration of cross-cultural communication in new media, integrate existing research findings, and construct a comprehensive theoretical framework covering platform algorithms and communication, user behavior and adaptation, content narration and empathy to guide practical implementation.

7.2.2. Emphasize embodied communication and expand research dimensions

Future studies should focus on offline "embodied communication," thoroughly examining the role of body language, voice, and facial expressions in cross-cultural exchange. This will enrich research dimensions and enhance the comprehensiveness and depth of studies.

7.2.3. Enhance practical integration and provide actionable guidance

Strengthen the connection between research and cross-cultural communication practices. Conduct targeted studies for professional communicators (e.g., hosts, journalists) to develop practical strategies and expression techniques suitable for new media environments. Formulate actionable guidelines to meet the needs of frontline international communication practitioners.

7.2.4. Reducing Cultural Misinterpretation and Enhancing Communication Effectiveness

When creating cross-cultural content, creators should thoroughly understand the target culture to avoid inappropriate use of cultural symbols. Platforms can implement a cultural review mechanism to assess cross-cultural content, thereby reducing the risk of cultural

misinterpretation and improving the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication. Additionally, fostering intercultural exchange and dialogue can enhance mutual understanding and cultural recognition.

8. Future Research Directions

Future research should expand into new media platforms for cross-cultural communication studies, including exploring applications of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and virtual reality. This involves analyzing cognitive differences and reception psychology among audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds to provide more precise guidance for cross-cultural content creation. Strengthening international academic collaboration and exchange, while drawing on advanced global research findings, will drive the globalization of cross-cultural communication studies in new media. Additionally, these research outcomes can be applied to professional education in broadcasting arts and international journalism, cultivating professionals with cross-cultural communication capabilities to support the sustainable development of new media cross-cultural communication.

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