



The Research on the Influence of Transnational Relations in Video Social Media Upon Chinese Young Audiences' Understanding of Multiculturalism

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Abstract. This study discusses how the theme of transnational marriage in video social media influences young Chinese audiences' understanding of the concept of multiculturalism in the process of globalization and the rapid development of the Internet. To answer this question, this study adopts the method of thematic analysis. This study chose Bilibili, a very influential video software in China, as the platform, and selected four vloggers with the theme of transnational marriage, watched their videos and analyzed and classified their comments in the comment section. This study studies the audience's views on transnational marriage from two aspects of media and audience. Studies have shown that the gender of the audience, the gender of the media and the type of video all influence the audience's understanding of transnational marriage and multiculturalism. Videos on transnational marriage can not only deepen the audience's understanding and identification with other cultures, but also deepen the national pride and identity of their own culture. As an indispensable part in the process of globalization, multiculturalism has a significant impact on the construction of human society and the progress of thought.

Keywords: Transnational Relations · Video Social Media · Chinese Young Audiences · Multiculturalism

1 Introduction

In the process of globalization, various ideas and cultures exchange more frequently. In these cultural exchanges, multi-culture gradually comes into people's sight. Multiculturalism refers to the integration of different races, nationalities and cultures. Multiculturalism is concerned with cultural diversity and communication between different cultures. With China's economic development and social progress, cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries are more frequent, and multiculturalism has infiltrated into people's daily life: more Chinese people choose to live abroad, and more and more foreigners come to settle down in China. Globalization and China's economic development and social progress make us re-examine the subject of multiculturalism.

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The process of globalization has also led to the rapid development of Internet technology and new media, and China has entered the era of social media. The era of social media is characterized by the diversification of information dissemination and the dissolution of monocultural discourse power. Multiculturalism has entered the public eye through the medium of social media. More topics about cultural diversity are appearing on social media. The content comes in a variety of forms, and multicultural videos are an integral part of that. For multiculturalism, videos can most directly show the differences of people of different races in appearance, language and behavior. In today's fast-paced era, videos have gradually become the main way for young people to obtain information. Therefore, this paper will focus on video social platforms such as Bilibili.

Transnational relationship is a very common form of expression in multicultural videos. Transnational relationship refers to the relationship between two or more people of different nationalities. Transnational relationship can be divided into transnational marriage, transnational family and transnational friendship. There are many related examples on Bilibili. For example, "Old Girl Ake", the uploader of Bilibili, is a British overseas student, and her husband is British. She posts her daily life with her husband under her video, which is full of multicultural integration and understanding. Another example is Johnny777, the owner of station B up. He is Chinese and his wife is Ukrainian. He often cooks some traditional Chinese dishes for his wife in his videos and invites her to comment on them. His videos also reflect the cultural exchanges between China and Ukraine.

The average age of the users of Bilibili is 22.8 years old, and 86% of them are under 35 years old, indicating that most of the users of video websites are young people. Young people under the age of 30 in China grow up in the Internet era and have the opportunity to access different social media platforms and obtain different information. Therefore, cultural diversity has been rooted in their minds for a long time. As the video software most frequently used by young people, the transnational relationship video published on Bilibili website will influence their definition of multiculturalism. Therefore, this paper mainly focuses on how the theme of transnational relations in video social media influences young audiences' understanding of multiculturalism and shapes young people's cognition of multiculturalism.

2 Literature Review

With the development of multiculturalism and its application in social media, many scholars have studied multiculturalism and social media. According to Muhammad's research, social media can bring people from different backgrounds closer and facilitate their communication [1]. In Guan Huiran's paper, she proposed that in the era of globalization, people begin to change from a single cultural identity to a complex cultural identity. Taking overseas Chinese as an example, the author points out that overseas Chinese will deepen their sense of identity with Chinese culture, lifestyle and values when they watch short videos on relevant topics [2]. Zhang Shaoke's paper proves this point of view; Through his research on Chinese students studying in the United States, he showed that the dispersed ethnic groups deepened their multicultural identity through the use of social media [3]. In her paper, Wang Tong pointed out the significance of network society for today's society. Due to the development and process of globalization,

the concepts of nation and region are being dissolved. Migration, cross-border trade and the spread of the Internet have also deepened cross-cultural depth and breadth. Under this background, multiculturalism gradually took shape [4].

Video social media is a very important medium of multicultural communication. The development of new media makes video appear in People's Daily life as a very common form of information transmission. For the audience, video is usually used to satisfy the entertainment needs of the audience's fragmented time [5]. Cross-cultural videos can not only deepen overseas Chinese's sense of identity towards China, but also enable Chinese audiences to construct national image from the perspective of "others". In Xia Feifei's paper, she points out that foreign vloggers who have lived in China tend to view the differences between Chinese and foreign cultures from the perspective of "others" and express such differences in their videos [6]. Luo Lanqiu also took the "Crooked Grape Research Association" as an example in her paper to explain how video, as a medium, helps foreign vloggers construct their views on Chinese culture in cross-cultural communication [7].

This study focuses on transnational marriage in a multicultural context. The process of globalization has brought people of different nationalities and cultures together and into marriage [8]. Transnational marriage is very representative in transnational relationships, because the two parties in marriage need to live together, so some cultural differences in life and thoughts will be more obvious. Transnational marriage can expose some cultural obstacles and conflicts, which can also enable both parties in the transnational marriage to respect the differences between different cultures and establish correct cross-cultural concepts in this process [9]. These ideas are also conveyed to the audience through video.

By June 2021, the number of short video users in China was 888 million, accounting for 87.8% of the total Internet users. By 2021, the number of Internet users aged 6–19 in China has reached 158 million, accounting for 15.7% of the total number of Internet users. This shows that young Chinese viewers are a very large group of video users [10]. Young Chinese viewers have always been devoted to short videos.

The above research and theories help us to know some background information in advance. Through literature reading, it is found that the researches on multiculturalism on social media in China mostly focus on exploring the self-presentation and cultural identity of the publishers, while there is a relative lack of researches on the audiences of such videos. In addition, the study also found some gaps in the research on the multicultural branch of transnational marriage. This study will study the influence of transnational marriage themes in video social media on Chinese young audiences' understanding of multiculturalism by classifying and analyzing relevant video comments.

3 Results and Discussion

This study adopts the research method of subject analysis and draws a conclusion by classifying the comments of viewers of Bilibili video uploader's videos on transnational marriage. This study selects three representative vloggers and conducts content analysis on the comments of their videos to study the views of Chinese young viewers on transnational marriage and their understanding of multiculturalism. Based on the content

analysis of comments, the research finds that audiences' attitudes towards transnational marriage vary depending on the gender of viewers, the gender of vloggers and the type of videos.

In this study, 10 videos of bilibili's video uploader "Old Girl Ake", "JOHNNY777" and "Karina and Rossi" (JOHNNY777's wife) were selected respectively, and the videos were classified. In this video, it was found that the gender of the vlogger would affect the audience of the video: "Old girl Ake" is a Chinese woman who has been living in the UK for a long time. She often posts about her daily life with her British husband in her video account. "JOHNNY777" is a Chinese man living in China who regularly posts videos of himself and his Ukrainian wife on his account. Karina is the wife of Johnny, a Ukrainian cosplay enthusiast. In her video account, people can see that she often publishes cosplays about animation. At the same time, she also contributes videos together with her husband through joint contributions. After browsing the comments section of their videos, the study found that the comments section of "Old Girl Ake" were mostly female, who were happy to watch the daily life shared by "Old Girl Ake" and leave messages for her. The comments section of Johnny will be filled with more men, who will also make their own comments on Johnny's video.

The study found that the type of video also affects the audience. The types of videos submitted by "Old Girl Ake" and "JOHNNY777" are also different. Ake often shares her daily life and funny things in the UK through vlog. However, due to the personality of the vlogger and her life status, her videos are generally relaxed and pleasant, and tend to ordinary daily life. There is no pre-designed script trace in this kind of video, so the content of the video is relatively formal, and there is not much funny content. For example, in one of her videos, "Wear Hanfu to UK Comic-con! I met Tom Hiddleston and gave him his autograph", she recorded a day of her life. She started by going out to walk her dog for breakfast in the morning, chronicling how her day went. Her videos are not very earthy, scripted, or very sophisticated in editing and post-production. They seem very close to everyday life. Ake will extract the funny moments from Vlog as the title of the video, which is also a way of naming Vlog videos. This nomenclature is a good way to catch the eye of the audience. Although Ake's videos are very natural and down-to-earth, she also uses her own methods to express the multicultural nature of the videos: For example, in this video, Ake asks her British husband Rob to voice the English narrator to tell the story of a day with the video pictures. In terms of video content, she also chose the exchange and integration of Chinese and Western culture of "Wearing Hanfu to The UK Comic Exhibition". She not only dressed herself in Hanfu, but also let her husband wear Hanfu and wig to experience traditional Chinese clothes. This kind of multicultural exchange and collision is also reflected in her other videos. For example, Ake has a series of videos about making Chinese food for her husband and his British parents and inviting them to taste it. From her videos, the audience can learn not only about transnational marriage, but also how transnational kinship works.

Johnny and Karina are a Chinese and Ukrainian couple living in China. Johnny is a Chinese man, while Karina are Ukrainian women. Johnny and Karina share their marital life in their videos, but unlike Ake, they rarely share their life in vlog form. Johnny, on the other hand, would give an oral account of interesting events in his life. The Johnny video has some script traces, indicating that he prepared well before making these videos.

He wrote his own video speech in advance and edited it professionally after filming. Johnny is fast paced, informative and punchline dense, giving viewers the impression that the vlogger is a very funny person. A very popular series of Johnny shows him cooking Chinese food for his wife. Unlike other vloggers who explain how to make food while cooking, he often tells non-food stories about himself and his wife while cooking. He uses humorous language and exaggerated expressions to spice up his videos. His wife, “Karina and Rossi,” is an anime lover who posts cosplay videos with Johnny on her channel. There will also be some vlogs about life on her channel. Karina and Jonny have a daughter, whose name is Rossi, and their daughter often appears in their videos. So through their videos, people can get a sense of how another kind of transnational kinship works.

As for such different types of videos, the study found that a large proportion of the audience in the comments section of “Old Girl Ake”, a vlogger living in the UK, were either living abroad or planning to go abroad. Among them are students as well as working members of the community. Through the video analysis of “JOHNNY777”, this study find that most of the people who pay attention to their videos are young people studying or working in China. In their comments, they do not show a strong desire to go abroad, but rather relax and entertain themselves through their videos.

Different audiences have different preferences and attitudes towards different videos. This study divided the audience into men and women. Combined with the above, the study found that both male and female viewers prefer to watch videos from vloggers with the same gender as themselves. It’s an expression of identity. For female viewers, they are more likely to watch videos from female vloggers. Because female bloggers tend to create videos from a female point of view and display emotional subtleties in their videos, they can be relatable to female viewers. When women watch videos from male vloggers, they also pay more attention to women in multinational relationships. For example, in the comments section of the video of “Old Girl Ake”, many female viewers have expressed praise and support for Ake’s video. They also praise Ake’s husband and family from a female perspective. In Johnny and Karina videos, female audiences often praise and praise Karina. For male viewers, they prefer to watch videos by male bloggers. When male viewers rated Chinese men’s international relationships with foreign wives, they were more likely to rate the women’s looks and personalities. A good example is the website B vlogger “Three Kingdoms of American Families”. It is an account run by a Chinese husband who lives in the Netherlands with his American wife and records their lives on video. In his videos, the commenters, mostly men, comment on the women’s looks and personalities. From their comments, the study found that most male viewers still followed traditional Chinese aesthetics. They believe that being gentle and virtuous is a standard for a wife, so you can see many comments like “This American wife meets Chinese aesthetic standards” in the comment section. In addition to commenting on women’s personalities and looks, male viewers also compared American and Chinese women. In their comments, they expressed dissatisfaction with Chinese women, attacking feminism on the Internet and expressing dissatisfaction with the values of Chinese women around them.

This study studies the reasons for the different comments between men and women on videos. According to the research, the reason why women are more tolerant to videos

about international marriage is that they have higher empathy ability, can think from the perspective of women, and will not express too negative views on such topics. Women watch videos on transnational marriage to satisfy their entertainment needs and seek a sense of identity, so they tend to watch videos with more life-like features. Compared with women, men have a single idea about videos on transnational marriage: they show a traditional Chinese male pride for the nation and objectification of women in such videos. For Chinese men, despite their positive comments on international marriages and foreign women, in fact, Chinese men still evaluate foreign women according to a traditional Chinese standard: they think their looks match the popular aesthetic, and they think their quiet personality makes them suitable for the position of wife. These comments show the national pride of young Chinese male audiences and the limitations of their multicultural cognition.

4 Conclusion

The process of globalization has led to the collision and integration of cultures and accelerated the rapid development of Internet technology. Multiculturalism and video social media have emerged and are linked together. The popularity of video-based social media has also cultivated a young Chinese audience. Through literature reading, this study finds that with the process of globalization and the development of Chinese society, multiculturalism has become a part of the mainstream culture of China. Multiculturalism has two sides: for audiences who are exposed to multiculturalism in daily life, watching such videos can deepen their sense of identity with foreign cultures in China. For audiences who are not exposed to multi-cultures, watching such videos can also shape their cognition of multi-cultures in an entertaining way. The study also shows that women are more moderate in their comments on international marriage and multiculturalism and tend to understand cultural differences from a woman's point of view and have a positive attitude towards such differences. For the male audience, they are more inclined to consider transnational marriage from the perspective of traditional men, and they will put the traditional Chinese aesthetics and marriage habits into the relationship of transnational marriage, and think it is a right thing. Video websites should strengthen management of the comment section of videos with multi-cultural themes. Bilibili has announced that it is stepping up its crackdown on pranks of events such as disasters and gender conflicts. The same is true for the comments section of multi-cultural videos: As the situation between Russia and Ukraine deteriorates recently, some malicious remarks can often be seen in the comments section of Chinese and Ukrainian husband and wife vloggers, which is not conducive to the correct dissemination of multi-culture. The video platform should indeed strengthen its control and help audiences establish correct values. In terms of media, video websites should also strengthen cooperation with foreign vloggers and strengthen cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries.

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