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Research on the Communication Narrative Strategies and Effect Improvement of Educational Content on Short Video Platforms

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Abstract: Driven by the in-depth integration of digital communication technology and educational digitization, short video platforms represented by Douyin and Bilibili have gradually become core carriers for the dissemination of educational content, which has profoundly reshaped the production logic, communication mode and acceptance mechanism of educational communication. Taking the educational content on mainstream short video platforms as the research object, this study focuses on the core entry point of communication narrative strategies, combines narrative theory and framing theory in the field of journalism and communication, systematically explores the narrative dilemmas and existing problems faced by current educational short videos, and extracts effective narrative rules and practical experience through in-depth empirical analysis of 5 typical educational short video accounts. The research shows that excellent educational short videos have distinct characteristics in narrative structure, content design and interactive mode, which are the key to improving their communication effect and influence. To effectively enhance the communication power, appeal and guiding force of educational short videos, it is necessary to optimize the narrative system through four core strategies: storytelling expression, conflict point design, user-participatory narrative and multi-modal presentation. This study enriches the cross-disciplinary research achievements of education and journalism and communication, fills the theoretical gap in the systematic research on the narrative strategies of educational short videos, and provides targeted theoretical reference and operable practical paths for the high-quality development of educational short videos and the construction of a sound digital educational communication ecology.

Keywords: Short Video Platforms; Educational Content; Narrative Strategies; Communication Effects; Framing Theory.

1. Introduction

In the context of the rapid development of digital media, short video platforms have emerged as a powerful force reshaping the dissemination of educational content with their unique advantages of fragmented communication, strong interactivity, and high penetration. According to the 56th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China released by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of June 2025, the number of short video users in China has reached 1.068 billion, accounting for 95.1% of the total netizens, and the daily playback volume of educational content on major platforms has exceeded 10 billion times[1]. Short video platforms have broken the temporal and spatial barriers of traditional education, making high-quality educational resources more accessible to the public, and meeting the personalized learning needs of different groups through diverse narrative forms.

However, the current communication of educational short videos still faces many practical challenges. Some content suffers from homogeneous narration, boring expression, and superficial interaction, making it difficult to achieve in-depth value transmission; the "information cocoon" phenomenon caused by algorithm recommendation mechanisms leads to the segmentation of educational content communication; the tendency of pan-entertainment may dissolve the seriousness and ideological nature of educational content. Against this background, how to give full play to the technical advantages of short video platforms, optimize narrative strategies based on communication theories, and enhance the communication effect and influence of educational content has become an urgent problem to be solved.

This study takes educational content on short video platforms as the research object, focuses on the core entry point of narrative strategies, explores the communication characteristics and narrative logic of educational short videos, analyzes the practical experience of typical cases, and proposes targeted optimization paths. The research is of great significance for promoting the innovative development of educational communication in the digital era, improving the effectiveness of educational resource dissemination, and building a sound educational communication ecology.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research Status of Educational Short Video Communication

Existing research on educational short videos mainly focuses on three dimensions: communication characteristics, communication effects, and optimization paths. In terms of communication characteristics, scholars generally believe that short videos have realized the situational penetration and mass communication of educational content with the characteristics of short duration, strong sensory stimulation, and high interaction. Their fragmented presentation conforms to the information receiving habits of contemporary audiences, but it may also lead to the lack of systematic knowledge dissemination. Zhou Fang (2025) pointed out that the decentralized nature of short videos has broken the authoritative discourse pattern of traditional education, forming a communication ecology of multi-subject co-creation, but it has also weakened the value leading power of educational content[2].

In terms of communication effects, relevant studies mostly

focus on users' cognitive and behavioral changes. Li Jungang et al. (2025) found that red culture short videos can effectively enhance young people's value recognition through emotional resonance and immersive experience, but the uneven quality of content and the "information cocoon" phenomenon restrict the maximization of communication effects[3]. Guo Yan et al. (2025) proposed that short video narratives have dual effects on youth ideological and political education: on the one hand, they realize positive empowerment through immersive narrative penetration and fission-style communication diffusion; on the other hand, they hide hidden risks of meaning deconstruction due to fragmented and entertaining narration[4].

In terms of optimization paths, existing studies mostly put forward suggestions from the perspectives of content creation, technical application, and platform supervision, emphasizing the importance of high-quality content supply and technical empowerment. Liu Panpan (2025) suggested that we should innovate the narrative content of ideological and political education short videos, promote the construction of short video platforms, and strengthen supervision to give full play to the empowering role of short videos[5]. However, there is a lack of systematic research on narrative strategies, and the exploration of how to apply communication theories to optimize narrative links and improve communication effects is not in-depth enough.

2.2. Research Gaps and Theoretical Deficiencies

By sorting out the existing literature, it can be found that the academic circle has fully recognized the innovative role of short videos in educational communication, but there are obvious gaps in the special research on the communication narrative strategies of educational content: first, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of the narrative logic of educational short videos. Most existing studies stay at the description of communication phenomena and do not systematically explore the mechanism of core elements such as narrative structure, narrative perspective, and narrative symbols; second, the research on the correlation between narrative strategies and communication effects is insufficient, and the differential impact of different narrative models on users' cognition, emotions, and behaviors has not been clarified; third, the cross-disciplinary integration research needs to be deepened, and the narrative analysis framework suitable for educational short videos has not been fully constructed by combining narrative theory and framing theory in journalism and communication.

3. Theoretical Foundation

3.1. Narrative Theory

Narrative theory emphasizes the effective transmission of information through storytelling expression, and its core elements include narrative subject, narrative structure, narrative perspective, and narrative symbols. In the communication of educational short videos, narrative theory provides a core logic for content creation: the diversification of narrative subjects can enrich the dimension of content expression; a complete narrative structure helps to improve users' content immersion; the switching of multiple perspectives can enhance the attractiveness of content; the collaborative use of multi-modal narrative symbols such as text, images, and audio can realize the concrete presentation of abstract knowledge.

As Guo Yan et al. (2025) stated, the essence of the narrative of educational short videos is the unified process of knowledge transmission and value leading through the process of symbol encoding and decoding[4]. By constructing vivid narrative scenes and emotional resonance spaces, narrative theory helps to reduce the cognitive threshold of educational content and enhance users' acceptance and internalization of knowledge and values.

3.2. Framing Theory

Framing theory holds that communicators construct specific cognitive frameworks by selecting, processing, and reorganizing information, influencing audiences' understanding and judgment of things. The application of framing theory in the communication of educational short videos is mainly reflected in two aspects: first, the content framework. By focusing on educational themes, refining key knowledge points, and selecting cases, a clear knowledge communication framework is constructed to help audiences quickly grasp the core content; second, the value framework. Embed value concepts such as socialist core values, scientific spirit, and humanistic literacy into the narrative process to achieve "silent" value leading.

Framing theory provides an important guide for the optimization of narrative strategies of educational short videos. That is, through scientific framework construction, the balance between the systematicness of knowledge transmission and the flexibility of communication forms is achieved, and the communication power and leading power of content are improved. In educational short videos, a reasonable content framework can help users establish a clear knowledge structure, while a positive value framework can guide users to establish correct values in the process of learning knowledge.

4. Empirical Analysis

This study selects 5 typical educational accounts on Douyin and Bilibili as research objects, including the popular science account "Wuqiong Xiaoliang's Popular Science Daily", the subject education account "Yishu", the red culture account "Communist Youth League Central Committee", the vocational education account "Craftsman School", and the life skills account "Food Writer Wang Gang". Through content analysis and case study, their narrative strategy characteristics are explored.

4.1. Narrative Structure: From Linear Presentation to Diversified Framework

The narrative structures of high-quality educational short videos show diverse characteristics: first, the "problem-solution" structure. For example, the math teaching videos of "Yishu" take specific exercises as the entry point, and help users master problem-solving methods through linear narrative of "putting forward problems-analyzing ideas-solving processes-summarizing rules"; second, the "story-insight" structure. For example, the red culture videos of "Communist Youth League Central Committee" extract the spiritual core by telling the touching stories of revolutionary martyrs to achieve value transmission; third, the "experience-sharing" structure. For example, the skill teaching videos of "Food Writer Wang Gang" record the operation process from a first-person perspective, interspersed with detailed

explanations and skill summaries.

These narrative structures are not only in line with the communication characteristics of short videos but also meet users' learning needs. Among them, "conflict point design" has become a key element to improve user stickiness. For example, "Wuqiong Xiaoliang's Popular Science Daily" often sets up cognitive conflicts between common sense and scientific facts to stimulate users' desire for exploration.

4.2. Content Design: From Knowledge Inculcation to Situational Empowerment

In terms of content design, typical accounts pay attention to "knowledge situationalization" and "expression popularization": first, transform abstract knowledge into concrete scenes. For example, "Wuqiong Xiaoliang's Popular Science Daily" explains natural science knowledge through scenes such as physical display, experimental demonstration, and field investigation, reducing the cognitive threshold; second, make good use of popular cultural elements. For example, "Craftsman School" combines automobile modification knowledge with youth culture and national tide elements to enhance the attractiveness of content; third, strengthen the practicality of knowledge. All selected accounts focus on users' actual needs. Whether it is subject knowledge, professional skills, or life skills, they emphasize "learning for immediate use" to improve users' learning motivation.

4.3. Interaction Methods: From One-way Communication to Participatory Co-creation

Interactivity stands as the core benefit of short - video communication. The interactive telling strategies of well - known accounts chiefly involve: First, it is guiding interaction. It rouses users' enthusiasm for taking part through asking questions, having topic discussions, giving out homework tasks and so on. For example, "Yishu" arranges "after - class practice" at the video's end and replies to questions in the comment section. Second, it is co - creating interaction. It urges users to do secondary creation, share content and exchange experiences. For example, "Food Writer Wang Gang" starts the topic "Learning to Cook with Wang Gang" to draw users to share practical outcomes. Third, it is feedback interaction. It improves content creation by looking into users' comments and suggestions. For example, "Wuqiong Xiaoliang's Popular Science Daily" makes popular science videos aimed at users' questions, creating a closed loop of "user requirements - content creation - feedback improvement".

5. Strategy Suggestions

5.1. Strengthen Storytelling Expression to Enhance Emotional Resonance

Storytelling narrative is the core strategy to improve the communication effect of educational short videos. First, excavate high-quality narrative materials, combine subject knowledge with historical stories, real cases, and life scenes. For example, integrate physical knowledge into aerospace engineering cases, and integrate moral education into good people and good deeds around; second, construct a complete narrative chain, focusing on the attractiveness of the beginning , the logic of development, and the inspiration of the ending ; third, strengthen emotional rendering. Narrow the psychological distance with users through detailed descriptions, emotional expressions, and value resonance. For example, red education short videos can highlight the family feelings of revolutionary martyrs, and vocational education short videos can show the craftsmanship of practitioners.

5.2. Optimize Conflict Point Design to Enhance Content Tension

Conflict - causing points are the key things to keep users' attention. Educational short - form videos can create conflicts in three manners: First, conflicts of cognition. Show knowledge or phenomena that go against users' existing knowledge to arouse the urge to explore, for example, "ordinary items that appear safe actually have hidden perils" in popular science videos. Second, conflicts of problems. Concentrate on the difficulties and troublesome points that users generally encounter in the learning process, like "discrimination of error - likely questions" and "misunderstandings of learning methods" in subject - based education. Third, conflicts of situations. Build up contradictory scenarios, such as "application of skills in urgent situations" and "resolving problems with limited resources". By means of reasonable design of conflict - causing points, the interest of users in watching and the depth of memory of the content can be effectively increased.

5.3. Promote User-participatory Narrative to Build a Communication Community

User can participate, which is a way of significance to enhance the effect of communication and exert influence. First, it can build a platform for participation. It can encourage users to engage in content creation and communication via topic challenges, content solicitation, online Q&A and so on. For instance, it can initiate a solicitation activity named "My Learning Tips" to invite users to share their experiences. Second, it can grant users the rights of narrative. It can support users to conduct secondary creation, personalized interpretation and communication of educational content, thus forming a communication matrix of multi - dimensions. Third, it can set up a mechanism of feedback. It can respond to users' questions and suggestions in a prompt way, integrate users' needs into content optimization, and construct a community of collaborative communication between "creators" and "users".

5.4. Innovate Multi-modal Presentation to Strengthen Sensory Experience

Multi - modal narrative has the ability to make the expression form of content more abundant and make the communication effect better. First of all, it is to carry out the integration of audio - visual symbols. Make full use of a variety of elements like dynamic images, animation demonstrations, background music, and narration to achieve the three - dimensional showing of knowledge. For instance, use animation for the purpose of showing the derivation process of mathematical formulas and use real - scene shooting to present experimental phenomena. Secondly, it is to make innovations on presentation forms. Combine new forms including VR/AR technology, interactive videos, and live connections to increase the immersion and interactivity. For example, restore historical scenes by means of VR technology so as to let users "personally feel history" and learn historical knowledge. Thirdly, it is to make

optimizations on visual design. Pay attention to the scientific nature of picture composition, color matching, and subtitle typesetting to enhance the visual appeal and readability of content.

6. Conclusion

Short video platforms have provided a new path for educational communication. Their fragmented, interactive, and mass communication characteristics are in line with the personalized, inclusive, and situational needs of contemporary education, promoting a profound transformation of educational communication forms.

By optimizing strategies such as storytelling expression, conflict point design, user-participatory narrative, and multi-modal presentation, the current problems of educational short videos such as homogenization, boring expression, and superficial interaction can be effectively solved, realizing the organic unity of knowledge transmission and value leading. However, this study still has certain limitations. For example, the selection of empirical research objects may have certain subjectivity, and the research on the differential impact of different types of educational content on narrative strategies needs to be deepened.

In the future, relevant research can further expand the scope of research objects, explore the narrative strategy differences of different types of educational content , and study the impact of algorithm recommendation mechanisms on narrative effects. It can also strengthen empirical research methods, use big data analysis, questionnaire surveys, etc. to quantify the effect of narrative strategies, and provide more targeted theoretical support and practical guidance for the high-quality development of educational short videos.

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