



A Study on Cross-Cultural Communication Factors of Black Myth Wukong

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Abstract. BLACK MYTH WUKONG has attracted a great deal of attention from players both at home and abroad since the first release of its promotional video, which is unimaginable for a single-player game developed in China. Therefore, its successful road to the sea has a high research value, which can provide a reference experience for other game companies. Based on the perspective of cross-cultural communication, the author explores the reasons why BLACK MYTH WUKONG can be accepted by players from different cultures, and finds that sensory factors, cultural symbols, translation factors, technical factors and playability are the core factors. From "Honor of Kings" to "Original God" to "BLACK MYTH WUKONG", it seems that Chinese games are gradually becoming a symbolic business card that can be compared with American Hollywood, Japanese second generation and Korean Wave, etc.

Keywords: intercultural communication; game communication; BLACK MYTH WUKONG; cultural identity

1 Introduction

In the era of global informatization, the concept of global village mentioned by McLuhan has become a reality, and the convenient network information technology has made the communication between the people of the world easier and easier, but the convenience of the technology can not change the barriers that still exist in the culture, language, and context, etc. Therefore, how to make the cross-cultural communication between the countries of the world more effective and reduce the discount problem that exists between the exchanges of different cultures has been the focus of scholars for a long time. has long been the focus of scholars' attention.

Gamescom is Europe's largest and most influential gaming showcase, and for gamers all over the world, the show is the object of much attention every year. August 26, 2023 Chinese game BLACK MYTH WUKONG wins best visual effect at Gamescom. From Glory of Kings to Genshin to BLACK MYTH WUKONG, Chinese games seem to have traveled a path for games to go overseas, and in the foreseeable future, games have a chance to become a representative business card in China's cross-cultural communication. In order to realize this future, it is important to understand the success of

BLACK MYTH WUKONG, as its success factors can provide a template for other game companies to follow.

Therefore, the main research question of this paper is: what factors of BLACK MYTH WUKONG make it popular among overseas players? When combing through the literature, the author found that the research on the relevant aspects is mostly didactic research, lacking empirical and quantitative research, and the author will use interviews to argue the question with the players' answer materials.

2 Literature review

2.1 Cultural Identity Related Research

Cultural identity theory is an important cultural theory put forward by Erikson, a famous American psychoanalyst, in the early 1950s, which emphasizes the affirmative cognition of the members of a nation on the common memory of the nation. Scholars have studied cultural identity from several angles. one of which is the exploration of definitions, for example, Schwartz et al. (2006) argue that its essence stems from social identity, which is an individual's sense of identification with the unique culture of the social group with which he or she identifies.[1] Cultural identity is the process of understanding and constructing one's own identity in cross-cultural adaptation.[2] The second is the construction and strategy of cultural identity. For example, Zhang Zixuan and Li Zheng discuss the process of user identity construction and the alienation of identity and identity in the new context of digital audiovisual.[3] The third is the study of cultural identity in cross-cultural communication. Zhao Yue takes traditional Chinese stories as the research object and discusses the process of communication and reproduction from the perspective of others and multi-culture.[4] The fourth part is the research on cultural discount, which has been the focus of scholars. Zhu Tong takes Chinese films as the object of study, analyses their manifestations, explores the reasons for the emergence of cultural discounts, and puts forward some countermeasures on how to reduce cultural discounts when cross-cultural communication is carried out in films and arts.[5]

2.2 Video Game Related Research

Games have always been regarded as the ninth art, which carries the unique cultural symbols of different regions. Excellent games can cross the barriers of different cultures and languages and be recognised by people all over the world, so they are also an excellent symbol of cultural communication. Compared with other means of cross-cultural communication, games are undoubtedly the most acceptable form, and they can be used to achieve intercultural communication in a subtle and pleasant way, such as the Three Kingdoms series developed by a Japanese company.

With the popularity of games from abroad in China and the blossoming of Chinese games in foreign countries, games have already achieved cross-cultural communication in the context of how to compete for the right to speak in the world and do well in foreign communication that is constantly being explored in the academic world today.

The author will discuss three aspects of the ontological study of games, game study and cross-cultural study of games. The ontological study of games focuses on various aspects of game mechanism, form, industry and technology. Starting from independent games, Xinyi Yuan believes that game design, visual art and technical means of games have a positive impact on game art; at the same time, it also promotes healthy competition among game manufacturers, which in a side way pushes the whole game industry into a virtuous circle.[6] With regard to the form of the game, researchers have continued to develop the construction of virtual worlds, the form, content and narrative of game design; the relationship between games, devices and players has also been partially discussed. There are two main types of game research, those that look at games as a narrative medium, and those that focus more on the emotional experience of games. Seray Şenyay & Barbaros Bostan (2021) experimentally surveyed players of six games to explore the impact of narrative on user experience. [8] In the context of game narrative research, games can play a powerful role in creating empathy and other strong, positive emotional experiences that can stimulate strong emotions in players through their exploration of the game.[9] The cross-cultural studies of games are more diversified. He Wei uses games as a medium for spreading traditional Chinese culture, arguing that games help humanistic exchanges and that they are an innovative way of cross-cultural communication in China.[10]

In general, research on online games is not rare, but research on games from the perspective of cross-cultural communication is rare, and the vast majority of scholars' research on games is a rational study, mostly explaining the development of games from a theoretical point of view, with a lack of quantitative perspective, which inevitably lacks support. Based on this, the author conducts interviews and collects data from overseas game bloggers, and explores the success of BLACK MYTH WUKONG through content analysis.

3 Methods

The author's research approach involves a meticulous blend of qualitative and quantitative research methods to comprehensively investigate the appeal of the game BLACK MYTH WUKONG. Given that the game is still in development and has limited promotional and demo materials available, the author has creatively designed their research strategy.

3.1 Data Sources

Promotional Videos and Demo Videos: The author has chosen these videos as their primary research objects due to the limited availability of game-related content. These videos serve as a valuable window into the game's features and mechanics.

Overseas Game Bloggers: The research subjects include overseas game bloggers who have watched and interacted with the promotional and demo videos. These bloggers provide insights into why they like the game.

3.2 Research Questions

The author has formulated a set of interview questions to guide their research, ensuring a systematic and structured approach:

Do you like this game? This question serves as the foundation to gauge the overall sentiment of the bloggers towards BLACK MYTH WUKONG.

What aspects of the game appealed to you the most? By asking this question, the author aims to identify specific elements or features of the game that resonate with the bloggers, providing qualitative insights into its appeal.

Do you feel that there are any shortcomings in this game? Understanding the weaknesses or shortcomings of the game is crucial to obtaining a balanced perspective. This question encourages critical feedback.

Would you recommend this game for your fans or friends? Assessing the bloggers' willingness to recommend the game to their audience highlights the potential marketability and word-of-mouth promotion.

4 Success Factors of BLACK MYTH WUKONG

The corpus of the author's collection and interviews revealed that the current comments of overseas gamers and game bloggers about the game are mainly in the following areas:

4.1 Sensory factors: audio-visual feasts

sight and hearing are the initial senses of human beings when receiving information, and audio-visual effects can bring the most direct reaction of likes and dislikes to human beings. The scenes in BLACK MYTH WUKONG come from the reality of national treasures, such as the Dazu stone carvings in Chongqing, the Shuilu nunnery in Shaanxi, the Chongsheng Temple in Yunnan, the Buddha's Light Temple, the Temple of the Jade Emperor and the Little West Heaven in Shanxi, and the Cangyan Mountain and the Jade Emperor Pavilion in Hebei, etc., which are all amazing in terms of Chinese religious sculptures and carvings, ancient Chinese architecture, traditional Chinese astronomy and mythology. A representative comment is: "After hundred years this story has been with us, its finally presented with amazing original ancient Chinese arts, myths, cultures, musics, speech, and environments, gods, creatures, vibes and even places (many of the places here are the real ones in China sites). Please take your time, and make this game worth it." In addition to this, there are people stating that these things are all present in China and can be visited. "Wow, these things are so beautiful. Are they real? Can I go to China to visit them?"

Apart from the stunning graphics, the sound effects and soundtrack of the game are even more moving. For overseas viewers who have known the 80s version of Journey to the West, the moment the theme song "Yun Gong Xun YIN" plays is moving. "For every kid who watched Journey to the West in the 80s... you got CHILLS at the end of the video like I did!" and "I literally got goosebumps when the original theme song of the 1986 Chinese TV series got played".

However, for many anchors who don't know the background, their feelings and surprises are only on the screen. For example, in the part where Goku is chasing the white dragon, they exclaimed "Wow SO COOL, they even have a dragon!", and why the main character is a monkey named Goku, they also just said "Well, it's pronounced Wukong, maybe it means something else, but I don't know what it means. It's pronounced Wukong, maybe it means something else, but I don't know what it means." To quote a Chinese netizen, "People who don't know the story of Journey to the West. story of Journey to the West: It's cool!"

4.2 Cultural Symbol Factor: Chinese Dragon and Monkey King

Cultural symbols are important carriers of cultural genes, and many of them represent the bearer itself, such as the national image, which is represented by the American bald eagle, the Chinese dragon and panda, and the Russian bear. The cultural symbols carried in BLACK MYTH WUKONG are even more profound and diverse, containing a large number of classical poems and philosophical connotations of Buddhism and Taoism. For players who don't know Chinese culture, "Do you know what that means? I don't get it, but I think it's cool." The cultural symbol that overseas players are most concerned about is the Chinese dragon, which is different from the image of the Western dragon. The scene of the dragon looking down on the monkey is so oppressive that it almost spills out of the screen, creating a strong visual impact on the viewer. "The look of the dragon is one thing but the physics of the dragon is incredible. All of its attacks make sense. It has real weight to it, and that's what's getting me interested :o" The symbol of a real Chinese dragon is cool enough for overseas players, "Finally, a game with a proper Chinese dragon fight. My body is ready", "Come on China, show the world what you guys can do. That dragon is truly epic! That dragon is truly epic!"

In addition to the Chinese dragon, another cultural factor is the Monkey King, a symbol that comes from the Japanese anime Dragon Ball. The fact that the game is made by the Chinese themselves and not by Japan is something that many overseas gamers are looking forward to. "For those of you who don't know the background, this is the real "Wukong", the prototype of Goku from Dragon Ball."、 "Trivia: Dragon Ball's " Wukong " is based on the Journey to the West, which was written in the 16th century, more than 500 years ago." and "Finally a decent classic, unlike Netflix's hokey Wukong." And it is not uncommon for such cultural symbols originally belonging to China to be appropriated by other countries.

4.3 Translation Factors: Self and Localisation

Translation is the most indispensable part of the cross-cultural communication process, and the result of translation will directly affect the degree of acceptance among different cultural groups. The initial video of BLACK MYTH WUKONG was released in Chinese only, without foreign translation, and the comments of foreign netizens and the anchor were basically the same: "That's amazing, but I can't understand it." and "Why are there no English subtitles, I don't know what they are talking about?" and "Just know this game, looks great, hope to have an English version, can board the PS5

platform. Later, English subtitles were added to the live demo, and in the translation of the English subtitles, BLACK MYTH WUKONG is not an English translation of the Chinese, and many of the contents are difficult to understand for most overseas players, so most of the contents are translated in a very straightforward way. For example, 不杀生, 仇恨永无止境 (Go, Kill, righteously, to end wars.), 不偷盗, 强弱如我何异 (Steal, with pride, to redistribute wealth.), 不邪淫, 一切有情皆孽 (Copulate, in all your passion, to give love a palpable shape.). In addition to this, some deliberate translations of classical words such as "thou" and "shalt" are often found in poetic or religious contexts.

One thing to note about translation and localisation is that much of the content is linked to cultural connotations, and once localised in a rigid way, it is likely to result in the loss of ideological connotations. The shift from a high-context culture to a low-context culture will result in the disappearance of a part of the high-context culture that cannot be translated. Therefore, when translating, it is necessary to strike a balance between maintaining oneself and localising.

4.4 The techno-symbolic factor: real immersion

Video games require the active participation and involvement of the player in order to fully realise their maximum fun and challenge. realise their maximum fun and challenge. Players can immerse themselves in virtual worlds, interact with other players, explore uncharted territories, and experience different cultures and histories. In addition, the graphics, lighting, sound effects, scenery, and characters present in the game are all means of creating a sense of immersion, and the game's application of these aspects can be described as densely impressive. "This game is stunning, it gives me a sense of epicness"

And in addition to the conventional means of creating a sense of immersion, the use of high technology is also very important. BLACK MYTH WUKONG has DLSS technology built into the Unreal 5 engine, a technology that allows for high frame rates while still achieving high graphics quality. Unreal 5's new Lumen global lighting system and low-specification rendering are interspersed to make combat details more realistic. So the final picture presented in front of the player's eyes is not only exquisite, but also has a certain immersive experience, bringing the player a sense of immersion. "Wow, the sound of a temple opening is terrible. I'm not going in." The technology used also supports its portrayal of details, such as snowflakes, mist, and flames, which are very delicate. In addition, the game's character movements are very fluid and expressive. "Before the Wolf entered the fighting position, he gently and quickly extended his right forearm, letting his long sleeve hang down beautifully and smoothly. beautifully and smoothly.", and some players even regard it as a benchmark for the next generation of games: "This is the first time in a long time that I feel what the next generation of Amazing animation, lighting, motoscopes, the whole thing is beautiful."

4.5 Gameplay Factor: Highly Playable

Games ultimately go back to the most basic point: is it fun? Playability is the most important attribute of a game, and only by paying full attention to the playability of the game itself can we better expand other aspects of culture and details. BLACK MYTH WUKONG demonstrates the excellence of the battle design and the diversity of strategies in the trailer, such as the different abilities such as split, dominant golden body, sex change, etc., which allow players to choose different playing strategies when facing different battles. According to the results collected from interviews and the internet, overseas players are still satisfied with the evaluation of BLACK MYTH WUKONG's playability. "Whoever's controlling this demo, this guy's making this fight look like a movie.", "The game's combat graphics look cool and interesting, and it looks like the combat is full." Audiences with knowledge of Chinese culture and background are more excited about the gameplay "I really hope there is a similar 72 change Settings, this skill to heaven, the hair on fire that section is also super good, the whole game world setting is also very ox x, too I really hope there is a similar 72 change Settings, this skill to heaven, the hair on fire that section is also super good, the whole game world setting is also very ox x, too comfortable, definitely buy." and "I hope the fight system has a lot of combo moves, difficult moves, like in Hong Kong action I hope the fight system has a lot of combo moves, difficult moves, like in Hong Kong action movies." Good design doesn't have to be innovative, but it has to be fun for the player. The skills demonstrated in the game have a lot of interesting possibilities, such as the split mechanism, which can be derived from the hold, output and other gameplay; the ability to transform is to add more variety of gameplay, if you can match the split mechanism, the game may be able to split out of more possibilities for collocation.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper focuses on the factors that make the promotional videos of BLACK MYTH WUKONG successful, and investigates and analyses them through interviews and online data collection with viewers and anchors who have watched their promotional videos. This paper aims to provide some reference experiences for other game companies or practitioners, so that more games can be disseminated globally.

The study found that there are five main specific influencing factors, namely: Sensory factors, Cultural Symbol Factor, Translation Factors, The techno-symbolic factor, Gameplay Factor. These factors are the five aspects that anchors and viewers are most concerned about, and therefore, the author believes that these five factors are very important to whether Chinese games can receive popularity among overseas players.

However, it is still necessary to pay attention to some shortcomings of this study, one of which is that the main research object of this study is basically from the Youtube platform, and there is a lack of data for other platforms, which may lead to a certain degree of bias in the receipt of data; and the second is that the influencing factors found in this study have not been tested on other games, and therefore the learnability of other games still needs to be taken into account.

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