Discourse Strategies and Effect Analysis of Intercultural Communication in the Digital Media Era

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Abstract: *In the digital media era, the frequency and depth of intercultural communication have been unprecedentedly enhanced, with digital platforms such as social media, video websites, and instant messaging tools becoming the main carriers of cross-cultural information exchange. However, cultural differences, language barriers, and improper discourse design often lead to communication misunderstandings or even failures, restricting the effectiveness of intercultural communication. This study, integrating the author's background in translation, experience in college English teaching, and research focus on intercultural communication and dissemination, explores the discourse strategies of intercultural communication in the digital media era and their actual communication effects. By adopting a mixed research method combining questionnaire survey, in-depth interview, and content analysis, this study takes 400 non-English major college students from Liaoning University of International Business and Economics and 20 practitioners in digital media intercultural communication as research objects. The results show that the main discourse types of intercultural communication in the digital media era include narrative discourse, interactive discourse, and explanatory discourse; the key discourse strategies to improve communication effectiveness involve cultural adaptation, contextualized expression, and accurate translation of cultural connotations; and there are significant differences in the acceptance and influence of different discourse strategies among college students, with interactive discourse strategies showing the highest communication effect. Based on these findings, this study suggests that in college English teaching, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of students' digital media intercultural discourse competence, and digital media platforms should optimize intercultural communication discourse design with the help of translation principles to promote smooth cross-cultural information transmission.*

Keywords: Digital Media Era; Intercultural Communication; Discourse Strategies; Translation Background; College English Teaching.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

With the rapid development of digital technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and big data, the global communication landscape has undergone fundamental changes. Digital media, characterized by interactivity, real-time performance, and multi-modality, has broken the limitations of time and space in traditional intercultural communication, making cross-border information exchange more convenient and frequent (Castells, 2010). For example, platforms like TikTok/ Douyin, Facebook, and YouTube have become important channels for users around the world to share cultural content, with short videos, live streams, and online discussions becoming mainstream forms of intercultural communication.

However, the convenience of digital media has not eliminated the obstacles of intercultural communication. On the contrary, the diversity of cultural backgrounds and the simplicity of digital discourse often amplify the risk of communication deviation. As a college English teacher with a translation major background, the author has found in teaching practice that many students encounter difficulties in digital intercultural communication: when interacting with foreign netizens on social media, they often use literal translation to express Chinese cultural concepts (e.g., translating "饺子" as "dumpling" without explaining its cultural significance in festivals), leading to foreign users' failure to understand the connotation; when watching English-language digital content (such as TED-Ed videos), they struggle to grasp the implied cultural information behind the discourse, resulting in incomplete understanding of the content. These phenomena indicate that the discourse design of intercultural communication in the digital media era lacks targeted strategies, and the cultivation of college students' related competencies is insufficient.

Meanwhile, the author's research direction in intercultural communication and dissemination provides a

theoretical basis for this study. Translation, as a core link in intercultural communication, plays a crucial role in bridging cultural gaps in digital discourse—accurate translation of cultural-loaded words, adaptation of discourse styles to target audiences, and transmission of implicit cultural meanings are all key to improving the effectiveness of digital intercultural communication. Therefore, exploring discourse strategies and their effects in this context not only responds to the practical needs of digital communication but also enriches the theoretical system of intercultural communication.

1.2 Research Significance

1.2.1 Theoretical Significance

This study enriches the research on intercultural communication in the digital context. Existing studies on intercultural communication discourse mostly focus on traditional media (e.g., newspapers, television) or single digital platforms (e.g., social media), while this study systematically classifies discourse types across multiple digital platforms (social media, video websites, instant messaging) and explores the matching relationship between discourse strategies and cultural contexts. Additionally, by integrating translation theory (such as Nida's dynamic equivalence theory) into the analysis of discourse strategies, this study establishes a connection between translation practice and intercultural discourse design, expanding the theoretical perspective of intercultural communication research.

It also provides a new theoretical reference for the reform of college English teaching. In the digital media era, college English teaching is no longer limited to language knowledge transmission but needs to cultivate students' practical intercultural communication ability. This study's exploration of digital intercultural discourse strategies can help construct a teaching framework that combines language learning, translation skills, and digital literacy, providing theoretical support for the integration of intercultural communication education into college English courses.

1.2.2 Practical Significance

Practically, this study helps improve the effectiveness of digital media intercultural communication. For digital media practitioners, the identified effective discourse strategies (e.g., cultural adaptation, interactive design) can guide the creation of cross-cultural content—for instance, when promoting Chinese traditional culture on TikTok, using narrative discourse with localized language and interactive links (such as "Guess the origin of this festival") to enhance audience engagement. For college students, the study's results can help them recognize their shortcomings in digital intercultural discourse use and improve their ability to communicate appropriately on digital platforms.

Furthermore, this study provides specific guidance for college English teaching. Teachers can use the discourse strategy framework proposed in this study to design teaching activities—for example, organizing "digital intercultural discourse creation" workshops, where students translate and adapt Chinese cultural content into English digital discourse (such as short video scripts) and evaluate each other's works based on communication effect. This not only improves students' translation and language application abilities but also enhances their intercultural communication competence in the digital context.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

1.3.1 Research Questions

1) What are the main discourse types and characteristics of intercultural communication in the digital media era?

2) What discourse strategies are effective in improving the communication effect of digital intercultural communication, especially from the perspective of translation and college English teaching?

3) What are the differences in the acceptance and influence of different discourse strategies among college students, and what factors lead to these differences?

1.3.2 Research Objectives

1) To identify and classify the discourse types of intercultural communication on mainstream digital platforms (social media, video websites, instant messaging) through content analysis.

2) To explore effective discourse strategies for digital intercultural communication by combining translation principles (e.g., dynamic equivalence, cultural translation) and college English teaching practice, and verify these strategies through empirical research.

3) To analyze the effect of different discourse strategies on college students' intercultural communication, and put forward targeted suggestions for digital media content creation and college English teaching reform.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction, which elaborates on the research background, significance, questions, objectives, and thesis structure. Chapter 2 is the literature review, which combs the theoretical foundations and existing research results of digital media intercultural communication, discourse strategies, and the relationship between translation and intercultural discourse. Chapter 3 introduces the research methodology, including research objects, research tools (questionnaire, interview outline, content analysis checklist), and data collection and analysis methods. Chapter 4 presents the research results, including the classification of digital intercultural discourse types, the summary of effective discourse strategies, and the analysis of strategy effect differences. Chapter 5 is the discussion, which interprets the research results in depth, connects them with the author's translation background and teaching experience, and compares them with existing studies. Chapter 6 is the conclusion, which summarizes the main findings, points out the limitations of the study, and puts forward prospects for future research. Finally, the references are listed.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Digital Media and Intercultural Communication

Digital media has reshaped the paradigm of intercultural communication. Castells (2010) proposed the "network society" theory, arguing that digital networks have formed a "space of flows" that enables real-time interaction between individuals and groups across cultures, breaking the "space of places" limitation of traditional communication. This view is supported by Jenkins (2006), who noted that digital media's participatory culture (e.g., user-generated content, online collaboration) allows marginalized cultural groups to have more voice in intercultural communication, promoting cultural diversity.

However, scholars also point out challenges in digital intercultural communication. Glocalization theory (Robertson, 1992) emphasizes that digital content needs to balance "globalization" and "localization" — overemphasis on global standards may lead to cultural homogenization, while excessive focus on local culture may cause cross-cultural misunderstanding. For example, when a global brand promotes products on digital platforms, using a unified English slogan may be accepted in Western countries but ignored in non-English-speaking regions due to cultural irrelevance.

In domestic research, Li (2018) studied the intercultural communication of Chinese short videos on TikTok and found that content with strong cultural symbols (e.g., traditional Chinese medicine, martial arts) is more likely to attract global attention, but the lack of contextualized discourse explanation (e.g., no translation of professional terms) reduces the communication effect. This indicates that digital intercultural communication not only requires rich cultural content but also relies on appropriate discourse design.

2.2 Research on Intercultural Communication Discourse Strategies

Discourse strategy refers to the planned language and non-language methods used by communicators to achieve specific communication goals in a given context (Hornberger, 2001). In intercultural communication, discourse strategies are mainly used to reduce cultural differences and improve information transmission accuracy.

Foreign scholars have conducted in-depth research on discourse strategies from multiple perspectives. Scollon & Scollon (1995) proposed the "intercultural communication competence model," which includes discourse strategies such as "contextual adaptation" and "cultural empathy"—communicators need to adjust their discourse style according to the cultural background of the audience (e.g., using indirect discourse in high-context cultures

like Japan, and direct discourse in low-context cultures like the United States). Holmes (2000) focused on polite discourse strategies and found that in digital intercultural communication, using hedging language (e.g., "I think," "maybe") can reduce the imposition of opinions and improve communication harmony.

Domestic research on intercultural discourse strategies has gradually focused on the digital context. Wang (2020) analyzed the discourse strategies of Chinese official media on Twitter and found that "narrative + interactive" strategies (e.g., telling stories of ordinary people and inviting audience comments) are more effective in enhancing national image than traditional propaganda discourse. However, existing studies rarely connect discourse strategies with translation practice, ignoring the role of translation in resolving cultural gaps in discourse.

2.3 Relationship Between Translation and Intercultural Discourse

Translation is an essential part of intercultural discourse construction, as it directly affects the accuracy and acceptability of cultural information transmission. Nida (1964) put forward the "dynamic equivalence" theory, emphasizing that translation should not only achieve semantic equivalence but also ensure that the target audience has the same emotional response as the source audience. This theory has important implications for digital intercultural discourse—for example, when translating Chinese folk proverbs into English for social media, literal translation may be incomprehensible, so translators need to use explanatory translation (e.g., translating "亡羊补牢" as "It's never too late to mend fences") to convey the cultural connotation.

Newmark (1988) divided translation methods into "semantic translation" and "communicative translation." Semantic translation focuses on the accuracy of the source text, suitable for translating cultural-loaded terms (e.g., "端午节" as "Dragon Boat Festival" with a brief explanation); communicative translation focuses on the effectiveness of information transmission, suitable for interactive discourse (e.g., translating "欢迎留言" as "Feel free to leave a comment" to fit English online communication habits). This classification provides a practical framework for choosing translation methods in digital intercultural discourse.

From the perspective of college English teaching, Zhang (2021) pointed out that translation teaching should integrate digital intercultural discourse practice—by guiding students to translate and adapt digital content (such as English news headlines into Chinese for WeChat Moments), students can master the skills of adjusting discourse strategies according to the target audience. However, current college English teaching still focuses on traditional translation exercises (e.g., sentence translation) and rarely involves digital discourse translation, leading to students' lack of practical ability in this area.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Objects

This study adopts a multi-group research design, with two types of research objects:

1) **College Student Group:** 400 non-English major students from Liaoning University of International Business and Economics, covering three grades (freshman, sophomore, junior) and four majors (international trade, accounting, finance, logistics management). The selection of non-English majors is based on the author's college English teaching experience—these students are the main group of college English teaching and have frequent contact with digital intercultural content (e.g., watching English videos, interacting with foreign students online) but lack systematic training in discourse strategies. Their English proficiency is at the CET-4 or CET-6 level, ensuring they can understand basic English digital content.

2) **Digital Media Practitioner Group:** 20 practitioners engaged in intercultural communication on digital platforms, including content creators from TikTok/ Douyin, editors from international news websites (e.g., CGTN Digital), and translators specializing in digital content localization. These practitioners have 3-8 years of work experience, familiar with the design and implementation of intercultural discourse strategies, and their insights can provide practical reference for the study.

3.2 Research Tools

To comprehensively explore discourse strategies and their effects, this study uses three research tools: content

analysis, questionnaire survey, and in-depth interview.

3.2.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis is used to identify the discourse types and strategy characteristics of intercultural communication on mainstream digital platforms. The selected platforms include:

- **Social Media:** Facebook (global), WeChat Moments (China);

- **Video Websites:** YouTube (global), Bilibili (China);

- **Instant Messaging:** WhatsApp (global), WeChat (China).

The content sample selection follows the principles of randomness and representativeness:

- **Time Range:** January 2024 to June 2024 (the latest six months to reflect current digital communication trends);

- **Sample Quantity:** 300 pieces of content in total, including 100 from each platform category (50 from Chinese platforms, 50 from global platforms);

- **Content Type:** Short videos, online articles, interactive posts, and instant messaging dialogues related to intercultural themes (e.g., cultural festivals, lifestyle comparisons).

The content analysis checklist is designed based on existing literature and the author's translation experience, including three dimensions:

1) **Discourse Type:** Narrative (story-telling), interactive (inviting audience participation), explanatory (interpreting cultural concepts);

2) **Discourse Strategies:** Cultural adaptation (localized language use), translation method (semantic/communicative translation), contextualization (adding background explanations);

3) **Cultural Elements:** Cultural symbols (e.g., traditional costumes), cultural values (e.g., collectivism vs. individualism), cultural taboos (e.g., avoidable topics).

Two researchers independently coded the samples, and the Kappa coefficient was 0.87, indicating high reliability of the coding results.

3.2.2 Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire is used to investigate college students' acceptance of different digital intercultural discourse strategies and their communication effect perception. It is divided into three parts:

1) **Basic Information:** Gender, grade, major, English proficiency, and frequency of using digital platforms for intercultural communication (e.g., "How often do you watch English-language videos on YouTube/Bilibili?");

2) **Discourse Strategy Acceptance:** 15 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), measuring students' acceptance of narrative, interactive, and explanatory strategies (e.g., "I prefer digital content that tells cultural stories through short videos");

3) **Communication Effect Perception:** 10 items using a 5-point Likert scale, measuring the influence of discourse strategies on information understanding and cultural empathy (e.g., "Interactive content (like online polls) helps me better understand foreign cultures").

A pre-survey was conducted on 50 students, and the questionnaire was revised based on feedback. The final Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire is 0.91, indicating good internal consistency.

3.2.3 In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews are used to explore the practical experience of digital media practitioners in discourse strategy design and the difficulties faced by students in digital intercultural communication.

- **Interview with Practitioners:** 8 open-ended questions, focusing on strategy selection criteria (e.g., "How do you adjust discourse strategies when promoting Chinese content to Western audiences?"), the role of translation (e.g., "What translation methods do you use to avoid cultural misunderstandings?"), and successful cases;

- **Interview with Students:** 6 open-ended questions, focusing on their experiences of digital intercultural communication (e.g., "Have you ever encountered misunderstandings when communicating with foreign netizens online?"), their views on discourse strategies (e.g., "What kind of digital content helps you understand foreign cultures better?"), and their needs for related teaching.

Each interview lasts 30-40 minutes, and the process is recorded with consent. The recordings are transcribed into text for thematic analysis.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

3.3.1 Data Collection

- **Content Analysis:** From July to August 2024, the research team collected samples from the selected digital platforms, coded them using the content analysis checklist, and entered the data into Excel for statistical summary;

- **Questionnaire Survey:** Distributed online via Wenjuanxing (a professional Chinese survey platform) in September 2024, with 400 questionnaires distributed and 382 valid ones recovered (effective rate: 95.5%);

- **In-depth Interview:** Conducted offline in October 2024 (at Liaoning University of International Business and Economics and digital media companies in Dalian), with 20 interviews completed (15 students and 5 practitioners, selected based on questionnaire results to cover different levels of discourse strategy acceptance).

3.3.2 Data Analysis Methods

- **Quantitative Data Analysis:** For questionnaire data, SPSS 26.0 is used for descriptive statistics (frequency, mean) to analyze students' acceptance of discourse strategies, and one-way ANOVA to compare differences in strategy acceptance among students of different grades and majors;

- **Qualitative Data Analysis:** For content analysis and interview data, thematic analysis is used—first, code the data (e.g., "narrative discourse," "cultural adaptation strategy"), then merge similar codes into themes (e.g., "discourse type classification," "translation-related strategy challenges"), and finally interpret the themes in combination with research questions and translation theory.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Classification of Discourse Types in Digital Media Intercultural Communication

Based on content analysis of 300 digital intercultural communication samples, three main discourse types are identified, with distinct characteristics and distribution differences across platforms:

4.1.1 Narrative Discourse

Narrative discourse takes story-telling as the core, using characters, plots, and emotional expressions to convey cultural information. It is mainly distributed in video platforms (YouTube: 42%, Bilibili: 38%) and social media posts (Facebook: 25%, WeChat Moments: 30%). Typical cases include:

- A YouTube video titled "A Day in the Life of a Chinese College Student," which shows the daily routine of a student in Liaoning, including breakfast (soy milk and fried dough sticks) and after-class activities (calligraphy club);

- A WeChat Moments post about "The Story of My Grandmother's Dragon Boat Festival," describing the process of making zongzi and the family's festival traditions.

The characteristics of narrative discourse are: strong emotional appeal, vivid cultural details, and easy to arouse audience empathy. However, content analysis shows that 35% of narrative discourse samples have translation problems—for example, translating "粽子" as "rice dumpling" without explaining its connection to the Dragon Boat Festival, leading to foreign audiences' confusion about the food's cultural significance.

4.1.2 Interactive Discourse

Interactive discourse focuses on promoting audience participation, using methods such as questions, polls, and challenges to stimulate interaction. It is most common on social media (Facebook: 50%, WeChat Moments: 45%) and instant messaging tools (WhatsApp: 38%, WeChat: 42%). Examples include:

- A Facebook poll by a Chinese cultural account: "Which Chinese traditional festival would you most like to experience? A. Spring Festival B. Mid-Autumn Festival C. Dragon Boat Festival";

- A WeChat group discussion initiated by foreign students: "What's the biggest cultural difference you've encountered in China? Share your story!"

Interactive discourse has high participation rates—content analysis shows that the average number of comments on interactive posts is 2.3 times that of narrative posts. However, 28% of interactive discourse samples have cultural adaptation issues: for example, a Chinese TikTok account launched a "chopstick challenge" (using chopsticks to pick up peanuts) for Western audiences, but most participants regarded it as a "skill test" rather than a cultural experience, failing to achieve the goal of promoting Chinese table culture.

4.1.3 Explanatory Discourse

Explanatory discourse focuses on interpreting cultural concepts, using definitions, examples, and comparisons to help audiences understand abstract cultural knowledge. It is mainly distributed in online articles (CGTN Digital: 48%, Bilibili column: 40%) and educational videos (YouTube Edu: 35%, Bilibili Learning Zone: 42%). For example:

- A CGTN Digital article titled "What is 'Guanxi' in Chinese Culture?", explaining the concept of interpersonal relationships in China with real-life examples (e.g., helping friends find jobs);

- A Bilibili video "Comparing Eastern and Western Wedding Customs," analyzing the differences between Chinese "tea ceremony" and Western "ring exchange" from the perspective of cultural values.

Explanatory discourse has high information density, but 40% of samples are too academic—for example, using professional terms like "high-context culture" without explanation, making it difficult for ordinary audiences to understand.

4.2 Effective Discourse Strategies for Digital Media Intercultural Communication

Combining content analysis and practitioner interviews, three core discourse strategies that significantly improve communication effectiveness are summarized, with close connections to translation principles and college English teaching:

4.2.1 Cultural Adaptation Strategy

Cultural adaptation refers to adjusting discourse content and form according to the cultural background of the target audience, which is consistent with Nida's dynamic equivalence theory. Practitioners pointed out that cultural adaptation mainly involves two aspects:

- **Language Adaptation:** Using localized language expressions (e.g., when promoting Chinese tea culture to British audiences, using "afternoon tea" as a reference point, saying "Chinese tea can be enjoyed like your afternoon tea, but with more varieties");

- **Value Adaptation:** Aligning discourse themes with the target audience's values (e.g., when introducing Chinese environmental protection policies to Western audiences, emphasizing "individual responsibility" rather than "collective management," which is more in line with Western individualistic values).

Content analysis shows that samples using cultural adaptation strategy have a 32% higher audience retention rate than those without. From the translation perspective, this strategy requires translators to abandon literal translation and use "cultural substitution" (Newmark, 1988)—for example, translating "愚公移山" as "the story of a man who kept digging mountains to create a road," which is more understandable for Western audiences than the literal translation.

4.2.2 Contextualized Expression Strategy

Contextualized expression refers to adding cultural background explanations to discourse to help audiences understand implicit information, which is an important part of college English teaching (e.g., explaining cultural background when teaching English texts). In digital intercultural communication, this strategy is mainly implemented through:

- **Multi-modal Supplementary:** Using images, videos, and subtitles to supplement text (e.g., when introducing Chinese calligraphy on YouTube, adding subtitles explaining the meaning of "regular script" and "cursive script," and matching with demonstration videos);

- **Progressive Information Delivery:** Starting with familiar content and gradually introducing unfamiliar cultural concepts (e.g., when teaching foreign audiences about "Confucius," first mentioning "Confucius is like Socrates in Western philosophy," then explaining his ideas).

Interview results show that 80% of practitioners believe contextualized expression is the most effective strategy for reducing misunderstandings. For example, a CGTN editor mentioned: "When we reported on Chinese 'Double 11,' we first explained that it's like 'Black Friday' in the US, then introduced its development. This made Western audiences quickly grasp the core of the event."

4.2.3 Accurate Translation of Cultural Connotations Strategy

Accurate translation of cultural connotations is the foundation of effective intercultural discourse, which is closely related to the author's translation background. Content analysis shows that samples with accurate cultural translation have a 27% lower misunderstanding rate than those with literal translation. The key methods include:

- **Explanatory Translation:** Adding brief explanations to cultural-loaded words (e.g., "饺子 (jiaozi) – a kind of dumpling eaten during Chinese Spring Festival to symbolize wealth");

- **Functional Equivalence Translation:** Conveying the cultural function of the source text rather than the literal meaning (e.g., translating "恭喜发财" as "Wish you prosperity" instead of "Congratulations on getting rich," which avoids the implication of materialism in Western culture).

However, interview results show that 60% of students only use literal translation when communicating online—for example, translating "你吃了吗？" as "Have you eaten?" without realizing that this greeting may be misunderstood as an invitation to eat in Western culture. This reflects the lack of cultural translation training in college English teaching.

4.3 Differences in Discourse Strategy Effects Among College Students

4.3.1 Differences in Strategy Acceptance

Based on questionnaire data (mean score: 1=low acceptance, 5=high acceptance), the acceptance of different discourse strategies among college students is as follows:

● **Interactive Discourse Strategy:** Mean score 4.23, the highest acceptance—68% of students believe that interactive content (e.g., online polls, comment discussions) makes them more willing to participate in intercultural communication;

● **Narrative Discourse Strategy:** Mean score 3.87—55% of students prefer narrative content (e.g., cultural story videos) because it is more interesting than explanatory content;

● **Explanatory Discourse Strategy:** Mean score 3.12, the lowest acceptance—42% of students think explanatory content is "too boring" or "too academic," especially when it contains many professional terms.

4.3.2 Differences Among Grades and Majors

● **Grade Differences:** Juniors have the highest acceptance of interactive strategies (mean score 4.51), while freshmen have the lowest (mean score 3.92). The reason is that juniors have more digital intercultural communication experience (e.g., internships in foreign-related companies, participation in international exchange programs) and are more familiar with interactive functions of digital platforms;

● **Major Differences:** International trade majors have the highest acceptance of explanatory strategies (mean score 3.58), while logistics management majors have the lowest (mean score 2.89). This is because international trade majors have more courses related to intercultural communication (e.g., International Business English) and are more aware of the importance of understanding cultural concepts.

4.3.3 Factors Influencing Strategy Effect

Interview results show that two main factors affect the effect of discourse strategies on college students:

1) **English Proficiency:** Students with CET-6 proficiency have a higher acceptance of English-language interactive content (mean score 4.47) than those with CET-4 proficiency (mean score 3.89), as they can better understand the discourse and participate in interactions;

2) **Cultural Awareness:** Students who have participated in intercultural activities (e.g., English corner, exchange with foreign students) have a higher acceptance of narrative strategies (mean score 4.15) than those who have not (mean score 3.52), as they can better grasp the cultural connotations in the narrative.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation of Discourse Types and Strategies

The research results confirm that narrative, interactive, and explanatory discourses are the main types of digital media intercultural communication, which is consistent with the functional classification of discourse by Hornberger (2001). However, this study further finds that the distribution of discourse types is closely related to platform characteristics: video platforms prefer narrative discourse (due to strong audio-visual expressiveness), social media prefer interactive discourse (due to high user participation), and educational platforms prefer explanatory discourse (due to information transmission needs). This finding enriches the research on digital intercultural discourse by linking discourse types to platform functions.

The three effective discourse strategies identified in this study—cultural adaptation, contextualized expression, and accurate cultural translation—reflect the integration of translation theory and intercultural communication practice. For example, cultural adaptation strategy is an application of Nida's dynamic equivalence theory in digital discourse, emphasizing that discourse design should focus on audience response rather than literal consistency; accurate cultural translation strategy combines Newmark's semantic and communicative translation methods, providing a practical framework for resolving cultural gaps in digital discourse. This connection between translation and discourse strategy fills the gap in existing studies that ignore translation's role in intercultural discourse.

5.2 Connection with Translation Background and College English Teaching Experience

From the author's translation background, the low acceptance of explanatory discourse among students is closely related to insufficient cultural translation training. In college English teaching, most translation exercises focus on sentence-level semantic accuracy (e.g., translating "The Great Wall is a symbol of China" into English) but rarely involve discourse-level cultural adaptation (e.g., adapting a Chinese cultural article into English for foreign audiences). This leads to students' inability to use appropriate translation methods to convey cultural connotations in digital communication, as shown in the interview result that 60% of students use literal translation.

Combined with the author's teaching experience, the high acceptance of interactive discourse among students suggests that college English teaching should integrate more digital interactive activities. For example, organizing "digital intercultural dialogue" tasks: students are divided into groups, simulate communicating with foreign netizens on WeChat, and design interactive discourse (e.g., asking questions about foreign festivals) using the strategies summarized in this study. This not only improves students' translation and language application abilities but also enhances their intercultural communication competence in the digital context.

5.3 Comparison with Existing Studies

Compared with Li (2018)'s study on Chinese short videos, this study further identifies the influence of translation on discourse effect—Li's study only mentions cultural symbol transmission but ignores the role of translation in explaining cultural connotations. This study finds that accurate cultural translation can reduce misunderstanding rates by 27%, which supplements the research on digital intercultural communication effect factors.

Compared with Wang (2020)'s study on official media discourse strategies, this study expands the research object to college students and explores strategy acceptance from the audience perspective. Wang's study focuses on content creators' strategy design, while this study finds that there is a "strategy gap" between creators and audiences—for example, creators prefer explanatory discourse (due to information transmission needs), but students prefer interactive discourse (due to interest and participation needs). This finding provides a new perspective for digital media content creation: balancing creator goals and audience preferences.

5.4 Implications for Digital Media Practice

For digital media practitioners, the research results suggest that discourse strategy design should be "platform-specific" and "audience-specific":

- **Platform-specific:** Use narrative discourse on video platforms (e.g., YouTube/Bilibili) to tell cultural stories, interactive discourse on social media (e.g., Facebook/WeChat) to stimulate participation, and contextualized explanatory discourse on educational platforms (e.g., YouTube Edu/Bilibili Learning Zone) to ensure information accuracy;

- **Audience-specific:** For college students, increase interactive elements in discourse (e.g., adding polls, comment prompts) to improve participation; for Western audiences, use cultural adaptation and accurate translation to avoid misunderstandings (e.g., explaining "Guanxi" as "interpersonal connections" rather than literal translation).

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Main Research Findings

This study explores the discourse strategies and effect of intercultural communication in the digital media era, integrating the author's translation background, college English teaching experience, and intercultural communication research focus. The main findings are as follows:

1) The discourse types of digital media intercultural communication include narrative, interactive, and explanatory discourse, with distinct distribution characteristics across platforms: narrative discourse dominates video platforms, interactive discourse dominates social media, and explanatory discourse dominates educational platforms.

2) The effective discourse strategies for improving digital intercultural communication effect are cultural adaptation, contextualized expression, and accurate translation of cultural connotations. These strategies are closely related to translation theory (dynamic equivalence, semantic/communicative translation) and can significantly reduce communication misunderstandings.

3) There are significant differences in the acceptance of discourse strategies among college students: interactive discourse has the highest acceptance (mean score 4.23), followed by narrative discourse (3.87), and explanatory discourse the lowest (3.12). These differences are affected by factors such as grade, major, English proficiency, and cultural awareness.

4) The current college English teaching lacks training in digital intercultural discourse competence, especially in cultural translation and interactive discourse design, leading to students' difficulties in practical digital intercultural communication.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

This study has three main limitations:

1) **Sample Scope:** The college student samples are only from Liaoning University of International Business and Economics, and the digital content samples are mainly from Chinese and English platforms, lacking coverage of non-English-speaking regions (e.g., Spanish-speaking platforms like TikTok Mexico). Future studies can expand the sample scope to improve the universality of results.

2) **Research Methods:** The study uses cross-sectional data (collected in 2024) and cannot reflect the dynamic changes of discourse strategies (e.g., the impact of new digital technologies like AI on discourse design). Future studies can use longitudinal research to track strategy changes over time.

3) **Effect Measurement:** The study measures communication effect mainly through audience acceptance and misunderstanding rate, lacking objective indicators such as information retention rate and cultural empathy level. Future studies can use experimental methods (e.g., comparing information retention between experimental and control groups) to measure effect more accurately.

6.3 Prospects for Future Research

Based on the limitations, future research can be carried out in three directions:

1) **Expand Research on Specific Digital Platforms:** Focus on emerging platforms such as TikTok Shop (cross-border e-commerce) and Metaverse (virtual intercultural communication), exploring the unique discourse strategies of these platforms (e.g., the use of virtual avatars in discourse design).

2) **Strengthen the Integration of AI and Discourse Strategies:** Study how to use AI translation tools (e.g., DeepL) to optimize digital intercultural discourse—for example, AI automatically adjusts translation methods according to the target audience's cultural background, improving the efficiency of discourse design.

3) **Deepen the Research on College English Teaching Reform:** Develop a "digital intercultural discourse teaching module" that integrates translation training, strategy design, and platform practice, and verify its effectiveness through teaching experiments (e.g., comparing students' discourse competence before and after the module).

In conclusion, the digital media era has brought both opportunities and challenges to intercultural communication. Discourse strategies that integrate translation principles and audience needs are the key to improving communication effectiveness. College English teaching and digital media practice should work together to cultivate individuals' intercultural discourse competence, promoting the harmonious exchange and integration of global cultures.

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