Peppa Pig: Experience Evolution and User Migration in Multi-industry Creative Consumption

Lingfeng Fei[1,a], Senmeng Gao[2,b], Rui Zhou[3,c,*] and Rui Chen[4,d]

[1]School of Digital Art & Design, Chengdu Neusoft University, Chengdu, China
[2]School of Art, Sichuan Tourism University, Chengdu, China
[3]School of Arts and Design, Xihua University Chengdu, China
[4]School of Literature, Journalism & Communication, Xihua University,, Chengdu, China
a. feilingfeng@vip.qq.com, b. simono2020@163.com,
c. raychou@126.com, d. chenrui@mail.xhu.edu.cn
*corresponding author

Abstract: The core IP image of the British animated film *Peppa Pig*, "Peppa", has seen an all-media explosion and multi-industry IP consumption since 2018, while transforming from a "child Peppa" to a "social person" symbol, becoming a youth subculture phenomenon worthy of attention. By combing through the rewriting or hype of Peppa as a cultural symbol in various media communication, we analyze the experience flow of cultural symbols behind Peppa culture in the communication process, as well as the phenomenon of user migration in multiple industries, and reflect on the creative consumption under the development trend of "new culture and creativity". Using *Peppa Pig* as a typical case of digital creativity, we propose the logic of user experience construction under two perspectives: product business line and user emotional engagement line. The cultural interpretation of Peppa by different user groups in different industries also inevitably leads to the alienation of Peppa, and Peppa with many different roles is typical. This also demonstrates the trend and crisis of creative IP in the development process: the synergistic evolution of digital creativity in multiple industries and the over-emphasis on experience consumption after the combination of the experience economy and the characteristics of the digital age may lead to creative misconception.

Keywords: Peppa Pig, Multi-industry Creative Consumption, Cultural Symbols, Digital Creativity, Cultural Transmission

1.   Introduction

"Peppa", the anime image from the British cartoon *Peppa Pig*, has become a hot cultural phenomenon in 2018, and its influence is continuing to ferment. Contrary to Peppa's simplistic visual impressions, Peppa's interpretation and multifaceted re-creation present a "cultural spectacle" that is extremely rich in dimension: a complete departure from the setting of this animated preschool children's television film, and even towards an adult interpretation and understanding. After the secondary packaging of short video sites like TikTok, Peppa became a symbol of a youth subculture in the adult world [1]. Peppa Pig's broad and quirky influence is a rarity in the general image of anime, with its development of influences encompassing multi-media communication, multi-industry creativity, participation, and

extension of multiple user identities, and multi-cultural immersion and transformation. Along with the lifestyle and media characteristics of mobile internet, Peppa Pig is placed in the era of "Neo-culture creativity", where the cultural experiences embedded in it have been reconstructed and rendered countless times, both actively and passively.

2.   Transmutation of Cultural Symbols: Peppa's Path to the "Top"

What is the nature of "Peppa"? First an overview of cartoon *Peppa Pig*. The multi-episode animated film, aimed primarily at preschoolers, aired in the UK in 2004 and was introduced to the mainland Chinese market in September 2015. The main story revolves around the happy life of 5-year-old Peppa Pig and her family and friends, the animated film is humorous and funny, each episode is usually no longer than 5 minutes long, through short stories to promote traditional family values and friendship, encouraging children to experience life. This shows that the setting of the original animated film *Peppa Pig* is not fundamentally different from *Pleasant Goat and Wolverine*, and that the audience is even younger and more popular with children and accompanying parents. "Peppa" is still just a piglet in a collection of animated shorts for young people, but at the moment she has been given many personalities.

For many adults, what they know of Peppa implies more than an animated name and an isolated image - a popular heat, an abstract sense of trend, yet strangely possessed of a figurative, symbolic image. The heat of *Peppa Pig* also began to ferment from the low age animated shorts encouraging parent-child bonding. After the general combing of Peppa node events, it can be found that after 2018, Peppa's "hot" road is always accompanied by contact material rewriting and almost hype-style "re-creation" that can trigger heat. With the spread of China's major social networking platforms, various new media, and multi-stream channels, Peppa Pig quickly began to move away from the symbolic meaning of cute, low-child animation characters and evolved from a single symbol of friendship and happiness given by animation to a cultural symbol in the adult world. Of course, the Peppa symbol exists independently in both the parallel worlds of children and adults and the Peppa in the adult world is constantly fragmenting and being rewritten again and again, as a cultural symbol whose implicit meaning has undergone subversive transmutation.

Under the wave of the experience economy, the only way for Peppa to generate more and greater consumer value in different worlds is to make cultural symbols change their connotations to better meet the needs of audiences in multiple industries. Under such circumstances, the process of change of cultural symbols is often hardly the absence of the so-called creativity, by carrying the banner of "secondary creation" and "cultural creativity", from the perspective of their respective interests, the cultural symbols are boldly and recklessly "creative design", either inadvertently or deliberately or even deliberately and maliciously. In the age of digital media, these changes cost little to create and the paths to digital dissemination are far more efficient and far-reaching. The creative force is well versed in user experience, and often surprisingly explores the many interpretations behind the symbolic representations, catering to the huge number of Internet users who have gathered their creativity to create a variety of popular stems. The Peppa in the children's cartoon is transformed into the Peppa culture experienced by adults: there is the "social person" label, the "no-nonsense" style, the bizarre perspective of the hairdryer, and the false imagination of the urban elite towards the countryside [2]. wrapped in different understandings and perceptions and, of course, creativity. In the name of creativity, "Peppa" was processed and rewritten by the masses through self-imagination and perception, and spread through various media on the Internet, until Peppa became a torrent and eventually a cultural phenomenon. From start to hot flip, as if overnight: "Peppa is a hottest star!".

3. The Flux of Creative Experience: Young Children to Adult Subcultures

3.1. Childhood Extinction: Children's Adult Perspective Perception

It is precisely children and adolescents who are responsible for the alienation of Peppa Pig's "social person" symbol, and it is children's imitation of social youth, such as tattoos, dress, gestures, etc., that contributes to Peppa's passive path to society. In the short video, a group of young children wearing tights, sunglasses, gold chains and other objects with clear social symbols, and behaving in an adult manner that mimics the "social shake", but with a sticker of Peppa Pig on their arms. Children's socialized adult parody of the show's hilarious ideas, which is the initial meaning construct of "Social Peppa". The desire of child groups to become adults, to be accepted and admired in the adult world, is also one of the symptoms of a rapidly fading childhood [3]. These social and adult symbols, paired with Peppa Pig, a representative of innocence and youthfulness, have a sense of "divine writing" in the video's reconstruction. And the choice of symbols is very clear about the meaning behind it, which in turn is a reflection of the child's perception of his or her surroundings from an adult perspective.

The erosion of childhood, consciously or unconsciously targeted by commercial companies in many different industries, would have required the combined efforts of parents, schools, the media, and government to reverse it and return childhood to the way it should be perceived. But in the age of digital media, unfortunately, electronics and digital media have coincided to form a linking force that has accelerated the demise of childhood in an unprecedented way. Both behavioral imitation and thinking perspectives are prematurely adultized, and the child's innocence is quickly eroded away. What is worrying is that the digital creative content in the adult world can bring these small adults to experience the pleasure and joy, from learning to entertainment, from games to videos, from learning to entertainment, from games to videos, under the empowerment of user experience, children become an "ideal consumer" of the Internet society to catch the wind. Children's Peppa audiences are rapidly aging and Social Peppa is becoming "true love".

3.2. Adult Anxiety: Childhood Fantasies of the Social Person

As Peppa Pig is being disseminated through various media channels and multi-industry platforms in China, the image of "Social Peppa" has exploded, announcing Peppa's transformation from an underage children's cartoon character to a part of the adult youth subculture. Technological empowerment under media fusion and social consciousness under subcultural domination have together created Peppa Pig's meaning drift from warm educational film to Piggy Girl to social person, its meaning floating process reflecting, to some extent, social psychology and needs [4]. "Peppa culture" reflects the confusion, anxiety, immaturity, and other characteristics of contemporary youth [5]. On the one hand, more and more young adults like to pretend to be adolescent, "refusing to grow up" fantasizes about prolonging the simple life of childhood, the "adolescent culture" fanfare and even seriousness occupy the place, but in fact, many adults are selective escape and even resistance to their anxiety. On the other hand, adults, based on their own experiences and preferences, wishfully interpret many cultural symbols in a mercenary way to show the maturity of their society, like the fantasy antithesis of "Sprouting Culture" reflected in a mirror.

Through digital creativity and digital communication, Peppa, originally a young child, became visible as a "social person" and the youth subculture was quickly surrounded by the mainstream media, further fuelling the continued exposure and discussion. But these subcultures, under the influence of the mainstream culture, gradually move from resistance to compromise, and the social ideological disorders brought about by subcultures are incorporated in the process of absorption by the mainstream culture, and the spectacle of subcultural styles fades and disappears, and subcultures are absorbed as part of the mainstream culture and spread widely, and then lose their distinctiveness [6].

The "Social Peppa" idea is just a catharsis of adult anxiety in the guise of childishness. It is undoubtedly somewhat ironic that the "harmlessness of human beings and animals" of the subculture, having been absorbed by the mainstream values, has lost its subversive significance in the process of reverting to the mainstream order [7]. These ideas, which are so hot in the emerging medium, seem to be not so different from Peppa for children, with their childlike innocence. On digital creative carriers and digital communication platforms, the cries of adult anxiety experiences are only amplified. As for the prolonged fantasy of childhood, once it is put into action, it remains out of place in the mainstream culture of the real world offline and is relegated directly to the childish category. Cultural barriers, both online and offline, remain strong, especially as the discourse of the mainstream world has not fundamentally changed. The occasional example of fusion, such as the Peppa Pig watch has countless fans in the adult world, and the inexplicable euphoria that lurks is also indicative of the difficulty of such fusion and recognition: digital media culture has never really finished "taking over" as the dominant culture in today's world, but this fission is happening gradually, and perhaps, one day, will "take over" the world discourse.

4. Multi-industry User Migration: Reflections on "Neo-culture Creativity" for Creative Consumption

4.1. UGC Alternative Spoof Production for IP Consumption

The multi-industry development of digital creativity based on the image of *Peppa Pig* IP has generated a huge commercial value of nearly 12 billion yuan a year [8], and has formed a phenomenal cultural influence in China that can affect hundreds of millions of people. "Neo-culture creativity" can be seen as the next phase of a world-class innovation strategy in business models. But at the micro-level, almost all IP images are challenged by the UGC (User Generated Content) model. Under the UGC model, netizens are no longer just viewers, but producers and suppliers of Internet content and experiential Internet services can be carried out more deeply. On the one hand, in the era of mobile Internet, the fever of IP cannot be separated from the powerful dissemination power of UGC; on the other hand, the creative discourse of UGC will inevitably produce an alternative and almost spoof application of native IP. The creator's consumption of the IP even generates additional broad commercial value that the IP itself cannot control. Benefiting from the low-threshold UGC production of digital ideas, Social Peppa has even greater reach and economic value in the adult world than Child Peppa has in the children's world. The double-edged sword effect of UGC creativity on native IP is surfacing faster in the new media era. The irony is that the IP building and hype is not pure from the beginning, as it is not possible to build an IP without UGC exposure and dissemination but to be pure on its own. With the increasing heat of dissemination, IP transmutation or degradation into the definition of UGC material, which has little to do with the connotation of the original IP itself, so what is the logic of the position of "spoof" criticism.

4.2. Windfall Consumption in the Flow Economy

Peppa Pig is at peace with society in the mass media but is given all kinds of identities, all kinds of labels in the open cyberspace. Nowadays, the public is used to being "labeled" in the world of big data, and more so to be "given labels". Labels often complicate the purity of reality, but also simplify the profound meaning of popular symbols [9]. In the face of the traffic benefits brought about by the mobile Internet, one of the benefits of abstracting and simplifying the cultural connotation into a label is to become a simple and efficient carrier of "viral spread" to better achieve the acceleration of the spread of all media. For example, after the *What's Peppa* film campaign was featured on Peppa Pig again in January 2019, a variety of brands participated in the creation of "native ads" related to the *What's Peppa* sentence. In the end, Peppa Pig was able to "dominate the screen" without any surprise,

including a blizzard of online and offline all-media trends. And the traffic economy has also succeeded in moving communications audiences from online expansion to every day, creating a trendy topic. *What's Peppa* became a topic of conversation for social reasons. As an essential part of the interpersonal process, "topics" generally consist of messages that both parties can understand to resonate. For such social needs, audiences often choose current trends as a prerequisite for interaction, and call this process "following the trend" or "catching up", and Peppa Pig is no exception [10]. The author conducted a rough questionnaire survey in this regard. Among the 188 valid questionnaires, the proportion of adult users who said they were familiar with Peppa topics was as high as 73.10% who "never watched" and "only watched a few episodes" of the *Peppa Pig* cartoon, and 19.70% of users who "watched a few episodes". And an episode of the Peppa Pig animated film is just under five minutes long. Therefore, only 7.30% of the users have looked at it. From this, it can be seen that to keep abreast of the topics in daily life and not to become "outdated", users also deliberately consume fashionably. But they're just users of the Peppa Pig trending topic. Mass users have shifted from IP consumption intentions to broad topic consumption needs under purely social needs. In the era of "Neo-culture creativity", IP consumption has been transformed into an everyday form, confirming the huge social attributes of mobile Internet. In particular, the "Z-era" crowd, which has a strong social demand, is often the main force of UGC. The Peppa Pig is a footnote to the migration of consumer connotations, with the double overlay of the attributes of the times and the attributes of the crowd.

4.3. Participatory Creativity in Fan Culture

In the second half of the mobile Internet, "Neo-culture creativity" has emerged, and all people are involved in the creation and distribution of content. Fans of various IPs have migrated from purely audience consumption users to creative producers. In the era of "Neo-culture creativity", the development of digital creative technology and user experience-oriented development has also lowered the threshold of cultural and creative production, Peppa Pig cultural symbols can stand out among adults, in addition to the need for interaction from daily life, and is also inextricably related to TikTok, Racer and other mobile audio-visual social software to promote the audience's "participatory production" with convenient operation steps, the lowering of the production threshold has also expanded the "fan" outreach [11]. The creativity and imagination of one part of the fan base add an aura to the native IP, while another part of the fan base (pseudo-fans in the eyes of the previous group) skillfully spoofs the creative interpretation. It's a law of the internet that only characters who can be spoofed are good. Because of the changing psychological needs of people in the post-truth era can only be met by spoofing [12]. The passion of fan participation is empowered by the dissemination, and when a certain level and frequency of exposure is reached, a certain IP of its obsession successfully becomes a certain period of net-celebrity, thus harvesting more attention and exposure. *What's Peppa* is a promotional film for the film *Peppa Pig for the New Year*, and its promoters know it well. Not only did it mobilize the general public's fan base, but it also succeeded in making each brand's official announcement platform a "fan", joining the ranks of the creative force. Some of the traditional media have taken the "what is Peppa" to mean "Peppa is love, Peppa is Spring Festival, Peppa is reunion". The bizarre conclusion or creative interpretation of "Peppa is a year" from the perspective of Chinese culture is quite a cute attempt to immigrate Peppa from Britain to China and become a Chinese citizen. At the beginning of 2019, after a long time of national participation that is not limited to fans, the whole media is filled with all kinds of peace before Peppa's big year. This "peaceful" cultural imagery is clearly what fans expect to read. Peppa, who was born in the British West, may not have understood the meaning behind this phrase. But this does not in any way impede the appropriateness of participatory creativity, as traffic consumption and the fan economy are inherently dual creatures.

5.   User Experience Factors for Digital Creativity

5.1.   Business Logic-based User Experience

As the world enters the Internet era, a large number of digital products with digital content as the mainstay, user experience thinking is also widely accepted and recognized in the IT community. In terms of industry coverage, digital creative products are also applicable to the review of experience thinking, but there are many differences with the software industry where the concept of "user experience" began. Scholar Jesse James Garrett builds a model of user experience elements that are well known to practitioners in the Internet space [13],A model that divides the user experience into boxes and levels helps developers to consider the problems that users may encounter in the experience. However, the user experience element model is built based on the business layer of digital product attributes and is suitable for the experience understanding of functional and information-based products. Thinking about the elements of experience in terms of business line logic, each level is decided based on the level below it, and there is a sort of bottom-up "ripple effect" that means that choosing an option outside the boundaries of the higher level requires reconsidering decisions made at the lower level. But when joined by the logic of the content line, this "ripple effect" is suspended, and different levels of experience elements are made possible. The content production mechanism of digital creative products is therefore significantly different from the waterfall development process of digital IT products, and the experience elements of digital creative products are not linearly logical. The user experience elements of creative products should be rethought in terms of business line and content line. In the digital product category, functional products are primarily task-focused, informational products are information-focused, and creative products should perhaps focus on emotion. This means that the three are significantly different in their strategic objectives for development. The first two are derived from user needs outside the organization, while the latter is the kernel and values of the story, and are deeply connected to the user's cultural background and emotional awareness. The strategic dimension of the experiential element can smoothly and retrospectively explain the phenomenon of *Peppa Pig* being easily alienated or misinterpreted in the communication process. The user experience of digital creative products has a wide range of migratory identities, which can also be called experience flux, and thus is also prone to user migration between different industries.

5.2.   User Experience Based on Emotional Engagement

The Experience Economy divides experience into four domains, entertainment, aesthetics, education, and escape, according to the level of user engagement and involvement, which are mutually compatible and form unique personal contexts [14]. It can be seen that the user experience cannot be separated from the user or consumer engagement. As digital technology evolves, the cost of user engagement is increasingly trending downward, while the penetration of engagement is on the rise. In the Internet age, the flow of digital information naturally moves in the direction of lower reach costs, and the content of digital ideas is then reconstructed in a way that is less costly to understand cognition. In this context, digital creative products tend to blur the boundaries between entertainment experiences and educational experiences, and educational experiences also require more active consumer engagement, and this engagement again blends the real world with the emotional world. The reason why the animated film *Peppa Pig* is gaining popularity with more and more consumers as the information medium develops is itself an expression of the development of the experience economy. At the same time, digital technology has broadened the breadth and thickness of emotional engagement, and phrases such as "immersive experience" appear frequently in user experience descriptions, helping to shape creative IP. Many creative IPs have significant cultural-emotional

characteristics, not only in the construction of the story content but also in the shaping factors of digital technology, making emotional engagement easier to achieve. The higher-order truth of the emotional experience is tapped from the perspective of IP creativity and is realized through digital technology. But ironically, the digital world is far less costly to invest in emotional engagement than the real world, and formally because of the reduced cost of reaching, digital technology inevitably affects real-world alienation and the creation of certain disorders. The "multifaceted", different types of Peppa images are the result of individual experiences with different emotional needs, and the side that is far from the original IP core is also the product of different levels of participation, in addition to the inevitable mixing of certain commercial purposes.

6.   Conclusion

The transformation of Peppa Pig from a British "child Peppa" image to a "Social Peppa" symbol of the Chinese youth subculture has become a cultural phenomenon in China, where mobile Internet is developing rapidly. In the process of all-media communication and multi-industry consumption of the Peppa Pig IP, there is the current maladaptive tendency of children to become adults, as well as the concentration of adult anxiety experiences and childhood fantasies that "refuse to grow up". Achieved near-all-age audience reach in a low-threshold digital creative stream. With the opening of the "Neo-culture creativity" era in the second half of China's mobile Internet, the migration of users in multiple forms of creative consumption has become more frequent and normalized, and the IP construction, dissemination, and consumption in the context of the "Neo-culture creativity" strategy also face new challenges and opportunities. Just as Peppa Pig's localized, multi-media, and multi-industry field has been a hit, it is worthwhile for the industry and academia to explore and reflect on it accordingly, to promote the healthy and sustainable development of China's digital creative industry and mobile Internet.

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