

Analyzing Linguistic Landscapes from a Cross-Cultural Perspective: Taking Black Myth Wukong as an Example

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Abstract: Based on a cross-cultural perspective, this paper analyzes the linguistic landscape in the video game Black Myth: Wukong and explores its unique role in cultural communication. By analyzing the game's linguistic symbols, character language, interactive interface and sound effects and soundtrack, it reveals its successful strategy of integrating traditional Chinese cultural elements. The study shows that Black Myth: Wukong not only enhances the players' sense of cultural identity, but also promotes the international dissemination of Chinese culture through the cross-cultural integration of linguistic landscape construction. This study provides insights into the practice of video games in cross-cultural communication.

Keywords: Video Games; Cross-cultural Communication; Linguistic Landscape; Black Myth: Wukong; Cultural Identity.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, cultural exchanges are deepening, and the importance of video games as an emerging medium of cultural communication is becoming more and more prominent. With the advancement of technology and the popularization of the Internet, video games have not only become an important form of entertainment, but also a new channel for cultural communication and exchange, which profoundly affects the interaction and integration of global culture. Its social cognition and functional position have changed from "electronic heroin" to "Chinese creation", and its role in cultural communication has become more and more important [1]. Black Myth: Wukong, as a video game integrating elements of traditional Chinese culture, has had a

wide impact in the international arena and has become a unique case of cultural dissemination (see Table 1). With its exquisite graphics, rich storyline and unique cultural symbols, the game has attracted the attention of players around the world, providing a valuable research object for exploring the potential of video games in cross-cultural communication. As an important carrier of cultural communication, linguistic landscape plays a key role in video games, and its study helps us understand more deeply how games construct and convey cultural meanings. Although research on linguistic landscapes at home and abroad has achieved certain results, cross-cultural linguistic landscape analysis for the field of video games is still insufficient [2]. This study aims to fill this research gap and provide useful insights for the cultural communication practice of video games.

Table 1. International Attention to Black Myth: Wukong

Times	Flat-roofed building	Airplay/Sales	Note
August 2024	Bilibili	Over 100 million views	China's Site B (equivalent to YouTube)
August 2024	YouTube	Over 10 million views	International platforms
August 2024	Steam, wegame, Epic, PS	4.5 million copies Ranked at the top of the global sales charts	Game Publishing Platforms

(Data source: "Black Myth: Goku" release! The translations of these terms light up (baidu.com) Black Myth: Goku Steam Global #1 US #1, this is the real meaning of cultural export - beiliili (bilibili.com))

2. Intercultural Theory and In-depth Analysis of the Linguistic Landscape

2.1. The Theoretical Cornerstone of Intercultural Communication

As an important feature of the globalization era, the core of intercultural communication lies in transcending cultural differences and realizing effective communication and interaction between individuals or groups of different cultural backgrounds. This process not only promotes cultural diversity and inclusiveness, but also promotes global cultural integration and change, and has a profound impact on cultural communication. Edward Hall's theory of high- and low-context cultures provides an important perspective for the study of cross-cultural communication, pointing out that information transfer in high-context cultures relies on shared

backgrounds and contexts, while low-context cultures are more inclined to direct and explicit information expression. This suggests that the linguistic landscape is not only a simple accumulation of words and symbols, but also a visual representation of cultural values and behavioral patterns (see Figure 1). Therefore, to analyze the linguistic landscape, we need to go deeper into the cultural context behind it, understand how the difference between high and low contexts affects the transmission and interpretation of information, and then explore the dynamic construction and functional realization of the linguistic landscape in cross-cultural communication, such as the design of the signs of international tourist attractions that need to take into account the information-receiving habits of tourists of different cultural backgrounds.

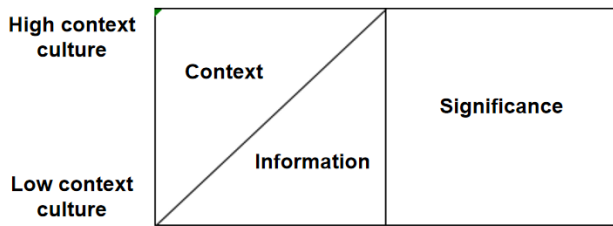


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of high and low context cultures

2.2. Multi-dimensional Interpretation of Linguistic Landscape

Linguistic landscape, as a language manifestation in public space, carries rich cultural connotations and social functions, and its manifestations in different cultural spaces in various forms, such as street names, advertising plaques and public signs, etc., all map out the cultural characteristics and linguistic habits of a specific region. These linguistic elements not only construct the local cultural identity, but also promote the communication and recognition within the community. Linguistic landscape is not only a key carrier of cultural transmission, but also plays an indispensable role as a bridge in cross-cultural communication. By analyzing the linguistic landscape, we can gain insights into the communication and integration of different cultures, as well as the change and adaptation of culture in the context of globalization. As a theoretical basis for cultural bridges, the linguistic landscape highlights its unique role in promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect. In a globalized business environment, multinational corporations enhance the localized identity of their products by incorporating local language and cultural elements into their product packaging and advertising campaigns, a strategy that not only facilitates the global dissemination and acceptance of their brands, but also demonstrates the practical application value of linguistic landscapes in cross-cultural business communication.

2.3. The Uniqueness of the Linguistic Landscape in Black Myth: Wukong

As a virtual linguistic landscape, the game shows its unique construction principles and specificity, not only as an entertainment platform, but also as a unique space for cultural dissemination and exchange. In game design, the construction of linguistic landscapes should strictly follow the principles of cultural authenticity, player immersion and cross-cultural adaptability to ensure the richness and diversity of the game world. Black Myth: Wukong, as a game with deep Chinese cultural heritage, integrates myths and legends, historical allusions, and folk customs into its linguistic landscape, which not only enrich the game's cultural connotation, but also provide potential for cross-cultural communication. The myths and legends in the game, such as the image and story of the Monkey King, not only occupy an important position in Chinese culture, but also have a certain degree of influence in the international arena, which provides a solid foundation for the game's globalization and dissemination [3]. The game successfully creates a strong Chinese cultural atmosphere through well-designed linguistic landscapes, such as architectural styles, costumes and props, so that players can deeply experience the charm of the culture in the process of the game, which further promotes the possibility of cross-cultural communication.

3. Analysis of Linguistic Landscape in Black Myth: Wukong

3.1. Analysis of Cross-cultural Linguistic Symbols in the Game Background

Black Myth: Wukong, as a game with deep Chinese cultural heritage, skillfully integrates the classic elements of the original Journey to the West in its linguistic landscape, and reinterprets these elements in the virtual game world through translation and innovative strategies. The character design of the Monkey King retains the iconic features of the original, such as the monkey's face and the golden rod, but also incorporates modern aesthetic and technological tools to meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary players. The construction of the game's storyline also embodies the subtlety of cross-cultural narrative. Through carefully designed linguistic landscape elements, such as architectural styles, costumes and props, a strong Chinese cultural atmosphere is created, which serves as an important tool for narrative, guiding players to go deeper into the game world and experience the cross-cultural storyline (see Table 2). This strategy not only enriches the cultural connotation of the game, but also enhances the players' sense of cultural identity and immersion by allowing them to understand and learn about Chinese culture while completing the tasks, laying a solid foundation for the game's globalization dissemination.

3.2. Character Language and Identity Construction: The Cultural Imprint of the Monkey King

In Black Myth: Wukong, the language of the Monkey King, as the central character, deeply reflects his cultural identity and implies the significance of cross-cultural communication. The Monkey King's language is full of personality and power, deeply imprinted with traditional Chinese culture, such as the classic quote "If I become a Buddha, there will be no devil in the world; if I become a devil, what can Buddha do to me", which not only shows his uninhibited character, but also embodies his control of his own destiny and transcendent attitude towards the world, which is the same as that of the original Journey to the West, where he was portrayed as a Buddhist. This is the same as Sun Wukong's image in the original Journey to the West, bringing players a unique cultural experience. At the same time, its language often incorporates elements of classical Chinese poetry, such as "I want the sky to be unable to cover my eyes, and the earth to be unable to bury my heart", which is a poetic way of expression that deeply reflects the Monkey King's inner ambition and infinite yearning for freedom, which not only strengthens the character's sense of cultural identity, but also lets players experience the unique charm of traditional Chinese culture in the game. It not only enhances the character's sense of cultural identity, but also allows players to experience the unique charm of traditional Chinese culture in the game. In the game, the dialogues between the Monkey King and other characters not only promote the development of the plot, but also show the significance of cross-cultural exchanges, which enriches the connotation of the game.

Table 2. Distribution of uniqueness of linguistic landscape in Black Myth: Wukong

Language Landscape Uniqueness Category	Description of the distribution	Typical Example
Multilingual integration	The game incorporates multiple language elements, creating a unique linguistic landscape and enhancing the atmosphere of cross-cultural communication.	The game offers multiple language options such as Chinese and English to meet the needs of players from different regions. The combination of Chinese dubbing and English subtitles provides a unique gaming experience for overseas players.
Use of culturally specific vocabulary	The game makes extensive use of vocabulary and expressions that are characteristic of Chinese culture, which enriches the game's dialog and demonstrates the unique charm of the language.	Chinese cultural words such as idioms and sayings frequently appear in the character dialogues, such as "drawing the dragon to dot the eyes" and "frog in the bottom of the well", letting players feel the profound heritage of Chinese culture in the game.
Intentions for cross-cultural communication	The dialogues and texts in the game not only convey the plot of the game, but also imply the intention of cross-cultural communication, showing Chinese culture to global players through the medium of the game.	The text content of the game, such as quest hints and NPC dialogues, incorporates elements and stories of Chinese culture, allowing players to understand and learn about Chinese culture while completing quests.
Innovative linguistic expressions	The game has made innovations in language expression, such as combining modern technological elements to bring players a new language experience.	The game uses modern technology such as dynamic subtitles and voice interaction to allow players to become more immersed in the world of the game and experience the unique linguistic landscape.
The Construction of Cultural Authenticity	The game strictly follows the principle of cultural authenticity to ensure that the linguistic landscape is accurate and realistic, providing players with an authentic cultural experience.	The architectural style, clothing props and other linguistic landscape elements in the game are carefully designed based on Chinese culture, such as palace buildings and traditional clothing, creating a strong Chinese cultural atmosphere.
Creation of player immersion	The game focuses on creating a sense of immersion for the player, immersing the player through a rich linguistic landscape and enhancing the gaming experience.	The language elements in the game, such as dialogues and narration, are all expressed in authentic Chinese, which, together with the exquisite scenes and sound effects, make players feel as if they are in a real Chinese cultural environment.
Cross-cultural adaptation considerations	The game has been designed with cross-cultural adaptability in mind in terms of language landscapes to ensure that it is understood and accepted by players around the globe.	The mythological elements in the game, such as the image and story of the Monkey King, not only occupy an important position in Chinese culture, but also have a certain degree of influence in the international arena, which provides a solid foundation for the game's globalization.

3.3. Exploring the Linguistic Landscape of Interactive Interfaces and Prompts

The linguistic landscape elements in the game interface design, task prompts, and interaction options constitute an important part of the player's cross-cultural game experience, not only conveying game information, but also profoundly affecting the player's comprehension difficulty and cultural resonance. The design of these elements is directly related to the players' emotional response in the game, which in turn affects the overall experience and quality of the game. In order to realize the optimal experience, the relationship between game complexity and player acceptance needs to be carefully considered, because complexity is a double-edged sword in game design, which can stimulate players' interest and motivation to learn in moderation, while excessive complexity may lead to frustration and hinder the learning process. According to theories such as the mind-flow theory and the 85% optimal learning rate, the sensory stimulation, learning information, and the challenge of the game task received by the player should reach a balanced state in order to achieve the best experience, and this balanced state is summarized as an optimal stimulation model (see Figure 2). The interface design of Black Myth Wukong skillfully integrates Chinese and multi-language elements, reflecting cultural diversity and taking into account internationalization needs. Its task hints are integrated with poems and allusions, which enhances the cultural resonance of Chinese native

speakers, and is supplemented with English annotations, which reduces the comprehension difficulty of non-Chinese native speakers and further enriches the gaming experience.

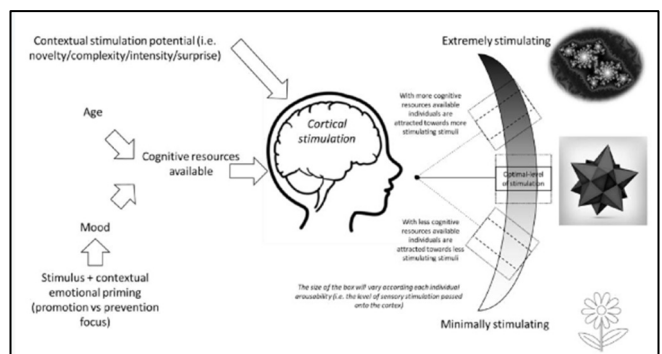


Figure 2. Optimal stimulus model, with complex fractal images, geometric shapes, and simple flowers on the right representing the three levels of stimuli, respectively

3.4. Sound Effects and Soundtracks: The Synergy of Non-Verbal Elements in the Linguistic Landscape

In game design, sound effects and soundtracks, as non-linguistic elements, play an indispensable role in the construction of linguistic landscape. Sound effects and soundtracks complement the linguistic elements of the game to create a unique cross-cultural atmosphere. Through the

analysis of the soundtrack of the video game Call of Duty series, it is found that music and sound effects have an important function in scene shaping, emotional guidance and cultural communication, which can simulate the real environment or create a fantasy atmosphere to provide players with an immersive gaming experience, and at the same time, through echoing with the game plot, enhance the emotional expression, further enriching the linguistic landscape of the game [4]. Sound effects and soundtracks also undertake the task of cultural communication, and can incorporate musical elements from different cultures to give the game a wider cultural appeal and bring cross-cultural listening enjoyment to players. As non-linguistic elements, sound effects and soundtracks, in synergy with linguistic elements, jointly create a unique cross-cultural atmosphere and provide players with a rich gaming experience.

4. Black Myth: Wukong in Cross-Cultural Comparative Perspective

4.1. Analysis of the Differences between the Language Landscapes of Eastern and Western Games

In the construction of the linguistic landscapes of Eastern and Western games, the significant differences appear in the choice of language and the use of cultural symbols. Taking several representative Western games as examples, such as World of Warcraft and The Witcher 3, they tend to adopt a single language (mostly English) and construct the game world through Western cultural symbols, such as myths and historical allusions, a strategy that reinforces the homogenization of cultural communication. In contrast, Black Myth: Wukong demonstrates cross-cultural integration in the construction of its linguistic landscape. Its interface design skillfully integrates Chinese and multilingual elements, reflecting cultural diversity while taking into account internationalization needs. The incorporation of poems and allusions in the quest hints enhances the cultural resonance of Chinese native speakers, while the English commentary

reduces the comprehension difficulty of non-Chinese native speakers and further enriches the game experience. These design strategies not only broaden the audience scope of the game, but also promote the communication and understanding between players from different cultural backgrounds, providing a new example of cross-cultural dialog between Eastern and Western games.

4.2. Challenges of Cultural Differences and Integration Strategies

Black Myth: Wukong faces the challenge of cultural differences in cross-cultural communication, but the game has responded effectively through a series of integration strategies. The game's interface design skillfully integrates Chinese and multilingual elements, which not only preserves the deep cultural heritage, but also broadens the international audience. The poems and allusions incorporated in the quest hints enhance the cultural resonance of native Chinese speakers, while the addition of English commentary lowers the threshold of understanding for non-native Chinese speakers, realizing the universalization of the cultural experience. The game also integrates traditional Chinese cultural elements such as Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism into the game design through the in-depth combination of plot and cultural elements, enabling players to learn and experience Chinese culture in the process of problem solving. The game's multiplayer cooperation mode and community communication platform promote communication and interaction between players from different cultural backgrounds, enhancing the game's socialization and helping to promote understanding and respect between different cultures. Together, these strategies build the game's unique cross-cultural communication appeal.

5. Impact Assessment and Cultural Dissemination Insights

5.1. Assessment of Cultural Communication Effect

Table 3. Player Feedback and Cultural Identity Analysis

Norm	Descriptive	Player Feedback	Social Media Discussions	Cultural Identity
Number of players	Number of active players on Steam	1.42 million	Positively	High
Favorable evaluation rate	Percentage of positive reviews given by players on Steam	About 45,000 reviews	Positively	High
Picture quality	The beauty of the game's graphics	Generally well received by players	Positively	High
Combat system	Smooth and challenging gameplay combat	Generally well received by players	Positively	High
Cultural elements	Presentation of Chinese cultural elements in the game	Generally well received by players	Positively	High
Storyline	The fit of the game's plot with the Journey to the West	Generally well received by players	Positively	High

(Source: How many people play Black Myth: Goku? Tracking the Number of Players - AMK Station China)

To assess the actual effects of Black Myth: Wukong in cross-cultural communication, it is necessary to comprehensively consider multiple data such as player feedback and social media discussions. Through analysis, it was found that the language landscape strategy made a significant contribution to enhancing players' sense of cultural identity and game experience (Table 3). Specifically, the integration of Chinese and multilingual elements in the game

interface design not only attracted a large number of international players, but also invisibly enhanced their interest in and identification with Chinese culture. For example, many non-native Chinese players shared on social media their experience of understanding poems and allusions through the English annotations in the game, stating that this design gave them a deeper understanding and feeling of Chinese culture. The deep integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements

in the game's plot, such as Taoist and Buddhist ideas, also prompted players to unconsciously immerse themselves in Chinese culture as they explored the game world, thus further enhancing the game experience. All these examples show that *Black Myth: Wukong* has achieved positive results in cross-cultural communication through skillful linguistic landscape strategies, providing new insights into cultural communication.

5.2. Industry Insights

Black Myth: Wukong's successes and shortcomings in building linguistic landscapes provide game developers with valuable insights into cross-cultural communication strategies and cultural dissemination. The game has successfully created a game world full of traditional Chinese culture through its delicate graphics, rich storyline and in-depth characterization, demonstrating significant cultural communication advantages. However, the shortcomings in the translation and interpretation of some cultural elements suggest that developers need to pay attention to the challenge of understanding the deeper cultural meanings of the game for non-Chinese speaking players. To address this challenge, game developers should adopt more nuanced cross-cultural communication strategies, strengthen the translation and proofreading of in-game texts to ensure the accurate communication of cultural elements, consider increasing in-game cultural annotations or explanations, and collaborate with professional cultural research institutes or scholars to enhance the cultural accuracy and depth of the game content [5]. The implementation of these strategies will help game developers to better disseminate and promote traditional culture in the emerging medium of games, and create game masterpieces with both depth and breadth.

6. Conclusion and Outlook

This study has deeply explored the contribution of *Black Myth: Wukong* to the construction of linguistic landscape and cross-cultural communication, and through meticulous methodological application, it has revealed the game's unique

achievement in integrating traditional Chinese cultural elements with video game mechanics, highlighting the core position and unique role of linguistic landscape as a cultural communication medium in the emerging field of games. However, there are limitations in this study, especially in terms of the breadth of data sources and the diversity of samples for cross-cultural comparisons. Future research can further explore the application of new technologies in linguistic landscape research, such as the impact of emerging technologies like virtual reality and augmented reality on cross-cultural communication, and expand to the study of multimodal linguistic landscapes, in order to more comprehensively understand the complex mechanisms of video games in cultural communication. For the field of practice, this study suggests that game developers, cultural communicators and policy makers emphasize the importance of cross-cultural communication strategies in game design and cultural communication, and encourage interdisciplinary cooperation to promote the innovative development of video games in cultural communication.

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