Research on Narrative Strategies of Self-made Character Micro-documents on the Internet

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Abstract:With the development of Internet information technology, various audio-visual works are developing and innovating with the transformation of media. In recent years, self-made micro-documentary on the network platform gradually rise, and produced a great effect of dissemination. This paper will use the theory of narratology, take the narrative words of the micro-documentary as a study sample, and make a detailed study on the narrative strategy of the micro-documentary from the aspects of "narration by others", "reverse narrative logic" and "language and emotion vocabulary". Try to solve the new media era, micro-documentary is how to rise and successfully complete its narrative, success.
Keywords: microdocumentary, narrate, internet, communication, commentary

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

With the continuous development of information technology such as the Internet and mobile Internet, the Internet has gradually become an important medium for the dissemination of information and audio-visual program creation products. After continuous practice and application, this new communication media has brought new communication channels and methods and reconstructed the communication mechanism of content production. This has not only changed the public's reading and receiving habits and lifestyles to a certain extent, but also affected the creation of audio-visual products, especially online audio-visual works, at the source. In this context, a large number of short videos have appeared and risen rapidly. We have observed that various micro-films and micro-documentaries are also significantly shorter in length than traditional works, and they have emerged as the times require. Authenticity is the life of documentaries, and most documentaries are often centered on characters. Take the online self-made micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Internal Conflict" as an example. Although the length of the micro-documentary is not long, the micro-documentary shows the characters capabilities can still be revitalized in this attention economy era.

We are curious about this, how did the character micro-documentaries represented by "Second Uncle Healed My Spiritual Conflict" rise in large numbers and manage to attract the attention of Internet users and successfully complete their narratives?

2. Literature review

2.1 Literature review on the study of micro-documentary narrative strategies

Documentary is a hot topic in academic research, and its academic theoretical achievements have been mature and fruitful. However, micro-documentary is a new style of documentary that was born in the era of new media with mobile Internet as the main body. In recent years, with the continuous development of new media, especially self-media, a large number of micro-documentary works have been produced by the people or the government. Related research However, it is relatively lagging behind, and most of them are master's thesis. Although there is a trend of gradually upgrading from the original superficial discussion of phenomena and the interpretation and analysis of the audio-visual language of the work itself to the level of theoretical research, there is still a lot of room for research.

In 2016, domestic scholar Guo Qiaomin of Beijing Jiaotong University wrote the article "The Turn of Documentaries in the Internet Age: Analysis and Reflection on the Film and Television Narrative Analysis and Reflection of the Micro-documentary "Forbidden City 100"—Based on Mark Currie's Postmodern Classical Narrative Theory". Theory, starting from the microscopic narrative perspective and the micro-narrative structure of the fragmented era, combined with the era background of post-modern narrative ideology and political diversification, taking the micro-documentary "Forbidden City 100" as the research object, and rationalizing the narrative of the micro-documentary Analysis and reflection [1]. Zeng Yatian of Jinan University in 2017 in the article "Analysis of Micro-documentary Narrative Strategies under the Background of Media Convergence", analyzed the rise of micro-documentaries under the background of media convergence, and analyzed the characteristics of documentary creation subjects and forms of expression, from the perspective of narrative stories and Narrative discourse analyzes the narrative strategy of the micro-documentary at two levels [2].

However, although these studies use the classic narratology theory to conduct research from the aspects of narrative perspective and narrative structure, they ignore the commentary text of the documentary.

2.2 Literature review on the study of micro-documentary narrative strategies

Rhetorical narratology, represented by Crete, began in the United States in the 1940s. Rhetorical narratology is a discipline about narratology. It combines linguistics, narratology, narratology and critical research to study language and narrative. How the text uses rhetorical devices to achieve the author's intention in the text. Wang Chunzhi of Zhongyuan Institute of Technology published an article "Analysis of Micro-documentary Narrative" in the journal "News Magazine" in 2014. In terms of narrative, it relies too much on telling, pays less attention to the process, and lacks the performance of new media characteristics. In addition, it is also mentioned that "the micro-documentary has a civilian perspective, zooms in on details, fast-paced narrative features and narrative strategies of scattered narrative, current narrative and national narrative."[3].

However, although this research has paid attention to the commentary text of the micro-documentary to a certain extent, it has been a long time ago and lacks attention to the current

micro-documentary, especially the self-made micro-documentary works on the Internet.

2.3 Questions raised

To sum up, this article will start from the theory of narratology, use linguistic analysis methods, and take micro-documentary commentary as the research text, trying to answer the following questions: How does micro-documentary adapt to the characteristics of network communication under the background of new media? How to attract the attention of Internet users and successfully change the narrative strategy?

3. Research Methods

This paper adopts the research method of text analysis to try to answer the above questions.

3.1 Use other narratives to strengthen the communication effect of online videos

3.1.1 The main body retreats, highlighting the production style of the work

"Other" is a philosophical concept born relative to "self", referring to any person or thing beyond the self, from Plato's "same" and "other" to Hegel's "master-slave dialectics", Eph Lloyd's "sexuality", Sartre, Husserl, Lacan and others' "gaze of the other", Western philosophers of different schools have outlined a multi-dimensional three-dimensional space for the theory of the other[4].

In the narrative style of "Second Uncle Healed My Spiritual Conflict", there is a very typical phenomenon that the subject retreats and the other stands out. The protagonist of the short film is the second uncle, but the narrative subject of the commentary is the video blogger and documentary producer Yige Guess. In the entire micro-documentary, there is no original sound of the protagonist second uncle, but a third-person perspective combined with documentary images, Photo materials, music, and movie clip quotes, etc., tell the story of the ordinary but personally great life of the second uncle. This kind of person who narrates other people makes the protagonist of the documentary no longer the whole subject, but connects it with the real relationship between the commentary narrator and the documentary producer himself. While telling the story of the second uncle, it also highlights the "he The personal viewpoints, comments and opinions of Yi Ge’s conjecture, and even the production style, aesthetic taste and value orientation of the documentary, enrich the content of the work.

Table 1: Commentary on personal views and value orientation

opinion, evaluative statement	Corresponding commentary
Ning Ning's personality	How can a child who has been abandoned twice be polite to the world?
The second uncle bought a house for his daughter	This is a Chinese-style parent, a respectable and poor Chinese-style parent, humble and great.
The second uncle's life description	In this way, another thirty years have passed, and there is nothing to say about it. Yes, the life of ordinary people is like this.
View of life and death	Why bother between life and death? This is not God's inhumanity but compassion, otherwise each of us is still in his seventies or eighties when he dies in good health, how much nostalgia should we have for this world? Isn't it more painful?
Second uncle's life choice	It's a pity, a pity really.
outlook on life	The happiest person in the world is the one who does not need to be responsible to others; the second happiest person is the one who never looks back.

3.1.2 Absent body, historical materials assist storytelling

In the micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Spiritual Conflict" produced by video blogger Yi Ge Guess with the second uncle as the main character, the director Yi Ge guesses that the story of the second uncle's life is told in a way that the body is absent. tell. The presence or absence of the body has a great influence on the transmission effect. In order to make up for the regret of not being physically present, people have come up with various methods, including finding "agents" or even "stand-ins", configuring and using monitors, and conducting post-mortem inspections[5].

The blogger used the short few days when he went home to shoot documentary video materials of his second uncle’s daily life, and finally made it into a micro-documentary. It narrated most of the second uncle’s life experience without the presence of the body, but in the end The dissemination effect of the work is astonishing, and to some extent it has become a phenomenon-level work and topic of discussion. By watching it, it can be found that the director quoted a large number of historical photos and old movie clips in order to make up for the lack of physical absence. For example, when talking about the things of the second uncle when he was young, the previous family photos appeared on the screen, which made the character image of the second uncle more intuitive and concrete, or when telling the macro historical background, he quoted "There is a tree on the tree" many times at different periods of the narrative. "A Good Place" and "The Garland Under the Mountain" and other film clips are used to assist the narrative and achieve better communication effects.

Table 2: Comparison of Auxiliary Historical Data

time	Historical images/photos/video clips	Narrative role
00:44	The Barefoot Doctor's Handbook	It paves the way for the second uncle to practice medicine in the following article, and tells the process of the second uncle's medical study
01:51	Videos of Tiananmen Square	Telling about the second uncle's adventures in Beijing
01:59	Group photo in Tiananmen Square	To show my second uncle's youthful appearance, he went to Beijing to join the army
02:16	Photos of my second uncle making furniture	Telling about the hard times, the happy time of the second uncle in Beijing
02:29	bathing video clips	Simulate the scene where the second uncle met the chief
02:42	A group photo of the second uncle and his family (sister)	Telling about the marriage of the second uncle and sister
03:33	Ningning's hour photo	The second uncle was busy outside when he was young and rarely accompanied him
03:52	Second Uncle's Ledger	Showing the image of the second uncle, frugal and thrifty
08:23	Video clips of the director's brother	Tell the story of the second uncle making the erhu by hand
09:16	Restoring the historical images of the college entrance examination	Tell the historical background
09:36	"There's a Good Place Up In The Tree" clip	Elicit the evaluation of the lines of the movie "The King of Chess"
11:00	notebook photo	Excerpt from Second Uncle, name themes

3.2 Micro-audio-visual narrative communication logic of "reverse narrative"

3.2.1 Convention Breaking and Imagination Construction

Reversal, capable of breaking conventions and constructing imagination, is a commonly used narrative strategy for audio-visual micro-works in the era of Internet media integration, which conforms to the law of network communication. The immersion and anesthesia brought by short video media in the context of audio-visual micro-narratives have become a media phenomenon that has attracted much attention. The reason why the public has a highly concentrated sense of participation in the experience of using and watching short videos lies in the formation of audio-visual micro-narratives. The increasingly obvious "reversal" narrative and the illusion of meaning it produces[6].

For the film medium, McLuhan has such an evaluation, "Movies rely on illusions to approach or even surpass real life." Based on this, in the Internet age, more and more short videos, micro-movies, etc. tend to "reverse Turn", constructing the imaginary world for the audience again and again, and generating multi-level communication.

For example, at the beginning of the micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Internal Conflict", the director used the "reversed" narrative logic to break the rules and capture the audience. The opening scene is the scene of the second uncle and his mother standing in the yard of their home. The second uncle here is living on crutches, with a sad face and a slight tilt, as if he would fall down at any time, which is a typical image of the disabled. The author's commentary to the protagonist's second uncle is like this: "This is my second uncle, a former genius boy in the village". The image of the second uncle recorded in the video here is in contrast to the genius boy in our traditional concept , which can not help arousing the curiosity of the audience, thus constructing the imagination of the second uncle's life and life stories.

3.2.2 Break the routine and shape a perceivable personality

The commentary of the micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Spiritual Conflict" adopts the narrative method of continuous reversal, and carries out several semantic reversals in a very short period of time. This narrative style of "narrative reversal" has been repeatedly reproduced , forming a perceivable personified symbol, and bringing a slightly pleasant humorous light comedy viewing experience.

For example, when the film tells about the only love experience of the second uncle's unmarried life, he uses a reverse narrative method, with twists and turns, from the pessimism that the second uncle's physical disability makes it difficult for anyone to say that the matchmaker succeeded, to the sudden arrival of a mysterious woman, the second uncle The relationship between people is mature, ambiguous emotions are intertwined, specious, and finally the sudden death of the woman and her husband from gas poisoning made the audience sigh. Another example is the demise of the production team, the encounter with the doctor in the health center, etc. In such a commentary, the character image and personality of the second uncle are more intuitive and perceivable. , I find it interesting and surprising, coupled with the legendary ordinary inspirational life story of the second uncle, with ups and downs, it brings a light comedy-like viewing experience.

3.3 Rapid language rhythm and high-frequency emotional vocabulary

Text, with a much longer history than images, is a tool with powerful vitality, sometimes closer to reality than images, or closer to the deep reality. The documentary uses the commentary to tell the restoration of real events and the experiences of the characters, which complement the footage. Because the overall tone of the documentary inevitably has a certain emotion, this emotion is the true feeling that the audience can experience from the language of the lens when watching[7].

In the micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Internal Conflict", a major feature of its commentary narrative is that the documentary does not "leave blank" for the language, and speeds up the narrative rhythm through continuous narration. There is no gap between sentences. pause. At the same time, when describing the second uncle's daily life and perception of life, the emotional vocabulary such as adjectives is obviously higher than that of traditional TV

documentaries. In the past, a large number of long shots and lyrical passages with soothing music are used instead of high-frequency emotional adjectives and The rapid switching of different types of video materials, under the fast-paced narrative discourse, reaches the climax of expressing emotions.

In the film, when the second uncle made furniture for the two younger sisters when they were young, the commentary reads, "Every drawing, every piece of wood, every piece of glass, every decorative strip, every One screw, each coat of paint, is done by the second uncle alone. Here, there are high-frequency parallel sentences, and there is almost no pause between sentences. It is matched with the corresponding freeze-frame pictures in the above screen, supplemented by fast-paced The music, fast editing transitions, vividly express the image of the second uncle's strong ability and high craftsmanship in making woodworking furniture.

Table 3: Comparison of emotional words and sentence patterns

time	emotion	Vocabulary/sentence pattern
0 0 : 08	calm	Poping statement
0 2; 21	joy	Ho mie rhetorical question
0 2 : 5 1	excited	Every, every parallel sentence
0 3 : 03	excited	dream rhetorical question
0 3 : 23	cheer up	OK , ultra - luxury rhetorical questions, parallel sentences
0 5 : 03	lost	fox for life declarative sentence
0 6 : 08	calm	pity, nostalgia, pain rhetorical questions, declarative sentences
0 6 : 33	happy	cool as hell declarative sentence
07:23	excited	one by one Parallel sentence
0 8 : 27	ridicule	fool brother statement
1 0 : 13	lost	sorry rhetorical question
1 1 : 00	cheer up	where, to, victory declarative sentence

4. Summary and reflection

4.1 Narrative thinking of the current network micro- documentary

As of April 2023, only on Bilibili, an online video platform, the micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed My Internal Disorder" has been played 48.739 million times, and 264,000 bullet screens have been harvested . Liked 5.802 million times, included in Bilibili's 175th weekly must-see catalog list, and related Weibo topics have been searched and discussed by hundreds of millions of people.

It can be seen that documentary images based on reality and documentaries with real narration, with their own social issues and personal charm, have strong vitality. At the same time, the characteristics of mass media communication of network platforms in the age of media integration, and the connection and influence between creators and platforms are also worthy of attention and research. The explosion of "Second Uncle Healed My Internal Disorder" proves that its narrative strategy conforms to the characteristics of Internet communication, and it has reference and learning significance for the current self-made micro-documentaries on the Internet,

especially narratives with characters as the theme.

4.2 Highlight the theme and focus on narrative compactness

The current micro-documentaries of characters should focus on the compactness of the narrative, and ensure that the visual content of the video screen is concise and clear, so as to highlight specific perspectives and themes. In the film "Second Uncle Healed My Spiritual Conflict", the director did not limit himself to a complete and extensive review of the second uncle's personal life experience and deeds, but took the theme clue of the second uncle's personality of overcoming difficulties and constantly improving himself, runs through the whole film, thus curing the internal friction of many people represented by the director.

The narrator should pay attention to details, not only to shoot specific characters and events, but also to capture specific time and related details about the characters. When shooting a certain important moment, the narrator can describe the characters' psychology, Values and behaviors are used to explain the thoughts and values of the characters. For example, at the end of the film, the second uncle walks up the steps with a cane alone. The commentary "this road of life leads to the end must be victory."

Through such refinement of the theme, detailed control and narrator's commentary narration, the profound inner experience of the second uncle character is highlighted, so that the audience can not only see the theme itself, but also experience the narrator's own deep emotions and thoughts.

4.3 Supplementary information, auxiliary narrative complete

Times have changed, and the production time of the current online micro-documentary has been greatly shortened compared with the traditional documentary production cycle of months or years, and can usually be completed within a few days or weeks. Due to the limitation of the shooting period, there must be a lack of intuitive lens records for historical figures and historical backgrounds. At this time, the collected photos, historical materials, documentary images, etc. can be used to assist the narrative in editing, and even bridge some classic movies. Paragraphs can be borrowed to achieve better expressive effect.

Pay attention to the choice of background music. Background music is almost indispensable in micro-documentaries. Background music can start from the theme, can strengthen the narrative effect, strengthen the content of the video screen, and at the same time can show the theme emotion of the video and increase the sense of rhythm. For example, "Second Uncle Cured My Internal Conflict" used two pieces of background music with jazz and blues styles , Assassin's Tango and Otra Luna, which enhanced the narrative rhythm and the legend of the protagonist's second uncle's life , Romantic color.

5. Reflect on insufficient research

This research uses the research method of text analysis method, comprehensively uses the theory of narratology, and analyzes the representative network character micro-documentary "Second Uncle Healed" from the perspective of others' narration, reverse narrative logic, language rhythm and emotional words. "My Spiritual Internal Conflict" conducts analysis and research, analyzes its narrative strategy under Internet communication in the media era, and tries to answer how micro-documents adapt to the characteristics of Internet communication, how to attract the attention of Internet users, and successfully transform narrative strategies. The analysis is more comprehensive. Comprehensive and accurate.

The disadvantage is that only one popular video is selected for the micro-documentary sample, and the horizontal comparison research has less analysis of the same type of video. At the same time, it only focuses on the analysis of the narrative strategy and communication effect from the perspective of the documentary itself and the creator, and less analysis of the influence of the micro-documentary creation and narrative strategy from the perspective of the network platform.

In future research, researchers in the documentary field may also need to pay attention to the new narrative changes and phenomena in the documentary field brought about by the change of communication media, and expand the two-way research and practice of self-made micro-documentaries on the Internet and Internet platforms.

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