

The Effect of Explanatory Framing on Evaluations of Culturally-Mixed Products: The Moderating Effects of Comparative Focus and Explanatory Strategy (Post-print)

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Abstract

Culturally-mixed products, which involve the simultaneous presentation of cultural symbols from different countries, may threaten the integrity and vitality of the home culture, triggering perceptions of foreign cultural invasion and consequently reducing consumer product evaluations. From a marketing communication perspective on culturally-mixed products and building upon prior research, this study investigates how the adoption of different information framing strategies influences consumers' perceived cultural invasion and their evaluations of culturally-mixed products, with particular emphasis on two potential boundary conditions: consumers' comparison focus and firms' explanation strategies. The results of two experiments not only replicate previous findings—that when culturally-mixed products employ a “foreign culture-home culture” framing strategy, consumers perceive that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, resulting in significantly lower product evaluations compared to a “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy, with perceived cultural invasion serving as a full mediator—but more importantly, reveal that this differential cultural mixing framing effect exists only when consumers' difference focus is primed and firms utilize an attribute explanation strategy. When consumers' similarity focus is primed and firms adopt a relational explanation strategy, this effect disappears. This study not only provides an in-depth analysis of the underlying mechanism that triggers consumers' aversive reactions to cultural mixing phenomena, thereby extending the generalizability of prior research conclusions, but also offers valuable practical implications for the marketing promotion of culturally-mixed products.

Full Text

The Influence of Interpretation Frame on the Evaluation of Culturally Mixed Products: The Moderating Effects of Comparison Focus and Interpretation Strategy

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Abstract

Culturally mixed products, which involve the simultaneous presentation of cultural symbols from different countries, may threaten the integrity and vitality of the home culture, evoke perceptions of foreign cultural invasion, and consequently reduce consumer product evaluations. From the perspective of marketing communication for culturally mixed products and building upon previous research, this study examines how different information framing strategies influence consumers' perceptions of cultural intrusion and subsequently their evaluations of culturally mixed products, with a particular focus on two potential boundary conditions: consumers' comparison focus and firms' different interpretation strategies. The results of two experiments not only replicate previous findings—that culturally mixed products employing a “foreign culture-home culture” framing strategy lead consumers to perceive that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, resulting in significantly lower product evaluations compared to a “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy, with perceived cultural intrusion serving as a complete mediator—but also reveal that these differential cultural mixing framing effects exist only when consumers' difference-focused mindset is activated and firms employ a property interpretation strategy; the effects disappear when consumers' similarity-focused mindset is activated and firms adopt a relational interpretation strategy. This research not only provides an in-depth analysis of the underlying mechanism triggering consumers' exclusionary reactions to cultural mixing phenomena and extends the generalizability of previous findings, but also offers valuable practical insights for the marketing and promotion of culturally mixed products.

Keywords: culturally mixed products; cultural mixing; framing strategy; comparison focus; interpretation strategy

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1.1 Problem Statement

With the development of globalization, it is no exaggeration to say that even without leaving our country, we can enjoy products and services from around the world, and experience different customs, traditions, and cultures from var-

ious nations without stepping outside our homes. In a globalized society, we often find that symbolic representations from different cultural traditions appear simultaneously in the same location or on the same product. Culturally mixed products are those in which cultural symbols from two or more countries are presented together (Cui, Xu, Wang, Qualls, & Hu, 2016), such as Beijing duck pizza, Starbucks mooncakes, and rice burgers. For such culturally mixed products, some may seem refreshingly creative, while others may evoke 反感 or even disgust among consumers. Interestingly, even when confronted with the same culturally mixed product, people may exhibit diametrically opposite reactions. For instance, regarding DreamWorks' film *Kung Fu Panda*, those who like it view it as a Chinese panda telling an American story, while those who dislike it see it as a Chinese panda telling an American story.

What factors, then, moderate consumers' reactions to culturally mixed products? A review of existing research on cultural mixing reveals that scholars have primarily examined factors such as the involvement of in-group cultural symbols (Cheng, Leung, & Wu, 2011; Cheon, Christopolous, & Hong, 2016), the degree of mixing between cultural symbols (Chiu, Mallorie, Keh, & Law, 2009; Yang, Chen, Xu, Preston, & Chiu, 2016), the level of cultural symbolism (Yang et al., 2016), and the power dynamics between cultures (Cheng, 2010), as well as individual consumer characteristics such as cultural identity (Morris, Mok, & Mor, 2011; Shi, Shi, Luo, & Cui, 2016), need for cognition (Torelli, Chiu, Tam, Au, & Keh, 2011; Keersmaecker, van Assche, & Roets, 2016), and mortality salience (Torelli et al., 2011). However, few studies have examined how to improve consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products from the perspective of corporate marketing communication, despite the fact that consumer product evaluations are influenced not only by product and consumer factors, but also by marketing communication factors (Homer & Yoon, 1992). Currently, only Cui et al. (2016) have investigated how different product information framing strategies in the marketing communication of culturally mixed products affect consumer evaluations.

Drawing on research in psycholinguistics and marketing regarding hybrid products, Cui et al. (2016) defined two types of cultural mixing frames: "foreign culture-home culture," where the foreign culture serves as the modifier category and the home culture as the head category, and "home culture-foreign culture," where the home culture serves as the modifier and the foreign culture as the head. According to Rajagopal and Burnkrant (2009), for hybrid products labeled as conceptual combinations (i.e., "noun-noun"), when the modifier category differs significantly from the head category, the modifier cannot be easily assimilated into the head, and the head is perceived as being transformed by the modifier into a subcategory. Because the simultaneous presentation of two cultures expands the perceived differences between them (Chiu et al., 2009), different conceptual combination labels for culturally mixed products trigger perceptions that the foreign culture (or home culture) has altered the home culture (or foreign culture). Due to the introspection illusion (Pronin, Kruger, Savtisky, & Ross, 2001), when consumers perceive that the foreign culture has altered the

home culture, they are more likely to engage in “external attribution,” triggering cultural protection motives and reducing evaluations of culturally mixed products. Conversely, when they perceive that the home culture has altered the foreign culture, they are more likely to engage in “internal attribution,” evoking cultural learning motives and increasing product evaluations. Therefore, when employing a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy (i.e., a Chinese panda telling an American story), consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products are significantly lower than when using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy (i.e., a Chinese panda telling an American story).

However, the underlying mechanism of these differential cultural mixing framing effects and their potential boundary conditions have not been thoroughly examined, and it remains unclear under what circumstances these effects may be strengthened or weakened. This study aims to address these questions. Existing research suggests that protecting cultural purity is a human instinct (Kashima, Halloran, Yuki, & Kashima, 2004). When home culture symbols are mixed with markedly different foreign culture symbols, if consumers perceive that the foreign culture may contaminate or alter the home culture, threatening its integrity and vitality, this triggers perceptions of cultural intrusion (Chiu, Gries, Torelli, & Cheng, 2011). This implies that the existence of differential cultural mixing framing effects proposed by Cui et al. (2016) must satisfy two conditions: first, consumers must perceive significant differences between the mixed home and foreign culture symbols; second, they must perceive that the foreign culture may contaminate or alter the home culture. Accordingly, we propose two moderating variables: consumer comparison focus—whether consumers’ attention is focused on differences or similarities between the mixed cultural symbols, which affects the degree of perceived difference between home and foreign culture symbols—and enterprise interpretation strategy—whether firms employ property or relational interpretations of culturally mixed frames, which affects the degree to which consumers perceive that the foreign culture has altered the home culture. In summary, this study adopts a marketing communication perspective and framing theory to examine how different cultural mixing framing strategies influence evaluations of culturally mixed products, with a particular focus on testing the moderating effects of consumer comparison focus and enterprise interpretation strategy.

1.2.1 The Moderating Role of Consumer Comparison Focus

According to Rajagopal and Burnkrant (2009), for culturally mixed products using “foreign culture–home culture” or “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategies, consumers only perceive that the foreign culture (or home culture) has altered the home culture (or foreign culture) when they perceive significant differences between the mixed foreign and home cultures. Existing research has shown that exposure to cultural mixing prompts individuals to focus on cultural differences, thereby expanding perceived cultural differences (Torelli et al., 2011; Li, Kreuzbauer, & Chiu, 2013). Comparison focus can lead in-

dividuals to attend more to either the differences or similarities between two cultures, thereby enhancing perceived cultural differences or similarities (Peng & Xie, 2016). Mussweiler and Damisch (2008) note that when a similarity focus is activated, individuals pay more attention to similarities between the comparison target (e.g., foreign culture) and the standard (e.g., home culture), whereas when a difference focus is activated, they attend more to differences. Research by Cheng and Leung (2012) and Peng and Xie (2016) found that prompting individuals to focus on similarities between two cultures reduces perceived cultural differences, while activating a difference focus increases perceived cultural differences.

Based on this, we infer that when a difference focus is activated, using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy enhances the perception that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, triggering concerns about cultural intrusion and reducing evaluations of culturally mixed products. Conversely, using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy evokes the perception that the home culture has influenced the foreign culture, thereby increasing product evaluations. However, when a similarity focus is activated, the perceived difference between foreign and home cultures decreases. Consequently, using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy weakens the perception that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, leading to higher product evaluations, while using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy also reduces the perception that the home culture has influenced the foreign culture, thereby decreasing product evaluations.

H1: When consumers’ difference focus is activated, their evaluation of culturally mixed products using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy will be significantly higher than when using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy.

H2: When consumers’ similarity focus is activated, there will be no significant difference in their evaluations of culturally mixed products between the “home culture–foreign culture” and “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategies.

H3: Perceived cultural intrusion mediates the interactive effect of bicultural framing strategy and consumer comparison focus on evaluations of culturally mixed products.

1.2.2 The Moderating Role of Enterprise Interpretation Strategy

Existing research has found that for the same “noun–noun” conceptual combination, different interpretation strategies affect the degree to which the combination is subcategorized. Wisniewski (1996, 1998) identified two distinct interpretation strategies for conceptual combinations: property interpretation, which maps one or more attributes of the modifier category onto the head category in some manner, and relational interpretation, which emphasizes a thematic relationship between the referents of the modifier and head categories. Rajagopal

and Burnkrant (2009) found that for the same conceptual combination, when property interpretation is used, the head category is perceived as having acquired certain attributes or features of the modifier category, making it more likely that individuals perceive the modifier as having altered the head and thus subcategorize the conceptual combination. In contrast, when relational interpretation is used, which merely attempts to connect the modifier and head categories through some intrinsic relationship without transferring relevant attributes from the modifier to the head, individuals are less likely to perceive that the modifier has altered the head and therefore less likely to subcategorize the combination. Additionally, Sujan and Bettman (1989) note that when a product is perceived as having attributes inconsistent with its product category, it is subcategorized—that is, transformed by the category-inconsistent attributes into a unique category member.

Based on this, we infer that when a property interpretation strategy is employed, using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy causes the home culture to acquire certain features of the foreign culture, making individuals more likely to perceive that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, thereby triggering concerns about cultural intrusion and reducing evaluations of culturally mixed products. Conversely, using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy causes the foreign culture to acquire certain features of the home culture, making individuals more likely to perceive that the home culture has influenced the foreign culture, thereby increasing product evaluations. When a relational interpretation strategy is employed, using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy reduces the perception that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, thereby weakening consumers’ concerns about cultural intrusion and increasing product evaluations, while using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy weakens the perception that the home culture has influenced the foreign culture, thereby reducing product evaluations.

H4: When property interpretation is used, consumers’ evaluation of culturally mixed products using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy will be significantly higher than when using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy.

H5: When relational interpretation is used, there will be no significant difference in consumers’ evaluations of culturally mixed products between the “home culture–foreign culture” and “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategies.

H6: Perceived cultural intrusion mediates the interactive effect of bicultural framing strategy and enterprise interpretation strategy on evaluations of culturally mixed products.

This paper will test the proposed hypotheses through two experiments. Experiment 1 aims to replicate the cultural mixing framing effect and examine the moderating role of consumer comparison focus, while Experiment 2 tests the moderating effect of enterprise interpretation strategy.

Experiment 1

Experiment 1 had two primary objectives: first, to replicate the effect of different cultural mixing framing strategies on consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products and the mediating role of perceived cultural intrusion; second, to verify the moderating role of consumer comparison focus on the cultural mixing framing effect. We predicted that when a difference focus is activated, consumer evaluations of products using a “home culture–foreign culture” framing strategy would be significantly higher than those using a “foreign culture–home culture” framing strategy, whereas when a similarity focus is activated, no significant difference would emerge between the two framing strategies.

2.1 Experimental Design and Participants

We recruited 279 undergraduate students (134 male, 145 female; mean age = 19.80 years) from a university in Hubei Province to participate in the experiment, randomly assigning them to one of six conditions in a 2 (bicultural framing strategy: foreign culture–home culture vs. home culture–foreign culture) \times 3 (consumer comparison focus: similarity focus vs. difference focus vs. control group) between-subjects design.

2.2 Procedure and Stimuli

Participants were invited to take part in a survey titled “College Students’ Cognitive Comprehension Ability and Product Attitudes,” which they were told consisted of two unrelated smaller studies conducted together for efficiency. They were instructed to carefully view and read the materials before answering subsequent questions. First, participants encountered a study called “Observation and Comprehension,” which served to manipulate comparison focus. The second study, titled “New Product Survey,” assessed participants’ evaluations of a new product designed by an American company entering the Chinese market.

In the “Observation and Comprehension” task, we adopted the manipulation method from Mussweiler and Damisch (2008) by having participants carefully examine two scene images presented on the same page. In the difference comparison condition, participants were asked to compare the two images and write down all the differences between them, whereas in the similarity comparison condition, they wrote down all the similarities. After completing this comparison task, we measured comparison focus as a manipulation check by asking participants to rate how similar they perceived four pairs of objects (whales and dolphins, white wine and red wine, bicycles and motorcycles, peaches and nectarines) to be on a 7-point scale (1 = very different, 7 = very similar) (Mussweiler & Damisch, 2008). In the control condition, participants simply viewed the two scene images without any comparison manipulation and directly rated the perceived similarity of the four object pairs.

For the culturally mixed product stimulus, we used a combination of hamburger (American cultural symbol) and mooncake (Chinese cultural symbol), manipu-

lating the framing strategy through product names and descriptions. In the “foreign culture–home culture” framing condition, participants saw an image of a new product titled “Hamburger Mooncake,” accompanied by the description: “Hamburger mooncake is a mooncake made in the shape of a hamburger,” following Rajagopal and Burnkrant’s (2009) conceptual combination priming method. In the “home culture–foreign culture” framing condition, participants saw the same product image, but with the title “Mooncake Hamburger” and the description: “Mooncake hamburger is a hamburger made using mooncake.”

We then measured participants’ evaluations of the culturally mixed product using a three-item, 9-point semantic differential scale (good–bad, popular–unpopular, liked–disliked; ranging from –4 to 4) developed by Shavitt, Swan, Lowrey, and Wänke (1994). To capture the degree to which participants perceived their home culture as being invaded by the foreign culture, we adapted Cheng’s (2010) cultural intrusion scale, measuring perceived cultural intrusion with two items on a 7-point scale: “This new product represents an erosion of Chinese tradition by American culture” and “This new product signifies an invasion of Chinese culture by American culture” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). As a manipulation check for cultural symbolism, we used Wan, Torelli, and Chiu’s (2010) scale, measuring the extent to which participants perceived the cultural symbols in the product as representing home or foreign culture through four items (e.g., “Mooncake/hamburger involves Chinese/American culture”) on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Since prior research has shown that consumers’ cultural identity (Shi et al., 2016) and perceived creativity of culturally mixed products (Peng & Xie, 2016) affect product evaluations, we measured participants’ cultural identity levels and perceived creativity. Specifically, we used Wan et al.’s (2007) cultural identity scale, including all five items for Chinese cultural identity but retaining only three items for American cultural identity (excluding “Being an [American] is important to me” and “Being an [American] makes me proud”) because all participants were Chinese (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). For perceived creativity, we used Peng and Xie’s (2016) two-item, 7-point scale: “This product is very creative” and “This product is very novel to me” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Finally, we collected demographic information on participants’ gender and age.

2.3 Results

Reliability Analysis and Manipulation Checks. Analysis of data from the 279 participants revealed that Cronbach’s α for the product evaluation, perceived cultural intrusion, home/foreign cultural symbolism, home cultural identity, and creativity evaluation scales were 0.92, 0.91, 0.82, 0.89, 0.92, and 0.85, respectively. The foreign cultural identity scale achieved $\alpha = 0.85$ after removing the item “I belong to American culture.” All values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating good reliability for all seven scales. For the comparison focus manipulation check, we averaged participants’ ratings of

the four object pairs to create a perceived similarity score, with higher scores indicating greater perceived similarity. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of comparison focus ($F(2,276) = 26.09, p < 0.001$). Specifically, participants in the similarity focus condition reported significantly higher perceived similarity ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.15$) than those in the difference focus condition ($M = 2.72, SD = 1.13, t(183) = 7.26, p < 0.001, Cohen's d = 1.07$) and the control group ($M = 3.26, SD = 1.16, t(184) = 3.99, p < 0.001, Cohen's d = 0.59$). These results indicate successful manipulation of comparison focus.

Product Evaluation. To test the moderating effect of consumer comparison focus, we conducted a 2 (bicultural framing strategy) \times 3 (consumer comparison focus) ANOVA, which revealed a significant main effect of bicultural framing strategy ($F(1,273) = 24.08, p < 0.001$) and a significant interaction between bicultural framing strategy and comparison focus ($F(2,273) = 7.19, p < 0.01$) [Figure 1: see original paper].

In the control condition, when the culturally mixed product used a “foreign culture-home culture” framing strategy (“Hamburger Mooncake”), participants evaluated the product significantly less favorably than when it used a “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy (“Mooncake Hamburger”) (M Mooncake Hamburger = 5.52, $SD = 1.60$ vs. M Hamburger Mooncake = 4.09, $SD = 1.59, t(92) = 4.37, p < 0.001, Cohen's d = 0.91$), consistent with previous research. When participants’ difference focus was activated, product evaluations were again significantly lower for the “foreign culture-home culture” framing than for the “home culture-foreign culture” framing (M Mooncake Hamburger = 5.45, $SD = 1.64$ vs. M Hamburger Mooncake = 3.97, $SD = 1.61, t(91) = 4.39, p < 0.001, Cohen's d = 0.92$). However, when similarity focus was activated, no significant difference emerged between the two framing strategies (M Mooncake Hamburger = 4.71, $SD = 1.61$ vs. M Hamburger Mooncake = 4.80, $SD = 1.57, t(90) = -0.27, p = 0.78$). Thus, H1 and H2 were supported.

Mediating Effect of Perceived Cultural Intrusion. To verify that perceived cultural intrusion mediates the effect of bicultural framing strategy on evaluations of culturally mixed products, we conducted a Bootstrap mediation test using Process 213. The results indicated that, at the 95% confidence level, the mediation effect was significant and did not include zero ($LLCI = -0.94, ULCI = -0.40$), with a mediation effect size of -0.67 [Figure 2: see original paper]. Therefore, perceived cultural intrusion fully mediates the effect of bicultural framing strategy on evaluations of culturally mixed products.

To test whether the moderating effect of consumer comparison focus on the relationship between bicultural framing strategy and product evaluation is mediated by perceived cultural intrusion, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis. The results showed that, at the 95% confidence level, perceived cultural intrusion indeed mediated the interactive effect of bicultural framing strategy and consumer comparison focus on product evaluation, with a moderated mediation effect size of -0.73 that did not include zero ($LLCI = -1.03, ULCI = -0.46$) [Figure 3: see original paper]. Specifically, when participants’ difference focus

was activated, the mediating effect of perceived cultural intrusion was significant (effect size = -0.66, Bootstrap CI = (-0.94, -0.41), excluding zero). When similarity focus was activated, perceived cultural intrusion showed no mediating effect (CI = (-0.38, 0.24), including zero). Thus, H3 was supported.

We also ruled out several alternative explanations that could confound the mediating effect. It is possible that different bicultural framing strategies lead to different perceptions of product creativity. We conducted an independent samples t-test to exclude this alternative explanation, finding no significant difference in creativity perceptions between framing conditions ($t = 0.44$, $p = 0.67$). Additionally, independent samples t-tests revealed that participants' identification with Chinese culture ($t = -1.53$, $p = 0.13$) and American culture ($t = 0.10$, $p = 0.92$) could not explain their evaluations of culturally mixed products.

This study replicates Cui et al.'s (2016) findings that culturally mixed products using a "home culture-foreign culture" framing strategy receive significantly higher evaluations than those using a "foreign culture-home culture" framing strategy, with perceived cultural intrusion serving as a complete mediator. More importantly, the study reveals that this main effect exists only when consumers' attention is focused on differences rather than similarities between the two mixed cultural symbols. Furthermore, consumers must perceive that the foreign culture (or home culture) has altered the home culture (or foreign culture). According to Rajagopal and Burnkrant (2009), for the same conceptual combination, property interpretation strategies are more likely to trigger perceptions of "change," whereas relational interpretation strategies are less likely to do so. Therefore, we next examine the moderating role of enterprise interpretation strategy.

Experiment 2

The primary purpose of Experiment 2 was to verify the moderating effect of enterprise interpretation strategy. We predicted that when property interpretation is used, consumer evaluations of products using a "home culture-foreign culture" framing strategy would be significantly higher than those using a "foreign culture-home culture" framing strategy, whereas when relational interpretation is used, no significant difference would emerge between the two framing strategies. Because the mooncake and hamburger stimuli used in Experiment 1 represented a mix of symbolic (mooncake) and material (hamburger) cultural symbols, Experiment 2 used a combination of two symbolic cultural symbols—paper-cutting and Mickey Mouse—to enhance the generalizability of our findings, following Cui et al. (2016).

3.1 Experimental Design and Participants

We recruited 177 undergraduate students (91 male, 86 female; mean age = 20.25 years) from a university in Hubei Province and randomly assigned them to one of four conditions in a 2 (bicultural framing strategy: foreign culture-

home culture vs. home culture–foreign culture) \times 2 (enterprise interpretation strategy: property interpretation vs. relational interpretation) between-subjects design.

3.2 Procedure and Stimuli

Participants were invited to participate in a “College Student Product Attitude Survey,” in which they evaluated a new product designed by an American company entering the Chinese market. The culturally mixed product combined Mickey Mouse (American culture) and paper-cutting (Chinese culture). Framing strategy manipulation followed Experiment 1: the “foreign culture–home culture” condition used “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting,” while the “home culture–foreign culture” condition used “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse.”

For interpretation strategy manipulation, in the property interpretation condition, “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting” was described as “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting is a paper-cutting that incorporates features of Mickey Mouse,” and “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse” was described as “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse is a Mickey Mouse that incorporates features of paper-cutting.” In the relational interpretation condition, “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting” was described as “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting is a paper-cutting cut into the shape of Mickey Mouse,” and “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse” was described as “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse is a Mickey Mouse made using paper-cutting methods.”

We conducted a pretest to confirm the success of these interpretation strategy manipulations. Specifically, we first explained the concepts of property and relational interpretations with examples, then asked participants to evaluate whether the four product descriptions leaned toward property or relational interpretation (1 = definitely property interpretation, 7 = definitely relational interpretation). The pretest included 145 undergraduate students (71 male, 74 female; mean age = 20.54 years), with approximately 35 participants per group. Results showed that “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting is a paper-cutting that incorporates features of Mickey Mouse” was significantly more property-oriented than “Mickey Mouse paper-cutting is a paper-cutting cut into the shape of Mickey Mouse” (M former = 2.39, SD = 1.73 vs. M latter = 5.03, SD = 1.82, $t(71) = -6.35$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen’s $d = -1.51$). Similarly, “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse is a Mickey Mouse that incorporates features of paper-cutting” was more property-oriented than “Paper-cut Mickey Mouse is a Mickey Mouse made using paper-cutting methods” (M former = 2.46, SD = 1.70 vs. M latter = 5.22, SD = 1.77, $t(70) = -6.74$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen’s $d = -1.61$).

Subsequent procedures followed Experiment 1, measuring participants’ evaluations of the culturally mixed product, perceived cultural intrusion, and cultural symbolism levels, followed by collection of demographic information (gender and age).

3.3 Results

Reliability Analysis. Analysis of data from the 177 participants revealed Cronbach's α values of 0.96, 0.93, 0.86, and 0.90 for the product evaluation, perceived cultural intrusion, home cultural symbolism, and foreign cultural symbolism scales, respectively, all exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70 and indicating good reliability.

Product Evaluation. To test the moderating effect of enterprise interpretation strategy, we conducted a 2 (bicultural framing strategy) \times 2 (enterprise interpretation strategy) ANOVA, which again revealed a main effect of bicultural framing strategy ($F(1,173) = 9.54, p < 0.01$) and a significant interaction between bicultural framing strategy and interpretation strategy ($F(1,173) = 8.81, p < 0.01$) [Figure 4: see original paper].

As shown in Figure 4, when property interpretation was used, participants evaluated "Mickey Mouse paper-cutting" (foreign culture-home culture) significantly less favorably than "Paper-cut Mickey Mouse" (home culture-foreign culture) (M Paper-cut Mickey Mouse = 6.63, SD = 1.78, vs. M Mickey Mouse paper-cutting = 4.96, SD = 1.81, $t(84) = 4.28, p < 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 0.93$). However, when relational interpretation was used, no significant difference emerged between the two framing strategies (M Paper-cut Mickey Mouse = 5.80, SD = 1.83, vs. M Mickey Mouse paper-cutting = 5.77, SD = 1.85, $t(89) = 0.09, p = 0.93$). Thus, H4 and H5 were supported.

Mediating Effect of Perceived Cultural Intrusion. To test whether the moderating effect of interpretation strategy on the relationship between bicultural framing strategy and product evaluation is mediated by perceived cultural intrusion, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis. Results showed that, at the 95% confidence level, perceived cultural intrusion indeed mediated the interactive effect of bicultural framing strategy and interpretation strategy on product evaluation, with a moderated mediation effect size of 1.10 that did not include zero (LLCI = 0.33, ULCI = 1.94) [Figure 5: see original paper]. Specifically, when property interpretation was used, the mediating effect of perceived cultural intrusion was significant (effect size = -1.18, Bootstrap CI = (-1.73, -0.66), excluding zero). When relational interpretation was used, perceived cultural intrusion showed no mediating effect (CI = (-0.69, 0.54), including zero). Thus, H6 was supported.

This study demonstrates that even when consumers focus on differences between mixed cultural symbols and different cultural mixing framing strategies are used, if inappropriate interpretation strategies fail to trigger perceptions of "change"—that is, if relational rather than property interpretation is used—consumers will not develop perceptions of cultural intrusion or cultural learning, and the differential cultural mixing framing effects will not emerge. In other words, the existence of differential cultural mixing framing effects requires two conditions: first, consumers must focus on differences rather than similarities between the mixed cultural symbols; second, property rather than relational interpretation

strategies must be used to explain the cultural mixing frames.

4.1 Research Conclusions

This study examined the influence of different cultural mixing framing strategies on consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products and its underlying mechanism, and explored two boundary conditions for this main effect: the moderating roles of consumer comparison focus and enterprise interpretation strategy. The findings indicate that for the same culturally mixed product, evaluations are higher when using a “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy than when using a “foreign culture-home culture” framing strategy. This occurs because the “home culture-foreign culture” framing evokes the perception that the home culture has altered the foreign culture, which consumers interpret as motivated by cultural exchange and learning, thereby increasing product evaluations. In contrast, the “foreign culture-home culture” framing evokes the perception that the foreign culture has altered the home culture, which consumers interpret as motivated by cultural invasion, thereby reducing product evaluations. Perceived cultural intrusion serves as a complete mediator, replicating Cui et al.’s (2016) findings.

More importantly, this study identifies two boundary conditions for these differential cultural mixing framing effects. First, consumers must focus on differences rather than similarities between the mixed cultural symbols. Only when home and foreign cultures are perceived as distinctly different (i.e., when difference focus is activated) do different cultural mixing framing strategies evoke perceptions that the foreign culture (or home culture) has altered the home culture (or foreign culture). When foreign and home cultures are perceived as similar (i.e., when similarity focus is activated), different framing strategies are less likely to produce such perceptions of change. Second, property rather than relational interpretation must be used for different cultural mixing framing strategies. Even when consumers notice significant differences between mixed cultural symbols, if they do not perceive that the home culture (or foreign culture) has altered the foreign culture (or home culture), the differential cultural mixing framing effects will not emerge. Only when property interpretation is used—emphasizing that the foreign culture (or home culture) has transferred one or more attributes to the home culture (or foreign culture)—will consumers perceive that the home culture (or foreign culture) has altered the foreign culture (or home culture). When relational interpretation is used—emphasizing a thematic relationship between home and foreign cultures—such perceptions of change are less likely to occur.

4.2 Theoretical Contributions

From the perspective of enterprise marketing communication and employing framing theory, this study explores the influence of different cultural mixing framing strategies on consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products, offer-

ing several theoretical contributions to the literature on cultural mixing and globalization.

First, this study expands cultural mixing research by adopting a marketing communication perspective. Existing research has primarily examined cultural mixing from the perspectives of product design features (e.g., Yang et al., 2016; Chiu et al., 2009; Cheon et al., 2016) and individual consumer characteristics (e.g., Leung & Chiu, 2010; Fu, Zhang, Li, & Leung, 2016; Torelli et al., 2011; Keh, Torelli, Chiu, & Hao, 2016). However, consumer product evaluations are influenced not only by product and consumer factors but also by marketing communication factors (Homer & Yoon, 1992). This study analyzes how different cultural mixing framing strategies affect consumer evaluations, providing a more comprehensive and multifaceted perspective that extends existing cultural mixing research.

Second, this study enriches globalization research by revealing the underlying mechanism through which foreign cultural inflow triggers consumers' exclusionary reactions. Previous research on cultural exclusion and mixing has suggested that individuals' exclusionary reactions to foreign cultural inflow or mixing require two conditions: foreign cultural symbols must be perceived as representative of a foreign culture, and the foreign culture must be perceived as threatening or eroding the integrity and vitality of the local culture (Yang et al., 2016; Shi et al., 2016). However, the conditions under which consumers perceive foreign culture as threatening or eroding local culture remained unclear. This study provides an in-depth analysis of this mechanism, demonstrating that consumers perceive foreign cultural inflow as threatening or invasive primarily because they recognize significant differences between foreign and home cultures and then perceive that the foreign culture may "alter" the home culture—making its original features blurred, disappeared, or endowed with foreign cultural characteristics—thereby threatening or destroying the purity and integrity of the home culture and triggering perceptions of cultural intrusion that lead to exclusionary reactions.

Finally, this study establishes boundary conditions for differential cultural mixing framing effects, greatly extending the generalizability of previous findings. Prior research has shown that culturally mixed products using a "home culture-foreign culture" framing strategy receive higher evaluations than those using a "foreign culture-home culture" framing strategy (Cui et al., 2016). However, this study demonstrates that this conclusion is not universally valid; it holds true only when consumers' difference focus is activated and property interpretation strategies are used. According to Rajagopal and Burnkrant (2009), for culturally mixed products labeled as "foreign culture-home culture" or "home culture-foreign culture" conceptual combinations, only when consumers perceive significant differences between home and foreign cultures and property interpretation is used to emphasize the transfer of attributes from the foreign culture (or home culture) to the home culture (or foreign culture) will consumers perceive that the foreign culture (or home culture) has altered the home culture (or foreign

culture), thereby enhancing or weakening their perceptions of cultural intrusion. When similarity focus and relational interpretation are used, these effects disappear. This study thus identifies boundary conditions for previous conclusions and explores their contingencies.

4.3 Managerial Contributions

As globalization accelerates, culturally mixed products are becoming increasingly common, and a key challenge for enterprises is how to improve consumer acceptance of such products. This study offers practical insights for marketing culturally mixed products. First, when naming culturally mixed products, firms should adopt a “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy, using host country consumers’ home cultural symbols as the modifier and the firm’s home country cultural symbols as the head category. Second, not all culturally mixed products are suitable for the “home culture-foreign culture” framing strategy; some can only use the “foreign culture-home culture” framing. In such cases, firms can use advertising to encourage consumers to focus on similarities between foreign and home cultural symbols, thereby reducing perceptions that the foreign culture is altering the home culture. Finally, firms can also improve consumer evaluations of culturally mixed products using different framing strategies through varied product description approaches.

4.4 Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations that warrant further investigation. First, our conclusions were obtained in laboratory settings; whether they can be directly applied to real-world contexts or how they can be better implemented and generalized in practice requires further exploration. Second, the experimental stimuli were limited to “mooncake hamburger” and “paper-cut Mickey Mouse”; future research should test these findings with additional culturally mixed products to enhance generalizability. Third, this study focused on consumers’ subjective perceptions of cultural differences; future research could examine whether objective differences between cultures yield similar conclusions. Finally, Peng and Zhao (2015) proposed dividing culture into three domains: material, symbolic, and sacred, with acceptance of cultural mixing being highest in the material domain, moderate in the symbolic domain, and lowest in the sacred domain. This study used stimuli primarily from material and symbolic domains without involving the sacred domain; future research should verify whether current findings hold when sacred cultural symbols are mixed.

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