

A Preliminary Analysis of New Media Language Features and Post-Print Communication from the Perspective of Media Convergence

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Abstract

The advancement of science and technology inevitably precipitates innovations in media communication philosophy and paradigms. [Objective] This study aims to investigate the characteristics and communication mechanisms of new media language within the context of media convergence. By analyzing concrete examples of new media language dissemination, it proposes well-grounded recommendations and frameworks to serve as a reference for subsequent research. [Method] This paper employs a literature review methodology to dissect the features and communication models of new media language. [Result] The findings indicate that media convergence has engendered distinctive features and communication mechanisms in new media language. [Conclusion] In the context of burgeoning internet big data, the digitization of communication media has become ubiquitous within new media platforms, catalyzing the organic integration of new and traditional media. This convergence has precipitated the emergence of new media language, which exerts a profound influence on contemporary society.

Full Text

An Analysis of New Media Language Characteristics and Communication from the Perspective of Media Convergence

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Abstract

The development of science and technology inevitably brings innovation to media communication concepts and models. **[Objective]** This study examines the characteristics and communication of new media language from the perspective of media convergence, combining practical examples to propose reasonable suggestions and plans for future research. **[Method]** The article employs literature research methodology to analyze the characteristics and communication patterns of new media language. **[Result]** It argues that media convergence development has led to the formation of unique features and communication mechanisms in new media language. **[Conclusion]** Against the backdrop of internet and big data development, the digitization of communication media has become increasingly prevalent in new media, driving the organic integration of new and traditional media, giving rise to new media language, and exerting profound influence on real society.

Keywords: media convergence; new media language; language characteristics; language communication; technological innovation

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Introduction

The concept of “media convergence” was first coined by American computer scientist Nicholas Negroponte in 1978, who pointed out the possibility of convergence between computers and traditional print publishing, broadcasting, and film industries. Subsequently, in 1983, MIT’s Ithiel de Sola Pool argued in *Technologies of Freedom* that media convergence represents a trend toward the unification of different functional media. Pool believed that different media forms, through a process of “convergence of modes,” blur their original boundaries and produce a new media form, such as various social media platforms and online forums. Henry Jenkins further noted that technological advancement would drive the flow of media content across all platforms, thereby promoting cooperation among multiple media industries and influencing shifts in media audience behavior. As can be seen, media convergence represents a state where the internal boundaries of various elements of human communication activities become blurred, including technology, economy, subject, content, and regulation, emphasizing several fundamental characteristics of media convergence [?].

Thus, media convergence is a media development concept under the backdrop of

digitalization, representing the organic integration of deeply-rooted traditional media and rapidly-developing information technology, encompassing technological convergence, economic convergence, subject convergence, and content convergence. This article focuses on analyzing the impact of content convergence on new media language characteristics and communication [?]. Content-level convergence mainly includes: (1) the increasing integration of content produced by professional media practitioners and individual media users; (2) the innovative content that may arise from the combination of different forms, such as images, text, music, video, comics, and animation [?]. Therefore, traditional media must transform their new media language according to content convergence to attract media audiences, enhance information transmission efficiency, achieve effective communication, drive their own transformation and upgrading, and better respond to the impact and challenges brought by the new era [?].

1. Characteristics of New Media Language

1.1 Diversity

Due to the rapid development of modern society, new media language injects new vitality into traditional language, with faster transmission speed and broader reach, thus giving rise to the diversification of new media language and its expressive forms. The diversity of new media language is mainly manifested in three aspects. First, the diversity of language symbol styles. For example, expressions like “yyds,” “emo,” “蓝瘦香菇” (feeling terrible), “芝士雪豹” (cheetah), “1!5!” use letters, numbers, or homophones as elements of new media language and are often combined and used together. Second, the diversification of communication methods. New media language is based on text expression, supplemented by various forms such as emojis and voice messages. Third, the diversity of stylistic features. Generally speaking, traditional media news language requires conciseness, accuracy, objectivity, and standardization to ensure the authenticity of news reports. However, media convergence means that traditional media are no longer the sole platform, and to attract mass audiences, news language style must change accordingly. This is because an overly serious and formal language style is not conducive to information dissemination in a fast-paced social environment and may even widen the distance between information disseminators and audiences, creating communication barriers. Therefore, new media language also needs to be affirmative, flexible, and adaptable to enhance the power of news communication [?].

1.2 Innovativeness

New media language is characterized by innovativeness, as internet slang creates new expressions through various means to increase expressive forms. There are three main innovative forms in new media language: same form with different meaning, different form with same meaning, and same sound with different meaning. Same form with different meaning refers to the same expression content but in different forms. For instance, some expressions “modify” Chinese

language rules to a certain extent to emphasize certain meanings. For example, using the passive voice from English grammar to create expressions that do not conform to traditional Chinese grammar rules, such as “被相亲” (being match-made) and “被就业” (being employed), to indicate the unfortunate experiences or passive situations of the parties involved, equivalent to the expressive effect of passive sentences. Different form with same meaning refers to words deriving different meanings in new social contexts and language environments. For example, “躺平” (lying flat) originally meant a person lying down, completely relaxed, letting nature take its course, and doing nothing. However, in new media language, it represents a new lifestyle for young people with active thinking who are not constrained by tradition—that is, choosing to place themselves in a marginal position, showing a decentralized trend, and no longer being bound by mainstream social norms such as promotion, working overtime, buying houses, or marriage issues. It is a way for contemporary youth to cope with anxiety and carries a certain sense of resistance. Same sound with different meaning refers to words or phrases with the same or similar pronunciation but different actual meanings. For example, homophonic puns are typical of same sound with different meaning, where characters with the same or similar pronunciation as the original words are used as substitutes, sometimes accompanied by metaphorical concept projection. In the provincial mini-program section of the national government service platform, some provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities use homophonic puns in their platform names, such as Anhui Province’s “皖(万)事通”(Wan Everything Pass), Jilin Province’s “吉(及)时办”(Ji Timely Service), and Tianjin’s “津(尽)心办”(Jin Wholehearted Service), reflecting the concept of doing their best to provide convenient and efficient government services for the masses. It should be noted that although new media language is innovative and easily disseminated and used among young people, it lacks stability, not only causing a huge impact on traditional Chinese grammar and phonetic systems but also being limited by factors such as age and region.

1.3 Intimacy

Traditional media language emphasizes rigor and standardization, with serious and formal wording, whereas new media language style is generally free, humorous, and intimate, helping to narrow the distance between news authors and readers. In January 2017, the *Southern Metropolis Daily*’s AI writing robot “小南”(Little Nan) officially launched, and the texts written by the robot exhibit typical new media language features. For instance, “小”(small) and “大”(big) are a pair of antonyms used to describe the shape characteristics of things. However, in “小南”s news articles, “小编”(little editor) is an affectionate term for editors, while “编辑大大”(editor big-big) is an affectionate term that adds a sense of respect when addressing editors, thus bringing editors and readers closer together [?]. Additionally, print media news titles are divided into single-type titles and compound titles, with compound titles including lead titles, main titles, and subtitles, which are more common in actual news reporting. Therefore, title phrasing requires careful deliberation and consideration. New media titles

are relatively free and tolerant, allowing colloquial expressions and exclamation marks in titles without mandatory requirements for parallel sentence structures. The style can be plain and simple, or flexible and playful. However, this has also led to the emergence of “clickbait” and “fishing-style” titles [?], which can easily reduce the value of news reporting and damage credibility.

1.4 Conciseness and Economy

The principle of linguistic economy makes people hope that language expression can save time and effort. The development of new media language injects new vitality into traditional media language, with faster transmission speed and broader reach. Therefore, new media language is highly concise, even “avoiding” traditional language rules and grammar, abbreviating expressed content into simple words and innovating expression methods, which are more easily accepted by people, reflecting the principle of linguistic economy. The combination and integration of Chinese characters, English letters, symbols, numbers, and Chinese pinyin appear chaotic and irregular at first glance, but the superposition and fusion of various methods are more expressive than traditional language methods. The expression is simpler and more convenient, for example: 555 (the sound of crying “呜呜呜”), xswl (abbreviation for “笑死我了” - laughing to death), pyq (WeChat Moments), 寄 (indicating ending in failure or death), etc. These hot words become popular throughout the new media world in a very short time [?]. However, it should be pointed out that while new media language pursues conciseness, it also brings about language non-standardization issues that need to be properly addressed.

2. Communication of New Media Language

2.1 Diversification of Media Communication Forms

New media is developing toward diversification based on big data, and some niche media have already emerged. Traditional media has a narrow communication scope and a small audience base, while diversified media can expand the originally limited media audience and promote the communication of new media language. In the internet era, the rapid development of networks has catalyzed media diversification, and the communication of new media language is constantly updated and iterated, making communication methods more diversified [?]. For example, new media uses sound, images, and text to deepen the public’s impression of new media information and accelerate language communication speed.

2.2 Bidirectional Interactive Communication

Before the rise of new media, traditional news media held the discourse power of media reporting and only output information unilaterally, so readers passively received information, and news authors could not receive timely feedback from readers or interact and exchange information. With the development and

communication of new media, netizens have gained the possibility to directly dialogue and communicate with editors through internet platforms, greatly enhancing bilateral interactivity. The previous one-way “output-receive” model is gradually being replaced by a bidirectional interactive model. Since new media audiences are mostly young people with rich imagination and creativity, only by giving such groups sufficient expressive power and discourse rights to satisfy their spiritual pursuits can new media continuously create internet buzzwords [?]. Today, the boundary between the virtual world and the real world is becoming increasingly blurred. Young groups continuously use new media language to interact and communicate, and new media language can be rapidly disseminated, affecting social public opinion in the real world, which in turn changes the environment of young groups, forming a bidirectional interactive cycle.

2.3 Dominant Position Language Communication

Sociolinguistics holds that languages with low usage frequency are in a weak position with limited communication scope, while languages with high usage frequency and fast communication speed occupy a dominant position with broad communication scope. Due to its fast communication speed and high usage frequency, new media language is a relatively strong one among many social dialects. Therefore, new media language in a strong position expands faster, more easily attracts fresh forces to join, and effectively expresses the information being communicated. For example, in the cultural field, new media language appears in all aspects of content production, making it easier to see the above-mentioned new media language vocabulary compared to other industries, which can meet the needs of some people under the new era development, thus gaining recognition and communication, gradually forming a stable audience group that can accept its content, consolidating its dominant position, and presenting a “Matthew Effect.”

2.4 Impact of New Media Language

From the above discussion, new media language has diverse forms and broad channels, greatly enriching communication content in the internet era and enhancing interactive communication, making it efficient, convenient, yet witty and humorous. However, new media language is a double-edged sword. Its use inevitably brings negative impacts to the harmony of language life. For instance, it has led to the abuse of internet slang to a certain extent, particularly affecting primary and secondary school students who are easily influenced, which not only impacts their proficiency in the national common language and script but also hinders the establishment of correct values. Moreover, inappropriate use of new media language can create barriers and hinder its own communication [?]. Therefore, although the communication of new media language is gaining momentum, it must be regulated to guide people toward correct usage and create a harmonious media language environment.

3. Case Studies of New Media Language Communication

3.1 Characteristics of Danmaku Language Style: A Case Study of AcFun

“Danmaku” (barrage) was originally an artillery term referring to the dense firing of shells in combat that forms a huge curtain. After the rise of new media and internet video platforms, “danmaku” began to be applied to videos and was given new meaning. New media danmaku mainly refers to the phenomenon on new media platforms where netizens’ comments, like shells being fired, fly across the screen rapidly, visually forming a curtain composed of language that covers the entire video screen area [?]. AcFun, established in 2007, is a new media video platform whose content involves various fields such as music, games, and animation, and its danmaku function provides a platform for online communication among netizens.

New media danmaku language style can be roughly divided into two categories. One is danmaku language with mainstream cultural style, using standardized and popular language to express personal opinions or objective facts, with a very low understanding threshold for audiences. The other is danmaku language with subcultural style, which can only be understood by specific groups. The “subcultural group” here mainly refers to young people who frequently browse information on the internet and new media platforms and are keen on spreading internet language, such as using internet slang like “23333” and “hhhhh” to express the meaning of “laughing out loud” [?].

New media danmaku language style has extensive characteristics. Taking AcFun video danmaku as an example, the primary element constituting danmaku is Chinese characters, such as “前方高能” (high energy ahead) indicating that the video is about to enter its most exciting or impactful part, and “前方名场面” (famous scene ahead) indicating that a well-known plot is about to appear. Secondary elements constituting danmaku are numbers and letters, such as “666” indicating praise, “awsl” indicating excitement when facing something cute, and “emmm” indicating awkwardness at not knowing what to say. The final element constituting danmaku is emoticon symbols, such as “@_@” (dizzy and confused), “-_-b” (sweating, indicating embarrassment and speechlessness), and “T_T” (crying, indicating sadness).

Loanword transliteration is common in the vocabulary used in new media danmaku language. Foreign words are replaced with Chinese words with similar pronunciation, such as “nice,” which means “very good” in English and has a similar pronunciation to “奶思” (nai si) in Chinese, so “奶思” is often used in danmaku to express “very good.” In addition, Chinese words can also be transformed into foreign words with similar pronunciation, such as “word 妈” (word ma) expressing surprise and exclamation. Since “word” sounds similar to “我的” (wo de, meaning “my”), netizens use “word” to replace “我的,” and it has become popular in video danmaku.

Although new media danmaku language has enriched the communication content of subculture, current danmaku content is uneven in quality. Danmaku language sometimes lacks courtesy, is filled with violence, insults, and other offensive words, and inappropriate remarks can easily provoke public emotions, affecting the creation of a clean cyberspace and causing adverse effects on teenagers who are forming their values. Therefore, to promote the healthy development of danmaku language, China mainly supervises it from three aspects: first, strengthening the danmaku supervision mechanism and implementing real-name commenting; second, strengthening education for teenagers and guiding the shaping of mainstream values; and third, strengthening user self-discipline and consciousness, and actively undertaking network responsibilities [?].

3.2 Characteristics of New Media Headlines During the Beijing Winter Olympics: A Case Study of the People's Daily WeChat Official Account

As China's traditional mainstream media, *People's Daily* has always left an authoritative, fair, and profound impression on the public. As its extension on new media platforms, the *People's Daily* WeChat Official Account has also become one of the most influential and widely-covered social network accounts. In today's massive sea of news information, attention is a precious resource. In a push article, the headline is the first thing users notice, and whether the headline's language style and quality can attract user attention directly determines whether the push article can gain favor. Statistics show that during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics from February 4 to 20, excluding some news reports unrelated to the Winter Olympics, the *People's Daily* WeChat Official Account pushed 150 Winter Olympics reports. This article summarizes the characteristics of the news headlines used in these 150 Winter Olympics reports.

First, the headlines pursue conciseness and refinement. New media headlines are more concise than traditional news headlines, with headline lengths ranging from 8 to 21 characters. Second, the style is plain and triggers empathy. While traditional media news headlines pursue rational rigor, new media news headlines are more down-to-earth in language and more likely to resonate with audiences. During the Beijing Winter Olympics, the *People's Daily* WeChat Official Account cleverly adapted some idioms and new media internet language into WeChat article headlines, such as “翊鸣惊人! 决赛加油!” (Yi Ming Astonishing! Good Luck in the Final!) and “冬奥会以来, 我大概吃了 200 个饺子” (Since the Winter Olympics, I've Probably Eaten 200 Dumplings). Third, the headlines combine virtual and real elements to create suspense, using information asymmetry to leave suspense in headlines and arouse readers' curiosity, such as “你的背包, 到现在还没烂” (Your Backpack, Still Not Worn Out After All This Time), which uses a fragmented strategy to spark readers' curiosity and encourage them to click on the news to find out more [?].

As an official media network account, the *People's Daily* WeChat Official Account employs three strategies when creating headlines. First, it emphasizes the

influence of headline quality on push articles. Even in the era of flourishing new media, a good headline remains a key factor for article success. As mentioned above, attention is a scarce resource. In the current era of fragmented reading, how headline language can attract people's attention is crucial, determining to a considerable extent whether a media account can survive. Therefore, the stylistic features of headlines should conform to the trend of the times and continue to innovate. Second, it leads social consensus and promotes social development. When mainstream media create headlines, they should "exchange sincerity for true feelings," place themselves among the people, think about what kind of headlines can be closer to real life and reflect actual conditions, find common emotional ground with the masses, and avoid being aloof, putting on airs, and becoming detached from reality. Third, it adheres to the spirit of journalistic professionalism and plays the agenda-setting function. Mass media can influence audiences' judgments on major events through their own news reports. Therefore, mainstream media should play the agenda-setting function on new media platforms, undertake social supervision functions, seek truth from facts, adhere to the principle of "content is king" in news reporting, and refuse to be "clickbait" that disregards facts in pursuit of traffic.

4. Additional Case Studies of New Media Language Communication

4.1 New Media Civic News Communication: A Case Study of Sina News Media

Sina News has extensive and mutually complementary communication channels. As a comprehensive new media news platform, its release channels include the main Sina News site, as well as local news sites such as Sina Shanghai, Sina Jiangxi, and Sina Hunan, and professional field news sites such as Sina Finance and Sina Real Estate. It can be seen that Sina has numerous release channels, extensive new media communication, and diverse content. Moreover, the content of different communication channels is targeted, precisely positioning target media users. For example, the Sina News main site is the largest news portal of Sina News, with a huge potential news user base, large internal individual differences, and inconsistent news literacy. Therefore, the content published on the Sina main site mainly focuses on social hot topics and national policies, with weak regional color and not very high professional thresholds, aiming to meet the news needs of all users as much as possible. Social news includes many aspects of social life and often has strong topic controversy attributes, such as news like "花钱去餐厅吃预制菜, 谁当了大冤种" (Who Got Scammed Spending Money to Eat Pre-made Dishes at Restaurants) and "喷射之王华莱士, 凭啥狂开 2 万家店" (Why Does "King of Explosive Diarrhea" Wallace Crazy Open 20,000 Stores). National policy articles mainly focus on national macro strategic planning and deployment, sharp commentary on hot topics, speeches by national leaders, and important government policy documents and their interpretations. Such news has strong public attributes, and the topic content is concerned by every netizen,

profoundly affecting everyone' s life [?].

Compared with main site news, local site news has fewer audience users and is mainly local users. For example, the Sina Guangdong site mainly disseminates content related to the promotion and release of local Guangdong policies and various local news. Under the current background of new media convergence development, diversified news release channels is the general trend, and the old single-channel approach has basically withdrawn from people' s vision. Although media workers cannot lose their journalistic ethics in pursuit of traffic, accurately understanding the audience groups corresponding to different media channels, creating user profiles, optimizing communication content and methods, and precisely targeting traffic are necessary paths to ensure media survival. However, diversified release channels also lead to relatively declining news quality and content homogenization. Users often feel overwhelmed when facing all kinds of news and drown in massive information fragments. Therefore, Sina' s multi-channel release model for civic news needs to improve its internal organizational structure, enhance the professional quality of news editors, emphasize the professional spirit under journalistic professionalism, strive for truthful and objective news reporting, and provide better news content for audiences.

4.2 Technological Application of Visual Language in New Media Communication

Technological means have greatly promoted the communication of new media visual language. Taking Flash animation demonstrations as an example, dynamic images combined with sound effects and audio-visual integration are powerful tools to help audiences understand news content [?]. Moreover, Flash animation demonstrations can also show the public the operational process of news activities, including basic principles of news communication, communication concepts, communication significance, and other content, spreading unique news culture and improving public media literacy. Additionally, the application of Virtual Reality (VR) technology is also being used in new media visual language communication. Using VR wearable devices to synchronously connect to online libraries has developed virtual libraries, bringing users an immersive experience. Some libraries also use Augmented Reality (AR) technology to enable interaction and overlap between real information and virtual space, strengthening users' sense of interaction when using library resources. Ultimately, with the support of modern technologies such as VR virtual space technology, AR intelligent enhancement technology, and the Internet of Things, a "VR+" library panoramic media platform has been formed. Libraries have transformed into communication subjects of new media platforms, saving manpower to a certain extent, improving resource utilization efficiency, and thereby increasing

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

Source: ChinaXiv – Machine translation. Verify with original.