

The Influence of The Chinese Documentary *A Bite of China* Upon Short Videos of Food Scouts on Chinese Media Platform

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Abstract. In today's Internet fragmented information age, short video has become a popular information dissemination medium, and the short video industry also has a place in the category of new media. In short videos, the popularity of food shopping videos has been high. This paper mainly discusses the progress of short food shop video, and studies how it extracts inspiration from traditional documentary *A Bite of China*, emulates shooting methods, and integrates actual content with audience emotion. This can give people a better understanding of how short videos have improved by exploring the reasons for the popularity of food inspection videos. Through interviews with experienced food shop bloggers, this paper further explores the source of inspiration in the production of food videos and its impact on creators: Food documentaries, such as *A Bite of China*, help creators take many of the techniques of documentary and storytelling and apply them to their own video production, allowing creators to pay more attention to detail and personal style expression. The conclusion of this paper is that the blogger of food shop draws inspiration from *A Bite of China*, learns from the aspects of shooting more exquisite food scenes, video content and style, imitating the music, adding more science popularization, and integrating the audience's emotions, and has achieved great success in the short video of food shop.

Keywords: *A Bite of China*; Short Video; Traditional Documentary; Short Video Shooting Techniques.

1. Introduction

Because of its convenient shooting process and short duration, Vlog short video can be shot in the simplest way to cover a variety of fields without complex ideas and mirrors. Moreover, vlog short video benefits from the characteristics of the Internet, its photographer does not need professional background and technology can be released at will, it can be said that the real realization of national participation, so it can spread rapidly in a very wide range on the network. This has also led to the flourishing of the short video industry today.

At the beginning, vlog was just a medium for people to record and share life. However, with the rapid development of Internet media, the artistic viewing degree of vlog and short video is getting higher and higher, and many categories have been derived, such as travel shooting, shop visiting, activity process recording, etc. The shooting methods and shooting equipment of these short videos are as follows: The editing level and the content arrangement have improved a lot since its early days, and it can be said that you can already learn a complete story by watching a video, and it can bring you a great experience. For example, Bilibili, a website founded in June 2009, initially had a narrow range of video content and low quality. However, after years of development and accumulation of contributors and users, Bilibili's video content has been qualitatively improved since 2017. This can be seen from the "85 inbound must brush video list" set up by the platform. The videos on this list are representative of various fields, such as gaming, science, etc. This means that the quality of vlog video has been greatly improved compared to before and can be accepted by the vast majority of users.

Nowadays, the ability of some Vlog short video producers has been able to reach the level of "blockbuster" in the eyes of the masses, which means that their works can be similar to traditional

video narrative works such as movies and documentaries. In order to make just a few minutes of vlog with atmosphere and narrative sense, the shooting method, lens language and editing skills of these video bloggers are all related to movies and documentaries without exception. It can be said that the emergence of more and more high-quality short video Vlogs means that producers are learning more about films and documentaries. This also allows short videos to meet the needs of the audience to quickly obtain information, but also has its pursuit of artistry.

In these Vlogs of learning documentaries, short videos of food inspection are particularly affected, and most short videos of food inspection have learned the content selection, shooting methods and introduction methods of the popular Chinese food documentary *A Bite of China*.

At present, the popular video bloggers who have released more popular videos on the Internet include "True Detective Tang Renjie", "Special Wulala", "It's a Bubble", etc., they have personally entered different restaurants in various provinces of China to experience, and tell netizens the taste of food, prices and their own ideas for everyone's reference. The main content of this type of shop-visiting video is "real", so this type of vlog short video has been popular since its inception. With the learning of documentaries by such food exploration bloggers, the content of food exploration videos is also more artistic, and on the basis of its basic role of "display" and "exploration", it becomes more exquisite and atmospheric and can also show the local customs and culture represented by different cuisines and play a role in popularizing science.

A Bite of China is a food documentary directed by Chen Xiaoping and produced by China Central Television. The theme of the program revolves around the Chinese people's pursuit of good food and life and tells the food ecology across China with specific character stories. *A Bite of China*, as a documentary about the relationship between Chinese people and food, takes food as a window to understand China - through food, people can have a taste of this ancient Oriental country. "One side of the soil and one side of the people", this film will depict and perceive the Chinese cultural tradition, family concept, life attitude and homeland by showing the multiple aspects related to food in People's Daily life.

In this regard, the writer will take the learning and reference of contemporary short video vlog on films and documentaries as the theme, take the impact of documentary *A Bite of China* on food shop inspection videos as an example, and conduct research from the three directions of topic selection, content production and shooting methods to explore the reasons for reference and the impact of reference learning on short videos themselves. And how to better develop the short video industry through these learning behaviors.

2. Literature Review

With the progress of The Times and technology, vlog is favored by more and more young people, and has developed into a way to record and display personal life of all ages, and has more functions, such as regional tourism publicity, corporate image publicity, activity records, food inspection shops, etc.

Liao Zixuan believes that the reason why vlog can be popular is due to its remote presence and immersive experience. Vlogger gives viewers an immersive feeling through the first-person shooting perspective and a large number of long shots. This method of documentary shooting is easy for the audience to bring themselves into the emotions of the photographers, thus achieving an attractive role [1].

iiMedia Research's "China Short Video Industry Data Analysis" data shows that in 2022, among the Chinese netizens using short video platforms, 93.6% of netizens are using short video platforms, 5% of netizens have watched short videos but have not watched them, and 1.4% of netizens have not used short video platforms. In March 2020, in the ranking of various types of Internet users of Chinese netizens, online videos and videos ranked second with 850.44 million users, after instant messaging applications, and short videos ranked third with more than 70,000 users [2]. This shows that the spread of short video vlog is wide and has covered the vast majority of Internet users.

According to the 2019 Q1 Micro-blog Vlog Data Research Report, the proportion of micro-blog Vlog bloggers with 1 million fans is 0.4%, and that of bloggers with fewer fans is as high as 96% [3], which means that ordinary users who publish short videos have accounted for the vast majority of publishers. The low threshold of vlog short video release demand has made more and more net names join them and personally participate in the new media industry.

Hu Beirong analyzed in detail the different shooting methods and the use of lens language of vlog short videos and proposed that short video shooting can make the content of short video platforms return from "acting" to "narrating" [4]. Most rely on scripts and characters to increase traffic, but short videos with content are more descriptive, and their biggest feature is regional expansion. It is not only very aligned with people's interests, but also very fragmented, allowing people to quickly get the information they want. It directly conveys key information and highlights key points, which can be well remembered by the audience. This is also in line with the characteristics of vlog short video.

As for the relationship between short video, film and traditional documentary, Liu Xiaoyu believes that the reduction from 150 minutes to 5 minutes reflects the evolution of film to traditional video; The increase from 5 minutes to 15 seconds indicates that short videos have been effectively applied in all fields of society. Short video can rise in a short time, and it must have its own advantages [5]. This article puts forward the view that the film industry is already in jeopardy under the impact of short videos, but movies are still superior to short videos in terms of their artistry and beauty, and short videos are more popular and user engagement. The advantages and disadvantages of the two are different, so their mutual integration is possible, film content can be more "grounded", short video can become more exquisite, improve the watchability of its content.

Liu Mingyue put forward: When sharing shop food, the emotional value level is multi-level. Food is something that always exists with people regardless of the change of time and space. From the past to the present, food has always represented some special emotion, which also means homesickness [6]. Maurice Halbwach, a famous French sociologist, proposed "collective memory" in 1925. He believed that "collective memory comes from social groups, and is something shared by people, jointly constructed by each member of the group, and passed on [7]." One of the reasons for the popularity of food shop videos is their ability to convey the stories and emotions that food represents through food.

Most of the current studies focus on the reasons for the rapid spread and success of vlog short videos, or the points that still need to be reformed, and the advantages and disadvantages of short videos compared with films and traditional documentaries. This paper chooses a new starting point: the contemporary short video vlog to learn from the film and documentary. This can give people a better idea of how short videos are progressing. This paper mainly discusses the progress of short food shop video, and studies how it extracts inspiration from traditional documentary *A Bite of China*, emulates shooting methods, and integrates actual content with audience emotion.

3. Methodology

In this study, the writer interviewed food video producer Jason Liu to understand the inspiration and influence of *A Bite of China* documentary on his own video creation. *A Bite of China* is an acclaimed documentary that has brought global attention to Chinese food culture. The writer spoke with xx to explore how he drew inspiration from the documentary and how he applied it to his own food videos. The questions roughly include the impact of the documentary "China on the Tongue" on Jason Liu's food video creation, as well as how to incorporate his own style. After analyzing Jason Liu's answers, the article summarized the following key points and themes: Drawing inspiration from the documentary *A Bite of China*, including the meticulous presentation of ingredients and production processes, the ability to tell a story, and a focus on regional culture and human touch. Apply creative inspiration to your own video production, pay attention to detail and story presentation, and present

food in a unique way. While maintaining the original flavor, adding personal style and creativity, through the use of photography and editing techniques, show the uniqueness of the video.

Through communication and analysis with Jason Liu, the documentary *A Bite of China* has exerted an important influence and inspiration on his food video creation. He has taken many of the techniques of documentary and storytelling from this and applied them to his own video production, paying attention to detail and expressing his personal style. This research result further confirms the importance and influence of *A Bite of China* documentary among food video producers.

The above is the qualitative research part of "A Bite of Chinese Documentary's Inspiration for food video Producers", which focuses on interviewing food video producer xx to explore how he draws creative inspiration from this documentary and applies it to his own video creation. The results of this study contribute to further understanding of the source of inspiration in the production of food videos and its impact on creators.

4. Results

4.1. Selection of food types and subjects

As a Chinese saying goes, "Food is the people's priority" and "traveling 10,000 miles is better than reading 10,000 books." In the contemporary Chinese environment, people are able to meet their needs for survival, so their traditional documentaries about food, travel and local customs are the most popular types. Even in the current situation where short videos of only ten seconds are popular all over the Internet, documentaries about food and local customs still have high ratings and attention. For example, the production team of *A Bite of China*, a relatively classic food documentary, selected the characteristics of different regions of China to introduce and shoot, and benefited from the characteristics of the documentary, it could introduce the subjects in detail, and integrate local customs and characters. However, short videos did not consider the above factors at the beginning. Most of the early short videos were based on the photographers' own stories and experiences or ideas, and the topics were relatively simple [8]. However, in the period before and after the novel coronavirus epidemic, the rise of tourism fever led to the emergence of more and more vlog bloggers, and a large part of these bloggers chose the direction of tourism food shop exploration. Compared with before, their topic selection has changed a lot, from a single personal experience to a more comprehensive content. For selecting food subjects, they would also choose to shoot local people or local authentic restaurants in the first person, or to explore food shops in person rather than try them themselves. For example, the well-known food scout blogger "True Detective Tang Renjie", his shop scout videos are all made by himself, imitating *A Bite of China* by a dress ordinary. The host personally visits the design of the kitchen in different regions, cleverly integrating into life and attracting the audience. At the same time, even the short vlog videos with the theme of food have begun to imitate more traditional documentaries. They no longer just shoot food, restaurants, prices and give suggestions, but pay more attention to the beauty like documentaries. The video publishers add the scenery and local characteristics they shoot, as well as appropriate knowledge popularization, before introducing food. It plays the same role as a documentary in explaining knowledge. This topic selection makes short videos more professional and has content that can attract more traffic.

4.2. Selection of shooting location

The early vlog short videos of food scout shops often only shot the scene of the restaurant lobby that all customers could see, and the food they shot only shot the food that had been served by the waiter. The documentary *A Bite of China* chooses to go into the kitchen, reveal the secret and visit the entire production process of the food, and sometimes the production team will go directly to the origin of the ingredients to show the audience all the secrets behind the food. After finding that the method chosen by *A Bite of China* to expose more food production locations was very popular with viewers, many food scout bloggers also began to learn, choosing similar shooting locations, such as the back kitchen, in order to better show the production process of the food. At the same time, it also

reflects the hygiene standards of different restaurants. Careful degree, as a gimmick, can also attract more traffic.

4.3. Material selection

When vlog, a food scout store, was just emerging, most Vloggers would choose more pictures with their own images to highlight their authenticity and "down-to-earth atmosphere". Now, with the continuous improvement of public aesthetics, photographers will learn the selection of film materials and choose more pictures with stronger lens language and more sense of story. In order to achieve the audience immersive, immersed in the effect. Nowadays, in the videos of some well-known shop bloggers, taking "special Wulla" as an example, he will add more street scene shooting while shooting himself, give more close-ups of the food itself, and match exquisite filter effects, which makes the short video further in the aspect of "telling", and can better mobilize the audience's emotions and ideas.

4.4. Video clips

In the past, vlog short video clips were relatively random, because they were essentially "the records of fragments of life", and most producers adopted the editing method of piecing together many fragments. With the audience's pursuit of drama or story, today's vlog short videos prefer to use long lenses like traditional documentaries, such as using a long lens to show the process of food from the pot to the dish to the table. This way of changing the scene in the end or only when different characters are speaking, gives the audience a more immersive experience [9]. Most of those pure editing Vlogs will learn the documentary music and scene connection, atmosphere creation, to create the ultimate audio-visual experience, and stimulate the audience's yearning for shooting food and the city.

4.5. Post-dubbing

At first, the food scout short video vlog basically does not add the later dubbing, but directly uses the original sound of the recorded material, which is also to increase its sense of authenticity. But now, due to the increasing demand of the audience for scientific popularization, the food vlog generally imitates the explanation mode of *A Bite of China* and adds appropriate knowledge popularization links to introduce the taste, cuisine, nutritional value and development history of this food to the audience in detail. However, it is worth mentioning that the dubbing methods of vlog short videos are diverse, and AI dubbing has also occupied a place in video dubbing.

4.6. Shaping themes through narrative

American writer Robert Mackey once said that the formation of a beautiful story often starts from a dilemma, and the design gap in the process of telling the event gives people the narrative power and makes people more convincing and more attention. This is the "Hollywood" type of narrative [10]. If only simple narration is carried out, the content will lose interest, and the corresponding audience will gradually lose interest, which is not limited to the scope of documentary. Story is an important way to describe the main plot and highlight the theme of film and television works. The purpose of story-oriented documentary is to enrich the expression form of documentary and make it easier to express the theme and theme. American scholar Sheila Cullen Bernard once put forward a question about the creation of documentary -- why documentary should also enter the story.

In fact, the documentary also needs the support of the story plot, and its own development is the corresponding plot. Story expression is not fictional but comes from the experience of human emotions brought by observation from different perspectives [11]. On the premise of maintaining authenticity, it can enhance the appeal and make the audience resonate with the program. With the ups and downs of the story, the conflict between emotion and action can be realized through the presupposition of some scenes, so as to achieve certain story-oriented communication effect and

promote the smooth development of documentary communication process under the story structure [12].

If the narrative is simply straightforward, the entire text will lose its appeal after being connected, and the audience's dependence will gradually decline, not just in the context of the documentary. In movies and TV shows, stories play a key role in illustrating the main plot and highlighting the central theme. American scholar Hilary Leonard has previously addressed this question, why should documentaries also be included in stories? Documentaries are stored in order to make the forms of expression more diverse and easier to explain the main ideas. In fact, documentary itself is about telling stories and conveying stories. Narrative expression is not made up; rather, it is based on human and emotional experiences from different perspectives of observation. It can resonate with the audience and the show, while maintaining authenticity and enhancing appeal. The ups and downs of a story can be created by strategically placing certain scenes to create conflict between feelings and actions. This will produce a special narrative communication effect and encourage the easy accumulation of documentary communication under the story plot structure.

4.7. VLOG records the process of exploring stores and spreads food stories in multiple dimensions

This essay aims to explore the potential impact of a bite of Chinese documentary on the video creation of food scout bloggers. In the previous discussion section, the writer explored the new inspirations, influential content and style, and audience appeal of documentaries for food scout bloggers' video creation. This section will provide some specific results from survey studies and case studies to support the previous discussion. "Special WuLala" as a shop search food blogger, its Tiktok number has been praised by 160 million in the past three years, and the number of fans has reached 15.65 million. With unique content and personal style, he is known as the "ceiling" of eating broadcast, and in 2022, "special WuLala" was awarded the title of "author of the annual highlight moment" in the "Tiktok 2022 Life Said" activity. Because "special WuLala" adopts the form of VLOG, it is different from the fragmented short video length, and its video content is richer, the process is generally for the shop before visiting the shop to order a meal and a summary, the title with "special Wulala" sentence "Wu ~ Hello, I am WuLala" self-perspective as the opening. "Special WuLala" not only vividly interprets the shape and taste of the food, so that the audience has a sense of immersion, but also introduces the background of the food culture, and the video also makes a "true beauty" shot at the end. Through the introduction of local history and culture, the video avoids the discount of cultural transmission that may be caused by a single food scene [13].

4.8. Based on audience needs, create personal image IP

"Special Wu La La" Chronicles the process of exploring the store in VLOG from a first-person perspective. This first-person perspective not only gives the audience an immersive experience, but also brings the audience closer to the story through various narrative techniques. The food in the "Special WuLala" video is mostly flour noodles, steamed buns and cakes and other staples, as well as high-calorie food such as hot pot and barbecue, so it is also affectionately called "carbon godfather" by fans. After watching his videos, viewers' appetites are no longer compulsively controlled, but instead look for epiphanies and catharsis in the right places, gaining an alternative satisfaction akin to good food. He also interacts with fans when shooting videos, and "special Wu La La" will agree to fans' requests for photos, and even give red envelopes to fans during the Spring Festival.

5. Discussion

5.1. New inspiration for video creation by food scout blogger

A Bite of China is known for their exquisite food images and cultural narratives. When viewers enjoy these documentaries, they often feel a deep understanding of food and respect for the diversity of Chinese culture. Food Scout bloggers often share their food experiences via videos, including the

taste, appearance and preparation of the food. However, inspired by documentaries such as *A Bite of China*, they may pay more attention to the following reasons:

Cultural context: Documentaries often emphasize the connection between food and culture. Food Scouts bloggers can add more cultural elements to their videos, exploring how food is connected to local traditions, history and rituals to provide richer information.

Storytelling: Documentary storytelling is often compelling. Food Scout bloggers can be inspired to adopt deeper storytelling that leads viewers on a comprehensive journey of food discovery.

Sustainability: *A Bite of China* also focuses on the sustainability of food and how it is produced. Food Scout bloggers may start to focus on healthier, environmentally friendly and sustainable food choices and share this information in videos to guide viewers to treat food more responsibly.

5.2. Influence content and style

Visual presentation: Documentaries are known for their beautiful visual presentations, including high-quality shots of food and brightly colored images. Food Scout bloggers may employ more professional photography and post-production techniques to enhance the visual appeal of their videos.

Music and sound effects: Documentaries such as *A Bite of China* often use music and sound effects to enhance emotions. Food Scout bloggers can choose the appropriate music and sound effects to enhance the emotional effect of the video.

Food Tells: Inspired by documentaries, food scouts' bloggers may focus more on the storytelling of food, including its origins, traditions, and uniqueness. This will give them more depth in their videos.

5.3. Audience appeal

International audience: Influenced by Chinese documentaries, food Scout bloggers' videos are likely to attract more international audiences as they can learn about Chinese food and culture through videos.

Cultural exchange: This audience appeal can also promote cultural exchange. Food Scouts bloggers can share their unique perspectives on Chinese cuisine with an international audience, thus promoting cross-cultural understanding.

6. Conclusion

This essay mainly discusses the progress of short food shop video, and studies how it extracts inspiration from traditional documentary *A Bite of China*, emulates shooting methods, and integrates actual content with audience emotion. The documentary *A Bite of China* has exquisite pictures and smooth narration. Food explores bloggers draw inspiration from this documentary. In addition to tasting the taste of food, bloggers begin to focus on shooting more exquisite food pictures, increase the length to emphasize the cultural background of food, increase the narrative of the whole video, and pay attention to the sustainability of food. Ensure it is safe, green and healthy. For the imitation of the shooting method, that is, the imitation of the video content and style, the shooting equipment of the food scout blogger has gradually upgraded from the mobile phone to the professional camera, learning the high-quality shooting method of *A Bite of China*, and shooting bright and full colors. In terms of style, food scout vlog began to move closer to documentaries in the post-production and editing, greatly improving the visual appeal. At the same time, in terms of music and sound effects, *A Bite of China* has a classic soundtrack, which has almost become a symbol of food, so many food shop bloggers will add this soundtrack or similar sound effects in their videos to increase the audience's immersion. The popular science added by the producer in the video can enhance the depth of the video and be recognized by more viewers. In terms of integrating the audience's emotions, these videos of Chinese food will also be seen by international audiences on today's internationally connected Internet, and the rich Chinese characteristics and emotions in the videos can be felt by the

world, promoting the communication between people in different cultures, integrating the ideas and emotions of people of different nationalities, and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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