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Table of Contents

China's National Image in the German Mainstream Media from a Constructivist Perspective

Authors

Dr. Xuying Tian - Xi'an Jiaotong University

Dr. Sitian Chen - shanghai International Studies University

Abstract

Germany has close relations with China, but due to cultural and historical reasons among with national interests, the official and public attitudes toward China are extremely complex, while the German mainstream media playing an important role in the construction of China's national image. Based on Alexander Winter's constructivist theory and national image study, this study adopts the quantitative research method of content analysis and also combines the qualitative research of text analysis and discourse analysis to analyze the China-related reports of the four major German mainstream media, *Die Welt, Der Spiegel, Die Zeit and Süddeutsche Zeitung*, since ten years after the beginning of the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics in November 2012. The results and patterns of China's national image in German mainstream media are analyzed at three levels: the constructors, the content and the motivation of China's national image. The study finds that, at the level of constructors, German mainstream media give full play to their own initiatives in the process of planning, writing and publishing news reports, and incorporate the media policy and will of the constructors in their reports, so as to convey a consistent attitude toward China to the target audience. In terms of content, the German mainstream media output a large number of in-depth reports of high news quality and richness, among which economic topics become an important aspect of Germany's perception of China. Supported by different news frameworks, the media provide selective and biased coverage of China's mainland cities, rural areas, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and different actors in the China conversation. At the level of constructive motivations, Germany has long viewed China as a friend more than an adversary, and Sino-German relations have changed with the times. The fundamental reason supporting the continued engagement between the two countries lies in the shared interests of China and Germany, and the coverage conveys the ideology of a cooperative development theory that values the trade partnership with China. The study reveals that China should highlight the common interests with other countries in its foreign communication, and directly convey to the international community the idea that China expects to achieve win-win cooperation and build a community of shared future, so as to avoid boring propaganda of political theories and the embarrassing situation of *self-talk*. This also requires China's official and private sectors to work together to do a good job in international communication and contribute to a more realistic and comprehensive presentation of China's national image in the international community.

Key Words

Digital divide and Arab media

Authors

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Abstract

Since 2011, the discourse on technology as a driver for prosperity in the Arab region has proliferated, but this rhetoric on technology as a path to prosperity conceals the reality of global inequality. This paper sheds new light on the digital divide between the Arab region and the Global North, taking the journalism sector as one topical case study to measure digital inequality. The paper demonstrates that the digital sphere has maintained the offline hierarchal forms of political, economic, and cultural powers. The argument is that there is a digital divide between the Global North and the Arab region, not only in terms of digital capabilities but also in terms of monopoly over the digital advertising market. The economic pressures on Arab newsrooms have resulted in fierce competition amongst Arab outlets to increase the traffic on their sites depending mainly on sensational headlines instead of constructive news. The paper also shows how Arab media do not always question the problems of data deprivation, the lack of local hosting in the region, and the massive dependency on Big Tech services; they appear to be generally content with only a fraction of the digital advertising revenue and using clickbait news to get more clicks.

International News Coverage: The case of Japanese Online Media

Authors

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Abstract

In recent years, developments in digital technology have led to the diversification of media. In particular, access to online media is increasing, and it is said that we have entered a "Digital Era in Journalism." As such, online media is regarded as a major source of knowledge of international affairs and a country's foreign policy. Japan, which has the largest newspaper circulation in the world, is no exception. According to Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism's Digital News Report 2022, the Internet (65%) was found to be the most common source of news, exceeding traditional form of media such as television (56%) and newspapers (27%). Online media is rapidly becoming a medium used by the younger generations, and they are not only relying on online media but are also being influenced by it in the way they think. Considering the significant influence of online media in shaping public opinion, it is indispensable in addressing social issues and policy challenges. However, in traditional media, an analysis of the characteristics of Japan's traditional media revealed that the proportion of international news coverage is low; countries that are geographically close and countries with significant influence on Japan were spotlighted. Thus, there is a distortion of news in Japan's traditional media. Under these circumstances, it is vital to explore the causes of the imbalance. However, most research regarding international news coverage in Japan centers on traditional media. There are few studies that focus on Japanese online media, and the majority of them are case studies. This study analyzes the reporting trends regarding international news in Japanese online media and examines the factors that influence coverage. To elucidate the reporting trends and the criteria that influence international news coverage, this study examines the leading online media in Japan. Specifically, the study focuses on LINE NEWS DIGEST, which is a news-content curation service provided by LINE, the most commonly used social media application in Japan, and Yahoo! News, an aggregator with which the Japanese primarily engage, to investigate international news coverage (2021–2022). First, it utilizes quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze reporting trends (by country and topic). Second, based on the aforementioned results, the determinants behind this news flow are identified by focusing on two aspects; namely, (1) characteristics of the country covered: prominence (GDP and population) and deviance (number of conflicts/terrorism and deaths) and (2) relationship with Japan: economic relations (trade volume and ODA amount), political relations (number of visits by politicians and treaties signed), cultural relations (number of tourists and international students), and geographical relations (capital distance and placement of correspondents). The findings indicate that the proportion of international news from the total coverage volume was relatively small, nearly 10% on average, and there was an imbalance in reporting trends. That is, only a few specific countries, such as the United States, China, North and South Korea, and Russia, were covered. From this, it was clear that there was no big shift from traditional media reporting in online media despite fewer limitations on paper space and broadcasting time. Furthermore,

although international news coverage is the foundation for mutual understanding and public opinion formation in the international community, much of the international news coverage was related to the "home" state: Japan. Therefore, in the Japanese context, readers may be unable to gain an objective outlook on various world affairs. In addition, this study can clarify the trends and determinants of online media's international news coverage. Comparisons of the outcomes with those of traditional media can help understand the role of online media in Japan and in other countries. Moreover, the results of this study are significant in terms of not only understanding the mechanisms that create imbalances in international news coverage but also considering methods for improvement. Finally, previous research that identified the factors that determine international news coverage targeted traditional media; however, focusing on online media is essential due to the possible increase of fake news and deepfakes in the future, which would lead to the spread of disinformation. Therefore, by focusing on online media, these findings help shed light on journalism in the digital age.

Key Words
Online media, international news coverage, Japan, news values

Efficacy of China's Soft Power in Africa: Impact of SPI engagement and media exposure on Nigerians' attitude towards China (INC/ESN Joint Session)

Authors

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Abstract

The art of persuasion and the enigmatic role the human cognitive process play in the transformation of persuasive messages into attitude formation and behavioural disposition have, for a long time, been objects of fascination among social and behavioural scientists, so much so that they have been investigated across different disciplines and in a variety of social contexts. More so, nations and governments have always leveraged various diplomatic initiatives as persuasive strategies to advance their interests and to evoke favourable attitudes among foreign publics. Over the last two decades, Africa, has witnessed an increase in Chinese interests manifested through accelerated diplomatic efforts in the fields of economic, cultural, media, and technological initiatives, geared towards projecting Chinese values and winning the hearts and minds of Africans. Although the budding Sino-African relations has been accorded enormous attention in both the media and the academia, there is little empirical understanding about the acculturation of Chinese values and the effectiveness of China's soft power in Africa. Likewise, despite the plethora of scholarship on soft power as a major component of foreign diplomacy, soft power instruments (SPIs) have rarely been studied for their persuasive effects on the attitudes of foreign publics. Drawing on bodies of literature from social psychology, public diplomacy and communication studies, this paper investigates how cognitive, affective, and behavioural intentions of Nigerians towards China are influenced by the persuasive strategies (soft power instruments) employed by China in the continent. This study further develops a theoretical model that explores the correlational trajectory of engagement with SPIs (i.e., awareness and interaction with SPIs), media exposure to Sino-African-related information, and Nigerian's attitudes towards China on the three attitudinal levels. Findings from a clustered random survey (n=624) reveal – among other interesting observations – that Nigerians' cognitive and affective attitudes as well as behavioural intentions towards China are multidimensional and majorly predicted by their personal experience (engagement with China's presence) and their second-hand experience (exposure to China-related news in local media), rather than by the intensity and tenacity of China's diplomatic strategies in the country. Evidence further demonstrates, on the one hand, an admiration for China as a country; and on the other hand, a deep-rooted discontent about China's activities in Africa. On a pragmatic level, the findings expose the inadequacies of China's soft power strategies in Africa as its projected international message of mutualism and partnership is counteracted by its perceived practices of ruthlessness, exploitation, and economic sabotage.

Key Words

Soft Power, Sino-African Relations, China-Nigeria Partnership, Attitudinal Components, Media influence

Algorithmic experiences of Netflix's users in the MENA region: Exploring agency as tactical behavior

Authors

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Abstract

Researchers have highlighted the fundamentally disruptive impact of over-the-the top (OTT) companies, such as Netflix, over the production, distribution and consumption of audiovisual content (Steemers, 2015; Afilipaie, et al., 2021). The video streaming services model like that of Netflix rely on the aggregation of big data and algorithms to understand market specificities and customer preferences (Shattuc, 2020; Lotz, 2021). Moreover, Netflix algorithmic data allows it to adjust its programming and investment based on the understanding of audiences less defined by territorial localization than by tastes that "might not have enough scale at the nation level" (Lotz, 2021, p. 7) and by "unserved and underserved content desires (p. 12). While Netflix claims that its system provides users with better quality services and infinite choices, its practices have raised concerns over the impact of algorithmic regimes on human agency, cultural expression and subjectivity. These concerns acquire additional dimensions when considered in the context of Southern countries. The company's global expansion, including in the MENA region, have renewed interests in what many scholars view as new forms of cultural hegemony or "a hybrid form of imperialism" (Davis, 2021). Engaging with the issues above, this project examines the implications of Netflix's algorithmic model and system for human agency, identity politics and entertainment industry in the MENA region. Drawing on a conceptualization of algorithm as "experience technologies" the project aims to shed much needed light on how users in the MENA region engage with algorithmic curate content, and incorporate algorithms in the experiences of their everyday life. The objective of this study is to explore how users/audiences in the MENA region appropriate and handle algorithmic OTT platforms in their everyday life context. The project also seeks to shed light on how users' perceive and negotiate with Netflix's localization strategy, especially the company's "original" productions in the region.Thus, the main research questions the project will examine are the following: RQ1. How do users in the MENA region engage with and behave around algorithmic curation on Netflix platform? RQ2: How do users/audiences incorporate their Netflix practices within their everyday-life experiences? RQ3: How do they perceive and negotiate with Netflix localized "original" productions? RQ4: To what extent do Netflix users in the MENA region reclaim agency vis-a-vis algorithmic curated content and recommendation system?

Algorithms are notoriously difficult to research or observe in operation because of their opaqueness and black box structure (Hamilton et al., 2014; Pasquale, 2015). Nonetheless, it is possible to examine and observe users' implicit and explicit practices as they interact with the

curated content on OTT platforms, in this case Netflix. For this purpose, this project combines two methods, namely in-depth interviews and walkthrough method (Light et al., 2018). Given the heterogeneity the Arab World at the socioeconomic and cultural levels, the researchers will recruit participants from four different countries, namely the UAE, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan, which represent distinct sub- geopolitical regions (Maghreb, Levant, GCC) in addition to Egypt, the most populous Arab country and the region's dominating media and cultural hub. Around 10 semi-structured interviews will be conducted with participants from each country online and also face-to-face (40+ in total). All interviews will be recorded and transcribed verbatim before being uploaded onto Nvivo to code them and extract common narrative and themes. In parallel with in-depth interviews, the walkthrough method will be used too that involves "the step-by-step observation and documentation of an app's screens, features and flows of activity […] in order to make them salient and therefore available for critical analysis" (Light et al, 2018, p. 882). Participants, thus, will be requested to share their screen and go through normal actions they perform when using Netflix, especially for dealing with recommendations and using the platform's features for a more personalized experience.

Key Words

OTT, Netflix, algorithm, audiences, localization, agency, MENA region, identity politics,

Whose Feeling is the Information? Investigating Privacy Paradox in the Intelligence Systems

Authors

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Dr. Amanda Huang - University of Macao

Abstract

Existing studies on user privacy disclosure behaviours focus on the situational risk-benefit evaluations, dispositional antecedents like individuals' privacy concerns and institutional trust and environmental factors. Nonetheless, typical context of the information privacy research is the dyadic relationships between individual users and firms. Scarce studies investigate privacy-related decision-making process in the context of intelligence systems, where information exchange is more mediated and intricate. Concurrently, users are engaged in a whole new level of perception, interpretation and decision-making processes. Drawing upon feelings-as-information theory and the technology threat avoidance theory, this study applies content analysis to examine the privacy disclosure on intelligence systems, aiming to explore privacy paradox and the dynamics of affect heuristics and users' privacy disclosure on the intelligence ecosystems. The research envisions bringing new insight in the current privacy paradox research by investigating the data disclosure on intelligence systems, and to examine the dubious role of intelligence system from the privacy perspective.

Key Words

Information privacy, privacy paradox, affect heuristics, intelligence systems

Transcultural fandom and Contra flows of culture: Turkish television in the Hispanic world

Authors

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Abstract

This study aims to understand the past, present and possible future of Turkish television in the Hispanic world with a focus on transcultural fan engagement. Alternative cultural movements from many regions of the world, contra flows of culture, have been integrated into the global circulation of culture thanks to globalization, the latest communication technologies and fandom (Iwabuchi, 2006; Thussu, 2006; Annett, 2011; Chin & Morimoto, 2013; Lee, 2016; De Kosnik, 2021). Today, one of these remarkable contra flows is Turkish *dizis*. As of 2010s, Turkish *dizis* have been broadcast in many countries around the world reaching nearly 1 billion USD in international sales by 2023. Productions of the Turkish *dizis* sector, which stands out in the market, have achieved considerable success in many parts of the world varying from the Middle East to the Balkans, Central Asia to Latin America. This success of Turkish *dizis* is undoubtedly of great importance in terms of contra cultural flows as well as the fanwork which contributed exceptionally to the boost and continuousness of the boom that drags along Turkish television content with *dizis* (Arısoy, 2016; Aslan, 2020; Öztürkmen, 2018; Pothou, 2020).

Following the literature review part of the study that focuses on contra flows of culture and transcultural fan engagement, the research centres around the fans of Turkish television in the Hispanic world. Fans from Chile, Spain and the Hispanic US will be interviewed on how they have become fans of Turkish television, why they prefer Turkish television content and what they do since fanwork has acted as an essential actor to overcome many barriers such as language and cultural traits. In-depth interviews will be conducted with a total of 30 fans (10 from each country) and the data will be analyzed in terms of contra flows of culture and how fans contribute to these flows. The study aims to come up with a roadmap of how contra flows of culture move and in what ways fans contribute to this flow.

Exploring Practitioners' Views on Product Placement: What can Taiwan Learn from the West

Authors

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Abstract

Purpose - The western world has been practicing product placements in movies and television programs for a long time, such as the fight scene in the first Superman in 1978, and all the James Bond series are filled with product placements. Many studies indicate that product placement is a booming practice and growing as a viable alternative to traditional advertising. In Taiwan, the research on product placement is majorly focused on consumer attitudes and effects measurement. The western practitioner's viewpoint on product placement is generally not studied in enough detail. This study, therefore, makes a hypothesis that Taiwanese placement marketing practitioners should learn from western content production, understand their culture, why they do what they do, and, most importantly, how they do it without affecting the audience's rights to content enjoyment, and at the same time not damaging the sponsored brand, or encourage better attitudes towards it.

Methodology - This study involved two phases. First, secondary data, including academic literature and legal documents that were made available, were collected. Second, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with a Taiwanese placement marketing complaint case review committee member of Taiwan's National Communication Commission (NCC), and three participants in the product placement industry in the U.S. The thematic categories addressed in the interviews were organized around three categories: view on brand marketing strategy, creative consideration, and obstacles facing product placement.

Findings - Taiwanese television programs and filmmakers can learn the aesthetics of natural subtlety in western placement advertising by studying the script, doing pre-production planning, or using 3D tracking software to place brands in the background. The background elements can also be planned during the pre-production stage by adequately communicating with the production crew about the placement plan. Such as, a billboard in the background can be digitally inserted or framed by photography during production to achieve desired results.

Practical Implication -Taiwan's current state of execution techniques is still in the development stage, where content creation professionals are fumbling to find the middle ground that would satisfy both the advertising sponsors and their audiences without incurring penalties by Taiwan's NCC. The regulation enacted in 2019 points to a direction for Taiwan's content creation

practitioners to follow-adopting western practices, where the consumer's audiovisual experience is considered the most critical issue.

Key Words
product placement, practitioners, policy, Taiwan

Stand-up during Netflix era: degrees of verbal violence in Mexico

Authors

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Abstract

The text analyzes eight streaming television programs from to the comic genre called stand-up made between 2016 and 2017 in Mexico by Netflix. I seek, from the perspective of verbal violence in relation to the "*Violentómetro*" —a tool created by the National Polytechnic Institute to measure the degrees of violence—, to question the relationship between the allusions made by the comedians in these programs to elements of verbal violence and the current Mexican reality. From the theoretical point of view, it's analyzed from the evolution of critical studies on media and technological dependence since post-colonization or neocolonialism in Europe and the relevance of the media industry in the world and its impact on economies and local audiences. This type of violence is exercised in the field of representation, disguising its arbitrariness under the cover of a supposedly natural legitimacy. It is concluded that for the Mexican comedians it is no longer politically incorrect to use racist or homophobic expressions since practically all the jokes they use allude to some type of violence stipulated in the *Violentrómetro*. These comedians seek to be innovative, but also stay in the mainstream to avoid touching local fibers. It is worrying, though, that two out of 10 jokes refer to the most aggressive and serious degrees of the index, such as murder, kidnapping or rape.

Key Words

International media, streaming tv, dependence theory, Mexico, Netflix

Framing the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Aljazeera English, BBC World News, and RT English

Authors

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Abstract

In light of the recent debates regarding the hosting of the 2022 World Cup by Qatar, this study examines how three global news websites, Aljazeera English (AJE), BBC World News (BBC), and RT English (RT), framed the events leading up to Qatar hosting the 2022 World Cup. The study looked at the main issues covered, the categories of news sources used, and the balance between official and non-official sources. Content analysis was used to examine the news coverage by the news websites over the nine years leading up to the tournament, and a total of 197 news articles focusing on the tournament were selected for the analyses.

The findings showed that across the sample issues related to social problems faced by workers and immigrants were prominent in the news coverage, whereas issues related to the local community were largely underrepresented. Additionally, analyses revealed varying perspectives offered by the news outlets. While the BBC tended to focus most on employment and workers' rights issues and least on local community issues, AJE focused most on issues related to infrastructure development and least on issues about employment and workers' rights. RT's news coverage was mainly dedicated to safety and security issues.

The analyses of sources showed that there was a lack of diversity in the sources used and that official sources were given more weight and credibility than non-official and public sources. Moreover, international sources were generally cited more frequently than Qatari sources although the use of citations did vary across the sampled news websites. That is, while AJE relied most on Qatari official sources, international official sources were most cited in the BBC and non-official international sources were most used by RT.

Finally, framing analyses revealed that the most prevalent across all newspapers was the conflict frame followed by the attribution of responsibility and economic consequence frames, while the least used was the human-interest frame. There were additionally some notable differences at the news outlet level; while the conflict frame dominated news coverage by the three news sampled websites, AJE and BBC relied least on the human-interest frame, whereas RT relied least on the morality frame. These findings are discussed in light of research on the news media framing and sourcing of international events.

Key Words

FIFA World Cup, news media framing, news sources, international news

The Current Situation of International Communication of the Belt and Road Initiative on Twitter - Based on the New International Situation of Rebuilding a Better World

Authors

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Abstract

Based on the new situation of international aid initiatives brought by the "Global Infrastructure Initiative" proposed by the G7, it is urgent to understand the current image of the "Belt and Road Initiative" in international communication for China to shape its national image as a practitioner of the community of human destiny. Using crawler data mining technology and the connection between "BRI" and "B3W" as the thread, we crawled and analyzed the tweets about the two major infrastructure initiatives from May 1, 2022 to November 25, 2022 on the international social media platforms represented by Twitter. The study examines the perceptions and sentiments of Twitter about the two infrastructure initiatives, as well as the image of China's Belt and Road in the new situation by African countries and international organizations that have already participated in the Belt and Road. The combination of word frequency analysis and natural language processing provides strong data support. The study found that Twitter has formed the perception that the two major infrastructure initiatives are in opposition to each other, most Twitter users have reservations about "B3W", while the proportion of negative attitudes is greater than positive attitudes, and international or international organizations that have participated in Belt and Road have not expressed their opinions. Therefore, China's international communication of Belt and Road should adopt international public relations measures to convince people with virtue and strengthen the wind of communication on international social platforms regarding the promotion of common development and revitalization of all countries in the world.

Key Words

BRI, B3W, Twitter, National Image, International Public Relations

International communication as translation: How western missionaries penetrate Chinese society in the Qing dynasty

Authors

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Abstract

In the Qing dynasty, western Christian missionaries from America or England came to China to preach. Missionaries deploy various methods including starting new newspapers, translating books, and opening up school facilities to prompt Christianity. In previous research, researchers rarely regard those missionary practices as international communication or transcultural communication. This article follows the translation view of communication and intends to answer below questions:

Question 1: How did the missionary become significant to Chinese society's renewal and revolution?

Question 2: which human and non-human actors have participated in western missionaries' communication practices? Did their participation have a side effect on missionaries, resulting in the deviation of missionaries' communication purpose or strategies?

Method

As a theoretical and historical study of western missionaries in the Qing dynasty, this study must go deep into the social conditions in which missionaries are in. Therefore this article intends to use historical records and historical data including newspapers that missionaries established, Chinese intellectuals' recording of their encounters with foreign preachers, distributing and releasing publication infrastructure, and so on to study missionaries' practices.

Conceptual Frame: Communication as the translation

A translation view of communication bridges the differences between the transmission view of communication and the ritual view of communication. Translation in essence regards communication as a practice that enrolls heterogeneous actors to act. Therefore, messages and meaning are in a constant influx as the different actors are involved in the communication.

This article uses a translation view of communication to depict how western missionaries forge the network of actors and how these actors influence and change the practices and goals of western missionaries. This article is to study how unfavorable Christianity gradually took root in China which was so dominated by Confucianism. In examining the above topic, this article provides a different perspective on international communication as well as further the theoretical understanding of communication.

More importantly, drawing from the missionaries' experience, this article may shed light on how to effectively communicate and send right messages despite the difference in the ideologies of multiple parties.

Key Words

western missionaries; international communication

Reporting China's Environmental issues in Britain: The Media Agendas in Four Major British Newspapers between 2000-2022

Authors

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is British news media's coverage of China's environmental issues between 2000 and 2022. It questions what issues were covered, how they were covered, and what images of China were portrayed by British news media through reporting environmental issues.

The environment is a key focus in international news coverage in the 21st century. Topics about the environment are diverse in the news (Hansen, 1991), which are rang from covering environmental problems at local and global levels (Major & Atwood, 2004), to environmental protection measures (Hansen, 2018), to environmental policies (Nisbet & Newman, 2015), to environmental activism (Lester & Hutchins, 2009), and to global collaborations for environment protection (Christensen & Wormbs, 2017). With increasing media attention, academic researches about the characteristics, impacts and functions of these news coverage are also growing (Hansen, 2011, Anderson, 2013). Majority of these researches followed the 'same path' as researches on 'any other social problem or issues' (Hansen, 1991: 443), which are to analyses whether and how the media can inform the public, increase awareness, set agendas to influence public opinions and lead to behaviour changes (Castrechini & Guàrdia-Olmos, 2014; Males & Van Aelst, 2021).

But studies about news coverage of environmental issues in a foreign nation, also have political implications, as to certain extend, they can reflect national interests, and the relations between the home country and the foreign nations (Wang, 2022). Whether the foreign nations are portrayed as causes of environmental problems, or playing positive roles in protecting the environment or promoting international collaborations with the home nations, demonstrate whether they are seen as allies or enemies by local media. In the case of the Sino-Britain relations, environmental issues, like other problems and issue in Chinese society, historically had been used by British media as means to establish the agenda of China as a threat, and reflected a conflictual relationship between two counties at the time (He, 2010).

Thus this study about British news media's coverage of China's environmental issues in the 21st century, can provide a perspective to understand Britain's interests in the international relationships and its relationship with China in this given period.

To answer the research questions, this paper will apply a content analysis approach, by using four British major newspapers, The Daily Mail, The Daily Mirror, The Times, and The Guardian, as samples. These four newspapers are among most read and influential titles in the UK (Jigsaw Research, 2022). Although they cannot fully represent British newspapers' coverage of China, they can at least provide a powerful and accountable snapshot of media representation. To discuss these newspapers' coverage, this paper applies a three-layer analysis to examine: the volume of

coverage of China's environmental issues; the topics of coverage, i.e. which perspectives of the environment were covered; and the associations, i.e. whether China was associated with causing environmental problems or protecting it. Through analysing the data, this paper then discusses what images of China were portrayed and what Sino-Britain relationships were demonstrated.

(Full bibliography available upon request)

Key Words

Environmental communication, Sino-Britain relationships, international communication, newspaper coverage

Framing China in Chile: A study of Op-Eds on China in Chilean media (Jan 2018 – Aug 2021)

Authors

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Abstract

China´s representation in Latin American media has been varied. From Colombian media criticisms of human rights abuse in the PRC (Armony and Strauss 2012) to a depiction of China as a unidimensional economic entity in Chilean op -eds -obscuring the question of "red lines" such as human rights (Labarca and Montt, forthcoming)-, media discourses reflect the local´s elites thoughts when Chinese are deepening its economic recent "arrival" in the region. As Zhu and Wang (2018) note, China has intensified its economic ties in Latin America in the last decade, affecting the imaginary of the Chinese within the region (see Montt et.al., 2022). One interesting case study is Chile, which has configured itself as a privileged partner of China without major contestation of local elites (Labarca and Montt 2019) and constitutes a model of the relationship for the rest of the region (Labarca 2013). Drawing on this, we aim to explore the main frames and representations of China and Chinese within Chilean media, specifically in opinion columns and editorials.

For this, we develop a mix -methods approach. We first do a content analysis of 240 columns and 117 editorials in the four main outlets of Chilean media between January 2018 and August 2021 to identify the most frequent themes and main frames according to the categories proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). Regarding attribution of responsibility, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), 57,4% of the analyzed op-eds are conflict (N:205), followed by cost/benefits (economics), which represent 21% (N=75). Regarding the most frequent themes are politics (49%) and economy (40,6%). We explored if the use of frames varies significantly between media and by topic, and we also added to this and asked if the use of frames varies by type of author. For the latter, we consider the number of columns and editorials published, identifying if some media rely more on "experts" (through columns) or on their editorials; if types of authors (diplomats/businesspeople/academics) are prevalent in some media outlets; and the topics on which each type of author write about.

We then develop a qualitative content analysis to explore how these main discourses, particularly those which refer to the most frequent frames and themes identified, are linked (or not) to significant events in Chilean-Chinese relations. For this, we consider the broader context, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, specific bids such as a 5G interoceanic cable, big merges and acquisitions of PRC companies in Chile, and the establishment of private and public agreements between governments.

Overall, we aim to explore whether there are significant differences in framing between media outlets and types of authors in columns and editorials on China in Chile and how these might be shaped by the national or global context. Ultimately, we expect to shed light on how editorials and opinion columns frame the information on China, as they have implications on the way in which the presence of China is evaluated and understood locally.

Key Words

China, Chile, Media, Framing, Op-Eds

Contextualizing A post-Pandemic Future: A Cross-regional Framing Analysis Model for International Health Communication

Authors

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deep divisions and disparities within the global society, calling for a more adaptive, effective and inclusive future as none of us is safe until everyone is safe. According to the data from Factiva Database collected for this study, international news coverage about *future* emerged since the first wave of the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, reached its peak during the 2nd quarter of 2021, and continued in 2022. How is the *future* shaped in the international news sphere during the Crisis? What are the prevailing frames used by the mainstream press to communicate with the international communit? How did the frame dynamic change overtime throughout the pandemic? And what are the regional similarities or differences perceiving the future of global health? This paper thus tries to investigate the mediated discussion about a *post-pandemic future* through comparative framing analysis from a mix of international news outlets between 2020 and 2022.

Searching for the keyword combinations via the Factiva database in the news headlines and the leading paragraph of "post pandemic" "future", and "health", the author retrieved 609 news articles from January 1, 2020 until December 31, 2022. The data of this paper thus consists full draft of the retrieved news discourse. Word frequency test was firstly applied with the collected corpus through computer-based tools by understanding the basic idea that specific words are the building blocks of frames (Entman, 1993). The preliminary findings disclose a high frequency of terms as social actors—as one classic frame element—linking to *people*, *business*, *technology*, and *government* . Besides an overall dominance of *people* in the corpus, the timeline trend of the registered terms showcased a high density of *business* and *government* actors during the beginning phase of the pandemic associated with the impact of work disruption and societal health control measures referring to a *near* future to "combat" against the COVID-19 outbreak. Such importance declined in the later stage, and other actors—such as *research*, *technology*, *service*, *companies*, and *data*—became more prevailing in the text, emphasizing a long-term future to "co-exist" with the coronavirus.

By applying topic modeling analysis (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013), the preliminary findings also show a significant regional difference between semantic clusters. Topics clustered with *vaccines*, *healthcare* & *life science industries*, *health technology* (*telehealth* in particular in the United States), and *mental health* are documented much more often in the context of north American news outlets, while topics related to *healthcare system*, *health/social care workers*, *health infrastructures* are mostly found in news outlets from (or about) countries in South Asia (i.e. Thailand, India, Sri Lanka), Africa and South America (i.e. Argentina). Chinese news corpus tended

to associate closely with the *World Health Organization* (WHO) for health-related sustainable development goals, and Arabic news discourse clustered more topics about *humanitarian aid* (from UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait) during the health crisis. Yearly-based frame network analysis will be further carried out as the last step for the comparative framing analysis to observe and interpret the continuity and changing frame dynamic.

The paper proposes a Cross-regional Framing Analysis Model (CFAM) to draw scholarly attention to an imbalanced frame diversity distribution in international health communication, led by active scientific & industrial players and emerging digital technology players—mostly from North America. To imagine a future of global health based on cooperation, trust, resilience, and solidarity after what COVID-19 highlighted as deep disparities and persistent inequities in our current health systems, actors from the Global South and International organizations (i.e., WHO, the UN) must regain their shine. A multilateral collaborative discursive construction is in urgent need to rectify the anti-otherness and marginalization and to urge the promise of good health and prosperity back on track.

Key Words
cross-regional framing analysis, comparative analysis, international communication, post-pandemic, global health

Vehicles for Multiple Modernities: a study on social media expressions of top universities

Authors

Dr. Fei Huang - Tsinghua University

Abstract

The global architecture of communications has been seen as uneven and unbalanced by critical scholars, specifically, argued by many, the flow of information and the rhetoric/discourse model was dominated by the "West" and "Global North", leaving the "East" and "Global South" as periphery. Despite this long-standing scenario, proposed by S.N. Eisenstadt (2000), and scholars such as Göran Therborn, Tu Weiming, Dominic Sachsenmaier, etc., the developments of modernization are diverse, they have refuted the homogenizing and hegemonic assumptions of the Western program of modernity. The concept of "Multiple Modernities" was after this emerging as a topic for vivid and continuous academic discussions and reflections, also as a theory countering the perceived Eurocentrism and unilinear interpretations of development. Eisenstadt argued that the articulations of movements in non-western societies showed distinctions from Western messages. have given rise to multiple institutional and ideological patterns that were expressed and extended in multifaceted ways, among which is communications.

As the entities of creation, dissemination and inheritance of human civilizations and cultures, universities are natural vehicles and the manifestations of "Multiple Modernities". Different from the constellations of existing literature studying the communications of universities as ways for branding or propaganda, this article would like to discuss the possible typologies/comparisons of top universities' communications in the context of the multiplicity and complexity of modernities. As social media provides a broad sphere for public communication activities, structural dynamics of the flowing information in this sphere serve as appropriate object for systematic study. With the goal of examining the social media expressions and engagements of universities in both Western contexts and non-Western contexts, the article analyzes the key indicators of the social media accounts, the texts and key programs of the selected top universities' social media behaviors. It is expected that the discussions can highlight the current landscape of universities' global communications and their inherent varieties.

Key Words

Multiple Modernities, universities, global communications, social media

Maybe NOT A Tiny Little Trouble For China: Examing Japanese Central-Left Media's Representation Shanghai's 2022 COVID-19 Crisis

Authors

Ms. Yumeng WU - Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Abstract

The 2022 Shanghai COVID-19 has attracted much attention from international news media. Media outlets in the United States and western Europe depicted the Shanghai COVID-19 crisis as the-end-of-the-world scare, many Japanese news media outlets represented the crisis in a different way. The *Asahi Shimbun* (in Japanese:「朝日新聞」), one of the top news outlets in Japan, has served as an important channel for Japanese audiences' attitude on international relations since the end of the WWII. The recent Shanghai COVID-19 crisis in 2022 is an important site for studying how *Asahi Shimbun* approaches the Japan-China relations. Thus, the author aims to examine how *Asahi Shimbun* represents the image of Shanghai in the 2022 COVID-19 crisis. The author collected news with a keyword-search of "Shanghai COVID-19" via the *Asahi Shimbun* Database Kikuzo II (n=56) from March 1st to June 1st 2022.

Guided by the theoretical framework of Stuart Hall's (2005) representation, the author used the method of a discourse analysis to analyze the collected news data from three aspects: citizens' suffering, static COVID policy and economic impact. Three themes emerged from the analysis: 1) unwell citizens filled with anxieties and discontentment; 2) the desolate metropolitan by the muscular COVID policy; 3) the economic metropolis manacled by the endless lockdown. Although the *Asahai Shimbun* has been said to be relatively "friendly" to China in comparison to mainstream Euro-American media outlets, the overall attitude towards the 2022 Shanghai COVID-19 turns out to be negative.Overall, the news reports seem to objectively narrate the situation in Shanghai, but actually they use direct negation to Chinese, and constantly attempt to politicize the dynamic zero-COVID-19 policy in China. Discussion of this study will focus on how the Shanghai COVID-19 crisis influences the bilateral relationship between Japan and China.

Key Words

Shanghai COVID-19, the *Asahi Shimbun*, representation, discourse analysis, international communication

New Thinking on Improving the Efficiency of International Communication from the Perspective of Digital Globalization

Authors

Ms. sinuo Zhang - Communication University of China

Abstract

In the era of digital globalization, international communication is not only facing the challenges brought by the changes in media technology, but also facing the higher level requirements of new international relations for international communication capacity under the great changes. The official background of international communication has gradually faded, and the multiple communication subjects have become the most effective idea and practice to improve the effectiveness of international communication. Based on the analysis of the connotation and significance of "comprehensively improving the international communication efficiency", this paper, starting from the perspective of digital globalization and centering on the methodology of "systematic coordination", combined with practical cases, proposes that the party and government, domestic media, international media, civil forces and multinational enterprises should strengthen cooperation and cooperation, form the international communication synergy, comprehensively improve the international communication efficiency, and shape the image of contemporary China.

Key Words

International communication efficiency,Digital globalization; System collaboration

Transformative Digital Citizenship in Africa

Authors

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Dr. Tony Roberts - Sussex University

Abstract

Digital citizenship is the use of mobile and internet technologies to participate in civic and political life. African citizens increasingly use digital technologies, including mobile phones, the internet, and social media to interact with their social, economic, and political environments as digital citizens. This digital citizenship is enabled by the new action possibilities afforded by digital technologies to instantly share text, images, and video with millions of people locally and globally. Digital technologies enable citizens to form groups, share experiences and information, without dependencies on establishment media or political institutions. However, access to digital devices, connectivity, and the digital literacies needed to effectively use these opportunities are not evenly distributed. Notwithstanding this inequality of access across Africa, digital technologies are being used by millions to engage in new forms of civic engagement and political participation.

Although there is a growing body of literature on activist use of social media in Africa (Mudhai *et al* 2009; Ekine 2010, Frére 2011; Mutsvairo 2016; Willems and Mano 2017; Dwyer and Molony 2019), there is very little existing research that focuses explicitly on digital citizenship in Africa. This leaves open important questions about how the widespread use of digital technologies is affecting the nature of African citizenship, how it is enhancing or impeding engagement in different forms of citizenship, and the extent to which it amplifies the power of citizens, the state, and private companies.

The proposed paper explores the continuities and discontinuities between citizenship and digital citizenship in Africa and how the positive openings it generates are being constrained by forms of digital authoritarianism and surveillance capitalism (MacKinnon 2011; Zuboff 2019). While digital technologies have often been characterized as enabling democratic openings in Africa, scholars also document their use in new forms of digital repression (Choudry 2019; Feldstein 2021). Old antagonisms familiar from the offline world are emerging in online spaces, often evident as a contestation between various forms of digital citizenship and digital authoritarianism (Mudhai 2009; Roberts and Bosch 2021). The aim of this paper is to illuminate this dynamic through a range of case studies from different African countries viewed through the lens of digital citizenship. We argue for an understanding of digital citizenship as an active process in which citizens use mobile and internet technologies to take part in the social, economic, and political life of communities of which they are a part.

Current conceptions of citizenship draw primarily on academic debates in the global North, but we explore the work of African scholars and alternate conceptions provided by Eleh (1975), Mamdani (1996), Ayoade (1988), Ogbonna (2018), and Nyamnjoh (2006) among others. We argue that not

all digital citizenship is progressive or desirable; and propose a normative definition of *transformative digital citizenship* that goes beyond signifying any online political or civic engagement to include an explicit commitment to social justice and human rights. To this end, we define transformative digital citizenship as the use of digital technologies in an active process of claiming rights and the pursuit of social justice.

Poverty Porn with an Extra Dose of Racial Discrimination: BBC's framing of China's Racial Discrimination against Malawi

Authors

Mr. Xuezhi Du - Simon Fraser University

Mr. BoRui Li - Simon Fraser University

Mr. Bowei Pan - Simon Fraser University

Abstract

There may be some awareness of poverty on a global scale, especially when it occurs in developing nations, but this awareness rarely translates into concrete change. On June 12, 2022, BBC News Africa published a 49-minute YouTube video, *Racism for Sale*, that attracted a large number of views and comments. Three days later, a roughly 9-minute short version of this film was uploaded to the BBC News Chinese channel. Together, the two films gathered more than 17000 comments and more than 1.6 million views by the end of January 2023. That shocking video uncovered by BBC Africa Eye is without a doubt a racial discrimination video created by a Chinese man, but as stated in BBC's documentary, it was only an extreme case in its production industries, within which many people from poor countries suffered financial burden hired to send blessing to its customers, reminding us of "poverty porn."

Poverty porn refers to certain media content focused on poverty that exploits the empathy or vileness of human beings for the purposes of charity, the media, politicians, etc. Previous research typically viewed poverty porn as an issue of representation politics, in which it is believed that the poor, who are intertwined with class, gender, and race, are misrepresented in television programs, thereby stigmatizing them. Some media professionals with a practical viewpoint, however, claimed that they were not consuming poverty and insisted that as long as the underprivileged could receive assistance, their products deserve attention. This gives rise to what we refer to as the "poverty porn dilemma." Secondly, seldom research paid attention to the political economy of poverty porn and located and analyzed it in the commercialized media system. Thirdly, the inquiry of poverty porn typically disregards the audience's interpretation.

This study will therefore investigate: How BBC reported poverty porn through one racial discrimination video? Is there anything representative about this video? Or could this shocking video be classified as poverty porn? How or if the BBC addresses the "poverty porn dilemma"? How do the audiences interpret BBC's documentary and that video?

Frame analysis is supposed to be the ideal research method to explore the above questions. By selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and action sequences, frames provide simplified representations of social issues. Because frames frequently reproduce moral judgments when identifying who is responsible for a social problem and who is impacted by it, frame analysis requires close attention to patterns, selection, and omission. Frame

analysis is also advantageous for our purposes because it enables us to establish connections between cultural representations and their broader socio-economic contexts. Therefore, we approached BBC's representation of the Susu through frame analysis. In addition, the Python NLP library NLTK and the Google YouTube API v3 were used to collect all audience comments, which would then undergo word frequency analysis and discourse analysis.

Key Words

Poverty Porn; BBC; Racial Discrimination; Attention Economy; Platform Governance

Representation or Reconstruction: A Critical Discourse Analysis of China's Image on YouTube Based on 3 Years' Videos in Major Emergencies

Authors

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Abstract

Major emergencies often bring significant challenges to national images. Simultaneously, International social media platforms have become a field for the presentation of national images. For so long, foreign YouTubers living in China play an increasingly important role in the construction of China's international image. Currently, scholars mostly discuss the construction of China's image from the perspective of the official government and mainstream media. With the expanding influence of social media, some scholars have paid attention to Chinese YouTubers and their communication effects, while few scholars focus on foreign YouTubers who live in China. Obviously, there is still a research gap in how Chinese foreign citizens construct China's image, especially in major emergencies.

This research attempts to fill the gap, provide empirical evidence, and discuss the following questions: What kind of China's image do foreign YouTubers living in China construct during Covid-19? How do they construct China's image in major emergencies? What are the deep contributing factors?

This study takes critical discourse analysis theory as a large theoretical framework and analyzes videos from 3 dimensions: text practice, discursive practice, and social practice. 64 videos concerning Covid-19 are selected as research objects, which were produced by 5 foreign YouTubers from 3 continents in the past 3 years. Specifically, this study searches channels on YouTube with keywords such as Chinese life/life in China, and sorts according to relevance. Among the top 200 relevant channels, this study chooses foreign YouTubers who not only live in China but also have more than 100,000 followers. To rule out YouTubers who tend to cater to Chinese netizens, the study removes YouTubers that have been active on Chinese video media.

In the text practice dimension, content analysis is applied to describe discourse characteristics from 3 levels. At the high level, themes and attitudes are described; at the middle level, the narrative structures are described; at the low level, visual and auditory presentations are described, including picture composition, high-frequency words, and background sound. In the discursive practice dimension, the internal structures and deep meanings are interpreted by studying the sources, tendencies, and discourse metaphors. In the social practice dimension, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is referenced, and the comparative analysis method is applied to explain ideological discursive formation. Specifically, this study horizontally compares videos released by different YouTubers in the same period, and vertically compares videos released by the same

YouTubers in different periods. Finally, attribution analysis is conducted from six dimensions, including power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, long-term/short-term, and indulgence/restraint.

Different from previous research, preliminary results indicate that foreign YouTubers gradually tend to accept collective values and form a multiple-dimension discourse system. Under the circumstances, China is constructed as a country governed by a meritocracy-based system, but it creates hyper-accountability and can respond effectively to its people in major emergencies. The innovation of this research lies in providing insight into the attitudes and current situation of foreigners of different nationalities living in China. It also contributes to the growing literature on the path of national image construction in major emergencies. Hopefully, it could provide suggestions for national communication and cross-cultural communication in the current media environment.

Key Words
social media, national image, ideological discursive formation, major emergencies

From Nollywood (via Netflix) with Love: How African Film Content is helping to Articulate New Media Geographies

Authors

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Abstract

The meteoric rise of digital media technology over the past decade has had transformative influence on the ways in which media content is not only consumed but created. Information spaces have been restructured, producing new communication geographies. They have also potentially, reshaped the political economy of global media cultures in interesting ways, giving rise to new questions regarding how emerging communication technology and platforms such as Netflix and YouTube, prompt a re-articulation of ideas about media flows, identity and cultural consumption. As Morley & Robins (2002) point out, we are now witnessing, a "deterritorialization of audiovisual production and the elaboration of transnational systems of delivery (p. 2), i.e. the emergence of other media geographies. What do these spaces look like? In what ways do they re-imagine the industrial paradigm of media production, dissemination and consumption? Do these spaces represent a new source of creative empowerment for traditionally marginalized global actors in the media economy? In sum, how do these alternative media geographies differ from, fit into or re/shape the traditional political economy of media? In this paper, I explore these questions by examining the rise of Nollywood or the Nigerian movie industry, as a player in the global image industry. Specifically, I examine the roles of platforms such as YouTube and Netflix, as well as the influence of an ever-expanding Diasporic community as part of the global market, in the re-imagination of ideas about cultural production and consumption. In doing so, the paper revisits the cultural proximity argument (Straubhaar, 1991; 1996), reevaluating its key assumptions within the framework of a digitally evolved global media ecosystem. A critical content analysis of select Nollywood media content available on Netflix and YouTube, as well discourse analysis of online user experiences available through online comments and chat forums facilitate this exploration.

Key Words

Nollywood, Media Economy, Cultural Industries, Netflix, Media Globalization, Critical Analysis

Rethinking International Communication through the Perspective of Media Infrastructure: A Case Study of Domain Name System(DNS)

Authors

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Abstract

Generally, international communication research has mainly focused on the media content, communication effect and foreign audiences, but just a few studies have pay much attention to the media infrastructure inside the process of international communication, like the undersea cable, data centers and satellites. The reason behind such ignorance to the infrastructures in many international communication research is the popularity of anthropocentric perspectives. Such anthropocentric perspectives tend to focus too much on screen content, failing to realize that infrastructure is also involved in communication phenomena and is even a prerequisite for the dissemination of screen content (Parks, Starosielski, 2015:5-6). In fact, media infrastructures are organizing the practice of life in modern societies out of sight increasingly; it is easy to make information flows globally at the click of a mouse without any ideas about how cables and data centers work in such process, as people hardly know how the "invisible" infrastructure works, let alone the labour exploitation, capital struggles and geopolitics behind it(Parks, Starosielski,2015:11-13). Therefore, rethinking international communication through the perspective of media infrastructures may help scholars move beyond the functionalist paradigm and explore the inequal exploitation inside international communication.

Indeed, some scholars, like Parks, Starosielski, have discussed the role media infrastructures, like undersea cable and satellite, play in the international communication, and thus the social inequality and capital exploitation inside international communication(Parks, Starosielski, 2015; Starosielski, 2015). However, some media infrastructures, especially those without concrete forms, like IP, domain name system, etc., are still out of the discussion about international communication. In fact, such media infrastructures, even without concrete forms, still play vital roles in the process of international communication. For example, it is nearly impossible for us to communicate with others globally without the help of domain name system, because travel of information in internet depends on the control of domain name system.

Hence, in order to rethink the international communication from the perspective of media infrastructures, such article has firstly discuss the inner connection between international communication and media infrastructures, and then make a case study about domain name system to explore the critical side about the international communication from the perspective of infrastructures. In the case study about DNS, the analysis is based on the 3 theoretical dimensions used increasingly in the studies of media infrastructures: material forms, technical practice and social discourses. And based on such theoretical dimensions, the data about DNS, like the technical

standard text about DNS, media reports about DNS, and governmental reports about regulation of DNS has been examined carefully in the case study(because of the limit of words, more details have been omitted). With such case study, the article found out that the DNS is not just a neutral technology in international communication, but it is associated with complicated powerful conflict among different actors, like the countries, big companies, technical communities, normal users.

Parks, L., Starosielski, N(eds)(2015). Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Starosielski, N(2015). The Undersea Network[M]. Durham: Duke University Press.

Key Words
International Communication, Media Infrastructures, Domain Name System(DNS), Political Economy

Exploring Sentiment Expression in China-related Factchecking based on Journalistic Professionalism from Western Organizations

Authors

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Mr. Haodong Xu - shanghai International Studies University

Abstract

Modern fact-checking has emerged as a new style of journalism around the world and used to debunk the viral disinformation spread on social media across a wide range of topics. Former studies have found that fact-checking is becoming a global journalistic practice and an approach to arouse journalistic professionalism. Meanwhile, sentiment expression has long existed in news production, influencing both the production process of fact-checking reports and the media effect. Therefore, this study attempts to explore how professionalism is embodied in China-related fact-checking reports and how sentiment expression and professionalism in China-related fact-checking reports influence each other.

In this paper, four fact-checking organizations in the United States and Europe, Snopes, Politifact, AFP Factcheck and Full Fact, were selected as the research object to analyze the content of 426 China-related news articles verified by them from January 2016 to October 2022. The study found that Western fact-checking organizations were able to carry out China-related fact-checking reports in an objective, transparent and independent manner, and the journalistic professionalism of China-related reporting was on the rise, establishing professional norms of practice. But the fact-checking organizations' procedural operation has turned journalistic professionalism into a strategic ritual to protect themselves from criticism. There are still many emotional expressions in China-related reports. Western fact-checking organizations may inadvertently follow the intentions of traditional media and use their biased content in fact-checking reports as the background or explanatory information, which may also lead to the deviation of the perspective of the truth in their reports. A weak negative correlation between professionalism and sentiment expression is found statistically. At the same time, it is found that the topic of the article, the country involved in the article and the type of conclusion have a significant impact on the sentiment expression in China-related verification reports.

The truth and emotion flowing through communication constantly shape power, which in turn affects information processing and shapes individual decision-making. To what extent the current professional norms formed by fact checking can solve the emotional expression in fact checking and make fact checking have basic objectivity and transparency, which still needs further empirical tests in the future.

Shanghai's City Brand Competitiveness in the Comparative Perspective of Top Ten Global Cities: Empirical Study based on Artificial Intelligence-Driven Semantic Mining on the Five-Year Full-Sample Global News Big Data

Authors

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Prof. Shaojing Sun - School of Journalism, Fudan University

Abstract

[Objectives]

By performing artificial intelligence-driven semantic mining on the full-sample Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone (GDELT) global news big data, along with statistical analysis, intelligent clustering analysis, and time-series analysis, this study seeks to quantitatively assess Shanghai's city brand competitiveness based on comparing the level characteristics, categorical features, and evolutionary trends of the city brand competitiveness of the top ten Globalization and World Cities Research Network (GaWC) global cities (i.e., London, New York, Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai, Beijing, Dubai, Paris, Tokyo, and Sydney), which were constructed and reflected by the global news media, over five consecutive years.

[Methods]

Based on the research paradigm of Computational Social Science, this paper

1) constructed the concept of city brand competitiveness (consisting of city brand attention and city brand positivity) based on the theoretical model of city brand identity (consisting of cognitive identity and affective identity) and built the dimensions (i.e., presence, place, people, prerequisites, pulse, and penitential) of city brand competitiveness, city brand attention, and city brand positivity by inheriting the dimension system from the Anholt's city brand hexagon model.

2) crawled the big data of 52,291,846 global news articles covering the top ten GaWC Alpha+ or above global cities from 2016 to 2020 from GDELT.

3) obtained the values of the city brand attention, city brand positivity, and city brand competitiveness of the top ten global cities over five consecutive years by projecting the numbers and the emotion accumulations of the related global news articles to the corresponding city brand dimensions in the latent semantic space constructed by intelligent semantic embedding.

4) assessed the levels, categories, and evolution of the city brand competitiveness of the top ten global cities based on statistical analysis, intelligent clustering analysis, and time-series analysis on the above preliminary empirical results.

5) identified the level characteristics, categorical features, and evolutionary trends of Shanghai's city brand competitiveness based on comparisons among the top ten global cities.

[Results]

1) Shanghai's city brand competitiveness is among the lowest of both the top ten global cities and the three top Chinese global cities. This due to Shanghai's city brand attention is significantly lower.

2) Shanghai's city brand positivity is among the highest of the top ten global cities.

3) The characteristics of the dimensional structure (i.e., the dimensional weight distribution) of Shanghai's city brand competitiveness are similar to the other top global cities. The dimensions with the highest weights are "presence" and "potential". The dimensions of "place", "prerequisites", and "people" have middling weights. The dimension of "pulse" has the lowest weight.

4) In the clustering of the dimensional structures of the top ten global cities' brand competitiveness, Shanghai is in cluster 3 with Hong Kong, Singapore, Dubai, and Tokyo, and the weight of the "potential" dimension in this category is slightly higher than that in cluster 1 (New York, London, Paris, and Sydney) and cluster 2 (Beijing).

5) Shanghai's city brand competitiveness, a form of soft power, is significantly weaker than its hard power (in terms of its GaWC evaluation). Shanghai ranked in the middle of the top ten global cities according to the GaWC evaluation the majority of the time. However, during the same evaluation period, Shanghai's city brand competitiveness ranked among the lowest of the top ten global cities.

6) Over five consecutive years, Shanghai's city brand competitiveness has evolved in a manner that is largely consistent with other top global cities. The values continued to drop from 2016 to 2019, then rebounded in 2020. However, Shanghai's city brand positivity decreased dramatically during this resurgence which was contrary to the trend that its city brand positivity had been high and stable from 2016 to 2019.

[Contributions]

The contributions of the paper are three-fold:

1) The findings of this study serve as a reference for strategically enhancing Shanghai's city brand competitiveness in the practice of city brand international communication.

2) The design and methodology of this study offer a reusable analytical framework for evaluating the city brand competitiveness of a specific city from the comparative perspective of competing cities based on intelligent semantic mining on global news big data.

3) The empirical results of this study provide quantitative data for future research in the field in terms of the level characteristics, categorical features, and evolutionary trends of the city brand competitiveness of the top ten global cities over five consecutive years.

China-Africa on Twitter: Telling China's Stories and Building an Online Community

Authors

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Abstract

The rise of web-based technologies made social media become the main facilitator of contact and communication across state boundaries. Social media represent an unprecedented openness in communication management that enable state actors to actively interact and engage with target publics. China's diplomatic departments and state-owned media have digitalized their international communication practice to promote Beijing's advocacy and construct China's international reputation in a dynamic and interactive way towards online foreign publics. This research purposes to understand how China strategically mobilizes online narratives to rationalize and legitimize the friendship between China and Africa. It focuses not only on China's narrative strategy towards China-Africa relations in response to international criticism of Beijing's neo-colonialism in Africa but also on China's network public diplomacy activities on Twitter to better conceptualize Beijing's initiatives in terms of shared future and values.

China-Africa relations are the most important diplomatic relationship in China's geopolitics (MFA of China, 2018). This geopolitical relation can be traced back to the aid diplomacy initiated by China at the beginning of the establishment of the socialist regime in the 1950s. China-Africa relations after 2000 were re-conceptualized by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), founded at the end of 2000 to localize Beijing's "Going out" policy in Africa. This study selected Twitter accounts of three most influential Chinese state-affiliated media: Xinhua News Agency, People's Daily, and China Global Television Network (CGTN). For each media outlet, we selected Twitter accounts of three main languages used in Africa: English, French, and Spanish. The Twitter data were collected using Crimson Hexagon and the study period spanned from August 1, 2018, to December 31, 2019. This timeframe covered developments of FOCAC. After the data-cleaning process, a total of 2,218 tweets related to China-Africa remained. A content analysis was conducted and the tweets were coded into categories including "typologies of content", "identity of narrators", "storytelling angle", etc.

The results show that the most used typology of content is "using China-Africa history for a common prosperity and cooperation issue" (41.2%), followed by "using China-Africa history for political issue" (25.1%), and "using China-Africa history to build a benefactor image" (17.1%). The following typologies were also used but less frequently: "using China-Africa history for China-Africa mutual cultural promotion" (5.3%), "using China-Africa history to promote China's achievement" (4.1%), and "using China-Africa history for promoting China's standards" (1.6%).

The majority of content used a "China + Africa" angle (89.4%). If a tweet used a single angle, there are more African-angle tweets (5.8%) than Chinese-angle tweets (3.2%). Very few tweets used a third-party angle (1.6%). In addition, a little more than a quarter of the content uses polyphony strategy (26.5%).

The findings empirically show the content categories and strategies of Chinese communication with Africa. China uses the Chinese voice and China-Africa perspectives to narrate, rather than from China's unilateral perspective. In terms of selecting narrators, China mostly used journalists as narrators to highlight objectivity, followed by politicians as narrators, highlighting authority and reflecting the importance it attaches to Africa.

Key Words
China, Africa, public diplomacy, Twitter, social media

Podcasting Across Borders: A Study on the Immersive Audio Storytelling and Intimacy Building of China's CGTN Podcasts

Authors

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Ms. Hanqin Li - School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University

Abstract

Podcast is increasingly gaining popularity worldwide in this ever-changing and competitive media ecosystem, especially for young audience such as the Z generation. With the urgent need to rebuild brands and make profits against the widespread distrust of traditional media, global major news outlets started to produce podcast shows.

The explosive growth of podcast industry began to draw the attention of media researchers. As a new hybrid cultural media form, podcast shows the features of collective listening, intimacy and transnationality (Bonini, 2022). Emerging academic studies focus on podcast's role in health communication (Nee and Santana, 2021), political participation (Lee, 2021) and education (Porter et al, 2022). Little attention has been paid to the transnational function of the podcast.

In this project, we examine China's efforts to utilize podcasts as a public diplomacy tool. On the way to become a global power, China has attempted to improve its national image by all means of international communication. CGTN (China Global Television Network) is a state-owned English-language news channel based in China and its content mainly targeted at the global audience. As its transformation to new media, CGTN has produced numerous podcasts to tell China stories in recent years and it reached 20 million downloads and listenership globally until 2021.

In the field of sound work research, podcast is considered as a type of personal and intimate narrative journalistic content. Through immersive audio storytelling and narrative journalism elements in the process of podcast production, an intimate listening experience is created and thus podcast intimacy is established. While most of the research focus on podcasts that aim at domestic audience, this study explores how internationally oriented podcasts work as an intimate bridging medium.

Close analytical listening is the major methodology throughout the whole research. It has long been used to analyze long-form audio journalism and is now adapted to podcast research. The practice involves pausing while listening to podcasts, noting all the details related to the research question and analytical framework (Spinelli and Dann, 2019). This research first conducts a comprehensive content analysis of CGTN podcast shows (n=46) with the codebook developed by Nee and Santana (2021). Then three of the podcast episodes are sampled as cases to further demonstrate the podcast intimacy building. The ten criteria of personal audio storytelling (Lindgren, 2016) are employed in the case study.

The result reveals that most CGTN podcasts involve some or all narrative journalism elements. Scene, Dialogue and Opinion, which are presented in more than half CGTN podcasts, are three most used elements in podcasts. However, the utilization varies significantly between different podcasts. The case study shows different podcasts' emphasis on intimacy building techniques. By providing context and intercultural background, the cases accomplish the intimacy building for foreign audience. Further study could explore the actual effect of podcast intimacy in the perspective of audience.

Key Words
Podcast, Immersive Audio Storytelling, Intimacy, Public Diplomacy, International Communication, CGTN

Digital Attachment and Control: Intergenerational Communication in Chinese Families

Authors

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Mr. Bingyu Chen - Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University

Abstract

As the world's largest manufacturing country, China's population trends and labor force situation have a huge impact on the global economy. Last year, the population declined for the first time, even as the "one-child policy" was canceled in 2021 to deal with the aging issues. Exploring intergenerational digital communication offers an entry point to understand the contemporary transformations of Chinese family dynamics. This study takes a culture-centric approach to go beyond prior affordances-based and techno-deterministic approaches. We aim to understand how the intergenerational trust relations of the elderly within the family structure influence their digital social engagements. Specifically, we utilize particularly Chinese dimensions of interpersonal trust, attachment and control to explain the transformational social bonds that characterize the dynamic sociocultural, economic and public policy environments.

We conducted remote interviews with elderly (n=20) living in China using Zoom with the approval of the (*university suppressed*) Institutional Review Board, examining how their social positionality vis-vis various groups influences mobile communication strategies and behaviors. Seniors with a mean age of 71 (from 55 to 83) who had mobile phones and used WeChat daily were recruited across included equal gender distribution. Conceptual analysis, a content analysis method was used dis-aggregate qualitative interviews into single words or entire phrases to describe key concepts. Then, we selected the topical arguments stated by our participants to identify and explain the generated concepts.

The responses from the Chinese elderly regarding their feelings and detailed use behaviors shed light on addressing the challenges and concerns related to digital engagement, as well as how to integrate factors about socio-relations and culture into technology affordances research and elderly-friendly technology design for better intergeneration communication.

Vulnerability and uncertainty are the two major aspects of trust relationships. We investigated how sociocultural, economic, and technological development in China influences the perception of vulnerability and uncertainty of the Chinese elderly, thus affecting their digital communication behaviors with their family members. Our study found that attachment and control are two typical emotional responses in response to varied conditions of vulnerability and uncertainty. Digital intergenerational communication serves as the function for them to attach or control their family members, as well as a source of seeking social (familial) support. The lens of trust with Chinese characteristics contributes to explaining elderly digital intergenerational communication. Based on

intergenerational communication behaviors, we further discussed the connection for broader sociocultural equilibrium amidst a world in flux.

Key Words

Digital Communication; Intergenerational Ties; Interpersonal Trust; Digital Social Engagement

Online Intercultural Communication of the Swedish TV Series Young Royals among Chinese Youth Groups

Authors

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Abstract

The popularity of the Swedish TV series *Young Royals* produced and distributed by Netflix in 2021, among young people in China is an impressive illustration of transnational fan culture, and a successful example of how the folk power behind intercultural communication in the Internet era can facilitate the exchange and dissemination practices of media products. This study is particularly concerned with how a new generation of Chinese audiences become fans of *Young Royals* in a heterogeneous cultural context amidst the ever-changing globalised internet. The focus here is on a coincidence of timing in their motivation to become transnational fans, namely the attribution of *Young Royals* as a queer TV drama and the current pursuit of male/male homoerotic relationships among female audiences of the Chinese youth population. According to Henry Jenkins' general definition of the fan as a " pioneer of participatory culture" (24), and the 2014 definition of 'data fans' in Chinese online pop culture, the two are combined to define the identity of the *Young Royals*' Chinese fans in this study as transnational fans of boy's love culture (BL).

Secondly, intercultural communication is communication between people whose communication processes are altered due to variations in cultural perceptions and symbol systems (Samovar et al. 34), and it is prone to be seen as part of national soft power building in some countries such as China (Shestopal & Silantjeva), yet in the observation of the intercultural communication pathway of *Young Royals* in China, a different interest-oriented mode of online communication is captured, which is distinct from the traditional mode of intercultural communication, i.e., the communication of cultural products is based on specific online communities of interest and is to a certain extent influenced by the algorithms of the social media, meanwhile, the scope of distribution is strictly controlled, especially to avoid any intersection with the grand narrative such as politics and nationalism. Therefore, its intercultural nature is not based on substantial intersections with heterogeneous cultures, but rather on intercultural communication within the same culture.

The method used in this study is online ethnography, which is based on a participatory observation conducted with fans of *Young Royals* (Season 1, Season 2) on Chinese social media platforms (Sina Weibo and Xiao Hong Shu), with an anonymous 15-minute online interview consisting of 6 questions with 12 fans. The six questions addressed the following issues: (1) How did you find out about *Young Royals*? (2) What is the core appeal of *Young Royals* to you? (3) What media platform did you use to watch and discuss *Young Royals*? (4) What kinds of fan activities did you do around *Young Royals*? (5) Did you feel any cultural and ideological differences while watching *Young Royals*?

(6) Did you feel that the fan activities surrounding *Young Royals* have had any impact on your online social life in China?

Key Words

online intercultural communication, international fandom, social media algorithms

The Coverage of International Conflict by State-Sponsored Media: The Case of the 2022 War in Ukraine

Authors

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Dr. Iveta Imre - University of Mississippi

Ms. Leslie Klein - University of Georgia

Dr. Ana Petrov - University of Toronto

Abstract

Media play an important role in reporting about wars and international conflicts. Their coverage can bring conflicts closer to world audiences and have a crucial impact on how these audiences understand and interpret armed encounters (e.g., Philo, 2002). Through the process of framing, news media can make certain aspects of coverage more salient than others, thus impacting particular problem definitions and the construction of perceived reality (Entman, 1993). Simultaneously, framing itself can be influenced by national contexts, as journalists tend to 'localize' news stories in order to target national audiences (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005). In cases when national interests overlap with conflict coverage, news media can even engage in "psychological warfare" to mobilize public opinion in support of a particular national cause (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012). Such causes might be promulgated by international broadcasters or state-sponsored international media outlets, whose goal is to target civilian audiences in foreign countries through broadcasting and internet (Juwayeyi, 2021) in order "to encourage them to support national objectives and foreign policies" (Snow, 2009, p. 6). In order to investigate how media coverage of important international conflicts is influenced by semi-structural characteristics such as country of origin, this study examines news coverage from two state-sponsored international media outlets, the Russian news agency *Sputnik* and the American broadcaster Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, to investigate how they frame the ongoing war in Ukraine (2022-present). Studies examining the previous conflict in Ukraine (2014) found that the degree of closeness of media outlet's home country significantly impacts the choice of frames and themes and that it might impact the use of a patriotic stance in the reporting (e.g., Fengler et al., 2020; Koltsova, & Pashakhin, 2020; Nygen et al., 2018; Roman et al., 2017). What has not been investigated so far is whether such narratives are present in state-sponsored media outlets' production for third-party countries. In order to fill this gap in the literature, our study examines the presence of war frames such as the military conflict frame, human interest frame, diagnostic frame, responsibility frame, media self-referential frame, prognostic frame, violence of war frame, and anti-war protest (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005), as well as the presence of particular war-related topics (e.g., actions involving weapons, international discussions and sanctions, military support for Ukraine, etc.) and dominant sources (Nygen et al., 2018) in the coverage of Russian *Sputnik's* and American RFE/RL's coverage for Western Balkan audiences. Using the most different

systems design (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005), this study conducts quantitative framing analysis as well as topics analysis of 472 news items in the first seven days of the ongoing war in Ukraine (February 24 – March 2, 2022). We specifically focus on the content produced for the countries of the Western Balkans (Sputnik Serbia – sputnikportal.rs and RFE/RL's – slobodnaevropa.org) as these countries lay at the crossroads of Eastern and Western influences and have been historically hit by both Russian and American information campaigns. The results are interpreted in light of war framing theory and propaganda studies.

Key Words
news framing, international broadcasting, war coverage, war in Ukraine

Virtual Influencer Engagement: Findings from a National Survey in Qatar

Authors

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Dr. Venus Jin - Northwestern University in Qatar

Dr. Noora Ahmed Gh A Lari - Qatar University

Mr. Shravan Regret Iyer - Rutgers University

Abstract

The convergence of artificial intelligence and digital technology has given rise to a spectrum of emerging media (EM), including what are called virtual influencers (VIs). VIs are social media influencers, or opinion leaders and shapers generated by applying advanced algorithms or even artificial intelligence – which appear to the user as the digital representation of a real human being. A growing body of research has examined the nature of VIs in marketing (Moustakas, 2020), specifically, the role of VIs in health and beauty (Black, 2012) and the nature of such computer-generated VIs in fashion. However, it is unclear how many real, human social media users are aware of VIs, whether they are influenced by them; or whether they care they are virtual entities and not based on actual human beings. With widespread internet connectivity/access and social media usage in developing and developed nations worldwide, VIs are now growing online presence. Considering the fact that nation such as Qatar in the Arab Gulf region is ranked first globally in the rate of internet adoption among the total population, with a percentage reaching 99%, according to The Global State of Digital 2021 report, and the fact that there is limited scholarly work pertaining to EM and more, especially VI uses in the Middle East, particularly Qatar which has the highest number of expatriate professionals who account for around 85.7% of total Qatar population, this study drawing upon the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theoretical framework (Conti, Gathani, & Tricomi, 2022; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003; Elshafey, Saar, Aminudin, Gheisari, & Usmani, 2020; Conti, Mauro & Gathani, Jenil & Tricomi; Pier Paolo, 2022) explores public awareness of and engagement with emerging media, especially VI in Qatar. The study seeks to understand: *RQ1: What is the level of awareness of and engagement with virtual influencers in Qatar?* and *RQ2: To what extent do key demographic variables, especially status as a Qatari national or expatriate professional, describe differences in patterns of awareness of and engagement with virtual influencers.*

A survey of a randomly selected sample (including adults, both Qatari nationals and members of the expatriate communities) of adults in Qatar to establish a baseline measurement of the use of and engagement with VIs was conducted to assess public engagement with VIs. Drawing upon the sample, the Qatar-based research organization Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) assisted in the design of the survey instrument and conducted the interviews via telephone using list-assisted dialing (based on a comprehensive sampling frame provided by a telecommunications company in Qatar). A nationally representative survey involving about 300

Qatari nationals and 300 expatriate professionals (600 total) was conducted in December 2022. The survey was offered in Arabic or English, depending on the respondent's language preferences.

The findings indicate that one in five (17.06%) participants have heard of VIs, with Qataris slightly less likely to be familiar with VIs than expats (13.71% v. 19.69%, a statistically significant difference, Pr=0.040). Among those familiar with VIs, about one-third (29.31%) say they have seen a VI, with little difference between Qataris and expats. One-half (52.94%) say they have followed a VI, with little difference between Qataris and expats. Expats are especially likely to follow VIs on Facebook (63.64%), with no Qataris following VIs on Facebook, a statistically significant difference, Pr=0.007. Further, the findings indicate that Qataris are most likely to follow VIs on YouTube (57.14%) and Instagram (28.57%), though the difference from expats is not statistically significant.

This study adds to the theoretical discussions on VIs per the TAM framework and provides practical implications.

Key Words
Virtual influencers, emerging media, Qatar, Algorithms, artificial intelligence

From Third World to Global South: China's Changing Spectatorship of Distant Suffering

Authors

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Abstract

With deeper involvement of global capitalism, China has no longer officially positioned itself as a "Third world" country. Imbedded in this concept was a nearly forgotten history of China that maintained an internationalistic solidarity with African, South American, and Asian countries. In comparison to relatively invisible history, the rich legacy developed with this concept has entangled with rising new imaginaries of world as well as China itself. Shared in these imaginaries is China has increasingly separated itself from these former Third World Countries that now have been partly categorized as "Global South". Although the concept of "Global South" has been accepted by international society, in domestic public sphere the relationship between China and Global South has not been fully defined, for which different discourses are competing. These discourses could be found in official discourses, academic disputes, as well as popular imagination on China's past and present ties with Third World/Global South. These discourses either take Global South as a business partner, or a silent object of pity, or a distant place, or a committed friend/brother, which compete and complement. Nonetheless, these imaginaries together offer a privileged access to understand China's changing self-imaginaries in different dimensions, which make visible the struggle between seeking alternative modernity and being a newcomer in global capitalism.

To better understand these contested imaginaries, this study takes China's spectatorship of suffering in Third World/Global south as an example and revisited cases such as 1958 Lebanon Crisis, 2020 Lebanon Explosion, as well as recent China's vaccine diplomacy in Global South. This article explores how media represent and reconstruct distance both in time and space between China and people in suffering, mobilizing or blocking Chinese solidarity with distant sufferers. It further argues throughout decades what changes happened and what imaginaries are highlighted or hidden in the ways Chinese people imagine the world outside itself as well as its position in the world. The complexities and discrepancies in China's spectatorship and action in response to these suffering could not be captured well in the current studies on the mediated suffering that share a western centric approach. These studies, although with a critical perspective towards the global inequality, ironically echo the viewing hierarchy between the West and Global South, for their major concern is western spectatorship and action on suffering in Global south. With the specific socio-historical contexts where Chinese spectators encounter with distant suffering in the media, the study would expand our understanding not only about historical struggle of China's alternative modernity but also politics of solidarity developed outside the west.

Key Words

To Be a Local Girl: A Case Study on Micro-Video of Sports Star Gu Eileen in Tik-Toks during the 2022 Beijing Olympics

Authors

Ms. Quanqingqing DU - Communication University of China

Abstract

As one of the most outstanding female sports stars in 2022, Gu Eileen, born in San Francisco, California, participated in women's freestyle skiing on behalf of China. Although Gu grew up in the United States, she has repeatedly declared in public that "I am a Chinese girl" because her mother is from Beijing. It is worth thinking about why Gu claims that she belongs to China and how she can prove that she is a local Chinese. This article will focus on this topic and carry out a scientific analysis.This paper found that as for proving one's "local" status, the self-construction of "local person" would much more depend on the related behaviors which have cultural intertextuality, thus "local character" can be constructed. Whereas, with the development of globalization and the improvement of mass media, The connotation of "local person" has been constantly deconstructed, constructed, or reconstructed, while the way of cross-cultural survival has gradually become the new normal of some groups. For instance, a foreigner who has lived in China for a long time would hardly be regarded as a "local person", because his or her behaviors do not thoroughly reflect the "Chinese character". For Gu, displaying her Chinese cultural identity through media platforms is the main way she constructs her local identity. Hence, this article aims to take Gu's media image presentation in *Tik-toks* as the analysis material to explore the principle and significance behind her self-constructed image.

The study collected 36 pieces of *Tik-toks* posted by Gu during her time in China during the Beijing Winter Olympics. Then, combined with the specific coding methods of short video content evaluation in previous studies (Zhu, Xu, Zhang, Chen & Evans, 2020), the interpretation is carried out. Specifically, the quantified influence dimension has three sub-dimensions: the number of likes, the number of comments and the number of forwarding. Video content dimension has four sub-dimensions: video type, theme, emotion, character; The video formal dimension includes five sub-dimensions: background music, language features, theme emphasized at the end, video length, and subtitles.

It was found that she displayed her identity as a Chinese native in three aspects: speaking, eating, and participating in competitions on behalf of the Chinese team. First, the background music was usually used to play up the emotional atmosphere, but it's so much more. Gu paid more attention to language expression, especially the use of "dialects". Second, apart from dialects, the local eating habits have exhibited a prominent feature for Gu, which reflected symbol and identity. Foods, as a symbolic text, have a distinctive local character, referring to the regionalism and nationalism feelings contained in "food politics". Third, Gu's positive portrayal of her winning the gold medal for the Chinese team has been liked more than 3 million times. The fundamental

reason is that netizens' attention to this image dimension is mainly based on ethnocentrism and related factors, while this symbolic cultural self-confidence and national pride cater to the nationalist mood of the audience.

From the perspective of anthropology and cultural geography, this paper analyzes the geo-cultural rhetoric of Gu in the process of self-constructing on "local girl". It is pointed out that the foundation and principles of shaping the "local person" media image are all around the creation of "topophilia", as it may cater to the "media gaze" via shaping the sense of cultural identity. In the meanwhile, Gu highlights the cultural elements of Beijing, with it enhancing the cross-cultural features of China-American which owned attributes contained in its image, and writing a self-construction way with multi-identities interlaced. In addition, this article attempts to analyze Gu's breakthrough in "mixed race" identity and the construction of a "local person" identity. Gu uses the local narrative containing "topophilia" to present an approachable "local person" image. It also revealed that Gu's social media use behavior refers to complex ideological significance, and links the content of public diplomacy. This image construction represents the public diplomatic significance of cultural identity: on the one hand, as a unique transnational athlete, Gu is more conducive to finding a consistent resonance in the cultural barriers between the East and the West; on the other hand, based on her medium image, she also subverts the long-term hegemony of the west in the field of winter sports, which breaks the dilemma, to a certain extent, what China often faces in the field of winter sports.

Key Words
Local person; Media image; Identity; Cross-cultural communication

Covering the Russian invasion of Ukraine in a 'multi-aligned' nation

Authors

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Abstract

President Vladimir Putin's 'special military action,' which the rest of the world defines as an invasion, has triggered a global geopolitical and economic crisis, receiving unprecedent coverage in the global media. In India, an old ally of Russia, going back to the days of the Soviet Union, the coverage has a very different tone and tenor. This paper focuses on the communicative dimensions of the Russian invasion of Ukraine within the geopolitical framework of a transforming India. After examining the Western governments and media's assessment of the invasion, evident in various commentaries and concerns expressed by think tanks and government reports, the paper will focus on how the mainstream Indian media – both state broadcasters and privately owned news channels and newspapers – have reacted to arguably the biggest crisis in Europe since the end of Nazism.

The paper suggests that, broadly speaking, the coverage in the media, though scant, has been more balanced than the almost systematic and unrelenting diatribe against Russia and its president in mainstream Western media. The paper seeks to explain this difference in geopolitical terms: India has very good relations both with its BRICS partner Russia – especially in energy and defence sectors - and with the West, which it cannot afford to antagonise if New Delhi wants a bigger role at the global stage, as the world's biggest democracy and its fifth largest economy. The paper asks whether these tensions are also reflected in the coverage in the Indian media, as the country aims to shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment.

Key Words

Russia's invasion of Ukraine through the prism of TV news around the world

Authors

Dr. Svetlana Pasti - Tampere University

Abstract

This paper reports on research at Tampere University in the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences into the news broadcast by the main television news bulletins in Russia, China and Finland in order to analyze the coverage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine from 24 February 2022. Ten daily TV news bulletins were included in a time sample until 14 April and 13 main topics were identified for content analysis. The research was later expanded by include the other BRICS countries – Brazil, India and South Africa – as well as the UK, Italy and the USA.

This paper summarizes the main results and compares the coverage of the countries included in the survey with the focus on Russia presented by the evening newscast *Vremya* (Time), which was totally devoted to war-related news during the sample period. With news coverage of the main TV channels in other countries, we note the maximum reaction to the Russian invasion in terms of the amount of news from Western countries: Finland (76%), Italy (71%) the USA (70%), and the moderate reaction of the BRICS between the minimum coverage by China (7%) and the maximum coverage by Brazil (41%). As for the geopolitical angles in the news, the Russian angle was marginal in all countries except China. In terms of political orientation, all countries showed a negative tone towards Russia, except China, as *CCTV News* kept its reporting tone neutral, remaining in line with the government's stated neutral foreign policy regarding Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

As for the diversity of political perspectives, the news on *Vremya* was mainly presented from the Russian angle (88%), and the share of other points of view was presented in marginal proportions: Ukraine 2%, other country 5%, and non-governmental 6%. Moreover, these other perspectives, accounting for 12% of the coverage, were included to reinforce or confirm the Russian perspective. The sources of news on the most important topics were the Russian authorities represented by the president, the government, and the army. Since mid-April, the topics 'Sanctions' and 'US policy' became the most important topics on the news agenda, indicating that Washington, not Kiev, was perceived as the real antagonist of Russia. Thus, the news agenda shifted its focus from the special operation to global issues, namely the confrontation between Russia and the West, primarily the US.

Key Words

BRICS, Russia-Ukraine conflict, geopolitics, comparative framing, news

The South African Broadcasting Corporation's coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war

Authors

Prof. Musawenkosi Ndlovu - University of Cape Town

Abstract

This paper examines the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) news coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Russia justified this 'invasion' and 'war', as defined by the West, as 'special military action' for the de-Nazification and de-militarization of Ukraine. However, Russian military action, however it is defined, was a historical milestone as it brought a full-scale war to the very heart of Europe for the first time since Second World War. For Africa, the Russian invasion of Ukraine triggered not only a global geopolitical and economic crisis that added more economic stress to a continent already devasted by the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, but it also created an ideological crisis. The Russia that invaded Ukraine was not just any other European superpower; it is the one that has special historical place in many parts of Africa. It is framed as a European superpower that never colonized Africa, a committed supporter of Africa's anti-colonial struggles after Stalin's death, South Africa's notable BRICS partner, and a major force in African regional political economy, a decade after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and USSR, and when Putin took over the Russian presidency in the early 2000s.

Against this brief background and given that news media, especially television, typically constitute the main window on the war scene, thus having a crucial role in the process of creating and maintaining the climate of public opinion for or against the war, this paper examines SABC News' framing of the Russia-Ukraine war. The examination of SABC News texts, as units of analysis, is executed through application of content analysis as a research method for investigating media text messages. The study concludes that the SABC, of the 13 topics coded for this study, the war-related topic that received the most coverage were UN, Civilians, Peace, and Security. War-related topics that received lower amounts of coverage on SABC News, in the sample period, were 'sanctions', 'battlefield', 'EU policies', 'nuclear', 'US policies', 'justification', and 'disinformation'. The paper argues as a result that SABC News coverage was largely politically neutral, reflecting the geopolitical position of South Africa.

Key Words

Domesticating international news: China's media coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict

Authors

Prof. Deqiang Ji - Communication University of China

Ms. Jiang Xiaomei - Communication University of China

Abstract

As an international conflict entangled with geopolitical tensions, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has had significant media coverage in China. It can be seen as a new battlefield for global media, supported by different geopolitical powers but also demonstrates the crucial role of social media in shaping perceptions and attitudes of the networked public in a virtual world. This study analyses the domestic context of news to examine how it is portrayed by leading news media in China with a special focus on the 'domestication' effect in global journalism, reflecting the differing approaches in each BRICS country to framing news coverage of the conflict.

By taking this theoretical approach, the study aims to explore how the Chinese domestic frame of the Russia-Ukraine conflict is built by China's news media, disseminated and negotiated by their online users, and its mutual enhancement with the mainstream international outlook constantly constructed by those media. The online databases of *People's Daily*, Xinhua News Agency, and *China Daily* were selected. Data collection was conducted throughout the year of 2022. Both content analysis and discourse analysis are used. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of how an international conflict is domesticated in the context of contemporary China and in the age of digitally interactive media.

Key Words

BRICS, Russia-Ukraine conflict, China, framing, domestication of media coverage

Disinformation and its regulation in Russia

Authors

Dr. Elena Sherstoboeva - University of Essex

Abstract

This paper analyses the role of Russian state disinformation and propaganda, which have caused serious concerns in Europe and the US, especially during Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Despite multiple studies on the Russian state's disinformation tactics and effects, there has been a lack of research into the national laws and policies governing disinformation, although this research is necessary to understand these tactics and their effects nationally and worldwide, particularly amid the Russian-Ukrainian war. The impact of the Soviet communist ideology on the modern Russian regulation of disinformation has also been mainly overlooked by scholars, although the notion of *disinformation* originates from Soviet Russia.

This paper applies critical legal theories to examine why and how modern Russia adopted and/or revised its disinformation laws and policies in recent years and during the Russian-Ukrainian war, to investigate their effects on the role of the Russian media in society, particularly in the context of the war. The Russian law and policy perspective is studied through the lenses of the Marxist-Leninist principles for the guidance of media workers put forward by Lenin: 'partyness' or partiality; linkage to the masses; truthfulness and objectivity and scientific approach. The dataset includes over 25 law and 45 policy documents, including Russian and Soviet programme political papers and speeches for governing disinformation and the news media.

This paper suggests that the current Russian state have 'actualised' the Soviet notion of 'disinformation' and Marxist-Leninist principles in the modern disinformation laws and policies to reclaim the government's monopoly on the truth for the media information on the issues of public interest. The results of the analysis demonstrate that modern Russian laws absorb the ideas laid in the Soviet communist principles for governing the media.

Key Words

Building National Image through Corporate Image: Exploring the Image Empowerment Mechanism of China

Authors

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Mr. Guoao Song - Communication University of China

Ms. Fang Hu - Communication University of China

Abstract

The image of a country is the sum of people's perceptions about all aspects of a country's economy, society, and culture (Seyhmus & Ken, 1999). Building national image cannot be achieved without the participation of different social actors, while practitioners have increasingly acknowledged the influence that multinational enterprises can exert on the image of their country of origin (Anholt, 2005; Dinnie, 2008).

Over the past two decades, research on international communication of China's national image has been dominated by effect studies and audience studies, with a considerable number of studies examining how media platforms in different countries construct and present China's national image. Yet, with the increasing frequency of global economic transactions, corporate images are currently underutilized assets in national image campaigns (Gotsi, Lopez & Andriopoulos, 2011).

This paper introduces an empowerment perspective to examine the empowerment mechanism between corporate image and national image. Empowerment theory suggests that one actor can empower another with the resources and energy to access capabilities, information, and environment that contribute to their mutual development (Rogers & Singhal, 2003). In the field of corporate communication, this process is known as the spreading activation process, where enterprises can activate stakeholders' associations with their country of origin through strategic image construction (Anderson, 1983).

In this study, we seek to research on this image empowerment informed by key insights from interviews with 16 communication experts from Chinese multinational enterprises. Between August 2020 and November 2021, we conducted in-depth interviews with the heads of communication and PR departments from 5 Chinese multinational enterprises, aimed at obtaining insights into: (a) the factors that shape the image of a country; (b) moving to more specific questions to uncover informants' interpretations of the influence of corporate image on country image and the factors that may affect the image empowerment. With the field research completed, we imported the interview data into NVivo to categorize, label and organize the data, and conduct content analysis of the responses.

Informants highlighted the link between corporate image and country image as a two-way relationship, mirroring extant studies in the national image literature. Focusing on the potential empowerment between Chinese enterprises and China's national image, informants discussed that

corporate values, corporate capabilities and corporate social responsibility are important factors affecting image empowerment. First, establishing reasonable corporate values is a prerequisite for image empowerment, whereby enterprises should highlight their identity as "global citizens" and "local builders". Second, strong business capabilities are short-term factors that affect image empowerment. Corporate credit, efficiency and product and service quality can quickly affect overseas stakeholders' perception for the country of origin's image. Third, corporate social responsibility is a long-term element that influences image empowerment, while public welfare activities with high continuity and visibility help build public goodwill for the national image. These three factors promote and interact with each other, and jointly constitute the empowerment mechanism of national image.

Key Words
National Image, Corporate Image, Empowerment

Transcultural Communication and Player Engagement with Games from the Perspective of Hybridity: An Empirical Study Regarding Genshin Impact

Authors

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Mr. Zizhong Zhang - School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University

Abstract

Chinese Game Published Abroad (CGPA) has become a hot issue over the past few decades while Genshin Impact (GI), as a typical CGPA, performed a commercial and word-of-mouth success overseas. Unlike its predecessors, which mostly draw on traditional Chinese culture such as martial arts, GI adopts a more hybrid path to interpret its story and characters. Accordingly, exploring GI facilitates better outlining how CGPAs present "cultural hybridity" under the transcultural context and how the innovation of digital games could support the upgrading and transformation of international communication and the transculturation practice globally. In addition, digital games always involve players' participation and comparatively long consumer lifespan, yet previous studies regarding cultural hybridity have been conducted from the perspective of content producers, ignoring the participation and decoding by active audiences, thus the current study introduces the users' perspective for enriching the theoretical connotation of cultural hybridity.

Our research questions include how does GI present cultural hybridity with discourses, how do overseas players perceive and understand the cultural hybridity of GI and how do players, as consumers, interact with the producers and contribute to the shaping of this cultural hybridity.

Employing Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) for profiling the videos and subtitles of GI on YouTube, the current study aims to depict how GI, as a content producer, constructs itself by means of cultural hybridity. Subsequently, the study mines and analyzes the comments of *The Divine Damsel of Devastation* (Shen Nv Pi Guan), one of the most popular videos of GI on the YouTube, with a Structural Topic model (STM) to picture how players participate in the construction of cultural hybridity of GI.

The results show that GI builds its global cultural identity by combining the triple communication mechanism of deculturalization, acculturalization as well as reculturalization and transforming characters, narratives, and scenes within the GI. For instance, 1) shaping the richness of game characters through the integration of hybrid cultures, such as elements regarding traditional opera and modern rock-and-roll appearing on one character simultaneously, 2) recreating a new game worldview through assimilating multiple historical narratives from various cultures, like China, Japan, and Western Europe, hence strengthening the historical sense embedded in the narrative through recreating epics and appropriating allusions, and 3) producing a realistic sense by game modeling techniques towards scenes through the gamified interpreting of the real world (e.g.,

Zhangjiajie and Guilin landscapes). Besides, GI has been understood by gamers as both a cultural platform and a commercial product, while the overall spectrum of cultural hybridity cannot complete without the audience's perception, deconstruction, and participation. Hence, cultural hybridity needs to be further improved based on "coculturalization" from the audience's perspective.

The current research not only adopts CGPA and GI as examples to re-verify the theory of cultural hybridity, but also incorporates the audience's perspective into cultural hybridity, and proposes the fourth path, coculturalization. Games can reasonably absorb the cultural essence from other countries, which have become an emerging but essential platform/intermediary within international communication practice. Accordingly, rooting in the spiritual identity of local and historical culture, games enhance the convergence and hybridization of multinational cultural elements, enabling players with multifarious backgrounds immersed in and developing a diverse, esthetic, and shared game world, and therefore, to construct the cultural hybridity to serve transcultural communication.

Key Words
transcultural communication, games, multimodal discourse analysis, structural topic model

Integration into the Global Communication Order: A Study of the Time Reform in Early Modern China

Authors

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Prof. Lei Zhang - Communication University of China

Abstract

Abstract：China is playing a vital part in a new round of global power shift, especially in global communication order. To understand the present controversaries, we need to go back to the beginning of China's integration into the modern world. As a vital infrastructure of global communication, the time regime was facing fierce changes in the end of 19th century. Previous theorists have revealed the importance of time for media. (Innis, 1950, 1951; Carey, 1989; Peters, 2015). In 1914, the official almanac of the Republic of China set Beijing average solar time as the official standard, putting an end to the traditional "local" apparent solar time system. The change in the time reform promoted the formation of a new Chinese nation community, the awakening of national consciousness, and China's involvement to modernity and globalization. How does this process take place? What is its relationship to the media? And how does it shape China's position in the global communication order? The reform of the time system is not only a long struggle of idealistic shift, but also full of debates and conflicts. The reform also fostered the application of modern measurement units, the use of standard time, and the establishment of the national calendar. Based on the changes mentioned above, a series of social debates over the use of sexagenary, the unification of time zones, and the addition of Gregorian calendar. The media not only provided a place for the debate, but also acted as a social technology to implement the new time reform. Using the methodology of media archaeology, under the perspective the histories of globalization, this paper analyzes the application process of global time standards in modern Chinese society, and the role media played in it. This article aims to reveal the reconstruction of Chinese perspective on 'the world' (*Tianxia;*天下) at that time of change, to further explore the global communication infrastructure. This paper found that the transformation of the modern Chinese time reform from "apparent solar time" to "mean solar time" took place along with the popularization of clock media and refined time concepts, with new media such as newsprint, telegraph and radio integrated into this time reform. The standardized modern time order constructed a technical operation system that matches the modern world, shaped a new world imagination for Chinese people, breaking the traditional '*Tianxia*' imagination, and introduced the myth of modernity to China. Time reform are not neutral, with regional contention and compromise, conquest and colonization (Ogle, 2015). The current international order and international communication order are the consequences of capitalist modernity and western-centrism. This paper does not call on abandoning the existing time system, but emphasizes the reflection on the power structure behind it. The Internet has connected the world closer and tighter, and the time scale has also been further standardized, unified, accurized, and automated.

Therefore, the reshape of the international communication order is not only an issue between nation-states, but also an important proposition containing technology, media, and" being-in-the-world".

Key Words

Why do politically engaged citizens share disinformation? Evidence of deepfake sharing from eight countries

Authors

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Abstract

More recently, scholars have paid attention to the role of political engagement in disinformation engagement on social media. Early evidence suggests that individuals with high online political engagement are more likely to share disinformation. However, the current literature suffers from some limitations.

First, most of the attention has been on disinformation within traditional formats (e.g., textual and photo-based news). However, attention to deepfakes remains absent. Deepfakes are a more virulent form of disinformation that is synthetically generated by sophisticated AI algorithms. As one can imagine, politically charged deepfakes regarding current affairs have the potential to influence citizens. Secondly, while the literature provides evidence that politically engaged citizens share disinformation – an explanatory mechanism is not offered. Third, a large majority of the literature has focused on Western democratic contexts, and insights from non-Western contexts are limited.

Recognizing the gaps in the literature, this study proposes and tests an explanatory mechanism for why politically engaged citizens share disinformation (in the form of deepfakes) in eight countries including the United States, Singapore, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

At the first step, based on recent literature, we propose that individuals with high online political engagement will share disinformation to push their ideological agendas (H1). Next, we suggest that the relationship between political engagement and sharing will be positively mediated by the perceived accuracy of disinformation (H2). Here, we believe that some politically engaged citizens may be sharing disinformation as they perceive it to be accurate (i.e., falling for it). Finally, we propose that the mediated relationship between political engagement and misinformation sharing through perceived accuracy will be contingent upon users' cognitive ability.

We employed Qualtrics, a reputed survey agency, to conduct an online panel survey in eight countries. The survey was translated into local languages and rolled out in June 2022. The sample characteristics were matched to population parameters focusing on specific quotas. Such an approach enhances the generalizability of the findings. A total of 8070 participants were part of the study (min N = 1002 in Malaysia and max N = 1010 in the US). We conducted OLS regression to test H1 and used conditional process analyses to test the mediation (H2) and the moderated mediation (H3).

The results were consistent across all eight countries and suggested that online political engagement is positively associated with the perceived accuracy of deepfakes and sharing intentions. We also find the relationship between online political engagement and sharing is positively mediated by perceived accuracy. Finally, we find that the relationship between online political engagement and deepfake sharing is mediated by perceived accuracy, such that the effects are most substantial for individuals with low cognitive ability.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to the scholarship on misinformation engagement on social media, specifically by presenting a mechanism that explains why politically engaged citizens are likely to share disinformation. It also adds value to the literature by identifying how individual cognition conditionally moderates the proposed mechanism.

Key Words
disinformation; deepfakes; social media; sharing; political engagement; Asia; USA

Media narratives of the European Union and the role of citizenship in times of conflict: the case of Hungary and Poland in the European digital media

Authors

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Abstract

The European Union has traditionally been seen as a communicatively distant entity for the majority of European citizens. However, the European project is also attributed with a set of values linked to peace and the maintenance of the rule of law, which in recent times have begun to be questioned in some member states such as Hungary and Poland. In particular, there is a debate over the prevalence of EU or national law, which threatens the idea of a strong and united EU. The current situation, after a year of war between Ukraine and Russia, reopens the citizens' debate on Europeanism in the face of the Euroscepticism that has already been at the centre of other crises such as Brexit, and is evidence of a possible paradigm shift in the Eastern European bloc.

In a conflictive context, marked by the balance between implementing sanctions against these countries and relying on their support in the management of the war in Ukraine, this research aims to map the narratives towards the EU attributed to Poland and Hungary, assessing whether there was a change vis-à-vis the European establishment in 2022 and 2023. Using a multimodal content analysis methodology (quantitative, qualitative and discursive), we analysed for six months the publications on Twitter referring to the presidents of the Polish and Hungarian governments in the accounts of four leading European digital media (The Guardian, Der Spiegel, La Repubblica and El País). Our research examines the thematic composition of the tweets and news items published, collecting also which leaders (national or international) are referenced and the level of participation and response of the social audience in a crisis situation. The percentage distribution of these categories is provided, along with a visual representation of their links. It should be noted in mind that elections to the European Parliament are due to take place in 2024, which means that current narratives may influence the future democratic articulation of Europe.

The results show the remarkable weight of the Ukrainian war on political and media agendas, conditioning narratives about the EU. It also shows the Polish government's cooperative attitude towards the EU and the prevalence of the Hungarian leader's emotion-based populist discourse and misinformation. The interrelation between national and EU politicians seems to be higher than expected, although with differences between Hungary and Poland that denote a greater sense of Europeanism in the latter. The European project is associated with new geopolitical communicative elements that reshape the discourses of leaders and the media, which can have a significant impact on public opinion.

Key Words

Political Communication, Digital Media, EU, Public Sphere, Twitter, Poland, Hungary

Effects of direct, electronic, and mediated contact on willingness to interact with international students among Japanese students

Authors

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Prof. Jiro Takai - Nagoya University

Abstract

In its efforts to stay ahead in this age of globalization and competition, Japan has attempted to increase the number of international students to 300,000 by 2020. Although intercultural interaction is proved to facilitate intercultural learning for Japanese students (Jiang, 2008), Japanese students are not particularly interested in forming relationships with internationals (Tsuboi, 1993). Despite language barriers, such reluctance to form relationships could be indicative of conscious or unconscious prejudice. The benefits of intergroup contact has been suggested by Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, in which contact under optimal conditions (equal status, cooperative attitudes, and common goals) would mitigate such prejudice, hence interaction between Japanese and international students would be conceived to be advantageous for Japan's internationalization goals. To this fact, the advent of the Internet offers the more viable channel of satisfying these four conditions and learn about outgroups (Park, 2012).

This study focused on: direct (face-to-face), electronic contact (communicating on SNS and other Internet communities), and mass-mediated contact (passive exposure to outgroup characters), while simultaneously examining their effects on Japanese students' willingness to engage in interaction with international students.

We conducted an online survey involving 327 Japanese university students. Using structural equation modeling, we examined positive and negative episodes of the above three types of contact and their influence on Japanese students' willingness to interact with their international peers, with intergroup anxiety and ethnocultural empathy being mediators.

The results showed that positive direct contact reduced anxiety (β = -.172, p < .05), improved ethnocultural empathy (β = .189, p < .01) and increased willingness to interact with international students (β = .216, p < .001). Negative direct contact, on the other hand, was only associated with ethnocultural empathy (β = -.191, p < .05). In addition, positive E-contact significantly reduced intergroup anxiety (β = -.227, p < .01) only, whereas negative E-contact had no significant effect at all. Moreover, positive mass-mediated contact enhanced ethnocultural empathy (β = .278, p < .001) and willingness to interact (β = .265, p < .001). Negative mass-mediated contact significantly increased intergroup anxiety (β = .190, p < .001). As for the mediators: intergroup anxiety had negative influence on willingness to interact with international students (β = −.209, p < .001),

whereas ethnocultural empathy has significant positive effect (β = .307, p < .001). Furthermore, ethnocultural empathy negatively influenced intergroup anxiety (β = -.225, p < .001).

Theoretically, this result revealed the significance of direct and mass-mediated contact in fostering intergroup attitudes compared to electronic contact. Additionally, compared to negative episodes, positive episodes of each type of contact had a larger impact.

The results of our study could inspire universities in identifying more appropriate channels and planning interventions for encouraging domestic students to interact with international students. In addition, by investigating Japanese student participants, we contributed to the scope and generalizability of intergroup research, which predominately focuses on Western individuals and groups (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011).

Key Words

Gazes Outside the "Large window"and Cross-Cultural Communication:An Analysis of Reaction Videos on Chinese Online Platforms

Authors
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Abstract
The prosperity of social media has created a good environment for the rapid rise of short videos.As Hall said, the core of culture is a process of communication (Hall Edward T,1966). Due to its strong interactivity,fast transmission speed and proximity, short video is shaping up to be the nonnegligible force of cross-cultural communication. Meantime,as the embodiment of cultural modes, individuals,are often active in the process of cultural conflict and cultural adaptation, and always the focus of cross-cultural communication attention (Ji Deqiang, 2021).

Reaction video is the video in which people react to something.We noticed that many foreign users record and post reaction videos about Chinese people and Chinese culture in bilibili.com, which attracts great attention.These video clips are rich in connotation.On one hand, the"large window"contains the main prosumers who react to video materials, when prosumer "gazes" at Chinese culture as "the other"in the "large window",his or her rich sensory expression and multi-symbol activities manifest cultural collision.On the other hand,the "small window"plays the video footage.As the "self-shaping"content, these clips visualize Chinese national image in the eyes of "foreigners" and unfold many interesting cultural phenomena in China.

For understanding the upsurge of reaction video,this research explored the way foreigners and Chinese people interact across culturals.The narrative analysis and content analysis were employed

as research methods. With the tags of "Foreigners seeing China" and "foreigners' reactions towards China", the top 100 most viewed videos (bilibili.com.) in total were chosen as samples to analyze in five dimensions: content theme, user identity,cross-cultural symbol narrative strategy, reactivity (positive/ negative attitudes,emotion), interaction (comment, bullet screen and etc.).

The preliminary result shows that reaction video has become a pivotal carrier of cross-cultural communication,the dissemination of reaction video is a way of "cultural increment".More importantly, the differences of audiences in different countries can not be ignored in cross-cultural communication; In addtion, foreigners have a wide choice of materials for gazing, involving entertainment, military, food and etc. The selection of materials has a certain convergence in the same field.For example, in the field of entertainment, there are a large number of reaction videos for beauty makeup, national costumes and variety shows.

This study will further analyze the intensity of reactivity and emotional bias of the prosumers in combination with the user identity, and study the application and interaction of cross-cultural symbols through representative cases, so as to better understand the effect of international communication and provide development strategies for Internet platforms to optimize cross-cultural communication.

Key Words
cross-cultural communication, reaction video,content analysis

Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Carnival：Chinese Hero Movie in the New Century through the Eyes of Foreign Audiences

Authors

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Ms. Liu Yang - shanghai International Studies University

Abstract

Abstract: Hero culture is not only an eternal theme common to all mankind, but also an vital carrier of national narratives. In the spirit of dialogue, it is an significant way to further integrate the two sets of discourse systems, official and popular, with the different values of China and abroad that exploring the space of carnival discourse centered on Chinese hero-themed movies and formed by foreign audiences in the new media era. Guided by Bakhtin Michael's carnival theory, having analyzed the reviews of fifteen Chinese major hero-themed movies since the new century by American and Japanese netizens, this study found that (1) in terms of discourse content, it reflected the subversion and dissolution of the old discourse embodied in Chinese hero movies by foreign netizens, such as state-centrism, national superiority, and historical and cultural differences, while the audiences' discourse also generated the civilianization of heroes and anti-hero values, giving a new value connotation to Chinese hero culture; (2) in terms of discourse rhetoric, it embodied the characteristics of offensive, humorous and cathartic; (3) In essence, the cross-cultural carnival picture constructed by American and Japanese netizens was the subversion and deconstruction of the Chinese official narrative with the hero narrative as the carrier. Besides, historical culture, aesthetic differences and other cross-cultural factors were also the main factors affecting foreign audiences to deconstruct the narrative discourse of Chinese heroes.

Key Words

Keywords: carnival theory, hero culture, dialogue, Chinese movie

La construction de l'image culturelle de la France sur les plateformes de médias sociaux chinoises : Une analyse de la diplomatie publique numérique française en Chine du point de vue de la théorie dialogique

Authors

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Abstract

2022 est l'année de l'élection présidentielle française et du 20e Congrès national du Parti communiste chinois. Le coronavirus fait toujours rage dans le monde et des changements sans précédent se produisent dans le monde. Dans ce contexte, le dialogue stratégique et les échanges bilatéraux entre la France et la Chine en 2022 ont un impact important sur les relations sino-françaises, sur les relations sino-européennes et sur la situation mondiale. Avec l'évolution progressive de la communication internationale vers un modèle de communication globale « désidéologisé » et « faiblement politique », la France s'engage activement dans la diplomatie publique numérique dans le domaine culturel via les plateformes de médias sociaux chinois pour construire son image culturelle nationale.

Basé sur la théorie dialogique, cet article utilise des méthodes d'analyse de contenu pour étudier la pratique de diplomatie publique numérique de la France en Chine dans le domaine culturel. Cet article prend comme objet de recherche le compte Weibo officiel « 法国文化（culture française） » géré par le Service de coopération et d'action culturelle de l'ambassade de France en Chine.

Cet article tente de répondre aux questions suivantes : (1) Comment la France mène-t-elle une diplomatie publique numérique dans la sphère culturelle sur les plateformes de médias sociaux chinoises ? (2) Quels types d'image culturelle nationale la France essaie-t-elle de projeter aux internautes chinois en 2022 ? (3) Dans quelle mesure la pratique de la diplomatie publique numérique de la France a-t-elle construit une relation de dialogue avec les internautes chinois ?

En termes de méthodes, cette étude se fonde sur la théorie dialogique, en se référant à cinq principes de Kent et Taylor (boucle de dialogue, utilité de l'information, génération de visites de retour, facilité de l'interface et conservation des visiteurs). Après avoir examiné l'applicabilité de la théorie, nous remanions le cadre stratégique en fonction de l'environnement de communication des médias sociaux chinois, et construisons un système d'évaluation, composé de 5 indicateurs primaires et de 13 indicateurs secondaires, afin d'examiner si le compte crée des relations dialogiques avec le public sur Internet.

D'après les résultats de cette étude, la France présente quatre types d'images culturelles au public chinois : en matière d'arts, la France est un collaborateur artistique qui célèbre les « croisements » dans toute les disciplines artistique ; en matière de littérature, la France est une puissance littéraire qui rend hommage au passé et se concentre sur le présent ; en matière de langue, la France est un promoteur linguistique qui diffuser la richesse et la diversité de la langue française ;

en matière de protection de l'environnement, la France est un pionnier écologique qui protège la planète bleue. En termes de communication dialogique, les images françaises mentionnées ci-dessus n'ont pas le même effet dialogique. En général, l'effet dialogique est plus marqué en ce qui concerne les images d'art, de langue et d'environnement, mais plus limité sur l'image de littérature.

Sur la base des résultats ci-dessus, cet article réfléchit de la théorie dialogique et de la diplomatie publique numérique à l'ère des médias sociaux. L'article soutient que la théorie dialogique basée sur les relations publiques mérite d'être exploré. Cependant, les principes du dialogue de Kent et Taylor sont proposés pour le contexte de communication du web 1.0 et ne sont pas entièrement applicables au contexte des médias sociaux. Sur les médias sociaux, il convient de mettre davantage l'accent sur l'établissement de relations avec les utilisateurs. Ainsi, l'indicateur de « intimité du texte » proposé par cette étude, qui signifie l'utilisation de mots familiers, de symboles vivants et de styles narratifs divers, représente une nouvelle perspective et joue un rôle d'orientation.

En outre, cette étude révèle que la pratique de la diplomatie publique numérique sur les plateformes de médias sociaux a quelques lacunes. Premièrement, de nombreuses pratiques de diplomatie publique numérique n'ont pas introduit de contenu de communication ciblé pour l'environnement de communication en ligne et se sont contentées de modifier le canal de communication, ce qui ne permet manifestement pas d'obtenir l'effet de communication souhaité. Deuxièmement, la construction de l'image d'un pays, une partie importante de la diplomatie publique numérique, ne créé pas une relation de dialogue réelle avec les publics étrangers. Enfin, cette étude propose six stratégies pour exploiter le potentiel du dialogue, tant au niveau du contenu que de la communication, afin d'aider le pays à mieux pratiquer la diplomatie publique numérique et à renforcer la confiance mutuelle entre les populations par le biais des plateformes de médias sociaux.

Key Words
diplomatie publique numérique, théorie dialogique, construction de l'image culturelle française

The Invisible Communication: A Study of the International Communication Features of Game Localization from A Semiotic Perspective

Authors

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Ms. Tongfei Liang - Communication University of China

Abstract

With the rapid development of global digital creative industries, overseas dissemination of games, as an important part of cultural exports, shoulders an invisible responsibility of international communication. The values and ideologies of a certain culture are not intuitively manifested in digital games, but syncretized with the character settings, picture scripts, music, and other content. Meanwhile, these symbols in games increase the possibility of internationalization and global communication. Therefore, games are not only a recreational instrument, but also a cultural platform. In the process of launching a game overseas, game localization builds a bridge of cross-cultural communication and enhances the transcultural communicability of games.

Due to the significant diversity between countries and regions in terms of histories, customs, and languages, game manufacturers need to adapt to the indigenous requirements through localization when popularizing and internationalizing game products. This is not a simple reproduction, but a process of re-creation. Game localizers need to modify, delete and transform the sounds, symbols and images in the original game to produce a localized version that is more prominent in the distinct nature of the target market and more in line with the cultural habits of the target players. In this way, the localized version not only preserves the original game experience, but also gives full play to the game's superiority of international communication, so that the maximum effect of cross-cultural connection has been achieved.

As game localization has been valued, there is still a lot of room for exploration in related academic research. Analysis of previous studies shows that most of the research in this field gives priority to the international communication of games at the linguistic level while ignoring other localization elements. To further explore the strategies and features of game localization in cross-cultural communication, this study takes Roland Barthes's semiotic theory as its basis and Overwatch, a multiplayer online competitive game with a user base of over 50 million around the world, as the research object. And the typical Spring Festival event held in the game is selected as a specific case in which the symbols produced by localization, including all 36 heroes' skins, voice lines, sprays, and other items, are collated into four categories: costume, food, literature and language. Through text analysis, this study dissects the connotations of these symbols on the levels of denotative and connotative meaning from both the pictorial and linguistic perspectives, then proposes the communication characteristics in terms of symbolic closeness and cultural pluralism in the process of localization.

Based on the above analysis and research, this paper explores the possibility of more interactive and flexible communication of cross-cultural content on multimedia platforms, especially in games. Also, the inspirations and suggestions summarized from specific research can contribute to the enrichment and improvement of international communication strategies in game localization and help game platforms play a greater role in international communication and cross-cultural exchange.

Key Words

international communication, game localization, cross-cultural communication, semiology

The use and dissemination of digital news cartoons in the construction of Chinese narrative system ——Take CGTN as an example

Authors

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Abstract

On October 16, 2022, president Xi Jingping emphasized the need to build Chinese discourse and Chinese narrative system to show the ideological and spiritual power behind Chinese road, Chinese governance, and Chinese theory. *Chinese Global Television Network*(*CGTN*), as an international news dissemination agency in China that broadcasts to the world, is also shouldering the important task of building the Chinese discourse and Chinese narrative system. During the COVID-19 epidemic, in the face of the complex and changeable international public opinion field, *CGTN* bravely innovated the traditional form of news commentary and created a series of digital news cartoons to respond to the international smear remarks and conspiracy theories against China, which have been recognized at home and abroad. However, there is little academic research on *CGTN*'s digital news cartoons since the column Cartoon was created after the outbreak of COVID-19 and has only been in operation for two years. At present, the researches on *CGTN*'s digital news cartoons focus on analyzing its international communication strategies and its application in international communication and few scholars start from the image narrative theory to research the image narrative content and mode of *CGTN*'s digital news cartoons, as well as its communication strategies. This article will focus on the "Cartoon" column on *CGTN*'s official website, use image narrative theory to analyse each digital news cartoon, explore its image narrative mode and communication strategies, which fits Chinese strategic needs and policy guidelines. In the meantime, it is conducive to enriching relevant academic researches and also enhancing Chinese theoretical and cultural self-confidence, providing reference for Chinese media to use news cartoons to carry out international communication work in the future. This article conducts a survey of the digital news cartoons published on *CGTN*'s official website, with a total sample of 139 cartoons, and the analysis unit is each digital news cartoon. The results of this article show that *CGTN*'s digital news cartoons focus on dialogue with the United States and keep up with international current political hot spots. And it is good at using rhetorical devices such as metaphor and exaggeration and narrative techniques such as action illustrations and scene symbols. Moreover, *CGTN* focuses on the use of a single scene narrative mode to stimulate readers' associative ability. *CGTN* also provides strategic references for other media in terms of digital cartoons. First of all, in terms of cartoon content, the media need to adhere to the combination of humor and criticism. Secondly, the media should have enough courage to comment and constantly innovate the distribution channels and forms of cartoons. Finally, the media should also insist on keeping pace with the times, carry out multi-matrix communication, and do a good job in narrative work in the new media era.

Key Words

China, International Communication, Digital News Cartoons, Image Narrative, *CGTN*

The viability of games as a cross-cultural communication medium：Analysis of Genshin Impact videos on YouTube

Authors

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Ms. Mengting Hu - Communication University of China

Ms. Yuwei Tu - Communication University of China

Ms. Yanchun Chen - Communication University of China

Abstract

Cross-cultural communication research emerged in the 1950s, referring to the communication activities between individuals, groups or organizations from different cultural backgrounds. Globalisation and the advent of the Internet have opened up more possibilities for intercultural communication, providing a wide range of possibilities for cultural communication between different nationalities. How to find appropriate and effective forms and texts for cross-cultural communication has been a key research proposition in this field.

Online games, with their wide reach and interesting content formats, are "intimate texts" with cross-cultural communication potential, which is helpful to eliminate ethnocentrism inherent in culture, get close to the audience's psychology and interests, and enhance the effectiveness of communication. As one of the hottest online games in the world, Genshin Impact contains a large number of traditional Chinese cultural elements. For example, the original opera song *Devastation and Redemption* has been widely disseminated and discussed on the YouTube platform, allowing many overseas players to be exposed to Chinese opera culture for the first time. Therefore, we take related videos of Genshin Impact on the YouTube platform and user comments as the object of study.

The main issues of this study involving:

1.How does Genshin Impact construct and present traditional Chinese cultural elements?

2.What are the main topics discussed by overseas audiences about the Chinese elements in the game?

3.Are there any misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the Chinese elements in the game among overseas audiences?

Text analysis and topic modeling analysis are applied as the main methods in this study. We processed 27854 comments under 10 related videos about Genshin Impact for word segmentation and sentiment analysis, and used the CTM topic model to explore the sentiment tendency and issue structure of overseas players. Finally, by tracing the origin and context of high-frequency

sentiment words, we explore what content elements are triggering sentiment and misunderstanding.

We find that Genshin Impact incorporates traditional Chinese musical instruments, opera, Wushu and festive customs into the game's background music, costumes, character movements and backstory. The construction and presentation of traditional elements can be categorized as language symbols, music symbols, movement symbols and costume symbols. Discussions among overseas audiences have focused on 'opera', 'culture', 'China', ' Yun Jin' and 'Lantern Rite'. In addition, most of these discussions focus on superficial visual and auditory appreciation, but less on the deeper connotations of traditional culture contained therein, which to some extent reflects the limitations and potential of online games as a cross-cultural communication medium.

Key Words

From "Self-Orientalism" to "New-Orientalism"-- The representation of modernity of Chinese online game "Genshin"

Authors

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Abstract

Up to 20 December 2022, an Open-World game "Genshin" which is designed by a Chinese game company MihoYo, had become the third highest-grossing mobile game in the global gaming market. Players take on the role of "traveler" as they travel through the seven countries of"Teyvat"(four countries have currently launched being Mondstadt, Liyue, Inazuma and Sumeru) to find their loved ones and discover the truth of the world. Except for its commercial success, Genshin also outstands as a cultural vehicle. The theme of "Genshin" is not limited to the subjectivity of Chinese culture, but based on the perspective of globalization, conveys more universal humanistic feelings to global players—— what is missing from most Chinese cultural products that have long been mired in 'Self-Orientalism'.

A postcolonial critic Arif Dirlik (1996) proposed his concept of "Self-Orientalism"based on Said's "Orientalism". "Self-Orientalism refers to the deliberate (re)action of non-Western individuals and institutions to 'play the other' (i.e. use Western descriptions of the non-West) in order to gain strategic recognition and positioning in the Western-dominated global economic system. In the 1980s and 1990s, China placed itself in the context of Western society and, by suppressing 'heterogeneity' in order to gain the recognition of the 'other', eventually achieved the global circulation of capital. In 21st century,5G technology breakthroughs and the popularity of smartphones, China has made great progress in product innovation represented by short-form video platforms(TikTok) and online/mobile games. As a digital cultural product of the new era China,"Genshin"embodies the characteristics of a more confident, open and inclusive Chinese modernity.

Therefore, this study takes"Genshin" as the object of study, based on the theory of "Self-Orientalism", and proposes a prototype of the concept of"New-Orientalism"——an ideological paradigm with universal humanistic concerns which takes non-Western countries as the subject of gaze, deconstructs global cultural characteristics and their connotations, and breaks the shackles of established racial, ethnic and national ideologies. In terms of research methodology, this study uses textual analysis to symbolically interpret the texts (including images, words, music, etc.) in "Genshin" in order to summarise and analyse its narrative characteristics.

The results of the study show that the design of "Liyue", which is based on the image of late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, still caters to the "Orientalist" imagination of the Western world (e.g. traditional Chinese cultural symbols such as Peking Opera, Kungfu, cheongsam, etc.), and characterised by "self-orientation". However, by representing 'Mondstadt ' (based on the imperial free cities of the medieval Holy Roman Empire), ' Inazuma' (based on Japan during the

Tokugawa shogunate) and 'Sumeru' (based on ancient Persia during the Cyrus period in the 6th century B.C. and the ancient Persian Empire of the 6th century Cyrus era and the Arabian Empire of the Islamic Golden Age of the 8th-13th centuries AD), "Genshin" has shown to the players in worldwide an in-depth "New Orientalism" practice in which the Chinese creators have honored the authentic history of the cultures rooted in Germanic peoples, Japan, and the Middle East. With the deepening of global players' "identity tourism" in virtual worlds, players not only develop empathic attachment to game characters, but also improve their understanding of the regional culture represented by the characters, which is conducive to promoting cross-cultural communication and eliminating cultural barriers and hegemonism.

Positive Discourse Analysis in International Communication of Major Sporting Events -- Taking BBC and CNN's Coverage of Athletes in Beijing 2022 as an Example

Authors

Mr. Jipeng Wang - Beijing International Studies University

Abstract

From the perspective of interdisciplinary research of linguistics and communication, this study focuses on the case of western mainstream media reports on athletes for Beijing Olympic Winter Games, uses the appraisal theory in systemic functional linguistics as the analytical framework, taking attitude system and positive discourse analysis as the research core, and investigates how the western mainstream media reported on the special groups in the international communication context. The author also explores the real reports attitudes of western mainstream media and further constructs an intercultural appraisal discourse in international communication pathways model in media organizations.

This study uses the Western mainstream media's reports on the athletes for Beijing Olympic Winter Games as data to establish a "Thematic Corpus of Western Mainstream Media Reports on Athletes in Beijing 2022". The corpus data comes from two English media that have great international influence and communication effectiveness: British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Cable News Network (CNN). The author used "Beijing 2022" and "Beijing Olympic Winter Games" as keywords, searched and screened two major news websites, BBC and CNN, and extracted a total of 30 effective reports about athletes, with a total of 15,413 corpus tokens. Based on the attitude system in Martin's appraisal theory, this study adopts mixed research methods combining quantitative and qualitative methods to conduct positive discourse analysis on the corpus, the author analyzes and discusses the real attitudes of Western mainstream media to the news reports of athletes in Beijing 2022, and constructs the media organization's pathways model of intercultural appraisal discourse in international communication. Quantitative research uses UAM corpus Tool and AntConc corpus tools together, and selects the appraisal theory in the UAM Corpus Tool software—attitude system as the analysis framework, manually annotates the words with the expression of attitude system in the thematic corpus, and uses the AntConc software to calculate word frequency statistics, and then obtain relevant data to ensure the objectivity and correctness of the analysis results. Qualitative research refers to the three types (affect, judgment, and appreciation) of attitude system under the appraisal theory, identifies and confirms the thematic corpus with relevant positive and negative words, and focuses on the analysis of positive discourse construction in the Western mainstream media's reports on the athletes in Beijing 2022. The study tentatively found that the western mainstream media mostly used positive words of judgment type when reporting on athletes, objectively stating facts and affirming the achievements of athletes, followed by affect type and appreciation type. On the whole, relevant reports have created positive international communication context for the success of Beijing 2022.

Therefore, we should attach importance to examining intercultural appraisal discourse in the context of international communication, and pay full attention to the significance of appraisal discourse development and changes.

Key Words

appraisal theory, international communication, positive discourse analysis, reports on althletes

French digital public diplomacy in China: an example of the WeChat of the French Embassy in China (2020-2022)

Authors

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Abstract

In the digital era, French diplomatic services have taken advantage of social media and developed principles for the development of digital public diplomacy in order to promote France's international image. As one of the first embassies to practice digital public diplomacy on Chinese social media platforms, the French Embassy in China has used monologue, dialogue and collaborative digital public diplomacy strategies to attract the attention of the Chinese public.

This research intends to analyze French digital public diplomacy, taking the WeChat platform of the Embassy in China from 2020 to 2022 as an example. Applying the nation brand hexagon model and the theory of three layers of public diplomacy, this research attempts to classify the digital public diplomacy strategies and agenda-setting topics on its official subscription account of WeChat, where articles are published on a weekly basis. Besides, the reaction of the audience will be calculated through the WeChat Communication Index, in which the number of views, likes and shares will be taken into account.

On the whole, the French Embassy in China has a relatively positive public reaction by using multi-layered digital public diplomacy strategies and diversified agenda-setting, with a particular focus on monologue mode and topics about diplomacy and culture. Besides, its WeChat delivers current information to the Chinese public, but rarely comments directly on international events, thus avoiding public discontent over conflicting national interests.

Although the French Embassy in China tries to build a comprehensive national image, it lacks effective mechanisms for dialogue with the audience and lacks initiative in terms of cooperation with Chinese media. Therefore, through more audience-centered agenda-setting, balanced use of diplomacy strategies and better understanding of the local media ecology, diplomatic services can improve their effectiveness in digital public diplomacy.

Key Words

digital public diplomacy, agenda-setting, French Embassy in China, WeChat

A Comparative Study on the Colors of Original-Remake Programs between Countries - Focusing on the original (Spain) and remake (Korea) of < Money Heist >

Authors

Ms. Yoonju Lim - Ewha Womans University

Prof. HO YOUNG YOON - Ewha Womans University

Abstract

I. Introduction

Exports of television program formats between countries are now commonplace. Unlike entertainment programs, genres such as remakes of TV drama series have greater production flexibility to appeal to diverse audience. Particularly, when remake intended to appeal regional or local audiences, country-specific characteristics such as people, background, plot, and dialogue are incorporated into the television series and previous studies have delved into finding the differences in those (Forrest & Koos, 2021; Pinedo, 2021). However, it is rare to find the color difference between the original and remake TV drama series. In this study, we would like to examine remake TV series from the perspective of color as a country-specific characteristic.

II. Previous Literature

2.1. Remake TV Series: Format vs Storytelling.

For entertainment programs, the format is the key item and idea of interest for remaking. For the remake programs of TV drama series and movies, the detailed plot of storytelling is the key item to adapt. Background of the scene, characters, and the nuance of lines depending on the local cultural context to offset the occurrence of cultural discount (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988). However, there is scanty of research about color usage, meanwhile the color usage of TV program has grabbed attentions from audiences (Hewitt, 2021).

2.2 Color Comparison

Color is one of the factors that influence humans. It is formed by social learning, which influences emotion, cognition, and behavior (Elliot & Maiter, 2014). The meaning and emotion associated with a particular color are not universal. Consequently, it will be fascinating to examine the use of color in the remade television drama series. Due to the fact that the plot and genre of a program can be controlled, remake TV series would be the best venue for research.

III. Data & Methodology

The original Netflix series Money Heist, 2017> and the Korean remake Money Heist; Korea, 2022> is used for the analysis. The captivating plot, vivid colors, particularly the red suits they wore, have become a symbol. We have selected six episodes for each series that no alternation of plot was

seen. The analysis is based on the color dissection of color (Hue), chroma, and brightness (Value) using the Munsell Color System. Keyframes of each episodes are extracted using digital image processing. Currently, the original and remake video frame extraction has been completed and color analysis is in progress.

IV. Expected Result.

We believe following will be found through our analysis. First. the color combination used in the original and remake will be common in terms of contrast-color tone usage. Second, even if the contrast tone is mainly used, Korean remake will show a relatively strong contrast tone due to the characteristics of Korea that emphasizes primary colors. By contrast, Spain original, reflecting European culture, where the overall tone is important in the screen composition, a color combination based on adjacent colors is expected. Third, overall, the saturation is low in the case of the original, and the brightness is high in the case of the remake. In particular, the symbolic meaning of "red," which is mainly used in this drama, varies subtly depending on the light/cancer.

Key Words
Remake TV Series, Color Comparison, Munsell Color System

Challenging the boundaries of knowledge production: implementing culturally sensitive approaches

Authors

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Abstract

Empirical research requires the use of a complex set of methodological tools to reveal the hidden dimensions of culture. The epistemic boundaries of intercultural communication research need to be pushed, because the whole social-sciences academic canon has been "Eurocentric throughout its institutional history" (Wallerstein, 1999: 168). Based, further, on the economic hegemony of the West, the supremacy of the paradigm is reflected in communication studies in particular. But in an interconnected world we need new approaches to avoid stagnation. As Wallerstein (1999: 168-169) argued, social science "must overcome the Eurocentric heritage which has distorted its analyses and its capacity to deal with the problems of the contemporary world."

Studying communication phenomena in the Global South offers the chance to pinpoint and revise methodological and theoretical foundations that come specifically from the Western academic tradition. De-Westernization is thus important to ensure that intercultural research is more inclusive.

To shed light on this challenge, the presentation has a threefold structure. The first part discusses the modus operandi. Here, the "polarity field approach" is presented, a method which has led to profound findings during a ten-year research project in China. In collaboration with Chinese scholars, the approach allowed the development of a culturally sensitive set of tools that could encompass cultural phenomena holistically. Opposites are not understood as independent, mutually exclusive entities (either/or), but as mutually dependent and complementary variables (both/and). Qualitative and quantitative methods (N=1838) were employed, and both methodological and investigator triangulations were implemented to guarantee cultural sensitivity.

In the second part, the explanatory power of the method is illustrated. The typology "Individualism-versus-Collectivism" (I/C) is often used as a framework for understanding cultural differences and is one of the most extensively studied constructs in intercultural research (e.g. Fischer et al., 2009). The construct is critically analyzed and de-constructed. By implementing the polarity field approach, the seemingly contradictory elements of I/C can be integrated into a more holistic model which captures both worldviews.

In the third part, I raise the question of appropriateness: Is it not a contradiction to participate, as a Western researcher, in the de-Westernization debate? The question can be answered both in the affirmative and in the negative.

It is important to explore newly developing approaches, such as the polarity field approach, both in order to enrich scientific discourse and – and herein lies a great potential – to uncover one's own blind spots.

Key Words

Death of Queen Elizabeth II as Media Event: Comparing Newspaper Coverage in Five Regions

Authors

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Abstract

Major global events happen once in a long while such as the assassination of President Kennedy, fall of the Berlin Wall, royal wedding of Prince Charles and Diana, 911 terrorist attack, etc. The recent death of Queen Elizabeth II is one such "media event" (Dayan & Katz, 1992) which was historical in nature and attracted large global audiences.

We study the news coverage of the Queen's death from several perspectives, namely international relations (between Britain and the United States, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan), media practices and media structure. We can compare how major powers (Britain, U.S. and China) treat the event through the media lens, and how different parts of Greater China (Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan) react to it. For media practices, we use the concepts of media "hyping" and "domestication" to illustrate how journalists try to attract audience's attention to an unfamiliar incident that happened in a remote place (Lee, et al., 2002).

This study examines how 20 newspapers from the above five regions covered the Queen's death. A total of 2,517 newspaper story headlines were analyzed between September 9 and 20, 2022. We look at the amount of coverage, the newspapers' focus of interest, and the tone of coverage. Emphasis is on the comparison among the regions as well as individual newspapers within a region.

Results show that Britain naturally had the most coverage, followed by Hong Kong and the United States. Mainland China and Taiwan showed low level of interest. The most reported topic was the Queen's life and people's perception of her. The state funeral, mourning by the public, Prince Charles' life and succession, and the future of the Monarchy and the Commonwealth were also hot topics.

The most mentioned people in the news of course were the Queen and Prince Charles. To domesticate the coverage, the United States also cited President Biden, while Mainland China (and Hong Kong too) mentioned Wang Qishan and Xi Jinping. Taiwan highlighted Biden and Wang. Apart from itself, Britain mentioned the Commonwealth and Australia. The other regions often referred to themselves in the news. Hong Kong also mentioned China. Taiwan additionally mentioned both Hong Kong and Mainland China.

In the British and Taiwanese coverage, positive news proportion clearly outweighed negative news. Coverage in the United States was slightly positive in tone. Hong Kong's coverage split quite evenly, while mainland China's was slightly negative.

There will be more discussion on the impact of different factors on the detailed coverage. For example, how did the newspapers hype up and domesticate the stories about the Queen's death? Would there be major differences of coverage between the elite press and the popular press in different regions? Significance of the Queen's death as a media event will also be examined and compared with past global events.

Key Words

media event, Queen Elizabeth II, international relations, news hyping, domestication

Cosmopolitanism in transnational issue publics: the case of Eurovision and Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Authors

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Abstract

As evidenced by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, we live in a world increasingly interconnected and separated at the same time. This paper starts from the premise that cosmopolitanism, or a moral attitude of openness and responsibility towards people and communities outside of one's nation, is necessary to enable cooperation across national borders and counter such global issues.

The role of several types of media for the formation of cosmopolitan attitudes has been examined in the past, but the scholarship has not reached a consensus on whether mediated communication can make us more cosmopolitan. These studies often focus on the ways in which distant others are represented in the mediated discourses. While it is important to critically engage with ways mediated communication represents those affected by global crises, it is not only discourse that may be enabling or preventing the participants of digital publics from demonstrating openness and responsibility to them. Investigation of cosmopolitanism mediated by digital technologies needs to be expanded to include material elements and user practices on these platforms. For this reason, I approach this research problem using Wanda Orlikowski and Susan Scott's concept of sociomateriality (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008) that conceives of user practices as shaping and being shaped by technological properties of the environments where they unfold.

The paper also deploys issue mapping methodology developed by Jean Burgess and Ariadna Matamoros-Fernández (2016), which combines computational and qualitative methods. Following this methodology, I perform network analysis to identify influential actors, and use computational text analysis methods, including topic modelling and dictionary-based analysis to get a higher-level understanding of the online communication regarding the issue. I then perform qualitative analysis of the posts and shared media objects to capture users' motivations and strategies of usage of platform affordances.

The study focuses on online English-language discussion regarding Eurovision on several social media platforms. This case is significant as Eurovision is one of the most popular internationally televised non-sporting events. It has been positioned in scholarly works as cosmopolitan or transnational (Kyriakidou et al., 2018), albeit in an unequal, incomplete, or contradictory manner. Ukraine's victory at the 2022 contest caused some controversy, with accusations of the performers' lack of skill and taking advantage of the "sympathy vote". Exploration of the online discussion around Ukraine's participation in the 2022 Eurovision contest, as well as comparison with the 2023 contest will uncover cosmopolitan performances of support towards Ukraine, intertwined with cultural consumption and symbolic bordering of Europe.

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Key Words

Class Dismissed: In Memoriam of a Global Communication M.A. Double Degree Program

Authors

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Abstract

Novel affordances in global communication and academic structures have given further traction to calls to democratize knowledge production in the field through de-westernization. In the above context, this paper works through a critical political economy of knowledge to examine as a case study the dismissal of a graduate-level international double degree program that was quashed through Covid-19 crisis management policy. Via autoethnographic accounts from the program's first teaching assistant and an alumnae from its first cohort, we draw on these experiences and put them in dialog with the emerging literature on academics for cosmopolitanism (Ganter and Ortega 2019; Carpentier, Ganter, and Torrico 2020; Masiero, Milan, and Treré 2021; Waisbord 2015). At its strongest, cosmopolitan de-westernization can be understood attempted to promote cultural diversity and translation within the frame of cultural pluralism. At its weakest, it can be read as being dismissive of substantive critical political economic alternatives both outside of the West and within it. As we show in our analysis of the program, this dismissal falls short in addressing transcultural transformation, and further highlights the need for what we describe as academic comradeship to de-westernize academic practice.

Simon Fraser University and the Communication University of China's Global Communication MA Double Degree Program embodied core ideals of cosmopolitanism by bringing together in a single cohort diverse students. Working through a transcultural praxis at the forefront of its pedagogy (Hauck and Nicolai 2021), the curriculum emphasized students self-reflexivity of their positionality vis-à-vis the challenge of communication studies in and through the People's Republic of China (See Zhao 2011; Hu and Ji 2013) and the politics of knowledge production and recognition in the settler-state of Canada (See Coulthard 2014). In this program, we can see how a form of academic comradeship, a form of de-westernization, that cannot be accounted for in its calls for deference towards diversity that stop at political economic systems, helps locate key moments where transformation for de-westernization can take place. As we show through our autoethnography, these were most evident in confrontations with boundary making practices described in terms of the professional need to maintain standards. As Waisbord writes in a more broader context related to de-westernization, these more difficult "questions, however, are rarely discussed in public, as if it were bad etiquette, akin to talking about religion or politics at the dinner table during the holidays" (Waisbord 2022, 26).

Recalling Mao's invocation that "revolution is not a dinner party" [革命不是请客吃饭], and drawing from the possibility of transcultural comradeship (Zhao 2020; Dean 2019; Zhao and

Chakravartty 2008), this paper brings to the fore some of these uncomfortable discussions on the horizon of cosmopolitan de-westernization at the level of conflict, professionalism, and representativeness experienced in the program through our accounts. In so doing, we highlight practical lessons learned from the now canceled program and discuss avenues for future de-westernization.

Key Words

de-westernization, academic cosmopolitanism, academic comradeship, transcultural political economy

Global Public Scholarship – a qualitative search for Media Utopias and Solutions in times of crisis and epochal shifts

Authors

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Abstract

The global crisis of trust in the core institutions of politics and the media has been widely addressed in communication studies. Still, forward-looking proposals for solutions are rare (Flew, 2021; IAMCR, 2023). In our Project Media Future Lab, we practice Global Public Scholarship to diversify knowledge and raise the visibility of unconventional ideas (Waisbord, 2020). Regarding methodology, we are guided by the "future workshops" (Jungk & Müllert, 1997), which always follow a sequence, Criticism, Utopia and Solutions. To consider the tension between individual ideas (signifier) and collective rules (signified), we organise the statements based on a Saussurian approach and the terms Audience Cultures and Media Parole.

We have conducted future workshops in Germany, Cuba, and Russia in very different settings: In Germany, we held 20 Media Future Labs with around 250 people from 2019-2021. In Cuba, nine people had four Media Future Labs in January 2020. We collected the Russian data material in May 2022, conducting 20 interviews online. We focus on surveys of 40 and 60 years old with different social backgrounds.

Results:

For the global critique of journalism, we identify four communication problems evident in all three countries.

1. Critiques

Dependencies

In Cuba and Russia, all participants are aware of government restrictions. The evaluation differs. In the case of the Germans, the criticism of economic dependency is the most prominent.

Homogeneity

In all three countries, one-sidedness in reporting is deplored. We call the criticism "homogeneity" since the term includes the journalistic lifeworld (Bourdieu, 1998).

Entfremdung (Alienation)

In Germany and Russia, respondents criticise too much "negativity" in the news; in Cuba, there is too much "positivity". What unites: "Journalism has nothing to do with my everyday concerns." We call this cluster: *Entfremdung* (alienation).

Demonization

A common criticism is the Demonization of foreign countries (Entman, 2003). A Cuban: "This is the mechanism in all systems".

2. Utopia:

We have formulated a positive formulation as a wish for each of the four clusters of criticism. Together, the four sets of desires form a utopia.

3. Concrete solutions:

Problem 1: Dependencies - Solution: Public Counsel

The proposals boil down to a "journalistic council", reminding of the socially responsible press model (Siebert et al., 1956) with more grassroots elements to reduce dependencies.

Problem 2: Homogeneity - Solution: Voluntary Journalistic Year

The solution lies in open editorial structures for more significant audience consideration and access to journalism. We highlight the German idea of a "Voluntary Journalistic Year".

Problem 3: Entfremdung - Solution: Musical Journalism

In all countries, we find wishes like "bardic journalism", "folk art", and the concept of Musical Journalism in Cuba. The idea leads to the social need for "resonance" (Rosa, 2017) and a "Musical Democracy" (Love, 2014).

Problem 4: Demonization - Solution: Transnational Media Republic

In Russia, one participant painted out the idea of a transnational media republic. We combined her wish with Thomas Piketty's (2020) proposal for a parliament of transnational democracy.

Summary

The Future Labs method is easy to apply; the workshops were seen as profitable by all interviewees and brought new knowledge from civil society for science. We are currently expanding the project in Thailand, Austria and Colombia.

Key Words
Comparing Media Systems, Public Scholarship, Audience Research, Utopias

A Transnational Network Analysis of Refugees/Migrants in Media Coverage from the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras

Authors

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Mr. Eliot Gibbins - National Chengchi University

Abstract

Over the last decade, politics and media in the United States (US) have been consumed with the issue of migrants and refugees arriving at the US-Mexico border. Refugees and migrants have become representative of major political and cultural debates throughout the entirety of the Americas. In 2021, the US had the largest surge in refugees across the southern US border in history (BBC News, 2021). Most 'western' commentary and research examining immigration into the US has originated from a US perspective (Ziegele, Koehler, & Weber, 2018) and generally neglects the international perspective of their compatriots, from whom they are departing.

Further research that has examined the relationship between media framing and political power suggests that individuals often internalise a disconnect when there are distinct differences between media in their home country and new country (Rodriguez & Blumell, 2014). This disconnect can manifest differently in the minds of those who are migrating and of those in the destination country. Of course, ideology is circular, so how these refugees view their own representation could play a substantive role in their own media representation in the US, how the public views them as a cohort of people, media representations and public opinions in their home country – and back again.

In this study, over 3000 articles from 2012-2022 were manually coded (with 2 coders, ensuring intercoder reliability) from the US, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras to better understand how refugees are internationally framed. Through an innovative methodological approach that combined a detailed frame analysis and a broad transnational network analysis, it was able to locate important differences between the media portrayal of refugees in home and destination countries compared against one another as well as to public opinion in each of these countries during the sample period. Quantitative statistical analysis, including one-way ANOVA tests, chi squares, frequencies, adjusted residuals and Spearman's rank correlations, were employed to fully explore the presence of and correlations between nine general frames and 30 attribute agendas of refugees as well as 35 attribute agendas of the new and home country. In addition to examining exactly how refugees were framed throughout geographical space and time, this study compared the networked attribute agendas assigned to refugees in each newspaper, to gain a nuanced perspective of news coverage (Guo et al., 2015) and to better understand how these representations connected to public opinion. Network agenda setting can focus on bundles of attributes to highlight the context of each individual attribute on the media agenda. This

measure of salience is in contrast to the traditional focus on solely the frequency of objects or attributes to define a media agenda.

The outcomes of this research speak to the degree of power that journalism norms have internationally. Similar coverage between newspapers in different countries suggest an inter-media networked level of agenda setting that points to journalism that is highly homogeneous and disregards international boundaries. Alternatively, differing coverage between regions would reflect the importance of local politics and cultures over any international journalistic norms.

Key Words
Transnational network analysis, International Media Coverage, Refugees

Legitimizing 'friend' and Denouncing 'enemy': Comparative Analysis of the Ukraine War Coverage in China, South Korea, and Japan

Authors

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Prof. Kaori HAYASHI - The University of Tokyo

Abstract

The Russian invasion and war in Ukraine have influenced the world economy and politics. East Asian countries are also experiencing a significant impact of the war on the international and domestic levels. This paper aims to investigate how the war in Ukraine was reported in China, South Korea, and Japan, where the embodied Cold War constantly operated in their political spheres. Previous studies were conducted on the crisis in 2014 between Ukraine and Russia, focusing on how US or European media covered the conflict using content analysis and framing analysis. Factors such as geo-political proximity, trade relations, or the level of domestication of issues explained differences in coverage (Fengler et al., 2020; Khaldarova, 2021). In this paper, focusing on the East Asian region, which was not analyzed enough yet, we questioned 1) how the broadcast journalism of Japan, South Korea, and China framed the war and 2) what roles and relations the journalism shaped with the power in reporting the war. We focused on the initial stage of the war by focusing on three dates; February 24 and 25, 2022, when the invasion and war were initiated, defined, and interpreted extensively, and April 5, 2022, when the "massacre" in Bucha was informed. From each country, two representative TV news programs were selected; one from public or government-owned broadcasters and the other from commercial broadcasters. The number of news items on the war was 79 in China (CCTV and Phoenix), 42 in South Korea (KBS and SBS), and 93 in Japan (NHK and Asahi TV). By conducting a framing analysis (Entman, 2003) in the qualitative approach, we found significant differences in defining the situation (terminology), interpreting and contextualizing the issue, the moral evaluation, and the solutions reported, including the way of using the sources and the images of citizens. These differences could be explained by international relations (ongoing Cold War influence), media-state relations, and journalism culture. It shows that war reporting in East Asia operated within the "sphere of consensus" (Hallin, 1989). This research is in progress.

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Key Words
Ukraine War, TV News, East Asia, Comparative Analysis, Media-State Relations

The impact of the transposition of the 2018/1808 directive on audio-visual communications services in Spain: The VOD portal Filmin as case study.

Authors

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Abstract

On July 2022, the 2018/1808 Directive amending the Audio-visual Communication Services was transposed into Spanish legislation, through Law 13/2022 General Audio-visual Communication. This regulation establishes new mechanisms for the promotion of the European audio-visual work, which also becomes compliance by audio-visual communication service providers upon request.

One of the objectives is to guarantee that the large international platforms such as Netflix, Disney + or HBO, incorporate at least 30% of European audio-visual production in their catalogues and contribute to the anticipated financing of the production of European audio-visual works. Said regulation affects at the same time national VOD portals whose turnover exceeds 10 million euros. Through this communication we will analyze how these new promotion requirements affect a national platform like Filmin. Born in 2007, it is one of the few Spanish platforms that has received regular funding from the MEDIA Program to promote the creation of VOD platforms, with the aim of consolidating an european VOD marked, as it emerged from the principles that emanate from the European Charter for online cinema.

The Company is established around 5 main lines of activity (SVOD; Rental; Online rights manager; Content aggregator; connected TV). We will see how the obligation to invest in production leads them to decide to consolidate a new line of activity in the production field. Among its objectives: to continue promoting emerging talent; have their own content that differentiates them from third parties and comply with the obligation to invest in production.

Beginning its career in the field of production 10 years ago with the film 'Barcelona nit d'estiu', since then it has participated in various co-productions. A path that, as we will see, now leads them to set the goal of producing 2 documentary series, 1 fiction series and 1 feature film each year.

Consumption patterns on mainstream VOD platforms across ten EU countries

Authors

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Abstract

Over the last years viewing behaviours have undergone remarkable changes resulting from the wide availability of streaming media and VOD services. The growth of these new platforms has led to more widely distributed consumption patterns among highly fragmented audience categories.

Subsequently, a crucial question being raised is whether and to what extent the consumption of EU audio-visual works still lags American offerings. Considering that these platforms compete directly with broadcast and cable TV services, the search for Europeanisation through cultural integration is questioned.

The intensity and dynamics of content distribution in various periods and across various countries pose several limitations in research, since platform catalogues change their roster constantly to incorporate the latest titles and drop expiring licences. The lack of a homogenised licence strategy among EU member states means that the differences among countries do not allow for more than a synchronic study to draw comparative conclusions.

In the proposed study, we aim to assess the current availability and diversity of video-on demand content in ten EU countries by analysing Netflix catalogues through a set of variables (size, year of production, ratings, genres). By studying the consumption patterns of European audio-visual works on various platforms we try to evaluate the penetration of European culture products in the global market, juxtaposing the results with the increasing investment in European productions. Finally, by comparing the consumption of the most popular genres in ten EU countries over 2020-2022, we review the algorithmic recommendations and content curation effects on the prominence of EU works and their consumption.

The analysis will also allow us to further evaluate the success of EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive call on content quotas addressed to VOD platforms and make further suggestions.

VOD Consumption and Cultural Europeanization

Authors

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the relationship between video platforms, consumption and cultural Europeanization by considering the most watched movies and Tv-shows in VODs platforms – Netflix, Amazon Prime, Google Play, Disney+, and iTunes – in the period from November 1, 2021 to February 28, 2022. We will use data related to ten national markets, which represent different European regions: the Northern-Western (Belgium, Germany), the Southern or Mediterranean cluster (Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece), the Nordics (Sweden) and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Czech Republic). Data about Turkey is also included in our analysis.

Needless to say, our observation over a four-month season only provides limited results, thus hardly allowing for any generalization. Supplementary investigation and more data will be necessary, especially on the consumption side, for coming to terms with the geo-cultural pattern shaped by major platforms. The synoptic analysis of most-watched movies and Tv-shows, nonetheless, seems to indicate that the main Europeanization strategies put in motion – the quota legislation, the global/local co-productions and the glocalization formula– have a little impact, if any, on what people actually consume on video-on-demand channels. Implications for cultural Europeanization will be also discussed.

Key Words

Turkey and the European identity from the perspective of Turkish TV Shows

Authors

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Abstract

Turkey is a country where the orient meets the occident with its multicultural structure and geographical location. As traditional values are important within the region, modernization is a concept that has been discussed in Turkish politics as well as Turkish society since the early periods of the newly emerged republic. The terms "traditional" and "modern" are mostly discussed in the context of the Westernization of Turkey in terms of sociological, economic, and political angles (Kandiyoti, 1997). Metin Heper (1992) discusses that Turkish politics has been persistently characterized by its strong state tradition since previous Turkish states. However, with the rise of the Kemalist regime in the early republic times, modernity and Westernization became considered topics within the Turkish political arena and consecutively within Turkish society. Modernity, as a controversial topic in Turkey, has been used interchangeably with the terms "Westernized" or "Europeanized" and is considered a concept that excludes distinctive Islamic and Ottoman traditional values (Akyüz, 2023).

In 2010, the Jasmine uproar against the then government of Tunisia spread to the other Arab countries Morocco, Syria, Libya, Egypt, and Bahrain, resulting in the Arab Spring, a passionate need for democracy and freedom (Noueihed and Warren, 2012). As this uprising affected the mass, according to the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), people from the Middle East are becoming increasingly more influenced by Turkish culture. In a general sense, Turkish movie productions appeal to the Eastern audience with the "modern" portrayal of a traditional society (Yiğit, 2013; Akgün, Mensur & Senyücel Gündoğar, 2012). In the past decade, Turkish television drama became increasingly successful in the Arab world, fueling wide-ranging controversies in the pan-Arab public sphere (Kraidy, & Al-Ghazzi, 2013).

This paper analyses the most-watched 100 Turkish TV series published on the Video-on-Demand platform (TRT İzle) of the Turkish public TV channel TRT between November 2021 and February 2022. It aims to contribute to a better understanding of which European codes are produced and communicated in Turkish TV series.

Can Immersion Improve Comprehension? The Effects of Immersive Storytelling and Virtual Interactivity on Empathy and Intergroup Attitude

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Abstract

Introduction

How to reduce intergroup prejudice and further decrease intergroup conflict has been the center of the intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954). Intergroup contact theory investigates the mechanisms of prejudice reduction, assuming that direct contact reduces bias of out-group (Williams, 1947). Nevertheless, intergroup contact theory has been criticized for its application as there are few opportunities for having direct contact with out-group members in real life. Virtual reality provides technological support to "immersive communication", which is considered as a ubiquitous experience beyond the boundaries of time and space (Qin, 2019). The study aims to investigate whether immersive storytelling and virtual contact can be powerful in eliciting empathy and acts as the "ultimate empathy machine". We developed this research into two parts:

Study 1 explores how immersive modalities (VR vs. video) and narrative perspectives (joy vs. misery) influence empathy and out-group attitudes, proposing these hypotheses:

H1: VR has a stronger effect on enhancing perceived levels of (a) associative empathy, (b) cognitive empathy, and (c) affective empathy than the 2D video.

H2: VR has a stronger effect on enhancing individuals' attitudes toward out-groups than the 2D video.

H3: Narrative perspectives can influence individuals' perceived levels of (a) associative empathy, (b) cognitive empathy, and (c) affective empathy.

H4: Narrative perspectives can influence individuals' attitudes toward out-groups.

RQ1: Do immersion modality and narrative perspective have an interactive effect on eliciting empathy?

Study 2 explores how virtual contact mode (interaction vs. observation) and description perspectives (positive vs. negative) influence closeness and identification toward out-group members.

H6: Interaction with out-group members can influence closeness toward out-group members.

H7: Interaction with out-group members can influence identification toward out-group members

Method

A 2×2 laboratory experimental design was used in study 1 and 2, equipped with an HMD and five laptops. In study 1, 128 students aged from 18 to 29 were randomly assigned to one of four conditions——view miserable narrative perspective 360° VR video with HMD, view joyful narrative perspective 360° VR video with HMD, view miserable narrative perspective 2D video, and view joyful narrative perspective 2D video. In study 2, we created two avatars in Gather Town, a virtual conference platform, one was Chinese called Zhao Yi and the other was African called Brenda. And participants were told to complete tasks of knowing about Brenda and her opinion on Africa. 120 participants were assigned to one of four conditions——getting negative information about Brenda's country by interacting, getting positive information about Brenda's country by interacting, getting negative information about Brenda's country by observing, getting positive information about Brenda's country by observing.

Results

In general, H3c, H4, H6, H7 were all supported. For intergroup attitude, immersive modality and interactivity were not as important as narrative and description perspective. Joy or misery narrative as well as positive or negative description made more significant difference toward intergroup attitude. Moreover, positive description and joy could affect intergroup attitude more strongly than negative description of misery. For empathy, immersive interactivity was able to significantly predict the differences in empathy between groups. To answer RQ1, we also found the interaction effect of immersive modality and narrative perspective on empathy.

Study 1

Although narrative perspective could not affect empathy directly, it was a significant predictor of associative empathy, a sub-dimension of empathy. Furthermore, comparing joyful narrative perspective with miserable narrative perspective, joy has more significant effect than misery when predicting associative empathy. However, we found no significant effect of immersive modality on empathy.

Although VR and video could not predict empathy directly, the interaction effect of immersive modality with narrative perspective could predict empathy significantly. Specifically, under VR condition, there was an significant difference between joyful and miserable narrative, particularity, joy had stronger predictive effect on empathy than misery, $F(1, 121)= 4.00$, $p< .05$. At the same

time, under the condition of misery narrative perspective, VR and video showed significantly different effect on empathy, and VR reported higher empathy than video, $F(1, 121)= 4.27$, $p< .05$.

The results about how narrative perspective directly affected inter-group attitude shows narrative perspective straightway predicted inter-group attitude significantly. More specifically, higher means of joy than misery showed that joyful narrative perspective could affect inter-group attitude more strongly than the miserable one. Nevertheless, immersive modality was still unable to predict inter-group attitude.

Study 2

Immersive interaction showed outstanding exploratory capacity on two more dependent variables, closeness and identification. Under interaction and observation conditions, there were significant differences on both closeness and identification, and it was interaction condition that had stronger effect on them.

Key Words
immersive storytelling, empathy, virtual reality, intergroup interaction

Meme groups on Weibo as glocal expressive repertoires: Is this a form of resistance in a subcultural setting?

Authors

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Abstract

Popular memes make use of vernacular catchphrases that are riddled with intentional grammatical errors, abbreviations or acronyms, and nonstandard platform language. Because memes seek to connect people who share similar interests (Malodia et al., 2022). This article examines how Chinese users of a cultural globalization meme on Weibo organize forms of subcultural sociality based on gender, race, and class. Weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter, has over 500 million monthly active users and is the largest receptive field for international meme culture. Weibo meme groups show some key movements in the circulation of thoughts, feelings, and ideas in digital cultures, allowing for new forms of user generated globalization and localization (BoxmanShabtai & Shifman, 2016).

The empirical work, in particular, draws on a dataset of 50,000 Weibo meme group posts that were explored and analyzed using a digital methods approach (Rogers, 2013). Traditional qualitative research methods were also engaged. This investigation focuses on how local Chinese users spread overseas meme texts. I propose the term "spectatorial foreigner" to describe how the texts of Weibo meme groups require the sharer to operationalize gendered, classed, and raced classificatory knowledges, demonstrating memes' glocal positioning as discursive repertoires that facilitate certain types of expression. The spectatorial foreigner, drawing on dominant modes of recognition and comprehension made available in postfeminist, post-racial digital cultures (Kanai, 2016).

According to the study, a surprising combination of Western conservative capitalist patriarchy and racial stereotypes occurs in a cross-cultural context with China's conservative class, which is overshadowed by the so-called subculture's humor and flirtation. Despite the fact that the meme sharers altered the English text, it is not a form of subversion or resistance but rather a confirmation of the transnational nature of inequality. As a result, meme participation is structured unequally. Unfortunately, some young Chinese people placed far too much emphasis in the in-depth interviews on reproducing a cross-cultural bias for the sake of entertainment. Despite the fact that it lacks certain characteristics shared by the West, such as religious history and immigrant countries, the Chinese context internalizes stereotypes and similar preconceptions.

Key Words

Social connectedness and psychological well-being: A study of international student experiences during the pandemic

Authors

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Dr. Mingshi Cui - The University of Leicester

Abstract

This study examines social communication experiences of international students from collectivistic societies studying in English-taught programs in Canada. This study emphasizes international student experiences in the host culture, when classes have been moved online due to the lockdown of the Covid-19. Drawn upon literature on social connectedness of international students, and the role of psychological well-being in cross-cultural adaptation, we explore the following research questions: How do social connectedness impact the psychologic well-being of international students during their cross-cultural adaptation? How does virtual community impact the social connectedness between international students and their peers during the global pandemic? For international students from collectivistic cultures, how do their preferences of social media impact social communication and psychological well-being during the global pandemic? We conducted 31 semi-structured in-depth interviews with international students studying in postgraduate education institutions in British Columbia, Canada. International students from collectivistic cultures are invited to participate in this study. A variety of collectivistic cultural backgrounds are presented in studied student sample, including Vietnam, China, Philippines, South Korea, Japan, Nigeria, and South Africa. Based on in-depth interview data, we argue that social interaction is a key for international students to adapt to the host culture where they are facing a high level of challenges and stress in an isolated environment. Our findings contribute to the contradictory viewpoints on the role of communication with co-ethnics in the host cultural environment during the global pandemic, and the findings reinform a significant positive impact of ethnic communication (both in the formats of face-to-face and via social media), on psychological well-beings of international students. The results also reveal that individual preferences of social media form invisible boundaries among different social groups of international students, which results in further social isolations and impedes psychological well-being. For international students from horizontal collectivistic cultures in particular, they experience better psychological well-being, and intend to maintain social connections with their families and friends in home countries to reduce loneliness and depressions. This research offers several important practical implications for social integration of international students and for creating diverse and inclusive campus.

Key Words

Cultural adaptation, social communication, psychological well-being

International English Translation of Chinese Domestic Movie Titles: A Content Analysis Study

Authors

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Dr. Xu Song - Stockton University

Abstract

As China becomes the second largest global cinema market in the world, some Chinese domestic movie productions have gained wide attention from international audiences and even been imported by other global markets. To successfully introduce and effectively promote Chinese movies to the global viewers, the appropriate international English translation of the Chinese movie titles becomes substantially important and rewarding. This study adopts the media globalization and transnational cultural production literature as the theoretical framework, investigates how Chinese domestic movie titles are being translated to English language, and explores the potential effect of culturally-specific word or term on the Chinese-English movie title translation.

Content analysis was designed and conducted. Coding scheme and coding sheet were carefully created. Two coders, who are proficient in both Chinese and English languages, were tasked to study the coding scheme and follow the coding instructions to code the movie-title-related variables independently. The two coders entered the coding values on the coding sheets respectively. Inter-coder reliability was measured by using IBM SPSS, and the study demonstrated strong inter-coder reliability for the coded variables as Cohen's kappa coefficients were greater than .80.

A complete census sample of 2,755 Chinese domestic movies screened between 2013 and 2022 was used in this study. Both Chinese movie titles' list and English translation titles' list were generated by referring to the IMDb website and the Douban.com website (a Chinese online database containing movie information). Only the Chinese domestic movies that had been screened in cinemas were included in the sample. Chinese low-budget, Internet-based B-movie productions that were only released on the Chinese online streaming service platforms but not screened in the movie theaters were not included.

Two movie-title-related variables were coded. The "English translation of the Chinese movie title" variable was coded into three values (1=exact word-for-word literal translation, 2=partial translation, and 3=not translating any part of the Chinese movie title). The "Chinese culturally-specific word or term" variable was coded dichotomously (0=no culturally-specific word or term in

the Chinese movie title; 1=has culturally-specific word or term in the Chinese movie title).

Study results show that movies with English titles that do not translate any part of the Chinese titles were the fewest, while a large number of English translation titles were coded as partial translation. Compared to the exact word-for-word literal translation or the not-translating-any-part-of-the-Chinese-movie-title translation, more of the partial translation movie titles contain the Chinese culturally-specific word or term in the original title. In addition, twenty-five movies come with Chinese titles only and don't have English title translation at all. A post hoc analysis on the movie title translation further reveals that a few movies have transliteration titles instead of real English translation titles.

This content analysis study examined how Chinese movie titles of the past decade are being translated to English for the global promotion purpose. Research results indicate that many Chinese movie titles contain culturally-specific word or term, and the partial translation (i.e., only translate some of the words/terms/characters of the Chinese movie title) is a popular technique for Chinese-English movie title translation to overcome the potential intercultural communication barriers and to facilitate the global marketing and promotion. Chinese movies targeting mainly domestic audiences could be accompanied by an English translation title to gain global awareness. However, an industry-wide, systematic Chinese-English movie title translation guideline seems to be lacking. Future research may investigate whether Chinese movies' English title translations could have significant effects on the international audience perception of the movies and the movies' global box office performance.

Key Words

Will Fact-checking Network Follow International News Flow? A Global Social Media Analysis.

Authors

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Abstract

The demand for transparent and unbiased news surged after the Russian-Ukrainian war, with fact-checking, which effectively countered fake news and monitored the news reporting power on the principle of transparency and censorship, gaining renewed popularity. Meanwhile, fact-checking organizations have gradually worldwide spread, evolving into international, well-organized institutions.Previous research on fact-checking was confined to the confrontation between fact-checking and fake news, and its own impact on readers, in wihch a global perspective of information flow is missing. In contrast, studies of international news flow are mostly based on world system theory, which investigates the power domination behind the flow of information.

Fact-checking has a strong news core: practitioners are mostly journalists, and some media serves as fact-checking organizations. Therefore, this stduy argues that information flows in international fact-checking networks are an integral part of international news flows.However, founded by a movement that resist fake news and re-examines news reporting power, fact-checking has a gene that opposes the monopoly of news power.

Thus, we wants to figure out whether the international fact-checking social network is affected by the world system theory, as the current international news flow is, with the core countries in central and the sources of the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries at its disposal.

By choosing twitter, the most concentrated social media for fact-checking, 22,955 messages from February , 2022-January, 2023 under the hashtag #factcheck, where fact-checking messages are posted, were crawled. Social network analysis(SNA) are conducted through conversational relationships between users, forming to a network with 16,372 nodes and 17,428 edges. The study used the world system theory's country ranking list that was written by Barbones 2005 and polished by Guo 2017.Through the analysis of density,centralization,degree centrality,Closeness centrality and Betweenness centrality,the results revealed that fact-checking organizations have an impact on the pattern of the international information flow system: International fact-checking networks are in a highly fragmented state. Numerous fact-checking organizations from Western countries are at the center of the network, while a few of semi-peripheral and peripheral countries also presented in the core.Peripheral countries acted as disseminators of fact-checking information, but are not dominated by Western countries in terms of source independence and control of global sources.

The results indicated that though international fact-checking networks are more congruent with international news flows in that they are inseparable from the power relations between countries, they are also different: peripheral and semi-peripheral countries are more central in fact checking.

The nature of fact-checking's supervision on the news reporting power enpowered itself the ability to make assault to international news flows that are already power-dominated.

This study broadens the perspective on fact-checking by exploring its changes to news through the lens of an international news flow. In terms of theoretical contributions, it corroborated previous findings that the influence of world system theory still exists but is weakening in international news flows. And we further refined the theory by arguing that the form of fact-checking's monitoring of news has changed the media's monopoly of power over news reporting to some extent, consequently affecting the existing international news flow structure and having an impact on the power control behinds news flow. From the form of fact-checking to the anti-monopoly of power therein, this study provides a more profound understanding of the form of fact-checking. Lastly, this study manifested a protential possibility on new media information flow's impact, like twitter, on international communication structure constructed by old media.

Key Words
Fact-checking, Social Network Analysis, International News Flow, World System Theory

Communications Governance: Decolonising epistemologies and ethics in Transforming Geopolitical Contexts

Authors

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Abstract

This paper explores the parameters of contemporary global communication governance through the lens of an epistemic governance approach. Epistemic governance emphasises that the underlying epistemic structure, the underlying epistemic base, or the underlying epistemic paradigms (knowledge paradigms) of those organisations, institutions, or systems (sectors), which should be governed, are being addressed. In the context of communications, this could refer not only to national governance within a regional or national context, but also to external governance, for example governance measures of international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and the Internet Governance Forum (IFG). It is not uncommon to discuss the aforementioned international bodies and organisations in terms of their democratic deficits, alongside their ostensible governance impact. In general, researchers take issue with their perceived lack of transparency and accountability, their imperviousness to public criticism, and their allegiance to some interests over the broader range of values held by people across the world (Dryzek et al. 2019: 1; Carpentier 2006) Epistemic governance, with its emphasis on an understanding that the production of knowledge for governance itself needs to be governed, therefore offers a useful entry-point into exploring new directions in communications governance. It engages the normative objective of how best to think about and produce knowledge for policy and regulation with an emphasis on the necessity to connect with decolonial, grassroots expressions of communication needs and rights. To this end, the paper considers the epistemological foundations of global communication governance from a decolonial perspective. First, the paper will briefly explore the roots of epistemic governance, which works on actors' perceptions of the world and its current challenges, before discussing definitions of governance and media governance within so-called "other" contexts. Second, through a focus on experiential knowledge, the paper unpacks the epistemic work actors are engaged in, with emphasis on pluriversal understandings of norms and ideals, or constructions of what the world is, who we are, and what is good or desirable. Connecting the above to the concept of "epistemic governance" the paper then considers the ways in which an engagement wit convivial epistemological approaches (1) limits universality (2) ensures pluraliversality - including those from other forms of research and expertise, and (3) fosters public-facing institutions that can ensure accountability of media in the public interest. Focussing on the strategies of power at play in attempts to influence policy change in the global South, the paper argues that epistemic governance could potentially define a benchmark and set of criteria for internal and external governance in communication that is

interested in applying good, effective, and sustainable governance that is responsive to rapidly changing contexts. In so doing, the paper connects with ongoing conversations in communication governance underpinned by perspectives from the global South in its attempts to "confront the terms of the conversation…the saying, the enunciation… (Mignolo, 2020).

Journalists' transformation to deliberatively participatory democracy in the digital age

Authors

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Abstract

The impact of journalism on democratic politics is self-evident, but the extent to which and the ways in which journalism contributes to the development of democracy are not yet established. In the digital age, journalism's commitment to "remaining independent and objective" in order to help voters make electoral judgements and preserve representative democracy has been challenged by the erosion of the market-based media system. At the same time, journalistic initiatives such as the public journalism movement that emerged in the US in the 1990s, which aimed at deliberative democracy and public participation, have emerged as a way of compensating for the failure of representative democracy to truly represent public opinion. The overall decline in electoral turnout does not signal people's disregard for democracy, but rather their desire for a new, deliberative and participatory democracy (Rosenberger, Stadlmair, 2014).

If the two different models of democracy, liberal-representative democracy and deliberatively participatory democracy, are appended in the discussion of journalism and democratic politics, new theoretical paths may be found and their relationship deepened. Journalistic practices often reflect journalists' political perceptions and democratic orientations, which are closely related to the character and function of journalism in democratic politics (Hanitzsch, 2011): the study of journalists' democratic orientations at the micro level provides a glimpse into the development of global journalism in democratic politics at the macro level. In the relationship between journalistic practice and democratic politics, Internet is not an instrumental presence, but rather the 'context' in which journalism exists, playing an infrastructural role (Lu, Yu, 2019). However, current research lacks mechanisms to explore the Internet's impact. Therefore, this study poses the following research questions.

RQ1: What is the relationship between journalists' democratic orientation and the elements that influence it?

RQ2: How do public perceptions of democracy and Internet coverage affect this relationship?

Using data from the second round of the World of Journalism Study (2012-2016), this study developed a multi-level linear regression model including a sample of 17,926 journalists from 39 countries. Individual-level variables included journalists' democratic orientation as the dependent variable, and four influencing factors as independent variables: news beat, media ownership, perception of influence (what factors are perceived to influence journalistic practice), and media

type. The country level includes the Democracy Perception Index (the percentage of respondents in each country who believe the country is democratic) and Internet Coverage.

There are three findings. Firstly, journalists' orientations towards liberal-representative democracy and deliberatively participatory democracy present different characteristics from each influencing factor, which constructs two effective models of journalism in the digital age. Secondly, the coordination of the public's democratic perception on the factors influencing journalists' democratic orientation is mainly focused on the deliberatively participatory democracy, and basically shows an increase in the positive relationship and a decrease in the negative relationship. In countries with a higher Democracy Perception Index, journalists' perceptions of the factors influencing them have a stronger positive relationship with deliberatively participatory democracy, demonstrating the consistency between the typology of deliberatively participatory democracy and the public's perception of democracy in practice. The public's recognition of the degree of democracy in their country comes from their full participation in political practice, proving that deliberatively participatory democracy is not only theoretically feasible, but also have the potential to be put into practice. Finally, the coordination of Internet coverage on deliberatively participatory democracy is also more evident, suggesting that the Internet as a context is empowering democracy at the individual level, responding to the debate on the impact of the Internet on political life: the Internet has a positive effect on public participation in political life by providing digital infrastructure and expanding public space.

Key Words
Digital journalism; Deliberative participatory democracy; Worlds of Journalism Study

The more similarity, the more empathy? The double-edged sword effect of cultural similarity on empathy in intercultural communication

Authors

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Abstract

Introduction: Intercultural empathy is a psychological mechanism that allows members from different groups to empathize with each other across cultural barriers. In recent years, intercultural empathic communication has been increasingly explored, but there are also problems such as a shallow comprehension of empathy mechanisms and a lack of empirical research. Fundamental issues such as the role of cultural similarity on intercultural empathy mechanisms have not been fully examined.

Literature Review: This paper systematically reviews the literature on the role of perceived intergroup cultural similarity on empathy in intercultural communication, and finds that previous researchers have provided conflicting findings that cultural similarity can either facilitate or hinder intercultural empathy.

Methods: The researcher conducted a field experiment with Chinese language learners (N=109) at an Italian Confucius Institute, in which participants watched two videos on the culture of the Chinese Lantern Festival, with the video of the "cultural similarity group" comparing the similarities between the Lantern Festival and the Italian festivals in terms of food, customs, and emotional atmosphere. The video of the "cultural uniqueness group" has a similar structure to the former one, but the information about the similarities between Italy and China is hidden.

Findings: The results of the experiment showed that the participants in the cultural similarity group perceived significantly higher cultural similarity between Italy and China than the cultural uniqueness group, but the cultural uniqueness group was higher than the cultural similarity group in the dimensions of emotional empathy and associative empathy. The researcher also adopted content analysis and interview methods to further examine this finding.

Conclusion: Cultural similarity has a double-edged sword effect in intercultural communication: on the one hand, it can enhance individuals' perceived intergroup cultural similarity and stimulate favorable feelings toward other groups, and on the other hand, it may reduce individuals' motivation to learn about other cultures due to the lack of cultural uniqueness and hinder individuals' emotional and associative empathy. The authors argue that intercultural communicators should adopt a dialectical idea of empathy, using cultural similarity as a bridge and cultural uniqueness as an attraction to hierarchically promote intergroup understanding and empathy.

Key Words

Cultural values and intercultural imagination of Chinese food : Take traditional Chinese dumplings as an example on YouTube

Authors

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Abstract

Background

On the international cultural exchange platform, Chinese food culture is a broad and profound Chinese culture.Netizens around the world are increasingly watching videos of dumplings.Integrating Chinese and Western cultural concepts is rugged, and there are differences in cultural background, values, thinking...Cultural differences make misreading inevitable, but misreading is not without creativity. To a certain extent, cultural misreading is a kind of enrichment and expansion of different cultures. The existing cultural conflicts also have the possibility of moving toward reconciliation.

Moreover, social media and short video platforms have broken the boundaries between countries, allowing more individuals in different cultural circles to come into contact with Chinese food culture."A media cultural phenomenon that embodies the basic values of contemporary society, guides individuals to adapt to modern lifestyles, and dramatizes conflicts and solutions in contemporary society." The impact of media culture on food culture Othering is mainly in two aspects. For one, food is presented as a burlesque spectacle of disorderly humor. Second, food is constructed as a landscape of daily life, and people use this pre-modern phantom to fight against modern anxiety. McLuhan's "medium is the message" proposed emphasizes the impact of media use on the audience's physical and spiritual emotions. Jonathan Turner believes this emotional experience includes physical, cognitive, and cultural levels. How will the media landscape formed by more videos with new forms and content on YouTube affect the audience's perception of Chinese food?

The consumption of Chinese food involves the intercultural impact of the audience's customs and Chinese and Western values. Therefore, in an environment where global social media is prevalent, does YouTube video social media bring media globalization, more consensus, empathy, or food culture conflicts? What are the content and theme perceptions of overseas users on Dumpling? How is it presented?

Methods

This research mainly uses LDA topic modeling and analysis, supplemented by the research methods of close reading and intensive reading of texts. Search the keyword "Chinese dumplings " on YouTube, sort by the playback volume from high to low,crawl 14,569 comments from 20 videos, and perform data preprocessing.

Findings

According to the perplexity, coherence, and coincidence degree of the bubble diagram in LDA topic modeling, the optimal number of topics is determined to be 4. The themes are views and sharing on food, how to make it, materials needed to make Chinese food, and the subject and characters of cooking, accounting for 32%, 31%, 24%, and 13%, respectively. Overseas audiences mostly praised the theme of "Food Views and Sharing."The production process and materials have a high intercultural acceptance.

Conclusions

During the epidemic, comments's number on food videos increased explosively and almost were after 2020. It is precisely because the epidemic outbreak has provided more opportunities for the attention and practice of Chinese food life videos. The advent of slow life has enriched the once scarce time, and the cramped space has further lengthened the familiar feeling of time, making it difficult to spread the extra time into the daily living space.

For audiences worldwide, this do-it-yourself food fantasy has become a reliable source of escape and comfort, as audience said, thanking the video for providing "tips and ideas for cooking new meals""entertainment""interest in trying new foods" "relaxed making dumplings at home"while in isolation.The impact of the sudden outbreak of the epidemic and the experience of slow life provides a new way of thinking for people in the post-epidemic era to grasp the relationship between time and space and how to find their spiritual home. For example, during the epidemic, comments such as "not being able to return to China for travel is both torture and happiness" and "can soothe the soul".

This kind of Chinese food short video has been constructed as a "media landscape" with rich, realistic connotations. The popularity of food style videos is not only because of its "emotional massage" effect on groups that are trapped in "modern anxiety". The popularity of the gourmet production-style media landscape has announced the birth of a contemporary super-emotional community that spans different regions and nationalities and covers different circles. The themes jointly compiled the food media landscape of dumplings on YouTube,like dumplings are "distinct, very diverse and balanced" and "stuffing have undergone a lot of trial and error to find the perfect consistency". In addition,"Views and Sharing on Food " theme emphasizes the memory and cultural memory of the times.

Key Words
Dumplings, YouTube, LDA modelling, cultural difference, media spectacle, emotional massage

The Hidden Power in the Platform Economy: The Collaboration and Conflict between MCNs and Creators on Chinese Platforms

Authors

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Abstract

This study examines how MCNs (Multi-Channel Networks) intervene in Chinese social media platforms through the lens of cultural intermediaries and creative labor. Previous studies have explored the emergence of content creators from various perspectives, including platformization (Lin & de Kloet, 2019), creative labor (Duffy, 2017), and algorithmic power (Bishop, 2020), highlighting the precarity and commercialization of creative work on digital platforms. However, little attention has been paid to another crucial player – MCNs, which incubate and train creators on an industrial scale. MCNs are firms and organizations that collaborate with creators on platforms facilitating the production, promotion, and monetization of creative content (Cunningham et al., 2016). They serve not only as incubators for micro-entrepreneurs and creators looking to establish their businesses, but also as a key intermediary between creators and other stakeholders on platforms.

Drawing on the concept of cultural intermediaries (Bourdieu, 1984) and creative labor (Duffy, 2017), this study examines how MCNs participate in and shape China's platform economy. We focus on China because, unlike the recent decline of MCNs on Western platforms, Chinese MCNs have proliferated since 2015 and become the major actor in the platform economy. Since 2017, Chinese digital platforms, including Weibo, Douyin, and Kuaishou, have announced collaborations with major MCNs. Today, more than 90% of the top creators in China have contracts with MCNs. However, hardly any work has addressed the role of MCNs in China's platform economy.

This study examines the conflicts between MCNs and creators through the analysis of lawsuits against the two actors. The findings highlight the tension between MCNs and creators. First, while MCNs seek to professionalize and industrialize cultural production, they also exert control over creativity by disciplining aspiring creators with norms, values, and standards of the platform economy. This suggests that content creation has become industrialized and manufactured labor rather than enthusiastic activity. Second, MCNs constitute the industry lore within which knowledge and expectations are generated and circulated. As such, MCNs could shape the gender, age, appearance, performance, and other characteristics of creators. Third, we demonstrate that MCNs are inherently featured by instability and uncertainty, meaning that they rely heavily on the business models and technical features offered by platforms. The study contributes to the understanding of MCNs in the platform economy.

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Key Words
Content creators, MCNs, platforms, cultural production, livestream, China

"Go out and Win over": A study on the International Communication of the Southern Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee

Authors

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Abstract

Research Background

The Southern Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, headed by Zhou Enlai, was the representative office of the Central Committee in Chongqing during the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, and was the organizer of international communications activities of the Communist Party of China in Chongqing. The Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression was an important part of the Second World War. Chongqing was the military, political, economic, and cultural center of the Far Eastern Theater of the World Anti-Fascist War, it is also has gathered foreign embassies, organizations based in China, foreign journalists and international friends. From this perspective, it is necessary to study the international communication practice of the Communist Party of China in Chongqing at that time from the perspective of international communication.

Literature Review

This paper defines international communication as the transmission of information to foreign audiences through various means and channels such as mass communication, organizational communication and interpersonal communication, in order to influence their awareness and attitude towards communicators.

Scholars generally think that international communication of the Communist Party of China during the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression mainly consists of mass communication, organizational communication and interpersonal communication. In the existing research, scholars have made relatively perfect researches on the forms of mass communication, but relatively little attention has been paid to organizational communication and interpersonal communication, more lack of international communication of the organization of the Communist Party of China and its members.

This paper examines the international communication practice of the Southern Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee from the perspective of international communication, and explores the operational mechanism of the Southern Bureau's International Communication.

Research Finding

In terms of mass communication, *Xinhua Daily* is the main means of international communication for the Southern Bureau. Members of the newspaper provide references for the international coverage of *Xinhua Daily*, including editorials, columns such as "International Review" and "International Gleanings" through data collection and compilation.

In terms of organizational communication, the Southern Bureau tried its best to influence the British and American policies toward China by meeting with foreign dignitaries and journalists and holding press conferences.

In terms of interpersonal communication, members of the Southern Bureau interacted closely with foreign journalists in time and space by making use of the Kuomintang's Foreign Correspondents' House and the regular weekly press conferences. They developed a deep friendship through the exchange of information, which enabled foreign journalists to help distribute materials of the Communist Party of China, such as newspapers, leaflets, pamphlets, etc.

Key Words
Communist Party of China, the Second World War

Research on short videos to enhance the influenceof international communication of traditional Chinese culture

Authors

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Abstract

China's short video platform started in 2014.However, due to the unclear profit model, the development process was not smooth. After 2015, short video platforms such as Quick Hand and Tik Tok appeared one after another. As short video platforms entered overseas markets aggressively in 2017, short video applications such as Kwai and Tik Tok quickly became popular overseas.Short-form video reshapes the definition of media, which is not only a change in media form, but also a revolution in the media industry, and more importantly, the existence of a new audio-visual culture. Short video plays an important and unique role in the international communication of Chinese culture. As a folk expression of Chinese culture, it has won the attention of overseas people. The continuous development of short videos has cultivated many popular Internet celebrities in China. After the fermentation of the domestic Internet, these short and concise video works have formed the network social circle. Subsequently, through the establishment of community, the international friendliness and transmission power of Chinese culture was further enhanced. With its multiple characteristics, including openness, pluralism, autonomy and interaction, new media has brought more space for the effective communication of Chinese culture. As an important part of new media, short video has a very broad development prospect and is gradu- ally becoming a powerful push to achieve national image communication. Short video platforms have nurtured many Internet celebrities, who gradually spread Chinese culture overseas as they become cultural spokespersons for video product content. Different from traditional video products, these network experts rooted in folk culture have achieved the creation style of short video products with personalized expression and personalized life narration, which has attracted wide attention in international communication. Online KOL has formed a certain influence on the creation and communication of short videos, especially the development of excellent short videos created with Chinese culture as the starting point in the overseas market. However, it is undeniable that there are many problems in the process of spreading Chinese culture through short videos. With the advent of the digital era of intelligent interconnection, the new pattern of communication and collision has gradually spread in the cultures of various coun-tries and regions around the world. Globalization has entered a more complex period of in-depth running-in. In other words, the "new era of globalization" has arrived. As people of various countries pay more and more attention to the multi-cultural agitation among their respective regions, countries and ethnic groups, a new pattern of international communication with multi-cultural interaction and deep integration is gradually emerging. Under the new international communication pattern, the positioning of Chinese culture in international exchanges and strategic

and effective communication is vital. This paper will focus on the research field that how to spread Chinese traditional contents through Short Video platform.

Key Words

Short video   Chinese culture   International communication   Digital platform

Proposing Global Issue Ownership: Concept explication and measurements

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Abstract

While issue ownership originated from election campaigns, the globalization trend is calling for theoretical and methodological exploration of global issue ownership. This paper provides a systematic review of issue ownership, elaborates on why it can be applied to a global context, and summarizes the existing measurements.

Theorizing global issue ownership

Issue ownership originated in the 1980s from election studies in western countries. It describes how voters would associate some issues with a specific party and vote for the party with higher competence in the issue area. Accordingly, parties gain advantages in elections by "owning issues" (Petrocik, 1996).

Issue ownership has two analytical dimensions: "competence" and "associative". The former refers to an actor's ability to deal with an issue and its reputation for addressing issues of concern to voters (Walgrave et al., 2012); the latter emphasizes that, over time, voters develop a "taken-for-granted" natural association between party and an issue coming from long-term perceptions (Holian, 2004; Walgrave & De Swert, 2007).

Issue ownership comes from election studies, but may also be applied to the global society. It embodies the concerns of the public on current important public issues. With economic, political, and information globalization, people from different countries developed further interdependency and have more shared concerns –what we call global issues (Hite & Seitz, 2021). Therefore, connecting to research around international news flows (e.g., Guo & Vargo, 2017), we apply the concept of issue ownership to global communication.

Three methodological approaches

The first is the survey method, which focuses on an individual's impression of the actor-issue association. For example, Tresch and Feddersen (2019) used questions including "Which party do you think is best at dealing with issue X?" and "When you think of issue X, which party do you

spontaneously think of?" Nevertheless, this approach faces the pitfalls that all self-reported surveys have (e.g., low representative and high-cost).

With the prevalence of digital media, semantic network analysis is applied on analyzing issue ownership. Scholars operationalize issue ownership as strong ties (i.e., high co-occurrence frequencies) between actors and issues in a semantic network (e.g., Chen et al., 2019; Guo & Vargo, 2015). Yet, network analysis has not been widely applied to study ties between countries and issues. The co-occurrence of issues and political subjects also does not directly prove that people have established an association between a country and an issue.

The third approach is word-embedding (e.g., Field et al., 2018; Gyllensten & Sahlgren, 2018). This method calculates a similarity index between the language use of online texts and the owner's official claims. This approach, however, is based on an assumption that (1) the actor(s) own strong media outlets and (2) their issue ownership largely depends on the agenda-setting ability of their media.

Given the limitations of the existing approaches, we call for an analytical schema that can (1) fully utilize non-intrusive data, (2) take the characteristics of ties into consideration while addressing both associative and competence issue ownership, and (3) focus on the perception of the general publics.

Key Words
Global issue ownership, computational, NLP, measurement, methodology

How SVoD competition transforms slow, hard-to-adapt, politicized public service media

Authors

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Dr. Francisco Campos Freire - Universidade Santiago de Compostela

Abstract

In many Central and Eastern European countries, where public service media are highly politicized, having a long tradition of operating as government mouthpieces, the rise of SVoDs is posing major challenges to the very existence of public broadcasters, almost depriving them of their *raison d'etre*. On the other hand, the opportunities presented by the rise of SVoDs for local production have not been fully embraced by public service media in Central and Eastern Europe for a variety of reasons including lack of targeted production and marketing investment, which prevents the flow of content from peripheral or small media markets in the region to global SVoD platforms. Moreover, the growth of the local SVoD services, usually content platforms curated by privately owned broadcasters adds to the competition for eyeballs in these countries, eroding the legitimacy of those public service media that fail to adjust their operations to be competitive on this burgeoning on-demand market.

Forced by the competition stirred by all these trends and factors, some public service media have been moving into changing their operating models and patterns of interaction with their audiences, yet many are left behind, unable to adapt. These trends have a significant impact on the overall media ecosystems in such nations.

Key Words

Public Service Media, Central and Eastern European countries, SVOD

The platformization of Spanish Public Service Media: national vs. regional approaches

Authors

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Abstract

Public service broadcasters across Europe are exploring different strategies that could empower them in their challenging mission of maintaining their relevance in a media context where the audiences' attention is heavily disputed; while embracing and safeguarding their public value (Cañedo, Rodríguez-Castro & López-Cepeda, 2022). Such strategies will necessarily involve some kind of assumption of the platformization of public service media (Donders, 2019; D'Arma, Raats & Steemers, 2021). While some public service broadcasters decided to engage with global digital VOD platforms such as Netflix or Amazon Prime Video, others have developed their own platforms in order to avoid brand dilution (Wayne, 2018) and remain in control of their content and of the data generated by its consumption. This research will delve into how two Spanish public service broadcasters (the national RTVE and the regional RTVA, from Andalusia; both operating a VoD platform on their own) are addressing their own platformization processes. To do so, from a comparative case study, we study their adaptation to platform dynamics from the three key processes of the political economy of communication (Mosco, 2009): commodification, spatialization and structuration.

Key Words

Europe, Public Service Broadcasters, Strategies

Production and Distribution through SVoD Platforms in Spain: The Case of Public Broadcaster TVE

Authors

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Abstract

International SVOD platforms made a strong entrance into the European audiovisual landscape more than one decade ago. In Spain, where they arrived in 2015, their production and distribution practices, unknown before their arrival, "changed the rules of the game", in a process that went back and forth for some time until regular practices were established and continue to prevail in the Spanish audiovisual market. Also, transnational flows of television series and shows have increased considerably (Arriaza Ibarra & Navarro, 2022), even though the European legislation – and moreover, the new Spanish Audiovisual Law of July 2022 – forces them to include European and domestic production in Spain, in any of its four co-official languages (Spanish, Catalan, Basque, and Galician).

In this respect, Public Service Media also plays a determinant role so that, despite the asymmetrical interdependence, which keeps the hegemonic position of the United States (and the United Kingdom, to a lesser extent), there is room for local and multidirectional audiovisual flows (Alankus & Yanardagoglu, 2016; Straubhaar, 2013). In this paper there is an analysis on how the Spanish public broadcaster RTVE deals with the SVOD platforms of Netflix, HBO, Disney+, Prime Video, and *Filmin* (Spanish).

Key Words

Spain, SVOD platforms, production, distribution, TVE

Ten Years' communication of the Belt and Road Initiative in the Indian Ocean Region

Authors

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Abstract

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has attracted dramatic attention in media, policy circles, and academia since its introduction in 2013. While China and supporters seeing opportunities and new economic and developmental approaches from it, rivals and sceptics view it as debt-trap diplomacy from the geopolitical perspective which has been a key element in the ever-tensing relationship between China and some Western countries. With most research investigating the differences in interpreting BRI, little has been done to investigate the determining factors of the fermentation of the confrontational discourses from both sides which has shown the sign of leading the world to the edge of a new Cold War.

This project adopts Burkart's Consensus-oriented communication model drawing on Habermas's theory of Communicative Action with a special focus on understanding in PR research. Burkart highlighted the four criteria for mutual understanding to be achieved: intelligibility (being able to use proper grammatical rules), truth (the existence both participants accept), trustworthiness (being honest and not misleading the partner), and legitimacy (acting in accordance with mutually accepted values and norms). Though BRI is not a strict PR project, its demand for understanding/trust from the engaging countries and around the world makes the understanding of the communication of it important.

Methodologically, this project uses framing analysis to investigate how BRI has been framed by the Chinese side by analysing Chinese official documents and China Daily reports of BRI, and how Chinese frames have been received in the Indian Ocean region which is a region where coordinating efforts have been led by leading Western countries to counter the rising influence of China; and how the differences of the frames were formed. The analysis of the reception side would be conducted by choosing two English-medium broadsheets from each of the eight key countries, taking circulation and diversity of opinion into account: Australia, India, Singapore, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, South Africa, and Kenya. In the end, a comparison between the Chinese framing and the framing of the Indian Ocean littoral media would be conducted to analyse how the four criteria have (not) been met in China's communication of BRI.

Initial analysis suggests that while intelligibility is not a big problem thanks to China's constant efforts in telling stories using audiences' language over the decades, the consensus on what is the truth is hard to achieve due to ideological differences, conflict of interests and the dominating influence of Western narratives around the globe, which would also impact the trustworthiness and legitimacy of message from China.

This project provides a new approach to interpreting the factors impacting the understanding of controversial issues at the global level in the context of increased tension in international relations where hyped arguments, out of overreaction, lead to the risk of confrontation when it could be avoided through better understanding and dialogue.

Key Words

Belt and Road Initiative, Consensus-oriented communication, Indian Ocean Region, Habermas

Sustainability, city branding, and model roles at the international level: Framing strategic communication about solutions to systemic changes

Authors

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Abstract

Purpose: Today's global society faces complex systemic challenges (Fischer et al., 2021) and threats, including energy scarcity and environmental degradation, whose solutions continue to be explored and debated. Cities are especially serving as training grounds and, as green cities and smart cities, are even emerging as role models (Lara, 2020) on the international stage. By exchanging their ideas and interacting with each other online, cities are not only gaining international recognition for their sustainable solutions but also shaping strategic communication about such solutions (Zerfass et al., 2018).

Theories: The study is based on framing theory (Entman, 1993) and literature addressing strategic communication, city branding, and urban systemic change.

Aims: The study analyzes (i) which cities are prominently branded as sustainable cities online (ii) and in relation to which communicated sustainability solutions cities achieve visibility. Based on the visibility and framing of city solutions on sustainable issues, it is further investigated (iii) whether the understanding of sustainability, the proposed solutions, and the prominence of sustainable cities have changed in recent years.

Method: With semantic network analyses, communication on Twitter using the keywords "sustainable cities" is analyzed to detect the evolution of dominant cities and of solution frames. Solutions for sustainability are grouped in categories extracted from the literature, including the Brundtland Report (1987). Sample tweets are collected in two periods: in 2016 (i.e., after the Paris Agreement) and in 2022 (n = 200,000).

Results: Preliminary results reveal not only which cities are strongly associated with sustainability online and their characteristics as role models but also a dynamic, changing understanding of smart and sustainable cities.

Implications: Insights contribute to the literature on green city branding and sustainability by highlighting a changing understanding of sustainability. They also give practitioners indications about which sustainable solutions are increasing cities' visibility.

Key Words

cities, sustainability, branding, role models, framing, strategic communication, Twitter

A Public Service Media Metaverse? Exploring European PSM's ideas and attitudes towards the new platform

Authors

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Abstract

The Metaverse is a promising and interesting environment that is occupying increasingly more conversations around the future of media, but there are still many questions to be asked, some of them are very fundamental: should European PSM be in the Metaverse? If they should, in what form? How can they establish their presence in this new virtual environment, in line with their public service values and responsibilities? In the realm of public service and public administration, a survey led by Accenture Technology 2022, 70% of public sector leaders expect the Metaverse to have a positive impact in their services (Accenture ,2022).

This first phase of assessing the possibilities of the Metaverse is also the phase of defining the position that European PSM want to occupy in this space. This question includes the analysis of what kind of interactions can take place in that environment, which users are active and present and what kind of experience they are looking for (EBU, 2022).

The objective of this study is to analyze the main strategies and early actions of European Public Service Media in the Metaverse, understanding whether it's seen as a place for the distribution of information, a common space for interaction with the audience, or perhaps an environment where instead of producing content, its main purpose is that of expanding and accompanying the audience's audiovisual experience. Aside from the main questions outlined in the first paragraph, this research also aims to draw prospects for this space in the PSM digital ecosystem: Will it be a general Metaverse? Or will it be a specific Metaverse, avoiding intermediation with a third party? Could we talk about a Public Service Metaverse?

The methodology used to conduct this study consists of 20 semi-structured interviews with heads if innovation, digital transformation and strategy in 10 of the main European public broadcasters (BBC, ARD, YLE, VRT, RTBF, France TV, RTVE, RTP, RAI, and SVT), complemented with a content analysis of their products in the virtual world.

To this day, there have been some initial incursions in immersive environments by European PSM. France TV, for example, opened a virtual immersive space during the last Winter Olympics with Stade 2; or with Hôtel du temps, a program based on interview with historical characters from the past. On the other hand, RTBF in Belgium has started its own experiences in the Metaverse through the game Roblox, using a branded character to interact with the youngest audiences in this space. Looking at the data, this initiative becomes particularly relevant, as Roblox has 43.2

million daily users, 67% under 16 years of age (Backlinko, 2022); a key sector of the audience for PSM.

Early results of this research show how some corporations are using this space to mediate their content for specific user groups, creating more interactive experiences through collaborative games. At the same time, it's also being projected as a platform with media literacy capabilities, as they can leverage the possibilities of immersive scenarios and the accessibility of the virtual sphere.

Key Words

Metaverse, Public Service Media, Virtual, Innovation, Universality, Accesibility, Values, Broadcast

The framing techniques of CGTN English in the coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict

Authors

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Prof. Javier Serrano-Puche - University of Navarra

Abstract

The media coverage of the war in Ukraine has highlighted the importance of propaganda studies by international news agencies (Golovchenko, 2022; Hansson et al., 2022). Strategic communication takes on more sophisticated features in environments where the state controls the media. The use of national media as a mechanism of ideological control focuses attention on Russian channels such as RT and Sputnik (Kragh and Åsberg 2017).

Technical and visual strategies are essential for the transmission of intended messages. To disseminate and share stories, policymakers increasingly study strategic narrative theory (Hansoon et al., 2022; Miskimmon & O'Loughlin, 2017). The term framing appears for the first time in Bateson's research (1972). Frames are identified with the mental schemas that shape events. Goffman (1986) underlines the properties of frames for the organisation of reality. Therefore, frames do not only occur in the mind but in society as a whole.

Recent studies evidence framing techniques in media coverage of Russia-Ukraine tensions. Lichtenstein et al. (2019) analyse the presentation of the conflict through talk show debates in Russian and German television. Similarly, Alyukov (2022) compares the Russian and Ukrainian press. Fortuin (2022) describes the features of Russian propaganda and Nikolayenko (2019) shows the role of social networks in the distribution of war messages.

Despite the fact that framing studies are prominent in the coverage of international conflicts, there is little empirical research that analyses the Russian invasion from the narrative of the CGTN. This channel, available in more than 160 countries, exhibits strategies of stylistic adaptation to Western media and cross-cultural extension as a vehicle of the Chinese "multiform and multilevel" channel (Ye & Albornoz, 2018).

This quantitative research analyses the coverage of CGTN during the first three months of the war in Ukraine (from February 24 to May 26, 2022). For this purpose, this paper presents a content analysis of the news pieces (N=1799). The aim is to identify the most prominent frames in Chinese information. In addition, this study reveals who are the most mentioned public opinion leaders (politicians, institutions, and civilians) and the sources in the media coverage.
The results show that the "descriptive war" and "diplomatic" frames are the most notable. In addition, the "economic" frame is more frequent than the "human interest" frame (that reports about victims and humanitarian assistance). These results demonstrate that CGTN English strategies about the conflict differ from other media channels. References to international leaders

are prominent and the medium emphasises Western sanctions against Russia. Finally, it should be noted that TASS, RIA, and Reuters are some of the most cited information sources. The examination of news strategies provides an opportunity to explore an issue of social impact in which political propaganda plays a substantial role.

Key Words

CGTN, Chinese channel, Russia, Ukraine, journalism, propaganda, and international media.

The 'Post-pandemic West' in the Chinese State Media: How 'the West' is Discursively Constructed in the Covid Coverage of People's Daily

Authors

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Abstract

The West is a significant 'Other' for the postcolonial nation-states to construct their national identity (Buruma and Margalit, 2004). China is one of the cases. The West has become the 'Other' to the Chinese national 'Self', but the narratives of the Western 'Other' and the Chinese' Self' are complex and multi-layered. Bonnet (2004) observes that the West is a concept of mobility, as its definition is developing, changeable and expandable depending on the contexts of discussion. The Otherness of the West, which served as a reference to reflect the Chinese national Self, consists of conflicting images. In the official narratives of the Chinese state, the West can represent progressiveness in contrast to China's 'undeveloped' status as a developing country. At the same time, China's sense of superiority grows with a booming economy. Western criticism of China is interpreted as a resurfacing of imperialism, but the Chinese state also promotes Sino-West cooperation.

The pandemic marks the crossroad of the ambivalent narratives of 'good West, bad West'. China's 'Covid success' compared to the struggle of the West in the early stage of the epidemic increased Chinese people's confidence in the superiority of their 'party-state' political system. The backlash from the West against China over the origins of the virus consolidates the sense that China is the victim of Western bias and hegemony. Nevertheless, it is too soon to conclude that the post-covid national Self of China is built simply through negative exclusions of its Western Other under the nationalistic narratives of 'victim-victor' (Gries, 2005). Although Sino-West hostility has reached a new peak due to the "Covid blame game", the globalist discourses on partnership and cooperation between China and the West have repeatedly been stressed in the party-state rhetoric. Moreover, the sense of Covid victory was also diluted by the domestic discontent and eventual failure of the Zero-Covid policies, marked by the White paper protest and the Chinese government's decision to open up.

To investigate contemporary China's self-identification, this proposed research project will focus on these emerging conceptions of the West in China through critical discourse analysis based on Van Dijk's (2011, p.396) theoretical framework of "ideological square". The study will be evident in People's Daily, also known as the 'mouthpiece' of China's government, as the Chinese media system is "party-state" dominant while news media is the premier device of Othering. The project is ongoing and relevant to the researcher's Ph.D. project. The researcher would appreciate any feedback on data analysis, especially on designing an analytical framework for context-based discourse analysis.

Key Words

Occidentalism, Chinese State Media, Pandemic, Critical Discourse Analysis

How Emojis and Stickers Are Studied in Different Cultures: A Comparative Literature Review

Authors

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Abstract

The globally widespread use of emojis and sticker has drawn significant academic attention. Many have looked at them in different disciplines, such as communication, education, or psychology (Tang & Hew, 2019; Bai et al., 2019). However, a review of the literature reveals that most of these studies are based on English literature, and little attention has been given to literature in other languages. This study argues that to better understand the use of emojis and stickers in a global context, the inclusion of literature in other languages is crucial.

The origin of both emojis and stickers can be traced back to Eastern countries: emojis were initially designed by Shigetaka Kurita, a Japanese interface designer worked in NTT DoCoMo, and the Line, an instant message software in Japan, initially introduced stickers. However, stickers are popular in Asian countries (Russell, 2013), especially in China, because WeChat has enabled users to download sticker presets from its store or create their own stickers. In this light, many scholars have studied sticker use in Chinese contexts. However, after reviewing the literature, it appeared that many studies in Chinese did not distinguish emojis and stickers. One study specifically mentioned that scholars considered emojis and stickers the same form of digital expression in the Chinese context, whereas, in the Western context, they are different (Huang et al., 2022).

On the other hand, although many mainstream Western social media platforms have made stickers available in their system (Russell, 2013), little literature has focused on sticker use (Konrad et al., 2020). This finding suggests that as a global culture, emojis and stickers are studied differently. However, the reason behind this phenomenon remained unknown. Therefore, it is important to not only consider literature from other languages but also to compare them with the existing literature in English. Furthermore, by examining how emojis and stickers are approached in different cultural settings, we can highlight differences and similarities in ways of thinking and methodologies, which can lead to a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of the global use of emojis and stickers. Hence, this study asks the following questions:

RQ1: How emojis and stickers are studied differently in terms of their roles in interpersonal communication?

RQ2: Why are emojis and stickers perceived as the same form of digital expression in China, whereas different in Western literature?

To fill this gap, this study applied a systematic literature review (SLR) on both Chinese and English literature regarding emoji and sticker studies. The SLR approach is specifically designed to systematically map the literature and identify key characteristics of the literature (Boell & Cecez-

Kecmanovic, 2015). This study collects data from two major databases: Zhiwang for Chinese literature and Proquest for English literature. Because this study focuses on the use of stickers and emojis in interpersonal communication, literature about their design and other applications of emojis and stickers are excluded (such as education). Finally, the collected article will be read thoroughly.

Key Words
Emoji, Sticker, Systematic Literature Review, Comparative Study

Internal and External: The Behavior of Chinese State-owned Companies on Domestic and Global Social Media and Corporate Image

Authors

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Abstract

The overseas assets of Chinese state-owned companies have reached nearly 8 trillion yuan up to now, distributed in more than 180 countries and regions. Internally, Chinese state-owned companies contribute to the national economy as an important force of the "go global" strategy. Externally, it has the attributes of multinational enterprises, which have a great influence on the country of origin. When expanding overseas business, social media has become one of the best platforms for enterprises to publicize information and increase visibility. Meanwhile, Chinese state-owned companies frequently use domestic social media platforms, including WeChat and Weibo, to communicate with the public at home and launch campaigns. The social media behaviour of enterprises can make the corporate known to the public and build the corporate image.

In practice, enterprises frequently provide cross-cultural communication training for internal employees on local culture or language. However, cross-cultural communication in the use of social media for external communication purposes is often ignored. From the cross-cultural communication perspective, the content released on social media by enterprises is encoded in Chinese culture according to the codebook of Chinese culture, while decoded in other cultures according to the codebook of other cultures. Based on the Onion Model proposed by Hofstede, cross-cultural practice can be analyzed through three levels: Symbols, Heroes, and Rituals.

The content posted by Chinese state-owned companies on domestic and global social media in the last three years is analyzed using the Onion Model to identify and classify the cross-cultural communication practice of enterprises. Ten companies were selected from 98 Chinese state-owned companies by systematic sampling to compare their behaviour on Facebook, Twitter, WeChat and Weibo. If the selected company do not have active domestic and global social media accounts, the next one on the Chinese State-owned Companies Directory will replace the original company. Also, the heads of the overseas communication departments of three state-owned companies were interviewed for more information from the corporate perspective.

The research results showed that Chinese state-owned companies were more active on domestic social media platforms, manifested as higher update frequency and longer posts. The common topics of posts on both sides included corporate information, Chinese culture, and corporate achievement. On domestic social media, Chinese state-owned companies focused on corporate rituals and the anti-epidemic measure. On global social media, enterprises preferred to publish corporate stories and employees' stories, in order to build a friendly corporate image and promote

Chinese culture, to take responsibility as state-owned companies. When posting about the same topic, the symbols on global social media were more general and easier to understand.

Key Words

Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Smart and Sustainable Cities: Improving top-down developed indicators with bottom-up feedback by local stakeholders. A case study of the Brussels Capital Region.

Authors

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Abstract

Within smart and sustainable cities, sound data is the cornerstone of evidence-based policymaking in formulating priorities, allocating budgets, and tracking progress (Lafortune et. al., 2020). Especially at the local level, the gathering of meaningful data can be challenging because of resource constraints in a context of widening responsibilities. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the policy framework that all 193 UN member states have pledged to achieve by 2030, is now also getting 'localized' by local urban actors. The set of 248 indicators promises to deliver an overarching overview of the progress on the SDGs and to provide insights into how to move forward.

However, different operationalizations of the SDG-framework (such as the efforts done by OECD and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network) in the form of local monitoring and assessment tools, create different conclusions with respect to the performance – and action points – of local governments on various SDGs. This is confusing for researchers and policymakers (Lafortune et. al., 2020, Fernández de Losada et. al., 2021). While all operationalizations stem from the same international framework, they result in different assessments of the actual state of the same local urban territory towards these SDG goals. This begs the question to what extent national frameworks can, and should, be applied in more regional and local contexts, and what the actual value is of these local SDG monitoring and assessment frameworks.

In this research, we will confront local stakeholders in the Brussels Capital Region with existing variations in results aiming to pinpoint lacunae in the existing local SDG framework operationalizations. Stakeholders will be queried as to their a) understanding of the underlying indicators, b) their views as to the fit between these indicators and specific SDG-targets and c) their ideas on the formulation of additional/ alternative indicators for local urban territories to improve the measurement of the distance to a specific SDG. The study is based upon a qualitative approach entailing 15 semi-structured expert interviews (Van Audenhove et al., 2016) with local public (regional and local governments) and a selection of private actors following a quadruple

helix approach. Thematic analysis across the 15 interviews allows identifying shared patterns or themes.

The purpose of this study is to provide guidance to city managers, civil servants and policymakers in the adaptation of SDG-indicators to the regional and local level, to uncover blindspots in the current operationalization, and to suggest specific points of action to improve the fit of SDG-measurement within a local urban context. Local SDG monitoring is important to support local urban actors in implementing the SDGs. As these tools are in the first place built for these local actors, we want to get qualitative feedback from them to know if the chosen indicators really represent what is important in the context of a smart and sustainable city.

Key Words
Smart & Sustainable Cities, Sustainable Development Goals, monitoring, indicators

The Belt and Road Initiative in Two Academic Contexts: A Comparative Review of Chinese and English Literature

Authors

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Abstract

2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2013, during his visit to Kazakhstan and Indonesia, Chinese President Xi Jinping put forward the idea of building the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" respectively. The idea was later developed into The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also termed as One Belt & One Road Initiative (OBOR). Nowadays, the BRI is one of the greatest international economic ambitions of China, which aims at establishing an economic cooperation mechanism among Asian, European, and African countries (Huang, 2016; Cai, 2014).

Since the BRI was put forward, it has always been a popular research topic. However, different academic contexts usually have different perspectives, especially on the topic of national policy issues. Particularly, we noticed that the BRI was interpreted and studied differently in Chinese and English literature, which reflects different understandings of the BRI among Chinese and Western scholars. Moreover, differences in research perspective will affect the promotion and acceptance of the BRI and further affect China's image and status in the international community.

This paper pays attention to the BRI in Chinese and English academic contexts, uses CiteSpace to sort out relevant literature, and compares the similarities and differences between the two academic contexts on this topic. The paper tries to answer the following questions: (1) What are the characteristics of Chinese and English literature on the BRI? (2) What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and English literature on the BRI? (3) How to explain the differences?

Relevant literatures were collected from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) and Web of Science (WOS) with the keyword "一带一路" and "'China' and 'Belt' and 'Road'" from 2013 to 2023. A total of 13,464 Chinese and 4,685 English articles were obtained, which were imported into CiteSpace for further analysis. The comparative review is carried out from several aspects such as literature quantity, subject, cited journal, country, institution, keywords, and topics.

The main findings include: (1) There is a time difference of 1-2 years between Chinese and English literature on BRI research, and Chinese literature is earlier. (2) Both Chinese and English literature take economics and politics as important research perspectives but hold different focuses. In English literature, environment, resources, and other universal issues concerning human welfare are discussed more under the topic of the BRI. (3) There are few pieces of research on the image/perception of the BRI from the perspective of communication. This kind of research pays more attention to the analysis of media texts and the survey of public attitudes. Basically, this

study helps us understand the different interpretations of the BRI in Chinese and English academic contexts. Besides, we find that there is a lack of regional studies and elite perspectives in the current BRI research.

Key Words

Belt and Road Initiative; comparative review; academic contexts

Transformation of the World Heritage Concept: Patrimonialization Challenges

Authors

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Abstract

In an after-war climate in the 20th century, the creation of Unesco and its conventions reflected a new concept of a better world where the humanity would live in peace and mutual understanding. This whole period was marked by the disenchanted belief in the universal man's progress, in a modern world (Giddens, 1990) based on nation-states. As a paradigm of cooperative international engagement, the Unesco's most "popular" Convention, concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage, first aimed the preservation of the most valuable sites for humanity facing the issues such as cultural globalization, urbanization, and climate changes effects.

Nowadays, at its 50th anniversary, the World Heritage List is tribute to the consequences of transformations and dissemination tendencies leading towards diversity and tribalization, which considerably alters the types of heritage inscribed. The "new tribes" which characterize postmodernism are not founded any more on "a common project turned towards the future but the impulse to be together", which is carried out by the decline of individualism and in a "process of identification to a group, a feeling, a fashion" (Maffasoli, 1988). According to Michel Maffasoli, this community dimension and the saturation of the concept of Individual and the logic of identity mark deeply the passage between the two centuries.

In a couple of decades of social acceleration (Rosa, 2010) and technological transformation, the World Heritage List has become a trademark, the prestigious project of stakeholders and politicians seeing it as a tool of communication and a way to promote tourism and economic growth, as popular Unesco sites have become geographically available to visitors from all around the world. As the outcome, heading towards an acceleration of inscriptions, the List typology has been enhanced including recent heritage products as the space-time boundaries have been expanded. Everything has become an object to patrimonialization and State Parties have encouraged this switch in traditional concept of the heritage, which permitted the growth of the List. The universal became the best of its kind and new types of sites such as industrial, agricultural, immaterial and, recently, memorial became potential candidates to this prestigious acknowledgement.

The List dissolution is threatening to discredit "the brand" the humanity created at the end of 20th century with the growth of the List's popularity. Imagined as a tool for saving the world's heritage of outstanding universal value, has the Convention become a victim of its success or a mirror for an inevitable change of the humane society? Through the study of the World Heritage List evolution, comparative analysis of the archive documents and important committee decisions we will discuss the main changes and their potential consequences on the world heritage mechanism. Is the

procedure of patrimonialization on the global level still sustainable and is it ready to face new challenges and reframe and what are the possible consequences to the Convention?

Key Words

Unesco, Convention, world heritage, patrimonialization, international cooperation

Communicating "Home" through Multiple Migrations: A Case of Highly-Mobile Individuals

Authors

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Abstract

Large scale migrations since the end of World War II have resulted in changes to the ethnic populations of many developed nations (Castles, 1995) as well as super-diversity in various parts of the world (Vertovec, 2007). Migrants are constantly required to negotiate and renegotiate new life circumstances and points of reference (Boccagni & Baldassar, 2015), including the meaning of "home" and "doing home". The migrant's "home" is often perceived as being elsewhere, such as in "the diasporic imagination" (Brah, 1996: 192), or in home countries and homelands (Bammer, 1992; Yuval-Davis, 2011). Migration has led to the politicisation of "home" (Sheffer, 2003), whereby "undesirables" are excluded and "desirables" are allowed inside (Bowlby, Gregory and McKie, 1997). There is also a contradiction at the heart of migration - those who migrate can have too many homes or no homes (Ahmed, 1999). In spite of these multiple perspectives on "home", little research has actually been done on how "home" is communicated by migrants, particularly by those who move multiple times as children/adolescents.

In this study, I focus on a cohort of "migrants in special circumstances" (Benjamin & Dervin, 2017) oftentimes termed "Third Culture Kids" (or TCK). The term TCK refers to an individual "who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years [in this case, childhood and adolescence] outside the parents' culture" (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Drawing from interviews with 16 to 40 year old TCKs and Adult TCKs (adults who grew up in multiple countries in their childhoods and adolescence), I explore how "home" and "doing home" are communicated by so-called TCKs who have experienced and are experiencing living in multiple physical settings throughout their early lives.

"Home" encounters multiple negotiations and renegotiations throughout a person's lifetime, but for migrants in particular, migration is an emotional process "as people move away from home or indeed, between 'homes'" (Boccagni & Baldassar, 2015: 74). I argue that for those who move multiple times, "home" is communicated through a temporal lens, where "home" represents the number of years one lived in a country, therefore becoming a point of reference. Furthermore, the use of interactive media have facilitated what Appadurai (2019) dubs the "diasporic public sphere", where "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983) are built, and migrants are able to voice their own opinions. In the case of my interviewees, Third Culture Kid communities and groups on social media fostered a sense of "home" and a way of "doing home" in a space "characterized by the presence of voice, agency, and debate, rather than of mere reading, reception, and interpellation" (Appadurai, 2019: 562). These interactive spaces have become a "digital home", allowing TCKs to communicate their thoughts, but also to develop a place of belonging on a non-physical platform.

Key Words

Home, communication, interactive media, digital media, migration

Seeing the Nation from Ground Level?: Engaging with User-Generated Nation Branding in Everyday Life

Authors

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Abstract

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Existing literature on nation branding tends to mainly focus on how a nation brand is devised and promoted by governmental agencies, economic institutions, and branding experts. This has led to a lack of focus on more bottom-up perspectives of nation branding generated by ordinary people (e.g., daily vlogs), and to what extent ordinary people contribute to creating more diverse representations of the nation. In addition, much of the existing attention in the field of nation branding is paid on production studies and media texts. However, the reception within the communication circuit of nation branding is still poorly understood, particularly regarding how people perceive this alternative type of nation branding created by common people like them, and in what ways people with different positionalities engage with the same content of nation branding.

To address these research gaps, this paper first introduces the concept of user-generated nation branding to capture the bottom-up dynamics of nation branding. It refers to the practices of promoting a nation initiated by online users in their everyday lives. Empirically, it focuses on two popular user-generated accounts in Japan and China: 'Abroad in Japan', which films the everyday life of a British guy living in Japan, and 'Liziqi', which records a Chinese woman's daily activities in rural China. A total of thirty-seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with their audiences (seventeen for 'Abroad in Japan' and twenty for 'Liziqi'), including both domestic and foreign viewers. More specifically, it investigates how audiences with different national and cultural identities engage with user-generated nation branding in their everyday lives, and to what extent they consider user-generated nation branding to help promote an alternative Japan/China that is different from the stereotypical imagery used in top-down campaigns. The preliminary findings suggest that audience engagement with user-generated nation branding is firstly associated with its perceived ordinariness, immersion, and authenticity. Audience members tend to consider that bottom-up nation branding supported by participatory culture highlights the day-to-day, mundane vibe of the country and invites a sense of immersive feeling, providing a more authentic representation of the nation compared to top-down nation branding.

Key Words

Networked Gatekeeping and Framing: A Comparative Study between Weibo and Twitter

Authors

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Abstract

Building on theories of hybrid media environment, networked gatekeeping and networked framing, we will examine how legacy media coverage and social media conversations are intertwined through linking practices. Under the context of diverse social-culture hybrid media system in the U.S. and China, we inquiry what are the evolving information propagation patterns and how do networked frames enact and sustain throughout the information dissemination progress. We will conduct network and content analysis of random sample social media message over one month-long period to study the networked gatekeeping and framing practices on Twitter and Weibo. We will first examine the primary sources on social media platforms (the target) from legacy media domains (the source) through hyperlinks extractions. The subsequent re-post and re-share messages of most-shared direct links will be obtained to construct the communitive networks through addressivity markers (i.e., RT, @). Networks will be distinguished between elite and non-elite users to closely examine the produced information flow for communication pattern and framing dynamic. Automated frame analysis with inductive and deductive approach will be applied to identify the frames usage. Inherited in the dynamic process of networked framing, we will analysis how frames are "revised, rearticulated, and redispersed" (Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013) to interpret the event over time and reveal the framing values the users of that platform hold onto. This study will bring to light how the source content is employed by elite and non-elite users to shape debates across Twitter and Weibo.

Key Words

networked gatekeeping, networked framing, social network, Weibo, Twitter