

A Brief Analysis on Cross-cultural Communication Strategy of Chinese Films under the Context of Globalization

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Abstract: With the development of globalization waves, the cross-cultural communication becomes more and more common nowadays. Chinese films, as a kind of mass media and the carrier of ideology, must meet the challenge in the world with active attitudes and take part in cross-cultural communication worldwide extensively. The context of globalization is not only a challenge but also an opportunity for Chinese films and if Chinese films want to be successful in the process of cross-cultural communication, it must find out a conjoint point between globalization and location to implement dual-coding of them. With the objective of consensus but different for the cultural demands of cross-cultural communication, the communicational strategies in culture, subject, art and operation must extensively use for reference and boldly create to renew the situation of Chinese films.

Introduction

Since 1980s, the concept ‘globalization’ is becoming more and more popular all around the world. And it has reached its peak in 1990s. Just like the famous Australian Scholar Watts said: “it is just like in post-modernism, ‘globalization’ is the concept appeared in 1990s. It is a key concept that can help us understand the movement towards the third millennium of human beings.”The concept of ‘globalization’ date back to McLuhan- a famous Canadian scholar. And he first of all put forward the concept “global village” in 1962. After that, the famous scholar Bzezinski again formally put forward the concept ‘globalization’ in the book named *America between two generations* in 1969. American socialist Anthony Giddens made a definition himself for ‘globalization’: things happened in one place is closely related to the things happened in another place. And the things happened in one place can refer to the things happened in another one. And this kind of relationship can be strengthened all around the world. This kind of ‘globalization’ in economical field has an effect on both social and cultural fields. With the free exchange of capital, information, staff, the identity

recognition and culture construction are becoming an important part around whole world. The concept “globalization” has become a key concept nowadays. “Film art is not the only social identity in its social context and it can make sure that the nature of identity certainly serves for its social nature. The nature of films depend on its social existence: film is a kind of popular communication media, a kind of art form, a video language and a kind of cultural industry. All the definitions concerned with the films have their own certainty. In the context of globalization, as a kind of mass-media form, how to make the most of cross-communication of film and maximize the value of cross-communication, capital is an important subject that the film makers must confront with.

It is well known that Chinese films have been restricted in a certain area for a long time and it lacks of broad international eyesight. This trend did not change until 1980s. The pace was too slow to go outside of the world. Nowadays, in the context of globalization, it is both possible and necessary for Chinese films to participate in the international cross-cultural communication. Seen from the name of it, we can get to know that cross-cultural communication is undoubtedly the combination of culture and communication: transmitting different cultures and communications in different cultures. The nature of communication is to exchange different cultures.

First of all, Chinese films must realize its development in the context of globalization, and then it must participate in the activity of cross-cultural communication and make itself more and more powerful. The advancement of a nation is closely related to the existence of cross-cultural communication. A nation must exchange with other nations so as to keep its vitality to some extent. As a form of cultural transmission, Chinese films must actively participate in the context of cross-cultural communication, it can absorb nutrition in the process of cross-cultural communication and then transport China’s national culture to other countries. Especially when China enters into WTO, Hollywood films come into the market of China accordingly. Therefore, there exists a big crisis for Chinese films. It is a fact that Chinese films must face with it and then take advantage of the advanced film concepts and methods. It then can brace the success in the coming 21st century. The founder of cross-cultural communication study is Edward Hall Jr. And he makes a distinction between context-dependent culture and context-independent culture. Context-dependent culture refers to those cultures with a long history such as Chinese traditional cultures. This kind of context obviously reflects that there is a large quantity of proverbs and famous sayings. Relatively speaking, context-independent culture refers to those multi-cultural factors such as American cultures, which are formed in the process of conflicts and compromises.

In this sense, the task of Chinese films is to change the form of its expressions. We should try our best to make the context-independent film languages known to the whole world.

If Chinese films makers have to face the whole world and realize the goal of cross-cultural communication, they must have to get to know how to “decode” the art information, cultural information so as to realize the effect of communication. It has been proved that two kinds of indigenous and international information do not contribute to the cross-cultural communication of the films. Mate Hjort has made two distinctions of the cultural factors: one is the transformational film factors; and another one is an international film factor.” In order to realize the biggest effect of cross-cultural communication, we should avoid not only the first level but also the second one. What we should do is to pursue the second level so as to find out the best “combination”, and take advantage of both international and indigenous ‘double -decoding’ strategy so as to realize the transformation of two kinds of films.

On the one hand, on the level of cultural strategy, Chinese film makers should dig out both the indigenous and international “cultural capitals”. It takes both indigenous and international factors into consideration. The cultural expression of film is a kind of system, it not only includes the factors such as clothes, food, language, and architecture, but also includes the factors such as relationship, life habit and value, etc. The films both in 1980s and 1990s are the kinds that carry out the strategy, which have made them known to the whole world. From the aspect of cross-cultural communication, the so called ‘international characteristics’ can create an impression of “others” so as to cater to the taste of “others”. From the perspective of ‘cultural capital’, it is practically acceptable. It is once more considered as a success of the internationalism of national films.

On the other hand, from the selection strategy of topics, in order to draw the readers’ attention, Chinese films should pay attention to the topics and the content of films. The most important reason why Chinese films do not step into the international market is that the topic of the film is too narrow. Therefore, the effect of film topic is restricted to some extent. China is a country with a long history and developed civilization, and it has irreplaceable advantage in topic selection. In current situation, there are more and more film topics to be dig out. Unfortunately, we don’t have a clear understanding towards these resources. Seen from the Iran and South Korea films in the world, both of them depend on indigenous and international topics to attract people in the world. The best work should be concerned with the problems related to real life and task. As a country with rich topics, Chinese films should dig out its own resources and then make use of the effects on cross-cultural communication. Only by doing so, can we make Chinese films more influential in the world.

Thirdly, from the level of art, Chinese films should make use of intern film languages. It should try its best to be creative. The language systems of the films should include the combination of visual language and concept language, the basic characteristics lies in the performance of signals. The famous scholar such as F.Vanove listed all kinds of “special codes”. They think the charm of film art lies in the following aspects: firstly, films can make up for the biggest weakness of other arts; secondly, the films have the ability of re-appearance, including “montage sequence.” In fact, generally speaking, Chinese films are the best examples including cultural strategy, think strategy, art strategy and implementation strategy, etc. And the actor Zhang Yimou can be called the most influential person in the film field of China.

In the process of cross-cultural communication, an effective communication should include at least three critical factors: communication identity, receiver, and the decoded information. We have mentioned that the “decoded information” should pay much attention to both commonness and difference. Besides, communication identity and receiver also have a limitation towards the effect of cross-cultural communication. Here, the concept of ‘gatekeeper’ was put forward by Ruyin. ‘Gatekeeper’ here means the selection of information. The person in this process is very critical. It is he who made a decision on the selection of information. In the process of film making, all concepts related to cultivation analysis are put forward by American journalists George Gerbner, who holds the view that “symbolic fact” in our daily life has a great effect on the understanding of the world. Because of the tendency of modern communication, there is a great difference between the visual world and real world. Media have a long-term effect on the audiences it affects our view of world gradually.

This kind of research is called by George Gerbner as “cultivation analysis”. And theories indicate that what kind of effect the mass-media have on the world view of us and how this kind of effect will happen.” “Cultivation analysis” theory has a great theoretical and factual significance on the cross-communication of Chinese films.

In the communication of subject, Chinese films should cultivate qualified “gatekeeper”: cross-culture communicators who know about both the eastern and western cultures In the context of globalization, Chinese films makers should possess a kind of international view of point, and from the perspective of modernization and globalization so as to get to know the difference between the eastern and western cultures. Although a group of new actors has appeared, but if China’s films try to build their own brand, there is a long way to go.

In the aspect of the subject, Chinese films must cultivate the “international audiences” if they want to occupy a share of Chinese market. From the theory of ‘cultivation analysis’, the audiences get to know Chinese cultures by way of the “symbolic facts” so as to construct their ‘Chinese image’. As it is a long term, we must let the audiences in the foreign countries know about and care about Chinese culture. In order to win the international audiences, we must pay attention to the taste and mentality of international audience. To some extent, the more national the Chinese films are, the more international the Chinese films are accordingly. In fact, China has achieved a lot in developing international audience. Chinese film makers should make further effort and try their best to win more international audiences so as to build up international brand to enter into international market.

What kind of attitude Chinese films makers should keep towards Hollywood films? It is a very important question that Chinese films should answer. In the context of globalization, the cross-culture communication of Chinese film should both have a broad cultural eyesight and extraordinary communication wisdom. How to make sure a harmonious development in different cultural background and achieve a mutual acceptance? We think that the principle ‘harmoniousness in difference’ probably can provide the positive resources.” “Difference in harmoniousness” is both a cultural strategy of Chinese but also a cultural pursuit, it is the final goal that Chinese films move forward to the outside World. We don’t worry that Chinese culture will lose its characteristics in the context of globalization. On the contrary, it will enrich our own culture if we Chinese participate in the cross-cultural communication. Because the development of culture is realized through the combination of foreign culture and indigenous culture, therefore, the development of culture is a dynamic process. We can say that without cultural communication, and then without development. The momentum lies between the different cultures and communication. Different cultures should realize the ‘win-win’ situation in the interaction of Hollywood films. The famous professor named David Bordwell in Wisconsin University once said in the paper *Trans-cultural Spaces: Chinese Cinema as World Film*: “frankly speaking, Chinese films belong to China, but they are films themselves.” As a strong cross-cultural medium, it not only depends on indigenous culture, but also it needs to absorb more human civilization so as to share other fruits.” Only by possessing the ability to absorb other kind of cultures are Chinese films accepted by people around the world.”

As for the Chinese films in the context of globalization, when confronted with Hollywood films and the rise of new films in Asia, it is very significant for Chinese films to participate in the cross-cultural communication. Bearing the cross-cultural communication strategy in mind and being creative at the same time, only by doing so, can Chinese films realize their goals in the following years in the world.

In the evolution of human beings, people in different countries and nations go on cross-communication by means of different media. Religions in Middle Ages, ocean navigation and the inventions of typography all have a positive effect on the cross-cultural communication. In modern times, films are becoming one of an important cross-cultural communication media. The characteristics of cross-communication are shown in the following: first of all, films are a kind of video forms, and it can make communication more direct and effective. Generally speaking, people communicate with each other by means of language. However, there is a great difference among the languages in different countries and nations, which will become an obstacle for the accuracy of communication. It is a common phenomenon that there exist misunderstandings among the different communicators. However, there seem no obstacles since the arising of films. Because films are of visuality, vitality, intuitiveness, which makes people become less and less dependent of characters in printing media. It is film that makes us understand those texts more and more easily. And it can make us understand different cultures more and more easily as well.

Films can overcome the language obstacles and then make languages easier to some extent. And people in different countries and nations can be attracted by the same films. In other words, the ideograms of films have a relatively easy universality. Therefore, people usually get to know the history and reality of this country. On the other hand, the beautiful scenes, different languages and gorgeous colors bear the colorful information. The purpose of films is for communication. And it requires the audiences to understand the language and thought.

Since the arising of films, the information it bears is the content of the cross-communication. In other words, as a kind of media, in the development of films, it is like a container which bears a certain amount of culture. Then, it can go on cross-cultural communication very smoothly accordingly.

If Chinese films cater to the international routes or insist on their own cultural perspectives, it is very hard for them to enter the international market and then shape the national images accordingly. Different historical processes、 different life experiences and different geographical environments all contribute to the differences between western and eastern countries. Accordingly, these differences in turn contribute to the different views of value and evaluations of beauty. However, we human beings always have the same concept such as the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty. In order to make the most of the positive side of the films , we should dig out the cultural factors such as “differences in harmoniousness”and then understand the cultural strategies of cross-cultural communication.

First of all, we should avoid the obscure cultural factors so as to make the things go smoothly. According to Edward Hall, the culture consists of two aspects: context-dependent culture and context-independent culture. We Chinese cultures have a long history and they belong to context-dependent culture. There are a large number of idiomatic expressions and proverbs. Relatively speaking, American culture consists of various factors and they are kept under the continuous conflicts and compromises. Then the things remained are definitely commonly accepted. In this sense, the main task of Chinese film cultures is to change the self-closed expressions so as to make Chinese context language known to the whole world to some extent.

On the other hand, make the most of the international cultural factors to some extent so as not to lose their own cultural characteristics. Seen from the business films in recent years, Chinese films are intended to take advantage of the thinking patterns, cultural spirits and ideology to construct the language system of Chinese films. It is very dangerous to follow other cultures without thinking twice. Considering the cultural aspects, especially the overseas films, they all seem to commit such a intuitions, that is to say, abandoning the indigenous cultures and then adapting to the global strategy is the only choice they should make.

Discussion

In the end, we should pursue the transformational cultural factors and find out the “combination” between the commonness and individuality. Specifically speaking, it means that Chinese films should make a connection with the outside world. Chinese films should avoid digging out the tyranny and old-fashion. We should immerse into the cultural reflections and kindness, such as the good evaluation of human nature, pursue of freedom and charge of tyranny. It is universal.

In the context of globalization, Chinese films should not only concern itself with the national spirits and traditional cultures, but also the loss of Chinese spirit of view of value. Especially confronted with the imperialism of conversation, it is rather important to hold on to. If we do not stick to this principle, otherwise, we should dismiss the national spirits and cultural characters. Only in this way can we make the most of the cultural strategies of cross-communication.

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