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Preface

The 2nd International Conference on Social Psychology and Humanity Studies (ICSPHS 2024) is an annual conference focusing on research areas including psychology and humanity studies, etc. It aims to establish a broad and interdisciplinary platform for experts, researchers, and students worldwide to present, exchange, and discuss the latest advance and development in all facets of psychology and humanity studies.

This volume contains the papers of the 2nd International Conference on Social Psychology and Humanity Studies (ICSPHS 2024). Each of these papers has gained a comprehensive review by the editorial team and professional reviewers. Each paper has been examined and evaluated for its theme, structure, method, content, language, and format.

Cooperating with prestigious universities, ICSPHS 2024 organized two workshops in Notre Dame and Murcia. Dr. Kurt Buhring chaired the workshop “Religion and Science”, which was held at Saint Mary's College. Dr. Javier Cifuentes-Faura chaired the workshop “Policies to Improve the Education System: Detecting Student Concerns in Higher Education” at University of Murcia.

Besides these workshops, ICSPHS 2024 also held an online session. Eminent professors from top universities worldwide were invited to deliver keynote speeches in this online session, including Dr. Ambreen Shahriar from London Metropolitan University, Dr. Sara Mashayekh from University of New South Wales (UNSW), Dr. Javier Cifuentes-Faura from University of Murcia, etc. They have given keynote speeches on related topics of psychology and humanity studies, etc.

On behalf of the committee, we would like to give sincere gratitude to all authors and speakers who have made their contributions to ICSPHS 2024, editors and reviewers who have guaranteed the quality of papers with their expertise, and the committee members who have devoted themselves to the success of ICSPHS 2024.

Dr. Kurt Buhring
General Chair of Conference Committee

Workshops

Workshop – Notre Dame: Religion and Science



March 1st, 2024 (GMT-5)

Department of Religious Studies and Theology, Saint Mary's College

Workshop Chair: Dr. Kurt Buhring, Associate Professor in Saint Mary's College

Workshop – Murcia: Policies to Improve the Education System: Detecting Student Concerns in Higher Education



March 1st, 2024 (GMT+1)

Department of Financial Economics and Accounting, University of Murcia

Workshop Chair: Dr. Javier Cifuentes-Faura, University of Murcia

The 2nd International Conference on Social Psychology and humanity studies

ICSPHS 2024

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The Influence of Cultural Background on Employment Behavior

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Abstract: Cultural background plays an important role in the organizational environment and has a wide and profound impact on employee behavior. Based on the cultural dimension theory proposed by Hofstede, this article attempts to explain more clearly from a theoretical perspective the predictable effects that different cultural backgrounds may have on cooperation in cross-cultural teams. This article also refers to a research report that investigated the cross-cultural after-sales team of "DM Company". It attempts to use this study as an example to explore the impact of different cultural backgrounds on sales work in cross-cultural teams, and to explore the impact of other cultural backgrounds on work. This paper aims to explore the impact of cultural background on employee behavior, including communication style, decision-making style, work attitude and so on. By analyzing how different cultural backgrounds shape employee behavior, it can help organizations better manage diverse employee groups and improve work efficiency and employee satisfaction.

Keywords: cultural background, environment, employee, behavior

1. Introduction

In today's globalization, organizations often include employees from different countries, regions and cultural backgrounds. This diversity creates a rich mix of cultural backgrounds within an organization, which also affects how employees behave and interact. Cultural background is a collection of personal cognition, values and social norms, so in the work environment, different cultural backgrounds will lead to different behavioral characteristics of employees. As far as we know, many large international companies have employees from all over the world who have received different cultural education since childhood. For example, Sony Interactive Entertainment, which is headquartered in California. Many of its management teams come from Japan, Europe, and other regions, and it itself needs to accept the jurisdiction of Sony's headquarters in Japan. The results produced by such a team are often gratifying. SIE has produced many works that are both loved by Americans and cannot be put down by Asians. But it is obviously not easy to manage such a large multinational company with employees from various cultural backgrounds. For example, Japanese people prefer to communicate in implicit language, while American people are more willing to express their feelings directly. This will lead to some occasions that Japanese employees think they are offended. In terms of working hours, Asians are willing to accept long overtime work, while Americans often think it is unacceptable to encroach

on their own rest time to deal with work. There are many similar problems caused by different cultural backgrounds. This paper will mention and analyze them in this article.

2. A brief introduction to Hofstede's cultural dimension theory

In the late 1970s, Dutch scholar Hofstede conducted a survey of 116,000 IBM employees in more than 40 countries and regions and classified cross-regional culture into four types, namely: power distance (PD), individualistic or collectivistic tendency (IND), uncertainty avoidance (UA), rigid-flexible tendency (MAS), in subsequent research in Hong Kong, based on the study of Chinese culture, Hofstede A fifth dimension, Long term-Short term, was also proposed. These dimensions briefly and comprehensively explain some common problems caused by different cultural backgrounds.

The first dimension is power distance. Power distance refers to the degree to which people with low status in a society accept the unequal distribution of power in a society or organization. Divided into authoritarian and democratic.

The second dimension is individualistic or collectivistic tendencies. Individualists prioritize the interests of themselves, those close to them, and habitually consider the pros and cons before making decisions. They will emphasize horizontal (i.e. peer-to-peer) relationships rather than vertical relationships. Collectivists prioritize the interests of the group and the organization and consider the norms of behavior established to regulate the group. Generally speaking, they are more submissive than individualists.

The third dimension is uncertainty avoidance. Refers to the extent to which the culture can tolerate future uncertainty. Some cultures prefer to avoid uncertainty and impose many restrictions on informal behavior; other cultures let uncertainty take its course and impose no restrictions on informal behavior.

The fourth dimension is rigid-flexible tendency, also translated as male-female tendency. A culture with a high degree of masculinity pays more attention to achievements and task completion. In contrast, a society with a high degree of femininity pays more attention to interpersonal relationships, cooperation, care for the weak and the quality of life.

The fifth dimension is long/short term orientation. Refers to the extent to which members of a culture are willing to delay the gratification of their material, emotional, and social needs. Or whether these people have a tendency to judge their behavior in a future-oriented way.

Hofstede's cultural dimension theory is based on a large amount of empirical data and is highly scientific and universal. However, as the times change and new research results emerge, it also needs to be constantly updated and improved. Based on the literature, this article summarized some problems that cross-cultural teams may encounter.

3. Influence on employees' communication styles

The cultural background has a profound effect on an employee's communication style. People are educated and socialized in different cultural environments, shaping their preferences and communication methods. This influence is particularly important in cross-cultural teamwork.

3.1. High Complexity Culture vs Low Complexity Culture

In some cultures with high complexity, people tend to consider others who are different from themselves, while in cultures with low complexity, people lack understanding of people who are different from themselves and sometimes involved in some sensitive issues. For example, in a video advertisement released by McDonald's (Japan) on the social media "X (formerly twitter)" on September 20, 2023, only an Asian family of three appeared, so there are some retweets believing that McDonald's (Japan) does not consider the feelings of LGBT people, birth control activists, and

interracial families. [1] This is because people in East Asia have less complex cultural backgrounds, which makes them more inclined to consider the moods of individuals similar to themselves. In team collaboration with a cross-cultural background, some employees from high-complexity cultural areas may feel that employees from low-complexity cultural areas do not consider their own feelings in terms of speech and other aspects. These factors will cause a certain degree of communication conflict.

3.2. High-touch culture vs low-touch culture

Societies in high-touch cultures emphasize emotional expression and physical contact, and pay more attention to non-verbal factors in communication, such as facial expressions, gestures, and voice regulation. This leads to employees in high-touch cultures being more emotional and closer in their interactions. In contrast, low-touch cultures place more emphasis on words and the clear delivery of information, and they prefer to use direct and unambiguous language to avoid ambiguity[2]. This creates misunderstandings in team communication, with employees in high-touch cultures feeling a lack of attention and employees in low-touch cultures feeling overly emotional.

4. Influence on employees' decision-making

Cultural background has a significant impact on the way employees make decisions, reflecting individual priorities when approaching problems and making plans. Different cultural values and mindsets shape employees' preferences in the decision-making process, which in turn affects their behavior and role in the organization.

4.1. Direct decision-making vs consultative decision-making

Some cultures tend to emphasize the leading role of leaders or top management in decision-making [3]. These cultures are more inclined to make decisions directly and decisively, emphasizing the authority of leaders. Other cultures place more emphasis on consultation and consensus, valuing the participation and input of team members. In cross-cultural teams, this difference leads to dissonance in the decision-making process, where direct decision-making employees feel that other team members do not respect their authority enough, while consulting decision-making employees feel that direct decision-making people lack openness.

4.2. Cautious decision-making vs brave decision-making

Highly prudent cultures emphasize fully considering variety and risk before making decisions. Workers in these cultures are more inclined to weigh decisions slowly, making sure that the option chosen is the safest. On the other hand, some cultures emphasize decisiveness and courage in decision-making and are more willing to take certain risks in pursuit of greater opportunities. This difference in decision-making leads to different attitudes toward risk assessment, with prudent employees worrying that brave people are too risky, and courageous employees thinking prudent people are too conservative.

5. Influence on employees' work attitude

The cultural background has a profound impact on employees' work attitudes, shaping their views on work, values, and emotional experiences related to work. Different cultures have different attitudes toward work, which affects employees' work commitment, career development goals, and emotional attitudes toward work.

5.1. The balance between individual achievement and teamwork

In some cultures, personal achievement and excellence are widely emphasized, and employees are more concerned with personal performance and achievement at work. This leads them to pay more attention to individual contributions in teamwork, and even tends to compete[4]. Conversely, some cultures place more emphasis on teamwork and shared success, and employees are more willing to sacrifice individual fulfillment for the sake of overall goals. In a team environment, this difference affects how well employees collaborate and support each other.

5.2. The pursuit of stability and career development

Some cultures pay more attention to job stability and long-term career development, and employees are more willing to work in a relatively stable position and accumulate experience and status. On the contrary, some cultures encourage employees to seek opportunities for career development, and are more willing to switch between different positions and organizations in order to pursue better opportunities and development[5]. This affects employees' long-term commitment to the organization and motivation to work .

6. An Instance about DM Company

A research team in Beijing conducted a 10-day investigation on DM Company [6]. Some of their findings are shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Findings of the investigation on DM Company

manifestation of cultural tendency	Total		Chinese		German		Singaporean	
	amount	percent %	amount	percent %	amount	percent %	amount	percent %
Individualism	19	63.3	8	53	9	90	0	0
Collectivism	11	36.7	7	47	1	10	3	100
High-context	17	56.7	11	73.4	1	10	3	96.6
Low-context	13	43.3	4	27.0	9	90	0	3.4
Linear concept of time	16	53.4	4	27.0	9	90	1	33.3
Flexible concept of time	14	46.7	11	73.4	1	10	2	66.7
Hierarchical culture	15	50.0	9	60.0	4	40.0	2	66.7
Democratic culture	15	50.0	6	40.0	6	60.0	1	33.3

Data from DM pointed out that employees from different cultural backgrounds also have these interesting characteristics:

(1) Individualistic culture: The German team's after-sales technical service team is individual-centered, attaches great importance to personal development and literacy, direct communication, transaction-oriented, divided service awareness and personal responsibility.

(2) Collectivist culture: China's after-sales technical service team is collective-centered, attaches great importance to teamwork and coordination, cooperation orientation, group decision-making, and face-to-face push-type work processes.

(3) Cognition of social framework: China's after-sales technical service team adapts to a high-context culture, focuses on corporate culture and trust relationships, is people-oriented, and comprehensively assesses employee performance. Germany's after-sales technical service team adapts to a low-context culture, focusing on work ability and data analysis, distinguishing public from private, linear reasoning, and direct expression.

(4) Differences in communication methods: German after-sales technical service teams are adapted to low-context communication methods. They like direct communication methods, pay attention to the key points of speech, complete work efficiently, and choose personnel with similar cultural backgrounds. China's after-sales technical service team likes indirect communication, does a lot of preparation, focuses on the efficiency of teamwork, and selects personnel with different cultural backgrounds.

(5) Linear concept of time: Germans have a strong linear concept of time. A linear time concept culture emphasizes time planning, work efficiency, punctuality and future development, and solves problems in a straightforward manner.

(6) Flexible concept of time: Chinese people have an obvious flexible concept of time. A flexible time concept culture focuses on service strategies, details, communication and long-term relationships, and responds to problems in a flexible way.

(7) Hierarchical culture: Chinese people pay attention to hierarchical culture, which can correspond to the long "power distance" proposed by Hofstede. A hierarchical culture emphasizes the distribution of power, reporting relationships, division of responsibilities and the inability to skip levels.

(8) Democratic culture: Singaporeans prefer democratic management. A democratic culture emphasizes evaluation criteria for competence and cooperation, two-way communication, equality and respect, openness and transparency, and teamwork.

There are still many differences caused by cultural background. In the context of globalization, multinational companies should pay more attention to dealing with those cultural issues they have to face.

7. Conclusion

The cultural background profoundly impacts employee behavior, from communication styles to decision-making styles to work attitudes. Organizations should recognize this impact and take appropriate measures to promote the harmonious coexistence of cultural diversity. By respecting and understanding different cultural backgrounds, organizations can maximize the potential of their employees and improve overall performance and creativity.

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Differences in BBC and CCTV Coverage

- An Applied Validation of Cultivation Theory

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Abstract: Every country in the world has its own media organization, so why is there a difference in perspective and content between media organizations around the world? This paper will use the BBC and CCTV as examples to try to explain the reasons for the differences between the different media and further explain the underlying principles behind the variation in media coverage in the context of cultivation theory. People can see that the factors contributing to this difference are complex and may include the nature of the media itself, the collective interests it represents, and the significance of the events it covers for the media. At the same time, the laws of media operation also play an important role behind the scenes, leading to all these differences, and the different reports may also be due to the application of different media theories. This paper will elaborate on the above factors.

Keywords: news media, cultivation theory, comparison

1. Introduction

In any country in the world, the media plays the role of a purveyor of information. But just as there are not two identical leaves worldwide, media coverage of the same event may also differ for various reasons [1]. This article would like to analyze the reasons for these differences based on the differences between BBC and CCTV's coverage of the 2023 Beijing floods.

Background of the incident: On July 21, 2023, Super Typhoon Dusuari was generated in the ocean east of the Philippines. It then moved in a northwesterly direction and continued to gain strength. In the following month, the typhoon wreaked havoc on the countries and regions it passed through along its path, including heavy rainfall and windy weather. Due to the enormous impact of the typhoon, great attention was paid to the disaster worldwide. China's capital city, Beijing, was also severely damaged by the typhoon, with most of the city flooded and the entire city suffering huge losses. In the aftermath of the disaster, the BBC and CCTV media reported on the natural disaster and the measures taken by the Chinese government and gave different attitudes towards the government's handling of the disaster, so let's take a look at the two media reports to see where the differences are.

2. Similarities between the two

This paper will first describe the similarities between the BBC and CCTV's coverage of the Beijing floods. For example, both follow the characteristics of truthfulness, accuracy, and effectiveness in their news reporting; secondly, both reflect their professionalism as news organizations and so on. Then, the cultivation theory is cited further to explain the reasons for the differences between the two. For example, they have different stances and report different contents for different purposes.

There is a lot of literature that discusses and examines nurture theory extensively. The Nurture Process discusses in detail the roots and development of nurture theory. They point out that people's perceptions and ideas are shaped by television over a long period of exposure to the medium, leading them to have an understanding of the natural world that deviates from the real [2]. They noted that despite the many studies conducted on nurturing theories, some controversies and uncertainties remain [3]. Their study found that how information is processed while watching television leads viewers to align their perceptions of the natural world with those presented on television [4]. Some found that the type and style of news coverage significantly affected viewers' political knowledge and opinions, thus further reinforcing the effect of nurture [5]. Overall, nurture theory continues to profoundly impact today's media as a framework for explaining television's impact on viewers' perceptions and ideas. These studies have important implications for our understanding of the media's shaping of viewers' attitudes and perspectives and the interaction between individuals and the media. This paper will analyze the similarities and differences between the two media based on cultivation theory

CCTV and BBC had several things in common in their coverage of the Beijing flood event. Firstly, both news organizations reported the Beijing flood incident in a timely and accurate manner, including the time and place of the flood incident and other relevant information. Second, both news organizations demonstrated a high degree of professionalism, and both reported in a professional manner and method. This includes interviewing relevant people, collecting information, and reporting objectively and comprehensively. Meanwhile, as mainstream media, both news organizations have certain influence. Their reports will attract public attention and have a certain impact on public opinion. People put the two reports together, it is not difficult to find that the BBC and CCTV for this flood disaster victims of the extent of the report are very similar, and in some of the affected areas of the specific circumstances of the performance of the same description, which can be fully demonstrated that the two media for the objective impact of the event has produced a very practical documentary reporting. Therefore, they need to be responsible for their reports and ensure the authenticity and objectivity of the information [6]. Lastly, and most importantly, the two news organizations are concerned about the affected people's situation and use it to convey relevant information to the public, such as interviewing the affected people and shooting relief videos.

3. Differences between the two

In addition, in the reports of these two media, people can also observe some details that have been deliberately ignored. Both media have partially reported the incident. Such selective coverage may involve political factors and ideological influences. For different purposes and directions, the media may choose to report and emphasize what is in line with their own positions and political interests, while ignoring some aspects that may negatively affect their positions.[7].

When reporting on the flood disaster, CCTV may not emphasize too much on the government's responsibilities and shortcomings in this incident. This is because CCTV represents the voice of the Chinese government and party to a certain extent, and the direction and content of its coverage may be somewhat restricted. At the same time, CCTV's reports paid more attention to the government's efforts to fight the flood and the people's solidarity and cooperation. They emphasized the

government's leading role and showed the active participation of government departments and rescuers in flood-fighting operations. CCTV also invited experts to advise on how to save themselves and cope with floods, aiming to raise public awareness and preparedness. This kind of coverage intends to convey a positive message and enhance public confidence in the government. Through critical thinking and extensive reading, people can better understand the complete picture of events and recognize bias and selective reporting. In contrast, BBC's reports focus more on factual presentation and multiple viewpoints. They showed the flood damage and interviewed some directly affected residents to show the impact of the flood on individuals. In addition, they also questioned and criticized the government's performance in flood response. These views and criticisms in the BBC report focused on provoking public thinking and discussion. From each side's point of view, the other side's reports are biased. Still, suppose people put their reports in a neutral position. In that case, people can find that their reports, although very different in the specific areas of concern, are both out of their interests and resort to their requirements, so people cannot simply because of the difference between the two reports of a particular place to determine whose reports are correct and whose statements are wrong.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Gerbner, an American communication scholar, proposed the cultivation theory through a series of studies on violent content on television. Cultivation theory advocates the convergence of public opinion through the influence of television as a mass media that represents and guides mainstream social opinion [8]. The BBC and CCTV coverage of the event also diverged in large part because of the role of cultivation theory. CCTV is the official media representative that fully utilizes the cultivation theory. It is easy to find that CCTV's coverage of the flood disaster mainly publicized the official data and selected some typical public representatives as the interviewees for broadcasting in terms of disaster statistics. To a certain extent, this spread the signal to the people that the disaster was not as severe as imagined so that people could believe that the government could handle the incident well, at the same time, CCTV also vigorously publicized the anti-flooding initiatives, which could help people cope with the dangers to a certain extent. The BBC's report on the flooding was more inclined to tell the public about the process of the disaster and its subsequent consequences, as well as about the impact of the disaster. The BBC's coverage of the flood was more oriented towards telling the public about the process of the tragedy and the subsequent damages caused, and the BBC reported on the incident from the perspective of a bystander, which was not as much of a guide as CCTV's coverage. In proposing the theory of "cultivation", Gerbner makes a central point. Media propaganda creates a new "worldview" for the public, one that may even run counter to the real world. Here, people can see this through different media's propaganda treatments at the time of the disaster; CCTV created a message for the Chinese people that "our country is capable of dealing with this disaster and protecting people's lives and health as much as possible." At the same time, the BBC conveyed a message to the world's people that "Beijing, China, is facing a serious natural disaster, and how the Chinese government is going to deal with this disaster effectively, people will wait and see," people can find that their focuses differ.

4. Conclusion

To summarize, first of all, both BBC and CCTV's reports on the Beijing floods showed the damage to the city and the people's living conditions from a professional point of view, both had similar affirmations of the damage caused by the floods, and both investigated and understood the whole process of the matter through similar means. Secondly, the two obviously disagree on the focus of the coverage of the event. Due to the cultivation theory, CCTV focuses more on the positive aspects of the event, which can not only increase people's confidence in fighting against the disaster, but also help the government to work better and stabilize the public opinion, while BBC prefers to show the impact of the event from multiple angles, such as the people's suffering and the destruction of the city,

in order to let people understand the whole picture of the event better.[9].When people are exposed to different media reports, people should ask ourselves some key questions: Does the report provide multiple viewpoints? Are different economic, social and political factors covered? Is there missing or exaggerated information? Instead of believing one side of different reports and refuting the other without thinking, people need to look at different news reports dialectically, taking into account the background of the time and the positions of both sides. This will also enable us to recognize the facts more clearly, just like an old Chinese saying: "Listening to both sides is good for you, while believing in one side is bad for you".

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Rwanda-Conflict, Violence, and Reconstruction

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Abstract: When it comes to Rwanda, most people first think of the tragic movie — *The Rwanda Hotel*. That film recreates the bloody 1994 massacre in Rwanda, causing irreparable harm to every Rwandan people. Rwanda's history is indeed full of hatred and misery. After the massacre, the Rwandan government led the people to take national reconstruction measures for the country and achieved the desired results. Based on adjusting their own culture, the Rwandans also explored a development path that suits their national conditions and has African characteristics. After the completion of the reconstruction, Rwanda largely resumed its economic development and made all-around progress, even known as the “Singapore of Africa.” Rwanda's reconstruction policy is generally improving, but there are still some shortcomings that need to be adjusted and improved. Driven by those reconstruction measures, Rwanda has achieved remarkable results and is worth learning from other countries.

Keywords: Rwanda Genocide, National Reconstruction, Economical Reform

1. Introduction

The Rwandan genocide was a racial riot caused by the combination of tribal unrest, economic stagnation, population surge, the artificial division of racial identity by the colonists, and the rise of the democratization movement in the international background.[1]

In the 16th century, Rwanda had its own country. At that time, there were Hutu and Tutsi titles, but no real racial distinction existed between them. The Hutu and Tutsi lived on the same land, used the same language, shared the same beliefs, and often intermarried; their racial division needed to be more straightforward. The most obvious difference is that the Hutu make a living by farming, while the Tutsi make a living by grazing. At that time, the Hutu and Tutsi names were similar to the difference between “peasant” and “herdsman.” If the Hutu farmers turn to grazing, they are called the Tutsi, and vice versa. [2] The two races are well connected, and there is no great hatred.

1890 when Rwanda became a German colony, the Germans differentiated the Rwandans: the Hutu were darker and shorter; the Tutsi were whiter and taller. The north is closer to the Nile, so the Tutsi people are more civilized and of a higher class. In 1935, Belgium entered Rwanda. In order to divide and rule, the Belgian colonists used “phrenology” to formally separate the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups into two different races according to the length of the nose, property status, height, skin color, and pupil color. They also used the ID card system to fix the division forever and extended it to the descendants of Rwandans. The Belgian colonists gave preferential policies to the Tutsi because the

Tutsi were a minority and easy to control. The Tutsi had various privileges, while the Hutu were regarded as poor and reduced to the bottom of society. After the implementation of this system, the class of Rwanda was completely solidified. As the ruling class, the Tutsi added many new legal provisions to help them maintain their dominance. Hence, the contradiction between the two nationalities intensified, and the Hutu and Tutsi developed antagonistic and hateful relationships.

As the Tutsi people had ruled for a long time, the Hutu people are often oppressed and exploited, and racial confrontation and mistrust have become the characteristics of Rwanda. [3] Racial violence has existed for a long time, and the contradiction between the two sides is deepening. Finally, on April 6, 1994, the plane taken by then President Hutu Juvenal Habyarimana was shot down over Kigali, killing all personnel. This led to an outbreak of the genocide in Rwanda. The subjects of the massacre were the Tutsi and Hutu moderates. The massacre resulted in eighty to one million deaths, equivalent to 12.5% of Rwanda's population and 0.0002% of the world's population. Finally, in July 1994, Paul Kagame led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in control of northern Rwanda, and the RPF announced the ceasefire in October.[2]

The reason for the outbreak of the genocide is apparent. Ethnic conflicts are the root cause of everything, and the refugee problem is a potential hidden danger; the large number of people and less land is an essential factor, and economic stagnation is the crux of the problem. The so-called multi-party democratization of the colonists makes the inherent contradictions in Rwanda more complicated. [4] Under the combined influence of these factors, the genocide erupted.

2. Recovery and Reconstruction in Rwanda after the Genocide

After the 1994 genocide, Rwanda's economy shrank, and its society was disrupted. In order to restore the economy and rebuild the stable country of Rwanda, the government has adopted a series of reconstruction measures. Before formulating the specific policies, the new government of Rwanda, under the leadership of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, mobilized non-governmental organizations and other social forces to organize dialogues across the country, discuss with the public the root cause of the tragedy of 1994, and on this basis, formulated practical policy measures.

2.1. Measures and policies adopted by the State

2.1.1. The Reduction of National Divisions and the Reconstruction of Unity

Eliminating racial hatred and reconstructing racial unity are the cornerstone of economic recovery and social development. The Government of Rwanda has adopted a series of measures to eliminate racial awareness and racial hatred in the hearts of the Rwandan people and promote racial unity.

The new government stipulated using new ID cards that canceled racial identification. [3] In 1994, Rwanda established a transitional government of National Unity, which abolished the ethnic identification on Rwandan identity cards and strengthened national citizenship. The Rwandan government stressed that all citizens of Rwanda have the same skin color, use the same language, are Rwandans, and should not be divided into different races. Rwanda is a united and harmonious whole. The new constitution adopted by the referendum in 2003 states that "all Rwandan people have free and equal rights and obligations from birth."

The Rwandan government launched the court in June 2002. Rwanda later established more than 12,000 traditional courts, employed more than 160,000 civil judges, and heard nearly 2 million cases in 10 years. In a short time, the Gacaca Court did work that regular justice could not do.[5]

The judiciary is a way of protecting human rights. It is clear that the existing way of trial in Rwanda after the genocide could not meet the requirements of human rights protection. To make up for the traditional judicial process, the most critical step for Rwanda is to launch the special judicial court,

which has been used for centuries—Gacaca.[6]

The court, also known as “justice on the grass,” is a traditional way for Rwandans to resolve disputes over public opinion. When a neighborhood dispute occurs, the elder will gather everyone on the grass, the parties will state the reasons for the conflict, and then the judge will make a judgment. Perhaps today, this way of trial lacks rigor and fairness, but in Rwanda at the time, it played an irreplaceable role in promoting ethnic reconciliation and achieving national stability.

Gacaca has also partly restored the psychological wounds caused by the genocide. At the scene of the trial, when the criminal and the victim's family made statements, most of the neighbors were present, and anyone could express his opinion. In this highly transparent situation, lies are easy to expose, and the truth is hard to hide. The sin and suffering of the dark days were brought before the Rwandans who had just stepped out of the trembling and fear. Whenever they hear the sadness, the judge and the audience cry. In the face of such blood and tears, Rwandans learned how to face the past bravely, how to unload the heavy burden, and how to unite to face the future.[5]

The purpose of the court is truth, justice, and reconciliation, aiming to stop conflict and promote community unity. Adult criminals usually serve their sentences after being prosecuted. For minors under the age of 14, they will first be sent to the “Solidarity Camps” [7] to receive psychological education, make psychological adjustments, and then reintegrate into society [8] to achieve tribal reconciliation and contribute to the unity of the country and tribal unity. The Gacaca court is where Rwandans use the unique combination of religion and tradition to do justice for victims and mend severely traumatized social relations. It is also an innovative social experiment.[7]

2.1.2. Economic Reform

After the genocide of 1994, the economy of Rwanda was severely devastated, and to restore and develop the economy, the Rwanda government implemented a series of development policies.

The government encouraged the people to strive for economic diversification and implemented policies to encourage industries. The government encouraged investment in infrastructure. Investment projects in these areas could receive special attention and enjoy preferential policies, such as tax breaks.

The Rwandan government also developed a development plan 2000 for the next two decades, namely Vision 2020. The vision aims to transform itself from an agriculture-based, low-income economy to a knowledge-based, service-guided, middle-income country by 2020. In his vision, President Kagame said, “We hope to build Rwanda into a middle-income country through our vision so that the Rwandan people will be healthier, better educated, and more prosperous.

Vision 2020 adheres to the principle of putting the people first, takes root in the people's livelihood, thoroughly investigates the actual demands of the people, and formulates measures in line with reality and tradition. The most typical example is the “one cow per household” program. In 2006, Rwanda introduced the “one cow per household” policy and distributed 350,000 cattle to poor citizens. Through this policy, the Rwandan people have significantly improved their farming efficiency and obtained large amounts of milk, thus increasing their household income and changing the current situation of poverty and malnutrition. The proportion of the poor population decreased by 12% over six years, and this policy received unanimous support from the Rwandan people.

The new government also improved the business environment, simplified business procedures, and encouraged domestic and foreign investment. The government of Rwanda carried out the privatization reform of the notary industry, allowing individuals to act as notaries and form a private notary office, which is a crucial reform in Rwanda to adapt to the development of the modern economy. This reform makes the notarial legal services more extensive, flexible, and efficient and creates good investment conditions for investors. According to the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report, Rwanda's business environment ranks 38th out of 190 economies worldwide as the only

low-income country among the top 50.

2.1.3. Social-level Protection

After the genocide, Rwanda suffered huge property damage and psychological trauma, and the Rwandan government adopted a series of safeguards to comfort the victims and improve their living conditions.

Making financial compensation to female citizens and giving them the right to participate in politics. [9] In the 1994 genocide, most of the citizens and those who fled after the Holocaust were men, and after the genocide, 70 percent of the Rwandan population were women. Therefore, the Rwandan government has introduced a series of policies and laws on equality between men and women to strongly support and encourage women's participation in national reconstruction. They are involved in all aspects of the country's reconstruction: picking up trash, helping repair infrastructure, building houses, maintaining public order, and more.

The Rwandan government also implemented educational reforms. Following the genocide, the new government improved the education system, introduced a non-discriminatory education for all in Rwanda, and implemented a twelve-year compulsory education system for children. It is worth mentioning that Rwanda has suspended the school's history curriculum and recompiled its history. [10] In 1994, the new government decided to suspend history teaching, and in 2011 published the first history book written by Rwandans, "Rwanda History: From its Origins to the End of the 20th Century". The president of the National University of Rwanda wrote in his book: "Today's Rwandan society urgently needs to properly understand the past in order better to face the challenges of the present and the future. The history of Rwanda, written by Rwandans and read by Rwandans, is an important step in the process of the national identity reconstruction."

The new government also conducted health care reform and improved medical conditions. After the 1994 genocide, Rwanda's national health system collapsed, with the world's highest child mortality rate and the shortest life expectancy. Rwanda has rebuilt the health system and trained community health workers. In 2008, the Rwandan government launched the health insurance scheme, which implementation reduced the average annual out-of-pocket cost by more than half. Now, the NHI program covers over 85%. At the same time, Rwanda built a high-quality medical system. The country has vigorously trained medical staff. Currently, two universities offer general medicine and surgery courses. An international school called Global Health Equality is also in the process of construction, which will offer internationally recognized undergraduate and postgraduate medical courses.

2.2. Challenges and obstacles faced in the process of national reconstruction

The first obstacle in the reconstruction process was the large size of the genocide, the escape of Rwandan citizens, the displacement of almost all citizens, the destruction of infrastructure, and the people's deep psychological trauma, making the implementation of the policies difficult.

Crucially, policy inequalities lead to a lack of popular support. National reconstruction policies and social welfare security are still biased toward the Tutsi "survivors," and funds and economic income have not been distributed equally. Poverty is still an important issue. In Rwanda, 90% of its citizens are still engaged in agriculture, and only a few people can escape their farmer status and do business.

3. Problems with the Reconstruction Measures

In the post-genocide reconstruction process, the problem was "exchanging fairness for economic growth." Policies and social welfare are partial. While there is no racial identity, there is a new

classification of political identity: survivors, expected to settle returnees, newly settled returnees, and Holocaust suspects. Later, it fell into two main categories: victims and perpetrators. [11] This division affected the share of resources allocated, and the Tutsi enjoyed special preferential treatment as victims. In 1998, Rwanda established Survivor Assistance Funds. The Tutsi had the right to funding, and they had more likely to get college scholarships, easier access to psychological counseling and medication, and so on. At the same time, the Tutsi people have apparent advantages in administration, education, military, and other aspects. They can hold important positions in the government and the private sector, while the Hutu people are still mainly farming, challenging to get involved in the business layer, and still discriminated against; some scholars call this phenomenon “the Tutsi bias of power.”

From the post-genocide reconstruction situation, there is a situation that the investment in social welfare security share is inconsistent with the actual needs of different places. In the genocide, it is difficult to count the number of victims. The number of Tutsi before the genocide was unknown. The killing was not recorded during the genocide. And the number of post-Tutsi people in the genocide was strange because the new government removed ethnic symbols, and many Tutsi refugees escaped Rwanda, making it challenging to assess casualties precisely. As a result, the Rwandan government cannot invest a share of benefits that will match the actual situation, which means that many refugees do not receive the social benefits they deserve.

4. Conclusion

After the massacre, Rwanda actively adopted reconstruction measures for national conditions and achieved results that could not be ignored. Rwanda's reconstruction policy is generally improving, but some shortcomings still need to be adjusted and improved.

One crucial part is that President Kagame's lengthy re-election is a problem for the country. President Kagame led the Rwanda Patriotic Front to power in 1994, ending the brutal massacre and leading Rwanda to political stability and economic development. He became President of the Transitional Government in 2000 and won a landslide re-election in 2003 and 2010, still holding the presidency today. As the president of Rwanda, Kagame has also been the de facto master of Rwanda. Historical evidence shows that the extended presidential term often forms a fixed development model, which is challenging to improve and innovate, leading to the stagnation of national development and hindering the dynamic progress of the country. Thus, the extended tenure raises concerns about the potential strangling of domestic innovation and renewal in the country, creating a potential obstacle to the future development of Rwanda and creating a disaster for its development.

From what has been mentioned above, although there are some problems and irrationality in the reconstruction measures in Rwanda, they have achieved remarkable results. They are still worth learning from other countries.

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Sophisticated News Outlets: Comparing The New York Times and Global Daily on the Framing and Diffusion of Attitude

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Abstract: Today, news media have become essential to everyday life, offering the public more information on political events. However, people who read different media outlets often hold different opinions on the same event. It is intriguing to think about how people are affected to hold the attitudes intentionally directed by the news outlets and to figure out some specific reasons behind. There are lots of communication techniques used by the news outlets in journalism in order to shape their readers' ideas, and framing is one of the common methods. Framing refers to the ways in which how an issue is characterized in news can influence how the audience understand it. This paper argues that news outlets strategically use framing to shape the orientations and opinions of their readers, by comparing the coverage of the Wagner Mutiny by two news agencies, Global Daily and The New York Times. This paper proceeds with, first, a summary of how the two news outlets reported the Wagner Mutiny, focusing on their different attitudes. Second, the paper provides a potential explanation of these differences by identifying the framing mechanisms that induces the readers' thoughts in each news outlet.

Keywords: News media, political events, framing analysis

1. Introduction

It has been almost three years since Russia invaded Ukraine. Despite substantial support from NATO, Ukraine continues to face challenges to defeat Russia and defend its national sovereignty. However, in June 2023, the Wagner Mutiny, an unexpected coup against Putin's regime in Russia signaled a turning point in the war and attracted global media attention. One day after the mutiny, Yevgeny V. Prigozhin, leader of the Wagner private military, agreed to halt his military rebellion against Moscow after negotiating with the president of Belarus. Mysteriously, two months later, Russia announced the death of Prigozhin, who was aboard a plane that crashed in Russia. Yet, news about the Wagner Mutiny and the death of Prigozhin has major differences depending on the framing. To illustrate my argument, I compare The New York Times (Chinese version) and Global Daily. Both target Chinese-reading audiences but represent different positions. The New York Times is an independent mainstream U.S. media, while Global Daily is a partisan media under the Chinese Communist Party.

2. Literature Review

Framing refers to how people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about it [1]. Framing has both sociological and psychological foundations. The sociological foundation includes diction, images, phrases, and presentation styles in communication [2]. The psychological origins are exemplified by how different presentations of the same decision-making scenario influence people's choices and their evaluation of available options [3]. Framing influence how an issue is viewed from a particular perspective and how it is construed as having particular values [4]. Framing is also a necessary tool to reduce the complexity of an issue and make the information more accessible [5]. Moreover, it is common for news media to use framing to link politicians and other opinion leaders to the public. Politicians can win public support by encouraging people to think about their policies along particular lines [1]. Specifically, journalistic framing is a significant type of framing that informs people about events and shapes the events' significance for individuals and the country [6].

3. Difference in the reportage

To analyze the framing used by the two news outlets, I summarize the differences in their reportage of the Wagner Mutiny and the death of Prigozhin. Global Daily tends to stress that President Putin controlled the mutiny and that the Russian Government took effective measures. Global Daily emphasizes that Russia overcame challenges and maintained national stability [7]. Its news primarily cites reports from Russian official press, such as RIA Novosti and Information Telegraph Agency of Russia. Citations from other foreign media, like BBC and Reuters News, are selected to favor Russia. Global Daily reports that President Putin stayed up late to tackle the mutiny [8]. Even when Putin fled to St. Petersburg, Global Daily publishes misinformation that Mr. Putin was still working in the Kremlin [9]. Moreover, one report by Global Daily summarizes all the national leaders who publicly supported Putin, including the Presidents of Chechnya, Kazakhstan, and Turkey [10]. Global Daily also reports that China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was confident that Russia could peacefully put down the rebellion [11]. When the mutiny ended, Global Daily mentions Prigozhin's audio recording but does not mention that Prigozhin's characterization of Kremlin's rationale for the Ukraine War was false [12]. For news on the death of Prigozhin, Global Daily tends to highlight Putin's grief and sadness at the loss of this friend. In "Prigozhon killed in plane crash, Putin responds," Global Daily reports that Putin was determined to investigate the plane crash [13]. This report also reports that Putin appreciated the contribution made by Prigozhin and his Wagner troops during the Russo-Ukraine War. Furthermore, another report cites the president of Belarus to deny that the accident was orchestrated by Putin [14]. Global Daily also reports how the Russian foreign minister rebuked President Biden's "not surprised" statement about the death of Prigozhin, criticizing the U.S. disregard for diplomacy [15].

On the contrary, The New York Times focuses more on reporting the catastrophic effects of the mutiny. It prefers to demonstrate how serious it was for Putin to be betrayed by one of his most trusted leaders. According to "What Will Happen to Prigozhin and His Wagner Fighters? Here's What We Know," Prigozhin's rebellion threatened Putin's authority and his dictatorial rule [16]. Instead of portraying Putin as a national hero fighting against a destabilizing mutiny, news from The New York Times shows Putin's failure. An article titled "Mutiny Provided Glimpse of a Post-Putin Russia. Is the Window Still Open" reports that after the mutiny, Putin still tried to re-establish a veneer of equilibrium in Russian politics to convey a firm grip on power and enduring popularity [17]. Internationally, The New York Times focuses on the decade-long political and economic collaboration between China and Russia. One report states that the Wagner Mutiny could have threatened President Xi to hedge the Sino-Russian alliance, which might bring China global criticism

and harm China's interests [18]. Regarding the attitude toward Prigozhin, The New York Times focuses on Prigozhin's complaints to the military officials and their handling of the invasion [19]. The New York Times also tends to emphasize the relationship between Prigozhin's death and his disregard for Russian authorities. It emphasizes that Prigozhin was a "public power player" in the past few months, who had escalated his feud with the military leadership of the Russo-Ukraine War, accused the Russian army of attacking his forces, and led the Wagner Mutiny [20]. Moreover, one piece of news titled "Rule No.1 in Putin's Russia: Defy Him at Your Peril" recalls the grim fate of individuals who threatened the domination of Putin in the past and alluded that Prigozhin, a traitor called by Putin during the mutiny, might have the same fate due to his disloyalty. It reports that many Western officials believed Putin ordered the plane crash. For Prigozhin's burial, The New York Times says that misinformation about the burial site may illustrate that the Russian Government tended to avoid spontaneous rallies in memory of the top leader of Wagner and the Russian state media barely mentioned the burial.

4. Explaining the differences

The readers' preference for each outlet is different. Since The New York Times is censored in China, its Chinese readers need to spend more effort to access the reports. Driven by a curiosity to get more perspectives, these readers are a relatively small group of people who tend to be more open-minded and have broader horizons. By contrast, Global Daily has a larger domestic Chinese audience. The digital news of Global Daily had 15.79 million followers in 2020, ranking first among all newspapers in China [21]. The proportion of party cadres and government staff was about 32 percent of the total followers, which was higher than average [22]. This suggests that readers of Global Daily are likely to support the Chinese government and trust the state media.

5. Framing in the news outlets

Framing is an important tool for news outlets to address their audience. There are several ways in which framing can induce readers' thoughts. First, the titles of Global Daily usually include key facts or directly use brief summaries of the contents, such as "Sort it out in one post: these countries have stated their support for Putin and the Russian government's actions," "Russian Media: Putin interviewed about special military operation against Ukraine, says he 'slept late recently,'" and "Foreign media inquired about the 'Wagner incident', the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: China is confident that Russia will be able to maintain national stability." The framing of these titles is ingenious. These titles are concise and conclusive, without specific causations against the events. They leave more space for the readers to connect the contents and convey most of the information that Global Daily intends to share. For instance, when the readers see the three titles above, they will likely conclude that the mutiny has been in control of the Russian leadership and Russia has many advocates to win the war. Moreover, Global Daily prefers to use a combination of short videos and real-time reports in the content. The videos are often characterized by a photo of one member of the Russian government or Putin, symbolizing stability in Russia. The videos usually provide short summaries of the content and focus on facts. Furthermore, this type of concise framing influences the readers who read the rest of the report. Like the framing of the titles, the framing of the content also uses segmented citations and information without details to convince the readers. The readers will likely try to depict the "fact" that Global Daily selectively presents. Though all the facts are real, curating these facts can present biased positions and shape the readers' attitudes toward the mutiny.

By comparison, titles of The New York Times have no punctuation marks or citations and usually do not conclude the content. The reports tend to present a brief overview of the latest situation instead of making real-time reports, like "Putin Says Russia Is United Behind Him, After Quelling Rebellion"

and “Rumors and Misdirection Keep Crowds Way from Prigozhin Burial.” Each report is relatively independent, making it less likely to induce people to combine the presented opinions in the titles. In addition, longer content focuses on commenting on the mutiny and expressing clear attitudes. When reading, the readers do not need to connect fragments of information by themselves or assume the authors’ opinions. The New York Times provides readers with a more comprehensive narrative of the events and emphasizes logical expression. The attitude of the authors is always hidden in the background information and facts. For instance, a report named “Yevgeny Prigozhin, Renegade Mercenary Chief Who Rattled Kremlin” intertwines Prigozhin’s life with the growing tensions between him and the Russian authorities, making the connection between his eventual death in a mysterious plane crash and what he had done. Moreover, The New York Times refers to other media and uses citations as supporting evidence instead of heading them in titles to lure the readers. All in all, the framing of The New York Times fits the preference of the intended audience who are likely to spend more time reading and understanding the authors’ opinions instead of only knowing some fragment of facts. By combining facts with the insight from the authors, the reports of The New York Times induce audiences to reflect on the reasons behind the political events by themselves instead of directly showing the personal attitude of the authors. In other words, the topic of each report in The New York Times cannot be obtained only from scanning the titles or a few sentences in the contents. The readers always need to read more carefully while thinking deeply to capture the main ideas by their own understanding.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper analyzes how journalistic framing influences the readers’ attitudes toward the Wagner Mutiny. This paper helps encourage people to read from various news resources before forming their own opinions of a particular event. The paper also makes people aware of the impact of framing on the kinds of information they can access.

The Russo-Ukraine War continues, and its media coverage still surrounds us in many aspects of our lives. Hopefully, people who read this paper can distinguish some framing techniques and form more objective and thorough opinions about any political event reported by the news.

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Analysis of Nonlinear Narrative via the Lens of the Coherence Theory of Language

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to examine the utilization of nonlinear narrative approaches in literature and investigate the potential optimization of comprehension of intricate plots through the application of linguistics-related knowledge. This study has determined, based on an examination of pertinent literature, that the use of non-linear narrative techniques can augment the appeal and intricacy of a literary piece, while also intensifying the level of reading challenge for its audience. This research use qualitative research methodologies to examine the utilization of non-linear narrative approaches, with a focus on comprehending these strategies through the analysis of textual data. The findings indicate that the principles of linguistic theory can be effectively employed in the analysis of literary texts as well as in the interpretation of films and television productions. This discovery has the potential to enhance the applicability of linguistics, thereby bridging a portion of the existing disparity between linguistic theory and real-world applications.

Keywords: nonlinear narratives, coherence theory, comprehension

1. Introduction

The narrative of the story is characterized by its intricate and multifaceted structure, featuring a non-linear progression of events. This intricate storytelling technique adds depth and complexity to the overall plot, engaging the audience in a more intellectually stimulating manner. Moreover, the incorporation of linguistic elements within the narrative further enhances its coherence and comprehensibility. By adhering to the principles of relevance theory, the story ensures that the information presented is both meaningful and pertinent to the overall narrative, so fostering a more profound.

The contemporary societal context places heightened significance on individuals' comprehension and analysis of intricate narrative structures. The complexity of narratives has been shown to increase alongside advancements in the mediums of movies, television series, and literature.

Nevertheless, comprehending these intricate narratives presents numerous obstacles. Consequently, there has been a significant focus on the investigation of methods to enhance comprehension of intricate narratives.

1.1. Problems with the earlier research.

Previous research has predominantly concentrated on the linear narrative structure of the plot, characterized by its sequential unfolding in chronological sequence. Nevertheless, the proliferation of nonlinear storylines, characterized by techniques like backtracking and flashbacks, has contributed to the heightened intricacy of the plot. The utilization of a non-linear narrative structure affords the audience with an expanded cognitive space for contemplation and interpretation.

However, it concurrently augments the level of complexity in comprehending the overarching storyline.

1.2. The importance of this research

In order to examine this matter, the present study will concentrate on the utilization of the coherence theory of language in the evaluation of nonlinear narratives. The coherence theory of language pertains to the construction of a cohesive narrative through the utilization and organization of linguistic expression. This analysis underscores the significance of language in the art of storytelling and offers strategies for enhancing comprehension of intricate narratives using linguistic means.

The study holds importance in its thorough examination of the coherence theory of language as applied to the analysis of non-linear narratives. This exploration aims to enhance the audience's comprehension and appreciation of stories. Simultaneously, this study's findings can offer valuable direction to filmmakers, writers, and other creators, enabling them to effectively develop intricate narratives and enhance the caliber and reception of their artistic endeavors.

2. Body

The primary methodologies employed in this work encompass a comprehensive examination of existing literature and a rigorous theoretical analysis. Initially, a comprehensive examination of the pertinent scholarly works will be conducted in order to gain insight into the advancements and accomplishments of previous investigations within this particular domain. Subsequently, the coherence theory of language will be employed to scrutinize the outcomes of empirical investigations, with the aim of enhancing comprehension of intricate narratives via linguistic means.

This study aims to contribute novel viewpoints and methodologies to enhance comprehension of intricate memoirs, hence enhancing the overall story experience for viewers. Additionally, it seeks to offer recommendations to authors in order to foster the advancement and creativity of storytelling.

2.1. Findings regarding coherence

The coherence theory has gained significant attention in recent years due to advancements in the field of linguistics. Coherence is widely regarded by scholars as a significant linguistic notion that encompasses the organization and effective communication of language. The evolution of the conceptualization of coherence has undergone many phases, wherein diverse scholars have put forth distinct viewpoints. In the realm of coherence, Halliday posits that the selection and arrangement of language play a crucial role in achieving coherence [1]. This paper contends that the primary essence of coherence lies in the attainment of coherence and consistency of information across all linguistic levels.

2.1.1. current studies on coherence

The available literature can be broadly categorized into the following classifications. The initial category of research centers on the utilization of coherence within spoken communication. One perspective posits that coherence plays a significant role in oral communication, facilitating

individuals' comprehension and articulation of information within a conversation [2]. In contrast to the aforementioned perspective, an alternative viewpoint posits that coherence is not a prerequisite for oral communication and can be attained by alternative means [3]. These studies demonstrate the significance of coherence in oral communication and extensively investigate its role.

The subsequent category of research centers on the utilization of coherence in written speech.

According to van Dijk [4], coherence is considered to be a crucial factor in written narratives as it facilitates readers' comprehension and interpretation of the textual information. An alternative perspective posits that coherence is not a prerequisite in written speech, and that information

coherence can be attained by alternative means [5]. These works demonstrate the significance of coherence in written speech and go into its role extensively.

The aforementioned works provide significant recommendations for the field of coherence studies, so advancing the understanding and interpretation of coherence. However, it is worth noting that none of the extant research have seen the utilization of coherence within non-linear narrative structures. The current lack of research is shown in the following areas.

2.1.2. Discovery of the insufficiency of nonlinear narrative

From a study design standpoint, it is worth noting that current studies mostly emphasize the utilization of coherence in linear narrative structures, while paying comparatively little attention to its application in nonlinear narrative structures. Smith [6] conducted a study on the significance of coherence within linear narrative plots, although did not extensively investigate the presence of coherence inside non-linear narrative plots.

Furthermore, in terms of data analysis methods, previous research has mostly focused on examining the utilization of coherence in maintaining narrative flow in continuous plots, while giving comparatively little consideration to the implementation of continuity in discontinuous narrative plots. Johnson [7] conducted an analysis on the role of continuity within the context of a continuous narrative plot. However, the examination of continuity within a discontinuous narrative plot has not been thoroughly explored.

Thirdly, it is noteworthy that previous research has mostly concentrated on examining the utilization of coherence in conventional narrative structures, whereas comparatively little attention has been given to the implementation of coherence in nonlinear narrative structures. The role of coherence in general plots is discussed by Brown [8]; however, a comprehensive analysis of coherence in nonlinear narrative plots is lacking.

2.2. Research on nonlinear narrative

Based on the aforementioned study, the objective of this paper is to examine the nonlinear narrative structure in literature via the lens of coherence theory in the field of linguistics. The primary research inquiry of this study pertains to the application of the coherence theory of linguistics in the analysis of nonlinear narrative plots seen in literary compositions. The problem at hand can be further broken into the subsequent sub-problems:

Subquestion 1: What is the impact of nonlinear narrative plots on the cohesion of literary works?

Subquestion 2: What is the explanation provided by coherence theory for the presence of nonlinear narrative plots in literature?

Subquestion 3: What is the nature of the interaction between the nonlinear narrative plot and other narrative elements?

This work aims to address the existing research gap concerning the utilization of coherence in nonlinear narrative plots. It intends to thoroughly investigate the significance of coherence within the context of nonlinear narrative plots.

2.2.1. The notion of intricate plotlines and nonsequential storytelling

A complex narrative refers to a literary composition characterized by the presence of several interconnected plot elements and a diverse cast of characters, resulting in a sophisticated and intricate story framework. Nonlinear narrative refers to a storytelling technique wherein the conventional linear progression of plot events and chronological timeline is deviated from, and instead, the narrative is presented in a nonsequential manner. Nonlinear narratives frequently introduce temporal disruptions within the storyline through mechanisms such as recollection, flashbacks, and foreshadowing.

2.2.2. The analysis of nonlinear narratives is significantly enhanced by the application of language coherence theory

The coherence theory of language pertains to the logical and coherent connections among different sentences and paragraphs within a given language. The coherence theory of language can provide valuable insights into the analysis of nonlinear narratives, particularly in relation to the structural organization and temporal shifts inherent in storytelling. Through the examination of linguistic coherence, one can discern the logical and cohesive connections within the narrative, so enhancing comprehension of the story's overarching framework.

2.2.3. The utilization of the coherence theory of language can enhance comprehension of intricate narratives.

To enhance comprehension of intricate narratives, the use of the coherence theory of language can be employed to examine the logical and coherent connections among the plotlines. To establish the correlation within the plot, it is possible to discern the interrelation by scrutinizing the essential terms and phrases included in the narrative. Keywords and phrases play a crucial role in facilitating our comprehension of the logical and harmonious connections among narrative threads.

Furthermore, an analysis of the sentence structure and grammar employed in the narrative allows for a comprehension of the alterations in the order and timing of the story plot. The logical and harmonious relationships between tale plots can be revealed through sentence structure and syntax. The comprehension of the narrative's background and subtext can be achieved through the examination and analysis of the contextual information included within the story. The inclusion of contextual information facilitates the comprehension of the logical and coherent connections existing among different narrative threads.

2.3. Examples of combining linearity and nonlinearity

To substantiate my perspective, I will provide a pragmatic illustration of how the coherence theory of language might be employed to enhance comprehension of intricate narratives. The article titled *Butterfly Effect* by Eric Brees discusses the concept of the butterfly effect. The film production company New Line Pictures was established in 2004. The utilization of nonlinear storytelling style is prevalent in the depiction of Evan's life, since it involves the cross-rating of the story at various temporal junctures to illustrate the evolving nature of his experiences. The utilization of a narrative method facilitates a heightened comprehension of the intricacies inside the plot and the internal landscapes of the characters.

2.3.1. Case analysis

The film employs a nonlinear narrative structure to illustrate the diverse outcomes that arise from Evan's choices and behaviors within various temporal sequences. The viewers are able to observe the

various identities and roles assumed by Evan in distinct temporal contexts, and discern the impact of his decisions on both his own destiny and the individuals in his vicinity. The utilization of a narrative style in writing enhances the level of engagement and curiosity experienced by the audience, so fostering a greater sense of participation in the story.

In addition, the implementation of a nonlinear narrative structure serves to enhance the sense of suspense and tension inside the plot by gradually unveiling fragmented pieces of information. It is vital for audiences to comprehend the veracity of the narrative, as the presence of doubt and challenges enhances the intrigue and captivation of the experience.

The utilization of nonlinear storytelling strategies can also facilitate the examination and exploration of the thematic elements inside the picture. One of the key issues explored in the

Butterfly Effect is the examination of the repercussions that arise as a result of individual actions. The video employs a nonlinear narrative structure to illustrate the interconnectedness of Evan's decisions and actions, highlighting how each choice sets off a series of events that ultimately culminate in divergent outcomes. This narrative highlights the significance of individual choices and acts on both personal and interpersonal levels, as well as the inherent unpredictability of destiny.

2.3.2. Example extension

The utilization of the nonlinear storytelling style in the film *Butterfly Effect* exerted a substantial influence. The utilization of these techniques serves to enhance the audience's level of engagement and curiosity, heighten the sense of suspense and tension, and provide a deeper exploration of the underlying issues within the picture. By employing a narrative approach, the audience gains a deeper comprehension of the intricacies of the story and the internal lives of the characters, so enhancing the level of engagement with the picture. Nevertheless, the intricate narrative of the film renders the viewers incapable of readily ascertaining the precise temporal location. The analysis of this problem can be approached using linguistic similarity theory, specifically by employing the concept of elaboration to elucidate the connection between the plot preceding and following Evan's crossing, as well as utilizing the concept of cause and effect to examine the connections between each instance of crossing. Through a careful examination of this particular situation, it becomes evident that the coherence theory of language plays a significant role in the interpretation of nonlinear narratives. The nonlinear narrative is a storytelling technique that deviates from the traditional chronological order of events. Instead, it uses various methods such as backtracking, flashbacks, and cross-cutting between different time periods to present the story. The renowned works of nonlinear narratives encompass a selection of distinguished novels and films, including those authored by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The publication titled *Recalling the Fleeting Years* authored by Agatha Christie was published in 2006 by the People's Literature Publishing House in Beijing[9]. In the realm of literature, notable works include *Ten Little Indians* by Collins [10], *The Kite Runner* by Hosseini [11], and *Cloud Atlas* by Mitchell [12]. In the cinematic domain, Christopher Nolan's *Inception* [13] stands out as a directorial masterpiece produced by Warner Bros. The subject matter under consideration is the medium of film. Hosoda Shou is the director of the film *Toki o Kakeru Shōjo* which was produced by MADHOUSE and released in [14]. The individuals mentioned are Liu Weiqiang and Mai Zhaohui, who are associated with the film *Infernal Affairs*. Golden Harvest Film Production Co., LTD. was established in [15]. All of these literary works employ the nonlinear narrative technique, so enhancing the intricacy of the plot and expanding the cognitive capacity of the readers.

2.3.3. Case summary

By examining the coherence theory of language within the context of analyzing nonlinear narrative, a more comprehensive comprehension and interpretation of the intricate plot can be achieved.

Through the utilization of the coherence theory of language, an examination of the logical and cohesive connections among the narratives may be conducted, hence enhancing comprehension of the intricate plotlines. Future research endeavors could go deeper into the application of alternative language theories in the analysis of nonlinear narratives, thereby providing additional empirical evidence to substantiate our perspective.

In relation to the utilization of the coherence theory of language within nonlinear narratives, it is crucial to highlight many significant findings.

3. Conclusion

The coherence theory of language pertains to the logical interconnectedness and cohesion among different sentences, paragraphs, and chapters within a given linguistic context. The maintenance of coherence is of particular significance in nonlinear tales, whereby there are frequent shifts in time, space, or themes. These shifts necessitate the use of appropriate cohesive devices to ensure that the reader's comprehension and engagement are sustained.

Furthermore, the attainment of coherence in nonlinear narratives can be accomplished through several means. One commonly employed technique involves the utilization of transition words or phrases, such as "then", "then", "then", and "to", in order to direct the reader's progression from one event or topic to another. These transitional elements serve to explicitly denote the connection between various segments within the text, thereby facilitating the reader's comprehension of the narrative's progression.

Additionally, coherence in nonlinear narratives can be attained through the use of context citation and reference. By incorporating references to prior or subsequent events, characters, or subjects within the text, readers are able to establish connections between different segments, thereby enhancing their comprehension of the overall story context. These references and citations can be accomplished through the utilization of pronouns, noun phrases, or other indicators.

Coherence in nonlinear narratives can be effectively established by means of structuring the story. This can be accomplished through the strategic implementation of various techniques, such as flashbacks, flash-forwards, or juxtapositions, which serve to present different events or themes. By employing these techniques, a natural cohesion and coherence can be achieved within nonlinear narratives. The selection of a particular structural approach should be determined based on the narrative requirements and the author's artistic objectives.

In conclusion, the utilization of the coherence theory of language holds significant importance in the context of nonlinear narratives. By employing suitable cohesiveness, contextual allusions, and organizing the structure of the tale, readers' comprehension and appreciation of the narrative are enhanced.

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Integrating Models in Education: Evaluating Strategies and Enhancing Student Learning Through Advanced Analytical Methods

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Abstract: This paper undertakes an in-depth examination of contemporary educational models, focusing on their impact on student learning and teaching strategies. It contrasts static models like the Item Response Theory (IRT) with dynamic models, notably Knowledge Tracing (KT) and its extensions such as the Knowledge Tracing Model (KTM) with a "Tutor Intervention" element. These dynamic models, particularly the dynamic Bayesian network (DBN) structure of KT, provide a detailed perspective on student learning, accommodating temporal skill variations and diverse educational interventions. The study further explores learning decomposition, revealing its effectiveness in evaluating various reading practices and their influence on reading fluency, underscoring the need for personalized educational approaches. Additionally, the paper discusses the Bayesian Evaluation and Assessment framework within Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS), offering a holistic view of both the immediate and long-term effects of tutoring. Key insights are presented on the efficacy of different educational models in reading education, advocating for diversified reading practices and personalized learning strategies. The paper also identifies limitations in current models, such as high standard errors in learning decomposition and weak fits in models like LR-DBN, and proposes future research directions, including automated analysis and a hybrid approach combining human expertise with computational analysis. This approach aims to enhance educational data mining and inform effective educational strategies and outcomes.

Keywords: Education, learning, strategy

1. Introduction

In the realm of educational technology and research, the development and application of student models have become increasingly sophisticated. Central to this evolution is the exploration of various dimensions that constitute these models. One critical aspect is the temporal effect, which delineates whether skills are considered static or evolve over time. This differentiation plays a pivotal role in the model's ability to accurately reflect a student's learning trajectory.

Static models, such as the Item Response Theory (IRT), assume that a student's skill level is a time-invariant trait. These models are typically employed in standardized testing scenarios, where a snapshot of student proficiency is required. However, they lack the dynamism to account for the fluid nature of learning, where a student's skill level can evolve with each educational interaction.

On the other hand, dynamic models like Knowledge Tracing (KT) present a more nuanced view. KT models account for the temporal variations in a student's skill level, adapting their predictions based on the student's performance over time. This approach is more aligned with the continuous and iterative process of learning, acknowledging that a student's understanding of a concept can improve or deteriorate over time.

Knowledge Tracing Model(KTM) depicts an enhanced version of the knowledge tracing model, incorporating a "Tutor Intervention" element.

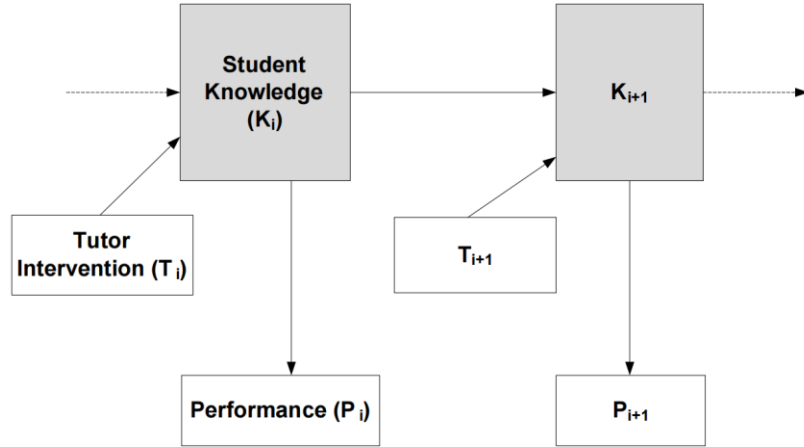


Figure 1: illustrates a dynamic Bayesian network (DBN) with three nodes at each time slice i . The hidden node K_i is a binary indicator of whether the student has mastered the skill by time i , with $P_r(K_i)$ denoting the probability of this knowledge state. The observed node P_i captures the student's demonstrated ability on the skill at time i . DBNs expand the basic knowledge tracing framework by allowing for additional nodes; for example, *Chang et al.* included a node for help requests. In our model, we introduce a "Tutor Intervention" node T_i to represent the type of tutoring intervention provided at time i . The network's links represent the probabilistic dependencies between these factors.

The model parameters include:

knew: The likelihood that the student already understood the skill before instruction.

prob_ T_i : The chance that the intervention applied is of a particular type i .

learn_ T_i : The likelihood that a student learns the skill following an intervention of type T_i .

forget_ T_i : The chance of forgetting a skill as a result of an intervention of type T_i .

guess: The probability of a correct answer even if the skill is not known.

slip: The probability of an incorrect answer despite knowing the skill.

Assessing the impact of various tutorial interventions boils down to comparing the "*learn_ T_i* " and "*forget_ T_i* " values for different interventions.

The model employs a two-stage implementation: an offline training process to derive parameters from historical performance data and a real-time updating mechanism to adjust the student's knowledge estimate after each observed performance. The BNT-SM knowledge tracing implementation uses an expectation-maximization (EM) algorithm for fitting and a Bayesian network inference process for updates.

Lastly, the representation of errors or discrepancies between what a student knows versus their performance is encapsulated in the noise dimension of student models. Models like KT acknowledge that students may guess a step correctly without knowing the underlying skill or slip at a step despite knowing the skill. This acknowledgment of noise is vital in creating a realistic and forgiving model that mirrors the imperfect nature of human learning and performance.

Each of these dimensions – temporal effect, skill dimensionality, credit assignment, higher-order effects, and noise – contributes to the complexity and efficacy of student models. “As we delve into these dimensions, we gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies involved in modeling student learning and the challenges in creating systems that can accurately predict and support a student's educational journey” [1]

2. Learning Decomposition in Educational Models

Learning decomposition, as a pivotal advancement in educational research, provides an in-depth analysis of different reading practices, such as massed versus distributed practice, and their impacts on reading fluency. This technique leverages fine-grained interaction data collected by computer tutors, applying it to understand various learning events and their relative impacts more intricately [2].

In the context of reading, learning decomposition aims to discern how different types of practice affect students' progress in reading skills. It offers a nuanced view, distinguishing between the effectiveness of massed versus distributed practice and wide versus re-reading. The study involves analyzing performance data on individual words, recorded over a school year, to examine how student progress in reading varies based on the type of practice.

The methodology of learning decomposition incorporates factors like student help speed and correctness into a single outcome measure. It emphasizes considering only the first encounter with a word on a particular day as a valid learning opportunity, thereby eliminating the effects of short-term memory retrieval on the demonstration of a student's knowledge.

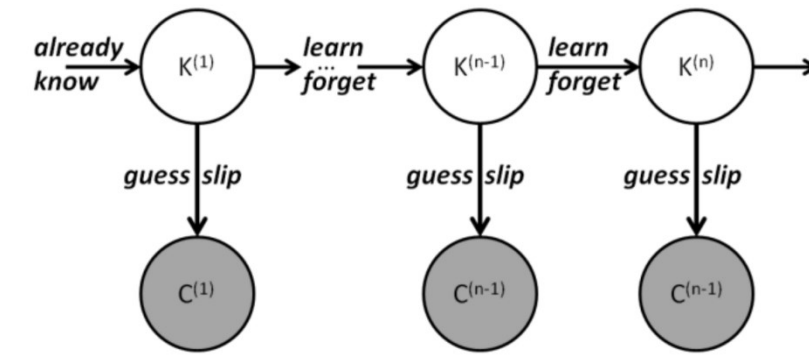


Figure 2: Single-skill knowledge tracing architecture

Figure 2 shows the graphical representation of the extended model. Student Knowledge (K_i) to K_{i+1} , Tutor Intervention (T_i) to T_{i+1} , Performance (P_i) to P_{i+1} . The figure shows that the model is a DBN with 3 nodes at each time step i . The binary-valued hidden node K_i represents whether the student knows the skill at time i . $P_i(K_i)$ is a probabilistic estimate of this binary student knowledge variable. P_i represents the student's observed performance (e.g., correct or incorrect) on that skill at the time i . Using a DBN for knowledge tracing allows us to expand its original formulation by including additional nodes. For instance, *Chang et al.* added a node to represent help requests

Furthermore, the approach delves into the debate between wide reading versus re-reading. It differentiates encounters with new material versus rereading familiar stories, acknowledging that memorization can affect learning outcomes. This distinction is vital, as it influences the effectiveness of the reading practices being analyzed.

Findings from this approach reveal that rereading stories results in less learning than reading various stories. Additionally, mass practice or repeated exposure to a word within a short timeframe is generally ineffective, especially for proficient students.

The application of logistic regression in learning decomposition allows for classifying students based on the benefits they derive from different types of practice. This advancement enables the identification of student subgroups who benefit from specific practices, offering a more tailored approach to educational strategies.

3. Analyzing Tutoring Strategies through Models

Innovative approaches in educational research have revolutionized the evaluation of tutoring strategies. Notably, the Bayesian Evaluation and Assessment framework stands out for its dynamic and probabilistic approach to analyzing the efficacy of tutor assistance. This method differs significantly from traditional models by utilizing dynamic Bayesian networks, offering a fresh perspective on the impact of tutoring interventions [3].

The core principle of Bayesian Evaluation in Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS) is its ability to model tutor help and student knowledge in a unified framework. This approach allows for a nuanced examination of the effect of help, distinguishing between the immediate scaffolding of performance and the facilitation of long-term knowledge acquisition [3]. For instance, the tutoring system may provide help in various forms, such as sounding out a word or breaking it into syllables, each of which has different impacts on immediate performance and long-term learning [3].

Prior research using learning decomposition has shown the relative benefits of different learning encounters. Bayesian Evaluation builds upon this by comparing the value of tutor help against reading words without assistance. This comparison reveals the intrinsic worth of tutoring interventions in the learning process.

However, the learning decomposition model has found that reading a word is, by default, valued at 1.0 practice opportunities. In contrast, depending on the model used, help is estimated to be worth approximately -1.5 to -4 trials of learning, indicating that receiving help might cause students to perform worse in subsequent trials compared to situations where they did not receive help.

Addressing the shortcomings of previous approaches, Bayesian Evaluation focuses on controlling for the student's knowledge of the skill being helped and refining the definition of what constitutes practical help. This is crucial as it accounts for both the immediate and long-term impacts of tutoring help on student performance.

The method unifies two common goals in Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS): assessing student knowledge and evaluating tutorial interventions. It does so by linking student performance with tutorial interventions so that both nodes are observable and their interactions are measurable. The approach assesses students as performance and knowledge are intertwined and evaluates tutorial intervention in terms of its temporary and lasting impacts on student knowledge.

The scaffolding effect on student performance can be estimated by comparing probabilities of correct responses under different intervention conditions. This allows for a clear delineation of how tutoring helps in immediate performance or long-term learning gains.

Bayesian Evaluation and Assessment (BNT-SM) allows for exploring different hypotheses on how knowledge is represented in student models. Despite its sophistication, this approach did not result in a more accurate assessment compared to simpler models like knowledge tracing.

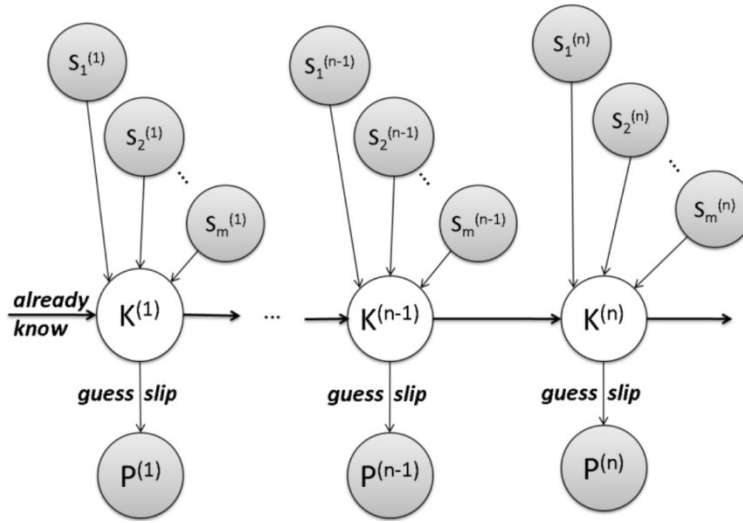


Figure 3: KT with Logistic regression

"LR-DBN is a recent but published method to trace multiple subskills, so we summarize it here only briefly in terms of the four aspects discussed in Section 2. Like standard KT, LR-DBN represents the knowledge for step n as a hidden knowledge state in a dynamic Bayes net. However, as Figure 3 illustrates, LR-DBN adds a layer of observable states as indicator variables to represent whether step n involves subskill j : 1 if so, 0 if not. LR-DBN uses logistic regression to model the initial hidden knowledge state and the transitions between states" [4]

4. Results

The studies' results in this paper highlight the nuanced implications these models hold for educational strategies, particularly in reading fluency [2]. The application of learning decomposition to a large dataset of student reading experiences revealed significant insights into the efficacy of various practice opportunities.

One of the main findings was the relative effectiveness of different reading practices. Rereading a story resulted in only 49% as much learning as reading a new story for the first time. This suggests that students learn to read words more effectively when exposed to a wide selection of stories rather than repeatedly reading the same story. Additionally, the analysis showed that massed practice, or multiple opportunities to practice a word on the same day, could have been more effective, especially for high-proficiency students. In fact, for these students, seeing the word again was almost a complete waste of time [2].

An essential contribution of this approach was the ability to detect student subgroups that benefit from specific types of practice. For instance, while rereading and massed practice was generally not beneficial, there were groups of students who did benefit from these practices. The analysis identified 11 students who helped from rereading and 5 who benefitted from massed practice, with learning support status and fluency being reliable predictors in the model. These findings suggest that while one-size-fits-all approaches might work for the majority, there are subgroups that require tailored approaches [2].

The equation 1 is an analysis framework for assessing the influence of student reading practice schedules and styles; it is a model of Analysis framework for evaluating the influence of reading practice schedules and styles.

$$\text{Readingtime} = l * \text{word_length} + (w * \text{wordID} + A) * e - b * (r * m * \text{RM} + r * \text{RD} + m * \text{NM} + \text{ND} + h * \# \text{helps}) \quad (1)$$

Word Length (l): the length of the word

Word Length * l : Longer words take more time to read.

Word Familiarity (w): Words that have been read before, either earlier that day or in the past, are read faster.

Proficiency ($w * \text{wordID}$): More proficient readers can read faster.

First Trial Performance (A): How well students read on their first attempt affects subsequent readings.

Past Help (h): How much help a student has received on a word influences how quickly they can read it.

The rest of the model uses learning decomposition to concurrently evaluate the effects of repetitive practice against spaced practice and comprehensive reading versus reviewing. The aim is to determine the optimal values for the r and m parameters to understand how different practice methods affect the advancement of student reading skills.

5. Conclusion and Future Directions

In conclusion, while the models discussed offer valuable insights, they also present limitations such as high standard errors, pointing towards areas for future research. These areas include the potential automation of decomposition analysis, which could enhance the precision and applicability of these models in educational settings. This direction suggests a focus on refining methodologies to overcome current challenges and improve the reliability of educational data analysis.

“Despite the significant contributions of the models discussed, they exhibit certain limitations, suggesting fruitful areas for future research. One notable limitation is the presence of high standard errors in learning decomposition, indicating a level of uncertainty in the model's parameter estimates” [5]. This uncertainty can affect the reliability of conclusions drawn from the data, underscoring the need for more robust methods in educational data analysis.

Another critical limitation is the potential for weak model fits in certain cases. For instance, while models like LR-DBN have shown promise in predicting and updating multiple subskills, they sometimes struggle to fit individual data points accurately. “This challenge highlights the complexity of modeling student learning and the need for more precise and accurate methods.” [6]

Future research in educational data mining focuses on automating learning decomposition to improve efficiency and accuracy. This involves integrating expert knowledge for valid outcomes and exploring different applications of concepts like massed practice for precise modeling. A proposed hybrid approach combines human expertise with computational power, aiming to enhance educational data mining and contribute to educational research effectively.

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Netflix Evolution and Strategy for Future Development

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Abstract: Since Netflix's founding in 1997, Netflix has transformed from an online DVD rental service into a massive streaming media company. Its 44.21% share of the US streaming market by 2023 shows how flexible and well-liked it is in the cutthroat world of streaming media. Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, Disney+, HBO Max, and other streaming services are competitors for Netflix, which has had inconsistent financial performance in 2023. Its strategy is centered on investing in high-value projects, creating content with both local and global appeal, and expanding globally. Netflix prioritizes original content, technological innovation, and international expansion as part of its subscription-based business model. In the cutthroat streaming market, Netflix faces off against established behemoths and upstarts and oblique rivals like social media sites. Though obstacles like financial management, content saturation, and strategic transparency still exist, its strategic concentration on unique material and international expansion seems appropriate. Future success is advised by prioritizing user experience, investing in technology, diversifying revenue streams, increasing the diversity of material, and being transparent about audience data.

Keywords: Netflix, Strategy, Global

1. Introduction

Despite technical advancements and shifting customer preferences, Netflix began as an online DVD rental service in 1997 and quickly evolved into a streaming media consumption platform. Today, it is one of the primary media consumption platforms, producing original content in the process. Netflix commanded 44.21 percent of the US streaming market at the beginning of 2023 [1]. Despite a tiny decline in market share year over year, this demonstrates their continued appeal and strategic agility in the fiercely competitive world of streaming media. Netflix's recent emphasis on advertising is indicative of its efforts to diversify its revenue streams in order to remain ahead of the competition and adjust its revenue stream in response to changes in the market.

Netflix is up against competition from Hulu, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, and HBO Max. Netflix has a big user base, produces original content, and makes data-driven decisions. However, it has challenges with licensing, including user attrition from price increases and limitations on its global reach [2]. In terms of finances, Netflix had a mixed 2023. Net income fell 12.2% yearly, even though revenue rose 6.7% annually to \$31.6 billion [3]. The varying subscription figures in 2022 demonstrated their flexibility and resilience in an increasingly tricky competitive landscape [3]. By analyzing Netflix's current strategy, competitors, and business model, this research hypothesizes Netflix's future development and improvement.

2. Netflix's Current Strategy

As Lobato & Lotz [4] and Wayne & Uribe Sandoval [5] explain, Netflix has a diversified approach to worldwide expansion while maintaining local identity. This approach entails balancing local market adjustments and a cohesive worldwide presence. According to Lobato & Lotz [4], this entails recognizing and managing the complexities of content localization, abiding by legal constraints, and competing with regional streaming services. The corporation underwent significant strategic changes in its development from a domestic DVD rental service to a worldwide streaming powerhouse, including a pivot from DVD rentals to streaming and an expansion from domestic content distribution to transnational content production [4].

Netflix's plan for 2023 is to acquire and produce content that appeals to local audiences, as noted by Wayne & Uribe [5]. Empirical shows such as "Fauda" and "La Casa de Papel" employ this strategy by capitalizing on the idea that popularity in regional markets frequently translates into appeal on a worldwide scale. This tactic emphasizes how crucial cultural relevancy and authenticity are while creating content. Furthermore, Netflix makes investments in high-production-value shows like "The Crown" and "House of Cards" to strengthen the company's reputation internationally in addition to producing engaging content [5]. These top-notch productions enhance the artistic standing of the material while meeting viewers' expectations for a cinematic experience.

Additionally, the company's encouragement of binge-watching provides an entertaining substitute for conventional television scheduling, conforming to contemporary viewing habits and solidifying Netflix's standing as a trailblazer in the streaming space [5]. Additionally, Netflix continues to collect audience data in an opaque manner. Although this may irritate industry watchers, the business can preserve a competitive edge by controlling narratives on the success of its content [5]. This deliberate information management helps mold how the public views the company's achievements. According to Lobato & Lotz [4] and Wayne & Uribe [5], Netflix's overall strategy leverages its content and data methods to maintain a leadership position in the streaming business. It combines worldwide expansion with a strong eye for local authenticity and user preferences.

3. Netflix's Business Model

Netflix's business model centers around subscription-based revenue generation: customers pay monthly fees in return for accessing an expansive library of licensed media titles as well as an ever-increasing selection of Netflix Original productions, providing them with a steady and predictable source of income. This system ensures a sustainable income source.

Netflix has long taken pride in producing original content to differentiate itself in an otherwise saturated market, which helps attract and keep subscribers. Original shows and movies play an essential role in Netflix's strategy by cutting its reliance on outside providers while differentiating itself from external providers in this way. Producing such original works is instrumental in drawing new subscribers and keeping existing ones subscribed.

Technological innovation is at the core of Netflix's business model. They invest heavily in streaming technology and data analytics to enhance user experience and customize content delivery accordingly. Their emphasis on technology ensures smooth content delivery and an enjoyable viewing experience - essential elements that provide subscriber retention and loyalty. Lotz [6] has emphasized Netflix's worldwide expansion plan, which underscores the company's dedication to globalizing its content catalog. Unlike its rivals, Netflix emphasizes localizing content to suit local tastes and cultural quirks more than it primarily provides content created in the United States. This strategy significantly impacts many markets, especially in places where local content is highly appreciated, like South Korea, Japan, and India. In addition to expanding Netflix's viewership across more than 190 countries, this tactic questions established ideas of media flow. Given the complexity

of operations in various locations, this calls for new research frameworks to comprehend the cultural influence of streaming services like Netflix, emphasizing the significance of context-specific studies in assessing the cultural function of global streaming platforms.

4. Trends and Competitor Analysis

In the context of trends and competition, Netflix operates in an environment increasingly shaped by evolving consumer preferences and a crowded market. The trend toward digital streaming as a primary form of media consumption continues to grow, with consumers seeking convenience, variety, and flexibility in their viewing experience. With its vast library and user-friendly interface, Netflix aligns well with these expectations. However, the competitive landscape in the streaming industry is intensifying. Netflix competes with traditional streaming giants like Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, Hulu, and HBO Max and faces challenges from newer entrants and less direct competitors. For example, Apple TV+ and Peacock are emerging as contenders with their unique content offerings. Additionally, social media platforms and YouTube present indirect competition, capturing a significant portion of the digital media consumption time, especially among younger audiences.

Netflix's main competitors, such as Disney+ and HBO Max, offer strong content portfolios, often at competitive pricing. Disney+, for instance, benefits from a vast array of established franchises and family-friendly content. HBO Max leverages its high-quality HBO series and WarnerMedia content. Amazon Prime Video integrates its streaming service with broader Amazon Prime benefits, creating a unique value proposition. Netflix's strategy of investing heavily in original content and expanding globally seems well-calibrated to address these competitive pressures. Its commitment to producing diverse and high-quality original content helps retain existing subscribers and attract new ones. However, as the competition escalates, Netflix must continually innovate and possibly rethink its pricing and content strategies to maintain its market position.

5. Strategic Appropriateness and Flaws

According to Wayne [7], Netflix has adopted a strategic strategy that reflects a clever response to the evolving television industry. Global expansion aspirations perfectly align with the company's commitment to creating unique content customized to varied regional markets, as demonstrated by hits like "Money Heist" in Spain and "Sacred Games" in India. This approach accommodates a range of cultural preferences and mitigates the potential hazards linked to an excessive dependence on licensed content, which content creators progressively recapture for their streaming platforms [5]. A key component of Netflix's approach is data analytics, enabling the firm to examine viewer preferences thoroughly. By using a data-driven strategy, Netflix can better select and produce content that appeals to a wide range of viewers, increasing viewer engagement and retention [7].

The strategy has its shortcomings, though. Due to Netflix's significant original content expenditure, the company has accumulated an enormous debt load. If not handled well, this financial load may present long-term sustainability issues, particularly as the streaming industry gets more cutthroat [7]. Furthermore, Netflix's policy of periodically raising prices may drive away customers, especially in areas with other streaming options and strong price sensitivity [7]. Netflix's strategy of hiding viewership data is another tactical drawback. This puts the corporation at odds with an industry trend towards greater transparency and collaboration, even as it helps control the narrative surrounding the success of its content. In a media world that is becoming more and more data-centric, this secrecy may impede possible collaborations and restrict Netflix's capacity to utilize data insights [7] properly. Netflix faces challenges related to financial sustainability and industry alignment, particularly concerning its approach to audience data and pricing strategies, even though its strategy of producing

original content and utilizing data analytics has been largely successful in driving global expansion and viewer engagement [7].

6. Recommendations for Netflix's Future Success

Netflix should develop a holistic plan to ensure its future success, considering current market trends, competitive challenges, and changing consumer tastes. One strategy involves diversifying revenue streams: Netflix could appeal more broadly by offering lower-cost ad-supported subscription options at reduced price tiers and tapping other revenue sources like merchandise or interactive content related to popular series for financial stability while expanding brand appeal. Regarding content, Netflix must diversify in terms of originals and genres/formats experimented with (such as short-form content). Reaching niche audiences while expanding genre/form experimentation may capture segments currently drawn towards platforms like YouTube/TikTok that attract them; doing this not only broadens Netflix's user base but also effectively combats digital entertainment competitors like Spotify, etc.

Technological innovation remains critical to Netflix's success. Investing in advanced streaming technology that ensures smooth content delivery and harnessing artificial intelligence to provide personalized recommendations are vital elements. These improvements enrich user experiences and can lead to longer viewing sessions and subscriber retention. Transparency in audience metrics and viewership data is also critical, and Netflix should leverage that openness by disclosing viewership figures to build stronger industry relations and attract quality content producers. Concurrently, conducting extensive market research to understand regional preferences will guide its localization strategies so content resonates with diverse global audiences. Prioritizing user experience and accessibility is also vital, along with optimizing the user interface, seamless viewing across devices, and optimizing mobile viewing experiences. These are critical to keeping existing subscribers while drawing in new ones in an increasing mobile usage market.

7. Conclusion

Netflix has demonstrated its capacity to adjust to shifting market circumstances and consumer tastes during its path from a DVD rental service to a streaming behemoth. Despite its dominance, Netflix has financial difficulties in addition to fierce competition in the streaming business. Its emphasis on technological innovation, global expansion, and original content fits with the changing needs of the media consumer scene. Netflix must, however, address its strategic shortcomings, such as financial management, content diversification, transparency in data sharing, and improving user experience, if it is to preserve its market position and guarantee future success. Netflix can sustain its success in the very competitive streaming market by broadening its sources of income, experimenting with different content formats, adopting new technology, and emphasizing user interaction. Maintaining its market leadership and appealing to a varied, global audience will depend heavily on its capacity for innovation and adaptation.

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Electoral Democracy: The Manifestation of Collective Will and Deliberation

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Abstract: This article examines the conditions under which elections can genuinely express the 'will of the people.' It argues that the establishment of a shared community and the engagement in genuine deliberation are fundamental to achieving this. Drawing on the philosophical concept of 'general will' as presented by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the article posits that a democratic society must first and foremost establish an effective social contract. This contract serves as a crucial mediator between conflicting individual desires, fostering harmony and collective wills. Furthermore, the article also notes that the establishment of a social contract is not a one-time event but rather, an ongoing process. It emphasizes the need for this contract to be consistently renewed and reevaluated through thoughtful deliberations. The article analyzes various election processes, highlighting the failures and successes of different countries. It underscores how different approaches to elections can either facilitate or hinder the formation of a representative general will. It finally concludes that elections, when conducted under the proper conditions of deliberation and a constantly evolving social contract, can indeed serve as authentic expressions of the will of the people.

Keywords: General will, Sovereign, Deliberation, Democracy, Election

1. Introduction

According to Winston Churchill, democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others [1]. The election is broadly viewed as a critical mechanism through which public accountability and legitimacy are upheld in a democracy. However, under certain circumstances, the results of elections alone can express none or even the opposite of the people's will. For instance, does a nearly unanimous vote for a student leader in the school's executive council reflect the students' preference for his leadership, or does it suggest that the election process may sway individuals towards a predetermined outcome? This article argues that two conditions must be met for the elections to express the people's will. First, people must acknowledge that they are "a people" and agree to a shared community that allows them to enforce their people's will. Second, they must engage in genuine deliberation to create an uncoerced and meaningful will that creates tangible change.

2. 'Will of People': A Philosophical Understanding

The first step is to understand the term 'will of people.' Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau developed the foundation of the will of the people, or the "general will," in "The Social Contract."

The first term to define is “will.” Merriam-Webster defines a will as a “desire” [2]. For instance, every individual desires necessities such as food and water. Often, these private or “particular” will clash with each other. One person's wish to eat food clashes with another person's wish to eat when there is limited food. In times before human civilization, people resolved these clashing wills through violence. This state of human society was named “the state of nature” by Rousseau. He argues the only guaranteed phenomenon in the state of nature is whoever has the most force controls others. [3]

Humans in modern society neither live in the state of nature nor operate under the rights of the strongest. How do people living in societies mediate conflicting wills? Firstly, there must be a society, and people within the society must agree to be in the society. Rousseau questions: “If there were no prior agreement, what would give the minority any obligation to submit to the choice of the majority?” [3] Rousseau argues that the people must believe that they are part of a unified society. There must be a social contract between individuals to prevent the strongest from dominating the rest through violence and impose their particular will on others. This social contract also means the strongest no longer need to live in fear of the minority using violence against them. Thus, the agreement of the social contract is necessary to “defend[ing] and protect[ing] each associate person and goods...” to allow individuals to pursue their wills. [3] Note that this social contract is a generalized will that all individuals agree to. Rousseau argues that the general will “looks only to the common interest” and is obtained by “remov[ing] from these same wills the pluses and minuses that cancel one another...” [3].

3. The Formation of ‘A People’ and the Role of a Sovereign

Thus, how does a general apply to a people, and what are the necessary conditions for forming “the people?” A “sovereign,” the perfect representation of the public will, is constructed to express and enforce the people's will. Rousseau claims two conditions exist in forming the social contract between individuals and the sovereign. Firstly, the sovereign must ensure the existence of itself to prioritize the general will over any will. Insofar as the sovereign commits an act that favors a particular will, the public will disappear, and the sovereign will destroy itself. Second, the individual, a citizen, must accept the sovereign's moral authority. Individuals pose the most significant threat to the existence of the sovereign's general will because they can attempt to overthrow the sovereign through violence. Thus, the state must force the people to accept the sovereign's general will. In short, for “a people” to be indeed considered “a people,” it needs to include reciprocal obligations between the sovereign and its people [3].

Nigeria's failed elections show the importance of the sovereign. Nigeria's elections have suffered from “violence, voter fraud, intimidation, manipulation” due to violent uprisings that cause societal breakdown. The root cause of the violence is the fundamental belief that one group of Nigerian citizens is not part of the Nigerian “people.” Nigerians could not form a social contract and were thus unable to create a sovereign powerful enough to prevent particular wills from overwhelming the general will [4]. The sovereign of Nigeria failed to ensure its existence due to the manipulation and intimidation of its people, and the history of colonialism and imperial power further entrenched the country into divides. Comparatively, Sweden's elections demonstrate the effectiveness of elections when a “people” is formed. A study of the Swedish elections shows a direct relationship between trust in the government and the willingness of citizens to cast their votes [5]. When more people believe in the social contract, the stronger the sovereign becomes, thus enforcing the general will.

4. Deliberation in Constructing General Will

The general will can be constructed after “a people” is formed, and it must undergo a process that cancels out conflicting particular wills and allows people to understand other people's wills. This

process is known as deliberation. The deliberation process could occur in different ways, such as journalism, debates, online discourse, and elections. Elections are “the method used to calculate the number of elected positions in government that individuals and parties are awarded after.” [6] Elections tally votes and reflect the votes in politicians or policies.

Why is the deliberation process necessary? Citizens cannot form an agreement with others in society if they do not know what other people’s wills are without deliberation. William Eveland Jr. at the Ohio State University School of Communication outlines three facets of deliberation’s importance. Firstly, citizens gain information when others who read different sources of information present them in the discussion. This is important because people can better judge the candidate, they think will fulfill the general will. Secondly, citizens are incentivized to conduct “anticipatory elaboration,” or more profound research, because they want to affirm or reject certain beliefs through credible information [7].

On the other hand, the lack of diverse information and research equates to fake information. Fake information misdirects individuals to vote in a manner that fulfills a particular will. Thus, phony information indicates the level of informational warfare against the sovereign and whether the deliberation process is functional. Other than counterfeit information, Eveland suggests that people’s beliefs could be swayed during political discourse. By becoming more politically literate, citizens could believe different particular wills under the influence of others [7]. Insofar as this influence is not coercive, changing the particular will is beneficial to represent the people’s will because the general will be up to date.

In addition, echo chambers are created when people are not exposed to other people’s beliefs and particular wills. An echo chamber is a ‘bounded, enclosed media space that has the potential to both magnify the messages delivered within it and insulate them from rebuttal’ [8]. Echo chambers are problematic because they reinforce people’s beliefs even though the information could be inaccurate. Furthermore, echo chambers destroy the purpose of deliberation as individuals are not exposed to opposing particular wills, making the cancellation process impossible. Therefore, echo chambers also indicate the failure of deliberation in an election. In summary, deliberation is important because it allows others to agree to the social contract and allows others to interpret an individual’s particular will.

5. Constant Evolution

Given that deliberation is vital to the formation of the general will, it is essential to note that “the people” change over time due to different circumstances. Thus, a single election is insufficient to represent the will of the people. Deliberation must exist constantly for the will to be formed. For example, the social contract between the founding fathers of the United States and constituents at the time is entirely different from the contract between the current president and citizens. The Second Amendment right to bear arms was written in a different context of society. The “arms” at the founding of the nation were muskets and not as dangerous as the modern machine guns.

Furthermore, America had a more significant necessity for guns to defend their borders against Native Americans and other nations. Given the different contexts of the time, the agreement that people have the right to own guns needs to be updated when society changes. Hence citizens in the United States are now restricted from owning certain firearms. There must be a renewal of the contract to ensure not only that the general will is consistent with the particular wills, but also new particular wills are included in the general will. Thus, to examine the process of elections as a form of “deliberation,” we must analyze the cycle and system of elections to determine whether elections express the will of the people.

6. Election as a Cycle of Deliberation

How do cycles of elections facilitate deliberation? A study by Stromback and Johansson finds a significant increase in political interest and news consumption during election campaigns and election season. [9] As discussed, the general will be determined by canceling conflicting particular wills. Citizens participate in elections because they want to include themselves in the deliberation process to include their specific wills in the general will. The separate wills of individuals are voted on through elections, creating discourse and policy changes, which in turn leads to more need for shift and elections. Through this continual cycle of deliberation, voting, and elimination of particular wills, the conflicting particular wills are canceled out, eventually leading to a general will.

For example, Perth, the capital city of Western Australia, implemented the “Dialogue with the City” program, which made it “the largest deliberative forum in the southern hemisphere and a case study in deliberative democracy.” This program was used for discussing city planning policies. Participant feedback showed that citizens were inclined to change their “initial cynicism about the political agenda.” Analysis by Hartz-Karp states [10]:

“They [the citizens] expressed surprise at the extent of common ground that had been forged, hope that politicians could be trusted to listen and respond to the people, and delight with the goodwill of fellow participants to engage in positive dialogue.”

Furthermore, data shows that 42% of the attendees believed that they had broadened their perspectives, and 97% of the participants believed the deliberations were valuable and were willing to attend again. This case study demonstrates how deliberation during times of voting allows citizens to be heard and, therefore, input their particular wills within the general will. In short, citizens have the incentive to participate in the electoral deliberation process due to their interest in their particular wills to be represented in the general will through the continual deliberation process.

Conversely, when elections are unable to allow deliberation, the result of elections tends to lead to the failure of the sovereign. Take Russia’s elections, for instance. Since 1998, Russia’s elections have been plagued with election fraud and voter coercion. The Kremlin has a firm grasp over the ballot system that allows it to falsify ballots. Furthermore, the Kremlin has strong ties with oligarchs that commit bribery that skew election results. Some officials were “awarded” over 10 million votes by the Kremlin. The failure of Russia’s elections led to the victory of Boris Yeltsin in 1996, who had only single-digit approval ratings, a clear sign of how the people’s wills were not expressed. [11].

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the will of the people, as Rousseau puts it, is the “constrained deliberate choice of the people.” There must be a social contract between individuals to compromise their particular wills and trust the sovereign; meanwhile, the sovereign must ensure its survival. Then, a general will can then be formed through a deliberation process. The cycle of elections demonstrates that it is a successful form of deliberation. Lastly, indicators such as echo chambers and fake information can be used to determine whether an election is failing. Therefore, elections do express the will of the people, only under the conditions that allow “a people” and its “wills” to be constructed through a deliberation process.

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Role of Language in Emotions and Bias: A Cognitive Linguistic Perspective of Affective Political Media in the US

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Abstract: In today's digital era, where emotions are central to journalism and information disseminates rapidly, the role of language in transmitting emotions, stereotypes, and biases has become a subject of debate and study. The use of language in news media can be argued, as it may prioritize sensationalism over accuracy to tap into people's feelings under new business models and the attention economy. While journalism ethics aim to minimize bias, journalism consistently incorporates emotions to captivate the audience and create an "experience of involvement". This is significant because language, consumed from diverse media news channels, is integral to cognition. Research in cognitive linguistics demonstrates that human beings view the world in metaphoric terms, and language defines and constrains communication, thinking, and sense-making. This article explores linguistic mechanisms such as metaphors of "flood" and "aliens", agenda setting, selectivity, framing, and expectancy bias, through which emotions, perspectives, and affectivity are sustained and propagated in political news reporting. It considers the impact of stereotypes and biases, particularly in the media portrayal of undocumented immigrants and different framings in the description of the War in Gaza. The article highlights that language is seldom neutral and is intertwined with motives, emphasizing the importance of understanding the persuasive power of words. In conclusion, this paper reveals the role of language in shaping perceptions of message receivers and contributes to enhancing linguistic justice, informing more ethical approaches to journalism and media production. It emphasizes the need for an editorially conscious and intelligent use of language to create engaging, empathetic content.

Keywords: Affective Political Journalism, Language Bias, Stereotypes, Cognitive Linguistics, Emotions

1. Introduction

In the era of digitalization and the evolution of a more rapid, networked media landscape, emotions and affectivity are central to the future of journalism. Nevertheless, its role becomes arguable as it may present itself as the drive for sensationalism and bias, using exciting framing and language at the expense of accuracy, in order to tap into people's feelings. This is especially salient to new business models like subscriptions and memberships and under proliferation of news media in diversified channels with increased ease of creating and sharing media [1]. The speed at which information travels in today's media ecosystem is unprecedented, enabling instant sharing and dissemination of

information flow. Such a fast-paced environment both has positive and negative implications, as it also entails the risk of misinformation and the challenge of verifying fake and biased news [1].

Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira introduced the concept of “affective news” to illustrate how news, opinions, and emotions become inseparable in the context of a political crisis, while studying the extraordinary news atmosphere during the Egyptian uprising in 2011, and as Charlie Beckett describes leveraging emotional resonance in news media, it is “a method for injecting some warm blood into the lifeless body of ‘rational’ factual reporting” [1, 2]. While journalism ethics have tended to stay subjective and involve as less as bias as possible, Peters emphasized that journalism has consistently incorporated emotions by aiming to captivate the audience through the creation of an “experience of involvement”. This is achieved by employing familiar storytelling techniques that revolve around the portrayal of protagonists and antagonists [3].

When professionals aim to make impartial claims about “truth” in their reporting, the language used would certainly reflect the emotions and intentions of the journalist, transmitting certain emotions, perspectives, and biases to the reader. This is shown in Karin Wahl-Jorgensen’s book, where she states that emotions are inherently relational, arising from people’s relationships with society and the underlying institutions that support it [4]. This means authors would expect certain emotions from the readers, and readers would be capable of parsing socially indexed cues in language while they interact with texts.

The foundation behind the transmission of emotions generated with simple texts is that language acts as an instrument for social influence, shaping social realities, identities, stereotypes, and biases. It is inherently persuasive, selecting and abstracting information, as Jacobs and Burke showed, and is predictive in nature, sermonizing about reality through its structure of connecting action (verb) to an object, as Weaver indicated [5, 6]. People adeptly produce and interpret socially indexed cues in language, and how people speak and perceive impacts our thinking and cognition [7].

The representation of any subject through language not only frames but also changes comprehension. It could be trivializing, criminalizing, or generating empathy, guided by semantics and linguistic mechanisms like agenda-setting, selective information, metaphors, and framing. A particular representation through language also encourages specific responses because language is integral to cognition, influencing thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors, and ultimately consolidating into social norms and culture. This concept can be traced back to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which posits that language provides the lens through which we interpret the world. Persistent language use by one group to characterize another can lead to misconceptions and perpetuate prejudice if the voice of the other group is suppressed or denied, solidifying into stigma, particularly for minorities such as immigrants, races, and genders [7].

Previous research has addressed the historical context of stereotypes or anti-sentiments against certain groups, focusing particularly on the adverse effects of discriminatory language at the group level. Yet, a crucial gap persists in people’s understanding: the underlying sociolinguistic and cognitive linguistic mechanisms of language that facilitate, sustain and propagate these stigmas and biases have not been thoroughly investigated.

This gap in the literature overlooks the potential of foundational linguistic insights to enhance the understanding of good or bad emotions and sentiments of the masses against a particular group provoked by news media, as they are becoming increasingly significant in people’s daily lives and information digestion. Another aim is to better assist linguistic justice. This paper discusses the mechanisms and effect of language as a maintainer of prejudicial norms; it wishes to offer a more robust framework for understanding language’s role in such transmission of emotions, affectivity, perspective, bias, and discriminations in news media with the literature review, with two case studies analyzed.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cognitive Bias: Framing Effect and Selectivity

When mainstream journalism aims to report facts, decisions regarding the selection of events are made while attempting to conform to collective professional codes. However, these selections are to a great extent subjective because, once again, journalism is “made by people for the people” and influenced by identity, culture, and personal values [1].

A framing effect in psychology refers to the phenomenon where people’s responses to a decision are influenced by how it is presented or “framed”. Frames work by selecting a certain group of information for a single event since there are so many facets of an event that cannot be incorporated into a single expression. Frames achieve their effects by emphasizing either the positive (gain) or negative (loss) aspects. This bias shows that the same information, when framed differently, can alter people’s reactions. The way information is worded has a greater impact on an individual’s choice than the content itself, demonstrating the cognitive bias of the framing effect. The framing of an issue, whether it emphasizes gains or losses, significantly influences decision-making. The analysis of such framing effects is an empirical area of study that tries to understand the link between language use (how it is framed) and how it influences our thoughts, including attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors [8].

Barsalou posited that frames serve as the fundamental format for concepts in cognitive processes, a proposition that became known as the Frame Hypothesis that within human cognition, frames offer the basic means of representing information [8]. He substantiated this assertion with empirical evidence and incorporated it into a comprehensive theory of cognition. The frame-based approach subsequently evolved into his theories of perceptual symbol systems and situated simulation, which explain how conceptual representations are firmly grounded in perception and experiential factors [3, 8].

2.2. No Neutral Language: Language as Sermonic and with Motives

Language is inherently intertwined with motives and is seldom neutral. This is evident in Kenneth Burke’s work as he went beyond the mechanics of persuasion to explore the underlying motivations that drive us in persuasive discourse [5]. Burke and Jacobs recognized that different motives have the power to shape rhetorical appeals, leading them to redefine persuasion as a process of identification or “consubstantiation.” To effectively persuade others, one must carefully select the appropriate appeal and establish a sense of identification with the audience [5]. This concept of identification, similar to Aristotle’s notion of seeking the means of persuasion, emphasizes the importance of understanding and connecting with the motives of the audience. Language usage is not simply a means of conveying information but involves transformative or substitutional moves, even in less overt situations. By comprehending the motives behind language, one can better navigate the persuasive power of words [5].

2.3. Metaphors

A great starting point to understanding how language conceptualizes the mass’s cognition is to comprehend the metaphors employed in languages. Metaphor is a poetically or rhetorically ambitious use of words, a figurative as opposed to literal use. Considering it as a single figure of speech is not sufficient, as it has provoked much more philosophical discussions than mere rhetoric. This involves a comparison of one thing to another, often unrelated. The primary subject can be enriched by newly introducing a second subject or vehicle. For example, portraying immigrants as “water” or a “flood” is an example of its application to political discourse. This helps map a complex idea of immigration to more concrete domains [9].

3. Case Studies

3.1. Story of Mexican Immigrant

The first surge of Mexican immigration to the US occurred in the early 20th century, between 1910 and 1930, due to the Mexican Revolution and a strong US economy. They make up the largest share of the undocumented immigrant population in the US. Different media framed Mexican illegal immigrants differently. For example, in a case study, Parker J. did on how Fox News framed an identical story differently for two different audiences. Fox Latino framed their headline as “In Rare Move, University Grants \$22K Scholarship to Undocumented Student,” while Fox News wrote three concise and straightforward words, “Money for Illegal.” [10]. As shown before, different framings encourage different responses and emotions for people who consume them. De Vreese conducted a study on the influence of news frames on public opinion and found that they have a significant impact [11]. The study revealed that participants were only able to alter the effects of framing when they were conscious of its presence. De Vreese concluded that the media possess the power to shape public opinion by employing frames that highlight specific facts or values within a story [11].

In another survey, Domke, McCoy, and Torres found that news stories framed with “material values” (economics and tangible resources) prompted participants to heavily consider racial and ethnic issues, while stories framed with “ethical values” (human rights and personal responsibility) did not [12]. For example, when participants read a “material” story about Hispanics, immigration issues were taken into account. The authors concluded that media framing significantly influences the application of racial prejudices and stereotypes by consumers.

In addition, a study by Aday distinguished between advocacy frames, which are one-sided and solution-oriented, and objectivist frames, which present a balanced approach [13]. The findings demonstrated that advocacy frames not only favor the addressed issue but also effectively influence media consumers to align their judgments with the opinions embedded in the stories. In contrast, objectivist frames did not produce this effect [13, 14]. Hence, it is arguable that public opinion is very susceptible to news framing, bringing complicated racial implications for Mexican immigrants. This then implies stigmatization and marginalization of certain groups. In addition, such sensational descriptions aimed to provoke different responses from people escalate political polarization between the Republicans and Democrats as people tend to digest information that reconfirms their existing views [15]. This also gives rise to a self-fulfilling cycle of anti-immigrant sentiment, as Linguistic Expectancy Bias has shown. This bias refers to the tendency to interpret ambiguous information in a way that aligns with one’s existing stereotypes and expectations, and such stereotypes or sentiments are often maintained and perpetuated in daily conversations.

Besides framing, metaphoric language is also pervasive in such political discourse to shape the story of immigration. A growing body of research in cognitive linguistics demonstrates that human beings view the world in metaphoric terms. That is, in attempts to understand new concepts, people borrow from existing ideas. Today’s immigration metaphors often signify a loss of security and cultural hegemony, while not often emphasizing economic contributions and social belonging. Salient exemplar metaphors refer to immigration as water, aliens, or floods [9]. This critically constructs the stories and laws about immigrants. In such a metaphoric war, Supreme Court Justices become soldiers who must protect citizens against the impending alien offensive. They themselves employ many metaphoric terms to illustrate a nation at risk. They describe the law as needing to “combat” (a metaphor) the employment of illegal “aliens.” Keith Cunningham argued that the larger cognitive frame structuring these might be portrayed as “immigration is a losing battle” and “illegal aliens are entering the country like an avalanche.” How these important figures are thinking metaphorically not only changes their perceptions but also affects how information is disseminated to the public [9]. How people think metaphorically affects how people talk about problems and solutions, and Keith

Cunningham argued that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy that our conceptual domains get more and more associated with a small number of connections the more people use, disseminate, and repackage certain metaphors [9]. Each conceptual frame employed, like wetbacks, and aliens, then creates a version of reality that emphasizes a particular side of immigrants, such as invasion, and illegality, and conceals others such as belonging, diversity, and personhood.

3.2. Depiction of War in Gaza

The manifestation of nuanced language in war discourse is of great importance. In the pre-digital era, traditional mass media (radio, television, and newspapers) were utilized as tools of propaganda during times of war. The involvement of these media outlets in the First and Second World Wars demonstrates their role in shaping narratives. Even in the Second Gulf War, CNN's live coverage earned it the moniker "Air war" as it directly broadcasted the war events to viewers' homes. Functioning as weapons in warfare, mass media framed information to rally support and generate sympathy for the forces, ideologies, or parties they endorsed. In international conflicts, mass media often claim impartiality while maintaining an underlying ideological stance [16].

Here, this paper will study two frames employed by two polarized news sources on a recent identical event—the end of the truce in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Dec. 1, 2023. Palestine Chronicle, a pro-Palestine news site, described "Dozens Killed, Injured in Israeli Raids after Truce Expires", while The Times of Israel wrote "Truce fell apart after Hamas refused to release more female Israeli hostages" in their headlines [17, 18]. The phrase in Palestine Chronicle, "fell apart," creates contrast with the neutral word "expires" in the Time of Israel. The first implies a sudden and disorderly breakdown, suggesting a lack of control or predictability in the truce ending, conveying a sense of chaos. Later it wrote Hamas refused to release suggesting the intentional decision by Hamas to withhold release, framing them as the active party in the truce breakdown with the agency and placing responsibility on Palestine. Conversely, "expires" implies inevitability and a natural culmination of the truce. This framing then suggests a more passive and perhaps expected progression. Palestine Chronicle also selects to focus on the severity of human lives impacted by highlighting "killed, injured" people, under "Israeli raids". On the other hand, the incorporation of "female Israeli hostages" in the Times of Israel adds an emotional element that provokes empathy as well. Inside the pro-Israeli article, it writes "Israel would agree to a pause". The choice of the word "pause" tends to convey a sense of reasonability, rationality, and a controlled approach on Israel's part. It downplays the severity of the military actions.

4. Conclusion and Implication: Role of Language in Emotions, Biases, and Cognition

Based on the discussion of the previous two case studies and the literature review, one can conclude that language serves as a social cue that embodies an individual's perceptions of reality. Message receivers promptly identify the social cues embedded in the language and adopt a similar frame and perspective in understanding the situation. In the two case studies, each agent revealed a particular perspective on immigration and the Gaza War through their metaphoric framing. While they may consider the language they use as culturally and linguistically appropriate and neutral, their conceptual frames created a version of reality that highlighted certain features of immigration or the Gaza War while omitting others. If employed regularly, such inferences perpetuate a certain perspective or bias against a particular group or event, implying the potential for restricting linguistic justice, fair outcomes, and stigmatization of certain groups.

The implication of such mechanisms of bias, stereotypes, or particular perspective transmission in media in the current digital age can be pivotal in warning people about their daily consumption of news media. People realize that language and cognition are intimately related, and language defines

what one thinks, communicates, and how one interprets communication in affective news if media aims to provoke certain affectivity or emotions from the readers. This implies the need for people to have a balanced digest of opinions, meaning becoming high information seekers and considering multiple perspectives and sources before forming conclusions.

The current era of digitalization actually equips people with greater power to do so, as the channels, forms, and contents of information transmission greatly diversify, and the manageability of one issuing news becomes easier. It is harder for one source to designate priorities and set agendas.

Emotions are central to the future of journalism and mass media. Emotions provoked through language serve multiple purposes, such as inspiration, creation, style, appeal, and resonance or impact. It is not simply an add-on marketing tool or a superficial way to gain attention. However, opportunities for more efficient, interesting, and pertinent journalism are created when one uses language to use emotions as a crucial component in the production and consumption of news in a morally, politically, and editorially aware and intelligent manner. After understanding the relationship between language used and emotions and bias, more ethical codes for creating news journalism would need to be updated and revised in future years, as the current age of digitalization becomes more dynamic, shaping or redefining the classic idea of journalistic objectivity to avoid sensationalism and create a more engaging and empathetic context.

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Better Ways to Protect Indigenous Knowledge and Cultures Through Intellectual Property

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Abstract: Indigenous knowledge can be understood as a network of knowledge, beliefs and traditions that can be preserved and have some commercial value over time. Along with the increasing visibility of indigenous cultures in the global marketplace, there are also significant challenges. These challenges are often related to the physical destruction and utilization of indigenous lands and knowledge. The historical context and uniqueness of indigenous cultures suggest that they require greater attention and special protection under the law. From the current provisions and judgments, some individual authors have been compensated while the rights of the broader indigenous community have not been adequately protected. From an international perspective, the focus of the work of international organizations has expanded to include indigenous peoples' land claims and cultural rights. In addition to various international organizations and related instruments, a number of countries and regions are working to protect the intellectual property rights of indigenous cultures. Australia is a country that is typically faced with the protection of indigenous intellectual property. For Australia, the effective protection of indigenous knowledge remains an issue that needs to be addressed and managed through the legal realm. The positioning of indigenous knowledge in the law is complex and incomplete. Australia has played an important role at the international level, but the actual response within Australia to the international level has been minimal. Australia should therefore recognize and respond to these developments in legislation as soon as possible.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge, indigenous culture, intellectual property

1. Introduction

As time passed, indigenous populations throughout the world retained unique comprehension grounded in cultural experience and developed their own cultures and knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is extensive and to some extent commercially valuable. However, intellectual property protection for indigenous knowledge in Australia is not straightforward. Historically, there have been a number of attempts to assert intellectual property rights over indigenous knowledge, and the courts have been positive about this. However, the courts do not have a legislative function and the Australian Government has not legislated in this regard. The content of existing intellectual property legislation may allow Indigenous knowledge to be plundered by those who record or write down or patent it in material form. This paper analyzes the content and characteristics of Aboriginal culture and the protection of Aboriginal culture in Australia. Also, the paper analyzes the international

protection of indigenous culture and compares the protection behaviors of other countries. Through these analyses, this paper tries to find out the way to protect the intellectual property rights of indigenous culture that is suitable for the Australian situation.

2. Australian Indigenous Knowledge and Intellectual Property

2.1. Concept and Importance of Indigenous Knowledge

In various parts of the world, indigenous peoples preserved their unique comprehension grounded in cultural experience [1]. It is such comprehension as well as relationships that make up a system that is widely recognized as indigenous knowledge, which has been called indigenous knowledge. Indigenous traditional knowledge can be understood as networks of knowledge, beliefs and traditions [1]. This network can be preserved and exchanged indigenous over time. Indigenous cultures have a certain specificity. There is historical continuity between indigenous peoples and the societies that developed in particular territories prior to conquest or colonization [2]. It illustrates the historical nature of indigenous knowledge, that is to say, from one generation to the next, indigenous traditional knowledge, beliefs, arts and other cultural expressions are conveyed to the next. What is more specific is that indigenous knowledge is handed down formally or informally between groups of kin and communities through social exchanges, spoken traditions, symbolic practices and other activities [1].

Indigenous knowledge is broad in scope. Indigenous knowledge may include, for example, narratives of human history, ways of communication, both figurative and decorative, technology for cultivation and gathering, skills for hunting and collecting, an understanding of local ecosystems that is specialized, and production of specialized tools and techniques, and so on [1]. As a result of different historical and geographical circumstances, different traditional knowledge has been generated and preserved by various ethnic and tribal communities in different parts of the world. Regardless of the specific content of indigenous knowledge around the world, their existence is very important for a country. Indigenous knowledge may be tangible as well as intangible. They reflect history, they bring together wisdom, they give solutions to problems and they leave a lot of legacy for the country and the world.

2.2. Protection of indigenous knowledge under Australian intellectual property rights

The historical context and uniqueness of indigenous cultures suggests that they require additional attention and special protection under the law. The growing visibility of indigenous cultures in the global marketplace is accompanied by enormous challenges. They are usually related to the physical destruction and exploitation of indigenous lands and knowledge, but often go unnoticed [3]. The successful calls by indigenous peoples for the further acknowledgement of their rights to indigenous knowledge in international forums over the last few years [4]. It is true that indigenous forms of art and intellectual use are not well covered by intellectual property laws in Australia. The concept and content of indigenous knowledge is relatively well defined. However, the positioning of indigenous knowledge in the law is complex, contradictory and incomplete [5]. It has been firmly established that the issue of how to curb the challenge of unauthorized use of indigenous knowledge is an issue that needs to be resolved and managed within the legal sphere [4].

Free, prior and informed consent, integrity, attribution and benefit-sharing are all recognized as indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights (ICIP) [6]. In other words, ICIP describes the rights of indigenous peoples to their heritage. This heritage is part of indigenous peoples' expression of their cultural identity and also includes objects that are potentially to build on this heritage at a later date [4]. Unregulated use of indigenous cultures not only undermines the rights and dignity of indigenous peoples, but also damages their economic opportunities and cultural sentiments. The determination that indigenous cultures have intellectual property rights has, in fact, gone through a

lengthy process. Taking the perspective of copyright law in intellectual property, for example, challenges arise in determining the boundaries and markings of property with indigenous subject matter [7]. The copyright laws do not cover all the types of rights that indigenous people desire to have over their indigenous cultural property rights [4]. The content of intellectual property laws gives some people the opportunity to plunder indigenous intellectual property rights, offering exclusive property titles to people who document or pen down content in material form or patent knowledge. There have been arguments for copyright protection for Aboriginal art.

Historically, the recording of much indigenous knowledge has been done without the capacity of indigenous peoples to exercise their right to prior informed consent [4]. *Foster v Mountford* is an example of a case where information was provided in confidence [8]. As time passes, it is clear from Australian cases that Australian courts are increasingly willing to take indigenous beliefs and values into account [9].

There was an action in 1983 by the Aboriginal artist Yanggarny Wunungmurra and the Aboriginal Arts Agency against a fabric designer/manufacturer and the proprietor of a retail store for copyright infringement [10]. The result of the case was that the first defendant was awarded damages and a list of all the people to whom he had supplied fabric. However, the case has not attracted much attention. This case is not featured in any of the Intellectual Property Case Reports; neither is it reviewed in any of the extensive documents addressing Aboriginal art and copyright [7]. The case of *Milpururru & Ors v Indofurn Pty Ltd* has attracted more attention and this case provides a clear judicial confirmation [11]. The protection of copyright in Aboriginal art can be legally obtained and there can be some degree of legal protection for the collective interests of Aboriginal owners. It also shows that Aboriginal culture expressed through art can become a marketable commodity. A legal perspective, there is also an indication from the outcome of the case that intellectual property law must find ways to incorporate this element of indigenous knowledge.

As a whole, the Court has taken a proactive approach to Indigenous intellectual property law. However, there were some regrets in the judgments. In the *Milpururru* case, the court made its decision based on traditional copyright law, despite the culturally offensive nature of the commercial activity [11]. This meant that only the individual authors were compensated and the rights of the wider Aboriginal community were not properly protected. Despite their shortcomings, historical Australian cases promoted greater protection of Aboriginal rights in Australian copyright law and led to an improved understanding of Aboriginal culture in mainstream Australia [9]. The inability of the courts to provide a legislative response to the ICIP aspect of protection, and the slow progress of the Australian government's legislative efforts, means that the legal framework for ICIP protection remains far from reality.

3. International Practices to Protect Intellectual Property Rights on Indigenous Knowledge

From an international perspective, there has been an expansion of the focus of the work of international organizations to include indigenous peoples' land claims and cultural rights. In the early 1980s, UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) convened a Committee of Governmental Experts on Intellectual Property Rights (COGEPRI) with the aim of protecting expressions of folklore [12]. There is a Model Provisions of the National Law on the Protection of Expressions of Folklore against Illegal Exploitation and Other Unfavorable Acts developed by the Committee of Governmental Experts. It was noted therein that because of gaps in individual ownership and copyright duration, the statutory provisions of copyright laws and treaties for the legal preservation of folklore are not fully effective [13]. In 1997, UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization launched a universal platform on the protection of folklore, the report of which summarizes the discussions on the International Committee on Folklore and discusses community property rights, moral rights and the development of new regulations [6]. In the years 2000 and 2001,

WIPO organized independent international fact-finding missions and reported on the questions that needed to be answered regarding the protection of traditional knowledge in the intellectual property system, including patents, genetic material and cultural expressions [14]. In 2000, the member states of WIPO agreed to establish the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC). The IGC is mandated to develop practical approaches, as well as political objectives and standard principles for the preservation of traditional knowledge, however, they have made very slow progress in their work, repeating the draft articles over and over again [6]. A specific convention seems unlikely to be agreed upon by member states [12].

During the 1990s, there were several indigenous declarations on indigenous cultural property rights, and the international community's response to the documents on indigenous cultures and intellectual property had a significant impact. There have been many other international initiatives over the years. For example, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established in 2000 and it serves to provide expert advice to the Economic and Social Council on the existing framework for indigenous peoples. It includes aspects relating to indigenous traditional knowledge. Three key issues - terminology, the nature of sui generis systems and intended beneficiaries - were scoped out in a study submitted in 2007 [12].

In 1992, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was established as a legally binding international treaty. It seeks to safeguard the intellectual knowledge, creativity and experiences of indigenous and local communities. There is an international level where both treaties and declarations can enforce intellectual property and international intellectual property agreement rights between the signatories to these agreements. Under the CBD, Australia has enacted the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) at the national level. This has led to the protection of Indigenous knowledge in Australia at an international level, but one problem is that there are no clear procedures. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is groundbreaking in addressing issues related to indigenous ICIP rights. Article 31 is a paradigmatic provision that clearly establishes that indigenous peoples must control and maintain their indigenous intellectual property rights and that nation-states should take the necessary measures to assist them.

In addition to various international organizations and relevant documents, some countries and regions are trying to protect the intellectual property rights of indigenous cultures. A number of African countries are actively involved in international forums. In these countries, there is a great deal of reflection on indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights. A concern has also been expressed by the Group of African States participating in WIPO with regard to the slow progress in the consideration of international instruments [15]. It is also for this reason that some African countries have tried to find a regional response. By adopting the Swanepoort Protocol on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Folklore in 2010, the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) called for the development of national legislation. The conduct of New Zealand is also a good reference. The Waitangi Tribunal of New Zealand released its WAI 262 report on the nature of Maori culture and intellectual property in 2011, finding that the New Zealand government had failed to protect Maori traditions under the 1940 Treaty of Waitangi [16]. Similar to Australia, the New Zealand Government did not act in a timely manner. In addition to this, some countries have developed their own national laws on the protection of intellectual property rights of indigenous cultures, such as South Africa and Peru. Other countries and regions, such as the Pacific, have developed regional approaches.

4. Possible Ways to Preserve Indigenous Cultures in Australia

For Australia, the effective protection of indigenous knowledge remains an issue that needs to be addressed and managed through the legal sphere. The positioning of indigenous knowledge in the law is complex and incomplete. The main controversy and anxiety now faced is how to get the law to recognize this new subject and category. International treaties and the prevailing international view are worthy references. While Australia accepts that the historical development of rights in the international intellectual property system has sometimes conflated with international initiatives, there is also often a contradiction with the standards being developed [6]. International developments have had an impact on Australia, prompting the work of the Working Group on Australian Indigenous Folklore. An important reference from international theory and practice was the establishment of a Folklore Commission. Although the Australian Government had not implemented that recommendation, it was certainly an approach that could be tried. In accordance with the CBD, Australia has enacted the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) at the national level and introduced legislation in the Northern Territory and two states, Queensland. At the legislative level, the protection of indigenous knowledge became a possibility. However, the problem in the implementation process after the legislation is that there is no clear procedure, and this is the direction that the Australian government should go to supplement and improve in the next step. There are many similar approaches, such as UNDRIP, which is a breakthrough in the implementation of ICIP rights in Australia. At present, Australia has no national legislation to assist with formal legal rights.

Rather than adherence to international treaties, the legal framework has the potential to provide important rights and recognitions. While these rights and recognitions are partial and incomplete, it is clear from current practice that the protection that legislation can bring is difficult to obtain elsewhere. While law may be a key player in the production of meaning, there are a range of other factors involved. In Australia, for example, shifting political contexts and emerging international markets for Aboriginal art have all been important factors in bringing legal attention to the misuse of Aboriginal designs, and are important issues for legislation to take into account. While in the absence of a treaties between the Australian Government and indigenous peoples, the protection of indigenous rights is also necessary from a human rights perspective.

It is also important to note that every country's history is different. While many countries around the globe face the issue of protecting the intellectual property rights of Aboriginal cultures, there may also be diversity in the characteristics and types of Aboriginal cultures in each country. Australia should research as much as possible about indigenous cultures before legislating, and indigenous peoples need to be more involved in government. Specifically, possible ways of doing so included comprehensive, prior consultation with indigenous peoples and increased representation of indigenous peoples in relevant meetings.

In general, Australia cannot rely on the implementation of international treaties to address the protection of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights. Many organizations around the world have played an extremely important role in the establishment of international indigenous cultural and intellectual property protection regimes. Australia has played an important role at the international level, but there has also been little actual response from within Australia itself to the international level. There are already a number of international instruments that create a strong foundation for indigenous peoples' right to receive and share the benefits of the use of their genetic material and traditional knowledge. Australia should recognize and respond to these developments in legislation as soon as possible, taking into account indigenous realities and the current legal issues that arise.

5. Conclusion

For historical and political reasons, indigenous cultures exist in many countries around the world. The protection of indigenous cultures is complex and diverse. Many international organizations have been promoting the protection of indigenous cultures for decades, which also involves the protection of intellectual property rights of indigenous cultures. Over the decades, there have been very critical developments and advances in the design of international systems for the protection of intellectual property rights for indigenous cultures. However, the pace of development has, in general, been slow. For Australia, domestic recognition of these developments has also been slow. It is clear from a number of Australian judgments that Indigenous peoples in Australia are in need of rights to protect Indigenous knowledge. The overall positive attitude of the Australian courts in protecting the intellectual property rights of indigenous cultures can be found through the historical judgments. With reference to the solutions of other countries, Australia should develop its own national laws in line with its domestic realities. Considering that each country is different, Australia should do as much research as possible into Aboriginal cultures and previous judgments before legislating, and could also allow for the need for Aboriginal people to be more involved in government.

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The Current Status of Internet Fiction Addiction among Chinese Middle School Adolescents and Its Association with Self-Efficacy and Boredom Proneness

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Abstract: With the widespread utilization of the Internet, symptoms associated with Internet Fiction addiction are increasingly prevalent among Chinese netizens. This addictive behavior not only poses risks to personal well-being and emotional stability but also jeopardizes physical health. However, the relevant studies remain scarce and the definition of IFA is controversial. In order to address this gap, a questionnaire survey was conducted on 412 Chinese middle school students to investigate their levels of Internet Fiction addiction, self-efficacy, and boredom proneness. The findings reveal a significant positive correlation between Internet Fiction addiction and boredom proneness while no significant correlation is observed between IFA and self-efficacy. This discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that heightened levels of boredom proneness contribute to mood fluctuations, increased indulgence in daydreaming activities, as well as a distorted perception of time -- all factors that exacerbate the symptoms associated with Internet fiction addiction. The study further investigated risk factors for Internet fiction addiction among Chinese middle school students, enhancing research in this area and providing a reference for the prevention and correction of this issue.

Keywords: Internet fiction addiction, boredom proneness, self-efficacy, adolescents

1. Introduction

The Internet is becoming important for people's lives because of technological development. In China, the internet penetration rate reached an astonishing 76.4% by 2023 [1]. Internet addiction, also known as Pathological Internet Use (PIU), is a recognized concept that gained official recognition from the American Psychological Association in 1997, as proposed by Goldberg [2]. As a subclass of Internet addiction, Internet fiction addiction (IFA) has similar characteristics to Internet addiction. As a new phenomenon emerging from the secondary development of traditional novel literature on the Internet platform, in recent years, the reader and creator group of Internet fiction has also expanded rapidly. According to the data of the prior report, the number of users of Internet fiction in China has reached 528 million, accounting for 49% of the overall Internet users [1]. However, there are few studies on Internet fiction at present, which may be due to the concealment of Internet fiction addiction symptoms. Due to the low cost of online reading and the lack of attention to compulsive reading behavior itself, this phenomenon has not received enough attention. In fact, excessive reading of

Internet fiction may indeed have some problems, such as body damage caused by maintaining reading posture for a long time without movement, insufficient sleep time caused by reading Internet fiction before going to bed, loss of interpersonal communication, and some negative emotions such as anxiety and depression [3]. Due to the insensitivity and difficulty of intervention in Internet fiction addiction, it is more important to understand the causes and mechanisms of Internet fiction addiction, which can help people better understand themselves as well as prevent and control the addiction phenomenon.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence and belief in their ability to achieve specific behavioral goals in a particular domain. In his book, Bandura provided a comprehensive exploration of self-efficacy based on his own research. That of others, advocating that self-efficacy involves not only an individual's estimation or confidence in their future performance of a specific activity but also directly influences their functioning within the dynamic psychological process of engaging in that activity. Self-efficacy manifests itself through four intermediary processes: choice, thinking, motivation, and psychosomatic reactions. It is worth noting that self-efficacy does not exist in isolation but is shaped by past experiences or information. Bandura identified four primary sources of information that contribute to the development and reinforcement of self-efficacy. These sources provide individuals with valuable insights and feedback, which in turn influence their self-efficacy beliefs [4]. Previous studies have established a noteworthy negative correlation between self-efficacy and social networking addiction among Chinese college students [5]. Considering the characteristics of self-efficacy in Internet addiction research and social networking addiction research, this paper will further explore whether self-efficacy is related to IFA.

What's more, the relationship between Internet Fiction addiction and boredom proneness(BP) will also be discussed. Boredom is a prevalent and ubiquitous emotional experience among human beings, often likened to one of the plagues of modern society. It is generally perceived as an emotional state characterized by unpleasant feelings, lack of stimulation, and low physiological arousal. When individuals experience boredom, they are susceptible to various stress-related issues and health problems. Research consistently demonstrates that boredom has a positive relation with addictive behaviors such as Internet addiction, adolescent delinquency, and job burnout [6,7]. Based on the characteristics of boredom, researchers have classified it into two types: state boredom and trait boredom. State boredom refers to a temporary feeling of monotony caused by a lack of external stimuli in a particular situation. On the other hand, trait boredom, also known as "chronic boredom" or "indifferent boredom," is a stable personality trait that does not change across time and situations. Research on boredom proneness is an important part of trait boredom [7]. High levels of boredom proneness tend to encounter more frequent episodes of tedium compared to those with lower levels, and frequent occurrences can lead to adverse consequences such as poor academic performance and engagement in risky behaviors [6]. Given the well-established correlation between boredom proneness and Internet addiction as well as its significant predictive value for adolescents' dependence on smartphones, this study aims to further explore the relation between BP and Internet fiction addiction based on previous research and proposes these three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: A significant positive correlation between Internet fiction addiction and boredom proneness can be observed.

Hypothesis 2: A significant negative correlation exists between Internet fiction addiction and self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 3: A significant negative correlation can be observed between boredom proneness and self-efficacy.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

A convenient sampling method was conducted for subject recruitment to select 420 participants from three middle schools in Suzhou. All participants were administered a unified questionnaire. Some questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete information. A number of 412 valid answers were collected, yielding an effective rate of 98.10%. The mean age of the subjects was 16.58 years old, with 107 males (25.97%) and 305 females (74.03%) participating. Notably, the subjects reported spending an average of 1.77 hours daily engaging in Internet fiction reading.

2.2. Measurements

2.2.1. Regular Information Supplement Questionnaire

To supplement the study, a set of general questions was employed to gather demographic information from the subjects. This information encompassed variables such as gender, age, family economic status, and whether the participants were the only children in their respective families. Additionally, the questionnaire aimed to capture characteristic details about the subjects' Internet fiction reading habits, including the specific types of Internet fiction they engaged with and the diverse methods they employed for accessing and consuming such content.

2.2.2. Internet Fiction Addiction Scale

The Internet Fiction Addiction Scale, updated by Zhang.D [8], was used in this study, which was expanded on the Chinese Internet Addiction Scale (CIAS-R). The scale used a 4-point Likert scoring system, and seven questions were excluded based on exploratory factor analysis principles. The final scale included 19 items organized into three categories: obsessive symptoms, withdrawal responses, and time management issues. A higher overall score indicated more serious Internet fiction addiction.

The scale performed well in confirmatory factor analysis, with $\chi^2/df = 4.17$, RMSEA = 0.07, NFI = 0.93, GFI = 0.91, and CFI = 0.94. The scale demonstrated great internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.96$).

2.2.3. Boredom Proneness Questionnaire

The Boredom Proneness Questionnaire (BPQ), developed by Chinese scholar Huang Hua, was utilized in this research. The questionnaire is a revised and adapted version of the Farmer and Sundberg Boring Tendency Scale [7], tailored to the cultural context of China and deemed more suitable for assessing boredom proneness among Chinese students. Comprising 30 questions rated on a 7-point scale, the BPQ encompasses two dimensions: external stimuli and internal stimuli. The external stimuli dimension encompasses four factors: monotony, constraint, loneliness, and tension. Conversely, the internal stimuli dimension comprises two elements: self-control and creativity. The six factors are denoted as F1 to F6 based on the content of the questions. In this study, the BPQ revealed high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.91$).

2.2.4. General Self-Efficacy Scale

In this study, the Chinese version of the General Self-efficacy Scale (GSES), as tested by Wang Caikang et al., was employed [9]. The scale consisted of 10 Likert 4-point items. Wang's research demonstrated the reliability and validity of the Chinese GSES, with a Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.87, a retest reliability of 0.83 over a 10-day interval, a half-test reliability of 0.90, and a correlation

exceeding 0.60 between the individual items and the total score. These findings indicate strong reliability and validity.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

The present study employed SPSS 22.0 for conducting descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. However, it is important to acknowledge that the utilization of self-report measures may introduce common method bias, potentially influencing the obtained results. To mitigate this issue, several precautionary measures were implemented in this study, including the separate administration of different questionnaires and a strong emphasis on ensuring data anonymity and confidentiality. Additionally, Harman's single-factor test was conducted as a post-statistical control to assess the presence of common method bias. Results from this test indicated that the factor characteristic root exceeded 1 and that the variance explained by the first factor was only 25.16%, significantly below the critical threshold of 40%. These findings suggest that no substantial common method bias exists within this study.

3. Results

3.1. Demographic Analysis

According to the results of the questionnaire, the mean age of participants is 16.58 years old, most of them come from rural areas and are not the only child. The specific details are shown below(See Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic Statistics

variable	category	number of people	Proportion(%)
Sex	male	107	25.97
	female	305	74.03
Rural or urban background	rural	280	67.96
	urban	132	32.04
Family economic status	well-off	154	37.38
	average	238	57.77
	challenging	20	4.85
Only child status	yes	132	32.04
	no	280	67.96
Duration of daily Internet Fiction reading	1h	196	47.57
	1-2h	149	36.17
	2-3h	33	8.01
	>3h	34	8.25

3.2. Descriptive Statistics

SPSS22.0 was used to conduct descriptive statistics on the total scores and sub-dimensional scores of the three variables, and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	Internet Fiction Addiction	General Self-Efficacy	Boredom Proneness
Mean	32.027	24.915	45.265
Std. Deviation	9.987	5.175	27.580
Shapiro-Wilk	0.885	0.926	0.979
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	< .001	< .001	< .001
Minimum	19.000	10.000	-34.000
Maximum	57.000	40.000	108.000

3.3. Correlation Analysis

Correlations between Internet Fiction addiction, boredom proneness, and self-efficacy scores among subjects are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson's Correlations

Variable		Internet Fiction Addiction	General Self-Efficacy	Boredom Proneness
Internet Fiction Addiction	<i>r</i>	—		
	<i>p</i>	—		
General Self-Efficacy	<i>r</i>	0.063	—	
	<i>p</i>	0.200	—	
Boredom Proneness	<i>r</i>	0.277	-0.234	—
	<i>p</i>	< .001	< .001	—

Table 3 reveals notable correlations among Internet Fiction addiction, boredom proneness, and self-efficacy scores. Firstly, a significant positive association was observed between the Internet fiction addiction score and the boredom proneness score ($r = 0.227$, $p < 0.001$), confirming hypothesis 1, which implies that higher Internet fiction addiction scores are associated with higher boredom proneness scores. Secondly, General self-efficacy was found to be significantly and negatively associated with boredom proneness ($r = -0.234$, $p < 0.001$), affirming hypothesis 3, which indicates that lower self-efficacy scores correspond to higher boredom proneness scores. However, the correlation between self-efficacy and Internet fiction addiction was not significant ($r = 0.063$, $p = 0.200$). Consequently, hypothesis 2 is rejected, suggesting that higher Internet Fiction addiction scores do not necessarily correspond to lower self-efficacy scores.

4. Discussion

4.1. Relations between Self-efficacy, Boredom Proneness, and Internet Fiction Addiction

Internet addicts commonly exhibit shared personality traits, including low self-esteem, interpersonal sensitivity, social withdrawal, and negative self-evaluation. These individuals struggle with social interaction and have difficulty expressing their opinions, leading to feelings of loneliness and detachment. Consequently, they often seek solace in immersive fantasy worlds, deriving pleasure and

satisfaction from storylines and characters, as a means to escape the disappointments of reality. Zhang Dongjing et al.'s research demonstrated a positive link between neurotic personality traits and Internet Fiction addiction [8]. Neurotic personality traits primarily encompass emotional instability and are associated with heightened levels of negative emotions [10]. These findings suggest a potential relationship between Internet Fiction addiction and negative emotional experiences.

People with psychological problems (such as loneliness and depression) are more inclined to interact online than face-to-face because it is easier to compensate for their lack of social skills. Other research supports the idea that some people use the Internet to cope with negative emotions [11]. The results of this research also demonstrate that IFA shares similar characteristics with Internet addiction. The higher the propensity for boredom, the greater the likelihood of IFA.

When studying the relationship between boredom proneness and time perception, researchers found that individuals with low boredom proneness can estimate time more accurately, while individuals with high boredom proneness show more mistakes in time estimation and tend to overestimate time [12]. This may also provide an alternative explanation as to why individuals with a higher propensity for boredom are more susceptible to Internet Fiction addiction. One of the possible reasons could be attributed to the inaccurate estimation of time. The relationship between BP, time perception, and Internet addiction can be further elucidated through various methodologies in future studies.

4.2. Analysis of the Non-correlation between General Self-Efficacy and Internet Fiction Addiction

In this study, there was no significant relationship between general self-efficacy and Internet fiction addiction. This could be due to the complexity of addiction, which suggests that it is affected by various factors. However, general self-efficacy, which represents the general part of an individual's psychological makeup, may not be sufficient enough to describe the nuanced dynamics of Internet Fiction addiction. Other elements, such as environmental and emotional factors, could also influence the measurement of general self-efficacy and therefore weaken the correlations [5,6].

5. Conclusion

The present study conducted a questionnaire survey among 412 Chinese middle school students to examine the association between Internet Fiction addiction, self-efficacy, and boredom proneness. The findings confirm that Internet Fiction addiction is significantly and positively related to boredom proneness, while no significant correlation was found with self-efficacy. This could be attributed to the fact that heightened levels of boredom proneness lead to mood fluctuations, increased engagement in self-fantasies, and distorted perception of time, thereby exacerbating symptoms associated with Internet Fiction addiction. However, the general self-efficacy scale employed in this study may have been too broad to capture an association with Internet Fiction addiction. Additionally, contextual factors such as the environment might have contributed to the lack of significance observed in these results. The study examines the relationship between Internet Fiction addiction, self-efficacy, and boredom proneness, providing a theoretical basis for student management and mental health in middle schools. It also offers valuable insights into preventing Internet Fiction addiction.

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An Analysis of George Orwell 's Animal Farm with Discourse Coherence Theory

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Abstract: Animal Farm is a political allegory that reflects the social and political issues of the Soviet Union under Stalin's regime. The narrative provides an insightful critique of the corruption and abuse of power that occurred during the communist regime. It highlights the process of social control and manipulation, the importance of language and discourse, and the effects of propaganda. The discourse coherence theory aims to explain the factors contributing to the coherence and coherence problems in texts. The theory suggests that coherence is achieved through the connections between linguistic elements, world knowledge, and situational and contextual factors. An analysis of Animal Farm from the perspective of discourse coherence theory could reveal how the language and discourse used in the narrative contribute to the coherence and the ways in which coherence is disrupted. Therefore, Animal Farm could be a suitable text for studying discourse coherence theory due to its complex narrative structure and the use of language and discourse to convey political messages.

Keywords: Discourse coherence theory, Animal Farm, George Orwell, Literary Analysis and Appreciation, Linguistics

1. Introduction

By examining different parts of Animal Farm, researchers can illustrate how discourse coherence works. The introduction, the construction of the animal's utopia, Boxer's character, Napoleon's rise to power, and the battle of the windmill offer valuable segments to conduct research on discourse coherence. However, the subjectivity of readers, the necessity for contextual knowledge, the prevalence of symbolism, and the time-consuming nature of the analysis, among other challenges, hinder the study of discourse coherence. Nonetheless, an extensive and objective analysis of Animal Farm using discourse coherence theory can improve the understanding of how structural and organizational elements of texts make them easy to interpret and comprehend.

While the challenges of analyzing Animal Farm with regard to discourse coherence theory are significant, the potential rewards are significant as well. Four sections evaluated the animal's rebellion, propaganda use, the use of language by certain characters, and the ending of the narrative, offer significant insights into the author's intent and the construction of the literary device. Furthermore, they provide an opportunity to understand how coherence theory works and how analyzing written narratives can provide useful information about how people perceive and interpret text. Therefore,

interrogating these elements of *Animal Farm* can provide critical insights into the coherence of the narrative.

Conducting a micro analysis of *Animal Farm* from the perspective of discourse coherence theory unveils valuable insights into language use, discourse markers, referential cohesion, and thematic coherence. By closely examining these elements, researchers can understand how they contribute to the overall coherence of the text and shed light on the author's intent. However, challenges such as subjectivity in interpretation, the presence of allegory, and the structure of the text must be considered during the analysis process. Despite these challenges, micro analysis provides a deeper understanding of how discourse coherence theory operates and how different components of a narrative contribute to its overall coherence.[1]

2. Literature Review

2.1. Discourse Coherence Theory

The body of research related to Discourse Coherence Theory has grown significantly since the 2000s, and this literature review provides a summary of 15 academic papers from core journals on the topic. Discourse coherence refers to the idea that a well-formed discourse contains linguistic elements that are connected to each other by a set of coherent relations.

Several researchers discuss how discourse coherence theory can be applied to different contexts. For example, in section 2.1, McGlynn [2] proposes an epistemological theory of testimony based on discourse coherence, while Fassio and Iacona [8] argue for the relevance of discourse coherence to philosophical claims. Similarly, Eshkol-Taravella and Cohen [12] investigate the relationship between coherence and truth/falsity in discourse, and Roberts [9] explores the connection between coherence and the rhetoric of political debates.

Other papers focus on the specific language structures that contribute to discourse coherence, such as temporal adverbials [11], contrastive disjunctives [19], and bare nominals [3]. Additionally, several papers examine how discourse coherence affects the interpretation of different linguistic phenomena, including pronominal reference [4], referential expressions [25], exclamatory questions [21], and counterfactuals [17].

Finally, two papers investigate the practical implications of discourse coherence theory. Odijk [18] argues that discourse coherence is an important criterion for assessing the quality of linguistic data, while Roberts [24] discusses the importance of coherence in legal decision-making.

Overall, this part demonstrates the versatility and relevance of discourse coherence theory across a range of linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. Future research on discourse coherence could focus on developing a more comprehensive theory that accounts for the many different factors that contribute to coherence, as well as investigating its broader implications for human communication and cognition.

2.2. George Orwell and his *Animal Farm*

Animal Farm is a powerful literary work that reflects the dynamics of power, language, and ideology in society. The allegory of the Russian Revolution is a dominant theme, but some authors argue that the novel should not be read solely as a historical account. Instead, Orwell's animal fable speaks to more universal issues of power, oppression, and resistance.

Following pages also explore the role of language in *Animal Farm*, highlighting how the pigs use rhetoric to manipulate the other animals and maintain their dominance. Critics note that the novel's focus on language and propaganda is particularly relevant in today's context of fake news and post-truth politics.

In addition, these researches shows that some authors argue that Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a political satire, while others suggest that it is an animal tale that uses anthropomorphism to convey its message. These papers address the novel's reception and interpretation, which has been shaped by historical context, political ideology, and literary theory.

Overall, the literature on George Orwell's *Animal Farm* encompasses a wide range of topics and issues related to the literary work. The papers surveyed in this review provide insights into the political, social, historical, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of *Animal Farm*.

Several researchers examine the use of animal fable and other literary techniques in *Animal Farm*. In section 2.2, Head [6] focuses on the tropes of power in the novel, while Ryan [5] discusses the use of irony to engage the non-ironic audience. These papers demonstrate how Orwell uses literary devices to convey his message and critique.

A number of researchers analyze *Animal Farm* in the context of the Russian Revolution and Soviet politics. Birat [22] examines the ways in which Orwell's novel reflects the historical events of the revolution. Lewis [7] contextualizes Orwell's allegory within the larger canon of political literature. Anderson [20] challenges the conventional interpretations of *Animal Farm* and offers a re-evaluation of the text.

Other papers focus on the relevance of *Animal Farm* to contemporary issues. Kodie [21] asserts that the novel's depiction of power struggles can be seen in modern-day political events. Bowen [10] discusses how Orwell's use of language in the novel is a key source of its power. Sheppard [14] analyzes the political language of Orwell and the relationship between language and power in *Animal Farm*.

Finally, some researchers explore the critical reception and influence of *Animal Farm*. Ingerman and Parker [13] examine the categorization of the novel and its implications for interpretation. Hollingsworth [23] delves into the possible CIA connections to *Animal Farm*'s publication and its implications for understanding its political import.

In summary, these papers demonstrate the richness and complexity of *Animal Farm* as a literary work and as a political commentary. By exploring various aspects of the novel, these scholars shed light on the ways Orwell's writing continues to resonate with readers and shape our understanding of politics and power.

3. Methodology

The methodology of this research paper involves the use of discourse coherence theory to examine George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The research process has been divided into several steps to ensure a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the text.[2-4]

Step 1: Literature review

The first step involves a thorough literature review of discourse coherence theory and its applicability in analyzing literary texts. The review covers studies that have used the theory to evaluate the coherence and cohesion of text structures, including narrative and argumentative structures.

Step 2: Text selection

The second step involves the selection of the text to be analyzed. *Animal Farm* was chosen due to its significant use of allegory to criticize societal and political structures. The novel is a classic example of a literary work that can be examined through coherent and cohesive discourse analysis.

Step 3: Data collection

The third step involves the collection of data from the text. This includes the collection of linguistic and semantic units, discourse markers, and the identification of the relationship between sentences and paragraphs. The data is coded and entered into a software program for analysis.

Step 4: Data analysis

The fourth step involves the analysis of the data collected using discourse coherence theory. This involves the identification of cohesive devices, such as conjunctions, pronouns, and lexical repetitions, and patterns of discourse cohesion and coherence. The analysis will focus on the narrative structure of the text and its connection to the central theme, which is the critique of political power structures.

Step 5: Interpretation and discussion

The fifth step involves the interpretation and discussion of the analysis results. The results will be discussed in light of the literature review and existing research on discourse coherence theory. The interpretation will provide insights into the ways in which Orwell uses text cohesion and coherence to communicate his message effectively.

Step 6: Conclusion and implications

The final step involves the conclusion and implications of the research. The research will draw conclusions about how discourse coherence theory can be used to analyze literary texts and the significance of its application in interpreting *Animal Farm*. The implications of the research will be discussed, including its contribution to the fields of discourse analysis and literary studies.

4. Analysis

4.1. Summary of narrative

Animal Farm is a classic allegorical novel written by George Orwell and published in 1945. It tells the story of a group of farm animals who overthrow their human farmer to establish an egalitarian society where all animals are equal and share in the benefits of their labor. However, things quickly go astray as the pigs, who take on leadership roles, become corrupted by power and gradually transform the farm into a totalitarian regime.

The novel can be seen as a critique of the corruption and failure of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent rise of Stalinism. Each character in *Animal Farm* represents a figure or group from the early days of the Soviet Union. For example, Old Major, the wise and respected boar who inspires the rebellion, symbolizes Karl Marx and his vision of a socialist utopia. Napoleon, the power-hungry and tyrannical pig, is a representation of Joseph Stalin, while Snowball, the intellectual and idealistic pig, represents Leon Trotsky.[5]

One of the main themes explored in *Animal Farm* is the nature of power and its corrupting influence. The pigs, after initially proclaiming their commitment to equality, gradually begin to consolidate power and manipulate the other animals for their own benefit. They rewrite the principles of Animalism, the ideology that symbolizes the initial rebellion, to favor their privilege and suppress dissent. This abuse of power is exemplified by the commandment "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others", which highlights the hypocrisy and inequality that arise within a supposedly egalitarian society.[6]

Another central theme in the novel is the manipulation of language and propaganda. The pigs use their superior intelligence to control the narrative and justify their actions to the other animals. They gradually change the commandments and rewrite history to maintain their authority, ultimately erasing any memory of the original vision of equality. This manipulation of language and information is strongly linked to the concepts of discourse coherence theory.[7]

Discourse coherence theory focuses on how a text or narrative maintains logical and semantic connections between its constituent parts to create a coherent and meaningful whole. In *Animal Farm*, the manipulation of language by the pigs creates a distortion of reality and disrupts the coherence of the discourse. Through their use of propaganda and rewriting of history, the pigs effectively control the narrative and shape the perception of the other animals, thereby enforcing their authority.

By analyzing *Animal Farm* through the lens of discourse coherence theory, researchers can gain insight into the power of language and narrative to shape discourse and control public opinion. The

novel demonstrates how the pigs' manipulation of language disrupts the coherence of the discourse, creating a distorted narrative that supports their authority and suppresses dissent. This manipulation of language mirrors real-world instances in which those in power use rhetoric and propaganda to shape public perception and maintain control.[8,9]

Studying *Animal Farm* in the context of discourse coherence theory allows researchers to better understand the mechanisms behind the manipulation of language and the distortion of reality for political purposes. It highlights the importance of critically analyzing narratives and the power dynamics at play in shaping public discourse. Additionally, the novel serves as a cautionary tale, reminding us of the dangers of unchecked power and the potential consequences of allowing those in power to control the narrative. Therefore, *Animal Farm* serves as a valuable case study for research on discourse coherence theory and its implications for society.[10]

4.2. Global Analysis

Discourse coherence is an essential component of communication and understanding, especially in written text. The theory explains the structural and organizational elements of text that make it easy to interpret and comprehend. In this regard, *Animal Farm*'s narrative provides several valuable parts for research in discourse coherence theory. This essay highlights some of the most valuable segments in the text, potential discoveries, and challenges to conducting discourse coherence research.[11,12]

One of the most valuable parts of *Animal Farm* is the introduction, where George Orwell sets the stage for the reader. In this section, Orwell outlines the characters, plot, and aftermath of the revolution, creating a background that makes it easier for the reader to follow the story. A crucial element of discourse coherence theory is the establishment of a communicative context that informs the reader what to expect. By providing a clear introduction, Orwell helps the reader understand the objective and direction of the narrative.[13]

Another valuable segment is the construction of the animal's utopia in the aftermath of the revolution. The animals work together and establish a social structure that enables them to distribute resources equally, among other things. The segment allows the reader to understand the principles driving the animal's society while providing a foundation that enables the reader to comprehend what separates the animals from Mr. Jones. Discourse coherence theory emphasizes the role of cohesion and coherence by creating links between sentences and paragraphs, establishing themes, and having a definite thesis. Orwell achieves these aims by providing a robust schema that helps the reader understand what drives the animals' society.[14]

The rise of Napoleon and his betrayal of Snowball represents another valuable element for researching discourse coherence. Napoleon represents the corrupting influence of power, and his manipulation of the animals' principles symbolizes the end of the utopia. The events that followed Napoleon's rise to power were confusing to a certain extent, characterized by propaganda, executions, lies, and leadership disputes. Thus, the story is fragmented and less coherent than usual, reflecting the breakdown of the animal society. Consequently, the segment provides an opportunity to examine how coherence works in the absence of cohesion.

Boxer's character provides another critical element for discourse coherence research. He represents the workers who risk their lives to achieve their goals but, ultimately, face betrayal from the leadership. Boxer's story highlights the role of established intertextual links that help the reader comprehend the character's plight. Boxer's story links with Karl Marx's statement, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," and the concept of the brute labor that drives the animal's farm. By providing intertextual links, Orwell enables the reader to compare and contrast different elements from different sources. This function builds coherence in the narrative by highlighting the continuum that drives the themes of the text.

In the latter stages of the novel, Orwell introduces significant adrenaline-filled events, such as the battle of the windmill, which provides another important segment for discourse coherence research. The events in this section work to bind the narrative cohesively, as the author brings together the different elements from previous chapters. Through detailed descriptions, Orwell recreates the battle of the windmill, bridging different episodes found in the novel.[15]

On the other hand, exploring the different components of discourse coherence theory presents several challenges. One major issue is the potential subjectivity of readers, which can make it challenging to assess the coherence of any given text. Different readers will have various interpretations of the same text, based on experience, knowledge, ontological framework, and other factors. Also, the biases of the researchers could influence their ability to conduct objective coherence analysis.

Secondly, discourse coherence theory relies heavily on the context and knowledge shared by the reader and writer. Consequently, the lack of vital background information can lead to a fragmented narrative that fails to communicate the writer's intended meaning. In *Animal Farm*, Orwell assumes that the reader possesses some knowledge about the events of the Russian Revolution. A reader without such knowledge would likely struggle to grasp the subtleties of the narrative comfortably.

Moreover, the prevalence of symbolism in *Animal Farm* poses another challenge. Orwell uses several symbols in the text, such as the pig and the windmill, to convey meaning. However, these symbols can be ambiguous and susceptible to multiple interpretations, making it difficult to accurately determine their role in the narrative.

Last but not least, the theory requires extensive writing and analysis, making it time-consuming and exhaustive. Careful consideration and evaluation of all the elements of *Animal Farm* are necessary of an insightful analysis into the discourse coherence of the novel.[16,17]

4.3. Macro Analysis

Discourse coherence theory is a critical aspect of discourse analysis that seeks to explain how different components of written or spoken text are organized into a coherent whole. It investigates how meaningful and logical relationships between different parts of text are established to convey specific meanings or messages. In analyzing the narrative structure of *Animal Farm*, several valuable parts can be identified to offer insights into the study of discourse coherence theory. This part will explore the aspects of the animal's rebellion, language use, propaganda, and the ending of the novel in considering key components of *Animal Farm* discourse that provide opportunities for macro analysis.[18,19]

The first section to consider in *Animal Farm* for macro analysis is the animals' rebellion against Mr. Jones, the farm owner. The narrative offers an insight into the central idea of the story, which is the desire of the animals to be free from human tyranny and to govern themselves. Through analysis of how this particular plot is constructed, discourse coherence theorists can learn about the narrative's organization, how the author's intent is conveyed, the objectives of the characters, and the different arguments put forward. This narrative section provides an opportunity to evaluate how coherent and consistent the story is in establishing and maintaining its themes across different sections.

The second section is that of language used by the animals and pigs in particular. The pigs play a central role in dictating the new society that the animals establish after the overthrow of the humans. Their manner of communication and language use is critical in shaping the animal's perception of society and their beliefs and values. The discourse coherence theory investigates how ideology is constructed through language use, how meanings are conveyed and how a reader follows aspects such as the use of political language.

The third section to evaluate is propaganda use, a tactic used by the pigs to maintain their hold on power, discredit opponents, and control the narrative. Analysis in this section is useful in determining

the relationships between the various themes and elements of the story in constructing a larger argument. This propaganda use illustrates how certain parts of the narrative support others and offers insights into how the pigs manipulate language to maintain their hold on power.

The fourth section for discourse coherence theorists to consider is the ending of the novel. This segment represents how ideas and themes are concluded and how they come together to form a coherent whole. It is in these final conclusions that the reader is given an idea of the overarching theme of the story, how the ideas explored in the narrative form coherent arguments, and how the literary devices employed are used to reinforce the story's message.[20]

Challenge in *Animal Farm*'s macro analysis is in the structure of the text. *Animal Farm* was written in an allegorical form, meaning that although the text is meant to convey meaning and messages about the Russian revolution, it is also expected to stand on its own as a coherent story. As such, some elements of the story that may be crucial to understanding the allegory may not directly aid in understanding the story's coherence from a micro-level. Furthermore, readers may interpret different aspects of the text with different levels of importance, which may form part of their subjective coherence. The author's intent may be lost, and the overall coherence may be misconstrued by the reader.

4.4. Micro Analysis

When conducting a micro analysis of the narrative *Animal Farm* from the perspective of discourse coherence theory, several valuable parts can be identified. By closely examining the language use, discourse markers, referential cohesion, and thematic coherence, researchers can gain insights into how these components contribute to the overall coherence of the text. In this part, I will discuss the valuable parts that offer opportunities for micro analysis in *Animal Farm*, what can potentially be discovered, and the challenges that may arise during this analysis.[21]

One significant aspect to explore in *Animal Farm* is the language use, particularly the manipulation of language by the pigs to maintain control over the other animals. The pigs establish their dominance by exploiting the power of rhetoric, persuasive techniques, and political language. They use slogans like "Four legs good, two legs bad" and "All animals are equal" to convince the animals of their leadership. By closely examining the language choices, persuasive strategies, and effectiveness of the pigs' communication, discourse coherence theory can reveal how rhetoric and political language shape the animals' perception and understanding of their society.

Another valuable part to consider is the presence of discourse markers, which are words or phrases that guide the reader through the text and signal relationships between sentences and ideas. In *Animal Farm*, discourse markers play a crucial role in clarifying the logical connections and coherence of the narrative. For instance, the repeated use of phrases like "But remember, comrades" or "Surely, none of you wishes" highlights the persuasive and manipulative nature of the pigs' discourse. Analyzing the placement, frequency, and effects of these discourse markers can provide insights into how the narrative flows and how the ideas presented are interconnected.

The analysis of referential cohesion is also key when examining *Animal Farm* through the lens of discourse coherence theory. This aspect refers to how references to people, objects, or concepts are introduced, developed, and maintained throughout the narrative. In *Animal Farm*, while characters maintain their names, their roles and attributes change over time. For example, Snowball starts as a positive figure advocating for the animals' welfare but later becomes a traitor in Napoleon's propaganda. By studying how these referential shifts are managed and how consistency or inconsistency of references affects the coherence of the text, discourse coherence theory can reveal the author's underlying messages and intentions.

Thematic coherence is another relevant part of micro analysis in *Animal Farm*. It involves examining the interconnectedness of themes and the transitions between different topics within the

text. Analyzing the themes of power, corruption, inequality, and manipulation can provide valuable insights into the coherence of the narrative. For instance, examining how the theme of power is developed, how it intersects with other themes, and how the story's events and characters contribute to reinforcing these themes can reveal the overall coherence of the text.

The allegorical nature of *Animal Farm* poses a challenge. While the text serves as an allegory for the Russian Revolution, it must also form a coherent standalone story. The coherence of the narrative from a micro perspective may differ slightly from the intended coherence of the allegory, as certain elements may be crucial for the allegorical reading but less relevant for the micro analysis. Balancing the analysis between the micro-level coherence and the overarching allegorical coherence can be complex.[22,23]

The structure of the text also presents challenges for micro-level analysis. *Animal Farm* consists of discrete chapters that can be read independently, but coherent analysis requires considering the narrative as a whole. With the presence of different characters, shifts in power dynamics, and varying thematic focuses within each chapter, maintaining the cohesive thread throughout the analysis can be demanding.

4.5. Challenge or opportunity

While doing this research, you will find repetition occurs frequently, such as some persuasive words like "Comrade" in The Old Major 's speech at the beginning of the novella. Here's where a problem arises that few professional researchers regard "repetition" as one part of the Discourse Coherence Theory, but it just occurs in many narratives including the target narrative *Animal Farm* of my research. What is the function of repetition when it occurs in a narrative? Could the "Repetition" become one part of the Discourse Coherence Theory in the visible future?[24]

The function of repetition in narrative is multifaceted and serves various purposes. While it may not be considered as an explicit component of Discourse Coherence Theory at present, it is possible that repetition could be acknowledged as a significant aspect in the future. To understand the function of repetition in narrative, we need to delve into its role in storytelling and how it contributes to discourse coherence.

Repetition in narrative can serve multiple functions. Firstly, it aids in emphasizing key ideas or themes. By repeating certain words, phrases, or concepts, authors draw attention to their significance and ensure that they remain in the readers' minds. In the case of *Animal Farm*, the repetition of terms like "Comrade" in Old Major's speech establishes a sense of unity and equality among the animals, serving as a rallying cry for their revolution. This repetition reinforces the central message of the novel and helps to create coherence by linking various events and characters to the overarching theme of the story.

Secondly, repetition can create a rhythm or cadence within the narrative. When specific words or phrases are repeated, it generates a pattern that can have a profound impact on the reader's engagement. The rhythmical quality of repetition can evoke certain emotions, enhance the narrative flow, and intensify the impact of the story. For example, the repetition of the commandment "Four legs good, two legs bad" in *Animal Farm* not only reinforces the principles of Animalism but also creates a rhythmic structure that ensures its easy remembrance by the animals. This repetition adds coherence to the discourse by providing a recurring pattern that holds the narrative together.

Additionally, repetition can function as a device for characterization. Different characters may have their own distinct catchphrases or habits of repeating certain words. This repetition becomes characteristic of their personality and helps the reader to identify and understand them better. In *Animal Farm*, the pig Squealer repeatedly uses phrases like "tactics," "loyalty," or "pursuing our goals," which establishes his manipulative nature and illustrates his role as the government's

propaganda machine. Repetition thus aids in building well-rounded and identifiable characters, contributing to the coherence of the narrative by ensuring consistency in their portrayal.

Furthermore, repetition can be employed to highlight contrasts or changes in the narrative. When certain words or phrases are repeated and then varied, it signals shifts in the story, character development, or thematic progression. By altering the repetition, authors can create suspense, irony, or explore the evolving nature of their narrative. In *Animal Farm*, the repeated slogan "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" exemplifies how repetition is used to expose the hypocrisy and corruption of the pigs who align themselves with the oppressive human beings. This variation in repetition adds coherence to the discourse by shedding light on the changing dynamics within the farm.

While repetition plays an essential role in narrative coherence, it is not explicitly acknowledged within the current understanding of Discourse Coherence Theory. Discourse Coherence Theory primarily focuses on the structural and semantic aspects of discourse, such as coherence relations, referential chains, or thematic progression. However, it is plausible that with further research and advancement in the field, repetition could be recognized as a valuable component of discourse coherence.

Repetition contributes to discourse coherence by creating a sense of unity, emphasizing key ideas, establishing rhythm, supporting characterization, and highlighting contrasts. These functions align with the general goals of Discourse Coherence Theory in maintaining the coherence and cohesion of a narrative. By acknowledging repetition as a significant factor in discourse coherence, researchers can delve deeper into its role and explore how it interacts with other coherence phenomena.[25]

In conclusion, repetition in narrative serves several functions that contribute to discourse coherence. Despite the current lack of explicit recognition within Discourse Coherence Theory, repetition plays an essential role in emphasizing ideas, creating rhythm, supporting characterization, and highlighting contrasts. In the future, it is plausible that repetition could be acknowledged as an integral part of discourse coherence as research and understanding in the field continues to evolve.

5. Conclusion

In the above sections, the valuable parts of the narrative *Animal Farm* that are discussed provide opportunities for macro and micro-level analysis from the perspective of discourse coherence theory. The macro-level analysis highlighted the animal's rebellion, language use, propaganda, and the ending of the novel as key sections to consider. The micro-level analysis explored the manipulation of language by the pigs, the presence of discourse markers, referential cohesion, and thematic coherence as important aspects to analyze.

Some of the major themes that emerged throughout all four sections are the critical role of language use in establishing discourse coherence, the interconnectedness of themes and ideas in constructing a coherent narrative, the impact of subjectivity in the interpretation of coherence, and the challenges inherent in the allegorical nature and structure of *Animal Farm*.

Moving forward, the key challenges in analyzing *Animal Farm* from a discourse coherence perspective include the need to balance the micro-level analysis with the overarching allegorical coherence, the challenges of interpreting coherence in a subjective manner, the difficulty of navigating the structure of the text, and the challenges of reconciling different interpretations of discourse coherence theory. Additionally, since literary texts are open to multiple interpretations, researchers in the future must take care not to impose their interpretive frameworks but to make way for an understanding that can accommodate different readers' views.

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Intelligent Ideological and Political Education: The New Role of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract: Intelligent political and ideological education has steadily gained popularity in today's educational landscape due to the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence technology. This research aims to investigate the emerging role of artificial intelligence in political and ideological education. First of all, we clearly define and explain the concept of intelligent ideological and political education, and deeply analyze the basic connotation and characteristics of intelligent ideological and political education including its important value. Secondly, we analyze the application status of artificial intelligence technology in ideological and political education, and give two representative typical cases. At the same time, we also analyzed the innovative practice of artificial intelligence technology from two aspects of moral education and political education. Furthermore, given the difficulties AI technology faces in the context of political and ideological education, we suggest appropriate responses. This study concludes with a discussion on artificial intelligence's development tendency in ideological education going forward. Our prediction is that as artificial intelligence technology advances and becomes more sophisticated, intelligent education will serve as a strong basis for comprehensive innovation in educational methods, content, and management. This will enable the development of exceptional talent who possess a strong sense of national identity, global perspective, and social responsibility.

Keywords: Intelligent ideological and political education, artificial intelligence, educational technology, development trend

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence, one of the newest and most inventive technologies, is slowly making its way into a number of industries, including education. Intelligent ideological and political education is just a novel approach to instructional mode. It has now become imperative to figure out how to use large data sets and artificial intelligence technologies to help educators overcome the blockings of time, space, and a heavy workload. This will enable workers to provide accurate feedback and positioning, raise the standard and efficacy of ideological instruction, and take appropriate action to address the challenge [1]. This research is devoted to the deep analysis of the new functions of artificial intelligence in the field of intelligent ideological and political education, the exploration of its specific influence and efficiency on ideological and political education, as well as the challenges and

countermeasures accompanied with it to encourage the superior growth of political and ideological education.

2. The promotion of Artificial intelligence towards intelligent ideological and political education

2.1. The introduction of the meaning of intelligent ideological and political education

Intelligent ideological and political education refers to a new mode of ideological and political education that improves and upgrades traditional ideological and political education through contemporary information technology such as big data and deep education[2]. The introduction of this idea indicates that new growth chances and hurdles have been brought about from conventional ideological and political education. Compared with the traditional ideological and political education, it is conducive to realizing the intelligent allocation of educational resources, promoting the fairness and inclusiveness of education, and providing equal learning opportunities and conditions for every student. However, the fundamental task of intelligent ideological and political education is still to cultivate youngsters by virtue and its critical problem to be solved is "who to train, for whom to train people, and how to train them".

2.2. The relevance of artificial intelligence and ideological and political education

Artificial intelligence, one of the key factors influencing the growth of modern society, is significantly altering people's productivity and lifestyle. Simultaneously, The way that students are educated politically and ideologically greatly influences how they perceive their societal duty. The following characteristics show how closely ideological and political education are related to artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence, first and foremost, offers new educational resources and instruments for political and ideological instruction. As artificial intelligence technology advances, it has been progressively incorporated into the field of education. Examples of this include virtual laboratories and intelligent learning platforms. Second, artificial intelligence provides rich educational resources for ideological and political education. In traditional one, teachers mainly rely on textbooks and classroom explanations to teach. Under artificial intelligence technology's support, teachers can use the network and intelligent systems to access various educational resources, such as high-quality educational videos and learning materials. For instance, the use of man-machine integration are one of the examples of how superior instructional films and learning resources provide a platform for common construction, common governance and sharing of ideological and political education resources. By using the thinking mode of big data, studying the internal mechanism of ideological and political education and external settings deeply, taking a page from other disciplines such as psychology, pedagogy, and meeting with the demand of society, we can constantly explore new ideas of ideological and political education to promote the advancement of ideological and political education career[3]. whats more, value-based guiding toward artificial intelligence is of the utmost importance for it. Ideological and political education, first and foremost, can assist individuals in developing accurate ethical conceptions of AI, and guide people to consider safety, confidentiality, and human dignity in the development of it. And it can also guide people to correctly view the relationship between artificial intelligence and human beings, emphasizing that artificial intelligence is only a tool for serving human beings which should not replace the human thinking and creativity.

3. The utilization status of artificial intelligence in ideological and political education

3.1. Application of Intelligent Tutoring System

An instructional tool powered by artificial intelligence is the intelligent tutoring system, which provides students with personalized learning guidance and tutoring by simulating human intelligence. In ideological and political education, the application of ingenious tutoring system is gradually being emphasized. First of all, the intelligent tutoring system can provide customized learning resources and learning plans according to students' personal conditions and backgrounds. By analyzing students' learning data and behaviors, the intelligent tutoring system can understand students' weaknesses and problems, and then provide corresponding solutions and learning suggestions. This personalized tutoring method can more effectively serve the learning purpose of students, so as to exalt their learning effectiveness. Secondly, the intelligent tutoring system can also achieve automatic assessment and feedback through artificial intelligence technology. The traditional evaluation of ideological and political education mainly relies on the subjective judgment of teachers which cause problems such as inconsistent evaluation standards and inaccurate evaluation results. The intelligent tutoring system can quickly and accurately assess students' academic performance and ability level by automatically analyzing students' learning performance and answering questions, and give students timely feedback and suggestions. In addition, the intelligent tutoring system can also make monitoring and measurement of the learning process through artificial intelligence technology possible.

3.2. The Intelligent and Interactive Environment provided by Virtual Lab for Ideological and Political Education

Through virtual settings and interactive experiences, the virtual lab is an innovative teaching approach built on artificial intelligence technology that gives students access to a more vibrant and authentic learning environment. In ideological and political education, the application of virtual laboratories provides a new way to enhance students' ideological and political literacy and innovation. First of all, through the simulation of vivid intuitive political education scenario, virtual laboratory enable students to feel immersive ideological education involved in various situations and problems, this will go a long way towards improving the students' thinking ability and problem solving competence in the safe and immersive environment for all kinds of ideological practice such as participating in the moot court and simulation debate, etc, Secondly, the virtual laboratory is also conducive to promoting the interaction between students and teachers and their partners. Students can engage in dialogue and interaction with virtual characters in the virtual laboratory. They can also engage in a variety of ideological and political practice activities with other students, which not only encourages student participation and motivate their learning zest but also help to promote the cooperation among students to cultivate their team spirit and communication skills. This more vivid and dynamic learning scene enable students to better understand the core concepts and opinions of ideological and political education in the "man-machine dialogue". It will be possible for them to experience firsthand real-life circumstances of great men in the intelligent interactive environment, or directly talk with our great human sages across time and space so as to more intuitively experience the wisdom of the truth, the shining human wisdom, and feel those noble souls who just still unswervingly pursue the truth, goodness and beauty after going through numerous hardships. Such a teaching effect will be self-evident. Virtual laboratories can offer students individualized learning counsel and coaching in addition to analyzing and evaluating their learning behavior. They can also serve as engagement tools for students. This helps to compensate for the one-to-many teaching flaws of the traditional classroom in addition to increasing students' willingness to study and assessing their learning impact.

4. The innovative practice of artificial intelligence technology in moral and political education

4.1. Case analysis of artificial intelligence technology' application in moral education

Artificial intelligence technology has demonstrated distinctively novel practices in the sphere of moral and political pedagogy that serve as a new educational means and carrier in intelligent ideological and political education. First of all, when it comes to moral instruction,, artificial intelligence technology can achieve personalized teaching through the construction and application of intelligent teaching systems. Second, in moral education, AI technology can also be applied to student behavior management and evaluation. Through the intelligent monitoring system and data analysis, the behavioral characteristics and problems of students can be discovered in time, and targeted intervention programs can be provided for schools and parents to assist pupils in developing a healthy perspective on life and morals.

4.2. Exploration of Innovative Practice of Artificial Intelligence Technology in Political Education

The innovative practice exploration of artificial intelligence technology in political education encompasses a wide range of aspects. First, AI can assist political educators in comprehending the political tendencies and ideological dynamics of their students through big data analysis and mining techniques. meanwhile, AI can assist students enhance their political comprehension and ideological clarity by offering them tailored learning recommendations and direction via algorithmic systems. . Traditional examination and assessment methods can usually only provide static evaluation results, while artificial intelligence can provide more comprehensive and accurate assessment results through data analysis and pattern recognition. For example, through speech recognition and sentiment analysis technology, students' emotional state and concentration in the classroom can be monitored in real time, providing teachers with timely feedback and adjusting teaching strategies. Artificial intelligence has a powerful data seeking and archiving, high-speed encrypted computing and analysis recommendation engine functions, so that it is able to swiftly and comprehensively grab the students' education big data on the basis of scientific research and judgment of students' differentiated learning needs, and tailor a unique personalized learning program, and its intelligent terminal analysis technology enables teachers to flexibly arrange the teaching content of the next class according to classroom feedback, to achieve aptitude teaching[4]. Broadly speaking, the creative utilization of artificial intelligence technology to political pedagogy can not only enhance the effectiveness and caliber of instruction but also to broaden the scope and methods of conventional political pedagogy while encouraging the growth and development of students' overall qualities. Examining these techniques will help to advance the modernization, transformation, and creative growth of political education by offering valuable resources and insights for the creation of intelligent ideological and political education.

5. Challenges and countermeasures of intelligent ideological and political education

5.1. The connection between the degree of intelligence of artificial intelligence and the traditional education model

Applying artificial intelligence to the sphere of political and ideological education has gained popularity due to its swift progression. However, there are some connection problems between the intelligence degree of artificial intelligence and the traditional education mode. First of all, traditional education prioritizes developing students' critical thinking skills and humanistic traits. Artificial

intelligence, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the gathering and interpreting of information. As a result, there is now a gap between the traditional educational model and the use of artificial intelligence in political and ideological teaching. When the application of technology disregards the cultivation of people's inner traits and the awakening of the curiosity for exploring the unknown world, such education will avoidably fail. Secondly, traditional education focuses on the living and vivid interaction between teachers and students, while the use of artificial intelligence education tools makes this communication very limited. Because it doesn't fully understand human language and emotion, let alone the body language such as eye contact. This will not only affect students' emotional communication and the establishment of interpersonal relationship, but also cultivate another sense of impersonal exam-oriented robot. Therefore, in order to address the issue of connecting between AI and the traditional education mode, we need to reshape the educational concept and make it clear that the essence of education is to make human beings live more intelligently and happily. Based on this, we can integrate the features of artificial intelligence technology, create intelligent learning aids that meet the standards of conventional education, experiment with new teaching methods like "infiltrating emotional teaching," and fortify the development of highly competent teachers so that technology can actually enhance education[5].

5.2. The challenges of moral and ethical guidance confront Intelligent ideological and political education

As artificial intelligence continues to advance and grow, it is becoming progressively in the wake of a series of moral and ethical conflicts. In order to fully utilize artificial intelligence to instruct pupils in accordance with their aptitude, It is imperative to present a particular character picture, which may make the person concerned confronted with the risk of privacy leakage and even be exploited by others, causing disputes on data security and personal information protection.

First and foremost, strengthening the creation and enhancement of pertinent rules and regulations is required to address these issues to ensure the security of personal privacy and information. Second, we can introduce interdisciplinary team cooperation, including ideological education scholars, computer scientists, ethicists to jointly study the intelligent ideological education moral standards, such as ideological education intervention to the design and application of it to ensure that the artificial intelligence ideological ethics and design program dominated, aiming to develop artificial intelligence in a direction conducive to human society[6].At the same time, the supervision and review of artificial intelligence algorithms should be strengthened to ensure the fairness and objectivity of the delivery of educational content. In short, we need to intensify the research of artificial intelligence and human cooperation, design intelligent systems that can make decisions with humans jointly to meet the ethical challenges it brings and ensure the dominant position of human. As Marx, the great thinker of mankind, said in the Economic and philosophical manuscript of 1844, " Only when the object becomes subordinate to human, or the objectified things, will he do not lose himself in his own object."

6. The social benefit and future prospect of intelligent ideological and political education

Intelligent ideological and political education will have a profound influence on the society. Intelligent ideological and political education can, first and foremost, be used to raise educational standards, achieve content personalization and differentiation to better serve the requirements of individual students and enhance efficiency of teaching. Second, pupils' ideological and moral guidance is strengthened by intelligent political and intellectual education. Furthermore, it can increase educational resources, dismantle regional barriers, and achieve educational equity in a large extent, enabling a greater number of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to have

access to excellent ideological and political education materials. In the future, as artificial intelligence technology develops and is widely used, intelligent ideological and political education will become more deeply ingrained in people's hearts and minds, which will aid in the cultivation of exceptional talent with high moral and ideological standards as well as innovative abilities, thereby advancing society's overall development.

7. Conclusion

This paper summarizes the application status and creative practice of artificial intelligence in ideological and political education, and analyse the advantages and challenges such as the connection problem with the traditional education model and some ethic issues through the exploration of the role of artificial intelligence. last, Along with emphasizing the expected future development tendency, it also stresses the social benefits of political and ideological education. In the upcoming years, we have to push for the further investigation and advancement of artificial intelligence technology in the fields of political and ideological education concerning its potential risks, promote the excellent development of intelligent ideological and political education, and provide more powerful support and guarantee for the training of socialist builders and successors.

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Tao Hongjing's Medical Health Preservation Philosophy

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Abstract: In the 21st century, the medical paradigm has transitioned from "disease medicine" to "health medicine," with the developmental trend shifting from "treating diseases" to maintaining a "healthy" state. Tao Hongjing, representing the field of health preservation studies during the Southern and Northern Dynasties in ancient China, contributed distinctive principles and methods to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) health preservation, constituting a crucial aspect of TCM health preservation academic thought. His concise and cost-effective health preservation theories and methods encapsulate profound health preservation insights and philosophical contemplation, earning commendation from successive generations of medical practitioners and holding remarkable research value. Against the backdrop of implementing the "Healthy China" strategy and advocating "universal health," Tao Hongjing's health preservation philosophy holds significant reference value for enhancing human health awareness and promoting harmonious social development, providing strong practical guidance. This paper focuses on Tao Hongjing's medical health preservation philosophy, utilizing works such as *Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity*, *Zhen Gao*, *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Records of Renowned Physicians*, and *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion* (《养性延命录》《真诰》《本草经集注》《名医别录》《陶隐居集》) as research materials to thoroughly explore Tao Hongjing's medical health preservation methods and academic characteristics.

Keywords: Tao Hongjing, Medical Health Preservation Philosophy, Health Preservation Methods

1. Introduction

Tao Hongjing, also known as Tongming, later honored as Mr. Zhenbai, adopted the alias Huayang Yinjv in his later years. He was a native of Moling in Danyang (present-day Nanjing, Jiangsu). Born in the third year of Emperor Xiaojian of the Southern Song Dynasty (456 AD), Tao Hongjing passed away in the second year of Emperor Wudi of the Liang Dynasty (536 AD) at the age of 81.

The Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties period was a crucial era in the rapid development of health preservation ideologies and methods in China, marking a milestone in the history of health preservation culture. Tao Hongjing, a prominent Taoist philosopher, alchemist, medical scholar, and literary figure of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, was a representative of the Shangqing School (上清派) of Taoism. He had profound achievements in the fields of medicine and health preservation. His notable works include *Efficacious Formulas for Practical Use*, *Zhen Gao*, *Record of Nurturing*

Life for Longevity, *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion*, *Supplementary Collection of One Hundred and One Formulas for Deficiency in Elbow Afterpains*, *Records of Renowned Physicians*, and *Summary of Medicinal Secrets*. During the Southern and Northern Dynasties, traditional medicine experienced rapid development, and Tao Hongjing emerged as a representative figure in Taoist medicine. The health preservation principles and methods he proposed constitute an essential part of traditional Chinese medical health preservation ideology. His simple and cost-effective health preservation theories carry profound philosophical insights and have been highly regarded by subsequent generations of medical practitioners, possessing distinct research value.

This paper primarily seeks to study and draw inspiration from Tao Hongjing's medical health preservation principles and methods, offering significant guidance for the physical and mental well-being of contemporary society. The aim is to achieve a harmonious development between the health of the people and socioeconomic growth.

Drawing from existing medical and health-related works of Tao Hongjing, such as *Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity*, *Zhen Gao*, *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Records of Renowned Physicians*, and *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion*, this paper analyzes the impact and limitations of Tao Hongjing's medical health preservation ideology on subsequent generations, providing a comprehensive exploration of Tao Hongjing's medical health preservation philosophy.

2. Tao Hongjing's Life and Works

2.1. Brief Biography

Tao Hongjing, a renowned Taoist philosopher, alchemist, medical scholar, and literary figure of the Liang Dynasty in the Southern Dynasties period, also stood as a representative figure of the Maoshan Taoist tradition. He possessed profound research and achievements in the fields of medicine and health preservation [1].

Born into a scholarly family in Jiangnan, Tao Hongjing's grandfather, Tao Long, was conferred the title of Jin'an Marquis for his military service alongside Emperor Xiaowu. His father, Tao Zhenbao, was well-versed in medicine, widely knowledgeable, and held an official position as the Xiaochang magistrate in Jiangxia [2]. Tao Hongjing exhibited a unique inclination from a young age, regarding ignorance in any matter as a deep disgrace. (“一事不知,以为深耻”) At the age of four or five, he used reeds as pens, practicing writing in ash (“以荻为笔,画灰中学书”), and by the age of nine, he was proficient in Confucian classics such as *The Book of Rites*, *The Book of Documents*, *The Book of Changes*, and *The Spring and Autumn Annals*. (《礼记》《尚书》《周易》《春秋》) At the age of ten, he devoted day and night to studying Ge Hong's work, *Biographies of Divine Immortals*, (《神仙传》) kindling his interest in health preservation.

In adulthood, Tao Hongjing integrated the paths of medicine, Taoism, and health preservation, dedicating himself to profound research. In the second year of Emperor Yongming of the Qi Dynasty (484 AD), Tao Hongjing became a disciple of Sun Youyue. In the first year of Yongming (488 AD), he joined the Maoshan Taoist tradition and obtained a genuine copy of the *Qing Scriptures* (《清经》) from handwritten books by Yang Xi and Xu Mi. During the eighth year of Yongming (490 AD), Tao Hongjing traveled to Zhejiang and visited the Taoists Lou Huiming and Du Jingchan, acquiring ten volumes of relics from real immortals. In the tenth year of Yongming (492 AD), feeling discontent with his official career, Tao Hongjing resigned from his position, retired to Maoshan, and adopted the title of Huayang Jushi (Recluse of Huayang).

Living on Maoshan for over forty years, Tao Hongjing established his martial arts school, immersed himself in Daoist practices, wrote numerous articles, and pioneered Maoshan's

development. Maoshan, also known as Qushan, renowned for its picturesque scenery, is considered a sacred place for cultivation in Daoism. Taoism designates Mount Mao as the “spiritual sanctuary of Wu, the poetic and beautiful region of Jinling, a blessed land for cultivating the Dao, and the sacred abode for achieving divinity.” (“金陵吴句曲,修真福地,成神之灵墟”) Despite his retreat to Maoshan, Tao Hongjing maintained close communication with Emperor Xiao Yan of the Liang Dynasty. Emperor Wu of Liang once remarked, "In matters of great importance, especially those related to military expeditions, consultation is essential. Each month, numerous letters are exchanged, and people refer to this as 'Mountain Correspondence.'" [3]. Despite invitations to build a Daoist institution, Tao Hongjing consistently declined. Tao Hongjing passed away in the second year of Emperor Wudi of the Liang Dynasty, posthumously honored as Mr. Zhenbai by the emperor.

Tao Hongjing was a polymath with extensive knowledge, delving into various fields such as astronomy, calendar calculation, geography, military strategy, pharmacology, medicine, craftsmanship, and even Confucian classics, poetry, calligraphy, and painting.

Historical records consistently praise Tao Hongjing, as seen in the *Book of Liang - Biography of Tao Hongjing*, (《梁书·陶弘景传》) which notes his passion for learning, curiosity, and wisdom even in old age, describing him as a man with a heart as pure as a child's. (“性好书,好奇事,惜时,虽已年老,但仍有一颗赤子之心。”) His expertise covered a wide range, including Yin-Yang principles, the Five Elements, celestial phenomena, geography, medicinal formulas, and medical texts [4]. In his memorial *In Praise of the Reclusive and Virtuous Master Tao*, (《隐居贞白先生陶君碑》) Prince Xiao Lun of Shao Ling in the Liang Dynasty appraised Tao Hongjing as follows: "His zeal for learning rivaled that of Zhang Hua, his expertise matched that of Ma Jun, his subtlety resembled that of Liu Xiang, and his cultivation of temperament mirrored that of Ge Hong." (“张华之好学,马钧之之精,刘向之之微,葛洪之养性”) [5] Jiang Zong, in his preface to *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion*, offered a comprehensive and affirmative evaluation of Tao Hongjing: "In ancient times, Liu Xiang comprehended the past and present, Ma Rong mastered books from all under heaven, Jing Fang observed the wind and rain, and Pei Kai understood yin and yang... Master Tao from Danyang is no exception. He possessed profound knowledge of the Purple Platform's green scrolls, green books, jade-inscribed secret texts, and extraordinary works from the Jade Altar. Every piece is meticulous, every detail refined; there is nothing he did not master, nothing he did not excel in. Truly, he was an extraordinary figure of his time." (“昔刘向通古今,马融通天下书,京房察风雨,裴楷晓阴阳.....丹阳陶先生,亦是如此。”知紫台青简、青书、玉版秘文、瑶坛奇书,无一不精,无一不精,无所不精,无所不精,无所不用其极,非世之奇人也。)[6]

As a versatile figure of the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Tao Hongjing made significant contributions to the paths of medicine and health preservation. According to historical examination by Mr. Wei Shimin, Tao Hongjing authored a total of 77 works, with rich contributions in the field of medicine, including works like *Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity*, *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Tao's Secluded Materia Medica*, *Efficacious Formulas for Practical Use*, *Records of Renowned Physicians*, *Summary of Medicinal Secrets*, *Regulations and Methods for Compounding Elixir Medicines*, and *Supplementary Collection of One Hundred and One Formulas for Deficiency in Elbow Afterpains*. [7]. Therefore, his academic thoughts, achievements, and contributions in the field of medicine are indeed noteworthy.

In summary, Tao Hongjing, born into nobility and receiving excellent educational training, left behind numerous enduring works. Influenced by his family's teachings, he developed a deep understanding of medical knowledge.

2.2. Medical-related Works

Tao Hongjing's extant medical and health preservation works include *Records of Renowned Physicians*, *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity*, Taoist classic *Zhen Gao*, and later compilations of Tao's literary works such as *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion*.

Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity is a representative work of early Chinese health preservation theories, divided into six sections [8][9]. The first half comprises sections on *Precepts*, *Dietary Precepts*, and *Prayers for Blessings*, (《戒律》《食戒》《祈福祈福》) illustrating the principles of health preservation by providing examples of adhering to the way of nature, emphasizing the importance of correct health preservation, and detailing many precautions in daily diet and life. The second half includes chapters on "Therapeutic Inhalation," "Guiding and Massaging," and "Female Health," describing methods for therapeutic inhalation, guiding and massaging techniques, and the timing and details of bedroom arts, including ancient health preservation methods such as the long-lost "Five Animal Frolics" and the "Six-Character Secret of Breathing."

Zhen Gao is a significant Taoist scripture compiled and annotated by Tao Hongjing [10]. The title *Zhen Gao* refers to "the edicts uttered by true individuals." (《真诰》者,真人口授之诰也。)[11]. In the preface of *Zhen Gao*, Tao Hongjing explains the reason for its title and cites Kong Anguo, who said, 'An edict is a proclamation of grand righteousness to the world.' (《诰,以大义告于天下者是也》)[12]. This positioning of *Zhen Gao* emphasizes its alignment with the classics, as Tao Hongjing asserts, "The creation of 'Zhen Gao' aligns with the classics." (《真诰之作,其纬于经者乎。》)[8]. Therefore, the book *Zhen Gao* exists as an explanation of the teachings of the Shangqing school of Daoism. Tao Hongjing likened it to a "latitude" in the context of this work.

The main content of *Zhen Gao* originates from the Xingning period of the Eastern Jin Dynasty when Yang Xi, a native of Wu County, acted as a medium, and many immortals descended to convey edicts to the father and son Xu Mi and Xu Xie in Jurong. These edicts were recorded by Yang Xi or transmitted orally by him and recorded by the two Xus. Tao Hongjing considered these edicts precious and of high religious value. As both Yang Xi and the Xus were skilled calligraphers, particularly Yang Xi, who excelled in calligraphy, the written edicts were of significant calligraphic value. Therefore, Tao Hongjing collected them from various sources, introduced their descent times and recording situations, annotated the people and content mentioned therein, and compiled this book, *Zhen Gao*.

Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion, also known as *Hua Yang Tao's Secluded Collection*, (《华阳陶隐居集》) was compiled during the Chen Dynasty in the Southern Dynasties period, lost during the Tang and Song Dynasties, and later reconstructed during the Southern Song Dynasty in the Shaoxing period. Scholar Wang Jingzhou believes that the collection *The Collected Works of Mr. Zhenbai, Tao's Seclusion* (《贞白先生陶隐居文集》) produced in the thirteenth year of Shaoxing (113 AD) is the most extensive surviving original. There are also other editions of "Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion," including Daoist collections, Maoshi Jigu Studio editions, Ming Dynasty editions by Xiao Sixin, and editions in *Seventy-Two Anthologies*. (《七十二家集》)[9]. Additionally, the preface of this book includes medical and health-related content such as prefaces to *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations*, *Summary of Medicinal Secrets*, *Supplementary Collection of One Hundred and One Formulas for Deficiency in Elbow Afterpains*, and *Record of Nurturing Life for Longevity*, making it an important documentary source for the Southern and Northern Dynasties period.

Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations (abbreviated as "Annotations") is Tao Hongjing's annotation of the *Shennong's Classic of Materia Medica*. [13]. Based on *Shennong's Classic of Materia Medica*, Tao continuously innovated and improved, summarizing the theories of traditional Chinese medicine systematically. The innovative aspects of Tao Hongjing's theory of medicinal herbs in *Compendium of Materia Medica Annotations* mainly include three aspects: Firstly, he further revised the traditional classification methods of medicinal herbs, clarified the natural properties of medicinal herbs, and pioneered a development model for Chinese medicine centered on the origin of medicinal herbs [10]. Secondly, he proposed attention to the dosage and application of medicinal herbs, stating, "There is a distinction between light and heavy, all must be distinguished." ("又有轻重之分,皆须辨之。") Proper usage leads to immediate relief upon ingestion, ensuring longevity and well-being. Thirdly, he established the concept of "universal medicines for all ailments," classifying them according to their "principal functions" and listing over eighty commonly used medicines, such as those for "treating wind-induced dizziness, facial wind ailments, and wind-induced leg disorders." ("治风眩、头面风、中风足") [11]. Although the original book was lost, it has been preserved due to extensive citations in subsequent medical literature and the discovery of partial scrolls in the Dunhuang Caves. The preface is included in the later compilation of *Collected Works of Tao's Seclusion*. Tao Hongjing wrote this book not only to cure diseases but also to prolong life, as stated in his preface: "The *Daoist Scriptures of Immortal Formulas*, through ingesting food and abstaining from grains, can extend life and enhance vitality, leading to transformation and ascension." ("《道经仙方》,服食断谷,延年益寿,连飞丹化石,云腾飞升,都是以药道为先。") [12].

3. Tao Hongjing's Daoist Cultural Influence on Medical and Health Preservation Thought

Daoism and Taoist philosophy advocate the attitude of "valuing life" as a fundamental approach to life, emphasizing that the essence of "Dao" lies in cherishing human life. The core idea of Daoism is "ascension," which places importance on "cultivation of truth" ("xiuzhen"). Cultivation of truth is the primary means of ascension in Daoism and constitutes its fundamental category. Consequently, Daoism places great emphasis on life, seeks longevity, values the efficacy of medicines, and actively adopts methods such as "health preservation," "avoidance of worldly affairs," "clearing the mind," and "disease prevention" to promote well-being and extend life.

3.1. Daoist Medicine

The emergence and development of Daoist medical thought are closely tied to Daoism's advocated perspectives on life and the universe. Daoist philosophy posits that everything between heaven and earth originates from "qi" (气/炁), which is the vital force or essence of "wuji" (无极), meaning limitless. Ge Hong, in his work "Inner Chapters of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity - On Ultimate Principles," elucidates this concept: "A woman governs it through qi, governs it through people." [14]. Chen Tuan stated, "Yin and yang are yin and yang; yin and yang are boundless. Without differentiation between yin and yang, the universe initially formed. Yin and yang harmonized, myriad energies were complete. Thus, this is the taiji, resembling my appearance before birth." (From *Yu Quan* (《玉铉》)) [15]. The human body imitates various natural patterns, and the methods of using medicine to treat illnesses in Daoism are built upon the theory of the body's connection with nature.

Laozi proposed the viewpoint of "Man models himself on the earth, the earth models itself on heaven, heaven models itself on the Dao, and the Dao models itself on the universe." ("人法地,地法天,天法道,道法天地") [16]. Therefore, to "model oneself on nature," one should act according to the laws of nature. Daoist medicine advocates that humans are a microcosm, a part of the universe, and

an essential element bestowed upon humanity by the heavens. To follow the connection and laws between humans and nature, achieving the harmony of "Heaven corresponds to humanity," is necessary for "longevity and enduring vision," leading to a peaceful and enjoyable old age. Otherwise, it may result in illness and unbearable suffering.

Daoist medicine, derived from the understanding of the principles governing all things in nature, explores and grasps human life activities, drawing conclusions about psychological, physiological, and pathological aspects. For example, the six natural climates of cold, heat, dampness, dryness, fire, and wind in nature do not normally cause human illnesses. However, if they are excessive, deficient, or not properly responded to, they can transform into the Six Evils ("liuyin"), disrupting the body's regulation and adaptability. This disruption can also promote the reproduction and spread of pathogenic bacteria, becoming a cause of various diseases. This analogy not only effectively illustrates the connection between humans and nature but also finds extensive application in health care. Daoism places great emphasis on disease prevention and treatment, traditionally valuing health preservation to achieve the goals of strengthening the body, preventing and treating diseases. Daoist health preservation methods primarily include dietary practices, qi cultivation, guided breathing, fasting practices, and bedroom arts.

3.2. Tao Hongjing's Medical Philosophy

Differing from Ge Hong's ultimate pursuit of immortality, which is more mystical, Tao Hongjing's health preservation philosophy is pragmatic, emphasizing longevity, health, and quality of life. For instance, his representative work *Record of Nurturing Vitality and Extending Life* contains minimal speculation and descriptions about transcending to immortality. Instead, it focuses more on practical and achievable health preservation methods, playing a pivotal role in inheriting and promoting theories related to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) health preservation. In Tao Hongjing's works such as *Annotations on the Classic of Materia Medica* and *Record of Famous Physicians*, he documented extensive information about medicinal substances, covering their origins, collection, preparation, and even usage. This compilation serves as a summary of Daoist dietary health preservation. In "Record of Nurturing Vitality and Extending Life," Tao Hongjing outlined a distinctive method of breathing exercises, emphasizing the exhalation process. (一种特殊的吐纳之法,就是呼,呼,呼,呼) [17]. Simultaneously, he collected various guidance methods from predecessors, summarizing and refining Hua Tuo's "Five Animal Frolics," providing detailed explanations for each specific movement. This significantly enriched and developed the guidance techniques during that period.

Treatise of the Divine Command (《神仙敕令》) was compiled by Tao Hongjing and represents his personal perspective. This article divides the path of health preservation into three levels. The lowest level involves solely consuming herbal medicines without practicing bedroom arts, guidance techniques, or engaging in chivalrous acts, yet still achieving eternal life. However, without the path of the Golden Elixir ("jindan"), one cannot ultimately become an immortal. Moving up, the Golden Elixir becomes the focus. Despite half a lifetime dedicated to alchemical practice, Tao Hongjing never successfully entered its profound realm. Even with his extraordinary intelligence and innate advantages, the difficulty remains formidable, let alone for others. *Great Daoist Canon* represents a method superior to the Golden Elixir, with an extremely high level of difficulty for mastery. Therefore, for ordinary individuals, becoming an immortal is an extremely challenging and almost impossible endeavor. The more practical approaches include meditation, the middle way, guidance techniques, the practice of the Lesser Yin, and dietary practices.

Tao Hongjing believed that understanding principles is paramount for maintaining health. Despite the various methods available, the essence remains the same for these three approaches. By adhering to common sense and persisting over the long term, positive effects can be achieved.

4. Conclusion

Due to historical and societal influences, Tao Hongjing's medical and health preservation philosophy inevitably carries certain limitations. Nevertheless, it has exerted a profound and lasting impact on the development of subsequent medical and health preservation studies. Against the backdrop of contemporary advocacy for "universal health," Tao Hongjing's medical and health preservation ideas retain practical value, warranting further exploration and inheritance.

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Why Does China Implement the "Dual Reduction Policy" to Restrict Educational Industry? An Explanation Based on Marxist Political Economy

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Abstract: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels proposed in "The Communist Manifesto" the viewpoint of the inevitable demise of capitalism, Marxist political economy serves as an explanation and justification of this viewpoint. Marxist political economy forms a complete logical system, which elucidates the developmental path of capitalist collapse through three stages: surplus value, free competition, and monopoly capitalism. The theory of surplus value explains the intrinsic essence of capitalist society, wherein capitalists profit by exploiting labor, while free market competition and monopoly capitalism are external manifestations of the operational laws of capitalist society. In recent years, the disorderly expansion of educational capital in China has shown clear monopolistic tendencies. At this juncture, China promptly implemented the "dual reduction policy" to restrict the expansion of educational capital, which is a practical application of Marxist political economy. From the perspective of Marxist political economy theory, China's restrictions on educational capital serve three purposes: firstly, to prevent capital from excessively depriving laborers of surplus value; secondly, to avoid cyclical economic crises brought about by unregulated capital competition; thirdly, to prevent monopolies and thereby avert both economic crises and the social crises brought about by monopolies.

Keywords: Marxist Political Economy, Surplus Value, Economic Crisis

1. Introduction

The research hypothesis proposed by Marxist political economy is that the capitalist world is bound to collapse. In order to verify this research hypothesis, Marxist political economy provides a rigorous and orderly logical system of argumentation. This logical system can be divided into three interlocking stages: the first stage is the commodification of labor. In this stage, capitalists profit by exploiting surplus value from laborers. This stage reflects the essence of capitalism, in other words, capitalism is built upon a foundation of injustice and inequality from the outset; the second stage is the phase of free capitalism. In this stage, the disorderly competition among capital affects supply and demand relationships, leading to cyclical economic crises when overproduction occurs. The third stage is the phase of monopoly capitalism. In this stage, monopolies emerge, not only leading to economic crises but also various social problems. In summary, these three stages constitute the inevitable path of capitalist development, each stage with its unavoidable contradictions and issues.

The research question of this paper is: Why does China implement the "dual reduction policy" to restrict the unregulated expansion of educational capital? To address this question, this paper will analyze and interpret using the theoretical framework of Marxist political economy. Studying this issue has certain academic and practical significance.

The paper is divided into the following parts: the first part is the introduction, which will present the research question and explain its significance. The second part is the literature review, focusing on the research achievements of the academic community on Marxist political economy and the "dual reduction policy." The third part is the theoretical framework, explaining the principles of the three stages of Marxist political economy. The fourth part is the case study, which will first analyze the operation mode of educational capital in China, and then analyze the "dual reduction policy" using Marxist political economy. The fifth part is the conclusion.

In terms of academic significance, this paper combines Marxist political economy with practice, and analyzes public policies that protect the rights and interests of laborers using Marxist political economy, promoting the scientific, practical, people-oriented, and advanced nature of Marxist theory. In terms of practical significance, this paper analyzes why China needs to restrict educational capital from the perspective of inherent principles, helping to understand the formulation and implementation of the "dual reduction policy."

2. Literature Review

This article primarily reviews two aspects of existing research: first, the existing research in Marxist political economy, and second, the research outcomes regarding the "dual reduction policy."

The existing research in Marxist political economy can be categorized as follows: Firstly, the fundamental theoretical viewpoints of Marxist economics. For instance, Professor Peng Xuenong from Shanghai University focuses on analyzing the class struggle between labor and capital. He points out that a significant driver of this struggle lies in the contradiction between private ownership and socialized production.[1] Secondly, the research methods in Marxist political economy. For example, scholar Zhang Xu from Renmin University of China elucidates the historical materialism and dialectical methodology used in Marxist political economy. Zhang's paper suggests that historical analysis and comparative studies can reveal the inherent laws and evolutionary processes of capitalist production.[2] Thirdly, the contemporary applications of Marxist political economy. Numerous studies in this area exist. For instance, some scholars argue that the core ideas of the "Three Represents" theory exemplify the integration of Marxist political economy with China's economic development, showcasing its vitality in the new era.[3] Furthermore, other scholars closely link artificial intelligence with Marxist political economy, explaining the contradictions between labor and capital in AI and their exploitation of surplus value.[4] In summary, the existing research on Marxist political economy in academia is relatively comprehensive, providing ample reference materials for this article.

Regarding the existing research on the "dual reduction policy," it mainly falls into several aspects: Firstly, the rationale behind implementing the "dual reduction policy." For example, some scholars argue that the purpose of this policy is to promote the fair distribution of educational resources, returning education to its essence and avoiding its commercialization.[5] However, the main problem with this viewpoint is its failure to grasp the essence; in other words, these scholars only see that commercializing education leads to unfair resource distribution without identifying the root cause behind it. Secondly, the impacts of the "dual reduction policy" after its implementation. Some scholars point out that reducing the education sector through this policy will increase the burden on teachers and may lead to unemployment among some education industry practitioners.[6] The main problem with this viewpoint lies in its overly shortsightedness. It is essential not to overly focus on

the short-term impacts of the "dual reduction policy"; its ultimate goal is to mitigate economic crises, serving the long-term interests of the nation and ensuring long-term social stability.

In conclusion, while academia has conducted relatively thorough research on Marxist political economy and the "dual reduction policy," few scholars have integrated Marxist political economy with the latter. Additionally, there are shortcomings in the existing research on the "dual reduction policy."

3. The Theoretical Framework of Marxist Political Economy

Marxist political economy includes a derivation process from micro to macro. From the micro point of view, the academic puzzle of Marxist political economy is why capitalists can make profits; From a macro point of view, the problem studied by Marxist political economy is how economic crisis and various social problems arise in capitalist society. The real and logical starting point of capitalism is the exploitation of the surplus value of the workers, while liberal capitalism and monopoly capitalism are the inevitable path to expand production.

3.1. The Stage of Labor Force Becoming a Commodity: Exploitation of the Surplus Value of Laborers

The theory of surplus-value answers why capitalists can make a profit, and the logical starting point of the theory is that labor becomes a commodity and money becomes capital. To study Marxist political economy, we need to distinguish the concept definition of labor and labor force. Labor refers to the use of labor power, and labor power is not equal to labor, but refers to labor capacity, including mental and physical strength. The subject of labor is the free man, and the free man is the working man with personal freedom, who has no capital in his hands, and no other commodity to be bought and sold except labor power.

The study of Marxist political economy also needs to distinguish between the concepts of capital and money. The so-called capital refers to the general term of social resources that can create material and spiritual wealth. Capital and money have the relationship of unity of opposites, they are not only different from each other, but also related to each other. On the one hand, money can only buy equivalent goods, while capital can be exchanged for more capital. On the other hand, labor is a special commodity that transforms money into capital.[7]The formula of commodity circulation and the formula of capital circulation just show the unity of opposites between money and capital: the two formulas can be expressed as:

Commodity circulation formula: $W \text{ (commodity)} \rightarrow G \text{ (currency)} \rightarrow W \text{ (commodity)}$

Capital flow formula: $G \text{ (capital)} - W \text{ (labor as a special good)} - G_1 \text{ (greater capital)}$

It can be found from the formula that the circulation of commodities and the circulation of capital are two modes. The circulation of commodities is selling first and then buying. The seller has commodities in hand and gets money through selling, and then the seller buys new commodities through the money in hand. The core of the formula of commodity circulation is the exchange of equivalence, the value of the goods bought by the seller and the value of the goods sold are the same. The capital circulation formula is to buy first and sell later. The original capital value possessed by capitalists is G , which is used to buy constant capital and labor capital W , and after a round of production, the total profit gained by capitalists is G_1 . According to Marxist political economy, the reason why G_1 is greater than G is that labor is a special commodity. It has both use value and surplus value. The capitalist is able to profit by depriving labor of its surplus-value.[8]In short, capital is called capital because there is no equivalent exchange in the process of capital circulation. The biggest

difference between capital and money is that capital can expand and increase in value in the process of circulation.

The core of surplus-value theory is to explain why G_1 is greater than G in the capital flow formula, in other words, how the capitalist makes a profit. Marx's explanation for this is that labor can be divided into necessary labor and surplus labor. The value created by necessary labor compensates the wages paid by the capitalist for the purchase of labor power, while the value created by surplus labor is the profit earned by the capitalist. The capitalist will use the principal and profits to expand reproduction. Then, under normal circumstances, the capital in the hands of capitalists will roll bigger and bigger, and the profits will be more and more. However, workers' wages have remained relatively constant, and the result has been a growing gap between rich and poor. A schematic of surplus value theory can be shown in Figure 1:

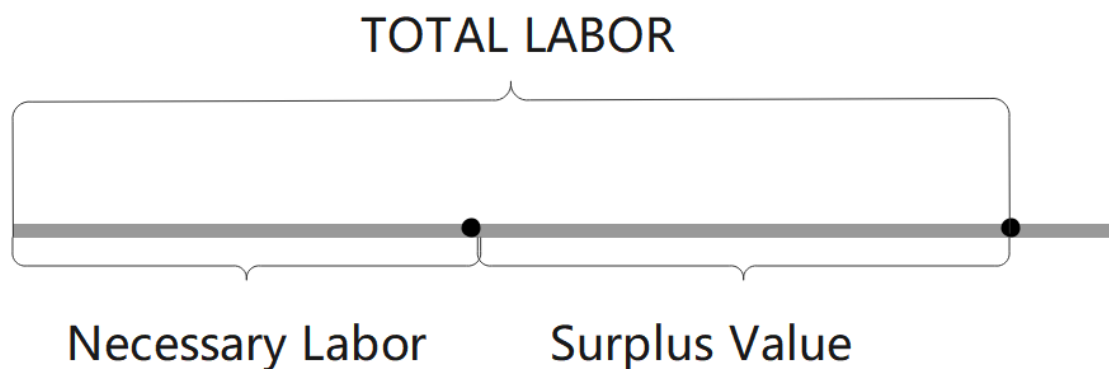


Figure 1: The Theory of Surplus Value

3.2. Liberal Capitalism and Cyclical Economic Crises

The stage of free capitalism is the second stage of Marxist political economy. The result of this phase is still a cyclical economic crisis. The operation process of this stage is roughly as follows. After a round of production, the capitalist makes a profit by depriving the laborer of his surplus value. This profit will be used by the capitalists to expand reproduction. In other words, part of the profits obtained are used for the capitalists' personal pleasure, and the other part is used for secondary investment to complete capital accumulation and the expansion of production scale. However, there must be market competition in the stage of free capitalism, and in order to win the competition, the capitalists must carry out extended and extended reproduction. In other words, capitalists will expand their operations and complete technological upgrades.

The result of the phase of liberal capitalism, however, must be an economic crisis, for two reasons. First, the inherent contradiction of capitalism lies in the contradiction between the socialization of production and the private ownership of the means of production. The socialization of production is embodied in the market distribution of products and the production process. The private ownership of the means of production is embodied in the private control of capital, profit and means of production by the capitalists. The result is that every capitalist has capital in his hands and the will to expand production. Then all the capitalists will invest in the production of one industry. As a result, there will be overproduction, and supply far exceeds demand. When supply exceeds demand, prices fall and investment loses money. The capitalists, then, are bound to reduce the scale of production, with the result that a large number of working people become unemployed. There is also the case that economic crises occur when the capitalists engage in inclusive and extensive reproduction. In other

words, what is included in the increase in the expansion of reproduction is the proportion of C in the organic composition of C/V of capital. When technology changes and new equipment is introduced, capitalists do not need so many workers to participate in production, and the result is overpopulation and increased unemployment.

3.3. Stage of monopoly capitalism

The stage of monopoly capitalism is the next step in the stage of free capitalism. First, the concept and process of monopoly need to be clarified. The most important feature of capitalism is market competition, and the development of individual capitalists is uneven. After a long period of market competition and mutual annexation, the total capital and strength of one or several capitalists far exceed that of the remaining small capitalists. In order to further make high profits, these capitalists who win the competition for capital will form an alliance and jointly agree on the price, sales, production and other factors of the product. At this time, there will be a monopoly over a certain industry.

If liberal capitalism brings periodic economic crises and overpopulation, the problems of monopoly capitalism are undoubtedly more varied and serious.

First of all, in the economy, capitalists in a monopoly position control the economic lifeline of the country by virtue of their dominant position. For example, production needs to expand and operations need to scale. Then the capitalists will finance themselves through loans. Generally, capitalists get loans from two sources. One is the government's banking and financial institutions behind them. Capitalists obtain credit by mortgaging property to banks and then raise financing. The second is individuals, through the issuance of stocks and bonds to individuals for financing. The convergence of industrial capital and financial capital makes the monopoly capitalists control the lifeline of the national economy. However, the production and sale of products are controlled by monopoly capitalists, and greedy capitalists will seek higher profits by raising the selling price, when the price is too high to consumers' ability to buy, economic crisis will break out. Exceeding purchasing power means that consumers will no longer spend, without consumption production will shrink, and it means that the previous investment, which was financed by borrowing, cannot repay the banks, the stock market faces a bear market, and the result is that everyone is in debt. On the non-economic level, capitalists in a monopoly position will control the society by manipulating public opinion, education, science and technology and cultural products. The monopoly capitalists can even support the government through money politics. When the government executive and the monopoly capitalists reach an agreement on the exchange of interests, the government will serve the monopoly capitalists' private interests instead of serving justice. Then fairness, justice and democracy will be threatened.

In short, the theoretical system of Marxist political economy systematically explains the development stage of capitalist society. Horizontally, the intrinsic essence of capitalism is the exploitation of the surplus value of laborers, while the external manifestation of capitalist society is the economic crisis and various social problems brought about by free capitalism and monopoly capitalism. From the vertical point of view, the development of capitalist society can be divided into three stages: first production, free competition, monopoly stage. The class contradiction between Labour and capital runs through every stage, so that the result of capitalist society must be class struggle and collapse.

4. Case Study: Why Implement the "Dual Reduction Policy" to Restrict Educational Capital

4.1. Operation mode of Chinese educational capital

4.1.1. One-to-one tutoring

The main participants of one-to-one tutoring are three parties: students, remedial teachers and third-party intermediaries. The operation process is roughly as follows: on the one hand, students have the need to make up lessons, but students do not have the right contacts in their hands. On the other hand, the supplementary teacher has the knowledge and the need for part-time work, but the supplementary teacher does not have the information of parents and students. At this time, the third-party intermediary makes use of the original capital in hand to make a match between the teacher and the student, and the intermediary will recommend the interpersonal resources in hand to the students or teachers in need to reach a make-up lesson transaction. However, the third party as an individual or team may take a cut of the extra time fee as a rebate. In addition, one-on-one tutoring is mainly aimed at students who need to make up for the shortcomings of their own knowledge system. The reason why it is difficult to ban one-to-one counseling is that one-to-one counseling has various forms and strong concealment. There are many forms of one-to-one tutoring, such as on-site tutoring by teachers, face-to-face teaching in the remedial places provided by intermediary agencies, and on-site lectures by students.

4.1.2. Institutional teaching

The main participants of offline face-to-face classes are also three parties: students, institutions, and full-time teachers employed by institutions. Its operation mechanism is roughly as follows: First, the head of the educational institution holds a certain amount of original capital, which will be used to rent teaching places, buy teaching equipment, train full-time teachers and other related investments. Next, educational institutions advertise admissions and offer classes, charging students high tuition fees. Then part of the high tuition fees is used to pay full-time teachers and another part is used to expand production. Offline face-to-face teaching is mainly aimed at students who want to learn the whole knowledge system, or prepare for a certain exam, subject competition students; In addition to completing the teaching task, the full-time teachers hired by the institutions also need to undertake the heavy and trivial tasks such as the compilation of teaching materials, the operation and editing of the self-media, and the advertising and publicity. In addition, there is a special form of offline face-to-face classes, that is, several parents and students have the need to make up lessons, they will jointly entrust a parent with rich social relations to find a teacher and rent a classroom. The client will pay the tuition fee to the entrusted parent, who will pay the tuition fee to the instructor. In other words, the essence of this model is that the entrusted parents take a cut as an intermediary and exploit the surplus value of the teacher. After the rectification and standardization of the "dual reduction" policy, illegal or non-compliant offline training institutions have been basically banned.

4.1.3. Tutoring with artificial intelligence

There are various forms of new technology guidance and training. With the development of science and technology, new technologies such as artificial intelligence and online live broadcast software are gradually applied to the education industry. Participants include technology investors, technology developers, educational institutions introducing technology, educational practitioners and students. Here's how this type of mentoring works: First, a technology investor hires a few technology developers and uses the original capital to buy equipment to pay the developers' salaries. Once the

technology is developed, investors sell it to educational institutions at a profit. Educational institutions also have a certain amount of original capital. Educational institutions will use the original capital to purchase technology, train practitioners to master the technical operation and pay practitioners' wages, and the product results made by using the new technology will be sold to students and achieve profits.

4.2. Marxist Political and Economic Explanation of "Dual Reduction Policy"

In July 2021, the "dual reduction Policy" was officially issued by Chinese government, which comprehensively standardized and regulated off-campus training behavior from the aspects of institutional approval, service standardization and operation supervision; The specific contents include: training shall not be conducted on national holidays, rest days, winter and summer holidays, non-disciplinary training institutions shall not engage in disciplinary training, and after-school delay service fees shall follow fixed standards.[9]

Then, from the perspective of Marxist political economy, the reasonableness of the "dual reduction" policy is as follows:

First, in essence, the "dual reduction" policy is a kind of restraint on the phenomenon of capital exploitation of practitioners' surplus value. Although the education industry has various forms, one thing is common to many forms, that is, the surplus value of education practitioners is exploited. Due to the participation of third-party intermediaries, teaching knowledge has become a form of labor, and the surplus value of practitioners is deprived by the third-party commission. With after-work tutoring, educational institutions will extract surplus value by extending labor hours or improving management efficiency. With the help of artificial intelligence for education and guidance, the surplus value of workers has been deprived twice in the industrial chain.[10]First of all, developing technology is a highly productive mental effort, and technology developers need to work very few hours a day to compensate investors. Then, technology developers can achieve the exploitation of surplus value by extending surplus labor time. In addition, educational institutions also have a certain amount of original capital in their hands, with which they can exploit the surplus value of educational practitioners. Therefore, from the perspective of exploiting the surplus value of workers, the education industry is unfair and unequal.

Second, from the perspective of free capitalist market competition, since consumers have the demand for remedial lessons in the market, capital will invest in the education industry. However, if there is a capital overheating, all the capital holders are investing in the education industry, and the following two problems will arise. First of all, if the supply exceeds the demand, there are too many tutoring classes and tutoring institutions, the price of class hours and tuition fees will inevitably decline with the market demand. If they can't get their money back, investors won't reinvest, and the result is mass layoffs. Second, education belongs to the service industry, if all the capital flows to the education industry, it means that there is no investment in real economy industries such as manufacturing and agriculture. Then, the country's industrial structure allocation will be unreasonable. Once the education industry has a cyclical economic crisis, the national economy will collapse. Then, the "dual reduction" policy will standardize the education industry, so that the education industry will not overextend, and it is the cyclical recession and economic crisis that will be avoided.

Third, from the perspective of monopoly, the disorderly expansion of the education industry will bring about various social problems. After years of operation in the education industry, the operation of individual investors is different. Then, in this process, there will be some successful large educational enterprises to occupy a monopoly position. Once a monopoly appears, it will bring the following problems: First, the monopoly can set its own prices, which means that the tuition fees and tuition fees continue to rise. When remedial fees and tuition become too expensive for consumers, all consumers are reluctant to spend. Then there will be a wave of unemployment and an economic crisis. Second, the capitalization of education will cause a brain drain. Once the tuition and class fees of

education rise, the wages of practitioners will also rise. Then, many public school teachers will be attracted by the high salary and transition from public school to education practitioners. As we all know, the education system of public schools is to maintain a relatively fair distribution of educational resources. Once the focus of education is shifted from public schools to education, the rich will have money to make up lessons and enjoy high-quality educational resources. The poor have no money to make up for the lessons and lose at the starting point. Third, if the education industry is allowed to monopolize education and disorderly expansion, it will also cause education to control social public opinion, and then cause various social problems. For example, the education industry can use public opinion to sell anxiety, influence parents' decisions, and get them to pay for extra lessons. As a result, students and parents face enormous physical, mental and economic pressure, which in turn affects social stability. So the essence of the "dual reduction" policy is to prevent the monopoly of the education industry, and to deal with potential social problems by reducing the burden on students.

5. Conclusion

Marx and Engels clearly put forward the view that capitalism will collapse and perish in the Manifesto of the Communist Party, and Marxist political economy explains this view with a complete argumentation system. First, Marxist political economy points out that capitalist production is based on the exploitation of the surplus value of laborers. Then, as the scale of production increases, the result of liberal capitalism is periodic economic crises; However, with the further development of liberal capitalism into monopoly capitalism, in addition to economic problems, various social problems have emerged one after another, and the situation has become more and more severe, and finally when the social contradictions are intensified to a certain extent, the society will collapse. From the perspective of Marxist political economy, the "double reduction" policy prevents problems before they occur, puts the education industry in a controllable degree, takes into account the interests of all parties to the maximum extent, and avoids the economic and social problems caused by the disorderly expansion of capital.

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Report on English-Chinese Translation Practice Based on Trados Computer Aided Translation: A Case Study of Procedure in Civil Cases in the U.S. Courts

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Abstract: This report focuses on the translation practice of parts of the text from "Procedure in Civil Cases in the U.S. Courts" using the Trados translation software. By comparing and analyzing the application of Trados in the translation process, this study aims to reveal the advantages and limitations of using computer aided translation (CAT) tools in legal text translation. The research finds that Trados significantly aids in the field of legal translation; however, its effectiveness is still limited by the translator's grasp of legal expertise. Therefore, this paper intends to offer practical suggestions and experience summaries for legal text translation and to discuss the pros and cons of CAT tools in specific fields. Through an in-depth analysis of Trados usage and a detailed examination of the translation practice results, this paper aims to provide feasible recommendations for improving the quality of legal text translation and to serve as a reference for the application of CAT tools in the legal field.

Keywords: Trados, Computer Aided Translation, Legal Text, Efficiency and Accuracy

1. Introduction

In today's globalized society, the role of computer aided translation (CAT) technology is increasingly prominent, providing translators with powerful tools to meet the needs of cross-cultural communication. Trados, as a widely used computer aided translation software, has gained significant attention and favor in the translation field for its excellent translation effects and efficient workflow. This paper discusses the practical application of Trados in the translation of English-Chinese legal texts, using "Procedure in Civil Cases in the U.S. Courts" as a case study. The translation of legal texts involves a high degree of professionalism and complexity, demanding higher linguistic abilities and legal knowledge from translators. As a CAT tool, whether Trados can effectively improve translation efficiency and quality in the field of legal texts becomes the focus of this study. By exploring the specific application of Trados in legal text translation in depth, this study aims to provide feasible experience summaries and practical advice for the practice in the field of legal text translation, to promote the progress and enhancement of translation work.

2. Computer Aided Translation

Computer aided translation (CAT) is a technology that uses computers to aid translators in efficiently completing translation tasks [1]. Its main functions include translation memory and terminology databases. The system divides the text to be translated into several small sentences and provides translators with existing translation memories and self-built terminology databases. During the translation process, the system automatically detects similar or identical translations for the translator's reference. For sentences or phrases that have been translated identically before, translators can directly use the translation segments provided by the system and adjust and modify them as needed. This method of computer aided translation greatly saves the translator's working time and avoids repetitive labor. Additionally, during the translation process, the system automatically builds a memory database to record the user's translations. After the translation is completed, the system's review function can identify errors in numbers, word spelling, and punctuation marks, ensuring that the translated text is exported in a format consistent with the original.

3. Task Description

3.1. Text Introduction

The original text to be translated is of the legal text type, with an excerpt of 1,407 characters, mainly covering parts of the procedure in civil litigation in U.S. courts.

3.2. Characteristics of the Text

Translation of legal English is one of the most challenging branches in the field of applied translation [2]. English legal texts often feature long sentences, complex structures, profound concepts, and a mix of technical terms with common words, often employing archaic adverbs and superfluous words. The style of legal texts is rigorous and meticulous, making their translation requirements distinctly different from other types of texts. During the translation process, it is necessary to deeply analyze the original text and ensure that every legal concept and clause is accurately conveyed, to maintain the legal accuracy and logical rigor of the translated text.

4. Translation Techniques and Strategy Analysis

4.1. Domestication

Domestication refers to localizing the source language for the target language or readers, adopting expressions familiar to the target readers to convey the content of the original text. Domestication translation requires translators to move closer to the target language's readers, speaking as a native author would. The original author's intention to directly communicate with the readers demands that the translation becomes an authentic expression in the target language. Domestication translation helps readers better understand the translated text, enhancing its readability and appreciation. In this translation practice, the translator frequently employed this method.

Example 1:

Original:

- A. The Parties to a Lawsuit
- B. The Commencement of an Action
- C. Pleadings and Other Procedures Prior to Trial

Translation:

一、诉讼的双方(当事人)

二、诉讼的开始

三、双方诉讼文书和审判前的其他程序

In English, it is common to use letters such as A, B, C, etc., to denote parallel sentences, which can make the sentences clearer and easier to understand, especially when expressing complex ideas. In Chinese, using "一、二、三" to represent the beginning of parallel sentences is a common method. "一" indicates the first sentence, "二" the second, and "三" the third, and so on. By applying domestication, translating "A, B, C" as "一、二、三" helps readers better understand the relationship between sentences, making the article clearer and easier to understand.

Example 2:

After understanding the logical relationship between the original sentences, the translator translated them in a more intuitive manner. As shown in Figure 1, "he will have to pick the proper court" is translated as "第一,他必须选择合适的法院" and other similar structures, adopting a domesticated translation strategy. This ensures that the translation naturally integrates into the target language's context, aligning with Chinese expression habits. Chinese typically uses similar numbering when expressing steps, order, or lists. This helps make the translation more in line with Chinese readers' linguistic habits, improving the readability and fluency of the translation.

14	To get the proceedings going, the plaintiff will have to do three things: he will have to pick the proper court, he will have to see that the defendant or his property is brought before it, and he will have to state his complaint and what he wants the court to do about it.		为了启动诉讼程序,原告必须做三件事:第一,他必须选择合适的法院;第二,他必须确保被告或他的财产被带到法院;第三,他必须陈述他的投诉以及他希望法院如何处理。
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Figure 1: Example of Domestication 1

Example 3:

In English, it is common to use impersonal constructions, while Chinese prefers personal constructions. As shown in Figure 2, the original "it may assert some counterclaim," where "it" refers to a state or situation rather than a living entity, is translated by making the defendant the subject, changing from an impersonal to a personal construction, aligning with Chinese expression.

49	Whatever the answer says about the plaintiff's claim, it may assert some counterclaim which the defendant has against the plaintiff.		不论答辩书对原告人提出的索赔要求有何看法,被告人都可以针对原告人的索赔要求提出某种反诉。
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Figure 2: Example of Domestication 2

4.2. Word Order Adjustment Method

The word order adjustment method is used to address differences in expression and habits between Chinese and English. During translation, translators need to skillfully handle the details, adjusting the order of words between Chinese and English in a timely manner to ensure more accurate expression of sentences, while also improving their fluency.

Example 1:

As shown in Figure 3, a part of the original text: "...because the defendant is not there..." is translated to: "若是由于被告本人不在那里...". By placing the causal adverbial clause at the beginning, the reason becomes more prominent in the Chinese translation, aligning closer with Chinese expression habits. This is a common word order adjustment method to ensure the translation fits better within the Chinese context, avoiding overly long modifiers and making the entire sentence clearer, maintaining the original text's logical relationship.

Furthermore, the original text uses a conditional adverbial clause, "if he has one, in the jurisdiction". This sentence is translated to "只要他有房子在该管辖区内". In the translation, this part is placed before the main clause, making the structure of the Chinese sentence clearer.

28	If the summons cannot be served personally, because the defendant is not there, it may commonly be served by leaving it at his house, if he has one, in the jurisdiction.		若是由于被告本人不在那里导致传票不能送给他, 那么只要他有房子在该管辖区内, 通常就可以把传票留在他家里。
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Figure 3: Example of Word Order Adjustment Method 1

Example 2:

Generally, English tends to express the result first and then use the reason to modify the result, i.e., "result before reason". Chinese, on the other hand, tends to express the reason first and then the result, i.e., "reason before result". This difference in word order may be related to the thinking modes of Eastern and Western cultures. This difference is also reflected in this translation report. As shown in Figure 4, the original text starts with the result "it more expeditious", but the translator places it at the end, translating it as "可以更快地做到这一点", making the translation more in line with Chinese expression habits.

The English phrase "in advance of the trial" is translated to "在审判之前", placing this temporal adverbial clause at the beginning, making the expression more direct and in line with Chinese habits, resulting in a smooth and natural translation.

In the original text, "by exchanging written statements of their respective claims" is translated as "通过交换陈述各自要求的书面文件". Here, the translator adjusts the order of actions, placing the act of exchanging documents before the purpose adverbial clause "attempt to narrow down the issues of fact and law on which they differ", making the Chinese expression more in line with the chronological and logical sequence.

35	But we have deemed it more expeditious to have the parties, in advance of the trial, attempt to narrow down the issues of fact and law on which they differ by exchanging written statements of their respective claims.		但我们认为, 在审判之前让双方通过交换陈述各自要求的书面文件, 设法缩小双方有分歧的事实问题和法律问题, 就可以更快地做到这一点。
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Figure 4: Example of Word Order Adjustment Method 2

4.3. Parataxis

Parataxis, or hypotaxis, refers to the connection between words or sentences based on their meanings or logical relations, rather than relying on linguistic formal means [3].

Legal English, to highlight the uniqueness of the law, often uses complex and lengthy sentences when drafting statutes or writing documents [4]. When examining the structural features of English sentences, it is observable that English tends to utilize formal and structural means based on conjunctive functions. In contrast, Chinese is more inclined to use parataxis, expressing ideas through independent clauses or cumulative sub-clauses, with the logical relations between sentences clarified by their sequence [5].

Original:

This demonstrates that he could be arrested if necessary, and also gives him notice that a lawsuit has been started against him, and in what court and by whom.

Translation:

这一举动表明,如果有此必要,他可能被捕;同时也通知他说,已经有人对他提起诉讼,以及在什么法院被什么人提起诉讼。

In paratactic translation, it's sometimes possible to omit conjunctions from the original text to make the translation more fluid, while still ensuring accurate conveyance of information. In the phrase "This demonstrates that he could be arrested if necessary, and also", the conjunction "and" is used to connect two pieces of parallel information. However, the translator has chosen not to directly translate "and", enhancing the smoothness of the translation.

5. Application of Trados in Legal Text Translation

5.1. Advantages and Applicability of Trados in the Legal Text Field

As a Computer Aided Translation (CAT) tool, Trados demonstrates significant advantages and applicability in the legal text domain. The benefits of using Trados in translating legal texts primarily lie in enhanced translation efficiency, maintained terminology consistency, and paragraph and format handling. These features make it an indispensable tool in legal translation work, providing translators with more efficient and accurate translation solutions.

5.1.1. The Role of Trados in Improving Translation Efficiency

Trados has a terminology memory function that can store translated professional terms. This not only ensures consistent use of specific terminology within the same document, enhancing translation accuracy and avoiding potential misunderstandings or ambiguities due to inconsistent terminology but also becomes particularly important when dealing with legal texts, which often contain a large number of complex professional terms and legal vocabulary. By accumulating and automatically applying previously translated terms, this feature of Trados not only simplifies the translation process but also provides translators with a powerful tool. This helps them focus more on the legal nuances of the text, improve translation quality, and meet the stringent requirements of legal texts for precise wording.

As illustrated in Figure 5, when handling the fourth sentence of the text, the translator faces a multitude of professional terms, which are then added to the translation terminology database. In the subsequent processing of the fifth sentence (see Figure 6), the terms previously included in the terminology database are displayed, thereby simplifying the translation process and significantly enhancing the translator's efficiency.

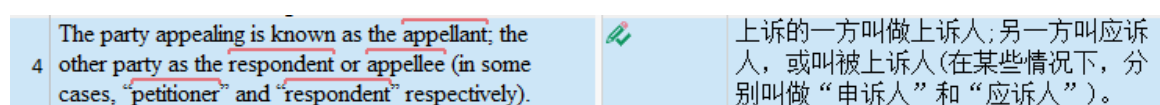


Figure 5: Trados Efficiency Enhancement Example 1

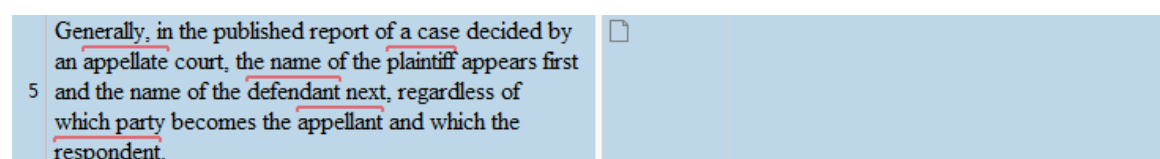


Figure 6: Trados Efficiency Enhancement Example 2

5.1.2. Advantages of Trados in Paragraph and Format Handling

Trados allows translators to process text by paragraph or sentence, effectively enhancing the convenience of text management and organization. This flexibility is particularly important when dealing with legal texts, as legal documents often encompass complex legal provisions and sentence structures. Moreover, considering the conventional characteristics of legal texts, which include

specific formatting and layout requirements, Trados ensures the translated document's appearance and format remain consistent with the original document by preserving the original text's format. The combination of these two features makes Trados an ideal choice for handling legal texts, providing translators with effective tools that not only simplify the translation process but also ensure the final translated document's professionalism and compliance with legal requirements.

5.2. Shortcomings of Trados in the Legal Text Domain

Due to the polysemy of legal terminology, where a single word can have multiple meanings, translating legal texts presents considerable challenges. When we have already added a term, its meaning in the next sentence might represent a different sense.

Translators frequently encounter the word "court" during the translation process, but it does not always translate to the same meaning. The term "court" can refer to various concepts including the court itself, courtroom, courthouse, judge, legislative body, and parliament among others.

Original:

Procedure in Civil Cases in the U.S. Courts

Translation:

美国法院民事诉讼程序

Here, the translator has chosen to translate "court" as "法院" (court), adding it to the terminology database.

Original:

The job of courts is to settle the controversies which persons bring to them.

Translation:

民事法庭的职责是解决当事人向法院提出的争议。

In this sentence, the translator has selected the meaning "法庭" (courtroom/court) for "court", while also adding information. Given that the primary content of the translation material is the civil litigation process, the term "court" here necessarily refers to a civil court. The translator has made this implicit content explicit, making the article clearer and easier to understand.

However, when translating this sentence, the translation memory displays "court" as meaning "法院" (court), which, while providing convenience to the translator, can also limit their thinking.

6. Conclusion

Through the experience of this translation practice, the author has recognized that utilizing Trados for legal document translation is effective. This tool has improved translation efficiency and also alleviated the burden of translation work to some extent. However, these advantages do not become immediately apparent at the outset but gradually emerge as the translation process continues. Significant assistance in translation is only achieved when the translator has built a substantial terminology database and the computer's translation memory is continuously enriched [6].

As translators, it is imperative to keep pace with the times, learn to apply CAT technologies like Trados, and integrate Trados with human translation to enhance translation efficiency and ensure the quality of translation. Through the analysis report of this translation practice, the author hopes to provide some references for translators working on legal texts on the one hand and deepen people's correct understanding of computer aided translation software on the other.

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The L2 Proficiency Effect on Mentalizing Abilities by Tibetan-Chinese-English Trilinguals

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Abstract: This study investigates the mentalizing performances of Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals with different L2 proficiency, using the “Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test” accuracy as a measurement index. The results indicated that trilinguals proficient in both Tibetan and Chinese outperformed those proficient in Tibetan and relatively proficient in Chinese in mentalizing abilities. A survey on language background revealed a positive correlation between L2 proficiency and L2 usage frequency. For Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals, Chinese proficiency and usage frequency may have significant effects on their development of mentalizing abilities and involvement in social interaction.

Keywords: Mentalizing Abilities, Tibetan-Chinese-English Trilinguals, L2 Proficiency, Usage Frequency

1. Introduction

In social interaction, mentalizing helps individuals infer thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and goals of another person. Mentalizing is also referred to as “theory of mind”, “mind reading”, and “social intelligence”, and overlaps with the term “empathy” [1]. It is a dynamic and flexible form of social cognition that aids in the understanding of others’ intentions and actions, allowing people to better navigate social situations and empathize with and predict the behavior of others [2]. There is a growing literature demonstrating that bilinguals exhibit greater mentalizing capacities compared to monolinguals across the lifespan [3] and greater L2 experience or proficiency can enhance bilinguals’ mentalizing performance [4]. However, one research shows adult multilinguals and bilinguals have different performances on the Reading-the-Mind-in-the-Eyes Test (RMET), the most widely used measure of mentalizing abilities [2], which highlights the need to differentiate multilinguals from bilinguals in research on multilingualism and cognition. Therefore, this study aims to explore whether L2 proficiency could also affect mentalizing abilities for adult trilinguals.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Bilingualism and Mentalizing Abilities in Adults

Empirical studies have shown that adult bilinguals exhibited greater mentalizing abilities compared to monolinguals [5], owing to bilinguals’ enhanced executive functions, greater metalinguistic

awareness [6], and strengthened social-pragmatic flexibility [7]. However, bilinguals also vary in meaningful and consequential ways within group and greater bilingual experience may promote pragmatic awareness and attention to social information, two core components of mentalizing [4]. For instance, some research has revealed that low L2 fluency related to greater difficulty in making “complex inferences” (i.e., pragmatic inferences) during text reading [8], whereas higher L2 proficiency enhanced irony comprehension [9]. Verbal irony is a common form of implicature that depends on successful mentalizing [10]. Furthermore, diverse sociolinguistic environments could also enhance mentalizing, even for monolinguals [7].

2.2. Multilingualism and Mentalizing Abilities in Adults

The cognitive processes of humans are significantly reliant on their linguistic abilities, yet far less is known about whether the mind is shaped based on number of languages used, and what potential impact multilingualism might have on social cognition [2]. Some scholars argued that individuals fluent in two or more languages possessed bilingual cognitive advantages [9]. However, one research found that adult monolinguals and multilinguals did not differ much in their mentalizing abilities on the RMET while bilinguals performed the worst, underscoring the necessity to differentiate between multilinguals and bilinguals in research on language and cognition [2]. But the impact of language proficiency on multilinguals’ mentalizing abilities remains unexplored. Scholars have noted that higher levels of multilingualism were associated with higher levels of cultural empathy, thus greater ability to emphasize the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of individuals from a different cultural background [11].

2.3. Research Objective

If bilingual experience can promote mentalizing abilities, can greater language experiences also enhance mentalizing performance for multilinguals? Given the above, this study focuses on the mentalizing differences within the multilingual group, targeted at Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals to examine the L2 proficiency effect on their mentalizing abilities.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Participants

A total of 100 Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals were recruited in this study and they were all first-year university students in Northwestern China. All participants were adults, with an average age of 19.46 years ($SD = 1.20$), and 74% of them were female. Prior to the experiment, the participants completed background information questionnaires adopted from previous research [12]. Results indicated that the average age of starting learning Tibetan, Chinese, and English was 1, 7.4 and 10.7 years old. Their language proficiency was self-reported on a ten-point scale (1 = lowest proficiency, 10 = highest proficiency). Their average Tibetan, Chinese, and English proficiency was 8.5, 7.5 and 4.0. The current use of languages showed that participants reported 48.2% average use of Tibetan, 51.5% for Chinese and 9.2% for English on campus; 89.3% for Tibetan, 23.6% for Chinese, and 2.1% for English at home.

Participants were divided into two groups according to their relative proficiency in L2: those proficient in L2 (L2 higher-level group) and those relatively proficient in L2 (L2 lower-level group), with 50 individuals in each group comprising 13 males and 37 females. Results showed average proficiency of 8.4 for Tibetan, 7.9 for Chinese, and 4.0 for English among L2 higher-level group. Analysis of variance showed no significant differences between Tibetan and Chinese proficiency ($F = 0.653$, $p = 0.071$), but significant differences were found between Tibetan and English ($F = 2.312$,

$p = 0.000$) and between Chinese and English ($F = 0.470$, $p = 0.000$). For L2 lower-level group, their average Tibetan, Chinese and English proficiency was 8.7, 7.1 and 3.9. Analysis of variance showed significant differences between Tibetan and Chinese ($F = 1.684$, $p = 0.000$), Tibetan and English ($F = 4.927$, $p = 0.000$), and Chinese and English ($F = 0.742$, $p = 0.000$). Comparing the two groups, Chinese proficiency of L2 higher-level group was significantly higher than that of L2 lower-level group, while there were no significant differences in Tibetan ($F = 0.350$, $p = 0.308$) or English ($F = 0.073$, $p = 0.952$) proficiency.

3.2. Materials and Procedure

The most widely used measure of mentalizing ability in adults, the Reading-the-Mind-in-the-Eyes Test, was employed in this study [1], which involved recognizing emotions from facial cues [2]. As shown in Figure 1, participants were required to recognize mental states based on a grayscale image of their eye-region (e.g., ashamed, nervous) and choose which of four possible adjectives best describes what the person was thinking or feeling. The RMET was scored as the total number of items answered correctly, out of a maximum of 36. The English version of the RMET has been translated into many languages, and the Chinese version employed in this experiment was derived from the Autism Research Center by University of Cambridge, translated and compiled by Chinese People's Liberation Army General Hospital, available for download at https://docs.autismresearchcentre.com/tests/EyesTest_Chinese.zip.



Figure 1: Chinese Version of the RMET.

Note: The four words denote ashamed, nervous, suspicious, and indecisive.

The experiment was conducted in a paper-and-pencil format. Participants gave informed consent and completed the background information questionnaire and the RMET independently in a quiet environment, without time limitation. Before the experiment, they were informed that a personalized report of results would be sent to them via their email, if they provided their email address. It was thought that this would motivate participants [13].

4. Results

Analyses were conducted in SPSS 17.0 and RStudio (version 4.2.3).

The average RMET accuracy was 23 of 36 items correct (52%; $M = 23.04$, $SD = 3.02$), ranging from 13 to 29. Consistent with previous findings, having more years of experience speaking a foreign language was associated with higher RMET scores ($F=3.961$; $p=0.049$). Results for RMET scores between the two groups were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results for RMET Scores between the Two Groups

Group	N	M	SD	Min	Max	p
L2 higher-level group	50	23.82	3.38	17	29	0.018
L2 lower-level group	50	22.26	3.10	13	29	

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances speculated the equal variance between the scores of the two groups ($p = 0.122$). Independent samples t-test results showed that L2 higher-level group exhibit higher mentalizing accuracy than L2 lower-level group ($F = 2.437$, $p = 0.018$).

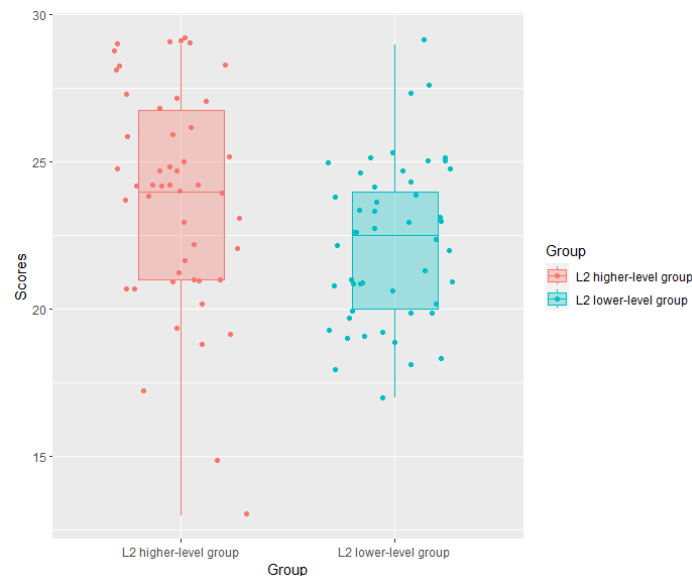


Figure 2: L2 Proficiency and Mentalizing Abilities

According to the background information questionnaire, participants' Chinese proficiency was positively correlated with the use percentage of Chinese on campus ($r = 0.231$, $p = 0.021$) and at home ($r = 0.258$, $p = 0.009$). In other words, highly proficient L2 users are also frequent L2 users. According to the results of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances, average usage frequency on campus of the two groups supported the assumption of equal variance ($p = 0.679$). Independent sample t-test results showed that L2 higher-level group used Chinese significantly more frequently on campus ($M = 54.78\%$) compared to L2 lower-level group ($M = 44.98\%$; $F = 0.049$, $p = 0.040$). Similarly, Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances did not speculate the equal variance between the scores of the two groups ($p = 0.001$), but after logarithmic transformation, it supported the assumption of equal variance ($p = 0.616$). Independent sample t-test results revealed that L2 higher-level group used Chinese more frequently at home ($M = 20.42\%$) compared to L2 lower-level group ($M = 10.46\%$; $F = 0.253$, $p = 0.010$).

5. Discussion

Participants in this study were all Tibetan first-year college students from the same cultural background in Northwestern China, all of whom were rigorously selected and admitted to the

university. The RMET consisted of 36 photographs of the eye region of actors and actresses from different countries.

Results showed that higher L2 proficiency was associated with higher mentalizing accuracy, consistent with previous findings suggesting that advanced knowledge of more languages and frequent use of more languages were linked to higher levels of cultural empathy [11]. Items include 'Tries to understand other people's behavior' and 'Pays attention to the emotions of others'. Their research indicated that multilingual individuals who used different languages regularly were less likely to have rigid prejudiced attitudes towards individuals from different cultural backgrounds and towards their cultural norms and values. They were also more likely to actively approach social situations and to build social networks quite easily. Hence, L2 proficient individuals were more capable of transcending cultural boundaries in recognizing emotions in the RMET.

It has been pointed out that having more opportunities to engage in novel social situations through the regular practicing of multiple languages, or greater language diversity, may expand one's understanding of the world and in turn their mentalizing abilities [9]. Early Exposure to a multilingual environment promotes effective communication [7]. This study also found that trilinguals who learned Chinese at an earlier age scored higher on RMET. Moreover, even passive involvement in greater language diversity could boost mentalizing performance. For instance, monolinguals growing up in a multilingual environment had better performance in perspective-taking tasks than those from a monolingual environment. The importance of a diverse language environment was highlighted in all these studies. There were no significant differences between the two groups in the frequency of L3 use neither on campus ($F = 0.101$, $p = 0.967$) nor at home ($F = 0.054$, $p = 0.599$). But highly proficient L2 users speak L2 relatively frequently both on campus and at home, whether actively or passively involved in L2 communication situations. They used foreign languages frequently to communicate with a more diverse group of people. In social interactions, they were well aware that people could come from different cultural backgrounds, speak different languages, thus having different ways of thinking [7], which led to strengthened social-pragmatic flexibility [4]. The social-pragmatic flexibility account is also aligned with social psychological research displaying that identification of self-other differences is a critical component of successful mentalizing. Speakers who experience greater language diversity may also experience other forms of diversity in their daily lives (e.g., racial, gender, class) [14]. Encoding these environmental differences may require high language diversity readers to exercise greater mentalizing. Future research could further explore the potential social mechanisms between sociolinguistic diversity and mentalizing.

Additionally, common measures of mentalizing abilities by previous studies, such as the empathy quotient [15], false belief tasks [16] were presented in the form of texts or verbal narratives, requiring participants to pay attention to subtle grammatical differences or narrative contexts. So certain level of language proficiency would be required. Existing research indicated that other, potentially social, or contextual, information (e.g., "paralinguistic cues") might compensate for low language proficiency during inference making of complex texts in the L2 [17]. The RMET used in this study, a typical emotion recognition paradigm, relied only on a series of photographs of the eye region, i.e., subtle non-verbal cues, to infer others' mental states, which reduced the impact of linguistic information on mentalizing to some extent.

6. Conclusion

This study targeted at Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals to explore the effect of L2 proficiency on mentalizing abilities. The results indicated that individuals proficient in L2 outperformed those relatively proficient in L2. Meanwhile, language background information revealed a significant positive correlation between L2 proficiency and L2 usage frequency both on campus and at home, suggesting that frequent L2 users exhibited greater mentalizing abilities than those who used L2 less

frequently. For Tibetan-Chinese-English trilinguals, improving Chinese proficiency and frequency of use could have a positive impact on their development in mentalizing abilities, interpersonal relationships, and social interactions.

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A Study of Jocular Mockery with Conversation in Welcome to the Mushroom House

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Abstract: There are fruitful research results about politeness and its strategies at home and abroad, but the research on mock impoliteness and its various practical activities still needs to be deepened. Combining previous researches with the corpus of collected conversational data from episodes 1-3 of *Welcome to the Mushroom House*, this paper analyzes the pragmatic mechanism and dynamic construction of the mock impoliteness practice activity of jocular mockery from the three dimensions of triggering mechanism, framing mechanism, and responding mechanism. The article is expected to provide more ideas for jocular mockery research. In the future, it can be combined with empirical research to explain the pragmatic phenomenon.

Keywords: mock impoliteness, jocular mockery, triggering mechanism, framing mechanism, responding mechanism

1. Introduction

Politeness, as a social norm, is an integral part of interpersonal communication. In the field of pragmatics, politeness research has become an important research direction. In recent years, with the increasing frequency of cross-cultural communication, politeness research has been receiving increasing attention in pragmatics. It has been more than 40 years since Lakeoff classical politeness study was introduced [1]. Impoliteness has also attracted great attention since the end of the 20th century. Culpeper [2] summarized the statutorily formulated expressions and strategies of impoliteness from the perspective of real impoliteness. However, in everyday communication, people often joke and make fun of each other, which does not appear to be impolite but enhances the relationship between them. This kind of impolite behavior is obviously not really impolite, but rather "a form of impoliteness or lack of politeness in establishing and maintaining intimate relationships" [3].

As a kind of "superficial impoliteness", mock impoliteness can be realized in various ways, and jocular mockery is one of them. "As a small branch of politeness research, there are few studies on jocular mockery, and the existing studies mainly focus on the dynamic construction of it. Carmen [4] discusses the use of jocular mockery in Spain and the United Kingdom by comparing the use of jocular mockery on social media Facebook, and discusses the triggers of jocular mockery in different cultures. Schnurr and Chan [5] summarized four response strategies commonly used by subordinates by generalizing the specific ways in which subordinates respond to jocular mockery emitted by superiors in the work environment. Qiao Han [6] categorized the receptive response strategies used

by third parties in jocular mockery discourse into five sub-strategies: ascending, descending, stuttering, lining up and inverting, and explored the motivations for choosing receptive response strategies.

However, few people have analyzed the complete mechanism of jocular mockery, most of them just make a passing reference to it, and most of the corpus used comes from social media, which does not guarantee that the mockery unfolded by the speaker to the hearer must be joking. In this paper, the author takes the reality show *Welcome to the Mushroom House* as the text corpus, and analyze the conversational activities of the re-employed men's group, who have been friends for more than ten years, to further elucidate the three mechanisms of triggering, framing, and responding to jocular mockery.

2. Literature review

Leech [3] defines "mock impoliteness" as the appearance of impoliteness that is actually politeness. Brown & Stephen [7], Culpeper [2], Bousfield [8], and a large number of scholars have embraced Leech's view of mock impoliteness. But this view of mock impoliteness has since been questioned by some scholars: is mock impoliteness really superficial impoliteness? Culpeper [9] revised his earlier view of mock impoliteness; mock impoliteness is not always superficially impolite in the eyes of different participants, and may be real impolite or irrelevant impolite especially to the target of the mockery. Haugh & Bousfield [10], building on Culpeper's [9] study of mock impoliteness, proposed that mock impoliteness itself should be viewed as a social evaluation of irrelevant impoliteness (non-impolite) and should not be subsumed under the theoretical framework of politeness or impoliteness.

Antaki & Widdicombe [11] state that a person's identity is "molded" by "shaping" a person into a type with "relevant characteristics or traits". When a person is evaluated in a way that is inconsistent with the identity that has been previously molded about him, this poses a threat to him or his identity. At the same time, this inconsistency can also pose a threat to the relationship between the person being mocked at and the other participants. However, if the participant perceives the offense as maintaining and fostering social relationships, then the threat to identity and relationships is considered "permissible". This permissible offense is then referred to as "irrelevant politeness" that is neither evaluated as polite nor impolite [10]. Haugh & Bousfield [10] note that speech or behavior that can be evaluated as mock impoliteness is often characterized by recognizable interactions. These behaviors typically involve the co-construction of a joking, non-serious, or flirtatious frame of understanding. Such behaviors contain, for example, teasing, jocular insult, jocular abuse and so on.

Jocular mockery is a type of teasing. Alberts [12] considers teasing as "a possible insult or aggressive comment", which implies that "teasing" could also be jocular or non-serious. Haugh [13] suggests that jocular mockery can be analyzed in three ways: 1) what triggers jocular mockery in a local sequential context; 2) how the speaker frame the jocular mockery; 3) how the recipient and other participants reacted.

Haugh summarizes the triggers of jocular mockery based on the previous research: exaggeration, slip-ups or exploitable ambiguity, and face concerns. Likewise, speakers frame jocular mockery by using lexical exaggeration, topic-shifting markers, contrastiveness, prosodic cues, inviting laughter, and facial or gestural cues. There are three broad categories of responses to jocular mockery: 1) denying the jocular mockery as untrue or exaggerated; 2) playing along with the mockery or pretending to accept; and 3) ignoring the mockery [13].

3. Data analysis

The data chosen for this paper is the reality show *Welcome to the Mushroom House*. According to the strict selection criteria, the invalid part of the dialogues is eliminated, and only the dialogues that

satisfy the jocular mockery in the local sequential contexts are selected to form the corpus of this paper. *Welcome to the Mushroom House* is a spin-off show of *Back to Field*. *Welcome to the Mushroom House* initiates the concept of sharing mushroom houses, which allows different guests longing for an idyllic life to live in the mushroom house in the form of sharing, and live a slow and self-sufficient life. The first three issues by the Re-employed Men's group Chen Chusheng, Wang Zhengliang, Su Xing, Zhang Yuan, Lu Hu, Wang Yuexin as a guest, the last issues by the members of the College of Detectives as a guest.

Jocular mockery is more common among people with close relationships such as friends, relatives and family members [14]. *Welcome to the Mushroom House* invites Re-employed Men's Group as guests in the first three issues, as they have been friends for more than ten years, the members of the Re-employed Men's Group have a relatively close relationship with each other, so the interactive dialogues that occur between long-time friends in the show can provide usable data for this study. Therefore, in this paper, the first three issues of *Welcome to the Mushroom House* (the last two issues were replaced by other guests, so they were not used) were selected as the research data, from which 31 local sequential contexts were screened out as the research data. During the collection process, the author and two other facilitators with a background in pragmatics strictly followed the definition of "jocular mockery" given by Haugh & Bousfield [10] to repeatedly screen the corpus to ensure its credibility. On the basis of Haugh's theory, the authors further analyze the triggering mechanism, framing mechanism, and responding mechanism of jocular mockery, and discuss them in turn in relation to the specific data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Triggering mechanism for jocular mockery

Jocular mockery is usually a response to the previous move of the person being flirted with [15], in which the triggers include exaggeration, slip-ups or exploitable ambiguity, as well as face concerns [13]. Since jocular mockery mostly occurs between relatives and friends who are more intimate in their relationship. There are also many cases of active triggering, so the authors include active trigger as a separate category in this section. Combined with the data of this paper, we give examples of each:

4.1.1. Exaggeration

Examples of exaggeration including complaining, extolling and bragging as well as overdoing polite routines and compliments, or being overly earnest at the topics [13].

Example (1):

陆虎:(指着修好的地方)怎么样不错吧!(炫耀的表情)达咩(比出 X 手势)

张远:你以为它(鸡)们看得懂啊。

(Lu Hu: (pointing to the repaired area) How's that? Not bad, huh? (Showing off.) DAMA (making X sign)

Zhang Yuan: You think they (chickens) can read?)

Lu Hu realizes that the fence of the chicken coop is broken and persuades Zhang Yuan to repair the coop together. Zhang Yuan thought that the chickens could fly out from the fence and escape, so there was no point in repairing it. After Lu Hu repaired the broken hole, he even put a red x mark on it. At the same time, he gave Zhang Yuan a smug look. But Zhang Yuan didn't care him. Zhang Yuan had already made it clear that he didn't approve of the significance of what Lu Hu had done, while Lu Hu was still bragging about his labor "how's that? Not bad, huh?", an exaggeration that triggers Zhang Yuan's jocular mockery with him --- "You think they can read?"

4.1.2. Sip-ups or ambiguity

Sip-ups or ambiguity refers to exploiting potential weak spots (ambiguity) in what a previous speaker said by echoing with a completely different reading.

Example (2):

张远:我们要不要最后投一个球。祝我们六个都顺顺利利。

苏醒:不不就你一个你一个。

王铮亮:你的事跟我们没有关系。

(Zhang Yuan: Shall we throw one last ball. Good luck to all six of us.

Sue Wake: No no just you one you one.

Wang Zhengliang: Your business has nothing to do with us.)

Before leaving the Mushroom House, Zhang Yuan wanted to throw one last ball and remembered that he hadn't said goodbye to his brothers yet, so he said, "Good luck to all six of us". But due to the construction of the basketball hoop in the morning, Zhang Yuan bet his fate for the next one year on the ball, but he didn't score in three consecutive throws. This time, Su Xing and Wang Zhengliang were afraid that Zhang Yuan's blessing was actually betting the fate of all six on this one ball, so they rushed to stop it. Apparently, the ambiguity of Zhang Yuan's blessing triggered Su Xing and Wang Zhengliang to employ impolite tactics to jokingly mock at Zhang Yuan: "you one you one" "Your business has nothing to do with us".

4.1.3. Face concerns

Face concerns triggers jocular mockery through participants particular expectation about the connection or separateness face.

Example (3):

张远:鄢姐你看过《最好的我们》吗?

鄢姐:(沉默)

王栎鑫:她不需要看《最好的我们》,她只认识我一个人。

(Zhang Yuan: Have you seen The Best of Us, Yan?

Yan: (SILENT)

Wang Yuexin: She doesn't need to watch The Best of Us, she only knows me.)

The men's group went to a villager's house to have lunch, and during the meal they tried to find out who had the highest popularity, but Yan said that she only knew Wang Yuexin himself. At this point, Zhang Yuan asked Yan if she had seen the TV series "The Best of Us" starring Wang Yuexin. But Sister Yan fell into silence, a silence that threatened Wang Yuexin's face. In order to maintain his face, Wang Yuexin adopted an impolite strategy to fight back against Zhang Yuan: "She doesn't need to watch The Best of Us, she only knows me."

4.1.4. Active trigger

Although exaggeration, slip-ups or exploitable ambiguity, as well as face concerns in the turns can trigger jocular mockery. However, in the data of this paper, the initiator of jocular mockery does not have any of these three situations in the previous moves, but still triggers jocular mockery discourse.

Example (4):

苏醒:这个头围太大,应该不是我。

陆虎:这么浮夸的动作,是张远。

(Su Xing: This head circumference is too big, it shouldn't be me.

Lu Hu: Such a pompous move, it's Zhang Yuan.)

The director team has prepared silhouette cutouts for the Re-employed Men's group and tried to let them guess. Su Xing first denied that it was himself, at which point Lu Hu took the initiative to launch into a mock at Zhang Yuan: "Such a pompous move, it's Zhang Yuan."

4.2. Framing mechanism for jocular mockery

Mockery can be projected within a non-serious or humorous frame, and thus as a "laughable", in a number of ways, including through various combinations of laughter particles, prosodic or phonetic cues, lexical exaggeration, implicit contrasts with known facts, formulaicity and topic shift markers, as well as facial or gestural expressions. formulaicity and topic shift markers, as well as facial or gestural cues, as has been noted in studies of teasing and improprieties more generally[16-21]. Combining the previous frameworks, the authors focus on the aspects of lexical exaggeration, contrasiveness, and formularity¹. In addition to these strategies that may occur in the data of this paper, the authors also found a callback strategy.

4.2.1. Lexical Exaggeration

Lexical exaggeration can be exploited in either the form of overstatement claiming on a higher scale than actually is or through extreme case formulations [22].

Example (5):

(陈楚生:(笑)

王栎鑫:你笑什么?你这个家伙你笑什么?(作势要攻击陈楚生)

陈楚生:雷王!你打一晚上雷。)

Chen Chusheng: (laughs)

Wang Yuexin: What are you laughing at? You guy what are you laughing at? (gestures to attack Chen Chusheng)

Chen Chusheng: King of Thunder! You hit the thunder all night.

This night Re-employed Men's group share one bed, Wang Yuexin's snoring never stops. Chen Chusheng unbearable disturbance, forced to move to the next room to sleep. The next morning, Chen Chusheng as soon as he saw Wang Yuexin showed a laughing face, which caused Wang Yuexin's dissatisfaction. Wang YueXin made a gesture to kick Chen Chusheng, and this exaggerated action triggered Chen Chusheng's jocular mockery, calling him "King of Thunder". The use of lexical exaggeration helps the initiator to frame a jocular mockery, and makes it easier for the recipient to accept the discourse as joking.

4.2.2. Contrasiveness

Contrasiveness can also frame jocular mockery as nonserious by incongruous imagery [17].

Example (6):

鄢姐:你跟他可能也差不了两岁(张远 36,王铮亮 44)

王铮亮:虽然我比他(张远)小一点,但是你这样说我也勉强接受。(喜笑颜开)

张远:什么??!!(如遭雷劈)

(Sister Yan: You're probably not even two years apart from him.

Wang Zhengliang: Although I'm a little younger than him (Zhang Yuan), I can barely accept it if you say so. (beaming)

Zhang Yuan: What?!!!! (as if struck by lightning))

¹ Prosodic cues and nonverbal cues are out of place for the analysis of our data in this thesis.

When the men's group has lunch in the villagers' home, they asked Sister Yan to guess their ages. After guessing Zhang Yuan's age, Sister Yan went on to guess that the difference between Wang Zhengliang's age and Zhang Yuan's age wasn't too much, but in fact Wang Zhengliang was 8 years older than Zhang Yuan. At this point, Wang Zhengliang was incredibly happy. At this point, he launched into a flirtation with Zhang Yuan, "Although I'm a little younger than him (Zhang Yuan), I can barely accept it if you say so." Wang Zhengliang semantically expressed his dissatisfaction with Yan's guess that he was the same age as Zhang Yuan, but in reality, he was just being nice. Although the bearer of the jocular mockery at this point is the third party, Zhang Yuan, and not Sister Yan, who is conversing with Wang Zhengliang, it does constitute jocular mockery. This contrasiveness maneuver is one of the common strategies used in framing jocular mockery.

4.2.3. Formulaicity

In general, formulaicity refers to the feature of expressions in fixed patterns used in a specific context [20]. Idioms, slangs, and taboo words are all types of formulaicity, with a focus on taboo words here. The term taboo word refers to words that many people consider offensive or shocking. They are generally considered inappropriate in certain contexts.

Example (7):

张远:你(陈楚生)那天那个骂我

陆虎:大概的话术是什么呢?

陈楚生:黄毛 SB!白毛 SB!

张远:当时我染那个白头发。

(Zhang Yuan: You (Chen Chusheng) scolded me the other day.

Lu Hu: What are the approximate words?

Chen Chusheng: Yellow hair idiot! White hair idiot!

Zhang Yuan: At that time I dyed that white hair.)

In this example, Chinese taboo words such as "SB" are utilized. This Chinese phrase means "stupid". When negative words appear in the discourse, the initiators are likely to be emotional. They may be disturbed by some external factors. In this example, Chen Chusheng's mock was directed at Zhang Yuan because Zhang Yuan had dyed his hair and made a very strange style when he went to Sanya to perform, and these styles triggered Chen Chusheng's mockery of him. However, Chen Chusheng had expressed his concern for Zhang Yuan by telling him that dyeing his hair would damage his scalp. Therefore, the impoliteness caused by the jocular mockery formed by the taboo words is permissible.

4.2.4. Callback

It is realized through an callback with what is presupposed or known amongst those participants as mentioned before [23].

Example (8):

张远:你们两个为什么不盖一床被子?

王铮亮:他蹬我,他开始一直在蹬我。

王栎鑫:真的啊?

王铮亮:因为你昨晚上一一直在又打呼又蹬我。你说我怎么睡?

张远:也可能这是你离婚的原因吧。

(Zhang Yuan: Why don't you two share a blanket?

Wang Zhengliang: He stomped me, he kept stomping me at first.

Wang Yuexin: Really?

Wang Zhengliang: Because you kept snoring and stomping on me again last night. How do you think I can sleep?

Zhang Yuan: Or maybe that's why you got divorced.

(laughter))

The night before, Wang Yuexin had said that he was not living in a good state because he had just gone through a divorce. When they woke up early the next morning, they had a discussion about last night's sleeping conditions, and right in the middle of the discussion between Wang Zhengliang and Wang Yuexin, Wang Zhengliang said that he didn't sleep well last night because Wang Yuexin snored and kicked him. At this point, Zhang Yuan launched a jocular mockery with Wang Yuexin: "Or maybe that's why you got divorced." The strategy of callback is involved here, and this strategy helps to establish the jocular mockery toward Wang Yuexin.

4.3. Responding mechanisms for jocular mockery

Drew [17] in his study of ways of responding to teasing discourse, suggests six non-serious ways of responding: ignoring; responding in a serious manner; realizing that one is being made fun of by others through the sound of others' laughter; rejecting or correcting with a laugh; laughing, then rejecting; and engaging in a submissive manner. Haugh [13] points out that there are three main ways of responding to jocular mockery in face-to-face conversations: Ignore, Deny, and Accept. We combine the findings of the two scholars that jocular mockery categorizes response methods specifically as non-acceptance, acceptance, and ignorance.

4.3.1. Non-acceptance

Haugh argues that the method of response to jocular mockery is denial in addition to ignorance and acceptance, but the authors argue that there is a counter-attack in addition to denial.

4.3.1.1. Denial

Participants reject the prior instances of jocular mockery, that is, they deliver the rejection with concomitant laughter or explanation, in a way that made it evident the rejection was serious without treating it as a laughable [24], although notably other participants often treated it as a laughable in such cases.

Example (9):

张远:躺一躺吧

王栎鑫:你这午睡的老年人

张远:午睡才不是老年人呢。谷爱凌一天睡十四个小时。

(Zhang Yuan: Have a lie down.

Wang Yuexin: You the nap of the elderly.

Zhang Yuan: It's not the elderly who nap. Gu Ailing sleeps fourteen hours a day.)

In this example, Wang Yuexin initiated a jocular mockery against Zhang Yuan's living habits, Zhang Yuan first adopted a response strategy of denial and then made further explanations, and Zhang Yuan did not take Wang Yuexin's words seriously and proceeded to nap after he finished speaking. This kind of denial can precisely show that the recipient did not take the jocular mockery seriously.

4.3.1.2. Counterattacks

Most people are inclined to counter the mockery they receive directly, instead of just denying mocking utterances. They tend to fight back the "attack" they have suffered by producing jocular mockery in a similar way.

Example (10):

王栎鑫:玩音乐,玩音乐(不要打球了)

张远:你有玩过什么红的音乐吗

王栎鑫:你个婚庆歌手

(Wang Yuexin: Play music, play music (don't play basketball)

Zhang Yuan: Have you played any hit music?

Wang Yuexin: you wedding singer)

Wang Yuexin called off Zhang Yuan's basketball activities and wanted everyone to sit together and play music. Zhang Yuan jokingly teased Wang Yuexin about not playing any hit song, but Wang Yuexin countered with Zhang Yuan calling him a wedding singer, intending to show that Zhang Yuan wasn't much of a popular singer either. Wang Yuexin used this counterattack to maintain his positive face. The recipient did not interpret this flirtation as a serious and earnest flirtation because he was still taking care of Zhang Yuan after his counterattack.

4.3.2. Acceptance

Given that jocular mockery "appears to be behavior designed to strengthen and confirm (amongst other things) the social bonds of friendship", rejecting it may be regarded as a disruption of social rapport. friendship" [10], rejecting it may be regarded as a disruption of social rapport.

Example (11):

陆虎:他(苏醒)是一直绕着热点走的人,说唱不好的时候他搞说唱,说唱好的时候他又去搞别的了

苏醒:太懂我了

张远:就是因为《快乐男生》淘汰了我们这些不该淘汰的人,活该!

苏醒:如果我活该能让我认识你们的话,我特别开心,感谢我活该认识了你们

(Lu Hu: He's the one who keeps going around the hot spots, when rap is bad he raps, when rap is good he goes on to something else

Su Xing: You Understand me!

Zhang Yuan: It's because in Super Boy you eliminated those of us who shouldn't have been eliminated. You deserved it!

Su Xing: I'm especially happy if I deserved to know you guys, thanks to the fact that I deserved to know you!)

Lu Hu lamented that Su Xing had been missing out on a good time, and Zhang Yuan thought of how he was eliminated by Su Xing when he was on Super Boy, which triggered Zhang Yuan's jocular mockery. In the face of such m, Su Xing adopts the strategy of acceptance and joins in the speaker's jocular mockery about himself, "I'm especially happy if I deserved to know you guys, thanks to the fact that I deserved to know you!" Through this strategy of acceptance, the recipient skillfully brings the two parties of the conversation closer together, keeping the conversation in a joking atmosphere and maintaining a friendly relationship.

4.3.3. Ignorance

Some of the basic ways in which recipients interpret mockery as wit can be reached by ignoring the initiator's mock in addition to explicit non-acceptance as well as explicit agreement [17]. The following example demonstrates how the recipient of a jocular mockery demonstrates his ignorance of the mocking word.

Example (12):

陆虎:(骚包的摆造型)

张远:你这样的话确实没人认识你。

陆虎:前奏好长。

(Lu Hu: (posing tartly)

Zhang Yuan: It's true that no one recognizes you if you do like this.

Lu Hu: The intro is so long.)

After the Re-employed Men's group went to the villager Sister Yan's house for lunch, Lu Hu decided to sing a song for Yan, while Zhang Yuan and Wang Zhengliang watched on. During the prelude to the song, Lu Hu kept striking some strange poses, and these exaggerated poses triggered Zhang Yuan to tease him: "It's true that no one recognizes you if you do like this." At this point, Lu Hu did not accept the mock or not, but chose to ignore it, and this turn ended here.

4.4. Discussion

In the previous section, we found that although the triggering of jocular mockery is associated with pragmatic behaviors such as exaggeration by the recipient, slips-ups or ambiguity, and threats to the face of the current speaker, the initiator may also spontaneously initiate jocular mockery with the bearer; the initiator frames his or her jocular mockery in a variety of ways, most often in terms of lexical exaggeration, contrasiveness, formulaicity and topic shift markers, and callback; the recipient's interpretation of jocular mockery is reflected in the way she responds, and the three responses discussed in detail in this paper all indicate that the recipient does not interpret the jocular mockery as real impoliteness. The process from triggering to initiator's construction to recipient's response is a dynamic construction of the phenomenon of jocular mockery, and the actual results achieved by both parties to the discourse are conducive to mutual intimacy.

These findings support Haugh and Bousfield's [10] view that mock impoliteness should be analyzed as an evaluation in its own right rather than being seen as a form of politeness or impoliteness. It is also evident that "not taking yourself too seriously" [25]. It is also evident that "not taking yourself too seriously" [26] is a core value shared by the show participants, which is associated with a sense of humor and the ability to laugh at each other's foibles and weaknesses.

5. Conclusion

This paper qualitatively analyzes the discourse phenomenon of jocular mockery using the collected conversational data from episodes 1-3 of *Welcome to the Mushroom House* and discusses the dynamic process of triggering, framing and responding to it. However, this study also has certain limitations. First, although the data of this study is close to life and has the typical characteristics of life situations of friends getting along with each other, it still cannot replace the real authentic corpus. Secondly, due to the lack of time, this paper only deals with the data of 1-3 episodes of the show and is not exhaustive. In the future, it can be combined with empirical research to explain the pragmatic phenomenon strongly.

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How and Why Does Social Exclusion Affect Individuals?

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Abstract: This essay explores the various effects of social isolation, emphasizing its psychological, social, and economic repercussions on individuals and society. Based on extensive empirical research, this study investigates the causes of social exclusion, such as cognitive shifts, emotional turmoil, identity conflicts, and economic inequalities. The article shows that social exclusion impacts both the mental and physical health of individuals and contributes to ongoing cycles of adversity, inequality, and social instability. Social exclusion is a widespread problem that weakens community unity and democratic participation. It promotes inclusive policies and structural reforms to tackle its underlying reasons. The essay highlights the significance of comprehending the extensive effects of social exclusion to promote a fairer and more peaceful society.

Keywords: Social exclusion, isolation, social influence, individual

1. Introduction

The field of psychology encompasses a wide range of complex phenomena, and social exclusion is one such phenomenon that has garnered significant attention from researchers. Social exclusion refers to the process by which individuals or groups are systematically disadvantaged, marginalized, or isolated within a society or community [1]. It can manifest in various forms, such as economic exclusion, discrimination, ostracism, or limited access to resources and opportunities. To understand its impact on individuals, we must examine the psychological, social, and economic dimensions of social exclusion. However, some argue that social exclusion does not have a significant social impact on people. They believed that social exclusion only affects the excluded person themselves. This essay will explore how and why social exclusion affects individuals, drawing upon empirical evidence from various fields of research. Firstly, the essay will explain why social exclusion occurs from various perspectives, and secondly, this research will describe how social exclusion affects the excluded and society in different ways.

2. Why social exclusion affects individuals

There are many reasons for social exclusion. Firstly, the cognitive consequences of social exclusion are substantial such as the Cyberball experiment by Williams et al. [2]. They demonstrated that exclusion triggered cognitive changes. Individuals subjected to exclusion exhibit heightened vigilance towards social threats, leading to increased susceptibility to negative social cues. This heightened sensitivity often results in the misinterpretation of neutral or ambiguous social interactions as hostile or dismissive, perpetuating a cycle of social withdrawal. Social exclusion triggers a cascade

of negative emotional responses. Human beings are inherently social creatures, wired to seek social bonds and connections. When individuals are excluded from social groups, it can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and sadness. These emotional responses are not merely transient, they can have long-lasting impacts on mental health. Prolonged exposure to social exclusion can contribute to the development of mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. Secondly, social exclusion disrupts an individual's sense of identity and belonging. Being part of a social group provides people with a sense of purpose, identity, and validation. When this is stripped away, individuals may grapple with questions of self-worth and identity crisis. This identity disturbance can lead to a range of emotional and behavioral problems, as individuals struggle to find their place in society. Thirdly, social exclusion has tangible economic consequences. Many aspects of life, including employment opportunities, educational attainment, and access to healthcare, are often tied to social networks. Excluded individuals may face barriers to accessing these resources, perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage and poverty. This economic impact can further exacerbate feelings of exclusion and marginalization.

3. How social exclusion affects individuals

3.1. Social exclusion can lead to negative behaviours

Social exclusion can often precipitate negative behavioral responses. In some cases, individuals may react to feelings of exclusion by pursuing alternative avenues for social inclusion. Unfortunately, these paths can sometimes involve engaging in risky or deviant behaviors. Such actions can further exacerbate social isolation and lead to increased stigmatization, thereby perpetuating a harmful cycle.

3.2. Social exclusion can affect mental health

One of the primary ways social exclusions affects individuals is through its detrimental impact on mental health. Numerous studies have shown a strong association between social exclusion and mental health problems. Experiences of social exclusion are strongly associated with depression. A longitudinal study by Cacioppo et al. [3] demonstrated that prolonged social isolation can lead to depressive symptoms. This is attributed to the negative impact on self-esteem and the feelings of worthlessness that often accompany exclusion. Social exclusion can also contribute to the development of anxiety disorders. A study by Alexandre [4] found that individuals who reported feeling excluded in social situations were more likely to develop social anxiety disorder. The fear of further rejection can perpetuate a vicious cycle of avoidance and anxiety. Furthermore, social exclusion can have a profound impact on an individual's self-identity and self-worth. According to Tajfel and Turner [5]'s social identity theory, individuals tend to categorize themselves and others into social groups. When individuals experience social exclusion based on their group membership, it can lead to a sense of devaluation and a diminished sense of self-worth. Empirical studies have supported this theory, demonstrating that experiences of social exclusion can erode an individual's self-esteem and identity [6].

However, Morgan [7] in his research indicated in certain situations, deliberately choosing not to engage with specific social groups or networks can be advantageous for one's mental health. This is particularly true if those groups are characterized by harmful or toxic behaviors or attitudes. Opting to distance oneself from such environments can lead to positive mental health outcomes, as it helps individuals avoid negative influences and potentially damaging interactions. This choice reflects a proactive approach to maintaining self.

3.3. Social exclusion can affect physical health

Empirical evidence also highlights the negative consequences of social exclusion on physical health. Prolonged exposure to social exclusion has been linked to increased stress levels. Social exclusion can also influence an individual's health behaviors and coping mechanisms. Research by Hawkey and Cacioppo[3] suggests that socially isolated individuals are more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and poor dietary choices. These behaviors contribute to a range of physical health problems, including cardiovascular disease and obesity. In addition, social exclusion is closely intertwined with the social determinants of health, which include factors like socioeconomic status, education, and housing. Research has consistently shown that individuals who are socially excluded tend to reduce access to quality education and housing. These factors contribute significantly to health disparities and are supported by empirical data [8]. This demonstrates that social exclusion is not solely a psychological or emotional issue but can have tangible consequences for an individual's physical well-being.

3.4. Social exclusion affects economic status

The profound impact of social exclusion extends well beyond health, significantly influencing economic disparities and obstructing social mobility. A key economic consequence of social exclusion is the evident income inequality. Wilkinson and Pickett [9], in "The Spirit Level," underscore this by illustrating a robust link between income disparity and social exclusion. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced as excluded groups often have restricted access to economic opportunities, leading to lower income and a persistent poverty cycle. Discrimination in the labor market further exacerbates these economic disparities. Marginalized groups, including minorities and individuals with disabilities, frequently encounter employment barriers. The OECD [10]'s report, "Tackling Vulnerability in the Informal Economy," sheds light on how exclusionary practices limit formal employment access, relegating individuals to precarious, low-wage jobs.

However, Beatriz & Morduch [11] study considers the impact of social exclusion on the economy from a different perspective. They argued that the exclusion of specific demographic groups from accessing financial services can result in the concentration of wealth and economic opportunities within a limited segment of society. This phenomenon tends to benefit financial institutions and individuals who enjoy more privileged access to these services. Such a scenario fosters an economic environment where financial power and opportunities are unevenly distributed, favoring those already integrated into the financial system. This dynamic not only accentuates economic disparities but also perpetuates a cycle of financial privilege and exclusion. This pattern of financial exclusion and its resultant concentration of economic advantages are critical topics for both economic analysis and policy formulation, as they have significant implications for social equity and the overall health of the economy.

3.5. Social exclusion affects education

Education plays a crucial role in facilitating economic mobility, yet access to high-quality education remains a significant barrier for individuals from marginalized communities. Supporting these findings, Sirin [12] further demonstrates that students who experience social exclusion in educational settings tend to show lower academic performance and aspirations. Such experiences have a profound and lasting impact on their socioeconomic opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage.

Checchi [13] in his book thought social exclusion within the realm of education, characterized by the restricted access of certain societal groups to high-quality educational resources, can result in the formation of a stratified workforce. This workforce stratification manifests as a distinct division between high-skilled and low-skilled labor. Consequently, industries and sectors that depend heavily

on a substantial workforce of low-skilled labor may derive economic benefits from this divide. Such a scenario underscores a critical socio-economic issue where educational inequity not only influences the quality of the workforce but also perpetuates a cycle of economic disparity, favoring sectors that capitalize on the availability of low-skilled labor at potentially lower wage rates. This complex interplay between educational access and workforce stratification has profound implications for both economic development and social equality.

3.6. Social exclusion affects wealth accumulation

Furthermore, the impact of social exclusion extends beyond education, significantly influencing wealth accumulation. This is starkly illustrated in the Martin [14] report on global wealth inequality, which reveals that the wealthiest 1% of the population own more wealth than the combined assets of the bottom 99%. Individuals who face social exclusion are often found within this lower percentile, a situation that carries profound economic consequences. Tackling social exclusion is not solely a social justice issue, it is an economic imperative. Effective resolution requires a collaborative approach across various sectors, aimed at ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources. Such efforts are crucial in empowering every individual to participate fully and prosper in society.

3.7. Social exclusion can lead to social isolation

Social exclusion can lead to social isolation. Additionally, social exclusion can contribute to the perpetuation of stereotypes and prejudice. When certain groups are consistently excluded or marginalized, stereotypes about them may persist or even intensify. This can result in discrimination, further social isolation, and a reinforcing cycle of exclusion. For example, racial or ethnic minorities who experience social exclusion may face racial profiling and discrimination, which in turn can lead to more exclusion and perpetuation of negative stereotypes. A study published in the American Journal of Public Health by Berkman and Syme [15] found that social isolation is a significant risk factor for mortality. Excluded individuals often lack social support networks, increasing their vulnerability to health problems. Research conducted by Sampson and Laub [16] in the "Age-Graded Theory of Informal Social Control" indicates that individuals who experience social exclusion are more likely to engage in criminal activities. This can further perpetuate the cycle of marginalization. Excluded individuals may become politically disengaged, feeling that the system does not represent their interests. This phenomenon is documented in a study by Verba, Scholzman, and Brady [17] on political participation, highlighting how social exclusion can erode democratic engagement. Social exclusion also intersects with various forms of discrimination, such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. Empirical studies have consistently shown that individuals who experience discrimination based on their race, gender, or sexual orientation are more likely to face social exclusion [18]. Social exclusion also has broader societal implications. It can undermine social cohesion and trust within a community or society as a whole. When people feel excluded, they are less likely to engage in social or civic activities, which can weaken the fabric of society and hinder collective problem-solving. High levels of social exclusion can lead to social unrest and conflict, further destabilizing communities and societies.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, social exclusion stands as a pervasive and profoundly impactful phenomenon that casts its shadow across various dimensions of human existence. Empirical findings from a diverse array of research fields underscore its pernicious effects on mental well-being, self-identity, physical health, economic prospects, educational attainments, and social cohesion. The recognition and rectification

of social exclusion are not merely imperatives of social justice but also essential for the cultivation of overall well-being and equitable opportunities for every member of society.

Looking to the future, addressing social exclusion requires a multi-faceted approach that involves policy changes, societal shifts, and individual actions. Future directions in tackling social exclusion might focus on inclusive policies that ensure equal access to resources, opportunities, and rights for all members of society, regardless of their background or circumstances. There's a growing recognition of the need for systemic changes to address the root causes of exclusion, such as poverty, discrimination, and inequality. Efforts may also concentrate on education and awareness-raising to change societal attitudes and reduce stigma and discrimination against marginalized groups. Additionally, empowering affected individuals and communities to participate actively in decision-making processes can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions. The goal is to create a more inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully and contribute to their community. In essence, addressing social exclusion is not only a moral obligation but a vital step towards creating a more equitable, harmonious, and thriving society for all.

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The Role of Insecure Attachment in Emotional Disorders: From Children to the Elderly

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Abstract: Certain emotional disorders pose a significant societal concern due to their association with recurring suicidal tendencies and behaviors. Beyond the ongoing debate surrounding genetic and personality factors, this paper underscores the importance of considering attachment in the context of emotional disorders. Through a comprehensive review of literature in the fields of social and clinical psychology, this paper explores the connection between insecure attachment and emotional disorders. The exploration encompasses a concise historical overview and categorization of attachment, followed by an in-depth analysis of the role of insecure attachment in emotional disorders across the lifespan, from childhood to old age. Additionally, potential mediator and moderator mechanisms are discussed. Notably, emotional regulation emerges as a predominant mediator during various life stages, serving this role in both childhood and adulthood, while self-esteem is identified as a sole mediating factor during adolescence. By elucidating the detrimental impacts of insecure attachment, this article emphasizes the crucial need to understand attachment dynamics throughout the human lifespan. Future research endeavors may focus on promoting heightened awareness among parents regarding the significance of sensitive early family interactions and encouraging individuals to identify and cultivate secure attachment figures.

Keywords: attachment, insecure attachment, emotional disorder, emotional regulation, self-esteem

1. Introduction

The global attention on the issue of suicide has intensified, with a marked increase in suicide rates in several countries [1]. Notably, suicide attempts are on the rise as well, as reported by Olfson et al. [2]. Shaffer et al. [3] have established that emotional disorders, particularly depression, constitute a significant risk factor for suicide. Furthermore, mood disorders, specifically depression, have been identified as positive predictors of self-harm behavior [4], with potential repercussions for subsequent generations [5]. When exploring the origins of mood disorders, various theories attempt to elucidate why certain individuals are more predisposed to these problems than others. One such explanation posits that the symptoms of mood disorders are intricately linked to an individual's attachment style [6]. In contrast to the conventional focus on genetic factors [7] and personality traits [8], attachment is increasingly recognized as a crucial contributing factor to the development of emotional disorders.

The genesis of Attachment theory can be traced back to the collaborative efforts of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in 1991. Bowlby laid the foundational principles of the theory, and Ainsworth,

in turn, expanded upon and empirically tested some of Bowlby's propositions. The term "Attachment" was first introduced in Bowlby's seminal 1958 paper, "The Nature of the Child's Tie to His Mother". According to Bowlby, attachment constitutes a bond established through interactions between children and their primary caregiver, particularly the mother. This bond is posited to influence natural and healthy functioning even in adulthood [9]. Simultaneously, Ainsworth operationalized this concept by assessing maternal sensitivity to infant cues and identified three distinct attachment styles: secure, ambivalent, and avoidant [10]. Securely attached infants display increased exploration in the presence of their mothers and exhibit reduced crying. Conversely, insecurely attached infants, including ambivalent and avoidant types, tend to be less explorative and cry more, even when held by their mothers. Ainsworth emphasized the crucial role of maternal sensitivity in shaping the quality of attachment. Building on the foundational work of Bowlby and Ainsworth, a growing number of researchers have analyzed various forms of attachment across diverse settings and age groups [9]. This includes investigations into peer attachment in preschoolers [11], father attachment [12], attachment in daycare settings [13], attachment in deaf children [14], among others. Recent studies continue to explore attachment dynamics, encompassing friend attachment during the college transition [15], adult attachment among first-generation immigrants in the United States [16], sibling attachment in young adults in Mexico [17], as well as parental and toy attachment [18], among others. In essence, attachment manifests in diverse forms and can be succinctly described as a bond formed with a specific attachment figure.

The term "Emotional disorders," while not a clearly defined medical term according to Sung et al. [19], commonly alludes to psychological disorders, particularly major depressive disorders and generalized anxiety disorders, which are known to impact individuals' emotional well-being. Furthermore, Bullis et al. [20] provide an insightful perspective, stating that "emotional disorders" manifest when individuals frequently experience intense negative emotions and respond aversively to these feelings due to a perceived lack of control, resulting in negative behaviors such as avoidance and escape. Numerous studies, highlighted below, consistently underscore the significant role of insecure attachment in predicting individuals' susceptibility to emotional disorders. [21-26]

Insecure attachment represents one of the distinctive attachment styles identified in Ainsworth's seminal work, particularly through the Strange Situation experiment, which introduced three attachment styles: secure, ambivalent, and avoidant [10]. The ambivalent attachment style, now broadly conceptualized as anxious attachment [27], is characterized by excessively needed behavior, as elucidated by Ainsworth's Strange Situation experiment. In the realm of insecure attachments, individuals are primarily classified into anxious and avoidant attachment categories. Compared to their secure counterparts, those with insecure attachments exhibit distinct strategies: hyper-activating strategies for anxious attachments and deactivating strategies for avoidant attachments. Hyper-activating strategies manifest as clingy and controlling behaviors within relationships, coupled with challenges in disengaging from negative emotions, thoughts, and psychological distress within the relational context. Conversely, deactivating strategies entail a propensity to eschew interdependency, striving for independence and control, along with a tendency to evade negative emotions [28]. Expanding beyond Ainsworth's initial classifications, Main and Solomon introduced another form of insecure attachment known as disorganized attachment [29,30]. The disorganized attachment style presents a more intricate dynamic; unlike hyper- and de-activation, which may be adaptive responses to sub-optimal caregiving, disorganized attachment appears non-adaptive and may signify a potentially pathological reaction to inadequate caregiving. Behaviors associated with disorganized attachment can be comprehended as a dilemma involving both approach and avoidance [31]. It is noteworthy that anxious, avoidant, and disorganized attachment styles collectively fall under the umbrella of insecure attachment styles, each presenting unique challenges in understanding and addressing attachment-related dynamics.

This paper comprehensively examines various emotional disorders stemming from insecure attachment, spanning from childhood to the elderly, and elucidates potential mediating and moderating mechanisms specific to each developmental stage. Theoretically, the significance of attachment throughout the human lifespan is underscored, shedding light on how insecure attachment detrimentally influences emotional well-being at different life stages. In practical terms, given the widespread belief that attachment lays its foundation in infancy and early childhood, this paper serves as a call to action for parents to place heightened emphasis on early sensitive family interactions. The findings presented herein have the potential to inspire proactive parenting approaches that prioritize the establishment of secure attachment bonds from the very beginning. Additionally, by emphasizing the possibility of finding secure attachments in various forms, including friends, pets, siblings, and more, the paper encourages individuals to actively explore and identify sources of support and connection throughout their lives.

2. Literature review

2.1. Insecure Attachment in Childhood

The term "children" typically refers to individuals aged between 3 and approximately 10 years old [21,22,32]. Specifically, the category of left-behind children (LBCs) encompasses those youngsters left in the care of grandparents or relatives due to one or both parents migrating to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities [33]. LBCs often grapple with the absence of warm care and guidance from their parents, resulting in prevalent insecure attachments and an elevated risk of depression [34,35]. A study by Tan et al. [21] utilized a cluster sampling method to select 614 LBCs from the third grade of primary school in Anhui Province, China. Employing self-report surveys, including parent-child attachment scale, depression scale, and loneliness scale, the researchers investigated the relationship between insecure attachment and emotional disorders in LBCs. Tan's findings indicate that insecure attachment, particularly in the maternal context, positively predicts loneliness and depression in LBCs. Additionally, insecure attachment between children and their parents emerges as a predictor for specific anxieties in academic domains, such as math anxiety. Bosman & Smedt [22] suggests "higher levels of mathematics anxiety are associated with insecure attachment". For instance, children with avoidant attachments may refrain from actively seeking assistance from parents or teachers, contributing to diminished proficiency in domain knowledge.

Emotional regulation emerges as a potential mediator mechanism linking children's insecure attachment to emotional disorders. Secure attachment fosters effective emotional regulation skills, with children exhibiting secure attachments demonstrating greater proficiency in this regard [32]. Surprisingly, paternal attachment security significantly predicts a child's emotional regulation in comparison to maternal attachment [32]. In childhood, insecure attachment, particularly influenced by paternal interactions, can result in poor emotional regulation and potentially trigger emotional disorders.

2.2. Insecure Attachment in Adolescence

Adolescents, typically defined as individuals aged 12 to 18 years old [36-38], undergo significant developmental changes, with noteworthy shifts in both parental and emerging peer attachments during puberty. Wilkinson [39] emphasizes the additive and complementary roles of peer attachment and parental attachment, positing that these connections, rather than competing, collectively influence adolescents, primarily impacting self-esteem. The evaluation of oneself, the development of self-identity, and the cultivation of self-esteem are identified as crucial components in adolescent development, closely linked to psychological well-being. In particular, self-esteem is manifested through perceived competence and value. "Ability relates to the amount of "self-competence" that the

individual feels, while worth relates to the extent of "self-liking" that the individual experiences" [40]. The significance of self-esteem is notably pronounced during adolescence.

Building on this, Lee and Hankin highlight the positive correlation between insecure attachment and emotional disorders, proposing self-esteem as a mediating factor. Their findings reveal that anxious and avoidant attachments positively predict anxiety and depressive symptoms while exhibiting a negative correlation with self-esteem [23]. Additionally, Lee and Hankin identify a negative association between dysfunctional attitudes and self-esteem, establishing that insecure attachment can also positively predict dysfunctional attitudes. Dysfunctional attitudes, defined as cognitive products influenced by schemas, accumulate negative bias and contribute to a pessimistic worldview associated with depressed feelings [23,41]. In a specific context, the relationship between anxious attachment in adolescents and subsequent depression and anxiety symptoms is found to be mediated by dysfunctional attitudes and low self-esteem [23].

2.3. Insecure Attachment in Adult

Adults, defined as individuals aged 18 to 55 [42], typically exhibit psychological maturity, and their attachment patterns tend to be relatively stable compared to children. Despite these differences, the common mediator mechanism between insecure attachment and emotional disorders remains consistent: emotional regulation (ER) [32,43]. Nielsen et al. conducted a study with 147 adults, both with and without diagnosed anxiety disorders, utilizing the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS), and Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised (ECR-R) to investigate the mediating mechanism between insecure attachment and anxiety [44-46]. Their findings suggest that emotional regulation serves as a mediator between anxious attachment and anxiety in adulthood [43]. While the significance of emotional regulation as a mediator aligns with Fernandes et al.'s study on children, Nielsen et al.'s research provides a more concrete and profound understanding of emotional regulation's role in adulthood. Paola et al. [42] further supports this by demonstrating that adults with preoccupied (anxious) and fearful-avoidant (disorganized) attachment exhibit more negative self-thinking models, which positively predict anxiety. However, the empirical validation of the potential mechanism of negative self-thinking warrants further investigation.

An alternative mediator explored in research is rumination, considered a passive and negative coping strategy. Mohammadkhani et al. [47] found that rumination mediates avoidant attachment and depression in adults, with a stronger correlation between these variables and depression compared to anxiety. Adults with avoidant attachment, when faced with activated avoidant tendencies, tend to resort to rumination as a coping mechanism, potentially leading to depression. Lastly, an investigation into adult separation anxiety, attachment styles, and Vaginismus suggests that women with an anxious-avoidant (disorganized) attachment have a higher risk of vaginismus. Furthermore, those experiencing vaginismus are more likely to have adult separation anxiety. Consequently, it is inferred that anxious-avoidant (disorganized) attachment may positively predict specific phobias such as adult separation anxiety.[24]

In summary, in adulthood, emotional regulation and rumination emerge as potential mediator mechanisms between insecure attachment and emotional disorders. Emotional regulation specifically mediates between anxious attachment and anxiety, while rumination mediates between avoidant attachment and depression. Additionally, anxious and avoidant attachment (disorganized attachment) patterns may predict adult separation anxiety.

2.4. Insecure Attachment in the Elderly

The elderly, categorized as individuals aged 50 to above 90 years old [25,48], constitute a demographic for which limited research focuses on the underlying causes of emotional disorders. Despite their age, the elderly are particularly vulnerable compared to other life stages, facing increased susceptibility to the loss of social support and isolation [25]. Mental health challenges such as depression and loneliness among the elderly are critical social issues demanding attention. Spence et al. conducted a study involving 80 elderly women, aged 50 to 83 years old, assessing their social support, isolation, and loneliness, and exploring their attachment styles through interviews. Results indicate that elderly individuals with an angry-avoidant attachment style are significantly more prone to depression than those with secure attachments. Additionally, those with an angry-avoidant style experience heightened feelings of loneliness when compared to those with avoidant styles. The emotional toll of loneliness and vulnerability can significantly impact the perceived quality of life among the elderly, contributing to the often underestimated problem of depression [25].

Social support plays a pivotal role among the elderly, and while constant human companionship may not always be feasible, owning a pet can provide a simple yet effective means for elderly pet lovers to enhance their social interaction and receive support [49]. However, findings related to pet attachment yield surprising results, suggesting that the stronger the attachment to pet dogs among the elderly, the higher the rate of depression [49]. Notably, the type of pet owned by the elderly appears to contribute as a moderator between attachment and emotional disorders. For instance, Branson et al. [48] indicate that "Cat owners reported significantly lower levels of depressive symptoms than dog owners". This distinction may be attributed to cats' greater emotional independence, lower need for attachment maintenance, and reduced physical requirements from owners. Consequently, the type of pets owned by the elderly may serve as a significant moderator in the relationship between their attachment style and emotional disorders.

In summary, insecure attachment in the elderly, particularly the angry-avoidant style, emerges as a predictor of depression, potentially linked to its influence on acquiring or perceiving social support. Additionally, the intensity of attachment to pets, with the type of pets as moderators, may positively predict depression among the elderly.

3. Discussion

This paper explores the potential influence of insecure attachment on emotional disorders spanning from childhood to the elderly. The abundance of evidence gathered across various life stages establishes a clear positive correlation between insecure attachment and prevalent emotional disorders, notably depression and anxiety.

Insecure attachment, as discussed, manifests several detrimental effects on mental health, serving as a positive predictor of depression, loneliness, and anxiety across different age groups, from childhood to the elderly. Building on the understanding from the book "Attached," which posits that attachment styles persist throughout one's lifetime, previous research by Levine and Heller [50] suggests that altering attachment styles is challenging and often perceived as resistant to change. However, Hudson et al.'s [51] research introduces a promising perspective. They propose that individuals seeking to change their anxious or avoidant attachment styles can succeed through intentional efforts to reduce anxiety or avoidant behaviors. Success is attributed to aligning behaviors with personal desires and the strategy of "faking it until they make it." Despite these promising findings, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this experiment, which may not conclusively determine the effectiveness of voluntary change across different age groups.

Recognizing the perceived unalterability of attachment styles, future research directions may shift toward mitigating the negative effects through alternative avenues. Researchers advocate for a focus

on changing potential mediators, particularly those emphasized in this paper—emotional regulation and self-esteem. Emotional regulation emerges as a crucial mediator throughout the lifespan, notably in childhood and adulthood. Early family interactions, pivotal for emotional regulation development, offer a strategic intervention point to alleviate the adverse impacts of insecure attachment. Although the essay does not explicitly discuss infancy, it recognizes this period's foundational significance for attachment development and emotional regulation. According to Bowlby [52], early emotional interactions with infants significantly influence the development of their emotional regulation abilities. Caregivers who sensitively respond to infants' distress, engage in meaningful conversations about their feelings, and take responsibility for addressing their emotional needs contribute to the optimal development of emotional regulation. This insight underscores the importance of targeted interventions in early family interactions to foster emotional regulation and counteract the negative consequences of insecure attachment.

Then, active paternal involvement is recognized as a crucial factor for children. Fernandes et al. [32] underscore the paramount importance of paternal attachment in the development of emotional regulation, even exceeding that of maternal attachment. Additionally, Shenaar-Golan et al. [53] observed that paternal emotions, particularly negative ones such as sadness and anger, can positively predict the insecure father-child attachment, thereby forecasting challenges in children's emotional regulation and resulting in anxiety. This suggests that a father's emotional stability acts as a model for the child's ability to manage emotions. However, compared with a paternal role in childhood, Islamiah et al. [54] illustrate that "fathers' role in the development of child's ER is most prominent in infancy and toddlerhood". Future research should investigate the paternal role across different developmental stages, examining how its impact on children's emotional regulation varies with each developmental phase.

Transitioning to adulthood, it remains a great challenge to alter emotional regulation abilities. However, an intriguing finding suggests that music intervention holds promise in improving these skills. Music serves as a multifaceted tool, offering strategies for diversion, emotional discharge, solace, energization, relaxation, and more. For the elderly, Saarikallio's [55] research unveils the therapeutic potential of music in alleviating loneliness. Active participation in a choir, for instance, fosters social connections among the elderly. Additionally, the intertwining of music and emotions enables the elderly to reminisce about significant memories associated with specific songs. That is, "music was a way to increase strong emotions related to a first love in young adulthood, and served as an important means for alleviating loneliness through keeping up social connections among the elderly" [55].

The mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between insecure attachment and emotional disorders during adolescence is a crucial aspect. Marshall et al. [56] reveal a noteworthy finding regarding self-compassion's buffering effect on the detrimental impact of low self-esteem. This insight proposes that adolescents with low self-esteem can cultivate self-compassion, which "may help young people to respond effectively to self-doubt" [56]. Consequently, the enhancement of self-esteem emerges as a viable strategy to mitigate the adverse effects of insecure attachment on emotional disorders.

Reflective Functioning (RF), also known as mentalizing, presents itself as a potential mediating factor. Acknowledging its role in understanding one's own and others' behaviors and intentions [37,57], Tanzilli et al. [58] and Borelli et al. [38] suggest that RF may mediate the connection between secure attachment and psychological satisfaction. Additionally, Chevalier et al. [59] find that RF-self, the ability to be aware of, evaluate, and understand one's mental states, may positively predict depressive feelings in anxious youths. Further investigation can explore whether RF, including RF-self, serves as a potential mediator between insecure attachment and depression.

Attachments can intersect and exert complex influences on each other. Shepherd et al. [26] demonstrate that sibling attachment not only predicts future life satisfaction but also correlates with parental attachment. However, the relationship between sibling attachment as a potential moderator between parental attachment and subjective psychological well-being remains unexplored [26]. Future research should delve into the impact of sibling attachment on insecure parental attachment and its connection to emotional disorders. Moreover, limited research exists on prenatal and postnatal attachment, and their interrelation. Ongoing studies could provide more evidence on whether strong prenatal attachment acts as a protective factor for postnatal mother-child attachment relationships and subsequent child developmental outcomes [60]. In summary, recognizing that individual attachments do not operate in isolation, future research should aim to unravel the multivariate interactions among various attachment figures.

4. Conclusion

This essay delves into various facets of attachment, with a primary focus on parental attachment and occasional exploration of specific attachments in distinct life stages, such as peer attachment in adolescents and pet attachment in the elderly. Attachment, a dynamic construct, can exhibit whether secure or insecure manifestations across different relationships. Notably, insecure attachment emerges as a potential harbinger of harm, impacting individuals from childhood through their elderly years and potentially leading to emotional disorders. Addressing insecure attachment proves to be a challenging endeavor, prompting researchers to explore avenues for change. The complexity of this task suggests the need to redirect efforts towards modifying potential mediators, such as emotional regulation and self-esteem. Additionally, the exploration of reflective functioning, encompassing reflective functioning-self, could serve as a promising avenue for future research into potential mediator mechanisms. The intricate interplay of sibling attachment as a potential moderator for parental insecure attachment and subjective psychological satisfaction warrants further investigation. Similarly, the buffering role of prenatal attachment in shaping postnatal attachment dynamics requires careful consideration in future research endeavors.

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A Review of Research on Menstruation and Menstrual Leave

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Abstract: The trouble that menstruation brings to every woman has been an ongoing problem. As puberty begins, the problems associated with menstruation affect every woman all the time, and many of these problems are not solved. Ignorance of menstruation stigmatizes menstruation and exacerbates gender discrimination and women's shame around menstruation. Women need to bear the cost of expensive menstrual products every month, and this includes the high menstrual tax. Menstrual leave is not regulated by law around the world. Discomfort during menstruation also causes most women to experience problems such as low productivity or inability to complete work. This series of issues continue to plague most women and make women suffer from a lot of unfair treatment in society. This article helps people better understand menstruation and menstrual leave by introducing the inconvenience caused by menstruation, the stigmatization of menstruation and the laws proposed by different countries around the world on menstrual leave.

Keywords: PMS, menstruation, shame, price, menstrual leave

1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the gradual development of feminism and changes in society's perception of women's physiology, people can recognize more about the unfair treatment of women in the workplace and the impact of menstruation on women in the workplace and society. In this context, the idea of "menstrual leave" has been proposed on the basis of maternity leave. Some people believe that since women experience menstrual cramps, fatigue and back pain during menstruation, which can affect their work efficiency while they are not feeling well, menstruation leave should be provided to women on their physical condition to help them get through the physiological period in a better way. Others argue that many companies already refuse to take on female staff on the grounds that maternity leave leads to low productivity, that no one completes the work during maternity leave, and that menstruation leave may make it more difficult for women to work in the workplace.

This research will discuss the connection between menstruation and work in four ways. These are the negative impact of menstruation on work, how menstrual shame affects work, policies on menstrual leave, and people's attitudes and perceptions of menstrual leave. The negative impact of menstruation on work centers on low productivity due to menstrual exhaustion and the increasing cost of menstrual products such as pads and tampons, which are unaffordable for women. The negative impact of menstrual shame on work focuses on the inconvenience and harm that menstrual

shame causes to women, and the inequality in the workplace that menstrual shame and stigmatization bring. For menstrual leave, this research focused on how policies on menstrual leave vary from country to country. Different people have different views on menstrual leave. There are some people who believe that menstrual leave will better protect women's bodies and power, while others believe that menstrual leave will make the already tricky workplace even more difficult for women. This is the topic we need to discuss in this article.

2. How Menstruation Impacts Work

What is menstruation? Menstruation is divided into four cycles: the menstrual phase, the follicular phase, the ovulatory phase and the luteal phase. Moreover, before each cycle, many women experience premenstrual syndrome. Premenstrual syndrome can lead to anxiety and depression in women[1]. What is the menstrual period? The menstrual period refers to the shedding of the unfertilized uterine lining expelled from the vagina along with blood in response to a drop in progesterone and estrogen[1].

How does PMS affect work? A study shows that women often feel anxiety, irritability and anger before or during their periods. However, in reality, women's mood changes during menstruation are not much different than men's[1]. And for women, pain is more likely to be felt due to lower estrogen levels[1]. This phenomenon can also be found in Hardy's article. Through Hardy's article, it can be seen that women with moderate or more premenstrual syndrome are more likely to be absent[2]. However, in terms of performance at work, women with more than moderate PMS are no worse than men[2].

3. Expensive tampons

In addition to the inefficiencies associated with menstruation, expensive menstrual products are a major contributor to the increased burden on women. In Boyers' study, it was found that many women could not afford menstrual products such as pads and tampons, and that most of them chose to use socks or tissues instead[3]. Some women choose to steal or rob tampons from supermarkets because they cannot afford them[3]. Under such circumstances, there were also many unreasonable policies, such as the tampon tax. Under such circumstances, there were also many unreasonable policies, such as the tampon tax. The tampon tax is unreasonable and unequal. However, not many people in Cyprus are aware of the tampon tax, and many women are unable to fight against it even though they know it is unreasonable[4]. Although the tampon tax has been abolished in many developed countries, in other countries, it adds to the burden of women who cannot afford menstrual hygiene products.

For menstrual education is also one of the issues. In some non-developed countries, many women are not concerned about menstrual health and do not even know how to use tampons and sanitary pads. For example, in Tembo's survey, it was seen that many women in Zimbabwe were not aware that menstrual health needed attention and did not even know how to use tampons[5]. This was significantly improved after the MH intervention[5].

Women in Palestinian areas are also less knowledgeable about menstrual hygiene. Many women do not know how to use sanitary napkins. Through the survey, it was learned that women do not know to seek medical attention even if they have painful periods, usually use disposable pads instead of tampons, and lack knowledge about menstruation[6]. At the same time, the high cost of sanitary pads also contributes to women's low knowledge of menstruation in Palestinian areas.

4. Menstruation Shame

According to the article Men and Menstruation: A Qualitative Exploration of Beliefs, Attitudes and Experiences, we can see the male's view of menstruation. As a gender which does not need to

experience menstruation monthly, a lot of males do not have a concept of menstruation. As seen in the article, many times, women around men did not discuss menstruation in person. Most males learned about it through books or magazines[7]. And today, even though menstruation has been used as a topic that can be normally taken up and discussed, it is not something that is expected to be heard or learned about by men, and some males choose to avoid the topic[7]. Peranovic and as part of interpersonal interactions, some male will help their female partners with snacks, tampons, and hot water during menstruation[7] while others feel that women can be harsh and difficult to get along with during menstruation[7]. Through this article it can be understood that since men have never been taught specifics about menstruation and because men have never experienced menstruation, it is more of a vague concept for them.

Stereotypes about menstruation go beyond this. As written in Teachers' reflections on menstrual management among urban and rural schoolgirls in South Africa, many teachers (especially male teachers) will assume that female students are using menstruation to push back and that this annoys them[8]. Many male teachers feel uncomfortable, avoid and are not patient enough to deal with the menstrual problems experienced by their female students.

This can lead to another set of problems; for example, in the face of male teachers who avoid the issue of menstruation, many female students, for fear of being discriminated against or reprimanded, choose to hide some of the difficulties they experience because of menstruation[8]. In addition to this, some schools do not have clean women's restrooms and bathrooms, and they do not provide tampons and pads[8]. Contrary to men's beliefs, it was found that many female teachers are more willing to help their female students and encourage them to speak out about the difficulties they face during menstruation[8]. As women who are also experiencing or have experienced menstruation, female teachers will have more empathy and know how to help the girls.

As mentioned earlier, young girls are afraid and ashamed to talk about menstruation when the male superior holds the power of voice and avoids talking about menstruation. This is not a sudden consciousness. Menstrual shame is slowly cultivated by society. In the article Menstruation in India: Ideology, politics, and capitalism, The article mentions that if it was a male who was menstruating then people would not be ashamed of menstruation. And there are also a series of customs and myths in India that reinforce the shame of menstruation, such as women who are menstruating not being allowed to enter temples[9]. The article mentions that if it was a male who was menstruating then people would not be ashamed of menstruation. There are also a series of customs and myths in India that reinforce the shame of menstruation, such as women who are menstruating not being allowed to enter temples[9]. Through *Comprehending the Bleeding Body: Epistemological Violence and (Un)Tabooing Menstruation in Selective Media Texts in India* it is possible to know that as a country ruled by a heterosexual group of males country, menstruation is an excuse that can marginalize women. The notion that menstruation is shameful and dirty is set up for all through customs and legends, etc., and women's shame of menstruation is reinforced in everyday life by the use of black bags for sanitary napkins, etc. Although it began to promote that women should not be ashamed of menstruation, more often than not, the media will also create a male image that helps women get rid of menstrual shame and provides convenience to women[10]

In addition to this, menstrual shame has always plagued some lower-income sex workers. In the article *Feminism, Sexuality, Gender, Labour: Invisible Stigma of Sex Work and Menstrual Labour in India*, it is mentioned that apart from the stigmatization of menstruation in Indian religions, which is considered to be contamination, the red light districts, as a place prone to ambiguous violation of the place where many women would be forced to carry and even give birth. The problem of menstruation for women in red light districts is compounded by the fact that no one cares about hygiene and the stigmatization of red light districts double stigmatizes sex workers for their menstruation[11]. The prolonged use of unofficial contraceptives to delay menstruation or contraception in private causes

irreversible damage to sex workers' bodies, leading to menstrual disorders and even amenorrhea[11]. And these are the effects of the stigmatization of menstruation.

In addition to religion, statements such as women being emotionally irritable during menstruation stigmatize menstruation. As stated earlier, women experience the same emotional changes during menstruation as men[1]. This stigmatization makes women more susceptible to discrimination in the workplace, and women are more likely to be promoted because of the impression that comes with the stigma of menstruation.

5. Policy of Menstruation

Indonesian law allows for menstrual leave. Through discussion and continuous improvement, the labor law was amended in 2003 to stipulate that "workers who feel pain during menstruation and notify the entrepreneur are not obliged to go to work on the first and second day of menstruation"[12]. This has given more options to female workers, many of whom, as stated in the text, are engaged in the lowest paid labor. In this case, female workers can receive additional allowances if they choose to work overtime during their menstrual leave. The policy on menstrual leave is more of a negotiation between the entrepreneurs and the workers. Hence, there are cases where some entrepreneurs do not fulfill the policy properly[12].

Menstrual leave varies from place to place, and policies on menstrual leave were introduced one after another in many countries during the period 1922-1931, starting with the Soviet Union. This series of policies guaranteed female employees the right to take leave during pregnancy, childbirth and menstruation. Nevertheless, there were many obstacles to the enactment of menstrual leave. For example, the Japanese government considers menstruation to be a "preparation for pregnancy and childbirth" and therefore does not allow menstrual leave[13]. However, nowadays, except for some countries that have legislated and implemented menstrual leave, it is still controversial in many countries. Some believe that it is unfair to men, while others believe that menstrual leave reduces productivity[13]. And this is what people think about menstrual leave.

6. People's views on menstrual leave

As mentioned above, through social indoctrination and the avoidance of male superiors, many people will have a bad impression of menstruation and even be ashamed of it. Girls will be ashamed of it without saying anything, which leads to a series of difficulties during menstruation[8]. As for whether menstruation affects productivity, Argha did mention that there is no scientific way to prove that menstruation affects productivity, but it is more a matter of getting people to accept him by constantly inculcating this knowledge in them[10]. By stigmatizing menstruation and treating it as a disease, this force-fed perception not only shames women about menstruation, but also marginalizes women in the workplace[10]. People of different genders will have different views on this as far as the idea of menstrual leave is concerned. In the article Menstrual Leave at Workplace: Employees' point of view, Through the survey, it was found that men and women have similar answers to whether menstruation will affect work, and both believe that menstruation will affect women's work. At the same time, the vast majority of people think that menstrual leave is not fair to men. But at the same time, a small number of people think that menstrual leave does not provide any benefits for women[14]. Although men and women have similar views on this, and they also think that menstrual leave will affect women's work and is unfair to men, it can be seen from the results that in addition to most female employees and a few men who think it is unfair to men, which shows that some men do not support any policies that benefit women[14]. However, there is no specific concept or policy for menstrual leave in the article, which may make the answers filled in by the respondents less accurate for the respondents, thus affecting the results[14].

In the survey, it can be noticed that there is a difference between men and women in terms of how they feel about the pain level of menstruation. It is possible to understand women and support the policy. It also shows that women may not always want to opt for menstrual leave[15]. In the same way, as mentioned before, menstrual shame prevents women from discussing menstruation related topics in public.

7. Discussion

As an experience that only women can experience, menstruation has many limitations. Long-term menstrual stigma (menstruation is pollution; menstruation can cause women to become irritable, etc.) makes it more difficult for women in the workplace. From the previous literature, it can be seen that the prejudice brought about by menstrual stigma makes women more discriminated against in the workplace. As people living in a patriarchal society, male decision makers and leaders cannot truly feel the trouble caused by menstruation from the perspective of women. On the contrary, the stigma of menstruation can further oppress women's work and social status. But this is not the fault of menstruation and women. On the contrary, the relevant policies should be how to serve women, rather than being a tool to oppress women. While formulating menstrual leave, we should give more consideration to the interests of women themselves rather than whether men think it is fair. Tax policies such as cotton swabs tax and the pricing of swabs also reflect the phenomenon of gender inequality in a patriarchal society that cannot clearly understand menstruation. It is also essential to correct the stigma of menstruation. In addition to oppressing women, the stigma of menstruation also makes women ignore the knowledge of menstrual hygiene and menstrual diseases because they are ashamed to discuss menstruation, thus causing further harm to women's bodies.

8. Conclusion

Menstruation is a physiological phenomenon that average women experience once a month, accompanied by feelings that make women inconvenient or painful. Menstruation is not a kind of pollution, and menstruation will not make women more irritable and irritable. However, menstrual fatigue and anxiety do exist. Although women can also perform well at work, their efficiency will be reduced due to premenstrual syndrome and other reasons. To this end, menstrual leave should be a better service for women. Menstrual leave should also be put in place and consider women who need more allowances than holidays. If you choose to work overtime instead of menstrual leave, how to guarantee women's work income during menstrual leave also needs to be considered. Refusing to stigmatize menstruation can not only alleviate women's inequality in society and the workplace, but also better make more women realize the importance of menstrual hygiene and treat related diseases promptly.

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The Phenomenon and Case Analysis of "Tuku" Style

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Abstract: Since 2016, *Tuku* (土酷, outdated fashion) style has emerged in Chinese social media and the manifestation of it varies. On the basis of a case study on fashion brand, the aim of thesis was to explore and analysis *Tuku* style with the main focus on *Tuku* styles characters and their representation, including the origins and connotation of it. The thesis found that the appearance of *Tuku* style based on the change of urban and rural structure in China during the millennium, and it has three distinguish characters: localized, retro, rebellious.

Keywords: *Tuku* style, outdated fashion, fashion brand, Chinese rural youth

1. Introduction

In 2016, when the video blogger "Yang ya(养鸭, raise duck, real name Li Zhiyuan) posted a music video on Weibo titled "Too Cool To Be True", he may not have thought that this video would start to become popular on the internet, along with his creation of a fashion style called "*Tuku* means a old-fashioned style with strongly Chinese rural vibe. For a while, clothing styles and elements with the keyword *Tuku* began to frequently appear on major social media and online stores. *Tuku*, as its name implies, is a kind of "cool" with "unfashionable". It contrasts the inner spirit of coolness with the external image of "*Tu*(土, outdated)", and is an aesthetic taste based on local cultural confidence.

2. Overview of *Tuku*

2.1. The Origin of *Tuku*

Tuku refers to a down-to-earth aesthetic taste that looks very tacky, but gives people an inexplicable fashion sense. Essentially, *Tuku* is a retro style with a strong Chinese rural atmosphere. "The meaning of '*Tuku*' is 'too cool', it does not emphasize '*Tu*', but rather 'too (very) ', which is the highest level of cool." Li Zhiyuan, The founder of *Tuku* has put forward the above views on the internet.[1] Small town youth are the most responsive group in China's urbanization process, with a focus on new urban planning and adapting to new identities. Appearance transformation is an important step. They actively imitate city dwellers through their attire and appearance, in order to gain recognition and respect and align with mainstream culture. But they are not satisfied with the monotonous fashion in big cities, and are beginning to seek a dressing paradigm that can better showcase their identity and attitude. In China, the most typical example of this phenomenon is the "*Feizhuliu*(非主流, non-mainstream)" and "*Shamate*(杀马特, smart)" style that emerged around 2005.[2] The composition of

these two styles are mainly composed of small town youth who work in big city. They are far less educated than young people from big cities and grew up in an environment that relatively backward, and their appearance is often considered not exquisite and outstanding enough. Due to this sense of inferiority and in order to integrate into the city more quickly and be valued, they will deliberately imitate the attire of city dwellers and at the same time, put on strong makeup and tall, flashy, and brightly colored hairstyles to attract attention. *Feizhuliu* and *Shamate* are manifestations of physical consciousness, as well as a means to compensate for their innate shortcomings and attract attention. But mainstream aesthetics strongly dislike and even reject and despise the bizarre and quirky dressing styles of *Feizhuliu* and *Shamate*. Under the siege of mainstream culture, *Feizhuliu* and *Shamate* still showed a more rebellious attitude than before. The reason for the emergence of *Tuku* style is similar to that of *Feizhuliu* and *Shamate*. They tried to cater to and identify with mainstream culture, while also showing resistance to the mainstream. But ultimately, the root cause of this is still the unequal relationship between young people in small towns and those in big cities caused by differences in social structure.

2.2. The Connotation of *Tuku* Style

The expression of *Tuku* clothing style often appears in a surprising but familiar posture. Surprisingly, in the fashion world dominated by mainstream aesthetics, this deliberate rustic atmosphere is undoubtedly a bold rebellion against mainstream aesthetics. As a fashion style, *Tuku* emphasizes a diverse attitude through a combination of "Tu" and "cool" based on self identity confidence. This is a recognition of one's cultural background. At the same time, it is also a questioning of mainstream aesthetics. Contemporary youth should not be swayed by a single aesthetic dominated by mainstream culture. In the eyes of *Tuku* youth, accepting their own background and daring to interpret my identity in a self mocking and self entertaining way is the core of *Tuku*. [3]

3. The Characteristics of *Tuku* style

3.1. Retro *Tuku*

The core of the *Tuku* style is to showcase the spirit inside with the external out-of-date vibe. In the common *Tuku* attire, the essential element to make this *Tu* easy to read symbol is retro clothing. At the same time, retro clothing elements are also the most important part of rustic clothing in the *Tuku* fashion. Almost all "tacky" clothing styles revolve around the keywords retro, nostalgic, and outdated. For example, oversized suits that look like you've secretly rummaged through your father's wardrobe, low waisted denim jeans adorned with sequins and sparkling diamonds, or bulky and comical dad shoes and thick soled sponge shoes. *Tuku* may not necessarily equate to "retro", but to present *Tuku*, it is necessary to be "retro".

It is not difficult to find that retro, as the main element of *Tuku* style, runs through the entire clothing product line in the brand Toocoolll founded by Li Zhiyuan, the founder of *Tuku*. Models wear Cuban shirts, and modern photograph style distinguish them from true retro. This aesthetic taste caused by differences is also applied to the products of Chinese fashion brand UOOYAA. In UOOYAA's 2020 Spring/Summer ready to wear collection, UOOYAA combined the themes of Chinese women's volleyball and table tennis with the competition uniforms of Chinese athletes in the 1980s, designing a *Tuku* style sports set that is full of a sense of time but also modern.

Although the elements used in the practice of the *Tuku* style can correspond to the popular items of a certain era in the past, the public can still intuitively see their "new" and "cool" from the external "retro" and "rustic" when receiving this clothing style. One is reflected in the material, silhouette, design where "outdated" and "trendy" must be balanced in combination; The second is reflected in the attitude conveyed by the presentation of the overall design: deliberately exploring and practicing

old fashion. The *Tuku* clothing style strives to distance itself from the true retro while embezzling retro elements, it extracts valuable symbols from the past and uses contemporary aesthetic to design.



Figure 1: Toocoolll.[4]



Figure 2: UOOYAA.[5]

3.2. Rebellious *Tuku*

The rebellion of *Tuku* style stems from the intentional attitude towards *Tu* in *Tuku*. *Tuku* style not only incorporates retro clothing elements, but also adds a more playful and humorous aspect, which is specifically reflected in the exaggeration and emphasis on a outdated symbol in the *Tuku* style. The ultimate goal of *Tuku*'s rebellion is to embellish and exaggerate past popular symbols to achieve *Tuku*.

In 2020, on the eve of the Chinese traditional festival Qixi Festival, Balenciaga launched a poster of the Qixi series, but it caused controversy because it was too corny. Two models pose with bags in front of a rural poster. All of a sudden, the *Tuku* style also became a topic of discussion along with this poster of the strong style of low-cost Chinese studio, and the outdated elements that can be seen everywhere in our daily life were used without decoration. Although the combination of *Tuku* and luxury brands is really unexpected, but in the "not fashionable" packaging, Balenciaga through the *Tuku* style achieved more than expected publicity effect, although the industry reviews are mixed, but this *Tuku* style poster is undoubtedly a heavy blow to the mainstream aesthetic. The derogation of this by the mainstream media is a necessary process of the rebellious journey of the *Tuku*. Balenciaga pioneered *Tuku*'s style, suggesting that perhaps the fashion industry has long since tired of the excessive pursuit of image perfection in mainstream aesthetics.



Figure 3: Balenciaga 2020 Qixi poster.[6]

3.3. Localized *Tuku*

Through the analysis of *Tuku*'s style, it is not difficult to find that there is always an emphasis on a key word: background. Background refers to an individual's previous experiences or identity based on family background. It also includes the cultural influences and customs that an individual will soon experience or have already received based on this identity, and this identity must carry collective memory. From a micro perspective, one's background represents the identity bestowed upon them by personal experiences; From a macro perspective, origin represents your ethnicity, the city, township, village, or ethnic group you were born into. From a macro perspective, they all point to the ultimate belonging and a gene that cannot be altered in the blood, it accompanies and affects a lifetime. It is closely related to the background of the practitioners, and it is individual, as well as belonging to society and the collective. Therefore, *Tuku* must be a localized and down-to-earth. Themed "Home coming", Chinese fashion brand marknull's Fall/Winter 2020 collection presents the Spring Festival homecoming plot familiar to all Chinese in *Tuku* style. In this series of looks, the model wears a motorcycle helmet and carries a woven bag, standing in front of a screen with a picture of the Chinese countryside, like a migrant worker riding home on a motorcycle to celebrate the Chinese Spring Festival. The collection references clothing and apparel popular among rural youth in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as wide-sleeved bomber jackets, belts and socks decorated with bright diamonds, transparent high heels in fluorescent colors, and even common posters of rural families printed directly on tight T-shirts as patterns. These elements are outdated and outdated in the mainstream aesthetic, but these outdated elements precisely constitute an important part of the homecoming scene. The product of the combination of local culture and foreign culture has also become a concrete symbol representing the cultural spirit, growth experience and values of a person or a nation.



Figure 4: Marrknull "Home Coming" collection.[7]

4. Case Analysis of *Tuku* Style

4.1. Gosha Rubchinskiy

Gosha Rubchinskiy was founded by designer Gosha Rubchinskiy in 2008 and is a men's fashion brand located in Moscow, Russia. Having experienced the turbulent period of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, his works were largely influenced by the culture of his homeland, especially the culture of the working class youth. Rubinsky once admitted that the works he presented were actually the young people he often saw on the streets and alleys before and after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in his memory. Most of the clothing he designed was inspired by sportswear styles, featuring rough cut clothing and unique color palettes, while also featuring the colors of Russian script and flag (i.e. white, blue, and red).

At Gosha Rubchinskiy's runway, male models with buzz cut dressed in neat shirts and straight pants, old-fashioned sports vests and shorts, all with their tops tucked into their pants. "This is the typical attire of a Russian youth," Gosha Rubins said in an interview with Vogue magazine. In Gosha Rubchinskiy's works, we can always intuitively feel a Soviet style coldness and solemnity, which is generated by the two-way interaction between clothing and people, and becomes even stronger with the blessing of a sense of time. Designer Gosha Rubchinskiy incorporate familiar elements (newsboy hats, 80s style sportswear sets, and the old-fashioned way of tucking tops into pants) into his designs. Simple shapes, simple patterns, and bright but not flashy colors form the main image of Gosha Rubchinskiy's design. Gosha Rubchinsky recreated the appearance of young people who had grown up under the institutionalization of the Soviet era in a thought-provoking way, while the outdated fashion based on clothing form replaced language to reveal a wider range of connotation and more modern design methods. This is a style that combines inclusivity and cunning and also where Gosha Rubchinskiy's cool lies.



Figure 5: Gosha Rubchinskiy.[8]

4.2. Li Ning

In recent years, "*China-Chic*(国潮)" has become a trend of the new generation with the rise of street youth cultures, such as rap culture and hip-hop culture. "*China-Chic*" means the combination of "*Guo*(国, China)" and "*Chao*(潮, Fashion)". "*Guo*" represents both China and traditional Chinese culture, while "*Chao*" represents a fashion trend in clothing and consumption. The characteristic of *China-Chic* is that it should not only retain and carry forward the Chinese characteristics, but also conform to the aesthetic that conforms to the characteristics of the times. And on the basis of local cultural confidence, we will organically combine Chinese with global, learn from each other's strengths. In 2018, Chinese sportswear brand Li Ning made its debut at New York Fashion Week and released Li Ning's "*Wudao*(悟道)" series, which sparked heated discussions among Chinese people. Subsequently, Li Ning walked onto the runway of Paris Fashion Week. The old-fashioned Li Ning in the impression of Chinese in the past has become a brand new Li Ning, which is full of cool but does not lose the national brand background.

Li Ning's appearance in China made the term *China-Chic* known to the public. In essence, *China-Chic* and *Tuku* have an inseparable relationship: they are also based on the local culture and self-identification of the identity and confidence, and the style of *China-Chic* clothing and *Tuku* can not be separated from the use of retro elements, *Tuku* is also an important way to create *China-Chic*. It can be seen that Li Ning's return is actually a phenomenon of revival, with a strong retro style. In the 2018 New York Fashion Week runway, Li Ning uses symbols such as "中国(China)", "李宁(Li Ning)", "体操王子(Gymnastics Prince)" as the carrier of Chinese characteristics and brand heritage,

and takes text and images as the most direct visual presentation in clothing design, which is the common design technique of Chinese cultural shirts. At the same time, Li Ning turned his experience as a former gymnast into a symbol[8], incorporating the style and shape of the uniforms of the Chinese gymnastics team and the classic red and yellow color scheme of the Chinese national team into street-style clothing. Through the excavation of local culture, Li Ning transformed abstract emotions and collective memories into concrete text patterns, and combined them with the style of street sports to achieve the integration and unity of "outdated" expression techniques and "cool" clothing forms.



Figure 6: Li Ning 2018 men's wear.[9]

4.3. Hu die gong zhu(Princess Butterfly)

From rural area to cities, in the process of urbanization, Chinese town youth who have extensive access to the Internet due to the high popularity of mobile terminal devices are the most sensitive group to fashion in the process of urban-rural integration. They are worn-out and flow upward with the smell of soil between agriculture and forestry, and construct the "unfashionable Babel" in the virtual social space[10]. The "unfashionable fashion" represented by *Tuku* style exists as the spiritual externalization of "local" in the construction of "unfashionable Babel Tower". *Hu die gong zhu*(蝴蝶公主, Princess Butterfly), a fashion brand founded by the Chinese influencer *Hu die gong zhu*, which is popular on Chinese social media due to its exaggerated color scheme and extremely outdated design, and has a certain number of followers among the youth group. The culmination of the aesthetics of vulgarity and elegance in its design, as well as the collision between the straightforward and ambiguous signifiers in clothing, the color schemes filled with high saturation colors, In its design, it often uses Chinese rural and landscape scenery as patterns, and chooses to present Chinese calligraphy through embroidery in clothing craftsmanship. We can accurately appreciate their core, which includes both collective memories and personal experiences. At the aspect of signifier, the design of *Hu die gong zhu* conforms to the aesthetic paradigm of *Tuku*'s style. The *Tuku* practiced by clothing brands will eventually be incorporated and transformed into tangible products into a new model of *Tuku* style in China.



Figure 7: *Hu die gong zhu*. [11]

5. Conclusions

This thesis analyzed the origin, definition and connotation of *Tuku* style, and concludes that the characteristics of *Tuku* style are retro, localized and rebellious through case analysis. In the context of China's rural urbanization, young people from small towns began to actively approach the mainstream culture in dress and appearance, and the outdated elements they displayed while approaching the mainstream were transformed into deliberate *Tuku*, which resisted the mainstream aesthetics with its difference between the countryside and the trend. The emphasis on collective memory, individual identity and local culture in its stylistic elements also resonates with the public to a certain extent. The essence of *Tuku* is a high degree of confidence in the local culture. *Tuku*'s "Tu" corresponds to "local culture" and "cool" corresponds to an international perspective. The organic combination of the two creates a unique style.

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Analysis of the Development Trajectory of Marx's Historical Philosophy

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Abstract: In his early years, Marx, inspired by Hegel, believed that history is a process of dynamic evolution. Therefore, he also paid attention to the replacement of social forms and the differences in social forms among different ethnic groups. While Hegel believed that the driving force of historical progress lies in “spirit,” Marx focused more on the role of “material” in it. Thus, in his theories of social forms and world history, Marx emphasized the historical progress brought about by changes in the mode of production. Based on this, Marx expounded his views on the evolution of social forms and the development status and prospects of world history. He consistently held a “equality” political inclination and continued to pay attention to the oppression suffered by backward nations. This paper summarizes Marx’s social form theory, world history theory, and his related discussions on backward nations in his historical philosophy. It outlines the global perspective from the internal social evolution of nations to the coordinated development of the world, and then to Marx’s humanitarian care for backward nations.

Keywords: Marx’s historical philosophy, social forms, world history, backward nations

1. Introduction

The question of how to interpret history has been a subject of diverse philosophical inquiries, encompassing debates on whether history is objective or subjective, whether it is subject to change, where the driving force of historical change originates, and what forms historical change takes. Marx inherited Hegel’s notion that history is objective and subject to change. While there is little disagreement regarding Hegel’s division of historical stages based on social forms, Marx differed in the criteria for such divisions, asserting from a materialistic standpoint that the driving force behind the evolution of social forms lies in the productive forces and relations of production. Building upon this foundation, Marx formulated his own historical philosophy, redefining different historical periods based on modes of production. Concurrently, Marx observed that the evolution of social forms in the capitalist era is no longer confined within the boundaries of individual nations or states. Instead, with the expansion of capitalism, different nations evolve collectively within the global context. Marx posited that human history would transition from the histories of different nations to world history. Within the backdrop of world history, the relationship between advanced and backward countries necessitates scrutiny, as Marx noted the oppressed status of backward nations within the international order, expressing concern over this issue. Thus, the theories of social forms, world history, and the

attention given to backward nations constitute the three components of Marx's historical philosophy.

2. Marx's Theory of Social Forms

Marx divided social forms into different periods throughout his lifetime. In "The German Ideology," Marx analyzed the forms of ownership in European history, delineating tribal ownership, ancient communal ownership, state ownership, and feudal or hierarchical ownership. In the early 1850s, Marx turned his attention to the "Asiatic mode of production," considering it as a distinct form of Asian society. In the "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" published in 1859, Marx pointed out from the perspective of productive forces and relations of production: "Broadly speaking, the Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois modes of production can be viewed as several stages in the economic formation of society." [1] At this time, Marx regarded the Asiatic mode of production as a form universally experienced by humanity. However, after studying ancient anthropological works, he concluded in 1881 that the Asiatic mode of production represented the final stage of primitive commune. In 1884, Engels recognized in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" that the clan commune was the initial form of human society. Apart from delineating social forms from a socio-economic perspective, Marx also categorized them based on the degree of human emancipation into relationships of human dependence, material dependence, and the full development of human freedom in the "Economic Manuscripts of 1857–1858." In the "Critique of the Gotha Program," Marx divided communist society into first-stage and advanced-stage based on whether it "transcends the narrow confines of bourgeois rights."

Marx studied the relationship in the evolution of social forms. Concerning the driving force behind the evolution of social forms, Marx continuously refined his theory of explaining social forms through productive forces and relations of production in his works, arguing that the development of productive forces is the driving force behind the evolution of social forms. In his later years, Engels developed a new understanding of the driving force behind the evolution of social forms, emphasizing the significant role of human production in the development of prehistoric societies and highlighting the profound impact of non-production factors on humanity's transition from the primitive commune stage. Regarding the sequence of evolution of social forms, many scholars have summarized various theories based on Marx's discourse, including the "Five-Form Theory," "Three-Form Theory," and "Two-Form Theory." These theories mainly illustrate the stages of the evolution of social forms from different perspectives, representing different aspects of the same process. Among them, the "Five-Form Theory" has had the most profound influence, primarily based on Marx's view in the "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" that the Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois modes of production represent several stages in the evolution of social forms, along with the future communist society, forming a linear path of five stages of social form evolution. However, such a path of the evolution of social forms is confined to the historical experience of Western Europe, and its universality has not been tested in other societal regions. Whether it is the mode of production in Asia, the slavery system in ancient Greece and Rome, or the feudal system in Germanic societies, they all originated from the primitive commune. When the Germanic primitive commune conquered Rome, it merged with the Roman social structure to form feudalism. The sequential order in time does not necessarily imply the universality of the transition between the slave system and feudalism. Marx pointed out in the "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Manuscripts of 1857–1858)" that the Asiatic mode of production, ancient Greek slavery, and Germanic feudalism all retained the form of the commune, with differences lying in the proportion between commune and private ownership, determined by the circumstances of the tribe's transition from the primitive commune to secondary forms, as well as changes triggered by geographical and climatic conditions, and relations with other tribes or civilizations.

According to Marx's theory of social forms, the primitive commune is a social form that all nations

must pass through. Different tribes, emerging from the primitive state, exhibit diversity due to various internal and external factors. “Secondary forms include a series of societies based on slavery and serfdom” [2]. Marx listed three social forms: ancient Greek slavery, Germanic feudalism in Europe, and the Asiatic mode of production in Asia. The Asiatic mode of production is a special stage that marks the transition from the primitive to the secondary form, characterized by the shift from communal ownership to private ownership [2]. Due to Marx’s cultural background, his analysis of ancient Greek slavery and Germanic feudalism is specific to particular ethnicities. However, the Asiatic mode of production encompasses a wide range, and Marx could only provide a general overview based on available materials. In reality, Eastern societies not only exhibit differences in social forms among different ethnic groups but also vary within ethnic groups over time. Consequently, the evolution of specific social forms for each nation or region after the primitive commune follows a chronological order rooted in internal ethnic laws, but it does not possess absolute universality. However, Marx initially believed that entering modern society had only one path, capitalism, viewing the transition of various nations into capitalism as an “iron necessity.”

Regarding the relationship between “modern society” and “capitalist society,” Marx, in his early works, largely equated modern society with capitalist society. “Modern” here does not imply a temporal sense but rather a conceptual one concerning the development of productive forces and relations of production, with communism corresponding to the “future.” In the “Preface to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law,” Marx referred to England and France as “modern states,” while Germany was labeled as an “unfinished modern state.” Throughout Marx’s numerous works, such as “The Administrative Reform Association—The People’s Charter,” “Letter to P. V. Annenkov,” “The Communist Manifesto,” and “Capital,” he frequently employed concepts like “modern society,” “modern division of labor,” “modern industry,” and “modern mode of production,” treating “modern” as synonymous with “capitalist.” Engels, in “Principles of Communism,” also used “modern society” to refer to “capitalist society.” In the “Critique of the Gotha Program,” Marx explicitly stated, “‘Modern society’ is the capitalist society existing in all civilized countries,” [2] though the specific “modern state systems” vary. During Marx’s era, “modern society” predominantly referred to Western European capitalist societies. Marx believed that “the more advanced countries show the less advanced the image of their own future,” [3] implying that only Western European capitalist society represented the form of “modern society.” Given that the potential space for the form of “modern society” had not been fully explored during Marx’s time, it was reasonable to equate “modern society” with “capitalist society.”

“Modern society” emerged intrinsically in the feudal system of Western Europe as a capitalist social form, radiating outward with Western Europe at its core. According to Marx’s conception in “The Communist Manifesto,” under the invasion of Western European capitalism, other ethnicities would also enter modern society in the capitalist form. “It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production” [1]. Thus, the issue of “modernization” becomes a matter of “capitalization,” entering “modern society” is tantamount to entering “capitalist society,” and achieving modernization must be through the development of capitalism. In his later years, Marx attempted to break through this conception, which has been proven correct in the course of development. If we understand “modern society” as a commodity society that has achieved political liberation on the basis of industrial civilization, then the fact proves that modernization does not equal capitalism, let alone Westernization. As human society moves away from the primitive forms into the diversified “ancient” secondary forms, how will the diversification be represented as human society moves away from the “ancient” and into the “modern”? According to the mode of material production, Marx in the “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Manuscripts of 1857–1858)” believed that the difference between ancient Greek slavery, Germanic feudalism, and the Asiatic mode of production lies in the proportion of “public” and “private” ownership in society. Therefore,

considering the mode of material production, whether “modern society,” until it returns to the fully public ownership of the “future” communist society, can also be classified based on the proportion of “public” and “private” ownership of the means of production is open to debate.

3. Marx's Theory of World History

Marx inherited and critiqued Hegel's theory of world history. Hegel in “Philosophy of History” suggested: “World history moves from the ‘Orient’ to the ‘Occident,’ where Europe represents the absolute endpoint of history, and Asia, the starting point.” [4] “World history” in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere moves from the “Orient” to the “Occident” and gradually progresses “towards freedom,” as “world history” is about “making the unbridled natural will subject to universal principles, achieving subjective freedom.” [4] According to Hegel, as the “universal spirit” moves from the “Orient” to the “Occident,” it leaves different imprints in various regions along the way. The “despotic regimes” of the East, the “democratic and aristocratic regimes” of ancient Greece and Rome, and the “monarchical regimes” of the Germanic world correspond respectively to the childhood, youth, and old age of “world history.” Additionally, Hegel believed that “world history” would begin its future in North America. Hegel used geographical environments and different stages of the movement of the “universal spirit” to explain the differences in the development of various nations. In Hegel's view, the unfolding of “world history” is mediated by spatial-temporal relations. Marx agreed that world history is a collection of nations at different stages of development and different social forms, but he opposed explaining differences between nations using the movement of the spirit and using spiritual development to explain social development. In the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,” Marx mentioned: “The so-called world history is nothing but the process of man's birth through man's labor” [2], emphasizing “history” rather than “world.” In “The German Ideology,” Marx truly introduced “world history,” believing that “world history” is the result of the development of productive forces that increasingly connect various parts of the world, establishing “the world-historical existence of individuals, that is, the existence of individuals directly linked to world history.” [5] At the same time, Marx stated that communism must be established on the significance of “world history,” as “every nation depends on the transformation of other nations” [5]. Marx's “world history” refers to the formation of an increasingly unified global community, as the modernizing force of Western European capitalism expands outward, establishing a common historical stage for every region and every individual worldwide.

The Globalization and Modernization Nature of “World History”. Marx pointed out that during the bourgeois historical period, the inception of “world history” bore the dual mission of fostering “universal exchange based on mutual trust among all humanity” and “developing human productivity.” “World history” exhibits a globalization nature as the global trade and division of labor, spearheaded by Western Europe, integrate every part of the world, rendering every individual not isolated but engaged in universal exchanges. With the advancement of maritime and overland trade, the establishment of ports in coastal areas, and the interconnectedness facilitated by railways, every piece of land is intricately linked, breaking the previous isolation of various ethnic groups. Raw materials and products from each region are not only supplied locally but also exported overseas. Moreover, “world history” possesses a modernization aspect, where the outward expansion of modern civilization from Western Europe disseminates advanced productivity worldwide. The extent of “world history” formation correlates with the degree of modern civilization dissemination. On one hand, the bourgeoisie, aiming to acquire raw materials from underdeveloped regions and expand their sales, constructs infrastructure and factories in these areas, thus promoting a certain level of modernization. On the other hand, modern ideas are introduced to various regions, instilling a consciousness of modernization among the populace. Given that “the establishment of new industries has become a vital issue for all civilized nations” [1], under the dual demands of internal and external

factors, regions and ethnic groups worldwide are undertaking their respective explorations of modernization. Only through the enhancement of productivity in each region can “universal exchanges among people be established,” breaking the old pattern of ethnic division of labor, and fostering closer ties between each region’s modernization and the rest of the world, thereby making history more truly “world history.”

The Capital Logic and National Logic of “World History”. The unfolding of “world history” is propelled by the modernization of capitalism civilization, where the logic of capital is the generated logic, and the driving force behind the formation of world history comes from the pursuit of profit by capital. The bourgeoisie’s promotion of the formation of “world history,” uniting all humanity into a unified whole and dragging them into the process of modernization, is not motivated by “good intentions” but merely serves as “the unconscious tool of history.” The logic of capital dictates that the resulting “world history” is inevitably a scene of exploitation; the more universal interaction forms, the more individuals are placed under the logic of capital, leading to direct and thorough exploitation of each individual. Meanwhile, the bourgeoisie expands outward using the nation-state as a tool. Capital and the state apparatus are deeply intertwined, and the “modern state power is nothing but the managing committee of the entire bourgeoisie” [1]. This determines that the modernization level of each nation is not merely a matter of the chronological order of exposure to modern civilization; the bourgeoisie of each nation will prioritize the development of their own nation, and the global division of labor among nations will be determined by the bourgeoisie of advanced nations. Consequently, the formation of “world history” not only gives rise to the phenomenon of “propertyless” masses in all nations, with the proletariat becoming the majority opposing the bourgeois world but also utilizes the oppression of backward nations by advanced nations as its shell, “subordinating the peasant nations to the bourgeois nations, and the East to the West” [1], creating a nested hierarchy of exploitation relationships between individuals under the guise of national hierarchy, thus gradually awakening “national consciousness” even among backward nations. The formation of “world history” gives rise to contradictions between the global proletariat and bourgeoisie and between advanced and oppressed nations. The capital logic of “world history” is wrapped in national logic, making “national liberation” an essential aspect of “human liberation.”

Marx and Engels believed that the realization of communism is premised on “world history,” which is based on “the universal development of productive forces and the associated global interaction” [5]. They also believed that only when the dominant nations revolutionize successfully simultaneously can communism be realized, thereby controlling “world history,” at which point “world history” is in its complete form. Although bourgeois nation-states are “false communities,” and on an ideal level, “the proletariat has no country,” the logic of capitalist expansion does create factual national inequalities. Meanwhile, “nationalism” serves as a tool for uniting the proletariats of each nation and is widely promoted in education. “Once the theory is grasped by the masses, it becomes a material force,” and proletariats of each nation come to identify with having their own homeland as a reality. The oppressed nature of the proletariat in advanced nations under the logic of capital is obscured by the domination of foreign nations under national logic, and the proletariat has not yet become the majority in backward nations. Therefore, the driving force for the realization of communism seems to be found among the victims under the national logic of “world history.” The communist movement fights through backward nations in the form of nationalism, and it can be foreseen that the independent movements of backward nations will use socialism to oppose the dominance of Western capitalism.

4. Marx’s Attention to Backward Nations

Marxism, known as the “science of human liberation,” has naturally focused on the interests of the oppressed since its inception. Against the backdrop of capitalism, Marxism pays special attention to

the proletariat, who are both oppressed and carriers of revolutionary movements. However, Marx did not overlook the suffering endured by non-Western nations that had not yet undergone modernization. In the 1850s and 1860s, due to a series of imperialist aggression and oppression events, Marx paid considerable attention to China and India, penning works such as “The Chinese Revolution and the European Revolution,” “Russian Trade with China,” “The Atrocities of the English in China,” “Persia and China,” “The History of the Opium Trade,” and “The British Rule in India.” In these works, Marx not only condemned the oppressive behavior of countries like Britain and Russia but also theoretically analyzed the impact of such actions. In “The Chinese Revolution and the European Revolution,” Marx proposed the idea of “the interconnection of the two extremes,” suggesting that the impact of the Taiping Rebellion in backward China could lead to a revolution in developed England. Marx linked the fate of developed nations with the uprisings of backward nations, laying the foundation for exploring the development paths of backward nations and the effects on developed nations in the context of their interaction. At this time, Marx believed that the uprising in ancient China, under the onslaught of British capitalists, would lead to the establishment of a “Chinese Republic - freedom, equality, and fraternity,” akin to a bourgeois republic. He also suggested that “Chinese socialism vis-à-vis European socialism might be akin to Chinese philosophy compared to Hegelian philosophy” [6]. In summary, Marx’s attention to backward nations during this period focused more on their receptivity to external forces rather than their agency, primarily discussing their vulnerability to the impacts of capitalism.

Marx paid considerable attention to anthropology in his later years, aiming to explore early human social forms and further refine the materialist conception of history. In the 1870s and 1880s, he read numerous anthropological works and made extensive summaries. The works Marx studied were based on primitive tribes that still existed at the time, including Kovalevsky’s “The Communal Land Ownership and its Disintegration,” Morgan’s “Ancient Society,” and Lubbock’s “The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man.” Marx and Engels devoted a great deal of effort to Morgan’s “Ancient Society.” Engels remarked, “In America, Morgan has discovered in his own way what Marx discovered 40 years ago—dialectical materialism in history” [7]. Engels utilized Marx’s summaries of “Ancient Society” to write “The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State,” which deeply analyzed the social forms of primitive tribes. In his “Historical Notes,” Marx further elucidated the social development process of pre-capitalist Europe. These studies laid the groundwork for exploring the social development paths of backward nations.

In Marx’s era, and even today, many tribes still remain in a primitive social state without developing into more advanced social forms, indicating that social development is not necessarily inevitable, or that there is a universal timeframe for the transition of social forms. Marx pointed out, “No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society” [1]. Due to various reasons such as nature, internal conditions, and relations with other tribes, some tribes with long-standing stagnant development of productive forces remain in a primitive society. The “maturing in the womb of the old society” that Marx mentioned refers to endogenous evolution of social forms, but this condition may not necessarily apply to exogenous evolution of social forms after entering “world history.” The phenomenon of “direct passage nations” from primitive tribes to modern society is universally observed. Therefore, this “maturing” of material conditions can be externally transplanted into the embryo of the old society, rather than necessarily being endogenously matured. However, the “world history” that unites humanity as a whole may become a new vast “embryo of the old society.”

5. Conclusion

In summary, Marx’s philosophy of history still offers vast research space today. The evolution of

social forms brought about by technology, the increasing closeness of global interactions leading to both conflict and cooperation, and the survival and development issues of backward nations under the current order, are all significant topics worth attention. Marx provides perspectives on examining social development from both technological and social relationship angles. He believes that social development, the fusion of the world, and the prospect of backward nations breaking free from oppression are inevitable. At the same time, he believes that progress in any society depends on technological innovation and reshaping of social structures, providing valuable theoretical references for the development and international cooperation of countries today.

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Analysis of the Pros and Cons of ChatGPT for College Paper Writing

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Abstract: Chat GPT is a chatbot system that utilizes natural language processing and deep learning technologies to mimic human discussions, potentially reaching or exceeding human intelligence. Recently, Chat GPT has shown significant advancements in various areas, particularly in natural language comprehension, automated question answering, and intelligent customer support, demonstrating promising possibilities. As Chat GPT technology advances and becomes popularity, there are concerns over whether it may bring an end to traditional university essays. This study utilizes a questionnaire-based research methodology to examine the advantages and disadvantages of including ChatGPT in the dissertation writing process for university students. The study seeks to investigate the variables affecting students' inclination to utilize these items, including gender, age, field of study, and prior exposure to comparable products, as well as the potential repercussions on academic integrity.

Keywords: Chat GPT, Artificial Intelligence, Educational Innovation and Reform, Academic Integrity

1. Introduction

Open AI released its AI chat model, Chat GPT, in November 2022, generating significant excitement across several industries. AI-powered educational tools of various types and sizes have become more common in recent years as digital education has been embraced. Chat GPT has emerged as a highly impactful product in the field of education because of its capacity to offer a customized and focused learning experience. ChatGPT is a language model designed for generating conversations. It can produce suitable responses by analyzing the user's text input. Due to its robust generating capacity and adaptability, it quickly became highly desired by many individuals upon its release. As the conversation progressed, individuals transitioned from discussing initial novelties to covering a wide range of topics within the industry, with a particular focus on the education sector [1-2].

An investigation is needed to examine the role of Chat GPTs in higher education due to the varied feedback from the academic research community and the lack of research on students' inclination to utilize them. This study utilizes a questionnaire-based research methodology to examine the advantages and disadvantages of including ChatGPTs in the dissertation writing process for university students. The study intends to investigate the characteristics affecting students' inclination to utilize these items, including gender, age, major, and prior experience with comparable products, along with the potential implications for academic integrity.

2. Methodology

A questionnaire was used as the research approach for this particular publication. 100 people participated in the survey, and 100 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire was disseminated on August 20 for three days, and it was collected on August 23. The total number of people that participated in the survey was 100. For the purpose of ensuring that the information is both comprehensive and accurate, the majority of the questionnaire samples were selected from students who were enrolled in universities. The questions were centered on ten different dimensions, which included personal information, understanding and exposure, usage, challenges of use, academic integrity, future outlook, sources of information, suggestions and perceptions, and feedback.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1. Age and gender of students

The first part of the questionnaire inquired about the age and gender of the participants. According to the data, out of a total of 100 respondents, 32% of the participants were below 20 years old (32 participants); 39% were between 21-25 years old (39 participants); 14% were between 26-30 years old (14 participants); and 15% were between 31-35 years old (15 participants). This suggests that there is a preponderance of young people using Chat GPT, as they have more scenarios to generate demand for its use, and have better accessibility and more exposure, and greater technological proficiency and digital literacy than other age groups. It is important to note that while there is a higher proportion of young people in this sample, it is not representative of the age distribution of all those using Chat GPT. Chat GPT is a widely used technology, and people of all ages are likely to use it, with specific usage varying according to individual needs and backgrounds. Next is the gender of the participants. The data provided shows that of the respondents, 69% were male (69 participants) and 31% were female (31 participants). So there is a male bias in the survey sample. This reflects the composition of the participants and the gender factor needs to be taken into account when analyzing the results of the survey.

3.2. Students' use of Chat GPT in academic projects and writing

The second section of the questionnaire asked participants how often they used Chat GPT in their dissertation writing. The number of frequent and frequent users of Chat GPT amounted to 77% (77 participants), while the number of never and seldom users of Chat GPT was 13% (13 participants). This then suggests that the majority of people in this sample have a positive attitude towards the use of this natural language processing tool and are willing to use it in a variety of situations. This may reflect the usefulness of Chat GPT in some specific domains or tasks and the general acceptance of this technology. However, it is important to note that this is still only a sample data and is not representative of the attitudes and behaviors of the population as a whole. The attitudes and frequency of Chat GPT use may vary depending on a variety of factors such as region, culture, age, occupation, and so on. Therefore, a combination of factors needs to be considered for the popularity and impact of Chat GPT, and more extensive research may be needed to fully understand its use in different areas and populations.

In question three, participants were asked to express their views on whether the use of ChatGPT in the dissertation writing process had a positive effect. Of all the respondents, 39% strongly believed that Chat GPT has a clear positive effect in helping with dissertation writing, and 31% agreed that Chat GPT has a more significant positive effect. Meanwhile, 14% of the participants were neutral and 5% disagreed with the statement.

The results suggest that a significant proportion of respondents believe that ChatGPT and related generative AI products have a positive impact on their learning process. This may be due to the fact that these products can quickly generate answers to their queries, help them complete their assignments, and provide them with new insights and perspectives. However, some participants may have had reservations about using these products, mostly probably because they believed that writing with Chat GPT would result in students lacking the ability to think on their own. Overall, the majority of participants felt that these AI products could have a positive impact on their learning, which may indicate that students are increasingly embracing AI-based educational tools.

3.3. Students' perceptions of the relationship between Chat GPT and academic papers

The fourth question explored participants' perceptions of whether the use of ChatGPT impacts on leading to academic integrity. The results of the survey showed that 44% of the participants believed that it was not at all, 38% believed that it was somewhat not, and notably none of the participants believed that Chat GPT was fully compatible with academic integrity, and a very small number believed that Chat GPT was largely compatible with academic integrity, which suggests that the majority of the students had concerns about the academic moral and ethical relationship that Chat GPT entailed.

The results indicated that more than half of the participants believed that the use of these AI products could lead to academic integrity issues because these AI products could generate text very similar to manually written text, thus making plagiarism by students covert. Additionally, these AI products may be more readily available and easier to use than traditional plagiarism detection software, making it more difficult for instructors and professors to catch instances of plagiarism.

3.4. Extent to which students search for information through Chat GPT

The fifth question explored whether participants were able to access information about Chat GPT through easy and quick access in the process of understanding and learning about it. The majority of participants did not have a very positive experience with accessing information about Chat GPT through convenient and quick means. Forty-two percent (42%) said they were not fully compliant and 40% said they were somewhat compliant. Only a minority felt that they were able to fully comply (1%) or mostly comply (7%) with this requirement. This may reflect the fact that a portion of this sample may not find access to Chat GPT-related information convenient or fast enough, or they may be skeptical about the reliability and quality of this information. Chat GPT is a field that involves complex technologies such as artificial intelligence and natural language processing, so it may require more background knowledge and resources to understand it.

Table 1: Regression statistics on whether students identify with Chat GPT or not

Regression statistics	
Multiple R	0.780406
R Square	0.609034
Adjusted R Square	0.555108
Standard Error	0.625273
Observed Value	100

Table 2: Variance results of regression statistics on whether students identify with Chat GPT or not

Variance results					
	df	SS	MS	F	SignificanceF

Table 2: (continued)

Regression analysis	12	52.98598	4.415498	11.29382	2.95E-13
Residuals	87	34.01402	0.390966		
Total	99	87			

In order to increase understanding of Chat GPT, more education and resources may be needed to ensure that people can easily access accurate information about its potential and limitations in order to better utilize the technology.

4. Regression Analysis and Discussion

Taken together, the results of this ANOVA indicate that the regression analysis factors have a significant effect on the dependent variable because the significance level of the F-statistic is very close to zero, which is much lower than the usual significance level (e.g., 0.05). This means that the regression analysis factors have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 3: *P Value Analysis

	P Value	Significance
Q1	0.527958	No
Q2	0.966221	No
Q3	0.54252	No
Q4	0.590033	No
Q5	0.110651	No

Based on the results of these p-values, this suggests that there is a statistically significant relationship between whether the participants were able to access information about Chat GPT through easy and quick access in the process of understanding and learning about Chat GPT and whether or not they had used Chat GPT in previous academic research and whether or not they identified with ChatGPT.

The reasons why those who have used Chat GPT in academic research are more likely to identify with Chat GPT may include the following, the first being practical experience, by actually using Chat GPT in academic research, individuals can experience its potential and utility first hand. This experience may make them more aware of Chat GPT's strengths and limitations, making it easier for them to identify with its value. The second is efficiency, Chat GPT can increase the efficiency of research work and reduce tedious tasks and time wastage. Those who have used Chat GPT may be more likely to agree with its positive impact on improving the efficiency of academic work. The third is a deeper understanding of Chat GPT; using Chat GPT for academic research may give individuals a deeper understanding of its inner workings and capabilities. This understanding may make it easier for them to identify with Chat GPT's technology and capabilities [3-4].

The accessibility and speed of obtaining information about Chat GPT can impact the degree of identification with Chat GPT due to many reasons. Firstly, the accessibility of information plays a crucial role in enhancing participants' awareness and understanding of Chat GPT. Assisting them in developing a thorough comprehension of the characteristics, applications, advantages, and constraints of Chat GPT contributed to enhancing their understanding of Chat GPT. A positive user experience involves participants being able to readily locate Chat GPT-related information, lessons, or instructions, which increases the likelihood of them actively exploring and using the tool. The third ability is to handle user concerns; Chat GPT could bring up concerns related to privacy, ethics, or

accuracy [5]. Convenient access to information can assist participants in addressing these worries and building confidence in Chat GPT, thus enhancing identification.

Ultimately, individual identification levels can differ based on personal preferences, opinions, and ethical perceptions. However, the study found that the practical experience and usefulness of Chat GPT in academic research, as well as the ease of accessing information about Chat GPT, were key factors influencing identification.

5. Conclusion

Upon analyzing the data, it is evident that the actual application of Chat GPT significantly enhances the efficiency and quality of dissertation writing. Writing a traditional dissertation often involves extensive reading and analysis of relevant material, constructing the dissertation framework, and iteratively refining the specifics through multiple revisions. Students can create an initial dissertation structure and content using Chat GPT by entering the dissertation criteria and data. They can then interact with the Chatbot to converse and make revisions, thereby saving time and effort. Chat GPT's technical capabilities can assist students in organizing and articulating their thoughts, enhancing the quality and coherence of their works.

Secondly, in the realm of education, the utilization of Chat GPT will influence teaching methods and academic principles. Educational institutions and academics must reconsider the conventional essay assessment model and the approach to training academic writing abilities due to the advancement and widespread use of Chat GPT technology. Using Chat GPT could potentially harm students' writing abilities, particularly in terms of academic honesty and originality. Schools should offer additional support and guidance to help students utilize these tools efficiently and responsibly. They should also establish clear laws and regulations to deter and penalize plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty.

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Challenges, Opportunities, and Recommendations for Sino-Thai Cross-Border Cultural Tourism Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative

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Abstract: The Belt and Road Initiative aims to promote cooperation in infrastructure construction, trade cooperation, cultural exchanges, and other aspects among the countries along the route. Over the past decade, the implementation of this initiative in Thailand has achieved remarkable results, injecting new vitality into Sino-Thai cultural exchanges. The implementation of visa exemption policies has made personnel exchanges between China and Thailand more convenient, providing new opportunities for cultural interactions. Cultural exchanges help to enhance the understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries, promoting cooperation in culture, education, and other aspects. As a key medium of cultural exchange, the tourism industry plays a very important role. This paper discusses the opportunities and challenges of Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and proposes corresponding strategies. The aim is to help promote cultural exchanges and mutual learning, contributing to the construction of a closer Sino-Thai community of shared destiny.

Keywords: Belt and Road, Cultural Exchange, Opportunities and Challenges, Strategy

1. Introduction

In September and October 2013, Xi Jinping, the President of China, proposed the significant initiatives of building the "New Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" (collectively referred to as the "Belt and Road"), aimed at strengthening the connections between Asian countries, enhancing the level of economic cooperation, and promoting common development [1]. Thailand, located at the heart of the Indochina Peninsula and serving as a juncture between the terrestrial Silk Road and the maritime Silk Road, is an important partner in responding to China's Belt and Road initiative. Under this initiative's framework, Sino-Thai cooperation in various fields has continuously deepened, with cultural tourism cooperation becoming an important part of their friendly exchanges. The "China Corporate Overseas Image Survey Report 2020: Belt and Road Edition" reveals that among 12 countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America co-building the Belt and Road, Thai public awareness of the Belt and Road construction is the highest at 93%.

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Moreover, 77% of Thai respondents recognize the positive impact of the Belt and Road construction on regional and global economies, which is 16% higher than the average approval rate [2]. Over more than a decade, Belt and Road cooperation has gradually taken root in Thailand, becoming a significant driving force in promoting the development of Sino-Thai relations, thus providing strong support and assurance for Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation. Deepening Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation can promote mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries, drive economic prosperity, protect and inherit cultural heritage, and enhance cultural exchanges and mutual learning. However, despite certain achievements, there are still some challenges and issues faced. This paper aims to explore the opportunities and challenges of Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road initiative, as well as the corresponding strategies, in hopes of contributing valuable insights to the research on Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation.

2. Sino-Thai Cross-Border Cultural Tourism Cooperation Under the Belt and Road Initiative

China and Thailand are connected by mountains and rivers, bound by blood relations, neighbors in residence, and integrated in culture, forming a deep friendship. The foundation for cross-border cultural tourism between China and Thailand is robust. Princess Sirindhorn of Thailand has always practiced the concept of "China and Thailand being one family" over the decades, tirelessly learning and spreading Chinese culture. In 2019, Princess Sirindhorn was awarded China's highest foreign honor, the "Friendship Medal," a full affirmation of her significant contributions to Sino-Thai friendship and an important manifestation of the "China and Thailand being one family" concept. Today, the idea of "China and Thailand being one family" has deeply rooted in people's hearts, continuously driving the bilateral relations toward a better future [3].

The history of people-to-people exchanges between China and Thailand can be traced back to the early Han dynasty in the 2nd century BC, as recorded in the "Han Shu - Geography." The friendly journey between China and Thailand has been witnessed through the Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, with cooperation in politics, economy, culture, and other fields gradually deepening. Both countries have a long history of cultural ties. According to historical records, the Zhuang ethnic group in Guangxi, the Dai ethnic group in Guizhou, and the main ethnic group in Thailand, the Thai people, share a common cultural origin, providing a solid cultural foundation for Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation. Thailand, as an important tourist destination in Southeast Asia, attracts a large number of Chinese tourists. China, being one of the world's largest tourism markets, plays a significant role in promoting Thailand's tourism industry. Following the announcement of the visa exemption policy, the search volume for Thailand on the Ctrip platform increased by more than 90% within just one hour. From February 5 to 14, 2024, a total of 3,086 direct flights from China entered through the six airports managed by the Airports of Thailand (AOT), marking a 202.6% increase compared to the same period. The implementation of the visa exemption policy successfully revitalized Thailand's tourism confidence and improved safety levels across various sectors of the tourism industry. This positive measure has provided ample opportunities for Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation. Furthermore, since the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2004, strategic designs at the upper levels of both governments have laid a solid foundation for close cooperation and exchanges, including in culture. Both governments highly value the achievements of the Belt and Road construction. In November 2022, the two countries signed the "Cooperation Plan for Jointly Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand." In October 2023, the Prime Minister of Thailand was invited to China to attend the third Belt and Road International Cooperation Forum. In an interview, he said, "The Belt and Road Initiative is a policy to promote international cooperation

in a wide range of fields, including trade, investment, tourism, and culture. It plays an important role in driving the construction of land, sea, and air infrastructure in ASEAN countries, greatly promoting inter-state mutual benefit cooperation." The process of Sino-Thai exchanges has seen the signing of a series of important agreements (Table 1), providing direction for continuously strengthening the relationship between the two countries and promoting cooperation in economic investment, social exchange, cultural education, and international relations. This has led to the emergence of a new type of friendly national relationship between China and Thailand, serving as a model in contemporary international society [4].

Table 1: Partial List of Important Agreements Signed Between China and Thailand

Signing Date	Agreement Name
August 2001	Joint Communiqué between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand
April 2004	Joint Statement on the Cooperation Plan for the 21st Century between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand
April 2004	Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand
April 2012	Sino-Thai Strategic Cooperation Joint Action Plan (2012–2016)
October 2013	Development Perspective Plan for Sino-Thai Relations
December 2014	Joint Press Communique between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand
September 2017	Memorandum of Understanding on Jointly Advancing the Belt and Road Construction between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand
November 2019	Joint Statement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand
November 2022	Joint Statement on Building a More Stable, More Prosperous, and More Sustainable Community of Shared Destiny between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand
October 2023	Joint Press Communique between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand
October 2022	Joint Action Plan for Sino-Thai Strategic Cooperation (2022–2026)
October 2022	Cooperation Plan for Jointly Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand

3. Opportunities and Challenges in Sino-Thai Cross-Border Cultural Tourism Cooperation

Since the proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative, Sino-Thai cooperation in various fields has yielded fruitful results, particularly in the field of cultural tourism. Before the pandemic in 2019, income from foreign tourists in Thailand accounted for about 12% of the country's GDP, with Chinese tourists reaching about 11 million, becoming the largest source market for Thailand's tourism industry. This fully demonstrates the huge potential and opportunities for Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation.

Despite the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global tourism industry, bilateral trade between China and Thailand reached \$131.2 billion in 2021, \$135 billion in 2022, and \$103.964 billion in 2023, showing that the development momentum of economic and trade exchanges between the two countries remains strong. In Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation, opportunities for cultural exchange and interaction can provide important support for the establishment and development of relations between the two countries. Through cultural exchange and interaction, the tourism industries of China and Thailand can achieve resource complementarity, market sharing, economic cooperation, and win-win results. Both countries have long and rich historical cultures, such as China's Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and Thailand's Grand Palace, temples, etc. These historical and cultural relics attract tourists from all over the world and provide a foundation for cultural exchanges between the two countries. By visiting and learning about each other's history and culture, tourists can better understand and appreciate the unique charm of each other's country, enhancing friendship and mutual trust between the peoples of the two countries. Cooperation in developing tourism routes and launching customized tourism products can offer more diversified and personalized tourism options to meet the needs of different tourists. Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha stated, "The friendly relations between Thailand and China have a long history, and the peoples of the two countries support each other like relatives and friends." Cultural exchange and interaction opportunities in Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative have significant meaning and role. By strengthening cultural exchanges, tourism resources can be shared, and markets expanded, promoting economic cooperation and win-win for both countries. Therefore, China and Thailand should actively promote cultural exchanges and interactions, innovate products and services, expand market channels and promotion through the opportunities and policy support provided by the Belt and Road Initiative, creating broader development space for Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation.

Furthermore, opportunities for cultural exchange and interaction provide a platform for innovation and cooperation in Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation. Cultural exchanges between the two countries can promote innovation in tourism products and services, stimulating the creativity and innovation of entrepreneurs and practitioners. For example, China and Thailand have jointly organized various cultural and arts festivals, folk performances, international tourism exhibitions, etc., showcasing traditional culture and modern art of both countries, attracting more visitors to participate and experience. Taking the Spring Festival as an example, as the oldest and most important traditional festival in Chinese culture, it is a festive day for family reunions and ushering in the new year. The Year of the Dragon Spring Festival is the first New Year after the United Nations General Assembly resolution included the Lunar New Year as a United Nations holiday. In the Jia Chen Dragon Year of 2024, "Chinese Year" was upgraded to "World Year," and Thailand's festive atmosphere was even richer. The "Happy Spring Festival" event, as an important festival of cultural exchange between China and Thailand, has become an important platform and link for the people of both countries to celebrate the festival together after 20 years. It is evident that opportunities for cultural exchange and interaction bring affinity and attraction to Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation. However, there are also some challenges, such as language communication barriers, cultural differences, market competition, security issues, etc. Therefore, appropriate strategies and measures need to be taken in promoting Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation.

4. Strategies for Sino-Thai Cross-Border Cultural Tourism Cooperation

In recent years, China and Thailand have achieved significant results in the field of cultural tourism cooperation, thanks to the active promotion by both governments and strong market demand. The "China-Thailand as One Family" tourism cooperation is an important component of the Sino-Thai relationship. Thailand, with its rich tourism resources and the warm hospitality of its people, has

become a top destination for many Chinese tourists. The Thai government has identified China as the most important target market for its tourism industry, reflecting not only the immense potential of our tourism market but also the complementarity and cooperative space between China and Thailand in the tourism sector.[5] Furthermore, as a pivot country in China's promotion of the Belt and Road Initiative in Southeast Asia, tourism cooperation has become an important field for enhancing bilateral cultural exchanges and fostering goodwill among the peoples. However, some security issues, such as shootings in Bangkok, have brought short-term impacts to the originally robust recovery momentum of Sino-Thai tourism cooperation, resulting in a decline in the number of tourists and affecting the confidence of tourists in the medium and long term to a certain extent. The implementation of visa exemption policies has to some extent reshaped tourism confidence. Faced with the unstable factors of tourism safety, China and Thailand should remain confident, deepen tourism cooperation, and jointly address challenges. By strengthening tourism safety guarantees, promoting tourism model innovation and service upgrades, expanding market channels and publicity efforts, and continuously driving the development of Sino-Thai tourism cooperation forward, we can contribute to the friendship between the peoples of the two countries and regional prosperity.

4.1. Strengthening Sino-Thai Tourism Safety Measures

During the Spring Festival in 2024, hotel bookings by mainland Chinese tourists to Thailand increased nearly 21-fold year-on-year, with hotels in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, and other areas becoming highly sought after, indicating a rapid rise in the number of Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand. In this context, ensuring the personal safety and legal rights of tourists has become an important task in Sino-Thai tourism cooperation. Therefore, it is necessary to regard "tourism safety measures" as a key focus for long-term attention and include it in the agenda for Sino-Thai tourism cooperation. For instance, to better protect the personal safety and legal rights of tourists, China and Thailand should strengthen the establishment and improvement of tourism safety guarantee systems. This includes, but is not limited to, the formulation and implementation of relevant laws and regulations, standardized training for tourism practitioners, and enhanced supervision over new forms of tourism. Through these measures, a solid institutional safety guarantee for tourists can be provided, helping to restore confidence in traveling to Thailand. Moreover, the real-time sharing and dissemination of tourism safety information play a crucial role in reducing tourism safety risks. China and Thailand should enhance exchange and cooperation in the area of tourism safety information, regularly issue travel safety tips, and remind tourists to be aware of safety risks at their destinations. At the same time, efforts should be increased through various channels to promote awareness of tourism safety knowledge, thereby enhancing tourists' awareness of safety. In terms of tourism safety measures, attention should be given to the reasonable arrangement of tourists' itineraries. Official channels and the tourism industry should guide tourists to make suitable itinerary arrangements based on their actual situations and tourism safety information. This can help reduce the tourism safety risks for visitors in Thailand and enhance the travel experience.

4.2. Promoting Tourism Model Innovation and Service Upgrades

With the rapid development of the tourism industry and the continuous demand for enhanced travel experiences, traditional tourism products and services can no longer satisfy the diverse needs of tourists. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the competitiveness of Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism by promoting tourism model innovation, product innovation, and service upgrades. Innovating Sino-Thai tourism models requires increasing the external promotion and dissemination of high cost-effective, high-quality tourism products. Especially, it is important to launch "personalized," "diversified," and "demand-driven" tourism products targeted at different groups such

as young tourists and family tourists. Attracting tourists with high-quality, cost-effective tourism products could involve introducing unique cultural experience products, such as Sino-Thai cultural exchange activities and traditional handicraft experiences. These cultural innovation products will not only attract more tourists to China and Thailand but also facilitate cultural exchange and interaction between the two countries. Secondly, service is the core element of Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation; thus, enhancing service quality and levels is key to promoting cooperation. Training tourism practitioners to enhance their service awareness and professional competence can provide higher quality tourism services. Supporting pragmatic cooperation between leading Sino-Thai tourism enterprises, strengthening tourism talent development, and improving the service level of tourism practitioners will offer tourists a higher quality travel experience. Relying on deep cooperation between Sino-Thai tourism departments and related industry associations, promoting quality tourism products in both markets through multi-channel, multi-platform, and comprehensive promotion efforts is essential. Additionally, introducing smart technology to improve tourism information consultation and navigation services can enhance tourists' travel experience and satisfaction.

4.3. Expanding Market Channels and Promotional Efforts

In Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation, expanding market channels and promotional efforts are crucial elements. Through reasonable market channels and effective promotional strategies, the exposure and recognition of tourism products can be increased, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and attractiveness of the cooperation. Regarding market channels, the cooperating parties can jointly develop and utilize various channels including international, domestic, regional, and online to broaden the sales channels and coverage of tourism products. On the international level, collaborative efforts can be made to showcase unique cultures to tourists and industry professionals worldwide through tourism expos, promotional events, and cooperative project roadshows. Domestically, partnerships can be established with travel agencies, OTA platforms, and other tourism-related institutions to expand the distribution channels and sales network of products. Targeted promotional activities can also disseminate the tourism products and advantages offered by both parties in the target market, attracting more tourists to choose cultural tourism. Promotional methods can be diversified, including traditional media advertising, online marketing, and social media promotions. In terms of traditional media, tourism magazines, television programs, and advertising through various media channels can be used to showcase the features and advantages of the cooperative projects. For online marketing, search engine optimization and online advertising can enhance website visibility and rankings, increasing the click-through rates and attention from target tourists. Additionally, social media platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, and others can be utilized to post content and activities related to cultural tourism cooperation between the two countries, attracting shares and follows from fans, thus expanding the impact and recognition of the cooperation.

5. Conclusion

As an integral part of the Belt and Road Initiative, Sino-Thai cross-border cultural tourism cooperation not only possesses tremendous developmental potential and strategic significance but also serves as a powerful bond for enhancing friendship and facilitating exchanges between the peoples of the two countries. Through cultural tourism cooperation, the people of China and Thailand can better understand each other's cultures, promoting mutual understanding and affinity among the populace. This plays a significant role in deepening the friendship between the two countries and advancing cooperation in political, economic, technological, and other fields. China and Thailand should strengthen their cooperation to jointly address security issues, innovate tourism models,

improve service quality, expand market channels, and enhance promotional efforts. This will provide a higher quality tourism experience for the peoples of both nations, promote cultural exchange and interaction, and take the Sino-Thai relationship to new heights. It is believed that in the near future, Sino-Thai cultural tourism cooperation will become a new highlight of regional cooperation, contributing to the construction of a closer China-Thailand community of shared destiny.

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Research on the Urban Renewal Planning from the Perspective of “Suturing”: A Case Study of the “Ancient City Suturing Plan” in Luoyang, Henan Province

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Abstract: With the acceleration of urbanization in China, historical and cultural districts in ancient cities have experienced rapid development under the promotion of various policies, gradually forming a homogenized development model for ancient cities. The rapid development has brought about environmental pollution and distortion in the protection of ancient city culture, making the contradiction between ancient city protection and renewal planning increasingly prominent. This study extends the theory and techniques of spatial suturing to the macro scale of historical districts in ancient cities, exploring the suturing effects and practical applications of ancient city design planning at the level of street and alley spaces and historical contexts. It aims to promote the sustainable development of historical and cultural ancient cities, and achieve the coordinated development of cultural heritage protection and socio-economic progress.

Keywords: spatial suturing, community organizations, historical context of ancient cities, renewal planning

1. Introduction

Historical and cultural districts in ancient cities carry the collective memory of a city, encompassing rich historical and cultural resources. In recent years, the protection and renewal of historical and cultural districts in ancient cities have become hot topics in the fields of urban planning and heritage conservation in China. With the advancement of urbanization and rapid economic development in China, historical and cultural districts in ancient cities face pressure and challenges for renewal and transformation. How to achieve the renewal and development of historical and cultural districts in ancient cities while preserving traditional culture and historical heritage has become an urgent issue to be addressed. This study will depart from a comprehensive perspective of “suturing” and analyze the historical and cultural districts in Luoyang City as a case study, aiming to provide a reference for future development and renewal planning of ancient cities.

Based on the preliminary research findings, this study conducts a qualitative analysis of the site and identifies the key contradiction of “fragmentation” in the ancient city of Luoyang. Quantitative data related to the above conclusion are then statistically analyzed to propose the goal vision of suturing and revitalizing historical and cultural districts. “Connection and suturing” are adopted as

the overall strategy for renewal, with specific planning and strategic design focusing on street and alley suturing, courtyard suturing, industrial suturing, cultural context suturing, and landscape suturing. At the resident level, the continuity of ancient city culture is ensured through the mode of community organization. Additionally, innovative designs such as the installation of an aerial walkway system are proposed to further activate the cultural value of the ancient city. Ultimately, a renewal planning and design for ancient cities guided by the “community organization model” is presented.

2. Introduction

2.1. Research Background and Objectives

The study of development planning for historical and cultural ancient cities has always been an important topic in China’s intangible cultural heritage protection and development. [1] With the rapid economic development in China, in recent years, the protection and development of historical districts in ancient cities have mainly focused on enhancing economic comprehensive strength and urban strategic position. There has been little emphasis on the renewal planning regarding the spatial layout of ancient cities, the protection of traditional courtyard structures, the inheritance of ancient city culture, and the development planning mechanisms for ancient cities. [2]

There are many problems in the development of historical and cultural ancient cities in China. For example, the large-scale demolition and construction of historical and cultural protection areas have resulted in damage to the scale and texture of the original districts, monotonous urban landscapes, and a lack of humanized facilities, greenery, and signage. [3] From the perspective of urban historical district renewal, the economic, environmental, and social benefits brought by the development of historical and cultural districts tailored to local conditions cannot be ignored. Through field visits and research on the historical and cultural districts of Luoyang, based on a comprehensive assessment system, the current development status and existing problems of Luoyang’s ancient city are summarized. The causes are deeply analyzed, and adaptive strategies for the development planning of Luoyang’s ancient city are proposed accordingly. This study aims to provide appropriate reference basis for the next stage of urban conservation planning and related improvement work.

2.2. Research Object and Methods

2.2.1. Overview of Research Object

The research site of this study is located in the historical and cultural districts in the eastern, western, and southern corners of Luoyang’s old city, belonging to Luoyang City, Henan Province. It stretches from Nan Street in the west to Yulu Street and Zhonghe Lane in the east, and from Xida Street in the north to Zhongzhou Canal in the south, with a total land area of 11.7 hectares. (See Figure 1) At the macro level, Luoyang relies on the Grand Canal, the Tea-Horse Road, the Silk Road, and other historical legacies to establish itself as the core area for the inheritance of Heluo culture, highlighting Luoyang’s central position in the Heluo cultural circle. At the meso level, Luoyang’s old city area is densely populated with historical sites, offering potential for excavating its historical heritage and contributing to the telling of Luoyang’s 5,000-year-old stories. At the micro level, the surrounding infrastructure of the historical and cultural streets in the eastern, western, and southern corners of the old city of Luoyang is well-developed, and the area boasts a rich historical heritage.

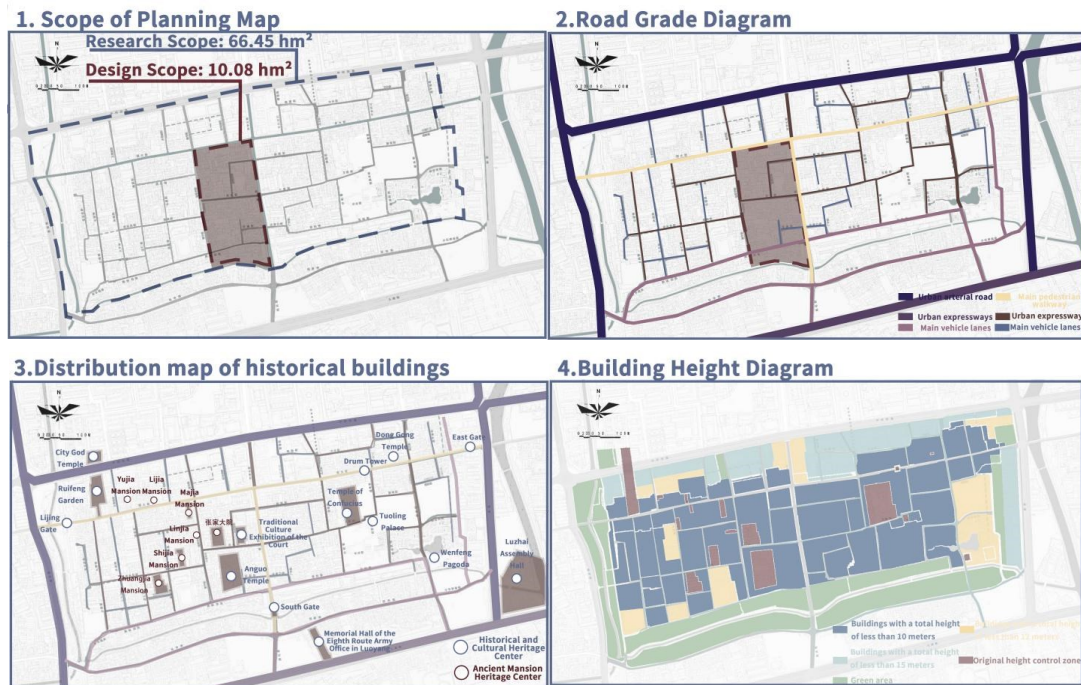


Figure 1: Location Characteristics of Luoyang Ancient City

(Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

2.2.2. Research Methods and Framework

2.2.2.1. Literature Review Method

By reviewing domestic and international literature and data on the internet, relevant theoretical knowledge about “spatial suturing” was acquired. Further understanding was gained on spatial suturing theory, connectivity theory, and related concepts of coupling theory, followed by knowledge organization and summarization. [4]

2.2.2.2. Summarization Method

The study of related cases of planning for historical and cultural districts in ancient cities serves as an important application of theoretical practice, illustrating the significance of this research. By consulting literature and design cases related to the renewal of historical city districts, and employing statistical methods, the qualitative relationship between “suturing theory - ancient city development planning - district transformation and node design” was deeply explored. Subsequently, optimization strategies for the renewal of historical and cultural districts in Luoyang’s ancient city were proposed.

2.2.2.3. Field Research Method

Field visits and investigations were conducted in the historical and cultural districts of Luoyang’s ancient city. Direct observations and on-site photography were employed to gather data on street conditions, building statuses, and greenery arrangements. Through communication and interviews with local residents, vendors, and staff, supplemented by the distribution of online and offline questionnaires, insights were gained into the attitudes of the local population towards the current status of Luoyang’s ancient city and their views on its protection and development. This facilitated a deeper understanding of the age structure and real needs of the local population, with all gathered

information serving as crucial basis for research and planning for Luoyang's ancient city.

3. Dilemmas and Opportunities in the Development of Luoyang Ancient City

3.1. Investigation and Problem Analysis of Luoyang Ancient City Districts

3.1.1. Fragmentation in Ancient City Planning Layout

(1) Disorder in Ancient City Spatial Planning

Nan Street in Luoyang's ancient city serves as a commercial street with strong public characteristics, while the interior of the ancient city is primarily residential, lacking transitional buffer spaces between public and private areas in the planning of spatial layout. The boundaries between public and private areas within the ancient city are unclear, which may lead to conflicts such as disturbances between external visitors and ancient city residents, as well as security issues.

(2) Chaotic Traffic Organization in the Ancient City

The interior of Luoyang's ancient city is mainly residential, with issues in traffic organization such as unclear primary and secondary roads, low accessibility in many areas, and traffic blockages within the ancient city.

(3) Lack of Planning in Ancient City Infrastructure and Public Spaces

The internal infrastructure of the ancient city lacks public facilities, with a shortage of leisure and entertainment venues (such as public squares), extremely limited leisure facilities like benches for resting along Nan Street, and inadequate planning for vegetation and greening. These issues have resulted in low living standards for ancient city residents, insufficient attractiveness to outsiders, and a need to enhance the vitality of historical and cultural districts in the ancient city.

3.1.2. Fragmentation of Collective Memories among Ancient City Residents

(1) Severe Loss of Ancient City Residents

Due to the current state of extensive demolition and construction in the historical and cultural districts in the eastern, western, and southern corners of Luoyang's ancient city, most residents have been relocated during field visits and investigations. Few original residents remain due to sentimental attachment to the old area, leading to a trend of desolation and dilapidation in the residential areas within the site.

In response to the above issues, this study proposes the following three overall strategies to attract original residents back. On a macro-policy level, there should be a shift from top-down policies of complete relocation of residents to the formulation of more open and beneficial policies by the government, aiming to improve people's livelihoods. In terms of organizational models, the study suggests utilizing grassroots community organization patterns initiated by residents themselves, with courtyard spaces serving as carriers for cultural activities. Spiritually, the study suggests building small theaters and stages where residents become the main actors, providing them with a sense of spiritual satisfaction and achievement, and ultimately increasing the happiness index of community life.

(2) Destruction of Historical Architectural Style

Due to the current state of extensive demolition and construction in the historical and cultural districts in the eastern, western, and southern corners of Luoyang's ancient city, most residents have been relocated during field visits and investigations. Few original residents remain due to sentimental attachment to the old area, leading to a trend of desolation and dilapidation in the residential areas within the site.

(3) Loss of Courtyard Organizational Structure

Due to the lack of reasonable policy guidance and control within the ancient city at present, most

houses are left unrepaired, and some residents carry out self-demolition and construction, resulting in the destruction of the original courtyard structure of the ancient city.

(4) Monotonous Business Types Lacking Features

According to statistical analysis of the types of businesses surveyed on-site, commercial activities in Luoyang's ancient city are mainly concentrated on Nan Street, primarily focusing on Hanfu rentals and catering, resulting in a single business type that does not fully represent the local historical and cultural characteristics. Figure 2 illustrates the site problems and preliminary strategies for Luoyang's ancient city.

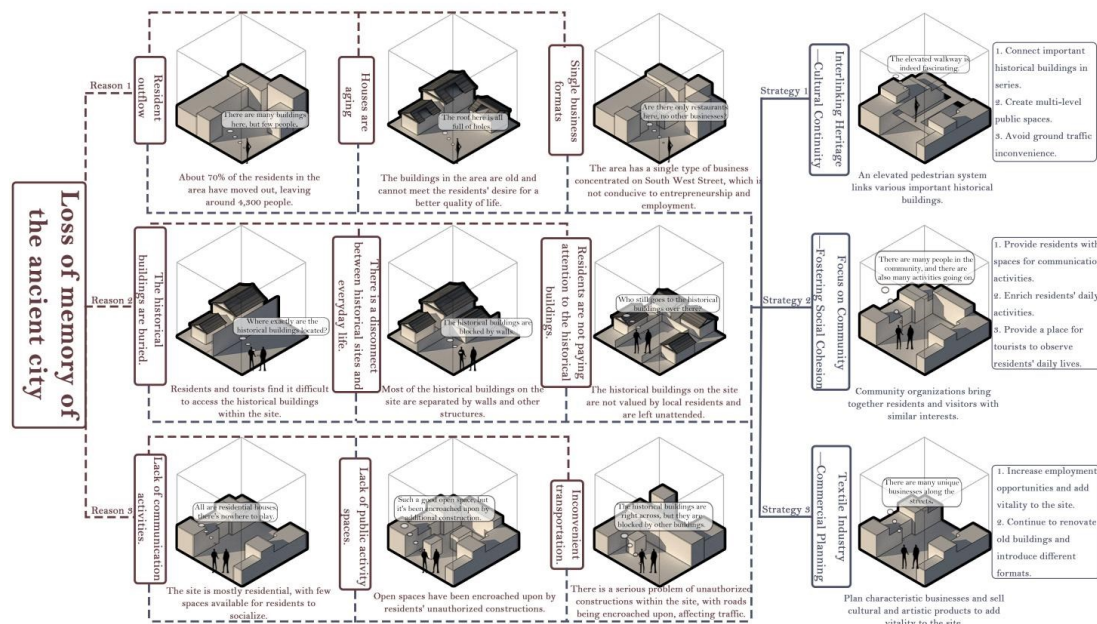


Figure 2: Site Problems and Preliminary Strategies for Luoyang Ancient City

(Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

3.2. Opportunities for the Development of Luoyang Ancient City

3.2.1. Historical Evolution of Ancient City Development

The research site is located in the historical and cultural districts in the eastern, western, and southern corners of Luoyang's old city, where numerous historical relics from the Tang Dynasty's Xuanren Gate site and Anguo Temple to the air raid shelters of the Republican era have continued to this day. With the disappearance of political space, the expansion of residential functions, and the transformation of public spaces, the internal development of the site has gradually tended towards a single residential area since the Sui and Tang Dynasties. [5]

3.2.2. "Soil" of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Ancient City

As a major hub of intangible cultural heritage resources, Luoyang City possesses 8 national-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, including legends of the He Tu Luo Shu, Heluo Drum Opera, lantern art (Luoyang Palace Lantern), Tang Dynasty tri-colored pottery craftsmanship, authentic Luoyang water banquet preparation techniques, traditional Chinese bone-setting (the Ping Le Guo Family Bone-setting Method), and folk beliefs (Guangong Folk Custom), etc. Luoyang City also boasts 62 provincial-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, such as the Luoyang Sea God Ritual, folk paper-cutting, and Du Yuan wine-making techniques, as well as 240

municipal-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, including the legend of Yiyin and the Twin Dragons of Dongguan, and 718 county-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, covering all ten categories of intangible cultural heritage. This study aims to integrate the aforementioned significant intangible cultural heritage into the development planning of the ancient city suturing, revitalizing and showcasing the local historical charm.

4. Urban Renewal Planning and Overall Strategy for Luoyang Ancient City Based on the Concept of Suturing

4.1. Temporal and Spatial Suturing in the Overall Planning of Luoyang Ancient City Districts

This study names the “Ancient City Suturing Development Plan” as the “Three-Five Plan,” dividing the planned construction from 2024 to 2040 into two three-year periods and two five-year periods. The period from 2024 to 2027 is designated as the current utilization phase, focusing primarily on the maintenance and repair of existing relics such as Anguo Temple and the Chayuan Site. From 2027 to 2030, it enters the initial catalyst suturing stage, focusing mainly on the improvement of the street and alley pedestrian system and the micro-renewal of key historical areas. The period from 2030 to 2035 is designated as the systematic suturing stage, focusing primarily on the construction of the above-ground transportation and aerial walkway systems. From 2035 to 2040, it enters the stage of perfecting suturing, focusing mainly on micro-level aspects such as street and alley facilities, landscape nodes, study routes for ancient trees, and catalyst architectural design, and continues to develop over time. Figure 3 illustrates the development plan for Luoyang Ancient City.



Figure 3: Development Plan for Luoyang Ancient City

(Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

4.2. Study on the Operation Mechanism of Urban Renewal in Luoyang Ancient City Districts

By restoring the historical fabric of the ancient city and incorporating cultural activities to attract the return of original residents, the aim is to enable them to enjoy life within the city while also becoming “performers” in the city’s cinematic setting. This serves as a tourism resource to allow visitors to experience the daily lives of local residents firsthand and revitalize the local historical context. Through the model of community organizations, courtyard spaces serve as carriers for cultural activities. Based on the urban spatial suturing theory, a system of points, lines, and planes is employed to set up spatial nodes at four levels, and street alleys and aerial walkway systems are designed to connect the routes, forming a humanistic historical district themed around “living, touring, gathering,

transmitting, and creating” that is suitable for all ages, shared by all, and spontaneously organized.

4.3. Comprehensive Suturing in the Overall Strategic Research of Urban Renewal in Luoyang Ancient City Districts

4.3.1. Cohesion - Heart Suturing through Community Organization

The model of community organizations not only gathers residents with similar interests but also attracts external visitors with the same hobbies to visit the ancient city for exchange. While enhancing neighborly relations, conflicts between ancient city residents and external visitors are cleverly resolved through grassroots forms of resident autonomy.

Based on the preliminary integration of Luoyang’s intangible cultural heritage, this study sets up the following categories of community organizations: (A) Academic: Cultural Heritage and Innovation Society (Guangong Folk Custom), Master Lecture Society (Academic Sharing Society), Ancient Tree Conservation Research Society. (B) Arts: Peony Culture Society (Calligraphy, Appreciation of Flowers), Hanfu Culture Society, Traditional Opera Performance Society, Film and Television Culture Society, Heluo Folk Music Exchange Society, Antiques Appreciation Society. (C) Sports: Tai Chi Society, Sports Society, Cycling Society, Parent-Child Interaction Society. (D) Public Service: Medical Service Society, Agricultural Society, Courtyard Protection Society, Tourist Reception Society. (E) Interest: Handicraft DIY Society (Tang Tri-colored Pottery, Palace Lantern Making, Cultural Creation), Photography Society (Hanfu Check-in), etc. Additionally, based on the space required for community activities, courtyard spaces are redesigned to activate and utilize them from the perspective of “heart” suturing, thereby restoring the courtyard organizational structure of the historical and cultural districts in the ancient city.

4.3.2. Weaving - Spatial Environment Suturing of Commercial Planning

Addressing issues such as the single-toned nature, lack of distinctiveness, low quality, and poor shopping experience along South Street in the ancient city, this study initially utilizes grassroots activation and spontaneous organization for bottom-up management and planning. To tackle the lack of vitality in the homestay sector within the ancient city district, specialty formats such as Peony Culture, Heluo Folk Music, Antiques Appreciation, Hanfu Culture, and Handicraft DIY are introduced to revitalize the intangible cultural heritage of the ancient city. Addressing the conflict between commercial public space and residential private space, spatial suturing techniques are employed to integrate street-front businesses with residential courtyards, creating transitional public activity courtyard spaces in the central area. Greenery is utilized for sound insulation to reduce conflicts between the two. Enhanced accessibility to commercial spaces leads to the aggregation of pedestrian traffic, thus activating the vitality of commercial spaces. [6]

4.3.3. Heritage Linking - Historical and Cultural Suturing of Heritage Continuity

Through comprehensive research on the original street and alley spatial layout and traffic organization in the ancient city, it was found that they exhibit strong privacy and weak accessibility characteristics. This study innovatively designs a complete aerial walkway system by elevating street and alley spaces, linking important historical architectural areas such as Anguo Temple, Zhangjia Courtyard, Xuanren Gate Site Park, and South Gate Community Activity Center, as well as significant redevelopment nodes. This forms a complete sequence of aerial public spaces. The aforementioned design strategies not only reduce disruptions to the normal lives of original residents but also enhance the accessibility and continuity of public space nodes and areas within the ancient city, thereby improving the ancient city touring experience for local residents and external visitors. (Figure 4)

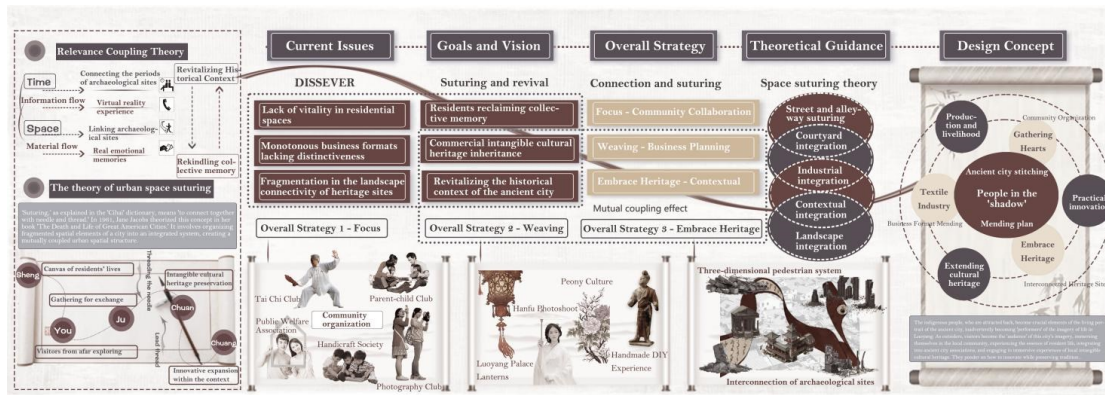


Figure 4: Overall Strategic Research on Luoyang Ancient City

(Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

5. Luoyang Ancient City District Suturing and Renewal Strategy

5.1. Site Suturing Concept

5.1.1. Macro-organizational Planning of the Site

(1) First-level Nodes - Four important historical architectural areas and newly built entrance plazas, consisting of the Anguo Temple area, Zhangjia Courtyard, Xuanren Gate, and the later planned South Gate entrance plaza. The first-level nodes serve as the historical and cultural “signboards” of the Luoyang Ancient City District, organically linked with characteristic nodes around the ancient city, acting as crucial catalysts driving the vitality of the entire Luoyang Ancient City.

(2) Second-level Nodes - Key protected courtyards and public buildings, selecting severely damaged non-historical buildings or illegal structures within the site to create protected courtyard exhibition nodes and public community organization spaces with the aim of constructing spatial sequences. The establishment of second-level nodes integrates the ancient city’s courtyard style into urban development, becoming an essential part of the overall planning sequence of the ancient city.

(3) Third-level Nodes - Ancient tree nodes, divided into South Gate Plaza welcoming ancient trees, Anguo Temple entrance ancient trees, site plaza characteristic ancient trees, and shared courtyard ancient trees based on the original locations of ancient trees on the site and the public node greening requirements. Combined with greening, the flow lines formed by ancient tree nodes link the characteristic greenery of the Luoyang Ancient City District, weaving a unique green picture of the ancient city.

(4) Fourth-level Nodes - Courtyard shared and public spaces. For open courtyard spaces, they can serve as resident-accessible courtyard squares; for semi-open courtyard spaces, they can function as discussion areas for communities, shared planting areas, etc.; for centripetal courtyard spaces, they can serve as shared kitchens, shared restaurants, etc., accessible only to residents of adjacent courtyards. With the development of the times, the functions of shared community spaces can be determined by residents themselves, reflecting the elasticity and polysemy of courtyard shared space functions.

5.1.2. Traffic Space Renewal Suturing Strategy

The planning and design of traffic space in the ancient city possess certain uniqueness and complexity. Due to historical reasons and urban development constraints, Luoyang’s ancient city traffic space faces many unique problems and challenges, such as road closures, poor traffic flow, and traffic safety

hazards. [7] This study systematically analyzes the urban form, road network, and traffic flow characteristics of the Luoyang Ancient City District's historical and cultural streets. Based on the organization of the four hierarchical nodes mentioned above, the flow lines of the ancient city are divided into main and secondary lines. The main lines mainly serve as routes for external tourism and internal resident strolls, while the secondary lines include the flow lines of ancient trees and scenic nodes. The roads are further classified into first, second, and third-level roads based on the main and secondary lines. First-level roads mainly connect important public nodes within the site to create routes for external tourism. Second-level roads primarily shape the flow lines of scenic nodes, while third-level roads mainly create routes for residents' leisurely strolls within the ancient city.

5.2. Key Area Transformation Suturing Strategy

The transformation and integration strategies of the four key areas in the ancient city of Luoyang need to be updated to varying degrees based on their specific locations and surrounding cultural environments. In this study, the Anguo Temple area is revitalized through the incorporation of landscape corridors, conference rooms, and the integration of community activities such as lectures by renowned scholars, aiming to preserve and innovate upon intangible cultural heritage. The courtyard of Zhangjia Courtyard is renovated, and the transformation of the street behind the agricultural school into a cluster of social club courtyards is designed to achieve the goal of inheriting intangible cultural heritage and fostering innovation. The exploration area of Xuanren Gate is repurposed, and the design of the museum and park is revisited to create a culturally rich district with an open entrance, providing a large recreational area for local residents, gathering them at the museum to promote community cohesion. Additionally, the distribution of community centers, the establishment of convenient activity hubs, and the setup of South Gate entrance square aim to offer quality living resources for residents in the South Gate area.

5.3. Suturing Strategy for the Spatial Polysemy Matching of Community Organizations

Social spaces serve two functions: internal and external. For residents of the ancient city area, residential courtyards serve as spaces for private daily gatherings and communication activities. For visitors, the public spaces of the ancient city are both a manifestation of residents' cultural life and a medium for visitors to observe and participate in. With the passage of time and the turnover of generations, the functions of the grouped spaces initially set in this study will change correspondingly with changes in people, demonstrating the temporal and spatial polysemy of courtyards. (Figure 5)

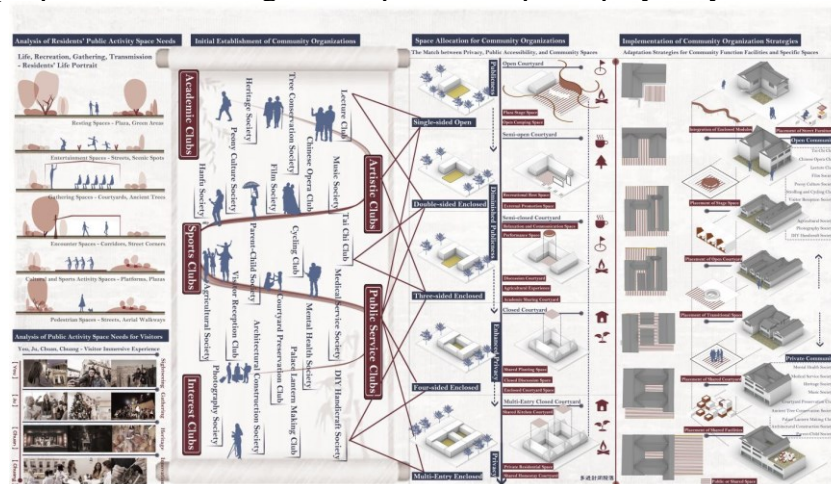


Figure 5: Matching of Social Organization Spaces and Strategies in the Ancient City of Luoyang (Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

5.4. Integration of Vertical Pedestrian System and Cultural Context System

The vertical pedestrian system in the ancient city includes both an above-ground street pedestrian system and an aerial walkway system. In this study, the coordination and planning of these two aspects are noted from the following perspectives:

(1) Preservation of Local Intangible Cultural Heritage and Integration of Potential Cultural Context Resources: It is essential to fully respect the history and cultural heritage of the ancient city during the planning and construction of the vertical pedestrian system. Local architectural styles and traditional elements should be incorporated into the design while avoiding damage to historical buildings and landmarks. Integrating the vertical pedestrian system with the existing cultural context system of the ancient city ensures that the newly constructed pedestrian system harmonizes with the surrounding environment without disrupting the existing cultural context pattern. The study connects the aerial walkway with natural and artificial landscapes such as ancient city streets, squares, and parks in a coherent manner.

(2) The study utilizes the construction of the three-dimensional pedestrian system to promote tourism and commercial development in the ancient city. In this study, public spaces such as cultural clusters of social organizations and leisure squares are constructed at nodes of the aerial walkway system, further attracting external tourists and driving the prosperity of the ancient city's economy. (Figure 6)



Figure 6: Achievements of the Three-dimensional Pedestrian System Integration in the Ancient City of Luoyang (Image Source: Self-drawn by the author)

6. Conclusion

This study takes the integration and revitalization planning of the historical and cultural blocks in Luoyang, Henan Province, as an example. It analyzes the fragmentation issues of spatial environment, historical context, and collective memory in the Nan Da Street area. While focusing on physical space

integration and revitalization such as sites, transportation, and heritage, the study incorporates industrial planning and collective memory into the integration system. Combined with the innovative construction strategy of the ancient city's aerial walkway system, it aims to provide a strategic reference for the comprehensive integration and rejuvenation of historical and cultural blocks facing fragmentation issues in various ancient cities.

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East Asian Security Architecture in the Geopolitical Competition Between China and the United States: Impacts and Adjustments

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Abstract: In the context of globalization, the rivalry between China and the United States has become a key factor shaping the regional security landscape. In this paper, the author investigates the profound impact and potential adjustment strategies of the geopolitical competition between China and the United States on the security architecture of East Asia. This paper first outlines the complexity of Sino-U.S. competition and its profound challenges in East Asia. The problem statement clarifies the core issue addressed in this study: how to address the multiple pressures on regional security arising from Sino-U.S. competition. The research employs a comprehensive approach, including a literature review and case analysis, to thoroughly understand the competition's multidimensional effects. Findings reveal that Sino-U.S. competition has significantly altered the security landscape in East Asia, spanning military, political, and economic domains. In conclusion, the paper summarizes key discoveries and emphasizes the urgency of adjusting the East Asian security framework. It proposes recommendations to guide regional stakeholders in preparing for the new geopolitical reality, ensuring adaptability to and mitigation of uncertainties from Sino-U.S. competition. These suggestions aim to provide powerful insights for decision-makers, fostering practical and effective policy adjustments in response to evolving circumstances.

Keywords: East Asian Security Architecture, Geopolitical Competition, China-US Relations, Regional Security Dynamics

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization, the rivalry between China and the United States has emerged as a pivotal determinant shaping the regional security landscape, particularly in East Asia. The dynamic interplay between these two global powers has engendered multifaceted implications for the security architecture of the region, necessitating a comprehensive examination of its impact and potential adjustment strategies.

This study delves into the intricate dynamics of the geopolitical competition between China and the United States and its profound ramifications on East Asian security. The central issue addressed in this study pertains to the multifaceted pressures exerted on regional security as a result of the intensifying competition between China and the United States. With escalating tensions and strategic maneuvering between the two powers, East Asia faces unprecedented security challenges, and a

nuanced understanding of the underlying complexities and potential pathways for mitigating risks is necessary. To offer a nuanced understanding of the multidimensional effects of Sino-U.S. competition on East Asian security, a comprehensive approach is employed, incorporating a thorough literature review and case analysis.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform policymakers and stakeholders about the urgent need to adapt the East Asian security framework to the evolving geopolitical reality. By offering actionable insights and recommendations, this study seeks to contribute to the development of pragmatic and effective policy adjustments that can safeguard regional stability and mitigate the uncertainties stemming from Sino-U.S. competition.

2. Complexity of Sino-U.S. Competition in East Asia

The complexity of Sino-U.S. competition in East Asia can be observed through various dimensions, each playing a significant role in shaping the rivalry.

In terms of the economic dimension, China and the U.S. have intricate trade relations characterized by interdependence and competition. Both countries aim to maximize economic gains while managing trade imbalances and tariff disputes [1]. Additionally, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the U.S.'s Indo-Pacific Strategy represent divergent investment patterns. China focuses on infrastructure development and connectivity projects, while the U.S. prioritizes strategic investments in defense and technology sectors [2]. Technological innovation serves as a focal point for Sino-U.S. competition. Both countries heavily invest in research and development with the goal of leading in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G, and quantum computing [3].

In terms of the security dimension, China's rapid military modernization and expansion of naval capabilities have presented a challenge for U.S. military dominance in the Asia-Pacific region. Security concerns are amplified by the deployment of advanced weapon systems and the establishment of military bases in the South China Sea [3]. Sovereignty disputes over territories like the South China Sea and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands further contribute to tensions, drawing the U.S. into regional security arrangements and strategic partnerships. At the same time, China and the U.S. both form strategic alliances and security partnerships with East Asian countries to strengthen their positions. However, these alliances also lead to the militarization of the region and create complex security dilemmas [3].

Lastly, the ideological dimension adds another layer to Sino-U.S. competition. China's advocacy for a multipolar world order challenges the U.S.-led liberal international order, emphasizing non-interference and respect for sovereignty. In contrast, the U.S. promotes liberal democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as universal values [1]. Diplomatic relations in East Asia become a delicate balancing act for countries as they navigate between China's economic incentives and the U.S.'s security guarantees, shaping regional dynamics and power alignments [3].

3. Impact of Sino-U.S. Competition on East Asian Security Landscape

The impact of Sino-U.S. competition on the East Asian security landscape is multi-faceted, with implications spanning military, political, and economic realms.

On the military front, the competitive dynamics have led to an arms race in East Asia. Both China and the U.S. are investing significant resources in modernizing their military capabilities, resulting in the development and deployment of advanced weaponry and defense systems. This arms race not only increases tensions between the two powers but also heightens regional security concerns [4]. Besides, the competition also exacerbates the militarization of disputed territories, particularly in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. China's assertive actions, such as island-building and the establishment of military installations, further escalate tensions and pose risks of conflict escalation.

This militarization of disputed territories creates a volatile security environment in the region [1]. Furthermore, the U.S. bolsters its military presence in East Asia through strategic alliances with countries like Japan, South Korea, and Australia. These alliances serve as a cornerstone of U.S. security strategy, enhancing deterrence capabilities and providing a framework for collective defense against regional threats. The formation of military alliances adds another layer of complexity to the security landscape in East Asia [2].

In terms of political ramifications, Sino-U.S. competition strains diplomatic relations in East Asia. Countries in the region find themselves navigating between the two powers to safeguard their interests. China's assertive behavior and territorial assertions challenge the established norms of international relations, leading to disputes and frictions with neighboring states and the U.S. This strained diplomatic environment creates challenges for regional cooperation and stability [3]. Additionally, the political ramifications also extend to regional influence. Both China and the U.S. vie for leadership and leverage in shaping the regional order. China's BRI and the U.S.'s Indo-Pacific strategy exemplify their efforts to expand influence and win over allies in East Asia. This power competition can lead to power struggles and tensions among countries in the region [5].

Economically, trade tensions between China and the U.S. disrupt global supply chains and impede economic growth in East Asia. Tariffs, trade restrictions, and retaliatory measures escalate economic tensions, affecting businesses, consumers, and investors across the region. These trade tensions create uncertainties and challenges for East Asian economies that are heavily reliant on global trade. Meanwhile, the competition between China and the U.S. also extends to the technological domain. Both countries strive for dominance in critical industries such as artificial intelligence and semiconductor manufacturing. This competition drives innovation but also intensifies tensions over intellectual property rights and market access. It creates challenges for East Asian countries that are caught in the middle and need to navigate between the two powers in terms of technology development and trade [6].

Furthermore, supply chain disruptions, exacerbated by trade tensions and geopolitical uncertainties, pose challenges to East Asian economies that are reliant on global trade. Vulnerabilities in supply chains, particularly in sectors like electronics and automotive, underscore the need for diversification and resilience-building measures. East Asian countries need to find ways to strengthen their supply chains and reduce dependence on a single market or country [7].

Finally, U.S. restrictions on technology transfer to China impact regional economies and technological development. The U.S. aims to limit China's access to sensitive technologies, which can hinder technological progress in East Asia. This has led to China's pursuit of self-reliance in critical technologies, further complicating the economic landscape and raising concerns about technological decoupling between the two powers [8].

In conclusion, the impact of Sino-U.S. competition on the East Asian security landscape is significant and multi-dimensional. It encompasses military implications such as an arms race, increased militarization of disputed territories, and the formation of military alliances. There are also political ramifications in terms of strained diplomatic relations and power competition. Economically, trade tensions, competition for technological dominance, supply chain disruptions, and restrictions on technology transfer all contribute to the complex landscape in East Asia. Understanding these implications is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders in managing and mitigating the risks associated with Sino-U.S. competition in the region.

4. Responses and Strategies of Regional Stakeholders

4.1. ASEAN's Role: Initiatives for Regional Stability and Cooperation

In recent years, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has intensified its efforts to promote community-building among its member states. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is an important pillar of this effort, seeking to deepen economic integration and create a single market and production base within ASEAN. By reducing barriers to trade and investment, the AEC aims to enhance regional competitiveness and create more opportunities for businesses and individuals within the region [9].

The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) focuses on enhancing political cooperation and building trust among member states. It aims to strengthen the ASEAN way of consensus-building, dialogue, and peaceful resolution of disputes. Through the APSC, ASEAN seeks to ensure regional stability and security, as well as strengthen cooperation on transnational issues such as counter-terrorism, human trafficking, and cybersecurity [9].

Meanwhile, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) focuses on promoting socio-cultural exchanges and people-to-people connectivity among member states. It aims to foster a sense of ASEAN identity and promote understanding and cooperation among diverse cultures and peoples in the region. The ASCC also works towards enhancing social development, improving education and healthcare, and promoting sustainable development within the ASEAN community [9].

Another important platform for ASEAN's community-building efforts is the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ARF is a key multilateral dialogue forum that brings together ASEAN and its dialogue partners to discuss political and security issues in the region. Through dialogue and confidence-building measures, the ARF aims to prevent conflict, promote trust, and enhance regional security architecture [4].

Furthermore, ASEAN has developed its Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which outlines its strategic vision for regional cooperation and connectivity. The Outlook emphasizes the importance of inclusivity, respect for international law, and peaceful resolution of disputes. It seeks to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region through cooperation in various areas such as maritime security, connectivity, sustainable development, and economic integration [2].

Overall, ASEAN's community-building efforts through the AEC, APSC, ASCC, ARF, and its Outlook on the Indo-Pacific demonstrate its commitment to promoting regional stability, cooperation, and prosperity. Through these initiatives, ASEAN strives to create a more integrated and resilient ASEAN community, while also contributing to regional peace and security.

4.2. Regional Stakeholders' Strategic Approaches in the Indo-Pacific

The responses and strategies of Japan, South Korea, Australia, and India highlight the complexities and dilemmas faced by regional stakeholders in East Asia when it comes to managing their relations with both China and the United States.

Japan, as an economic powerhouse, heavily relies on the Chinese market for trade and investment. But on the other hand, it also values its security alliance with the United States. The delicate balancing act for Japan lies in maintaining economic ties with China while ensuring its security cooperation with the United States [4].

Similarly, South Korea faces a similar challenge. The country has significant economic ties with China, but it relies on the United States for security support, particularly regarding tensions on the Korean Peninsula. South Korea must navigate this delicate balance between economic interests and security alignment [4].

Australia has been evolving its strategy to manage economic ties with China while strengthening security cooperation with regional partners. With a focus on the Indo-Pacific region, Australia aims to counterbalance China's influence while upholding its national interests and promoting regional stability. This approach reflects the challenge of striking a balance between economic relations and security concerns [4].

India pursues a multi-alignment strategy, engaging with various powers while promoting regional stability. It not only partners with the United States in defense and security matters but also values economic cooperation with China. India seeks to balance its strategic engagements with different powers, demonstrating the complexity of managing relationships in the context of the Sino-U.S. competition in East Asia [4].

These responses and strategies highlight the diverse approaches taken by regional stakeholders to navigate the complexities and dilemmas brought about by the competition between China and the United States in East Asia. Each country must carefully weigh its economic interests, security concerns, and regional dynamics to find a balance that serves its national interests and contributes to regional stability.

5. Implications for Regional Security Architecture

The complexity and multi-faceted nature of Sino-U.S. competition in East Asia have significant implications for regional security architecture, spanning military, political, and economic dimensions.

Military Implications: The intensifying arms race between China and the U.S. in East Asia, coupled with the militarization of disputed territories, raises concerns about regional security [10]. This calls for a reassessment of existing security arrangements and the exploration of potential new alliances to effectively address these emerging threats. Strengthening military cooperation among like-minded nations can enhance deterrence capabilities and contribute to maintaining stability in the region [11].

Political Ramifications: The strained diplomatic relations and power competition in East Asia have negative repercussions on regional stability and cooperation [6]. It is essential for regional security architecture to adapt to shifting power dynamics and find ways to mitigate the risks of conflicts resulting from geopolitical tensions. This can be achieved through diplomatic efforts that prioritize dialogue, negotiation, and collaboration among countries in the region.

Economic Challenges: Trade tensions and disruptions to global supply chains pose economic security risks for East Asian countries [12]. To address these challenges, it is crucial for regional security architecture to incorporate mechanisms for managing economic conflicts and promoting resilience in the face of trade disruptions. This can involve the establishment of regional economic agreements or platforms that facilitate dialogue and cooperation to address economic security concerns collectively.

Technological Competition: The competition for technological dominance in East Asia raises cybersecurity concerns [10]. Enhancing technological cooperation and information-sharing mechanisms becomes crucial to effectively address these concerns. Regional security architecture should prioritize collaborative efforts in cybersecurity, including joint initiatives, research collaborations, and the sharing of best practices.

Need for Multilateral Cooperation: Regional security architecture should prioritize multilateral cooperation and dialogue platforms to foster trust-building and conflict resolution [11]. Initiatives led by ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum provide valuable forums for countries to engage in dialogue, enhance understanding, and work towards resolving conflicts.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of the East Asian security architecture within the context of Sino-U.S. competition highlights the intricate and multifaceted nature of this rivalry. The examination of various dimensions, including economic, technological, security, and ideological factors, underscores its profound impact on regional stability and prosperity.

The military dimension of this competition is marked by an arms race and heightened militarization of disputed territories, posing significant challenges to security. Politically, strained diplomatic relations and power competition create uncertainties and frictions, necessitating adaptive responses from regional stakeholders. The economic dimension is characterized by trade tensions and disruptions to global supply chains, emphasizing the need for cooperative efforts to mitigate risks. The technological dimension raises cybersecurity concerns and highlights the importance of enhancing cooperation in this domain.

Despite the comprehensive analysis, this study has several limitations. Firstly, the examination primarily focuses on the perspectives of major stakeholders such as China, the United States, and ASEAN countries, potentially overlooking the nuanced dynamics within smaller states. Secondly, the study predominantly analyzes the current state of affairs, providing limited insights into future trends and potential developments. Additionally, the analysis may not fully capture the evolving nature of the Sino-U.S. competition and its implications for East Asian security.

To address these limitations, future research should adopt a more comprehensive approach that incorporates the perspectives of a broader range of stakeholders, including smaller states and non-state actors. Longitudinal studies can provide insights into the evolving nature of the competition and its impacts over time. Comparative analyses across different regions can offer valuable insights into the unique dynamics of the East Asian security architecture.

In conclusion, while this study provides valuable insights into the implications of Sino-U.S. competition for East Asian security architecture, further research is needed to comprehensively understand the complexities of the geopolitical landscape and identify strategies for fostering stability and cooperation in the region. Continuous research and collaboration are essential to address the limitations of current analyses and promote regional stability and prosperity amidst evolving dynamics.

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Correlation Between Pressure During the Final Week and College Students' Positive Psychological Capital

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Abstract: Positive psychological capital (PPC), as a concept of positive psychology, has achieved a great development. It emphasized the positive psychological state of an individual and how it affects their well-being and performance. It contains four parts: hope, efficiency, resilience, and optimism. PPC also has important reference value for judging an individual's mental health status. This paper aims to discover correlation between college students' PPC and number of their final exams and papers. The study found that the PPC level of Wenzhou-Kean University college students during the final week did not show a high level of correlation with the number of final tests (NFT) or number of final papers (NFP). The research results can provide a reference for exploring the sources of stress during final week for college students. The outcome of the study can apply the framework to explore the relationship between potential variables and college students' stress, which will promote the study of college students' stress.

Keywords: Positive Psychological capital, final test, final paper, college students

1. Introduction

Suffering from COVID-19, Chinese college students are forced to take online classes for several years. Based on such background, these fresh bloods of universities lack social experience with their peers, since schools transfer from face-to-face teaching to online teaching for nearly two years. Although the Internet has already applied a number of new stages for young people to practice their social skills, current undergraduate students still lose many chances to have a face-to-face talk that emphasizes participation in cultural and artistic activities. Lack of social activities in real life is undoubtedly a destructive disaster for the mental health of college students. Cultural and artistic activities are closely related to the positive psychological capital (PPC) of Chinese college students [1]. The PPC is helpful for college students to establish life motivation, self-confidence, strong will, and even resilience in the face of adversity [2].

The correlation between pressure experienced during the final week and the positive psychological capital of college students is a subject of considerable interest within the realm of positive psychology and student well-being. Numerous studies have delved into various facets of this correlation, shedding light on the intricate relationship between pressure, psychological resources, and overall well-being. In order to investigate the connection between college students' psychological health and goal-oriented self-regulation, Wang, Yang, and Li [3] carried out a weekly diary research. They underscored the pivotal role of academic performance as an intermediary factor in this relationship,

emphasizing the significance of optimism and social support as essential resources for unleashing the positive effects of goal-oriented self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, Sun, Wang, and Shen [4] focused on the role that PPC played as a mediator in the link between college students' employment pressure and their inability to wait occupational gratification. Although their study did not offer a summary, the selection of a mediator aligns with the overarching theme of comprehending how psychological resources mediate the impact of external pressures on the well-being of college students. Furthermore, Varadwaj and Mahapatra [5] explored the mediation of psychological capital between academic stress and positive academic behavior among college students. The results of their research have demonstrated noteworthy positive associations between the characteristics of psychological capital and positive academic behaviors. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that psychological capital functions as a moderator to mitigate the negative effects of academic stress on constructive academic activities. These investigations contribute to a comprehensive comprehension of the connection between the pressure experienced during the final week and the PPC of college students as a result, they highlight the importance of psychological resources in reducing the negative impacts of pressure on students' wellbeing. In summary, the reviewed research provides insightful information about the complex relationship between pressure, psychological capital, and general well-being in college students. The findings underscore the significance of psychological resources in buffering the negative impact of external pressures and fostering positive outcomes for students [3] [4] [5].

In order to discover the factors impacting the PPC of Chinese college students in their daily lives since the PPC plays such an indispensable role in their academic performance, this study aims to discuss the correlation between the number of final tests and the PPC of college students from Wenzhou-Kean University. Score of the PPC will be randomly recruited from Wenzhou-Kean University. Regression analysis will be carried out on two sets of data in this study: PPC scores and NFT, and PPC scores and NFP. It is anticipated from the experiment that there would be two hypotheses in total. Hypothesis 1: PPC has negative correlation with NFT. Hypothesis 2: PPC has negative correlation with NFP. In this study, NFT is IV1, NFP is IV2, and PPC is DV.

2. Reaserch methodology

This study used SPSS26.0 and bootstrap for data analysis.

2.1. Measures

The Positive Psychological Capital Scale used the scale developed [6], adapting the questions to the college student population. The Luthans et al. Positive Psychological Capital Scale focuses primarily on work and goal accomplishment in companies, enhancing the restricted research framework with college students and the general public. The reliability of this scale has been tested by several experts. There are 20 questions on the scale.

2.2. Participants and Procedures

In this study, the questionnaire was distributed to students at Wenzhou-Kean University, including undergraduate and graduate students. This questionnaire began to be distributed online through the Internet on September 2th, 2033 and lasted 25 days. A total of 45 questionnaires were obtained, of which 42 questionnaires will be used for this study.

2.3. Control variables

Wenzhou-Kean University has a much smaller student population than other schools, and the enthusiasm of students to fill out questionnaires is relatively low. Limited by the factors considered above, this study did not control the age of the participants, which college they came from, and their hometown. This study mainly controlled the grade of the people who participated in the questionnaire and the number of final tests.

3. Result and discussion

3.1. Descriptive analysis

Descriptive line statistical analysis of demographic variables based on data collected from 42 participants revealed that 47.6% of participants were male. The proportion of women is 50%. In addition, most junior and senior students participated in the questionnaire, reaching 33.3% and 35.7% respectively (the total is 69%, accounting for the vast majority). From a professional perspective, participants from the College of Liberal Art (CLA) reached 40.5%, while participants from the College of Business & Public Management reached 42.9%. The specific data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of participants

Demographic Variable	Type	Frequency	Ratio (%)
Gender	Male	20	47.60%
	Female	21	50.00%
	Prefer not to say	1	2.40%
	Total	42	100.00%
Year of Study	Freshmen	7	16.70%
	Sophomore	6	14.30%
	Junior	14	33.30%
	Senior	15	35.70%
	Total	42	100.00%
Types of Colleges	CLA	17	40.50%
	CBPM	18	42.90%
	CSMT	4	9.50%
	Architecture and Design	3	7.10%
	Total	42	100.00%

3.2. Hypothesis Testing

A Pearson correlation analysis was carried out on each variable to show if the variables were associated with one another. The result is shown by SPSS 26 in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation analysis.

		TotalScore	NFP	NFT
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Table 2: (continued).

TotalScore	Pearson Correlation	1	0.096	0.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.544	0.652
NFP	Pearson Correlation	0.096	1	-.378*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.544		0.014
NFT	Pearson Correlation	0.072	-.378*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.652	0.014	
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Note: The lower triangle is the Pearson correlation coefficient between variables; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$. NFT: number of final tests; NFP: number of final papers; PPC: Positive Psychological Capital.

In Table 2., The correlation coefficients between NFT and PPC were significant at 0.072, and the correlation coefficients between NFP and PPC were significant at 0.096. These results indicate a positive relationship between NFT and PPC, and also a positive relationship between NFP and PPC.

3.3. Regression Analysis

Two regression analysis graphs are demonstrated by SPSS 26 to indicate correlation between PPC and NFT, and correlation between PPC and NFP.

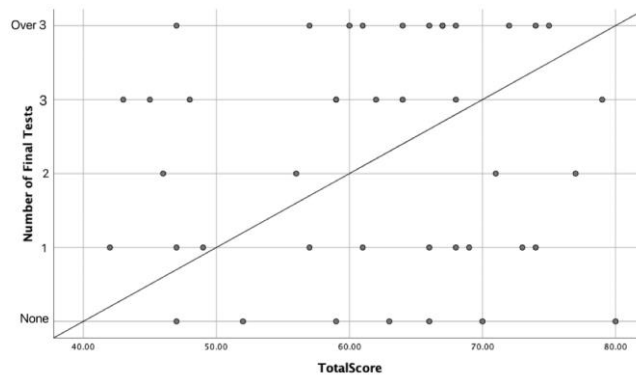


Figure 1: Correlation between NFT and PPC

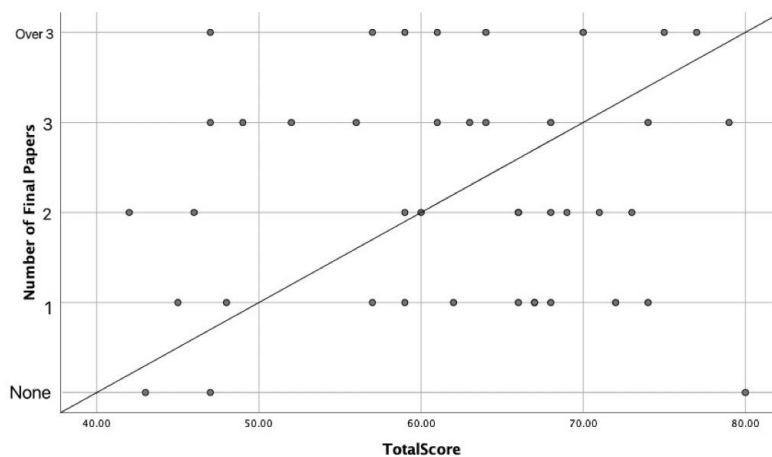


Figure 2: Correlation between NFP and PPC

Simple scatter graph of both two hypothesis shared a weak correlation between variables which means the correlation of the two variables in Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 does not hold.

4. Limitation

This study is a cross-sectional study which lacks longitudinal methods to collect data from participants. For example, the author collected data four times (one week before midterm week, one week after midterm week, one week before final week, and one week after final week) to make comparison of difference results. Besides, use of questionnaires raises the possibility of participants reporting false data. Since the sample scope was selected at Wenzhou-Kean University and lacks external validity, this study cannot be used as a reference for external parties (such as other universities). Since most of the sample size comes from juniors and seniors, they may experience a practice effect more than other sophomores and freshmen in facing final stress. In the end, too small a sample size can easily lead to unreliability in the results of this study.

5. Conclusion

The following conclusions can be formed based on the study's findings. Hypothesis 1 is rejected, which means there is no negative correlation between PPC and NFT. Hypothesis 2 is rejected, which means there is no negative correlation between PPC and NFP. In summary, both of NFT and NFP will not impact PPC of students from Wenzhou-Kean University. However, it is an optimistic outcome to interpret that mental health of students from Wenzhou-Kean University will not easily be impacted by NFT and NFP.

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Sociocultural Theory in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract: Early childhood education (ECE) is pivotal for children's development, with Lev Vygotsky and Urie Bronfenbrenner's sociocultural theory stressing social interactions and family engagement. Sociocultural principles advocate for tailored learning within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and emphasize language's role in cognitive development. However, ECE faces challenges like funding shortages and staff turnover, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sociocultural theory suggests collaborative partnerships to address these issues, stressing educator-student and family-school connections. It also advocates for community involvement to bridge financial gaps and highlights the importance of professional development for teachers. Family participation is crucial, recognizing diverse family influences and educational styles. Sociocultural theory promotes inclusive practices accommodating diverse needs, temperaments, and learning styles, fostering creativity, problem-solving, and socialization in ECE settings. Early childhood education (ECE) is pivotal for children's development, with Lev Vygotsky and Urie Bronfenbrenner's sociocultural theory stressing social interactions and family engagement. Sociocultural principles advocate for tailored learning within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and emphasize language's role in cognitive development. However, ECE faces challenges like funding shortages and staff turnover, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sociocultural theory suggests collaborative partnerships to address these issues, stressing educator-student and family-school connections. It also advocates for community involvement to bridge financial gaps and highlights the importance of professional development for teachers. Family participation is crucial, recognizing diverse family influences and educational styles. Sociocultural theory promotes inclusive practices accommodating diverse needs, temperaments, and learning styles, fostering creativity, problem-solving, and socialization in ECE settings.

Keywords: Sociocultural theory, early childhood education, zone of proximal development, holistic development, personalized learning

1. Introduction

Early childhood education (ECE) influences young learners' cognitive, social, and emotional development, which in turn affects their futures. Child growth is very flexible and responsive during the formative years, which are widely recognized as being crucial. During this formative period, family, school, and sociocultural variables interact aggressively. Academics and educators are describing the dynamics of early childhood education using sociocultural theory since it provides a

foundation for lifetime learning and holistic development. According to Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory [1], early children's learning experiences are greatly influenced by social interactions, cultural influences, and familial participation. It argues that people's thoughts are influenced by their ties with their sociocultural surroundings and emphasizes how intertwined people are with them. This essay looks at early childhood education from a sociocultural perspective. This integration's theoretical foundations, practical applications, and current challenges will be covered. This study argues that sociocultural theory in early childhood education promotes comprehensive engagement, personalized learning, and meaningful relationships in order to produce optimal developmental outcomes for young learners. These traits will be looked at in the following sections, which will also demonstrate how creative sociocultural theory can be in the field of early childhood education.

2. Research Questions

How does sociocultural theory address current challenges in early childhood education and offer a more comprehensive and democratic approach to raising young children?

3. Research Methods

Essential documents, research projects, scholarly articles, and the literature on sociocultural theory in early childhood education are reviewed. The report includes qualitative insights based on the author's experiences with the early childhood education and family engagement project.

The study aims to investigate the principles of sociocultural theory in the context of early childhood education, examining its relevance amidst challenges such as financing, staffing, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also explores how sociocultural theory can address these issues and promote inclusivity in early childhood education, emphasizing the importance of considering educational and familial influences on young children's cognitive and emotional development.

4. Sociocultural Theory-Based Early Childhood Education

In 1978, Lev Vygotsky revolutionized child development with his sociocultural theory [2]. This theory highlights socialization and culture's impact on children's development. This essay discusses Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and child development. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory states that children learn from peers and their surroundings. Unlike traditional theories that highlight natural abilities and internal processes, Vygotsky's approach emphasizes social interaction and cultural backdrop in child development. This perspective values social interactions and the environment over genetics-driven development. The ZPD finest illustrates Vygotsky's "scaffolded learning," which underpins his theory. ZPD is essential and growing in sociocultural theory. It shows what a child can do alone and what they require adult or older peer help with. Child development depends on the ZPD, which defines the ideal learning and growth zone.

ZPD social mediation increases learning. It says youngsters learn better with adult help and instruction[3]. It challenges the universal approach to education and highlights the need to tailor courses to each student's needs and skills. Research by Rogoff[4] and Wertsch[5] has demonstrated the importance of scaffolding and collaborative learning experiences in facilitating children's development within their ZPD. ECE teachers utilize the ZPD to tailor classes to individual children. Early childhood educators use the ZPD and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory to create a pleasant learning environment. Each student's ZPD and developmental stage can be used to adapt training to give the right balance of challenge and support. Guided exploration and cooperative learning help children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. To scaffold learning, ECE teachers must monitor, measure, and determine each child's ZPD. After ZPD identification, teachers can train and enable the child to complete previously impossible tasks. A teacher could help a child with name-

writing letters. Through this cooperative effort, children gain self-assurance and acquire new skills. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory also emphasizes how peer interaction affects a child's development. Children pick up knowledge from their classmates. Peer interactions help with social skills, cooperative problem-solving, and idea-sharing. Fostering a collaborative classroom atmosphere where children can cooperate, exchange ideas, and learn from one another is beneficial for ECE teachers.

In addition to cognitive development, the sociocultural paradigm emphasizes the importance of early relationships for social and emotional development. Children's ties to carers and peers influence their relationships and mental health. These early relationships can influence a child's sense of self-worth, empathy, and emotional regulation. Early childhood educators can assist children's social and emotional development in the classroom by fostering a caring and accepting environment. Children are more likely to develop healthy attachments and strong peer connections when they feel protected and appreciated. Teachers may help children learn how to manage their emotions by offering them emotional support, teaching them how to resolve conflicts, and modeling acceptable social behavior.

The sociocultural theory emphasizes how language contributes to the growth of cognition [6]. It emphasizes conversation and interaction as powerful learning and thought processes. Creating language-rich environments where children actively participate in group activities, storytelling, and conversations that foster verbal expression and cognitive development is the core of this approach to teaching early childhood education. In socioculturally enriched classrooms, children's language abilities improve by 20% as a result of group projects, storytelling, and conversations with peers and adults. The interconnectedness of human development with sociocultural environments is acknowledged by sociocultural theory, in contrast to behaviorist and cognitive theories like those of Piaget and Skinner. According to this approach, the kid is viewed as an active participant in a social and cultural setting where the practices, individuals, and materials all have a significant influence on the development of the child.

Sociocultural theory holds that children acquire knowledge on their own. They use the world to give their relationships with it meaning and comprehension, as opposed to just absorbing it. Current cognitive psychology research emphasizes the active and constructive aspects of cognition. A key idea in sociocultural theory, the ZPD makes explicit how dynamic learning and growth are. It compares a child's ability when left on their own and when given assistance. A developmental "zone" where learning is possible is called the ZPD. In this zone, kids can attempt tasks that are just a little bit difficult for them but manageable with help from an adult with more experience. ZPD is essential for ECE. This approach helps educators create learning environments for their pupils that are both demanding and controllable. If they receive the proper support and direction, teachers can use their ZPD to scaffold students' learning and teach them new skills. Differentiated education recognizes that children acquire knowledge at varying speeds. Language and communication development are also highlighted by sociocultural theory as components of social learning. Language is vital to cognitive development, according to Vygotsky. Language facilitates social interaction and thought processes. Youngsters with linguistic skills are more capable of reasoning, communicating, and problem-solving. Talking allows kids to express themselves, think, and communicate, which advances their cognitive development.

5. Issues with Education for Young Children

Early childhood education is based on the sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner. This theoretical approach emphasizes the influence of social and cultural elements on children's learning, education, and development. It emphasizes the significance of social connections, cultural environment, and meaningful activities for cognitive development. Despite the solid theoretical foundations of sociocultural theory, a number of challenges in modern culture may hinder early

childhood education from realizing its full potential. Funding is one of the biggest problems in early childhood education. High-quality early childhood education programs need sufficient funding. The Balance Table shows, with minor deviations, the average age of children in different learning situations. The main worry is that early childhood education may be significantly impacted by differences in income between various locations.

The study indicates that insufficient funding may lead to a lower teacher-to-student ratio, crowded classrooms, and a shortage of resources. Even while children in different settings tend to be somewhat similar in age on average, financing can lead to notable variations in these crucial measures, which can have a direct impact on how young children learn and interact with others. Based on the facts at hand, early childhood educators can encounter challenges in establishing a supportive and engaging learning environment due to resource constraints. Meaningful social connections and scaffolded learning are essential aspects of sociocultural theory, but crowded classrooms, high student-teacher ratios, and a lack of resources for education may compromise them. Teachers might not be able to provide every child the individualized attention and assistance they need to foster their social and cognitive development because of these difficulties.

Staffing is a severe issue in early childhood education[7]. Staffing issues have an impact on learning and engagement quality, but the Balance Table does not address them. A healthy learning environment is dependent on having early childhood educators who are both motivated and well-trained, as they have a significant impact on children's social and cultural relationships. However, low compensation, a high turnover rate, and a lack of opportunities for professional development discourage exceptional teachers from entering and staying in the industry. The steady educator-child interactions required for the successful application of sociocultural theory can be hampered by high staff turnover. Frequent teacher turnover may hinder children's social and cognitive development because it prevents teachers from building meaningful relationships and trust. Low compensation may deter talented people from pursuing careers in early childhood education, which would reduce the number of dedicated and talented educators in the field. It can also be more difficult for teachers to adapt to changing teaching styles and fulfill the requirements of younger students if they have not had enough professional development.

The stats don't explicitly reflect it, but the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated issues with early childhood education. Closing early childhood education facilities, the abrupt switch to remote instruction, and changes to daily routines have affected teachers and young children. These disturbances have exacerbated field problems and complicated the use of sociocultural theory. Early childhood education programs had to close because of the outbreak, which affected the education of the kids. The sociocultural theory's focus on situated learning and social interaction may conflict with the absence of social connections and cultural background in distant learning. Disruptions to children's regular routines and social interactions can be detrimental to their socioemotional development, in addition to hindering effective learning.

6. Overcoming Challenges in Sociocultural Theory

It is possible to overcome these problems with sociocultural theory. Building supportive relationships is the first step towards fixing these problems. Teachers and students form deep bonds in a well-functioning sociocultural educational framework, which creates a safe and stimulating learning environment[8]. They establish a nurturing environment, listen to youngsters, and deal with their problems. The importance of family involvement in education is also highlighted by sociocultural theory. It acknowledges the importance of families—including blended and extended families—in a child's development. When educators acknowledge the distinctive characteristics of every family and establish robust collaborations, a welcoming and encouraging learning atmosphere ensues. The sociocultural theory emphasizes community collaboration when it comes to money matters. Utilise

neighborhood resources, include families in decision-making and seek out community assistance in order to close the financial gap. ECE institutions can improve and broaden the learning settings for kids by cultivating community relationships. Sociocultural theory requires professional development for educators to solve staffing issues. By using sociocultural theory and applying it through training courses, educators may create engaging and meaningful learning experiences.

7. Sociocultural Approaches to Family Engagement in Early Childhood Education

Sociocultural theory places a strong emphasis on family engagement in early childhood education because of the diverse roles and relationships that families play in the lives of their children. This approach emphasizes how important family dynamics are to a child's education. Family involvement in school is crucial to development since the family is often a child's first and most impactful social environment. There is more to this variation than just gender and age. It presents a strong argument for the importance of respecting each child's distinct cultural and familial background. This kind of knowledge, which is consistent with sociocultural theory, is essential to inclusive and effective early childhood education.

Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory states that social situations are where learning and growth take place[3]. Children learn and comprehend better when they have social connections, especially when it comes to situations involving family and culture. Therefore, a welcoming learning atmosphere is essential for children with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. These distinctions offer significant chances for reciprocal development and kinship. Including a variety of cultural viewpoints in the curriculum has several benefits. Children raised in multicultural environments are thirty percent more likely to embrace cultural diversity, according to research promoting empathy and global knowledge in children and providing them with a well-rounded education that prepares them for a diverse world. Understanding the various levels of involvement and expectations surrounding education among families is necessary for family engagement. Teachers need to be inclusive and flexible in order to facilitate genuine family engagement. The findings indicate that children's social decisions have an impact on early childhood interventions. Sociocultural theory can be used to improve family interactions and offer children a sense of value, encouragement, and incentive to learn. In early childhood settings, relationships between children, families, and educators are crucial for promoting trust and healthy interactions.

8. Adjustments to Children Differ in their Temperaments.

Some have more intense actions or preferences than others. An infant's natural, biologically derived emotional and behavioral traits determine their temperament. Temperamental differences have an impact on child development and early childhood education[9]. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes how a kid grows up in their social and cultural surroundings. Essentially, this theory holds that children's development is greatly influenced by their classmates, carers, and community culture. It is imperative to understand and accept temperamental variances to foster a rich learning environment in an all-encompassing approach to early childhood education. Strong-willed kids may present extraordinary obstacles in the setting of early childhood education, according to research. Higher levels of activity, behavioural reactions, and emotional reactivity characterize intense temperaments. These kids may act out in challenging ways out of concern, rage, or frustration. Instructors must be ready to discuss these issues and provide assistance.

Strong-willed kids can need extra supervision, structure, or specialized training, and maybe universal education wouldn't work. It is beneficial for these kids. Instead, adapted learning environments, tailored pedagogies, and flexible scheduling could be needed to meet their demands. Instructors must also be patient and empathetic towards these young learners. Establishing a healthy

learning environment requires acknowledging and appreciating the child's enthusiasm. Building solid, pleasant relationships is essential when working with children who have strong personalities. These connections allow kids to live in a loving and secure environment. Respected and understood children learn more and develop healthy self-images. It's also essential to comprehend the perspective of kids with solid temperaments. It's critical to recognize that their dramatic responses may have less to do with rebellion and more to do with temperament. Teachers can help these kids by identifying their feelings and offering assistance.

Furthermore, by recognizing that learning includes identity building, self-regulation, and socio-emotional development—all of which are congruent with holistic development—sociocultural theory encourages educators to use a holistic approach to teaching. This study illustrates the difficulty of integrating sociocultural theory into early childhood education. These include the need for intensive teacher preparation, cultural adaptation, and problems related to equity and inclusion. Academics, legislators, and educators must work together to integrate sociocultural theory into the educational process successfully.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, integrating sociocultural theory into early childhood education offers a promising framework for fostering inclusive, dynamic, and effective learning environments. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the significance of social interactions, cultural contexts, and family involvement in children's cognitive and emotional development. Through concepts such as the zone of proximal development, cultural tools, and guided participation, educators can tailor learning experiences to meet the diverse needs of each student while promoting collaboration, reciprocal teaching, and cultural awareness.

Moreover, sociocultural theory advocates for a holistic approach to education, recognizing the interconnectedness of development's cognitive, social, emotional, and cultural aspects. By addressing challenges such as funding shortages, staffing issues, and the impact of events like the COVID-19 pandemic, sociocultural theory offers strategies for building supportive relationships, involving families, engaging communities, and providing professional development for educators.

Despite the challenges of implementing sociocultural theory in early childhood education, its potential benefits for promoting inclusive practices, personalized learning, and meaningful relationships are evident. Moving forward, collaborative efforts among academics, policymakers, and educators will be essential to successfully integrate sociocultural theory into early childhood education, ultimately enhancing the quality and equity of educational experiences for young learners.

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Cultivating Diverse Harmonic Thinking in Improvisational Accompaniment: Strategies and Case Studies Exploration

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Abstract: As compulsory courses for music major students, improvisational accompaniment has gradually received significant attention from universities and scholars. However, due to the comprehensive and complex nature of its curriculum content, achieving the preset teaching objectives often proves challenging during the teaching process. Consequently, many students feel the need to enhance their improvisational accompaniment skills even after entering the workforce. The cultivation of harmonic thinking abilities is identified as a crucial factor in improving improvisational accompaniment proficiency, deserving ample attention. This paper aims to outline strategies for comprehensively strengthening students' harmonic thinking abilities. By incorporating teaching examples for analysis, it seeks to address the deficiency in students' harmonic thinking abilities, thereby further enhancing the effectiveness of improvisational accompaniment teaching.

Keywords: Improvisational Accompaniment, Harmonic Thinking, Teaching, Music Education

1. Introduction

As music education evolves, improvisational accompaniment has become vital for music majors, garnering attention from universities and scholars. However, the complexity of the curriculum often hinders achieving teaching objectives, prompting students to seek further enhancement of their improvisational skills post-graduation. Cultivating harmonic thinking is crucial for improving improvisational proficiency. Traditional harmonic methods fall short in meeting modern musical demands. This paper explores strategies for fostering diverse harmonic thinking in improvisational accompaniment teaching, enhancing students' interdisciplinary practice and musical literacy. Innovative approaches, such as integrating diverse musical styles, adopting compositional principles, and utilizing inner auditory perception, are proposed. Emphasis on practice and reflection aims to develop students' harmonic thinking comprehensively, enhancing their improvisational skills. This endeavor is pivotal for nurturing music educators with innovative prowess.

2. Analysis of the Current State of Improvisational Accompaniment Teaching System

Improvisational accompaniment is a comprehensive artistic form that integrates keyboard performance techniques, knowledge of harmonic theory, expertise in accompaniment texture application, and rich imagination. Proficiency in improvisational accompaniment necessitates a profound musical foundation[1] Moreover, as a compulsory course for music majors, improvisational accompaniment holds a significant position within the professional music education system of higher institutions, with a wealth of excellent research findings and teaching materials accumulated over the years. [2]

Traditionally oriented towards employment prospects, the curriculum of improvisational accompaniment in music education programs primarily aims to cultivate students' abilities in arranging accompaniments for songs in primary and secondary school teaching materials. Although most students grasp the general methods of arranging simple harmonic functions, they often lack understanding in the organization and principles of chord structures, as well as the techniques for expanding tonalities in arrangement. Furthermore, there is a deficiency in improvisational composition and performance skills, making it challenging for them to develop a robust inner auditory perception and diversified harmonic thinking.

In recent years, the author has encountered music majors from diverse academic backgrounds, including music education (normal), music performance, transfer from non-music to music majors, and vocational music education, with varying levels of proficiency in keyboard performance. After extensive review, collection, and study of numerous teaching materials and literature, it becomes apparent that the prevailing teaching system often divides the arranging process into three main components: Firstly, a simple analysis of the song's key, mode, and structure; secondly, arranging harmonic functions for the melody, with harmony as the primary criterion; thirdly, selecting accompaniment textures that match the melody style based on different keyboard performance abilities.

Through evaluation feedback and communication with students, it is evident that a significant portion of students still have vague understandings of chord properties, the sonic effects of chords, and the functional logic between them, despite theoretical explanations and simple demonstrations by teachers regarding major thirds, minor thirds, and altered chords. Consequently, upon entering educational positions, they encounter various difficulties. To achieve better teaching outcomes, diligent students may use song scores for accompaniment practice, while others rely on intuition for chord progression, resulting in improvised accompaniments that do not necessarily match the song's style. Consequently, innovative and personalized harmonic function schemes are lacking.

Although the author's expertise lies in traditional compositional techniques and theories, they frequently engage with contemporary popular music works alongside their teaching responsibilities. In doing so, they have encountered numerous outstanding compositions. Through the process of "deconstructing" and rearranging these works, the author has gained a deeper appreciation for the significant enhancement in overall quality that meticulous harmonic arrangements can bring to a composition. It is observed that for many music majors, their level of aural perception or inner auditory acuity may make it challenging to grasp the harmonic progressions within a song upon initial listening. However, when instructed to consistently practice playing chords or pre-arranged harmonic songs for a period, some students pleasantly surprise as their understanding of harmonic arrangement gradually clarifies, and their arranging logic becomes more rigorous. This observation prompts the author's consideration that to address issues in students' harmonic thinking, it is imperative to broaden their musical horizons. Introducing students to a diverse range of musical genres enables them to learn the harmonic arrangement concepts embedded in exceptional works. Moreover, drawing from

the practice methods of popular and jazz keyboard improvisation can not only enrich teaching content but also yield favorable teaching outcomes.

3. Cultivating Diversified Harmonic Thinking in Improvisational Accompaniment

3.1. The cultivation of diversified harmonic thinking ability

The cultivation of harmonic thinking ability entails the capacity to perceive and comprehend various harmonic sound structures. This encompasses not only the discernment of chord properties but also the ability to assess the functional tendencies within harmonic progressions. Such proficiency necessitates prolonged engagement in arranging and performance practices. Upon mastering these skills, the flexible application of phrase structures from musical compositions to improvisational accompaniment practices is essential for achieving favorable auditory outcomes. Evidently, this is an outcome of collaborative efforts across multiple academic disciplines. Therefore, in pedagogy, the primary task is to enable students to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate melodic and harmonic pairings. Without the ability to discern the correctness of harmonic arrangements, students cannot develop the capability to arrange harmonies.[3]

3.2. The cultivation of diversified harmonic thinking ability

The cultivation of students' harmonic thinking ability is a long-term and arduous task, requiring both an understanding of the general principles of musical development within compositions and the capability to swiftly select the correct harmonic functions in a manner akin to "muscle memory." [4] Moreover, due to the unique nature of improvisational accompaniment as an art form, it is common for different arrangements to be devised by the same individual for the same piece, posing challenges in teaching. It is imperative to remind students that "improvisation" does not imply haphazard or arbitrary performance, but rather demands rigorous logic and intricate conception. While arrangements may vary, the conceptual framework must remain clear and accurate.

Drawing upon teaching examples, this discussion will delve into methods for enhancing students' harmonic thinking ability, encompassing skills such as chord selection, arrangement within keys, arrangement outside keys, and modulation techniques.

3.2.1. The capacity for harmonic selection

Songs, as relatively short and comparatively simple musical forms, typically belong to the realm of traditional tonal music, primarily emphasizing harmony to facilitate memorization and comprehension. Although each individual's arrangement of the same song may vary significantly, harmony remains its primary characteristic. Therefore, students must possess a certain level of aural perception and fundamental knowledge of harmonic theory. Through training, they should be able to judge the appropriateness and correctness of harmonies both theoretically and perceptually.

During the initial stages of learning, when arranging harmonic functions for the melody, it is preferable to use a single chord that encompasses as many melody notes as possible. This method yields harmonious harmonic function schemes with strong auditory coherence. However, it may result in fixed harmonic rhythms and a relatively uniform harmonic palette. Particularly when arranging for songs with complex and varied melodic lines, it becomes challenging to achieve the aforementioned effects. In such cases, it is necessary to extract the essential notes from the melody, such as the middle notes of subdivided rhythms, long-duration notes of dotted rhythms, or notes occupying strong beats or positions. Simultaneously, it is essential to exclude passing tones, auxiliary tones, anticipations, and appoggiaturas, and then arrange the remaining melody notes to achieve optimal auditory outcomes.

Subsequently, students can begin with harmonic rhythms, guiding them to design appropriate harmonic rhythms, gradually diversifying and recombining the harmonic rhythms originally consisting of one or two chords per measure. Through this progressive arrangement training approach, students' harmonic thinking abilities can be effectively expanded.

The aforementioned approach is commonly employed in traditional improvisational accompaniment courses. Through systematic and scientific training, students can experience the acoustic effects of harmonic progression. However, due to the relatively weak theoretical foundation of some students and their lack of innovative deductive abilities, there is a tendency to repetitively use familiar chord arrangement schemes. Therefore, we can also consider adopting training methods from popular keyboard harmonization.

Teachers can select some widely sung and distinctive popular music pieces or relatively simple jazz standards to complement our teaching. For instance, Figure 1 is an excerpt from the first nine bars of the jazz classic "Out of Nowhere" composed by Charlie Parker, where the harmonic functions have already been arranged. Students are encouraged to repeatedly perform these well-structured and accurate harmonic progressions, selecting suitable accompaniment textures, and thereby perceive the harmonic colors. Subsequently, teachers can provide theoretical explanations, thus creating a cyclic learning process. Through this iterative approach, students' inner auditory perception and aesthetic standards will undergo substantial enhancement.



Figure 1: From Charlie Parker, "Out of Nowhere," Bars 1-9.

3.2.2. Harmonic Arrangement within Keys

Throughout the centuries-long development of music, there has been a significant period of "collective creation," during which the aesthetic value of music has largely remained within a relatively stable dimension. Nowadays, with the progress of society and the refinement of people's aesthetic tastes, new explorations have emerged since the late Romantic period, breaking free from tonal constraints, and various novel and unique musical forms have proliferated. However, for students who are still in the foundational stage of learning and training, the ability to arrange chords within keys remains crucial.

Chords composed of the seven basic tones within a key encompass various types of triads and seventh chords, satisfying initial arrangement needs. In the process of selecting harmonic arrangement schemes, rapid recognition of the functional attributes and application rules of chords is necessary.[5] It is often recommended that students classify chords according to their functionality, as shown in the table below. Extensive research findings on the characteristics and tendencies of tonic, subdominant, and dominant function chords are readily available for study, thus further elaboration is omitted here.

Table 1: Key-based Chords

Functional Attributes	Main Function	Subordinate Function	Dominant Function
Corresponding Chords	I, VI	VI, IV, II	V, III, VII

According to the table 1, the author concludes from teaching experience that when composing, the tonic chords I and VI are commonly used as primary functional chords, while the subdominant chords VI, IV, and II are frequently employed as subordinate functional chords, and the dominant chords V, III, and VII are typical for dominant functional chords. Although some chords have dual functional attributes, certain choices can be made based on their frequency of use. For instance, among the chords within the key, the III chord often functions as a subdominant chord. On the other hand, the VI chord's usage is more versatile; it can serve as a substitute for the tonic chord, adding different harmonic colors to the beginnings of two repeated phrase relationships. Additionally, it can function as a subdominant chord to propel musical development due to its two common tones with the tonic chord, playing a transitional role between stability and instability. Furthermore, it can be used at cadential points, typically appearing in the form of V(7) to VI, not only expanding the structure of the phrase but also serving as a starting point for interludes, facilitating a more natural transition between two musical sections.

To efficiently conduct logical harmonic arrangement, firstly, one should understand the general rules of musical development, namely stability-unstability-increased unstability-stability (tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic). Secondly, it's essential to remember the functional properties of chords, using the functional progression direction as a guiding principle. During this process, chords within the same functional group can be interchangeable to avoid consecutive occurrences of similar chords. Simultaneously, students should possess a certain level of proficiency in musical analysis, accurately determining the tonality of a piece, and being able to precisely divide phrases and sections. Based on establishing the harmonic functions of each phrase and section's "head" and "tail," crucial chord schemes for half cadences, cadences, cadence interruptions, and supplemental cadences can be further determined. Subsequently, harmonic fillings for the development of the middle section can be added, resulting in higher efficiency in arrangement.

It is evident that there are multiple options for the arrangement of chords within the key. As long as students understand the functional properties of chords and arrange them according to the general rules of musical development, they can achieve effective harmonic arrangements. Especially in the process of musical development, there is no need to strictly adhere to predetermined chord schemes for improvisation. Creativity can be fully unleashed, embodying the true essence of "improvisation." However, given the diverse styles and themes of songs, which often involve various conflicts and emotional changes, relying solely on chords within the key for arrangement may lack color and become monotonous over time. Therefore, after mastering the above methods proficiently, students can further enrich the expressiveness of music by incorporating chords outside the key for arrangement.

3.2.3. The ability to arrange chords outside the key

The rational use of non-diatonic chords can significantly enhance the tonal richness of accompaniment music. Among the non-diatonic chords commonly used in improvisational accompaniment are the secondary dominant and secondary subdominant chords. However, the ability

to swiftly complete arrangements often relies on "inertia," hence when guiding students, training should be supplemented with clear short-term objectives to enable proficient application of non-diatonic chords in arrangement. Firstly, it is essential to determine the positions for using non-diatonic chords. When selecting these positions, factors to consider primarily include whether they can highlight contrasts between repeated musical phrases, serve as effective fillers during relatively static melodies, and provide good transitional support at terminations or half-cadences.

For example, in the excerpt from the song "Walking with Hope" by Shen Yingjie (lyrics) and Gong Yaonian (music) shown in Figure 2, the third beat of the fourth measure marks a half-cadence. The conventional approach would be to use the dominant chord (V). However, by preceding the dominant chord with a secondary dominant chord, a sequence of minor and major triads (temporary subdominant and temporary tonic chords) is formed within this measure. This not only diversifies the nature and functional progression of the chords but also renders the subsequent resolution to the dominant chord more natural due to the progression of inner voices by semitone.

The figure displays a musical score for the song "Walking with Hope". It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time, with lyrics written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staves to indicate the harmonic progression.

Staff 1:

- Measure 1: F: I (Chord), lyrics: lue biao yi cun xin,
- Measure 2: V6 (Chord), lyrics: xian shang yi pian qing,
- Measure 3: VI (Chord), lyrics: xian shang yi pian qing,
- Measure 4: III6 (Chord), lyrics: xian shang yi pian qing,

Staff 2:

- Measure 1: IV (Chord), lyrics: feng yu tong zhou yong bu xiang wang
- Measure 2: III (Chord), lyrics: shen hou de qing yi.
- Measure 3: V7/II (Chord), lyrics: shen hou de qing yi.
- Measure 4: II (Chord), lyrics: shen hou de qing yi.
- Measure 5: V7/II (Chord), lyrics: shen hou de qing yi.
- Measure 6: V7 (Chord), lyrics: shen hou de qing yi.

Below the second staff, the lyrics are repeated in Chinese: 略表一寸心，献上一片情，风雨同舟永不相忘，深厚的情谊。

Figure 2: From Shen Yingjie (Lyrics), Gong Yaonian (Music). "Hope to Walk with You."

Furthermore, the major and minor subdominant chords mainly consist of major and minor seventh chords, while the major and minor subdominant leading chords primarily involve diminished and diminished minor seventh chords. The two differ in tonal color, with the former being brighter and tending more toward resolution, thus creating a stronger sense of anticipation in auditory perception.

The latter, on the other hand, exudes more tension due to its compressed internal structure, resulting in a stronger sense of expansion and extension upon resolution. In the last beat of the third measure in the figure above, the melody pauses for a relatively long duration. After incorporating the minor subdominant chord, which is preceded and followed by minor third chords, the raised fourth note (#F) in the minor subdominant chord stands out. Furthermore, this note has an inherent tendency to gravitate towards the temporary tonic G, leading to a satisfying resolution.

As a result, the fluctuation in auditory perception becomes more pronounced. The choice of this arrangement serves two purposes: first, to contrast with the previous sections of the melody, creating a development in the harmonic layer; second, to emphasize the logical relationship conveyed in the lyrics, highlighting the logical emphasis in the lyrics, namely, "yong bu xiang wang (never forget)," as a tribute to the "shen hou de qing yi (profound friendship)" that should not be forgotten. Therefore, to effectively enrich the content of improvisational accompaniment using non-diatonic chords, it is necessary to define the objectives of arrangement based on the analysis of the lyrics and melody structure of the song. After students become proficient in using diatonic chords, they can practice arranging non-diatonic chords based on the target chords they need to resolve to at key points in the song.

It is essential to emphasize the importance of "listening" once again: after determining the arrangement plan, students should constantly use their ears to judge whether the harmonic progression scheme is correct and whether it meets the expressive needs of the music content.

3.2.4. The ability to arrange using tonal alternation.

The application of tonal alternation techniques in arrangement and the use of non-diatonic chords share similarities in purpose, both aiming to enrich the color and depth of harmony. In improvisational accompaniment, the tonal alternation technique involves relationships between tonic and relative keys, parallel major and minor keys, and closely related keys. Since song melodies typically do not involve modulation or the presence of non-diatonic tones, this increases the difficulty for students in selecting non-diatonic chords during arrangement. The following example illustrates the practical approach to such arrangement techniques.

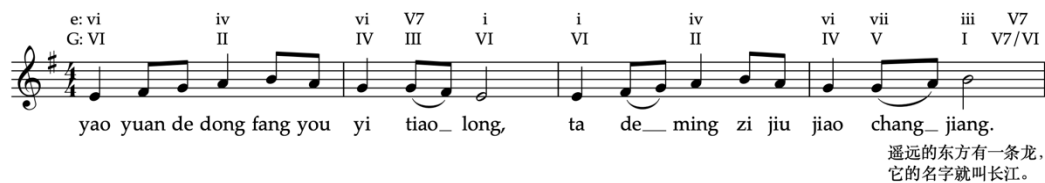


Figure 3: From Hou Dejian (Lyrics and Music). "Descendants of the Dragon."

The above Figure 3 is excerpted from the song "The Descendant of the Dragon," composed and written by Hou Dejian. It is a segment of a song in the key of E minor, where the melody does not include non-diatonic tones. Two harmonic arrangement schemes are presented above the melody: the first line is marked within the tonal environment of E minor, while the second line is marked within the tonal environment of G major.

Upon observing the first two measures, regardless of the tonal environment, the functional nature of the chords remains the same. Thus, the harmonic progression for these two measures follows the pattern of "tonic-subdominant-tonic." Subsequently, in the fourth measure, the technique of tonal alternation is applied. Here, borrowing from the parallel major key of E minor, which is G major, the progression "IV-V-I" is employed, a commonly used harmonic progression for cadences.

The consecutive major triads create a positive and bright sound, serving to propel the development of musical emotions. While the appearance of the cadence at this point would typically imply a sense of resolution, as it is only the end of a phrase, there is no prolonged stay on the tonic chord (I). Instead, it promptly returns to the tonic through the use of the subdominant chord borrowed from the parallel minor key of G major, which is E minor. This arrangement not only facilitates the transition back to the tonic but also lays the groundwork for a modulation to the key of G major in the subsequent chorus section.

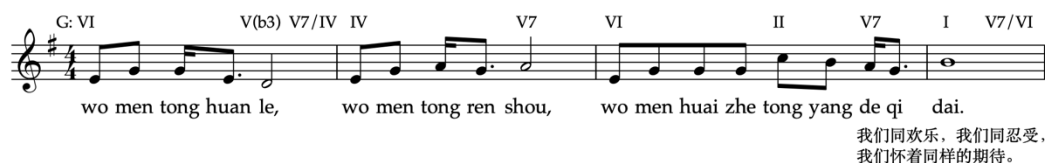


Figure 4: From Chen Zhe, Liu Xiaolin, Wang Jian, Guo Feng, Sun Ming (Lyrics), Guo Feng (Music). "Let the World Be Full of Love."

The figure 4 is excerpted from the song "Let the World Be Filled with Love" written by Chen Zhe, Liu Xiaolin, Wang Jian, Guo Feng, and Sun Ming, with music composed by Guo Feng. In the second measure of this song, the harmonic progression also employs the technique of modal interchange. The progression "b3V (II/IV)-V7/IV-IV" essentially borrows the subdominant termination harmonic progression of the key of C major, moving in the direction of the subdominant from the main key of G

major, which is the "II-V7-I" progression of C major. However, due to its short duration, it is less stable and does not create a sense of termination or modulation.

Such harmonic techniques are commonly used in the development of music and are particularly prevalent in jazz music. The temporary tonic chords resolved by this harmonic progression are typically the VI, IV, and II chords of the main key, making it an advanced supplementary version of the subdominant chord. This type of harmonic progression is characterized by strong flow between voices, noticeable alternations in chord color and harmonic progression strength, and effective filling of melodic gaps, making it suitable for use before the target subdominant chord in the development and evolution of the main theme melody, enhancing the driving force of music development and continually surprising and refreshing listeners.

Although there are numerous types of modal interchange harmonic techniques, through the analysis of the examples above, we can still identify some patterns and training strategies for harmonic arrangement. Firstly, both modal interchange and the use of borrowed chords require a clear understanding of the target chord (i.e., the temporary tonic chord). To achieve this, students should first strengthen their proficiency in playing the harmonic connections at each tonal termination, enabling their hands to keep up with changes in harmonic arrangement. Secondly, since this harmonic arrangement technique is often used in the development of music, indicating its strong dynamic nature, students should enhance their ability to quickly identify harmonic functions and analyze the structure of musical works during their regular studies, enabling them to accurately locate positions suitable for applying modal interchange harmonic arrangement techniques and thereby creating brilliant harmonic arrangement solutions to assist in the interpretation of songs.

4. Conclusion

As an essential skill for music majors, improvisation is typically applied to smaller musical genres such as songs. While improvised accompaniment may not rival the intricate design of notated accompaniment, its versatile style of arrangement and distinct personal flair often captivate audiences. However, one of the crucial factors contributing to its diverse effects is harmony, which is often a challenging aspect for students to grasp. Therefore, in teaching, it is important to use excellent arrangement schemes or works as a foundation to enhance students' ability to judge harmonic functions and their level of musical aestheticism.

At the same time, when teachers modify arrangement schemes, they should explain the reasons behind the changes to students, enabling them to gradually develop diverse harmonic thinking and eventually form their own conceptual approaches and personal styles. The above reflections are just some of the insights gained from my teaching experience. I hope that through the analysis and writing of this article, I can further contribute to the classroom. Moreover, I also hope to provide some teaching references to my colleagues and contribute my modest efforts to the cultivation of music majors with excellent professional qualities.

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Analysis of Address Terms Translation Strategies: The “Norms” in the Translation of Address Terms in Moment in Peking

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Abstract: This paper, framed within Chesterman’s translation ethics, focuses on the translation of address terms in the first volume of *Moment in Peking*. It analyzes the practical application of “professional norms” and “expected norms” in the translation of novels, exploring the strategies of address terms translation. Through comparative analysis of different Chinese translations of address terms in the first volume of *Moment in Peking* (translated by Zhang Zhenyu, Yu Fei, and machine), this paper aims to reveal the ethical and professional norms that translators should consider in the selection of address terms and explore the performance of machine translation in terms of “norms.” The study finds that the ethical principles of human translators result in higher quality and reliability of translations, while machine translation, although formally faithful, still has deficiencies in context perception, emotional discernment, and target reader cognition.

Keywords: Chesterman’s translation ethics, *Moment in Peking*, address terms, professional norms, machine translation

1. Introduction

In social communication, address terms are linguistic elements that reflect aspects of the speaker’s relationship and psychology and are typically determined by individual factors such as identity and occupation. In literary works, address terms not only reflect character relationships and character images but also the changes in them can reflect the development of the plot. Therefore, the study of address terms is of significant importance for a thorough understanding of the textual meaning.

Due to differences in cultural backgrounds and ideological concepts between Chinese and English, there are differences in address terms between the two languages. When translating novels, translators need to focus on how to better connect the text, convey the content of the article, and handle the corresponding transformation of address terms skillfully. Taking the first volume of Lin Yutang’s *Moment in Peking* as an example, it contains numerous instances of address terms, demonstrating the important function of address terms in literary works. In translating into Chinese, translators need to “reproduce” the original text while remaining loyal to the source text and the original author, and “serve” the target audience of readers. In addition, they need to consider the ethical values held by specific societies and specific periods to regulate translation behavior.

This paper takes the five translation modes proposed by Chesterman as a perspective, and through case analysis of the address terms in the first volume of *Moment in Peking* and the corresponding Chinese translations by Zhang Zhenyu, Yu Fei, and machine translation, it aims to explore the strategies of address terms translation and their practical application in the translation of novels.

2. Normative Principles from the Perspective of Translation Ethics

The translation process involves a “trinity” of “source text (author) - translation (translator) - target (reader)”, with close relationships among the three dimensions. Scholars tend to analyze the relationship between these three elements to guide translation or critical research. There is a bias towards focusing more on the conversion at the linguistic level, such as translation shifts [1], dynamic equivalence [2], and translation research from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics [3]. Beyond language and text, the cultural dimension has also received widespread attention in research. For example, the pluralistic systems theory places translation within a diverse socio-cultural context [4], while translation theorist A.K. Sinha [5] highlights the issue of cross-cultural problems in the translation process, providing specific examples to illustrate how translation may require entering into another worldview. However, most of these theories mainly focus on the translated text itself, and the subjectivity and agency of the translator deserve further in-depth research. Translation is not only about converting between two/multiple languages or facilitating cultural exchange but may also reflect the will of the translator, the demands of sponsors [6], and other factors.

Ethics refer to systematic norms and standards that guide core values and development of individuals. In 1985, Toury first proposed the “translator’s decision,” moving beyond mere textual analysis to focus on the translator’s subjective agency [7]. Then, in 1991, Nord, from the perspective of functional translation, explained that the scope or function of the translation is the most important criterion for translator decisions [8]. These viewpoints provide a theoretical foundation for the “norms” of translators. Influenced by Toury and others, Chesterman pointed out that translators’ ways of thinking and translation works are influenced by their translation theories and concepts. He borrowed the term “meme” from sociobiology and developed his translation norm theory [9]. All these translation conceptual factors converge to form a vast pool of conceptual factors (meme-pool). Once a certain translation conceptual factor dominates, a translation norm is formed [10]. He emphasizes that translators should establish genuine similarity between the source text and the translation, maintain trust, and minimize misunderstandings. This “return to ethics” translation theory emphasizes the effectiveness of interlingual communication, not only extending the viewpoint of traditional translation studies from a “description” perspective but also strengthening the scientific and normative aspects from an “evaluation” perspective.

Chesterman employs the concepts of “professional norms” and “expectancy norms” to measure the level of translators and the quality of translations. By dividing socially recognized authoritative professional translators into one subset and the ideal translations identified by readers into another subset, Chesterman conducts a descriptive study of the characteristics and patterns of these two subsets, refining the “should” norms of translation behavior for other translators. This achieves the dual goals of description and evaluation in translation norm theory [11]. “Expectancy norms” refer to the translator’s goal of translating in a manner that aligns with readers’ expectations for the translation and logically corresponds to professional norms. During the translation process, translators must carefully consider the multifaceted expectations of target language readers for the translation, including expectations regarding language choice and structure, to ensure that the translation better meets the needs and expectations of the target language readers. “Professional norms” correspond to accountability norms, communication norms, and relation norms, which impose higher requirements on translators from moral, social, and linguistic aspects. These four points collectively reflect the ethical values of clarity, truthfulness, trust, and understanding. Building upon this, Chesterman

introduces the concept of commitment norm. As a profession, translation has unique industry ethical guidelines that dictate the obligations and responsibilities translators should undertake and the professional standards they should demonstrate. This ethical requirement of professional responsibility demands that translators, in carrying out translation tasks, not only consider linguistic and cultural factors but also adhere to ethical guidelines of the profession, ensuring that their work meets high-quality, reliable standards. “Commitment ethics” serves as an alternative approach to potential conflicts among the four translation models mentioned earlier and can be considered an additional ethical dimension. In practical translation operations, translators find it difficult to adhere to all translation ethical principles simultaneously. Instead, they must strike a balance between objective constraints and subjective professional ethics to find a suitable ethical equilibrium [12].

Throughout Chesterman’s translation ethics model, it is evident that translation ethics focus on power relations in translation. Translators must not divorce their translation creations from the original text, nor can they ignore the needs of the “users (audience)”. At the same time, they need to be constrained by norms and fulfill the requirements of “clarity, truthfulness, trust, and understanding” to achieve the professional standards of professional ethics.

3. Address Terms in the First Volume of *Moment in Peking*

Moment in Peking was written in the 1930s and, with its expansive and refined narrative framework, profoundly reveals the changes and evolution of Chinese society during that period. Through vivid portrayals of characters and stories, the author Lin Yutang uses English to depict the customs and sentiments of Beijing [13], elucidating the vicissitudes of seventy years of history. To let the West understand the real China, Lin Yutang created an English novel. Therefore, this English novel possesses significant propagandistic functions [14]. The first volume begins with the Boxer Rebellion, depicting the departure of the wealthy merchant Yao Sian from Beijing. During the chaos of war, Yao Mulan, the ten-year-old daughter of the Yao family, becomes separated from her family and is later taken in by the official Zeng Wenpu. Mulan is seen as a heaven-sent match and becomes engaged to the third son of the Zeng family, Xinya. Over time, Mulan grows into a beautiful and skillful young woman. However, the tranquility of these two families’ lives is disrupted by a series of worldly upheavals. The ambitious young man Kong Lifu enters Mulan’s life. Despite Mulan’s marriage to Xinya, which turns a Taoist daughter into a Confucian daughter-in-law, Mulan harbors a deep admiration for Kong Lifu. The story involves numerous dialogues and address terms, portraying complex emotional entanglements and intricate family relationships.

Address terms are contextualized and individualized linguistic units that change with context, reflecting the structured and hierarchical nature of interpersonal relationships in language. Address terms need to meet the requirements of “face” and “mutuality,” possessing referential function, flexibility, and specificity, and can be divided into two categories: those that represent social relationships and roles and those that do not [15]. Following this definition, this paper considers address terms as “the names used by the speaker and the receiver in the process of language communication when they directly address each other through specific channels (oral, written, or electronic).” It is found that in “*Moment in Peking*,” there are many dialogues among characters, and the variations in address terms are abundant, such as “Meimei” “Chiehchieh” “Pingko” “Mother” etc.

This paper first uses BF-SUSentenceSegmenter1.0 to segment the text into sentences, then employs regular expressions to greedily filter dialogues containing address terms, and then distinguishes them according to the original context to obtain the following chapters and the frequency table of address term occurrences (Table 1). After obtaining the raw corpus, Youdao Translation is used as the machine translation tool. By comparing the translations of Zhang Zhenyu, Yu Fei, and machine translation, while appreciating and criticizing the manually translated versions, attention is given to the features of machine translation to conduct in-depth research on the following

issues:

- 1) How do human translations adhere to or exceed translation norms, and should they delete/modify/add to the original meaning?
- 2) What are the differences between machine translation and human translation in terms of “norms”? Can a certain “professional responsibility” commitment be achieved?
- 3) What are the challenges of machine translation in terms of ethics, and how should they be guided?

Table 1: Frequency and Rate of Address Terms in the First Volume of *Moment in Peking*

Chapter	Frequency of Address Terms	Chapter	Frequency of Address Terms	Chapter	Frequency of Address Terms
Chapter 1	1.1‰	Chapter 8	4.0‰	Chapter 15	1.6‰
Chapter 2	0.8‰	Chapter 9	0.9‰	Chapter 16	1.4‰
Chapter 3	2.4‰	Chapter 10	1.6‰	Chapter 17	1.1‰
Chapter 4	1.6‰	Chapter 11	1.9‰	Chapter 18	2.3‰
Chapter 5	1.0‰	Chapter 12	1.0‰	Chapter 19	1.4‰
Chapter 6	3.1‰	Chapter 13	1.2‰	Chapter 20	1.7‰
Chapter 7	1.0‰	Chapter 14	1.1‰	Chapter 21	1.3‰

4. Manifestation of Norms in Translations of *Moment in Peking*

Based on the research of scholars such as Khoshsaligheh, combined with model analysis, an understanding of the translation requirements for fidelity to the author’s tone and writing style for foreign novel readers is obtained [16]. Building upon the questionnaire testing method proposed by Khoshsaligheh et al., Dong Mei suggests that adult readers are more concerned about the quality of the literary reading experience [17]. *Moment in Peking* was written from August 1938 to August 1939 with the aim of introducing the living conditions of Chinese people to Western society. Through the focus on Yao Mulan in the first volume, Western readers can deeply feel the philosophical thoughts of Confucianism and Taoism in China. Presented in an artistic form and starting from a cultural perspective, this book injects unique cultural elements into the Chinese resistance against Japan, evoking resonance among Western readers. According to the viewpoint of American sinologist Joseph W. Esherick, in the 1940s, the understanding of China by the United States was relatively limited due to the political situation at that time, language barriers, and restrictions on information acquisition, leading to a limited understanding of the deeper historical, cultural, and social status of China [18]. Therefore, while Western scholars appreciate the literary charm of “*Moment in Peking*,” they also gain a deeper understanding of the living conditions of Chinese people and comprehend the real scenes of China’s resistance against Japan. For Chinese readers (primarily contemporary), the literary value, cultural connotations, and various aspects of Chinese traditional culture and modern society reflected in the book will resonate with them, deepening their understanding and reflection on history. Due to different purposes, the English original of *Moment in Peking* (which is a re-translation and equally worthy of analysis) and the Chinese translations should be considered from different perspectives in order to discuss corresponding norms.

Expressions related to identity, status, and seniority in the English original’s address terms precisely arouse the curiosity of Western readers. Similarly, the corresponding dialectal or colloquial expressions in the Chinese translations are intriguing at the linguistic level, as shown below:

Example 1. In Chapter Three, when Mulan first sees Ailian, the daughter of Sister Cassia, in the Zeng family:

Table 2: Original Text and Translations of Example One

<i>Moment in Peking</i>	Zhang's Translation	Yu's Translation	Machine Translation
“The child doesn't know who you are yet,” said the wife. “Mulan, this is Chien Yima. “ “Call me Sister Cassia, Hsiaochieh.” “That she also can do,” said Mrs. Tseng, “but you need not call her Miss Yao; just call her Mulan. “ “Mulan, you are going to have a little sister. Her name is Ailien,” said Cassia. “This is Mulan Chiehchieh (elder sister),” she said to Ailien. The little six-year-old girl smiled and hid her face in her mother's dress.	太太说：“孩子还不知道你是谁呢。木兰，她是钱姨妈。” “小姐，叫我桂姐吧。” 曾太太说：“那样也可以。不过你也不要叫她姚小姐，就叫她木兰好了。” 桂姐说：“木兰，你还有个妹妹，她叫爱莲。” 她跟爱莲说：“这是木兰姐姐。”六岁大的小姑娘微微一笑，把脸藏在母亲的怀里。	“这孩子还不知道你是谁呢，”曾太太说，“木兰，这是钱姨妈。” “叫我桂姐吧，小姐。” “那也行，”曾太太说，“但是你必须叫她姚小姐，就叫木兰。” “木兰，你有个小妹妹。她名叫爱莲。”桂姐说。 “这是木兰姐姐。”她对爱莲说。这个六岁的小姑娘笑了，把小脸藏到妈妈衣服里。	“孩子还不知道你是谁呢，”妻子说。“木兰，这是钱一马。” “叫我桂皮姐姐吧，小杰。” 曾太太说：“这也可以，不过你不必叫她姚小姐。就叫她木兰吧。” “木兰，你要有一个小妹妹了。她叫艾琳。”凯西娅说。 “我是木兰姐姐，”她对艾琳说。这个六岁的小女孩笑了，把脸藏在妈妈的裙子里。

This passage has typical representation: in Example One, there are a total of address terms such as “yima” “wife” “Mulan” “Chien Yima” “Sister Cassia” “Hsiaochieh” “Miss Yao” “Mulan” “Ailian” and “Chiehchieh (elder sister).” In *Moment in Peking*, address terms are often presented in forms such as phonetics, identity + surname, rewritten phonetics, rewritten English names, and identity; in the translations by Zhang and Yu, it is easy to understand the relationships between characters, which is more in line with the expression habits of Chinese and thus more readily accepted. Both translations exhibit significant consistency in the identity of the characters. The problem is more pronounced in the machine translation version, where the grasp of character relationships and identities is not sufficiently clear.

Expectancy norms emphasize meeting readers' expectations for translations, involving the rational use of language choices and structures. From the perspective of Western readers, *Moment in Peking* reflects Chinese culture, social customs, etc., from a literary perspective. To ensure that Western readers can understand and appreciate this novel more smoothly, detailed explanations are needed regarding clothing, food, housing, transportation, marriage, funerals, relationships between characters, etc., to enable readers to gain a deeper understanding and immerse themselves in the story. For example, “yima,” which is the phonetic form of “aunt,” in this case, “Sister Cassia” is the second wife of the Tseng family, with no blood relation to Mulan; in the original, the same character appears with both familial and social titles, and “the wife” earlier in the text refers to Mrs. Tseng, not wife in general. This interchange aligns with the linguistic habits of Chinese: it refers to different people from

different perspectives, and naturally changes due to different social relationships. “Sister Cassia” is actually another relative, and the modification of her name here leads to name confusion: Cassia originates from the name of a French saint from the fourth century, while many other names in the original are directly written in Chinese phonetics. The difference between the two may confuse readers. Moreover, based on expectancy norms, foreign readers do not fully understand the complex relationships in large families, which arouses curiosity about this culture. The re-translation in the original work is still worthy of scrutiny: “Chiehchieh (elder sister)” not only shows the pronunciation in Chinese but also adds the real meaning, making the specific identity of the character clearer to readers and providing more information about Chinese address terms - in contrast, “yima” and “Hsiaochieh” have similar corresponding character identities in Western culture. In terms of addressing, Western culture mainly addresses relatives directly by their names or uses nicknames; here, additional annotations can be made to reduce misunderstandings. Chinese readers expect to see a kind of Beijing culture in their impressions and a sense of homeland in their blood. The Chinese translations of the original work perform well in meeting these expectations, while the translated versions in machine translations are obviously unable to extract the deeper meanings of the text and can only perform a simple literal comparison. The translated versions produced by machine translations without verification, such as “yima” directly translated as “一马” (“yima” is misinterpreted as “一马,” meaning “a horse”), “Cassie” translated as “桂皮” (“Cassie” is mistranslated as “桂皮,” meaning “cinnamon”), and “Hsiaochieh” translated as “小杰” (“Hsiaochieh” is mistranslated as “小杰,” meaning “Xiao Jie”), are all obvious mistranslations, unable to meet the normal reading needs. This further illustrates that machine translation focuses on the text during work, separating the “trinity” of translation, although it acts as a “translator,” it only considers the “author” and is not suitable for texts with high interactivity; human translation, based on understanding the expectations of readers, can reprocess the ambiguous expressions in the original text, achieve fitting with the original text through appropriate adjustments, and meet readers’ expectations for language forms.

Although the original text and translations are aimed at different readerships, terms of kinship present challenges for translation in terms of accountability, communication, and relationship aspects. Professional norms involve accountability norms, communication norms, and relationship norms, requiring translators to achieve higher levels in morality, society, and language. Accountability norms regulate personal relationships between translators and other stakeholders (such as authors, commissioners, clients, readers, and other translators); communication norms stipulate that translators should optimize communication; and relationship norms, the most crucial aspect, require ensuring “the establishment and maintenance of appropriate corresponding relationships between the source text and the target text.” When dealing with the translation of kinship terms, communicative ethics demand that translators be keenly aware of the importance and significance of address terms in different cultural backgrounds. In the translation process, translators must handle them cautiously to ensure that the translation maintains appropriate respect and politeness in the target language culture. Normative ethics require translators to select appropriate terms of address to convey the meaning and emotion of the original text according to the habits and conventions of the target language and culture. This may involve a deep understanding of the meanings, usage scenarios, and social status of different terms of address, as well as familiarity with and mastery of the corresponding address customs in the target language culture.

Chinese kinship terms are more complex than English, making them more challenging to convey: In China, there are two types of relatives. One type is consanguineous, referring to relatives with blood relations. The other type is affine, referring to relatives formed through marriage. Blood relationships also influence the formation of kinship terms [19]. Many blood and affinity kinship

relationships appear in *Moment in Peking*, as shown in Example 2:

Example 2. Kinship Terms and Translations (Table 3).

Table 3: Kinship Terms Appearing in Chapter Four

<i>Moment in Peking</i>	Zhang's Translation	Yu's Translation	Machine Translation
Old Ancestor	老祖宗	老祖宗	古老的祖先
Good sister-in-law	好姨娘	好姐姐	好嫂子
Sister-in-law	嫂子	好嫂子	嫂子
Mother	妈	妈	妈妈
My child	我的儿	我的心肝	我的孩子
Such little children	那么俩小孩子	这么小的孩子	这样的小孩子
Little Number Three	小三儿	小老三	小三

According to the kinship terms appearing in Chapter Four of *Moment in Peking*, it is evident that the manual translation of the Chinese version does not entirely “reproduce” the original content but rather modifies it based on the target text, sometimes even adding translations. Although machine translation achieves “faithfulness” to the original text, it does not conform to the expression habits of the target language in practice. Here, there is a clear conflict between “reproducing the original content” and “professional norms.” “Commitment ethics” emphasizes the responsibility and commitment of translators to the translation task, placing it within a broader ethical framework. This ethical model requires translators to consider not only the text itself but also situations where various ethical principles conflict. When dealing with these conflicts, translators should make choices and make wise ethical judgments based on specific contexts and cultural backgrounds [20]. Taking the two instances of “sister-in-law” in Table 3 as an example, although they both refer to the same person (Sister Cassia), they are addressed differently by Sunya and Mulan, indicating different familial relationships. Therefore, translators need to discern this. In this case, “好姐姐” in Yu’s translation is not entirely accurate; “姨娘” typically refers to a secondary living space for high-ranking officials and nobles, commonly referred to as “Yiniang’s room (姨娘房)” or “side room.” Considering the characters’ familial relationships, Zhang’s translation is more appropriate. Both manual translations of “mother” and “my child” employ a more colloquial style, which aligns with the context of the dialogue, achieving an organic combination of “reproduction” and “norms.” “such little children” is a term of endearment used by elders for younger ones; Zhang’s translation clarifies the two children, while Yu’s translation emphasizes their young age. The phrase “这样的” in the manual translation does not actually refer to anything specific and lacks substance. Sunya is the third child, so he is referred to as “小三儿” or “小老三”. This reflects the affection of the older generation towards him. The machine translation’s “小三” is prone to misunderstanding and sounds abrupt. Thus, it can be seen that machine translation “reproduces” the form of the original text rather than its essence and needs improvement in aspects like “clarity” and “understanding” to adjust autonomously in situations where ethical principles conflict.

In contrast, the original text also follows and oversteps professional norms. Chesterman proposed that communicative ethics highlight the importance of cross-cultural communication, which requires a profound understanding not only of the source text itself but also of the overall comprehension of the original text’s information, signs, intentions, and the underlying meanings it carries [9]. Within this ethical framework, translators are encouraged to go beyond the language level and actively

explore elements such as cultural backgrounds, social customs, and contexts to ensure that the conveyed information is not only accurate but also appropriately conveyed in the target culture. The term “Old ancestor” is relatively uncommon in Western contexts; by analogy with “Old Ancestor” in *A Dream of Red Mansions*, Hawks translates it as “Lord Zheng,” intuitively reflecting the character’s relationship and better meeting the requirements of communicative ethics. Similarly, the original text can be modified to “Lord Tseng” in this context. Expressing “sister-in-law” repeatedly actually seeks to avoid readers’ potential confusion about the characters’ relationships from a reader’s perspective, and it approaches the language form more from the reader’s standpoint, making choices in the conflict between “reproduction” and “norms.”

5. Conclusion

Through the comparative analysis of different Chinese translations of *Moment in Peking* (by Zhang Zhenyu, Yu Fei, and machine), this paper aims to reveal the ethical and professional norms that translators should consider in the selection of kinship terms, and explore how these norms affect translation quality and meet reader expectations. Combining specific examples, it is found that: in the translation of kinship terms, the translator’s task is not simply to correspond in form but to conduct cultural transformation, add annotations, or transcribe and compile to help readers of the target language better understand the implied meanings and emotions in the original text. Although machine translation has made significant progress in being “faithful” to the original text, it lacks attention to readers, judgment of formal or informal language styles, and cannot promote the integration between form and content. It still requires manual editing and proofreading by human translators. In the future, emotion recognition technology can be introduced into machine translation to understand and convey the emotional nuances in kinship terms, avoiding misunderstandings or inaccuracies in translation. For novels like *Moment in Peking*, the translator’s responsibility lies precisely in ethical guidelines, ensuring the effectiveness and accuracy of cross-cultural communication, and better achieving the effective transmission of the text and the reader’s deep understanding.

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Student Attitudes and Teacher Strategies in the Aesthetic Education in Chinese Middle School Music Classes

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the current state of music education in Chinese middle schools within the context of aesthetic education. It focuses on middle school students' attitudes toward aesthetic education and the challenges and strategies music teachers face when implementing aesthetic education in their classrooms. Through questionnaires and interviews with 13 music teachers and 1032 students from 7 middle schools in Guangdong Province, this research reveals that students generally have a positive attitude toward aesthetic education, considering it an essential part of their holistic development. However, the study also identifies multiple challenges teachers face in implementing aesthetic education, including varying interests and levels of understanding among students, curriculum design and textbook selection, and a lack of adequate teaching resources and support. In response to these challenges, teachers have adopted a series of strategies, such as innovating teaching methods, utilizing technological tools, and enhancing teacher-student interaction, to improve the effectiveness of aesthetic education. This study provides an empirical basis for improving the quality of music education in Chinese middle schools and offers suggestions on how music teachers can effectively implement aesthetic education.

Keywords: Aesthetic Education, Chinese Middle Schools, Music Education, Attitudes, Challenges

1. Introduction

Aesthetic education, as an educational philosophy, aims to cultivate individuals' sense of beauty, creativity, and artistic appreciation through experiences of art and beauty. Campbell emphasizes that aesthetic education is crucial for achieving educational goals and highlights the educational function of aesthetics in enriching, cultivating, and developing genuine humaneness [1]. The international academic community has widely recognized and researched the importance of aesthetic education. Silva points out that aesthetic education helps students develop creative thinking and expressive abilities and enhances their quality and interdisciplinary thinking skills [2]. Lee believes aesthetic education can promote emotional development and social skills, fostering students' cultural confidence and global perspective [3]. Moreover, aesthetic education contributes to emotional development and mental health, helping students establish positive life attitudes and values [4]. Through learning about art and culture, students can better understand and appreciate different

cultural forms, enhance cross-cultural communication and understanding, and develop a global perspective and competency [5].

In recent years, aesthetic education has received significant attention in China. The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council issued “Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era” on October 15, 2020, emphasizing the state’s high regard for school aesthetic education [6]. This initiative demonstrates the government’s recognition and support for aesthetic work. As education reforms deepen, more research has focused on middle school students’ attitudes toward and acceptance of aesthetic education. Shih’s survey shows that most middle school students have a positive attitude toward aesthetic education, believing it enhances their artistic cultivation and aesthetic abilities, which is beneficial for their future development [7]. Jesionkowska found that middle school students prefer engaging in practical artistic activities, considering learning methods more interesting and practical [8]. However, some students believe that the arrangement of aesthetic courses is too concentrated and wish for more flexibility to match individual interests and strengths [9]. Hurley found that the acceptance of aesthetic education among some middle school students is significantly influenced by their family cultural background and personal interests, calling for better cooperation between families and schools to promote students’ holistic development [10]. Therefore, schools must focus more on individualized needs in the arrangement of aesthetic courses.

The study points out that aesthetic education faces several challenges in implementation. Some schools experience an imbalanced allocation of aesthetic resources, preventing some students from accessing high-quality aesthetic education. The content and setup of aesthetic courses often do not align with students’ actual needs and interests, lacking specificity and appeal [11]. The lack of awareness and support for aesthetic education among some parents and society affects its promotion and development [12]. Moreover, the construction of the aesthetic education teacher team faces issues, with some teachers needing to improve their professional level and teaching ability, affecting the quality of aesthetic education [13]. The integration of aesthetic education with other subjects is insufficient, lacking interdisciplinary teaching models, affecting aesthetic education’s comprehensiveness and depth [14]. Therefore, to better promote aesthetic education, it is necessary to comprehensively address these issues to improve the quality and effectiveness of aesthetic education.

While extensive, existing research on aesthetic education has notable limitations, including a focus on theory over practical teaching analysis, insufficient consideration of diverse student needs, a narrow scope that overlooks its application across various educational stages and subjects, and a lack of long-term evaluation. Future studies are encouraged to address these gaps to understand the impact of aesthetic education better. Therefore, future research needs to overcome these limitations to explore the role and impact of aesthetic education in education more comprehensively.

Empirical research on music education in China is limited compared to global standards. This study aims to investigate music education within Chinese middle schools, focusing on student attitudes toward aesthetic education and the challenges and strategies music teachers face. It seeks to enrich the literature and offer insights into global music education by examining China’s unique educational landscape. The research will address two key questions:

1. What are the attitudes of Chinese middle school students towards aesthetic education?
2. What challenges do teachers face when implementing aesthetic education in music classrooms, and how do they respond?

Exploring these questions will help to gain a deeper understanding of the actual situation of music education in China, providing an empirical basis and suggestions for improving the quality of music education.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

This study encompasses 13 music teachers and 1,032 students from seven middle schools in Guangdong Province. The teacher participants consist of seven females and six males, with an age range from 28 to 52 years old and teaching experience varying from 3 to 25 years. The student participants span grades seven through twelve, comprising 482 males (46.7%) and 550 females (53.3%). The distribution of students across grades is as follows: 156 in Grade 7, 195 in Grade 8, 167 in Grade 9, 185 in Grade 10, 174 in Grade 11, and 155 in Grade 12.

2.2. Materials and Data Collection

The research instruments comprise two main components: a student questionnaire and an interview guide for teachers. The student questionnaire is designed as a quantitative survey, covering perspectives on the importance of aesthetic education, satisfaction with the school's aesthetic education curriculum, preferences for different aesthetic activities, and suggestions for improvements to the school's aesthetic education courses. The questionnaires were distributed online for data collection to ensure anonymity and voluntariness. The questionnaires were disseminated through official school channels, achieving a response rate of 94%.

The teacher interview guide focuses on exploring the challenges encountered during the implementation of aesthetic education and the strategies adopted in response. The researchers collected teacher data using semi-structured interviews via video conferencing, each lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were recorded with participant consent. The interview includes a series of open-ended questions to guide the discussion (including, but not limited to):

1. How do you understand and practice aesthetic education in your music classroom?
2. What are your most common challenges when implementing aesthetic education?
3. What importance do you place on aesthetic education for student development? Do you have any success stories or case studies to share?
4. In your opinion, what skills and qualities should teachers possess to implement aesthetic education effectively?
5. What strategies or methods have you used in your practice of aesthetic education, and what were the outcomes?
6. How do you think schools and educational institutions can support teachers in better implementing aesthetic education?
7. What are your expectations and suggestions for the future development of aesthetic education?

2.3. Data Analysis

The student questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis to reveal students' overall attitudes toward aesthetic education and the relationships between different variables. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, including the calculation of basic statistical measures such as frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations, as well as correlation and regression analyses to explore critical factors affecting students' attitudes towards aesthetic education.

Teacher interview data were processed through content analysis, beginning with transcribing recordings into text, followed by open coding to categorize and summarize the data. Analysis was assisted by NVivo software to identify the main challenges encountered in the implementation of aesthetic education and the strategies adopted, as well as the effectiveness and limitations of these

strategies. The findings aim to provide in-depth insights and practical guidance for improving music education in middle schools.

3. Results

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of Chinese middle school students towards aesthetic education?

Table 1: Quantitative and Percentage Distribution of Aesthetic Activity Preferences Across Different Grades.

Aesthetic Activities	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Music courses	34 (21.8%)	43 (22.1%)	37 (22.2%)	38 (20.5%)	45 (25.9%)	81 (52.3%)	278 (27.0%)
Fine arts courses	45 (28.8%)	33 (16.9%)	38 (22.8%)	30 (16.2%)	29 (16.7%)	36 (23.2%)	211 (20.5%)
Artistic performances	21 (13.5%)	19 (9.7%)	22 (13.2%)	18 (9.7%)	24 (13.8%)	61 (39.4%)	165 (16.0%)
Film and video production	11 (7.1%)	15 (7.7%)	15 (9.0%)	11 (5.9%)	14 (8.0%)	11 (7.1%)	77 (7.5%)
Design and fashion courses	9 (5.8%)	11 (5.6%)	13 (7.8%)	13 (7.0%)	13 (7.5%)	10 (6.5%)	69 (6.7%)
Creative handicraft activities	6 (3.8%)	9 (4.6%)	10 (6.0%)	9 (4.9%)	17 (9.8%)	16 (10.3%)	67 (6.5%)
Photography courses	5 (3.2%)	7 (3.6%)	10 (6.0%)	8 (4.3%)	10 (5.7%)	13 (8.4%)	53 (5.1%)
Recording production	8 (5.1%)	7 (3.6%)	9 (5.4%)	6 (3.2%)	8 (4.6%)	8 (5.2%)	46 (4.5%)
Concert visits	3 (1.9%)	6 (3.1%)	5 (3.0%)	5 (2.7%)	6 (3.4%)	9 (5.8%)	34 (3.3%)
Museum visits	2 (1.3%)	3 (1.5%)	3 (1.8%)	3 (1.6%)	5 (2.9%)	5 (3.2%)	21 (2.0%)
Literary creation	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.5%)	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.6%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.3%)	11 (1.1%)

The survey results revealed that most middle school students consider aesthetic education significant to their lives, with an average importance rating reaching 4 points. This finding highlights the general emphasis students place on aesthetic education. Despite expressing moderate to high satisfaction with the aesthetic courses offered by schools, with average satisfaction scores ranging between 3 and 4 points, students still see room for further improvement. In terms of preferences for aesthetic activities, a rich diversity was observed, especially music courses (278 responses), fine arts courses (211 responses), and artistic performances (165 responses) emerging as the most popular types of activities.

Students generally believe that music and fine arts courses play a positive role in promoting their personal development, particularly in enhancing creativity (406 responses), aesthetic sensibility (314 responses), and cultural literacy (253 responses). In suggestions for improvements to aesthetic courses and activities, students expressed a strong demand for more practical and interactive courses

(139 responses), particularly showing interest in creative crafts (269 responses), photography (149 responses), and film and video production (78 responses).

Furthermore, students emphasized the significant impact of aesthetic resources outside of school, such as family and community (149 responses), in providing diverse learning opportunities and practical platforms for their aesthetic education. These findings highlight the high regard and positive attitudes middle school students have towards aesthetic education and point out their specific expectations for improvements in course content and teaching methods.

Research Question 2: What challenges do teachers face when implementing aesthetic education in music classrooms, and how do they address these challenges?

Table 2: Challenges and Countermeasures in Implementing Aesthetic Education in Music Classrooms.

No.	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Most Common Challenge	Strategies
1	Female	35	8 years	Low student interest	Developing engaging lesson plans and increase interactive segments
2	Male	42	15 years	Insufficient time	Flexibly adjusting teaching content, reducing non-essential courses
3	Female	28	3 years	Lack of resources	Utilizing online resources to find free or low-cost teaching materials
4	Male	50	20 years	Difficulties in student comprehension	Explaining from multiple perspectives and provide demonstration examples
5	Female	45	18 years	Inadequate artistic literacy	Regularly organizing art appreciation events to enhance students' artistic literacy
6	Male	30	5 years	Classroom management challenges	Establishing solid class rules to increase student participation
7	Female	38	12 years	Lack of parental understanding	Strengthening communication with parents to explain the importance of aesthetic education
8	Male	48	22 years	High exam pressure	Guiding students to treat exams properly, focusing on holistic development
9	Female	32	7 years	Difficulties in interdisciplinary integration	Collaborating with teachers of other subjects to design joint teaching activities

Table 2: (continued)

10	Male	40	14 years	Insufficient student creativity	Offering creativity-stimulating activities, encouraging free student expression
11	Female	36	10 years	High teaching pressure	Finding psychological adjustment techniques to maintain teaching enthusiasm
12	Male	52	25 years	Significant differences in student backgrounds	Providing personalized tutoring, paying attention to each student's characteristics
13	Female	42	16 years	Insufficient school support	Making suggestions for improvements to gain more support

Overall, teachers believe that aesthetic education is beneficial in the field of music education, with an average score of 4.13 (SD =1.06) (from 1 = ‘highly disagree’ to 5 = ‘highly agree’). In understanding and practicing aesthetic education, some teachers mentioned during interviews that aesthetic education encompasses aesthetic learning and involves emotional, consciousness, and cognitive aspects, an essential component of students’ holistic development. They focus on cultivating students’ aesthetic emotions, capabilities, and attitudes in classroom teaching. Teachers generally consider that one of the most significant challenges in aesthetic education practice is students’ varying interests and levels of understanding, making it challenging to benefit all students. Additionally, course design and material selection are frequent challenges faced by teachers. To address these challenges, teachers have adopted a variety of strategies and methods to promote students’ aesthetic education, such as multimedia teaching, classroom interaction, and practical activities, among which multimedia teaching is regarded as an effective instructional tool that can attract students’ attention and enhance their learning interest.

Teachers unanimously agree that aesthetic education can cultivate students’ aesthetic emotions, capabilities, and tastes, improve their creativity and innovation skills, and enhance their overall quality. To achieve good results in aesthetic education practice, teachers should possess a wealth of professional knowledge and experience, be able to apply various teaching methods flexibly, be adept at stimulating students’ interest and potential, and have good communication skills and a spirit of teamwork. Regarding future expectations and recommendations, teachers suggest that schools and educational institutions should increase their investment in aesthetic education, for example, by expanding the setup and diversification of aesthetic courses, strengthening the construction of aesthetic education faculty, introducing a variety of aesthetic activities and projects and enhancing the interdisciplinary integration of aesthetic education with other subjects.

4. Discussion

4.1. Chinese Middle School Students’ Perspectives on Aesthetic Education

The findings reveal that Chinese middle school students overwhelmingly perceive aesthetic education as crucial to their lives, with an average importance rating of 4. Spivak asserts that individuals can find a way out of emotional and physical isolation through the humanities and literature, guiding them toward the ideal of a well-rounded human being [15]. Deer highlights the crucial role of visual arts

in enhancing cognitive and non-cognitive skills, such as creativity, self-esteem, communication, cognition, and self-awareness, among middle school students [16]. Moreover, Bahar Karaman Guvenç suggests that aesthetic education enhances students' ability to interpret art from multiple perspectives, increasing their empathy, self-expression, and artistic application. It underscores the importance of integrating aesthetic education into middle school curriculums to foster diverse thinking and personal development [17].

Regarding satisfaction with aesthetic education courses, scores ranged between 3 and 4, indicating students' recognition of these courses' value and seeing room for improvement. This aligns with Cheng's findings, which indicated that despite improvements in China's aesthetic education curriculum over the past few years, issues such as outdated teaching materials and monotonous teaching methods persist. Challenges in China's aesthetic education curriculum manifest not only in teaching materials and methods but also in teacher training and curriculum setup [18]. In our survey, a student mentioned that the aesthetic education curriculum lacks up-to-date content, failing to engage students' interest. A teacher interviewed expressed that the teaching methods for aesthetic education are traditional, necessitating more innovative and diverse teaching approaches.

Students' preferences for aesthetic activities exhibited a rich diversity, with music, fine arts courses, and artistic performances receiving favor. This is consistent with D'olimpio's finding, which emphasizes the importance of diverse aesthetic activities in nurturing students' varied interests and skills [19]. Furthermore, participation in art exhibitions and concerts also found favor among students, reflecting their broad interest in cultural arts. Notably, students expressed a strong desire for more practical and interactive courses, especially in creative crafts, photography, and film and video production, indicating that traditional teaching methods of aesthetic education might not fully meet students' needs, necessitating the integration of more practical and experiential learning elements.

Furthermore, students emphasized the importance of family and community in providing diverse learning opportunities and practical platforms, further validating that learning and experiencing aesthetic education extends beyond the school environment, requiring participation and support from all sectors of society. This aligns with the findings from Sunassee, which highlighted the significance of constructing an aesthetic education cooperative network across schools, families, and communities to enrich students' aesthetic experiences [20]. This approach values families' expertise about their children and recognizes the community as an indispensable part of the learning ecosystem. Evans states that engagement in the arts is vital to the human experience, emphasizing that involvement in the arts correlates with behaviors that contribute positively to civil society, such as increased civic participation and social tolerance [21].

In summary, the findings of this study highlight the high regard and positive attitudes of Chinese middle school students towards aesthetic education while also pointing out areas for improvement in content renewal, teaching method innovation, and integration of social resources in aesthetic courses and activities. Future research should further explore how to effectively integrate resources and innovate teaching methods to meet students' aesthetic education needs better.

4.2. Challenges and Measures to Implement Aesthetic Education in Music Classes

The results of this study underscore the evident benefits of integrating aesthetic education into music teaching, with teachers expressing strong agreement on its value (mean = 4.13, SD = 1.06). By infusing aesthetic education into music education, teachers encounter multifaceted challenges and adopt various strategies to address them. Current research identifies that teachers face challenges in implementing music education, including differences in student interests and backgrounds, limited educational resources, and the limitations of traditional teaching methods [22]. To overcome these challenges, teachers can employ personalized teaching strategies, utilize digital resources to enrich instructional content and enhance teaching quality through professional development. Personalized

teaching strategies involve selecting musical pieces and adjusting teaching depth based on student's interests and capabilities to meet individual needs. Implementing such strategies helps attract and retain student interest, improving learning motivation and outcomes. Using digital resources, such as online music libraries and music production software, enriches instructional content, interactivity, and enjoyment of teaching. For instance, employing technological tools like iPads and educational applications allows students to engage in music learning creatively [23]. Moreover, some music education technology trends indicate that through online services and mobile devices, teachers can create assignments with extensive music libraries. In contrast, music-sharing services offer students a platform for receiving feedback on a wider scale [24].

In summary, by implementing personalized teaching strategies, leveraging digital resources, and engaging in professional development activities, music teachers can effectively address teaching challenges, improve teaching outcomes, and better integrate aesthetic education with music education.

4.3. Future Directions and Recommendations

For the future, it is recommended that educational institutions enhance their commitment to aesthetic education by adopting innovative teaching methods, utilizing emerging technologies, and focusing on the ongoing development of teachers. Innovative approaches like project-based and interdisciplinary teaching can enrich learning, encouraging creativity and critical thinking by integrating music with subjects such as literature and history. Technologies like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) can offer immersive experiences, making music education more engaging by enabling virtual performances and participation in music creation. Artificial intelligence (AI) could also revolutionize music education through automated performance assessments and personalized learning suggestions. Essential to these advancements is the continuous professional development of teachers, who can participate in seminars, workshops and form learning communities for knowledge exchange and improved teaching practices. Ultimately, the goal is to advance music education by fostering students' aesthetic literacy and innovative skills through diverse teaching strategies, technology integration, and teacher development.

In conclusion, future music education should prioritize the integration of diverse teaching methods that incorporate aesthetic education, actively explore the application of emerging technologies, and reinforce teachers' professional development to nurture students' aesthetic literacy and innovative capabilities.

5. Conclusion

The study's conclusions on music education in Chinese middle schools within the context of aesthetic education underscore the students' positive attitudes towards aesthetic education, viewing it as a crucial component of their holistic development. Despite challenges such as limited class time, diverse student needs, and a scarcity of resources, strategies like innovative teaching, technology integration, and enhanced teacher-student interaction have effectively improved teaching outcomes. The research emphasizes the need to increase investment in aesthetic education resources, innovate teaching methods, promote interdisciplinary integration, and strengthen teacher professional development to enhance music education quality and support students' comprehensive development.

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Navigating the Digital Horizon: The Impact and Future of Communication Technologies in Society

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Abstract: The article delves deeper into the dynamic and rapidly evolving realm of digital communication technologies, highlighting their transformative impact across various dimensions of modern society. It scrutinizes the latest advancements in digital communication tools and platforms, assessing how these innovations are not only altering our fundamental methods of interaction but also redefining the paradigms of information exchange and processing. The study provides an in-depth analysis of five key domains—social media dynamics, e-commerce evolution, mobile communication progression, online educational methodologies, and telemedicine advancements. Each of these domains is thoroughly examined through three distinct lenses, offering a nuanced perspective on their current state, challenges faced, and the potential trajectories they may follow. The article aims to furnish a holistic view of the digital communication landscape, contemplating its broader implications on social behavior, economic patterns, educational practices, healthcare delivery, and governance mechanisms. This comprehensive exploration is intended to offer readers a multifaceted understanding of how digital communication technologies are not just tools of convenience, but powerful forces shaping the future contours of our global society.

Keywords: Digital Communication, Technology Trends, Connectivity, Information Technology, Social Media, E-Commerce, Mobile Communication, Online Education, Telemedicine

1. Introduction

The onset of the digital age has been marked by a revolutionary shift in communication technologies, reshaping how information is disseminated and received across the globe. This paper delves into the origins and evolution of these technologies, tracing a path from the early days of the internet and mobile communication to the current dominance of social media and cloud computing. It scrutinizes how these advancements have infiltrated every facet of daily life, influencing personal interactions, leisure activities, professional engagements, and educational methods. The current state of digital communication is characterized by an unprecedented ease of connectivity and a rapid flow of information, reshaping societal norms and expectations. The narrative then shifts to explore the enormous potential of these technologies for future transformations, particularly focusing on the

integration of artificial intelligence and the expansion of the Internet of Things (IoT) [1]. Considerations are given to the implications of these advancements for privacy, security, and social dynamics. Through this comprehensive exploration, the paper aims to illuminate the profound and multifaceted impact of digital communication technologies, setting a foundation for a detailed analysis of their applications and consequences in various sectors of society.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL INTERACTION

2.1. Evolution and Impact

The ascent of social media platforms has been one of the most significant developments in the digital era, fundamentally transforming both personal and professional communication landscapes. Originating as simple platforms for online socialization, these media have evolved into complex ecosystems that influence public opinion, drive political campaigns, and create new marketing paradigms. Their impact extends beyond mere communication; they have redefined community building, identity formation, and global connectivity. This segment of the paper examines the historical progression of social media, from its rudimentary forms like chat rooms and blogs to the sophisticated, algorithm-driven platforms of today [2]. The focus is on understanding how these platforms have shaped human interaction, affected cultural norms, and contributed to the democratization of information dissemination.

2.2. User Behavior and Analytics

In the realm of social media, user behavior and analytics play a crucial role in shaping the digital experience. This section delves into the methodologies employed by platforms to track and analyze user interactions, preferences, and behaviors. It explores how this data is utilized to curate personalized content, thereby enhancing user engagement and optimizing advertising strategies. The intricacies of data mining, pattern recognition, and predictive analytics are discussed, highlighting their significance in understanding consumer behavior. Additionally, the ethical considerations and privacy concerns surrounding this data collection and usage are critically analyzed, acknowledging the fine line between personalized experiences and user privacy infringement [3].

2.3. Future Trends

The future of social media is a landscape teeming with innovation and potential, marked by the integration of cutting-edge technologies. This part of the paper explores emerging trends in social media, such as the incorporation of augmented reality (AR) to create immersive experiences and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for sophisticated content creation and curation. The discussion extends to the potential implications of these technologies in transforming user experiences and opening new avenues for digital interaction. The focus is also on the challenges these advancements pose, such as the need for enhanced digital literacy and the potential amplification of misinformation [4]. This forward-looking analysis aims to provide insights into how social media might evolve and the impact it could have on societal communication patterns.

3. E-COMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETPLACES

3.1. Online Shopping Revolution

The unprecedented growth of e-commerce has fundamentally altered the landscape of retail and consumer behavior. This section delves into how online shopping platforms have expanded from niche markets to mainstream dominance, influencing not only consumer habits but also the global

economy. The shift from traditional brick-and-mortar stores to digital marketplaces is examined, highlighting how convenience, variety, and personalized shopping experiences have driven this change [5]. The impact of e-commerce on supply chain dynamics, employment patterns, and economic structures is also explored, providing insights into how online shopping is not just a retail evolution but a transformative economic force.

3.2. Technological Innovations

E-commerce's evolution has been significantly fueled by technological innovations such as blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI). This segment explores how blockchain technology is revolutionizing the industry by introducing enhanced security, transparency, and efficiency in transactions. The potential of blockchain to address issues such as counterfeit goods and supply chain authenticity is discussed. Concurrently, the role of AI in e-commerce is examined, focusing on how it personalizes shopping experiences through predictive analytics, enhances customer service with chatbots, and optimizes inventory management. The section underscores how these technological advancements are not just enhancing user experiences but are also reshaping the operational paradigms of e-commerce businesses.

3.3. Security and Trust

As digital marketplaces continue to grow, so do the challenges related to cybersecurity and trust. This part addresses the critical concerns surrounding data privacy, transaction security, and consumer trust in online shopping environments. The complexities of safeguarding sensitive customer information and ensuring secure payment processes are analyzed. Furthermore, strategies employed by e-commerce platforms to build and maintain consumer trust are discussed, including the use of encryption, secure payment gateways, and transparent privacy policies [6]. The section also touches upon the regulatory frameworks and industry standards that guide these practices, highlighting their role in fostering a secure and trustworthy digital shopping ecosystem [7].

4. MOBILE COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

4.1. Advancements in Mobile Networks

The evolution of mobile networks from 4G to 5G and beyond represents a significant leap in communication technology. This section examines the developmental milestones that have marked this transition, emphasizing the transformative impact of each generation. While 4G laid the groundwork for high-speed internet and enhanced data transmission, the advent of 5G technology has brought about unprecedented changes. 5G networks offer significantly higher speeds, lower latency, and greater capacity, enabling more reliable and efficient communication. This technological advancement extends beyond improved personal communication; it is pivotal in driving innovations in fields such as the Internet of Things (IoT), autonomous vehicles, and smart cities [8]. The discussion also ventures into the potential of emerging technologies like 6G, which promise to further revolutionize mobile communication by integrating advanced features like higher frequencies, improved spectral efficiency, and integration with satellite networks, paving the way for a more interconnected and smarter world.

4.2. Impact on Global Connectivity

The expansion of mobile communication technologies has played a critical role in enhancing global connectivity, particularly by bridging the digital divide between urban and remote areas. This section delves into how mobile networks have become instrumental in connecting disparate and previously

unreachable regions, fostering socio-economic development and cultural exchange. It discusses the role of mobile communication in facilitating access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and banking in remote communities. The analysis extends to how mobile networks are empowering individuals in these areas by providing them with platforms for expression, information, and participation in the global economy [9]. The narrative underscores the challenges involved in this endeavor, including infrastructure development, affordability, and adaptation of technology to diverse geographical and socio-cultural contexts. The profound impact of mobile connectivity in fostering inclusivity and global integration forms the crux of this discussion.

4.3. Mobile Apps and Services

The proliferation of mobile apps and services has dramatically reshaped daily life, offering unparalleled convenience and accessibility. This section explores the diverse landscape of mobile applications, from communication and entertainment to health monitoring and financial services. It highlights how these apps have become integral to modern living, influencing consumer behavior, business models, and even social norms. The discussion includes an analysis of how app ecosystems are constantly evolving, driven by user demand, technological advances, and market competition. It also addresses the challenges posed by this rapid expansion, such as issues of privacy, data security, and the digital divide in app accessibility and usage [10]. The exploration of mobile apps and services culminates in a reflection on their future trajectory, considering emerging trends like augmented reality (AR) apps, AI-driven personal assistants, and the integration of apps with wearable technology, which are set to further transform the user experience and expand the possibilities of mobile technology in daily life.

5. ONLINE EDUCATION AND DIGITAL LEARNING

5.1. Transformation of Educational Systems

Digital platforms have initiated a transformative wave in education, redefining traditional learning and teaching methodologies. This shift extends beyond mere digitization of content; it encompasses a fundamental change in pedagogical approaches. E-learning platforms and virtual classrooms have democratized access to quality education, enabling personalized learning experiences that cater to individual learning styles and paces. The integration of interactive tools, multimedia content, and real-time feedback mechanisms has enriched the learning environment, making it more engaging and effective. This transformation is also marked by the adoption of data analytics and adaptive learning technologies, which help in tailoring educational content to meet the evolving needs of learners, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience.

5.2. Accessibility and Personalization

The rise of online education has significantly increased the accessibility and personalization of learning. Technology has broken down geographical barriers, providing learners from remote or underprivileged areas with access to the same quality of education as their urban counterparts. Online platforms offer a range of courses and learning materials, enabling learners to choose what aligns best with their interests and career goals. Personalization is further enhanced through adaptive learning systems that adjust the content based on individual performance and learning patterns. This approach ensures that each learner receives a tailored educational experience, conducive to their personal growth and academic success.

5.3. Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its benefits, online education faces several challenges. Issues like digital divide, lack of personal interaction, and concerns over maintaining academic integrity pose significant hurdles. The digital divide, especially, accentuates inequalities as students without reliable internet access or technology struggle to keep pace. However, the future holds immense opportunities, with potential advancements in technology promising more immersive and interactive learning experiences. Innovations like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) could simulate real-world environments for practical learning. The continuous evolution of online education platforms is expected to address current challenges and redefine the educational landscape.

6. TELEMEDICINE AND DIGITAL HEALTHCARE

6.1. Evolution of Telemedicine

Telemedicine has emerged as a crucial component of modern healthcare, driven by the need for accessible and cost-effective medical services. Its evolution can be traced back to the use of telecommunications for remote diagnosis and treatment. With advancements in technology, telemedicine has expanded to include a wide range of services like teleconsultations, remote monitoring, and digital health records. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated its adoption, underscoring its effectiveness in providing continued medical care while minimizing exposure risks. Telemedicine has proven particularly beneficial in reaching underserved populations and managing chronic conditions, thereby playing a significant role in improving global health outcomes.

6.2. Technology Integration

The integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and wearable health devices is revolutionizing telemedicine. AI algorithms assist in diagnostic processes, predicting patient outcomes and personalizing treatment plans. VR applications offer innovative solutions for patient education, pain management, and rehabilitation. Wearable devices enable continuous monitoring of health parameters, facilitating proactive healthcare management. These technological integrations not only enhance the efficiency and accuracy of medical services but also pave the way for more patient-centered and predictive healthcare models [11].

6.3. Ethical and Legal Considerations

The expansion of telemedicine and digital healthcare brings to the forefront a myriad of ethical and legal challenges that must be navigated with care and diligence. The primary concern lies in the realm of patient privacy and data security. As healthcare providers collect, store, and analyze vast amounts of sensitive health data, the risk of data breaches and unauthorized access increases. Ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of this data is not only a technological imperative but also a legal one, requiring strict adherence to laws like the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the United States and similar regulations globally. Another significant aspect pertains to the quality of care provided through digital means. The legal framework governing telemedicine services, particularly in terms of liability and malpractice, is still evolving. There are questions about how to maintain the standard of care, ensure accurate diagnosis, and provide effective treatment remotely. These concerns become even more complex when telemedicine crosses national borders, as different countries have varying regulations and standards for healthcare. Furthermore, the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare decision-making introduces ethical challenges regarding transparency, accountability, and bias.

AI systems, while powerful, can sometimes operate as 'black boxes', making it difficult to understand how they reach certain conclusions. This lack of transparency can be problematic in healthcare, where understanding the rationale behind a diagnosis or treatment decision is crucial. Additionally, if the data used to train AI algorithms is biased, the outcomes of these systems might also be biased, potentially leading to unequal or inappropriate care for certain patient groups. Addressing these ethical and legal considerations is vital for building trust in digital healthcare systems and ensuring their responsible and equitable growth. This involves not only implementing robust security measures and regulatory compliance but also fostering ethical AI design and usage. As telemedicine and digital healthcare continue to evolve, ongoing dialogue among healthcare providers, patients, technologists, and policymakers will be essential to address these challenges and harness the full potential of digital innovations in healthcare.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper has traversed the expansive landscape of digital communication technologies, highlighting their profound impact on various sectors of modern society, from social media and e-commerce to mobile communications, online education, and telemedicine. It has shed light on how these technologies have revolutionized interactions, commerce, learning, and healthcare, making them more accessible and efficient. However, the journey also uncovered challenges such as the digital divide, data privacy, and ethical concerns in AI and healthcare, emphasizing the need for a balanced and responsible approach in advancing these technologies. As we look to the future, the paper underscores the significance of these innovations in shaping a more connected and informed society. It calls for ongoing collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure that the evolution of digital communication technologies continues to serve the broader goals of societal enhancement, equity, and ethical integrity.

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Analysis of Grotowski's Body Action Method from the Perspective of Zhuangzi

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Abstract: Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999, hereinafter referred to as Grotowski) was a renowned theater practitioner in the 20th century, dedicating his life to the study of theatrical performance. His theatrical works shook the world in the 20th century, and he was well-known in the theater communities of Europe and America. Unfortunately, he passed away prematurely, leaving behind profound and abstruse writings for future generations. His late-life creation, the Art of Vehicle in body action methods, holds profound significance for the study of “states” in various artistic performances. Based on this, researchers, drawing on Grotowski’s lifelong learning and research background, interpret and analyze Grotowski’s study of “art of vehicle” through the Zhuangzi’s concept of “body” in the philosophy of Swiss philosopher Jean François Billeter’s “dynamic mechanism”. This paper is based on the research theory of Professor Mingder Chung from Taipei National University of the Arts on Grotowski’s MPA, aiming to elucidate Grotowski’s interpretation of “body” through Zhuangzi’s “body view”, and further clarify the conceptual framework of MPA. The purpose is to contribute theoretical foundations to the study of Grotowski’s Art of Vehicle.

Keywords: Grotowski, Essence (Body), Operation, Heaven and Human, Dynamic Mechanism

1. Introduction

Jerzy Grotowski, born in August 1933 in Poland, passed away in January 1999 in Italy. In the 1960s, Grotowski (hereinafter referred to as Grotowski) made waves in the avant-garde theater world of Europe and America with his theory and practice of the “Poor Theatre,” establishing himself as one of the four great playwrights of the 20th century. What further astonished the theater world was that after directing the play “Apocalypsis cum Figuris” in 1968, Grotowski never again directed any works, instead embarking on epistemological research replacing “aesthetic of symbols” with “aesthetic of transformation”: the Art of Vehicle. In short, while the study of “Art as presentation” focuses on the aesthetic construction between the audience and the performers, performance appreciation, and other qualities, the study of “Art of Vehicle” focuses on the performer’s states. “Art of Vehicle” is not only Grotowski’s final stage of research from “performative theater” to “participatory theater” to “source theater,” but also a method and approach to help performers transition from “everyday states” to “non-everyday states.” As stated in Grotowski’s essay “From Theatre to Art of Vehicle”:

The “Art of Vehicle” is akin to a primitive elevator, with the performer sitting on a lift that

moves up and down. Through self-control, one can ascend to more refined energies or descend to instinctual bodily states. This is what he calls the objectivity of ritual... When I talk about the lift, that is, when I talk about the Art of Vehicle, I am referring to verticality. We can examine verticality through different categories of energy: the heavy and organic energies (related to vitality, instincts, or sensations) and the finer and subtler energies. The issue of verticality implies a movement from so-called rough levels — in a sense, the energies of everyday life — towards subtler energy levels or even towards higher connections. Regarding this point, I should not dwell too much on it here; I can only indicate one path and direction. However, there is also another path there: if we touch upon that higher connection — from the perspective of energy, meaning touching upon those finer energies — simultaneously, a descent phenomenon will also occur. Bringing this subtlety into the general reality associated with the density of the body.

The key lies in not abandoning any part of our inherent selves — the body, heart, head, feet, and above all must retain their natural positions, all connected in a vertical line, and this verticality must be stretched tight between organicity and awareness. Awareness refers to a consciousness that is not related to language (the machinery of thought) but is related to presence (presence, the now, the divine). [1]

In his writings, Grotowski reveals the core issue of the “Art of Vehicle”: performers maintain a tension between organicity and awareness through the elevation of bodily energy and the descent of life instincts (objectivity) via the lift (verticality), thus entering a process of transformation from the energy of daily life to subtle energy levels and then to even finer energies. Professor Mingder Chung believes that Grotowski’s repeated emphasis on “objectivity” and “verticality” refers to the transformation of consciousness: “objectivity” refers to “verticality” (the vertical ascent and descent of energy). Grotowski coined the term “objectivity of ritual” to mainly refer to the phenomenon of verticality (the vertical ascent and descent of energy) in ritual activities, which is an objective fact. The term “verticality” refers to the ascent and descent from the level of daily life to higher energy levels. Therefore, the transformation of energy states from the level of daily life to non-daily life through the “Art of Vehicle” is the key to Grotowski’s training method. Its purpose is to allow performers to achieve a state of egolessness through artistic means, ultimately reaching the next stage of unity between the self’s “body” and “essence”: the state of “essence (body).”

It is challenging that Grotowski’s ideas and writings are often obscure and difficult to comprehend, which adds a certain resistance to the research of successors. Moreover, constrained by the rational world constructed by the languages of the East and the West, it is difficult for Grotowski’s bodily discourse to find a prominent place. As Grotowski himself said, “The contemporary world has forgotten about the Art of Vehicle, knowing nothing about it.” Fortunately, Grotowski’s concept of the Art of Vehicle has not been lost, and his successor, Eugenio Barba (1936-), the founder and director of Odin Teatret, was not only influenced by Eastern philosophical thoughts like Grotowski but also inherited Grotowski’s early training methods. His establishment of “Theatre Anthropology” is dedicated to the transformation from daily states to non-daily states. Terms such as presence, energy, body-in-life, etc., abound in his research. Particularly, through the discovery of extra-daily body techniques, Barba found the most fundamental concept in theatre anthropology theory: pre-expressivity [2]. However, the steps and processes of energy transformation in the Art of Vehicle are seldom mentioned in Barba’s writings. Fortunately, another successor of Grotowski, Professor Mingder Chung from Taipei National University of the Arts, encountered Grotowski in the late 20th century in the United States and was taught by Professor Schechner from New York University. Based on the transformative experience in the 1998 performance ritual of Ai Ling, Professor Chung devoted himself to the study of the transformation of “performer’s bodily energy” related to the Art of Vehicle. Drawing from the transformative experience in the Ai Ling ritual and analyzing literature related to

the Art of Vehicle such as Grotowski's "Performer" and "From Theatre to Art of Vehicle," Professor Chung interprets the different levels of "self" in the performer, namely the worldly self (body/I1), the self blending body and essence (I-I), and the essence (body) self (I2/awareness), elucidating them within the context of energy transformation in the Art of Vehicle. This forms the energy transformation pathways of "I1" <-> "I-I" <-> "I2," as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Energy Transformation Pathways

Essence (Body)	Target	I2	Awareness	Extra-daily finer energy
Body and Essence (Blend/Unity)	Process	I1-I2	Organicity	Non-daily subtle energy
Body	Starting Point	I1	Mechanicity	Daily heavy energy

From this, we understand:

(1) The core idea of the Art of Vehicle: Performers undergo a consciousness/energy transformation from a state of daily life to a state of non-daily life.

(2) The transformation pathways of the Art of Vehicle: "I1" (body/daily life energy) → "I-I" (the blending of body and essence/subtle energy level) → "I2" (essence (body)/finer energy).

So, what is the method of energy transformation in the Art of Vehicle? Although Grotowski did not directly provide us with a fixed answer, we find the answer in his words: "Subtraction." As Grotowski said, "Our theater training is therefore a kind of subtraction (via negativa), not an accumulation of sets of techniques, but the removal of obstacles." [1] Based on the above research, Professor Chung summarized the creative methods of Konstantin Stanislavski (1863-1938, hereinafter referred to as Stanislavski), the Russian theater practitioner, and his successor Grotowski into a concept named "Method of Physical Actions" (MPA). This concept integrates Stanislavski's and Grotowski's creative methods, forming the following concepts:

Narrow MPA: A method for performers to enter their optimal performance state through the appropriate execution of a learned or self-constructed performance procedure.

Broad MPA: A method for performers to generate "organicity" or "awareness" through the appropriate execution of a set of bodily action procedures. (Mingder Chung, 2018:21)

In summary, this paper, based on Professor Chung's research findings, employs the philosophical perspectives of Zhuangzi, which were extensively studied by Grotowski, and interprets Grotowski's obscure methodological approach to bodily energy transformation under the interpretation of Zhuangzi's philosophical ideas by the Swiss philosopher Jean François Billeter. It is widely known in the field that Jean François Billeter is a renowned Swiss philosopher with profound research in traditional Chinese culture. Particularly, in his book "Zhuangzi Sijiang," he extensively discusses unique insights into Chinese philosophical thoughts. His research diverges from the conventional notion of "Chinese thought" and questions and restores our fixed concepts. The following paper will be divided into two sections: firstly, it will analyze and interpret the key concepts in the "Art of Vehicle" using the concepts of "operation" and "heaven and human" from Jean François Billeter's "Zhuangzi Sijiang." Secondly, it will elucidate that Grotowski's method of subtraction in energy transformation in the Art of Vehicle is aimed at approximating the functioning of the "dynamic mechanism" at the "heaven" level, using Jean François Billeter's method of "forgetting" in Zhuangzi Sijiang [3]. In conclusion, the researcher's interest is based on the theoretical foundation of MPA by

Professor Mingder Chung from Taipei National University of the Arts, aiming to explore the similarity between Zhuangzi's "view of the body" and Grotowski's "view of the body" not only in methodology but also in conceptual thinking, thereby further clarifying the conceptual framework of MPA. The purpose is to contribute theoretical foundations to the study of Grotowski's Art of Vehicle.

The term "dynamic mechanism" was coined by Jean François Billeter, based on three dialogues from Zhuangzi: "Nourishing Life", "The Way of Heaven", and "Attaining Life". These dialogues focus on the changes in a certain movement and the corresponding changes in the relationship between "consciousness" and "unconsciousness". The term "mechanism" is translated from the French word "regime", which can refer to the speed of an engine, with the variation of speed determining the strength and weakness of the rate of change. Jean François Billeter borrowed this term as a metaphor for the different modes of human activity, serving as the core key to interpreting Zhuangzi's ideas on bodily transformation. In the text, he divides the dynamic mechanism into "low-level", "transitional level", and "high-level" aspects.

2. A Comparative Analysis of Views on the Body

The progression from "I1" to "I-I" to "I2" not only serves as the vital lifeline in unlocking the core of energy transformation in the Art of Vehicle but also stands as the central keywords in Grotowski's essay "Performer." As Grotowski stated in the text:

Ancient books often say: We have two parts. The bird that pecks and the bird that watches. One will die, the other will live. We strive to peck, to immerse ourselves in the life of time, forgetting to let the part of us that watches live. Thus, the danger is in existing only in time, unable to live outside of time. Sensing being observed by your other part (as if outside of time) will bring about another dimension. There is an "I-I" something, the second "I" is half virtual: it is not the gaze or judgment of others because it is within you; it is like a still gaze: a certain silent presence, like the constant sun of all things. The process can only be completed in the context of this "silent existence," in our experience, "I-I" has never been separate, but is a perfect and unique match.

On the path of the performer, he first perceives his essence through the blending of body and essence, then engages in the process: he develops his "I-I." The teacher's looking presence sometimes serves as a mirror for the connection of "I-I" (at this point, the connection between the performer's "I" and "I" is not yet fully established). When the channel between "I-I" has been laid, the teacher can disappear, and the performer continues toward essence (body).....[1]

Regarding the above literature, the term "I1" is derived by Professor Chung from Grotowski's concept of "I-I," splitting it into the first "I" (I1) and the second "I" (I2), based on the research scope of Grotowski's Art of Vehicle. The term "I1" refers to the worldly self, the self shaped by socialization, influenced by language, emotions, and constructed by thought patterns. As Grotowski stated, such a self (I1) is connected to the relationship between oneself and society, representing the socialized flesh of everyday life energy.

Secondly, the term "I-I" originated from Grotowski's essay "Performer," Chapter Two: I-I. Grotowski borrowed the concept from "The Secret Book" regarding the two parts of the bird, symbolizing the inseparable parts of humanity in existence. Humans often immerse themselves in the time and space of the pecker, forgetting or distancing themselves from the observer. However, the observer remains unchanged, seemingly observing and perceiving the pecker in time and space, thus generating a certain "I-I." In Grotowski's view of the performer, the secularized "body" symbolizes the pecker, while the internalized "essence" symbolizes the observer. Through the process of blending body and essence, one can become aware of their essence, discovering their I2. This stage is merely

the process of becoming aware of one's essence, and only by maintaining awareness can one approach the essence, namely the essence (body).

Thirdly, the term "I2" is also proposed by Professor Chung, based on Grotowski's research on the Art of Vehicle. Typically, Professor Chung interprets it as "awareness," while Grotowski refers to it as "essence" or "body of essence." As Grotowski stated, the teacher assists the performer in constructing a certain organism-channel that is recyclable, transformative, and purely practiced in the present moment. This organ constructs the connection between "I1" and "I2," that is, constructing a sound "I-I." When the connection between "I1" and "I2" is established, the teacher can withdraw, and the performer can continue to progress towards the "body of essence" through diligent practice and meticulous actions.

In summary, in the process of energy transformation from "I1" to "I-I" to "I2," we have elucidated the most crucial transformation mechanism of the Art of Vehicle. That is, a performer starts from their secularized "I1," progressing from the socialized "flesh" to the inner "essence," develops into "I-I," and then, through the intermingling of the "I" (flesh) and the "I" (essence), a certain "I-I" emerges. In the practice of embodied knowledge, the body disappears, and the essence emerges (I2). Regarding how to practice and integrate, that is the topic for the next chapter. How to deeply understand "essence" or "body of essence"? This is precisely the key to be elucidated at present. Just as Grotowski explores "essence" and "body of essence" in "Performer," it is stated as follows:

The term "essence," etymologically speaking, pertains to the issue of being, a certain presentness of being. I am interested in essence because it is unrelated to social factors; it is not something you borrow from others, it does not come from outside, and it is not learned. For example, conscience belongs to something of essence, unlike moral laws belonging to society. Breaking moral laws, you may feel guilt because society speaks within them. However, if your actions violate your conscience, you will feel remorse—because the issue lies between you and yourself, not between you and society. Although we almost entirely possess everything from society, essence seems trivial, but it is ours. For example... With age, one may possibly reach the body of essence through the integration of body and essence. This achievement is not easy and requires undergoing difficult transformations and personal changes—perhaps this is everyone's task. The key question is: What is your process? Are you loyal to your process, or do you resist it? The process is like everyone's destiny, your own destiny, unfolding in time. So, what is the nature of your submission to your destiny? If a person can hold onto themselves, if they do not hate their actions, they can grasp the process. This process is connected to essence and indeed leads to the body of essence. During the brief period of integration of body and essence, the warrior should seize their process, merge into it, and the body will no longer resist, almost becoming transparent. Everything is bathed in sunlight, clear and definite, the performer's actions are almost akin to the process. [1]

As per the above literature, Grotowski's notion of "essence" refers to a certain inherent being that is unrelated to external social factors. It transcends the confines of society, having no connection to it but relating to conscience. It is not sought externally but exists internally. Therefore, we can understand it as a certain innate natural attribute inherent in human evolution. "Essence" differs from the external attributes of our socialized bodies, thus we can understand it as the "natural disposition" of life. The "body of essence" is the goal of the performer's actions, that is, the endpoint of conquering unknown actions. It is the formation resulting from the integration of body and essence, the next stage after the unity of body and mind. In other words, the body of essence is essence itself, approached through the body towards a realm that can only be sensed and not verbally expressed.

In comparison, Swiss philosopher Jean François Billeter's exploration of the "Heaven-Human" relationship in "Zhuangzi Sijiang" may perhaps provide an understanding of the internal relationship

between “body,” “essence,” or “body of essence.” In terms of the text’s essence, Zhuangzi believes that humans typically undergo repetitive physical training, gradually transitioning into a state of unconsciousness and spontaneity. In this transition mechanism, all functions of our bodies and everything we are conscious or unconscious of are encompassed. In other words, Zhuangzi’s so-called transition mechanism requires us to integrate our bodily functions with inner potential, based on physical action. [4] (Jean François Billeter: 51) For example, in the process of learning bicycle tricks, beginners must first consciously grasp the basic operating methods, including the driver’s balance and coordination abilities, muscle memory, and bodily perception. After tens of thousands of physical trainings, this technique will enter a state beyond conscious control. In essence, the core concept of “Heaven” and “Human” plays a crucial role in the “transition mechanism.” “Heaven” and “Human” can be interpreted as “natural” and “artificial,” or “nature” and “culture.” In Zhuangzi’s perspective, “Human” refers to intentional, conscious activities, slightly inferior to “Heaven’s” inevitable, spontaneous, unconscious activities. As stated in Zhuangzi’s interpretation of the “Autumn Floods” chapter: “Heaven is within, while man is without. Man’s ability to act lies in everything related to ‘Heaven’ within you. You must understand the actions of Heaven and Man and rely on Heaven to grasp the ability to act...” In other words, “Heaven” and “Human” are two aspects of the non-anatomical or objective external body, explored at the metaphysical level, representing the capacities or potentials of the body under one’s perception. The reason they are observable lies in the specific bodily actions that correspond to “nature and rigidity,” “modification and unmodified,” while the unobservable aspects correspond to “unconscious and conscious.” Therefore, “Heaven” and “Human” are discussed within various transformation mechanisms. In other words, in the transition of various mechanisms, “conscious activity is unique to humans and is the root of errors, failures, exhaustion, and death, while complete, inevitable, and spontaneous activity is defined as the activity of Heaven [4].” Therefore, we can understand “Heaven” above and “Human” below. Based on the above, Zhuangzi’s core idea is precisely the transition of an individual from a lower level (Human) to a higher level (Heaven) through the mechanism, achieving a certain natural externalization dominated by the unconscious “dynamic mechanism” of Heaven’s capability. In comparison, Zhuangzi’s “dynamic mechanism” or body view might be the core view of Grotowski’s “Art of Vehicle.” Zhuangzi’s external, cultural, conscious activity of “Human” corresponds to Grotowski’s secular, mundane “flesh” (I1); the transition from consciousness to unconsciousness in the process of “Heavenly Unity” corresponds to the integration of body and essence (I-I); the internal, spontaneous, inevitable, unconscious activity of “Heaven” corresponds to the ultimate goal of “Heaven”: the visible essence (body of essence) (I2). As shown in the table:

Table 2: Philosophical Exploration of Body Views

	Starting Point	Transition	Objective
Grotowski’s Body View	Socialized Body (body)	Integration of Body and Essence (I-I)	Essence (Body of essence)
	Energy at the Level of Daily Life Process	Process/Subtle Energy Level	Objective/Even More Subtle Energy
Professor Chung’s Interpretation of Grotowski	“Me” in Daily Life I1	Body-Mind Unity/Fusion I-I	Awareness I2

Table 2: (continued)

	Lower Level	Transition	Higher Level
Zhuangzi's Body View	Dynamic Mechanism: Human Level (Culture)	Dynamic Mechanism: Encounter with the Divine/"Heavenly Unity" (Transition from Consciousness to Unconsciousness)	Dynamic Mechanism: Heavenly Level (Inevitable)

As mentioned by Jean François Billeter in his book "Zhuangzi Sijiang," exploring the allegory of "A Magical and Skilled form of Craftsmanship" can further help us understand the similarities in the body views of Zhuangzi and Grotowski. Butcher Ding told Lord Wen Hui that in the initial stages of butchering, he saw the ox as a whole ox. Later, after three years of diligent practice, a qualitative change occurred in the relationship between subject and object (the ox). He said, "I no longer see it as a whole ox." In the later stage of his specialized practice, he reached a point where he encountered it with his spirit, not with his eyes; he knew when to stop by reason, but his spirit desired to act, following the natural order. In other words, at that point, he could face the ox with only his spirit, without needing to rely on sight. His sensory perception was unnecessary; he acted with fluidity. The objectified ox disappeared, and the subjectified person (Butcher Ding) also disappeared. Through this logical sketch, Jean François Billeter believed that "spiritual encounter" is not a specific function but rather a state where the actor achieves complete integration and unity of body and mind, thus advancing to a higher level of mechanism. In this process, Butcher Ding must start from the conscious level of being a beginner and, through practical exercises, gradually detach from conscious control, surrendering to the body of himself, and seeking the inevitable and intrinsic (heavenly) aspects. According to Jean François Billeter's perspective, Butcher Ding, although transitioning towards "body consciousness" through practical exercises, had not yet reached the state of effortless action without conscious control, the "almost instantaneous" state of dynamic mechanism. Indeed, as Butcher Ding stated, "I always find the difficult points, focus my gaze, proceed cautiously, and move the knife very slowly." From this perspective, it appears that Butcher Ding was still consciously controlling his actions and had not entered the transformative mechanism of "nature".

In other words, according to Grotowski's body view, Ding, in his initial learning stage, must first rely on the body controlled by rationalized knowledge and emotions (I1). Through practice, the conscious body gradually withdraws from the forefront, allowing the unconscious essence to slowly take root and blend with the body. As the conscious body still exists, Ding remains in a state of encountering the divine, where the human and divine merge (I-I), without approaching the state of the unconscious essence (body of essence) (I2).

Through the above case analysis, we can conclude that Zhuangzi's "body view" not only shares conceptual significance with Grotowski's "body view" but also aligns in method and approach. Jean François Billeter's method of transitioning Zhuangzi's thinking involves "subtracting the categories of rationality and mind control from the individual to enter the state of 'heaven' in the dynamic mechanism." Similarly, Grotowski's method of transitioning in his theory of Art as Vehicle involves subtracting the rational constraints of knowledge, feeling, and will to enter the state of essence (body of essence), as mentioned by Professor Chung as 'penetrating essence through three bodies.' Therefore, we can explore in the next chapter that the transition mechanism relies on "subtracting conscious activities and moving towards a state controlled by the unconscious, the dynamic mechanism of 'heaven'."

3. “Forgetting” is Penetration

Whether it's Zhuangzi's transition from “lower” to “higher” levels or Grotowski's bodily transformation of “I1 → I-I → I2,” they both involve replacing conscious control and regulation of activities with a holistic operation of many things. This operation removes most of the burden of consciousness, making human actions effortless. “All our functions and potentials, whether known or unknown, are combined together to move in the direction we anticipate, and their cooperation now possesses the characteristics of necessity (heaven). This transformation is the ultimate goal of all learning processes.” That is, I2/heaven. The effective way to achieve this goal is through “subtraction.” Zhuangzi calls this method “forgetting,” while Grotowski refers to it as “penetration.”

As for “forgetting,” it is a concept commonly used by Zhuangzi. It refers to the actor reducing executive control and forgetting the self. However, this “forgetting” is not about forgetting certain things but rather the result of a kind of proficiency. This forgetting occurs when a deep-seated energy takes the lead role. Consciousness gradually relinquishes its dominant role and forgets the self. In the text “Zhuangzi: The Great and Most Honored Master,” it is mentioned: “Abandoning the body, discarding intelligence, leaving form, and discarding knowledge, becoming one with the Great Harmony, this is what is meant by sitting in forgetfulness.” In other words, “We abandon our bodies, let go of sight and hearing, lose consciousness of ourselves and things, and fully comprehend all things; this is what is meant by sitting in forgetfulness. [4]” As seen in the interview with Zhou Yu, a Manchu yangge artist, the interviewer asked, “What do you do at the moment when you go on stage?” He replied, “I empty myself. When the music starts slowly, my pulse follows the rhythm from inside to outside, creating great waves and charm. At that moment (presence), I don't even know who I am.” In this regard, Jean François Billeter may be able to converse with Zhou Yu: “We all know that when we enter a state of emptiness, the power we possess will gather and enter into that inevitable level (heavenly) of action. When we lose this emptiness, we produce repetition and rigidity.” When we “return to emptiness” and are no longer controlled by anyone, we can act appropriately in any situation. And the emptiness here is the “becoming one with the Great Harmony” mentioned earlier.

In this regard, following Zhuangzi's concept of forgetting, we must construct the body as an integrated entity of all known and unknown functions and potentials. In other words, the body is conceived as a world without definite discernible boundaries. In the process of operation, consciousness sometimes disappears and forgets, sometimes freeing itself from the self in different activity mechanisms of the present moment. It can also be said that in Zhuangzi's view, grasping the mechanism of moderate transformation and allowing changes to occur naturally is quite important. Under appropriate conditions, consciousness should accept the disappearance of the self, allowing its transformation to take place freely, thus entering into actions with greater freedom. This is precisely the subtractive mechanism of “forgetting,” “becoming one with the Great Harmony,” and “returning to emptiness.”

By comparison, Grotowski's bodily perspective of “self-penetration” may also adhere to this principle. Grotowski's “bodily perspective” is based on the foundation laid by his predecessor Stanislavski, which focused on knowledge, feeling, and will. This concept originated from Stanislavski's “An Actor's Work,” and Grotowski expanded upon Stanislavski's conventional training system of the “three bodies.” It focuses on the “will” among “knowledge, feeling, and will,” namely, “bodily action” [1]. Grotowski penetrates the rational constraints of knowledge and feeling, initiating bodily actions to approach a state of essence. This is the core concept of Grotowski's “poor theater”: “Actors must self-penetrate, self-expose, or self-sacrifice to become sacred actors. [5]”

Researchers analyze that Zhuangzi's “forgetting” is equivalent to Grotowski's “penetration.” As mentioned earlier, Zhuangzi's forgetting refers to the conscious control of thoughts and emotions at the level of “human.” In the natural process of operational transformation, the subtraction of

conscious control leads to forgetting the self, gradually entering the level of the dynamic mechanism of “heaven.” Similarly, Grotowski’s “penetration” involves breaking free from the rational constraints of thought and consciousness, as well as the rigidly constructed emotional cognition influenced by societal norms, thereby entering the natural and unconscious state of “heavenly” essence.

Just as in Cieslak’s 1965 shocking performance of “The Constant Prince,” it fully demonstrates the young Grotowski’s use of penetration techniques to subtract rational constraints of knowledge and emotion in order to awaken the “inner essence” of transcendentalization. In this work, the portrayal of Richard Cieslak as the incarnation of Jesus Christ is not to present a glorified image shedding humanity’s burdens and worldly entanglements in radiant splendor, but rather to fill the viewers’ eyes with a portrayal of suffering, torment, and lamentation. In the play, he curls tightly on the floor, his hair brushing against his fingertips, immersed in endless agony. His cries resonate as every inch of his muscles trembles, reminiscent of the humiliation of Christ’s body and the brutality of external forces during crucifixion. In his hoarse cries, he leaves traces of saliva on the ground he has licked, as if forgetting himself in the moment. From this, it can be seen that actor Cieslak is not merely playing a role at the level of “human,” but rather acting out himself at the level leading to “heaven.” His curled figure, trembling muscles, and licking of the ground demonstrate his state of penetrating/forgetting conscious control, leading to the essential state of the inevitable, natural, and unconscious dynamic mechanism.

This is akin to what Lieshi Dunbeige wrote in “Tu Xie Shou Ce”: “There are things we do constantly without realizing it, and we get better at them over time. Eventually, perhaps people can do anything unconsciously and truly become a thinking animal.”

4. Conclusion

Through the comparative analysis and interpretation of Zhuangzi’s and Grotowski’s theories of the body, the researcher draws the following three conclusions:

Firstly, the trajectory of Zhuangzi’s bodily transformation, namely from “human” (cultural, conscious control of thoughts and emotions) to “unity of heaven and man” (transition from consciousness to unconsciousness) to “heaven” (heaven/necessity/nature/dynamic mechanism), reflects precisely Grotowski’s theory of the body, namely from “body” (I1) to “body and essence merging” (I-I) to “essence (body)” (I2). Their objectives are to awaken the inner energy of heaven/essence through the transformation of consciousness from the secular level of humanity, ultimately reaching the state of dynamic mechanism/heaven/essence (body) relying on the body.

Secondly, Zhuangzi’s “forgetting” and Grotowski’s “penetration” are the core methods of the “subtractive mechanism” in bodily transformation. The driving force behind this method is what Grotowski calls “knowledge is doing.” As Jean François Billeter puts it: “This kind of knowledge is non-discursive, beyond language.” It is precisely because people are often too familiar with this kind of knowledge that they often ignore its existence. When people master a certain method and repeatedly execute operations, it will inevitably become a kind of unconscious bodily action. In other words, “a person may never have worked with Grotowski, but as long as he can construct a viable action, work, or ritual for himself. One day he will reach the essence (body) or the ultimate purpose of the inner person. [4]”

Thirdly, through the analysis of cases such as “A Magical and Skilled form of Craftsmanship” and the drama “The Constant Prince” employing the technique of entranced performance, we can infer that Grotowski’s method of physical action (MPA) is not only applicable to micro-level artistic performance training but also to macro-level operations that humans are capable of, transcending merely technical aspects.

In summary, based on Professor Chung’s theory of physical action (MPA), the researcher further analyzes and defines MPA from the perspective of Zhuangzi’s philosophy:

Narrowly speaking, MPA refers to the appropriate execution by a performer of a set of learned or self-constructed performance procedures, and under the long-term training where knowledge is doing, gradually transitions from conscious control influenced by secular and cultural factors to an unconscious state. Through action, it explores the inner essence/necessity, ultimately reaching the optimal performance state of natural externalization, which is the “dynamic mechanism.”

Broadly speaking, MPA refers to the appropriate execution by a practitioner of a set of bodily action procedures, and under the long-term training where knowledge is doing, relieves most of the burden at the level of consciousness, making human actions effortless. It gradually transitions from conscious control to an unconscious state, ultimately entering the operation of things in a state of “necessity” and “nature” through the synergistic action of all known or unknown functions and potentials.

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A Performer's Journey: From Visible to Invisible
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Teamwork in a Multicultural Context: The Driver of Creativity

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Abstract: This paper deeply explores the complex and dynamic relationship between team creativity and cultural factors and reveals how subtle cultural differences can play a dual role in shaping team creativity. Central to the study is an in-depth analysis of interactions between team members from different cultural backgrounds and how these interactions significantly influence the collective output of the team's creation. This detailed review of the extensive literature illustrates the important impact of team diversity, communication patterns, and leadership style on the profile shaping of team creativity. The center of the discussion is the dual nature of the organizational culture: it has both the potential to stimulate creativity within the team and the potential to inhibit it. Research shows that while cultural diversity brings unique perspectives and ideas that create mature environments for innovative thinking, it also presents significant challenges, including communication barriers and the generation of possible misunderstandings. Without skilled management, these problems can hamper the flow of ideas. Furthermore, this paper highlights the importance of fostering leadership styles and communication strategies for an open and supportive environment critical to thriving team creativity. In the text section, I integrate these findings into practical, actionable strategies that provide some feasible suggestions for organizations seeking to improve innovation. These strategies are deeply embedded in an understanding of cultural dynamics and aim to reform organizational practices to add some possibilities for us to achieve greater innovation and success in an increasingly diverse business world.

Keywords: cultural diversity, team, organizational culture

1. Introduction

Innovation and creativity have become the fundamental backbone of an evolving global business environment. In this competitive environment characterized by rapid technological progress, innovation ability is not only an advantage but also a key requirement for survival and development. In this context, team creativity becomes the core element that drives the organization to achieve breakthrough and lasting success. So-called team creativity is the creation of a valuable, useful new product, service, idea, procedure, or process by individuals working together in a complex social system [1].

Obviously, it is a fusion of diverse thinking, which can weave a rich brocade of ideas and solutions that go beyond the ability of any single thinker. It is similar to a jazz band, where each musician has

his unique style, which together form a harmonious and creative performance. Imagine a tech startup with a diverse team — that includes programmers, designers, and marketers — Everyone brings their skills and a different cultural perspective. Their partnership aims to create a breakthrough app. This collective effort is not only a simple convergence of individual skills but also a vivid demonstration of the synergies of their unified creative pursuit.

Many factors stimulate the creativity of a team, among which culture is one of the most important factors. The culture within the team is like the subtle and powerful flow in the river, shaping perception, communication, and problem-solving methods. Teams with rich cultural diversity often have a broader perspective and ideas than other teams, providing an ideal breeding environment for innovation. Diversity is like an artist's color palette, with more colors to create unimaginable solutions in monochromatic environments.

However, enriching the diversity of teams can also pose great challenges. Cultural differences often lead to misunderstanding, disrupted communication, and conflict. For example, suppose two members of a team, one coming from a high-context culture that relies on implicit communication, while the other is a low-context culture known for direct communication. Such a mix could create significant barriers to reaching a consensus. Manually managing these diverse cultural dynamics is essential to unleashing the full potential of a team's creativity. This means not only recognizing diversity but also embracing and harnessing it to create synergies that drive innovation and growth in the global business arena.

2. Literature review

The exploration of team creativity in organizational psychology and business management literature presents a diverse understanding. Various academic works deconstruct and reconstruct this concept, providing unique insights into the mechanisms that drive creativity in team settings. For example, Woodman et al. transformed the concept of team creativity into the ability of a team to participate in innovative problem-solving and conception through collaboration, emphasizing the importance of collaboration [1]. Amabile explores environmental influences and proposes that team creativity is the product of the interaction between individual talents and a favorable team environment [2]. His view shows that team creativity is not simply the sum of individual creativity, and its development depends more on the interaction of members within the team.

In addition, a major concern in the literature is the role of team diversity in promoting creativity. Bantel And Jackson found a positive correlation between the heterogeneity in the background of team members and the team's ability to innovate in their pioneering studies. This diversity includes multiple dimensions, including cultural context, work experience, and cognitive style [3]. Page further illustrates that teams of members with different educational and professional backgrounds are more effective than homogeneous teams in solving problems and generating innovative solutions [4].

Effective communication and an appropriate leadership style are essential to reach the potential of multiple teams. De Dreu and West proposed the role of open and supportive communication in promoting idea-sharing and collective creativity [5].

The impact of cultural differences on team dynamics and creativity is complex. On the one hand, cultural diversity in the team can be a rich source of different perspectives and novel ideas, combining different world views and problem-solving methods. Stahl et al. showed that effectively managed multicultural teams can transcend culturally homogeneous teams in creativity and innovation. On the other hand, cultural diversity poses challenges such as language barriers, different communication styles, and conflicting norms that may hinder teamwork and stifle creativity [6]. Gibson And Gibbs found that unresolved cultural conflicts within the team reduce communication efficiency and team cohesion, ultimately affecting the team's creative output [7].

In summary, this literature presents team creativity as a complex structure that is influenced by multiple factors. While team diversity is a potential gold mine for innovative thinking, it requires skilled management to overcome the inherent challenges. Effective communication and transformational leadership are the key drivers of team creativity. Most importantly, to understand and leverage the complexity of team dynamics, especially in culturally diverse environments, which is critical to fostering environments conducive to creativity.

3. The influence of cultural diversity on innovative thinking

Cultural diversity within the team has a significant impact on their ability to innovate. Team members from different cultural backgrounds bring rich experience, perspective, and problem-solving skills. Research on multinational companies shows that teams with multicultural backgrounds are more skilled in developing innovative solutions for global markets because they take into account broader market needs and creative approaches. In the technology industry, for example, cross-cultural teams have successfully developed software products that attract global users by integrating diverse technical insights and user interface design.

As for the influence of organizational culture on team creativity, the culture of an organization plays a key role in shaping the creativity of its team. A culture that encourages openness, adventure, and values diversity significantly increases creative output. Companies like Google, known for their innovative culture and "20% time" rules, allow employees to project, work for individuals, and thus create some fairly successful products. In contrast, the creativity of rigid, hierarchical organizations may be suppressed, as some, declining traditional manufacturing tends to follow established processes rather than innovate.

However, while cultural diversity can promote creativity, it also poses challenges, especially in communication and conflict resolution. Differences in different communication styles, language barriers, and cultural norms may lead to conflict and hinder creative processes. For example, a multicultural team in a European company faces language barriers that lead to misunderstanding and frustration that negatively affect team cohesion and creative collaboration. Effectively managing these challenges requires fostering mutual respect, providing language training when necessary, and developing an understanding of diverse cultural norms. Leaders play a key role in addressing these challenges by ensuring that all team members feel valued and heard.

In conclusion, according to research, even if cultural diversity in a team can be a powerful catalyst for innovation, it requires clever management to reach its full potential. An organizational culture that supports creativity, and effective leadership in managing cultural diversity, is essential to maximize the team's creative capacity while dealing with cultural differences.

4. Methodology

The results discussed above demonstrate that cultural diversity plays a key role in enhancing team creativity, while also acknowledging the challenges of managing diverse teams. For organizational leaders, these findings provide viable strategies to foster an inclusive and creative team environment. Here are some of my points.

Firstly, encouraging and valuing diversity is very important for managers. There was a study highlighting the impact of leadership in fostering a creative climate which found a strong correlation between transformational leadership style and team creativity. The point is Transformational leaders motivate and inspire teams to create an atmosphere that encourages and values creative ideas[8]. They should take the initiative to build teams with different cultural backgrounds and create an atmosphere in which different views are welcome and respected. This approach, such as the well-known Apple, for example, will bring richer ideas and global market appeal. However, building a diverse team is

only the first step, and leaders must ensure that all members feel inclusive and that their contributions are fully valued.

After that it is clear that effective communication can play a vital role in this system: A clear and open communication channel is critical, especially if there is a multinational team, and managers may need to provide language support or use tools to facilitate communication. This similar approach designed to raise cross-cultural awareness can play a key role in breaking down barriers and promoting trust among team members.

Sometimes some conflicts may be caused by cultural differences which cannot be ignored, so leaders must pay attention to them. Managers should be fully prepared to identify and mediate conflicts and foster a culture of mutual respect and understanding. Awareness training and workshops on cultural differences can prevent irreconcilable misunderstandings and contradictions among team members, especially in decision-making or expressing dissent.

As a Leadership role they should also set the tone for the team culture. The transformational leadership style, characterized by inspiring motivation and personalized attention, is particularly effective for diverse teams, inspiring shared visions while meeting the unique needs of each team member and giving full play to each person's strengths.

Therefore the benefits of harnessing cultural diversity in teams require a comprehensive approach, including valuing diversity, promoting effective communication, being fully prepared to manage conflict, and providing inspiring leadership. By adopting these strategies, managers can create an environment that not only exists for cultural diversity but also actively promotes creativity and innovation.

5. Conclusion

This paper highlights the complex relationship between team creativity and culture, highlighting the important role of cultural diversity in enhancing the process of creation within the team. Research shows that while cultural diversity can greatly enrich the team's potential for innovation, it also presents unique challenges, particularly in communication and conflict resolution. Effectively managing these dynamic relationships is essential. This paper not only expresses a certain understanding of academic theory, shows how cultural factors affect team creativity but also provides a general methodology for the effective management of multiple teams. Further future research could attempt to explore specific strategies to harness cultural diversity in different organizational settings and industries, and empirical research on the long-term impact of these strategies on team performance and innovation to further contribute to this important field.

This paper studies and analyzes the importance of team creativity and its central role in promoting innovation and competitive advantage. Through a comprehensive literature review and in-depth analysis, this paper provides a comprehensive perspective on understanding the complexity of the impact of cultural diversity on team creativity, while providing some practical strategies for effectively managing multiple teams. In a world of globalization and technological advances, these fact-based understandings are indispensable for organizations seeking continuous innovation and adaptation to dynamic market environments.

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Transformative Narratives: Generational Gaps in Post-War Japan Through the Cinematic Lens of Tokyo Monogatari and Ohayo

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Abstract: The research delves into the profound generational divides depicted in Yasujirō Ozu's Tokyo Monogatari and Ohayo, providing a captivating cinematic exploration of post-war Japan's transformative landscape. Through an intricate synthesis of cinematic narratives and history analysis, it meticulously examines the contrasting attitudes towards material fulfillment, evolving social norms, and shifting patriarchal dynamics portrayed in these masterpieces. Yasujirō Ozu, widely regarded as one of Japan's most influential filmmakers, captured the complexities of generational dynamics and societal transformation during the tumultuous era of reconstruction in the 1950s in Japan. By scrutinizing these themes in depth, the essay offers profound insights into the complexities of post-war Japanese identity, shedding light on the intricate interplay between tradition and modernity during the pivotal era of reconstruction in the 1950s. Through its nuanced examination of these multifaceted themes, the essay provides a comprehensive understanding of the enduring generational gaps that emerged in Japanese society during the 1950s, inviting readers to contemplate the intricate dynamics shaping the nation's narrative during a crucial juncture in its history.

Keywords: Yasujirō Ozu, post-war, cinema

1. Introduction

The 1950s in Japan stood as a pivotal moment in the nation's narrative, a period where the wounds of World War II were slowly healing, and the nation embarked on a complex journey of reconstruction. This transformative era was characterized by profound social, cultural, and economic changes, igniting generational gaps that would imprint a lasting legacy on Japanese society. This essay delves into the transformative cinematic landscape of post-war Japan during the 1950s, examining how these changes, as portrayed in masterpieces like Yasujirō Ozu's Tokyo Monogatari and Ohayo, played a pivotal role in portraying these enduring generational gaps. Far from being mere historical contingencies, these generational divides became integral to Japan's evolving identity.[1] By synthesizing insights from cinematic narratives and scholarly analyses, this essay dissects the divergent attitudes of the younger and older generations regarding desires for material life, ideas of evolving social expectations, and the transformative dynamics of traditional patriarchal authority shown during post-war Japan.

2. Towards the “Bright Life”

Compared to the older generations, younger generations tended to embrace a new lifestyle regarding food and entertainment. This goes beyond making a basic living called “bright life” (akarui seikatsu) [2].

Simon Partner, in his book *Assembled in Japan*, states that “In the early 1950s, consumption had more to do with putting rice on the table than with the pursuit of pleasure.”[3] It is a lens through which we can analyze the historical context of societal values and consumption patterns. Ozu’s films embody the same idea, shedding light on the intricate relationship between generational perspectives and the evolving socio-economic landscape.

The older generations portrayed in Ozu’s films have been through the material hard times during the war, and embody the values ingrained in the pre-war era, where the emphasis on basic survival needs was paramount. The pursuit of pleasure took a backseat to the practicalities of securing sustenance, symbolized by the central role of rice on the table. This historical context reflects the frugality and resilience of a nation recovering from the devastations of war.

The generational divide, then, becomes a historical commentary in *Ohayo* as the younger generation, Isamu and Minoru, expresses dissatisfaction with the same options for meals. Specifically, children are complaining about the traditional fare of dried fish and miso soup. This discontent symbolizes a broader societal shift – a departure from the older generation’s emphasis on simplicity and necessity towards the post-war generation’s desire for a more varied and pleasurable lifestyle. This shift can be linked to the broader economic recovery and growing affluence during the 1950s, signaling a departure from the austerity of the immediate post-war period. Similarly, in *Tokyo Monogatari*, when the two kids’ parents, who represent the younger generation in this movie, plan to take the family out for lunch, they think the children’s lunch from the department store is a desirable choice for the kids. As lunch from outside the home is a relatively new option and the department store represents “modern-lifestyle”, it mirrors the changing economic landscape where prosperity and more opportunities for Japanese consumers in the form of commodity culture.[4] The parents, the younger generation, aspire to provide their children with experiences beyond mere sustenance, reflecting the priorities in a post-war society shifting to the quality of life.

The spread of television provided a new way for entertainment and further exacerbated the gap between the two generations in addition to socio-economic changes. With the advent of the “three sacred treasures” of the 1950s, television, electric washing machine, and refrigerator,[5] coupled with the burgeoning popularity of sumo wrestling culture, television has ushered in an entirely new era of entertainment for the masses. In *Ohayo*, the children always get together at the neighbor’s house after school, forming a communal space to collectively enjoy televised wrestling matches. This shared activity became such a focal point that some children went to the extent of deceiving their parents by feigning the intention to study while secretly visiting the neighbor’s house for the sole purpose of enjoying television. Their intense eagerness to watch sumo wrestling became a symbolic representation of the younger generation’s enthusiastic embrace of this novel form of entertainment. Also, in the analysis of the purchase of electrical devices in Japan during the 1950s, a notable incident should be discussed in the film. Isamu and Minoru, two brothers, displayed an intense enthusiasm for watching sumo wrestling on television. In their fervor, they went on strike against their parents, refusing to talk until their parents agreed to buy a television. Furthermore, when the two brothers are eventually found after their brief disappearance, they are discovered engrossed in watching television at the station, reinforcing their passionate engagement with the medium.

Contrary to this, at one point, when two kids’ father met with his friend at the pub one night, he explicitly voiced their concern that TV would turn millions of Japanese people into idiots. The expression of “idiots” reflects a deep-seated opposition rooted in the fear of cultural erosion and the

potential influence of mass media on societal norms. This contrasting attitude represents a generational clash, with the older generation resisting the changing landscape of entertainment. The advent of television is not merely a shift in entertainment preferences but symbolizes a broader transformation in communication and cultural dissemination. The father's apprehension can be interpreted as a resistance to the perceived erosion of traditional values, showcasing a poignant struggle against the potential influence of mass media on societal norms, which is completely different from the younger generations.

3. Stands on Social Expectations

Older generations are more likely to follow the traditional social expectations regarding filial duties and the relationships among neighbors, while the younger generations are challenging the old socially expected norms.

In *Tokyo Monogatari*, the cinematic portrayal of the older generation, embodied by Shukichi and Tomi, encapsulates a steadfast commitment to societal norms deeply rooted in pre-war Japan. Their trip to Tokyo takes on the significance of a symbolic pilgrimage, filled with expectations for familial warmth and respect, reflecting the enduring values of the past. Japanese society historically leaned towards collectivism, emphasizing group harmony and interconnectedness.[6] Family bonds were considered paramount, and individuals were expected to prioritize the well-being of the family unit over personal desires. Set against the backdrop of post-war Japan undergoing profound societal transformations, the film starkly portrays a generational divide. The post-war period saw seismic shifts in societal structures and values, as disruptions caused by the war and subsequent urbanization and industrialization strained intergenerational relationships. Women entering the workforce further altered the traditional family dynamics of women at home waiting for the men.[7] Shukichi and Tomi's expectations echo a yearning for the persistence of traditional Confucian values in a society grappling with the aftermath of war and the challenges of modernization.

As the narrative progresses, a disheartening reality surfaces, laying bare the widening gap between the expectations of the older generation and the reality of their children's lives. The adult children, absorbed in the demands of contemporary urban life, are unable to maintain the expected familial bonds. For example, when queried by customers, the daughter refrained from disclosing her parents' identity in the countryside, only revealing they were fellow villagers. Additionally, due to a seminar being hosted at home, she chose not to expend her children's funds unnecessarily, resulting in the premature eviction of her parents who had returned early from vacation, leaving the elderly couple without shelter on the streets. This stark contrast serves as a microcosm of the broader generational gap, reflecting the tension between the traditional values upheld by the elderly couple and the evolving familial structures in post-war Japan.

The disappointment experienced by Shukichi and Tomi becomes a powerful metaphor for the challenges faced by many families during this transformative period. The film underscores the complexities of bridging generational gaps in the face of societal changes, where the older generation grapples with a shifting cultural landscape and the younger generation seeks autonomy and individual aspirations. Similarly, in *Ohayo*, these desires for autonomy and individuals are shown in daily conversations. When Isamu and Minoru express their desire for the family to purchase a television, their father dismisses the idea with a curt remark, stating, "That's too much talking." In response, Minoru challenges the conventional notion of excessive communication by asserting, "It is adults who speak too much," particularly in the context of unnecessary daily greetings. This rejection of the traditional greetings and their belief in the redundancy of such formalities stand in stark contrast to the values upheld by the older generation. Consequently, they adopt a form of silent protest, choosing to stay unspoken as a means of challenging the established mainstream greeting cultures. This intentional shift in communication style becomes a symbolic expression of the younger generation's

resistance to conforming to traditional societal norms, adding depth to the exploration of generational dynamics in the film.

The intriguing development of breaking the silence through the eventual purchase of a television set provides a deeper insight into the historical context of post-war Japan, underscoring the pivotal role of societal expectations in shaping generational dynamics. Partner's observation that decisions regarding television purchases were often influenced by the younger, less "rational" family members aligns seamlessly with the broader societal shift toward embracing modern conveniences.[3] Admittedly, the younger generation emerges as key catalysts for change within the family unit, actively challenging established norms. However, a more crucial element in buying the television in this scenario is the introduction of a new salesman, coincidentally a neighbor, which adds an additional layer to the interpretation of the social expectations. In post-war Japan, the significance of societal bonds within neighborhoods cannot be overstated. As advertising played a crucial role in electrical goods companies' efforts to stimulate consumer demand, Japanese companies initiated door-to-door sales as a strategic approach to better convince consumers.[3] The decision to acquire a television set, particularly with a neighbor assuming the role of a salesman, reveals a nuanced interplay between personal choices and communal expectations. During this period, the older generation, burdened with the responsibility of upholding societal norms and fostering harmonious relationships within the community, may have felt a heightened sense of obligation to align with the popular trend of acquiring modern amenities. The television purchase, therefore, evolves into a multifaceted decision, influenced not solely by children's irrational desires, but also by the weight of communal expectations and the collective well-being of the neighborhood.

4. Patriarchal Dynamics Across Generations

The generational gaps can also be detected from the attitudes towards traditional patriarchy, specifically shown in the contrasting relationships between children and fathers, females and males.

In *Ohayo*, despite being bestowed with the television after striking with silence and hunger, the two brothers persist in defying their father's expectations for maintaining silence. *Ozu* employs deep space dynamics to vividly portray the generational gap between father and sons, with Minoru and Isamu seated at the end of the hallway while their father stands with his back to the camera, out of frame. The low camera position centers the brothers, and the introduction of the television effectively acts as a visual separator, accentuating the evolving distance between them.[8] Even after a stern warning, Isamu remains defiant, prompting his father to acknowledge defeat and exit the frame. This poignant representation encapsulates the decline of traditional patriarchal authority, leveraging television as a poignant symbol of the widening generational chasm between father and sons. The persistent resistance exhibited by Minoru and Isamu resonates with a broader post-war societal issue, fueled by the substantial loss of young and middle-aged soldiers, creating a significant void in Japan's social fabric. This sentiment aligns with the 'sun tribe' (*taiyozoku*) movement, marked by a rejection of patriarchal authority, the celebration of sexuality, and resistance against Western influence.[9] The movement is intricately connected to Japan's resounding defeat in World War II and its profound impact on the reconstruction of Japanese masculinity in the post-war era.

The active resistance demonstrated by the younger generation against traditional patriarchal norms stands in contrast to the submissive behavior of female characters, evident in both films. In *Tokyo Monogatari*, the depiction of the mother, Tomi, encapsulates a submissive role, embodying a quintessential representation of patriarchal authority. She faithfully follows her husband's words, displaying a lack of active self-expression. Even after being expelled by her daughter, Tomi dutifully complies with her husband's decisions, maintaining a subordinate position within the patriarchal structure. The film's narrative culminates in a poignant moment where the mother, despite joyfully visiting Tokyo to see her children, succumbs to illness upon her return and ultimately passes away at

home. This narrative arc symbolizes the complete muting of her character, underlining the pervasive influence of patriarchal norms on her individual agency and illustrating the broader societal dynamics depicted in the film. Similarly, in *Ohayo*, the female characters, particularly the mothers, show a similar pattern of subservience. The societal pressure to maintain decorum and adhere to traditional expectations is vividly depicted through the gossiping women in the community. Also, the satirical element arises when the director uses the misconception of a mother interpreting a fart as a directive from her husband, cleverly juxtaposed with the children's playful fart game. When analyzing the cinematography language, both films consistently position female characters behind male counterparts in the frame. This visual motif underscores Ozu Yasujiro's conscious emphasis on a "patriarchal supremacy" family perspective, reflecting deeply rooted societal norms in Japan during the depicted era. The traditional Japanese value of "everyone should take one's proper station"[10] confines female characters within the gaze of male characters, existing in a state of aphasia or absence. This formed a completely different attitude compared to the resisted younger generations.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, *Tokyo Monogatari* and *Ohayo* vividly reflect post-war Japan's generational shifts, highlighting the clashes between tradition and modernity embodied by the younger and older generations. These masterpieces delve into the clash between tradition and modernity, offering insights into the evolving societal landscape. The pursuit of a "bright life" by the younger generation, evident in changing lifestyle preferences and the embrace of television, symbolizes broader shifts in post-war Japan. The narratives also explore tensions in social expectations, portraying the struggle to reconcile traditional norms with evolving familial structures and connections among neighbors. Additionally, patriarchal dynamics undergo scrutiny, revealing the decline of traditional authority and the resistance exhibited by the younger generation. The two films serve as captivating windows into the complexities of post-war Japanese identity, portraying the resilience of a society navigating reconstruction and modernization.

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Exploring the Impact of Neo-Confucianism on Material Art Through the Artistic Characteristics of Kesi in Song Dynasty

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Abstract: The Song Dynasty was a period of great development in ancient Chinese art, including material art. *Kesi*, a type of material art is taken as an instance to explore how Neo-Confucianism influenced the development of art during the Song dynasty, a period marked by new developments in thought and culture. Neo-Confucianism impacted not only the political realm but also the art of painting, and further had a significant influence on the composition, coloring, and techniques of silk textile. The ornamental *kesi* taperstry paintings of the Song dynasty as a material artistry, similar with the style of flower and bird paintings of the period, focused on the realistic depiction of objects, using silk as a substitute for the brush. With image analysis, historical document research, and the corroboration between documents and physical objects, this article elucidates the artistic characteristics of *kesi* (silk tapestry) under the influence of the "investigation of things to extend knowledge" philosophy in Song dynasty.

Keywords: material art history, Neo-Confucianism, *kesi*, painting, silk

1. Introduction

Silk textile was one of the most important Chinese material art, which reflects the artistic and economic life of Chinese people over thousands of years. *Kesi*, a kind of silk tapestry with cut designs was one with the highest technique in specialized silk textile. Centered around the concept of "investigating things to extend knowledge," the philosophy of Neo-Confucianism impacted not only the political realm but also the art of painting, and further had a significant influence on the composition, coloring, and techniques of silk textile. This article first analyzes the political environment and economic situation of the Song dynasty, and discusses the relationship between the elevation of the scholar-official class's status and the development of Neo-Confucianism against the backdrop of a unique social context. It then examines the artistic characteristics of *kesi* before the Song Dynasty and compares the changes afterwards, concluding with the intrinsic relationship between *kesi*, painting art, and Neo-Confucian philosophy.

2. The Historical Context of the Song Dynasty

2.1. The Flourishing of Culture and Arts during the Song Dynasty

Historian Chen Yinke remarked, "The culture of China, having evolved over thousands of years,

reached its pinnacle during the era of the Zhao Song. Thereafter, it gradually declined, but it is bound to be revitalized." Compared to previous dynasties, the Song Dynasty's culture exhibited trends of "popularization, secularization, and humanization." Firstly, the growth of the scholarly class and the civil service examination system, which was more open and fairer than that of the Tang Dynasty, provided opportunities for many individuals from humble backgrounds. Secondly, the rise of the urban citizenry; the city of Kaifeng during the Song Dynasty was a comparatively open environment, with frequent movements among people from different social strata such as scholars, peasants, artisans, and merchants [1]. Urban prosperity and the burgeoning of the urban class forged a closer connection between art and the common people, expanding the scope of artistic expression and leading to greater diversity in subjects and styles. The royal nobility's increased demand for art, the ruling class's fondness and emphasis on art, and the trend of scholars and officials collecting paintings, calligraphy, and art objects all propelled the development of art. Moreover, the advancement of handicrafts and commerce, along with technological progress during the Song Dynasty, provided fertile ground for the development of material art.

2.2. The Scholar-Official Class and Neo-Confucianism

The Song Dynasty marked a critical period of ideological transformation in Chinese history. To prevent the political peril of regional military insubordination that had been prevalent since the late Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties period, the emperors of the Song adopted Confucian governance and favored the appointment of scholar-officials [1,2]. The civil service examination system, as a mechanism for selecting officials, significantly supported the entry of literati into government service, thereby gradually shaping a vast scholar-official class. This class not only inherited traditional Confucian teachings but also constructed the theoretical framework of Neo-Confucianism. Rationalism, which absorbed philosophical theories from Taoism and Buddhism, saw its status in thought and culture continually rise. By the late Southern Song Dynasty, it was adopted as the official philosophy.

3. Song Dynasty *Kesi* and Painting

3.1. Characteristics of *Kesi* before the Song Dynasty

Kesi is a type of silk weaving craft characterized by the technique of 'continuous warp and broken weft,' which uses undyed silk as the warp and colored silk as the weft. The patterns are woven using a method that involves changing shuttles and partially reversing the weft according to the contours of the design or color changes. This technique allows the weft to pass through the warp, revealing the pattern and creating boundaries with a carved effect, giving the fabric a rich, three-dimensional appearance [2]. The Encyclopædia Britannica notes that the weaving technique of continuous warp and broken weft originated in Syria and Egypt and was later passed through Persia and Central Asia to China's Xinjiang via the Pamir Plateau. Archaeological discoveries in China have uncovered *kesi* artifacts, such as the horse-and-rider patterned *kesi* wool from the Shanpula site in Hotan, the beast-head patterned *kesi* woolen cloth from the Keriya River site, and Han Dynasty woolen textiles unearthed in Loulan. The discovery of a *kesi* belt in a Tang Dynasty tomb in Turpan indicates that the emergence of China's ancient *kesi* craftsmanship can be dated back to no later than the Tang Dynasty.

3.2. *Kesi* and Painting

Since the Song Dynasty, *kesi* not only gradually developed and matured in skill but also underwent changes in form.

In terms of *kesi* technique, the Song Dynasty was more sophisticated compared to the Tang Dynasty. Although the weaving technology was the same as in the Tang Dynasty, the patterns of the Song Dynasty were more complex, and the widths of the textiles were significantly increased [2, 3]. Tang textiles, exchanged during the cultural interactions between the East and West, were mainly practical items such as ribbons, and the decorative patterns were mostly simple geometric shapes, lacking artistic depth.

The Song Dynasty's rulers valued culture over military prowess and rewarded learning and artistic skill, leading to a flourishing of scholarly pursuits. All types of handicrafts during the Song Dynasty, whether in craftsmanship or decoration, experienced unprecedented development. Among these, the technique of continuous warp and broken weft in *kesi* craft rapidly advanced. *Kesi* artists infused personal emotion into their weaving, producing *kesi* works with delicate and rich patterns, which provided the technical foundation for the transition of *kesi* from practicality to aesthetic appreciation with embedded meanings. *Kesi* patterns evolved from early geometric shapes to gradually integrating with painting and religious techniques during the Song Dynasty, developing into a fiber art that unified weaving and painting [4,5]. In the late Northern Song Dynasty, Emperor Huizong had a profound love for painting, greatly expanded the imperial painting academy, and developed institutions like the Wen Si Yuan and Wen Xiu Yuan for crafting court artifacts, leading to an unprecedented flourishing of court paintings and artistic works. The representational themes of Song Dynasty *kesi* patterns often emulated the realistic *kesi* works based on the Song academy style of painting. Therefore, the study of Song Dynasty *kesi* patterns often draws upon the aesthetic principles of Song paintings.

3.2.1. The Painting Perspective and Confucian Spirit of the Song Dynasty

The art of painting in any nation or ethnic group usually begins with the goal of 'realism,' and 'faithful reproduction' has been a long-sought aim among artists. However, due to limitations of the period, the initial works of these painters were not highly accomplished in terms of 'likeness.' It was not until the Jin and Tang dynasties that 'likeness' made significant strides, laying a solid foundation for the peak of 'realistic' painting techniques during the Song Dynasty, where the pursuit of detailed, lifelike reproduction was taken to its extreme.

A crucial factor influencing many painters' adherence to 'realism' was the Song people's reverence for 'rationalism.' The development of Neo-Confucianism during the Song Dynasty had a profound impact on all aspects of society. In painting, it was essential to follow the laws of nature and not create works arbitrarily. Historical records note that Emperor Huizong of Song was meticulous in his observation of the world around him, even considering whether a peacock steps first with its left or right foot, or the various changes in leaves over time—details he would scrutinize before painting, exemplifying his rigorous approach to the art. This attitude set a standard that many painters emulated, cultivating flowers, birds, insects, and fish, and observing them carefully for use in their life drawings.

It was this meticulous approach that led to Song Dynasty painters favoring the portrayal of detailed scenes in their work. The paintings of the era are filled with a conservative and rational style, marked by precise realism. *Kesi* adopted this characteristic; in the shaping of objects, the control of form and color was almost indistinguishable from their real-life counterparts, avoiding the exaggerated deformations and strong contrasts in color common in other silk fabrics [2, 5-6]. The pursuit of realism and fine detail remained the goal of Song Dynasty painting, as evidenced by the realistic style and exquisite fine lines found throughout the works of the period.

3.2.2. Characteristics of *Kesi* Painting

Neo-Confucian scholars of the Song Dynasty advocated for the practice of self-cultivation through

'investigation of things to extend knowledge' to meet the standards of 'heavenly principle.' The aesthetic principle of the imperial painting academy was 'meticulous imitation of nature,' valuing the 'methods' of the ancients and strictly adhering to the 'likeness' of natural phenomena, taking the pursuit of detailed and realistic depiction of details to its zenith. Guo Ruoxu, in his 'Tuhua Jianwen Zhi' (Records of Observations on Painting), discussed flower and bird paintings, suggesting that one should understand 'the conditions of the four seasons, the facing of yin and yang, the age of bamboo shoots, the sequence of buds and sepals as well as the forms and features of various birds.' To portray objects authentically, many painters raised flowers, birds, insects, and fish themselves, observing and sketching them meticulously. During the reign of Emperor Zhenzong, the painter Zhao Chang, in pursuit of faithfully reflecting reality through color, often went to the garden in the early morning while the dew was still fresh to observe and mix colors, thereby earning the reputation for 'lifelike portrayal unmatched by his contemporaries.' Consequently, the painters' approach to creation was quite rigorous; they observed nature deeply and thoroughly, from the exterior to the interior, and had a profound experience with every bird, insect, grass, flower, mountain, and body of water. They not only captured the true form of the subjects they painted but also grasped the essence of the objects, achieving 'investigation of things to manifest truth, and likeness to generate meaning.' This pursuit of detail and authenticity became an important aesthetic standard in the imperial painting academy, increasingly becoming a prominent trend and interest in the artistic community, from within the academy to the outside [6, 7]. As the decorative aspect of painting was enhanced, arts and crafts borrowed elements from painting to strengthen their own visual appeal. At this time, the integration of arts and crafts with painting became even tighter, permeating the shadows of Song Dynasty painting everywhere, and the realistic style also significantly influenced the institutions and workshops within the palace, such as the Wen Si Yuan, Jia Ku, Wen Xiu Yuan, and Lian Jin Yuan, which produced craft items. As known from the 'Yunqing Xuan Mi Lu' (Secret Records of the Yunqing Pavilion), the embroidery products of the time were influenced by the academy style paintings: 'Landscapes convey the charm of distance and proximity, pavilions and towers achieve a depth of form, figures possess a vivid sense of contemplation and observation, and flowers and birds exhibit an elegant and lively demeanor. The finest among these surpass even paintings in their beauty.'

3.3. Style Analysis of Representative Works and Neo-Confucianism

The influence of Neo-Confucian philosophical thought of the Song Dynasty on art extended from the realm of painting to the representative of material art—*kesi*.

3.3.1. Composition

In the Song Dynasty, *kesi* depictions of flowers and birds were often small in scale, typically featuring a branch of flowers bending into the picture from one corner or side, with birds or insects added as embellishments. This not only balanced the composition but also brought vitality to the scene. This was a common compositional method in Song Dynasty flower and bird paintings, which not only allowed for a delicate and vivid portrayal of the subjects but also imparted an exquisitely unique sensation to the viewer. *Figure 1 'Kesi Camellia and Butterfly'* is a masterpiece by the renowned *kesi* artist Zhu Kerou. In the piece, a blue background sets the stage, with a cluster of floral branches extending from the bottom right corner. The flowers are depicted in varying states of bloom—some partially open, some bud-like, about to unfurl. The shape and texture of the pinkish sepals are rendered with subtle delicacy; the leaves are spaced to create density and rhythm, with both flattened and turned states represented. The veins of the leaves and branches are clearly defined, and the depiction of insect-eaten, yellowing leaves, based on direct observation from life, significantly enhances the realism of the work. Similar detailed depictions of branches and leaves can be seen in Lin Chun's

'Birds Attracted by Ripe Fruit' and a Song-era 'Camellia and Butterfly.' The petals and leaves transition in color naturally, reminiscent of the fine-brush gradient effect; a butterfly alighting on a branch adds dynamism to the entire scene, as if a light breeze were blowing and the scent of flowers was in the air. The signature 'Seal of Zhu Kerou' is woven in the lower-left corner. This image is a typical Northern Song academy style of flower and bird painting. The weaver's use of various colored silk threads is distinctive, such as using brown and beige for withered branches, green and yellow-green for leaves, and the most challenging depiction of insect damage is woven with beige and brown threads to create a natural color transition [7, 8]. The fine sepals are rendered in varying lengths using the herringbone technique to create depth, while the stamens use beige and yellow, with the technique reducing the gap between stitches and adding detailed stippling and retouching according to the layers, for a flatter and more natural effect. Retouching is a common technique in *kesi*, and in '*Kesi Camellia and Butterfly*,' details like sepals and branches, as well as the parts of leaves damaged by insects, are all enhanced with localized stippling. Where there are omissions in the weaving, the retouching method can be employed to achieve the best effect.



Figure 1: '*Kesi Camellia and Butterfly*' by Zhu Kerou

3.3.2. Coloration

Due to the emulation and borrowing from painting, ornamental *kesi* also adheres to the principle of 'assigning colors according to type' found in painting, applying colors in accordance with the natural hues of the objects depicted. Zhang Xizhi once praised Zhu Kerou's '*Kesi Peony*' (Figure 2: '*Kesi Peony* by Zhu Kerou'): 'This piece, just over a square foot, is all delicately detailed, as if drawing from a single silkworm thread, containing five colors, intricately adorned and meandering, a work of natural ingenuity. The excellence of its needlework surely sets it as a Song dynasty creation without doubt.' The various colors in '*Kesi Peony*' differentiate from each other yet harmonize and unify, maintaining integrity amidst variation, reflecting the Song people's reverence for Neo-Confucianism. A focus on realism and meticulous craftsmanship has always been the goal pursued by Song dynasty painting.



Figure 2: '*Kesi Peony*' by Zhu Kerou

In the *kesi* works featuring flowers and birds, there is also the 'Lotus Pond with Ducks' (*Figure 3: 'Lotus Pond with Ducks' by Zhu Kerou*) in the academy and freehand style, which is a larger piece and a representative work of Zhu Kerou. This piece is rich in coloration, with a composition that possesses a sense of depth and narrative. It portrays a pair of mallard ducks, two ducklings, two egrets, and a kingfisher, some frolicking in the pond, others soaring close to the water, all vividly lifelike. Interspersed among them are dragonflies and grass insects, while in the water float lotuses, lily pads, hibiscus, white lotus, and water lilies interspersed among Taihu rocks and the shoreline, all arranged in an orderly manner that combines stillness with motion, creating a tranquil scene. The piece is marked with 'Made by Zhu Gang from Jiangdong, Lotus Pond with Ducks' and 'Seal of Zhu Kerou.' All the flora, fauna, and birds in the image are realistically rendered, likely drawn from life, with the proportions of the animals and plants true to scale. The scene of the lotus pond, based on the size of the ducklings and the state of the flowers, is inferred to represent a late spring to early summer setting. Throughout the image, flowers are either budding or fruiting, and birds and insects are paired, suggesting companionship.



Figure 3: 'Lotus Pond with Ducks' by Zhu Kerou

3.3.3. Technique

Shen Zifan was a master of *kesi* weaving during the Southern Song Dynasty. His *kesi* works often took famous calligraphy and paintings as prototypes, with compositions that were simple and styles that were light, elegant, and antique. He was skilled in using techniques such as the wooden comb herringbone, wrapped heart herringbone, and phoenix tail herringbone. His depiction of bird feathers was vivid and lifelike, leaving no traces of carving, which presented a strong sense of pictorial art. *Figure 4 'Kesi Plum Blossoms with Cold Magpies'* inherited the painting methods of Huang Quan's academy style of flowers and birds, utilizing ink painting techniques for stippling the branches of the tree and fine brush painting techniques to depict the magpies and plum blossoms. The tree branches are robust and vigorous, with two magpies standing opposite each other, their feather textures enhanced by the fineness of the silk, achieving effects even superior to painting. The plum blossoms on the branches are in various states, from fully bloomed to bud, each with a distinct form. A cluster of green bamboo is interspersed among the branches, with bamboo leaves also showing different shades of yellow-green and the detail of insect-eaten leaves. The fine details are meticulously rendered, showing a mastery of both expressive and meticulous brushwork, exemplifying a perfect fusion of painting and *kesi* weaving techniques [7, 9]. The bottom of the work is woven with 'Made by Zifan' and the 'Shen Family' seal, while the poem hall bears Qianlong's imperial brush 'Joy Gives Rise to Fragrance,' and is stamped with multiple seals such as 'Qianlong's Appreciation,' 'For the Progeny,' 'Treasure Inspected by Jiaqing,' 'Qianlong's Imperial Hand,' 'Shiqu Baoji,' 'Definitive Shiqu

Examination,' 'Recompiled Treasure Records,' 'Fruit Prince Mansion Book Record,' 'For the Descendants to Cherish,' 'Liang Family of the Banana Forest Calligraphy and Painting Seal,' among others. There is also Shen Zifan's 'Kesi Flowers and Birds,' which introduces thick and thin peach branches into the picture, with two doves standing on the thick branches, thin branches extending upwards, flowers abundant and leaves lush. The peach blossoms vary in state from blooming to budding, with contorted tree trunks outlined in ink, and the piece signed with 'Zifan.'



Figure 4: 'Kesi Plum Blossoms with Cold Magpies' by Shen Zifan

4. Conclusion

Song dynasty flower and bird paintings emphasized observation of nature, capturing the essence of natural objects with refined brushwork that achieved both realism and spirit. This was closely related to the ideological transformation of Neo-Confucianism during the Song dynasty. The prosperity of painting also influenced *kesi* (silk tapestry). The ornamental *kesi* of the Song dynasty as a material artistry, similar with the style of flower and bird paintings of the period, focused on the realistic depiction of objects, using silk as a substitute for the brush. Through a variety of techniques, it conveyed the characteristics and texture of different objects. In terms of composition, coloration, and expressive techniques, both forms of art demonstrated a remarkable harmony.

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The Continuation of Incense Worship: Exploring the Rituals of “Ancestral Belief” in the “Incense Worship” Culture from the Perspective of Chinese Transmission

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Abstract: “Incense worship” refers to the incense or candlelight used for worshipping ancestors or deities, which is an indispensable part of traditional Chinese culture. With the succession of generations and the evolution of culture, the term “incense worship” has gradually developed more connotations, among which the evolution based on clan implications is particularly characterized by localization. This paper will deeply explore the connotations of “incense worship” from the perspective of Chinese transmission, tracing its evolution in the context of ancestor worship and the localization of clan traditions. At the same time, from the perspective of communication studies, it analyzes its metaphor as a form of communication, glimpsing the rituals of “ancestral belief” in the “incense worship” culture through exploration of media, ceremonies, and space, and discussing its modern continuation and changes.

Keywords: Incense Worship, Ancestor Worship, Folk Belief, Clan, Rituals

1. Introduction

“Incense Worship” refers to the incense or candlelight used for worshipping ancestors or deities, which is an indispensable part of the traditional Chinese culture. From the “customs” of household shrines and community rituals to the “ceremonies” of temple offerings and prayers for a good harvest, incense worship holds significant importance both at the level of rituals and culture as a material symbol. In Bai Juyi’s poem “Wǔ yuè zhāi jiè xiān yǐ cháng jù chéng xiè” (五月斋戒先以长句呈谢), he states, “Sàn zhāi xiāng huǒ jīn zhāo sàn, kāi sù pán yán hòu rì kāi” (散斋香火今朝散, 开素盘筵后日开), which embodies the act of attending to the incense and offerings for the deities, echoing the sentiment expressed in Guan Xiu’s poem, one of the “Shǔ wáng dēng fú gǎn sì tǎ shī” (蜀王登福感寺塔诗): “Tiān zī zhōng xiào zuǒ jīn lún, xiāng huǒ kōng wáng yǒu sù yīn” (天资忠孝佐金轮, 香火空王有宿因). This implies devotion to Buddhism, establishing a connection through the offering of incense and maintaining the flame of faith.

With the succession of generations and the evolution of culture, the term “Incense Worship” has gradually developed multiple connotations, among which the evolution based on the connotation of lineage is particularly characterized by localization: looking back, it can be traced back to the worship of the ancestors of the Chinese nation; in interpretation, it manifests as a metaphor for the continuation

of offspring and clan lineage. In the second act of Ma Zhiyuan's "Yueyang Tower" from the Yuan Dynasty, the line "dàn dé yī nán bàn nǚ, yě jué bù liǎo Guō shì mén zhōng xiāng huǒ" (但得一男半女，也绝不了郭氏门中香火) uses "香火" (Incense Worship) to refer to the descendants of the clan. Similarly, in the contemporary writer Mao Dun's novel "Shuāng yè hóng sì èr yuè huā" (霜叶红似二月花), the line "nǐ shì jiān tiāo le liǎng fáng de, Qián jiā de xiāng huǒ, jiù zhǐ zài nǐ yī rén shēnshang ne!" (你是兼挑了两房的，钱家的香火，就只在你一人身上呢！) also reflects the importance placed by Chinese folk on family continuity and bloodline inheritance.

Existing literature on "incense worship" is abundant, but most studies approach it from the perspectives of folklore, religious studies, or history, exploring how the symbol of incense worship is specifically manifested in the overall folk culture, mainly through interpretations, conceptual analyses, or ritual explorations. There is scarce construction and in-depth analysis from the perspective of communication studies on its implications of "clan" and "bloodline," as well as its communicative significance as a symbol. On the other hand, in studies of folk religion and clan genealogy, the element of "incense worship" is often overshadowed by customs of offerings and worship, with little in-depth exploration.

Therefore, based on existing literature, this paper will deeply explore the connotations and local evolution of "incense worship" from the perspective of Chinese transmission. Through analyzing its metaphor as a form of communication, it aims to glimpse into the rituals of "ancestral belief" in the "incense worship" culture.

2. "Incense Worship" — Local Evolution Based on Clan Implications

2.1. Paying Homage to Buddhas, Incense Takes the Symbolic Lead

The original meaning of "incense" is recorded in Hong Chu's "Xiāng pǔ · xiāng zhī shì" (《香谱 · 香之事》) from the Song Dynasty as follows: "Shuō wén" yuē fāng yě. Zhuàn cóng shǔ, cóng gān. Lì shěng zuò xiāng. Chūnqiū zhuàn yuē shǔ jì xīn xiāng. Fán xiāng zhī shǔ jiē cóng xiāng. Xiāng zhī yuǎn wén yuē xīn. Xiāng zhī měi zhě yuē chàng, xiāng zhī qì yuē xīn. "Shàng shū" yuē zhì zhì xīn xiāng gǎn yú shén míng. "Máo shī" yǒu bì qí xiāng bāng jiā zhī guāng. "Máo shī" qí xiāng shǐ shēng shàng dì jū xīn. "Guó yǔ" qí dé zú yǐ zhāo qí xīn xiāng. "Zuǒ zhuàn" lán yǒu guó xiāng." (《说文》曰芳也。篆从黍，从甘。隶省作香。春秋传曰黍稷馨香。凡香之属皆从香。香之远闻曰馨。香之美者曰鬯，香之气曰馥。《尚书》曰至治馨香感于神明。《毛诗》有饎其香邦家之光。《毛诗》其香始升上帝居歆。《国语》其德足以昭其馨香。《左传》兰有国香) [1] It can be seen that "incense" (香) originally referred to the fragrance produced by the steaming of millet and sorghum, which later extended to virtues and glory, and was "felt by the gods" and "pleased the Lord of Heaven." At this time, "incense" was not yet associated with "fire," but its significance as a ritual offering facilitating communication between humans and gods was evident.

Tracing back to the act of "burning incense" as a way to worship heaven and honor ancestors, we can refer to the records in the Book of Songs during the Western Zhou Dynasty: "Shī · Zhōu sòng · Wéi qīng" yún: "Wéi qīng jī xī, wén wáng zhī diǎn, zhào yīn." (《诗 · 周颂 · 维清》云: "维清缉熙，文王之典，肇禋") "肇禋" (zhào yīn) refers to offering smoke to the heavens. From this, it can be seen that although there was no incense specifically used for worship in the true sense during the Western Zhou period, the act of conversing with the gods through the smoke produced by burning sacrifices, animals, and silk on firewood laid the groundwork for what is now known as "burning incense."

During the Eastern Han Dynasty, Buddhism was introduced to China, and the original "fragrance" derived from "millet and sorghum" was diluted by the burning of sandalwood [2]. The concept of

burning incense in Buddhist worship gradually integrated into the Chinese cultural system. At the same time, the implications of incense and the methods of making incense in Buddhism, to some extent, changed ancient customs while also being sinicized in practice in China. *Huáng Dì Nèi Jīng* (《黄帝内经》) states, “Wǔ qì gè yǒu suǒ zhǔ, wéi xiāng qì còu pí” (五气各有所主，唯香气凑脾). In the classification of Yin and Yang and the Five Elements in Chinese thought, the five directions, five natures, and five organs are interconnected and correspond to each other. Incense originates from the south, so it corresponds to the “Huǒyáng” (火阳) nature in the Five Elements, and its function of harmonizing the spleen demonstrates that the culture of incense worship has been absorbed into the ideological framework of Yin and Yang and the Five Elements, becoming a part of Chinese culture and life.

However, from the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty to the Three Kingdoms period, “burning incense” remained a luxury exclusive to the nobility, mostly used by the imperial and aristocratic families for worshipping heaven and ancestors. It wasn’t until the Sui and Tang Dynasties that burning incense began to popularize among the common people. The “Xiāngchéng” (香乘) states: “Dài Yáng dì chú yè, huǒ shān shāo chén jiǎ jiān bù jì qí shù, Hǎinán zhū xiāng bì zhì yǐ [3]” (迨炆帝除夜，火山烧沉甲煎不计其数，海南诸香毕至矣). Large quantities of incense from Guangdong, Guangxi, and Hainan flowed into the Central Plains, significantly reducing costs and providing material conditions for ordinary people to burn incense. At the same time, the rapid development of Taoism and Buddhism, with believers spread across the country, contributed to the flourishing of incense burning in Taoist temples and Buddhist temples, promoting the popularization of “incense worship.” By the time of the Song Dynasty, the right to perform sacrifices had essentially shifted from the nobility to the common people. Incense burning became widespread throughout the country, from households to temples, becoming a ubiquitous practice. Incense was extensively used in daily life, thus forming a carrier of diverse cultures and becoming a spiritual sustenance and ceremonial form of popular belief.

2.2. From Ancestor Worship to the Continuation of Incense Worship

As rituals transitioned from exclusive imperial rights to widespread practices among the populace, “incense worship” also shifted from the lofty heights of temples to the far reaches of society, integrating into the everyday ritual system of folk life. “Fú lǐ, tiān zhī jīng yě, dì zhī yì yě, mín zhī xíng yě [4]” (夫礼，天之经也，地之义也，民之行也). In traditional Chinese culture, rituals not only signify reverence for the principles of Heaven, Earth, and natural law but are also intimately related to human natural emotions and basic ethical relationships. Rituals are practical and are “based on human natural relationships and emotions, with sacrifices as a reference, combined with the spread and development of social customs and habits among the society and the population at that time [5].” Therefore, exploring the rituals of incense worship in folk culture requires starting from “民之行也” (the behavior of the people), understanding the underlying ethical and emotional logic.

“In Chinese view, human beings are not seen as fixed entities; they must maintain a dynamic balance with other individuals within their network of relationships [6].” The family is such an important network of relationships for Chinese people. It not only has blood ties and organizational structures but also provides values that transcend mere kinship. Thus, although China is commonly perceived as a nation without religious beliefs, “ancestor worship” in Chinese civilization almost holds equivalent significance to religion.

The tradition of ancestor worship in China can be traced back to the Shang and Zhou dynasties. The merchants of the Shang dynasty believed that the souls of ancestors coexisted with God and other natural spirits in the same space [7]. They worshipped ancestors because they believed they could bring blessings and prevent disasters, possessing divine abilities similar to those of the emperor (“既

能致福，又能降祸”“具有帝之神能”）。Therefore, they worshipped ancestors through ritual sacrifices to pray for good harvests, rain, and blessings. During the Zhou dynasty, ancestor worship continued to thrive, as the Zhou people also believed that their connection to heaven was mediated through their ancestors, who served as intermediaries between heaven and earthly kings. Since the Han dynasty, Confucianism has established a Confucian sacrificial system represented by the suburban sacrifices and the imperial ancestral temple. While the emperor worshipped the Supreme Emperor of the Sky, ordinary people worshipped their own ancestors [8], further promoting the prevalence of ancestor worship and ancestor sacrifices among the populace.

This is specifically reflected in the customs of “incense worship,” where folk customs based on ancestor worship have elaborated on the unique connotations of “incense” within the existing Buddhist incense-burning rituals. For example, in terms of “edibility,” “ordinary people eat grains, while gods and immortals consume incense.” (凡人以五谷为食，神仙才以香为食) Since the deities worshipped in folk rituals generally possess ancestral characteristics, ancestral gods, who were once human, still require sustenance. Therefore, “the significance of incense as food for ancient gods, such as cattle, sheep, millet, and sorghum, remains at the core of incense burning in folk beliefs [9].” “Incense” adds a food-based imagination on top of its original meaning, serving as an offering to ancestral gods.

Influenced by the concept of ancestor worship, Chinese people are accustomed to placing themselves within the flow of life of their family lineage, originating from ancestors, flowing through themselves, and continuing to future generations. The death of the body does not mean the extinction of the soul; the soul of a person transforms into an ancestor, continuing to exist in the family lineage and revered by future generations. In this context, incense worship rituals become crucial in this “ancestral belief,” and the continuity of these rituals depends on the transmission of offspring and the continuation of bloodlines. Thus, the significance of “incense worship” expands in the rituals of ancestral transmission, forming a concept of incense worship that ensures the continuation of bloodlines through the birth of descendants.

3. “Incense Worship” — Metaphor as a Communication Form in Clan Culture

Dào yóu xīn shēng, xīn jiǎ xiāng chuán. (道由心生，心假香传)

Xiāng rù yù lú, xīn cún dì qián. (香薰玉炉，心存帝前)

Zhēn líng xià pàn, xiān pèi lín xuān. (真灵下盼，仙旆临轩)

Lìng chén guān gào, jiàng dá jiǔ tiān [10]. (令臣关告，迳达九天)

The “Líng yīng běn tǐ zhēn jīng” (灵应本体真经) contains the recitation of the “Zhù xiāng zhòu” (祝香咒) used in folk incense offerings to invite deities. Phrases like “心假香传,” “真灵下盼,” and “迳达九天” all demonstrate that folk use incense burning to express their sincere hearts to the heavens, hoping their wishes can reach the highest realms and the presence of immortals. It can be seen that for the folk, the most important aspect of “香薰玉炉” is to communicate with the heavens through incense. As mentioned earlier, the clan perspective of “ancestor worship” is an important component of folk beliefs, resembling a quasi-religious belief. It “has its theological, sacrificial, and human operation systems, but whether in terms of spiritual core or formal ritual organization, it is organically integrated with secular institutions and social order; at the same time, it also operates as a supporting force for social order within secular life [11].” Therefore, through a deep exploration of the imagery of incense and smoke in communication forms, we can gain a deeper understanding of folk “ancestral belief” rituals.

3.1. Incense as a Medium of Communication

Incense serves as a medium of communication with deities, as “its fragrance rises straight to the heavens, reaching the gods [9]” (袅袅直上升天，可以通达神明). Burning incense signifies “sending an invitation” or “offering incense or a cup of tea,” representing the highest form of etiquette. Incense separates humans from gods, and burning incense is “a form of free communication achieved through formal respect. To put it in simple terms, it is like a host treating guests, and upwards, it is like subjects treating the emperor [12].” At the same time, incense also represents the devotee’s dedication. The process of burning incense is considered to transform oneself through fire, releasing “smoke” and “qi” as an offering to the deities to express one’s sincerity. People believe that the will of the gods can be revealed through the imagery of “incense,” and the smoke guides them to come to deal with earthly matters.

Regarding the communicative function of “incense,” Wang Sifu described it as “a representation of the opening of communication [12],” meaning that the petitioner externalizes their desires, seeking fulfillment through communication with the gods, while ensuring the fulfillment of this process through the ritual itself, and burning incense is the way to ensure a response. As mentioned earlier, “incense” serves as a medium of communication between humans and gods in folk beliefs, and communication is a two-way process. The petitioner regards ancestral spirits as the imaginary respondents, and “incense smoke” is the communication signal sent from humans to gods. The burning process of incense is the process of this communication: the fire and smoke ignited during the burning process, the slowly burning incense, and its fragrance provide “both representation and response, both identification and recording”. The burning process is continuous communication; the flickering of flames may indicate whether desires may or may not be fulfilled. After burning, incense transforms from its original form into “ash,” representing the result of communication. The “incense ash” left behind is seen as the feedback from the gods to humans, a visualization of divine power. This is why “incense ash” holds sacred significance in folk ritual practices and is even used for healing purposes. “Incense ash” as a sacred existence after burning represents the result of communication between humans and gods and, to some extent, represents the gods, making it a crucial sacred object in folk beliefs.

3.2. Incense as Ritual

“Offering incense” as an activity to honor the deities is undoubtedly the most common and sacred among various ceremonial rituals. It is more accurate to say that incense itself is embedded as a ritual in people’s daily lives rather than being just an offering within the entire ceremony and space. Ceremonial rituals typically commence with the lighting of incense. Amidst the swirling smoke of incense, an imagined sacred space is constructed, evoking enduring and universal emotions and perceptions in specific contexts. It is widely believed that offering incense is a way to communicate with the souls of ancestors in the beyond and to daily pay homage to the deceased. “This way of communicating with the deceased, along with visible symbols such as ancestral tablets and devout worship, all indicate that the deceased still play a role in the world of the living [11].”

Émile Durkheim wrote in “The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,” “Rituals are modes of behavior generated within the collective group, which must necessarily stimulate, maintain, or reshape certain psychological states within the group [10].” Rituals and the group engage in a two-way interactive process. Therefore, the incense offering ritual not only reinforces the relationship between believers and their “ancestors” but also strengthens the relationship between individuals and families. According to Yang Qingkun, “In times of crisis or major events such as births, marriages, or traditional festivals, people set up altars to worship various gods at home and hold various ceremonies. At such times, a sacred and reverent atmosphere pervades every corner of family life.”

In Chinese family life, the most important religious content is ancestor worship. Incense and candles form the foundation of a family's ancestral worship rituals. Within the ritual constructed by the lingering smoke of incense, people consciously enter a kind of sacred atmosphere and emotion. This spontaneous emotion keeps them in awe of their ancestors, believing that "there are gods three feet above one's head." At this moment, all family members gather together to share the "spiritual essence" of the offerings in the sacred name of the ancestors. This process continually strengthens the loyalty and unity among family members. Therefore, funeral rituals "help to maintain the group's memory of clan traditions and history, uphold moral beliefs, and foster group cohesion." Through rituals, emotions of pride, loyalty, and solidarity are also reinforced within the family.

3.3. Incense as Spatial Element

The term "incense" derives from the belief in ancestral worship and the practice of "offering sacrifices to ancestors," constructing a sacred space where religion intersects with secularism through the concrete expression of rituals. Within this space, ancestral worship permeates various features of religion into domestic settings, with the presence of incense allowing households to serve as places for religious activities. Yang Qingkun suggests, "Many religious activities do not take place in public venues. In a sense, every traditional family is an altar of worship, preserving ancestral shrines, portraits, or idols of household gods [11]." In each household, the simplest shrine consists of only two permanent installations: an incense burner and a pair of divination blocks. Through the medium of the incense burner, people believe they can communicate with the souls of their ancestors and establish a connection. In this process, the souls of ancestors are believed to morally and materially influence descendants, who must reverently carry on the offering of incense to the ancestors. These rituals and beliefs constitute a part of the traditional "ancestral worship" and are embedded in the structure of families and society bound by kinship.

Ancestral worship rituals, funerals, and other religious activities revolve around the imagery of "incense," forming an indispensable part of family structure. In the context of ancestral worship, a family's patriarch is responsible for managing the affairs of ancestral worship, and each member of the clan must participate in the rituals in an orderly manner based on their age and gender status within the family. Ancestral worship rituals repeat and consolidate the original family organization and system. According to the basic concept of Chinese tradition, although "rituals" are expressed in certain forms, their significance lies more in the meaning they symbolize, closely linked to the individual emotions of the participants [10]. From this perspective, when entering the sacred space centered around the imagery of "incense," the process of ancestral worship rituals is a continuous reinforcement of sacredness, stabilizing individual emotions during the ceremony. Through the use of "incense," the "ancestral worship" based on family structure permeates into the space of the family and its associated secular social system in a dispersed form, unfolding around secular institutions while also gaining support from the traditional social structure.

4. Inheritance: Continuity and Transformation of Incense Belief

4.1. Incense Inheritance Based on Humanistic Interaction Concepts

The overall tone of Chinese philosophy tends towards humanism, and the dissemination of ideas follows suit. Unlike the emphasis in the West on constructing a speculative and logical system, Chinese philosophy "emphasizes a deep understanding of the universe, society, human life, and its value norms" [13]. The traditional Chinese philosophical value system revolves around the relationship and positioning of the "heaven, earth, and human": Laozi emphasizes "following the Dao," stating "people follow the earth, the earth follows heaven, heaven follows the Dao" (人法地,

地法天，天法道); Zhang Zai seeks to provide a metaphysical basis for ethics and morality; the Cheng-Zhu school endows “li” with absolute significance, elevating it above heaven and earth; Lu Jiuyuan and Wang Shouren believe that moral principles such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom are inherent concepts in the human mind, advocating “the mind is the li” (心即理) [14]. From this, the rationalized norms of interaction, embodied in the concept of the “heaven, earth, and human” triad, further integrate “humans” into the arena of communication studies, jointly weaving the Confucian ethical network that dominates traditional Chinese interaction concepts. Originating from customs, the core of Chinese “incense culture” stems from the tradition of ancestral worship, supported by the metaphorical and ritualistic significance of “incense” in human-divine communication, evolving and elucidating the concept of incense within the structure of kinship and clan.

The essence of incense culture lies in the tradition of clan beliefs and ancestral worship, which, though perhaps labeled as feudal superstition in certain supernatural dimensions, still holds significant importance in dissemination studies and sociology due to its millennia-long existence in China. The core importance of the lineage family system in Chinese social organization endows ancestral worship with universal significance in China. In Chinese culture, intergenerational continuity often extends beyond two or three generations of blood relatives, and to string together the ties of kinship requires ancestral worship to fulfill its integrative function. In ancestral worship, “the social psychological effects of the deceased are not limited by time and space, they can transform biological connections into social connections, without confining actual kinship ties to a smaller, close-knit circle” [11]. Therefore, based on familial incense culture, numerous family members can be consolidated into an organized kinship structure. The innate blood relations among family members thus evolve into an effective social bond.

4.2. Decline of “Incense Inheritance”

The continuity of kinship relations relies on the transmission of “incense” through marriage and childbirth. Ancestral worship also plays a crucial role in this process. The “Book of Rites” elucidates the importance of conducting ancestral worship ceremonies during marriage and childbirth: “Chóng shì zōng miào shè jì, zé zǐ sūn shùn xiào. Jìn qí dào, duān qí yì, ér jiào shēng yān.” (崇事宗庙社稷，则子孙顺孝。尽其道，端其义，而教生焉) It can be seen that the concept and rituals of ancestral worship are closely related to the transmission of incense. However, in modern times, on the one hand, the popularization of higher education and the rapid development of the modern economy have placed increasing pressure on the younger generation. On the other hand, with the influx of Western ideas and the development of industrialization and informatization, the traditionally closed environment has been disrupted, and the sacred space centered around the “incense” imagery is gradually collapsing, both subjectively and objectively. Chinese notions of kinship and ethics are wavering, and the idea of procreation and succession is no longer deeply rooted. Consequently, family “discontinuation” has become the norm, and the willingness of young people to “inherit kinship” is decreasing.

In contrast to traditional Chinese families that adhere to ancestral worship, the kinship-based incense culture has been gradually waning in today’s Chinese households. The integrative and stabilizing effects of ancestral worship on blood relatives have shown a clear trend of interruption in modernized and Westernized Chinese families. Especially in large cities, such situations are becoming increasingly common as the pace of life accelerates. In the core families of modern society, close kinship relationships often exist only between three or two generations. Taking sibling relationships as an example: children have the responsibility of caring for their elderly parents, which to some extent ensures regular contact and mutual support to maintain the familial blood ties.

However, as they age, individuals will establish their own families and pursue different careers, which may gradually weaken their mutual connections. After the parents pass away, there is no longer a shared object of filial piety. Therefore, without a symbolic worship ceremony to help descendants remember their deceased parents and ancestors from earlier generations, and to strengthen the identification of living descendants with their family lineage, the generation that grows up and the descendants who marry and start families may become increasingly unfamiliar with each other, with almost nothing to bind them together as an organized family unit.

5. Conclusion

Max Weber once said, “Man is suspended in the web of meaning he has woven for himself. The analysis of culture will not be empirical science, but interpretive science” [15].

In the bidirectional interaction between humans and gods, incense carries the personal consciousness or psychological aspirations of the people, and through the incense itself, interaction with the gods is achieved. Almost all folk belief rituals involve the lighting of incense. Incense itself represents the people, who offer themselves to the gods through fire, and the gods also express their will through fire. Thus, humans and gods come from different worlds but find a space for interaction in the fire. The gods receive the people’s devotion through the fire, while the personal aspirations of humans transcend, reaching the original universal realm. Rituals are monuments of culture, condensed with culture and thought. The cultural significance of individuals is manifested through this means of condensation in rituals. In addition to “incense worship,” there are many similar symbols in folk beliefs. This paper aims to inspire a new perspective on the study of folk beliefs by using fire as a symbol in rituals and exploring the meaning of symbols to interpret cultural phenomena.

In the rapid development of modern society, although many traditional concepts and practices are gradually fading, the incense culture, as part of the Chinese nation, still has profound influence that cannot be ignored. The concept of incense inheritance is not only a religious belief or ancestral worship but also a deeply rooted cultural identity and values. It reflects a strong pursuit of life continuation, family prosperity, and bloodline inheritance, as well as deep contemplation of the past, present, and future.

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