A semiotic analysis of Chinese export online TV dramas based on the Fiske's TV culture theory

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Abstract---The Belt and Road have changed the Chinese TV drama export industry. The export volume has climbed significantly, but China's TV series trade gap is still considerable due to external solid competition in the global cultural products market. The barbarous development under the capital has caused China's TV drama output surplus, and the domestic market cannot absorb it. Internal and external forces force Chinese TV dramas worldwide, and to travel overseas, the material must be optimized to attract foreign audiences. China's TV drama industry is growing online. Its versatility in making and transmitting has made it the leading exporter of Chinese TV programs. This study employs Fiske's TV culture theory and semiotic methodologies to analyze Chinese internet dramas transferred to Malaysia. Chinese web plays' narrative structure. This study uses semiotic analysis and Fiske's TV culture theory to describe Chinese online TV dramas. Export TV dramas must improve their quality and attract new fans to boost their market position in Malaysia. The Chinese export TV business must consider public sentiment to improve its market position and competitiveness. Fiske's TV Culture theory boosts China's film industry's competitiveness. Evaluating the

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findings in the conclusion and recommendation chapters helped meet the objective. Fiske's active audience, text, and intertextuality theories have been investigated and supported. The findings imply that Chinese exported TV dramas engage Malaysian audiences through cultural factors. Family values, friendships, and social structure helped this series in Malaysia.

Keywords---a semiotic analysis, Chinese online TV drama, and Fiske's TV culture theory.

Introduction

The Chinese TV drama export industry has undergone significant changes in the Belt and Road Initiative context. The export volume has risen steadily, and the trade deficit is still huge. Currently, China's TV drama production ranks first in the world. Still, the brutal development under the capital has made the production surplus, and the domestic market is not enough to digest. Therefore, the overseas market for Chinese TV dramas is the most obvious way to release domestic excess capacity. In recent years, a new force has emerged in China's TV drama industry-online dramas. Internet dramas are born out of the big data of the TV drama industry and the intertextual use of popular Internet literature. It is a unique new form of TV drama with substantial research value. Malaysia is a traditional import country of Chinese TV dramas. The high cultural proximity and a large proportion of Chinese nationals make the media environment of Malaysian TV dramas the main object of this paper. The traditional Chinese and Malaysian cultural relations under the dualistic opposition between China and the West have long been in a state of chaos that is close to and alienated, so there is no practical significance for cultural exchanges between China and Malaysia. This paper aims to find a static research orientation in the dynamic vision of globalization by setting a transparent historical background (B&R). The export of Chinese online TV dramas is regarded as a phenomenon of cultural exchange. The research examines the domestic and export of Chinese TV dramas from the perspective of Fiske's TV culture theory. At the same time, combining the observations in Malaysia (viki.com), we found ways to guide the transition of Chinese online TV dramas through economic exchanges to cultural exchanges; and then expand the overseas market to achieve the practice of digesting domestic stocks, My Drama List (2022).

Background of the Study

Chinese drama exports were studied in 2006. "Eleventh Five-Year Plan" launched in 2003, and Hu Jintao's new generation of leaders "continued" Deng Xiaoping's "going out" strategy. The original goal of the "going out" strategy was to reduce China's excessive reliance on foreign trade (70 percent) since reform and opening up and domestic overcapacity in low-value-added industrial links. Chinese TV exports fit this. Rim history is surprising. Paradoxically, the quality of Chinese TV dramas is improving faster. This argument can be summarised from many current situations, such as the choice of the theme of applying big data, product ads combined with the TV series character, the latest online vocabulary in

costume drama, etc. US and South Korean TV dramas dominate Chinese Internet forums, Naeem, K., Jawad, A., Rehman, S. U., &Zulqarnain, M. (2020).

Chinese TV dramas' trade deficit reflects the low quality. Chinese TV industry insiders cannot wait to explain the export of Chinese TV dramas. Through the study of TV drama export papers, the theoretical starting points are communication, radio and television art, film science, dramatist, contemporary Chinese literature, Marxist theory and ideological and political education, international trade, corporate management, etc. Ten of the 60 papers are doctoral theses on the film industry (policy and market), international communication, and intercultural communication. Industry (policy and market) and intercultural (transnational) research can be combined. Internet drama is new to China's TV drama industry and a research focus. Five hundred thirty-four articles (periodicals, newspapers, editorials, masters and doctoral theses) cover Internet dramas. 1999 was the start of China's Internet drama research, and 2010 was its peak. Literature topics are similar to Chinese online dramas and domestic video sites. Online self-made dramas, video website research (IQIYI), network-derived movies, etc.

Dr. Yuanyuan Liang of Huazhong University of Science and Technology studied the IP (intellectual property right) operation of Internet drama from the perspective of cross-media narrative (2017); Gu Aceh discusses the transformation of the gender image in the online film and television space, interprets the complex and diverse network gender cultural cognition, (Gu Aceh 2016); Cheng Bo, Zu Qing discussed the cross-media connection between online drama and film with Liu Xia As a TV genre, online drama has excellent potential. Its emphasis on capital orientation contradicts China's mainstream value of historical nihilism, money worship, single content, and repetition. Due to its rapid content management development, operating methods, profit model, etc., a scientific and perfect evaluation system is needed to guide its growth and avoid obstacles.

Problem Statement

The output of Chinese TV dramas is large, domestic supply exceeds demand, and it is necessary to go to stocks. This is the internal motivation for ensuring the healthy development of Chinese TV dramas. There is a trade deficit in Chinese TV dramas, and it is necessary to reduce the trade deficit, which is an external requirement to enhance the competitiveness of the international market. Chinese online TV dramas are a new growth point in the Chinese TV industry, and there is an urgent need to establish a feasible academic research system.

In this context, the Chinese government has promoted domestic measures to "go global" to stimulate exports and has subsidized Chinese TV via numerous ministries and commissions. The market frequently mindlessly follows the trend when government monies are used. From the list of significant national cultural exports from 2015 to the present it can be observed that animated series exports continue to expand, and TV drama exports are overwhelming. The Ministry of Culture started this trend. China Animation Industry Fund Traditional TV plays were marketed earlier, causing complications. The Chinese government has

restricted old costume films, historical nihilism, and actor pay to enhance the TV drama business. These restriction measures for the domestic TV business intend to generate a better mid- and long-term impact by modifying government direction and enhancing the Chinese TV drama industry. However, TV dramas' living space is compressed in the short term. Costume dramas are the most popular among global spectators Fung, A., Pun, B., & Mori, Y. (2019). Chinese TV plays must translate internal developments into abroad competitive advantages. Foreign viewers have a more challenging time adapting to changes in Chinese TV shows. Protectionism is vital but irritating. Although China's TV drama business has intensified global collaboration, varied ratings for the same series are standard and thought-provoking. The author concludes that a country's TV drama industry must have a better intercultural perspective, learn from other countries' successful TV dramas, and summarize its thriving and blocked experiences. The competitive environment generates the squid effect and enhances self-creation awareness, Keane, M. (2019).

Significance

The TV drama study focuses on national economic and trade exchange policy, and structural functionalism is used to analyze the cultural production industry. Chinese TV drama exports research needs a B&R history and policy background. This setting reflects the researcher's personality. Malaysia is selected to break China and the West's binary opposition. The study approaches sustainable development from multiple angles. Returning to China from abroad strengthens intersubjective research. Malaysia's cultural complexity enables intercultural communication research. Empirical data avoid black holes. The American empirical school research model views the audience as passive and information transmission as linear. Technology has made media more complex, requiring a broader perspective.

In the study of TV drama, cultural studies tradition and Fiske's research method expand the theoretical vision of "television culture" and intercultural communication. This research is subjective because it relies on first-hand experience. Chinese academic intercultural research has a unique "extension," biasing vocabulary and concepts. Empirical error in qualitative research and "Western doctrine" ambiguity in "Orientalizing" are two research limitations.

Literature Review

Under the guidance of the one-on-one policy of the TV drama industry in mainland China, it is inevitably involved in the wave of globalization, which is manifested in many aspects of the industry: such as the expansion of the program broadcast range; the overseas audience needs to consider the overseas market Adaptation; cooperation and integration development of TV production and broadcasting institutions. The involvement of Internet digital transmission technology and the increasing involvement of personalized media have gradually eliminated the insurmountable borders of past cultural works. The subtitle groups formed by the private people in various countries have actively translated the TV dramas of other countries. It is also easier for TV dramas to enter the eyes of other audiences. It can be said that the Chinese TV drama industry, in the

context of the Belt and Road Initiative, needs to combine the current form of sea-going and have more brand-new self-reflection, Alardawi, M. (2020).

Achievements, Challenges, and Prospects》: 2018 TV drama video hits accounted for over 60% of the entire network video on demand. It is fully explained that the 60-year-old cultural communication form of Chinese TV drama still has great vitality today. In the 《Industrial Thinking of Chinese TV Drama Creation in the All-Media Age》, Dong Xiao Meng takes Zhejiang Huace Film and Television Co., Ltd. as an example. He summarizes the latest forms of current Chinese TV drama creation as "product thinking, industrial chain thinking, and industrial ecological thinking." Form. (东南传播2019).

Yao Yu Ting of Shandong Normal University summarized the mode of international communication in Chinese TV dramas as "Chinese-foreign cooperative production, institutions are in the air, and the Internet promotes international communication" in the article 《International Communication Research on Chinese TV Drama, (姚羽婷 2019)Rashid, M. H., Lan, Y., & Hui, W. 2022).

She separately emphasized the relevant departments of the government to check the overseas production of TV dramas, deepen the spread of TV dramas along the Belt and Road, and the transformation of Internet technology in the TV drama industry. Hu Lu Man of Central South University for Nationalities pointed out in the article "Research on the Structure of Foreign Trade of China's TV Play Industry" that the mode of foreign trade in Chinese TV dramas is only "self-issued, commissioned, and participated in domestic and international TV festivals." (胡璐曼 2018),

This fully demonstrates that there is little trade in the export of Chinese TV dramas and it needs to be upgraded. Yu Shi (Penn State Harrisburg) wrote in the article To energize China's undercapitalized and poorly managed TV stations, the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) and the Department of Commerce announced in November 2004 that foreign companies could form joint ventures with Chinese stations, especially in the area of producing films and TV dramas. (Shi 2008) It can be seen that under the background of the reform and opening up and the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, the Chinese TV drama authorities have relaxed the access of TV dramas to broadcast overseas power. However, at the same time, "foreign capital is restricted from investing in and operating news media, broadcasting networks, and other core communication venues."(Shi, 2008); it shows that the leading force in the development of China's TV industry is still tied to politics. The opening up of the Chinese TV industry is limited.

TV Industry and Policy

Y. CHENG and other scholars used the method of intercultural research in the book the belt and road initiative in the global arena》 to discuss public opinion, the relationship between the national image and the media, and graphically display the relationship between these people as follows :
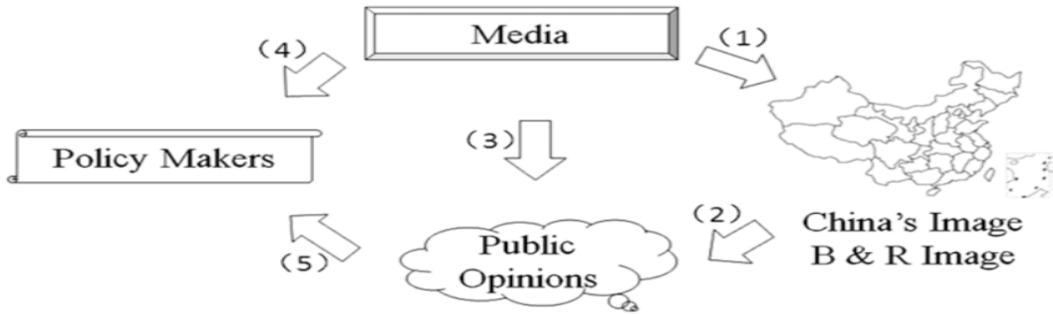
(Cheng 2018)

From the perspective of his analysis, the media has a vital role in the role and public opinion and decision-making by foreign policymakers. Therefore, it can be said that TV drama as a mass media is not only a part of China's export trade but also one of the driving forces of the One Belt and One Road policy. Jack M. Mcleod and others interviewed 389 adults on a telephone using random number dialing technology in Wisconsin, USA. A joint article argued that the media has significantly impacted the local democratic process and graphically explained the impact process.

328   *Jack M. McLeod et al.*
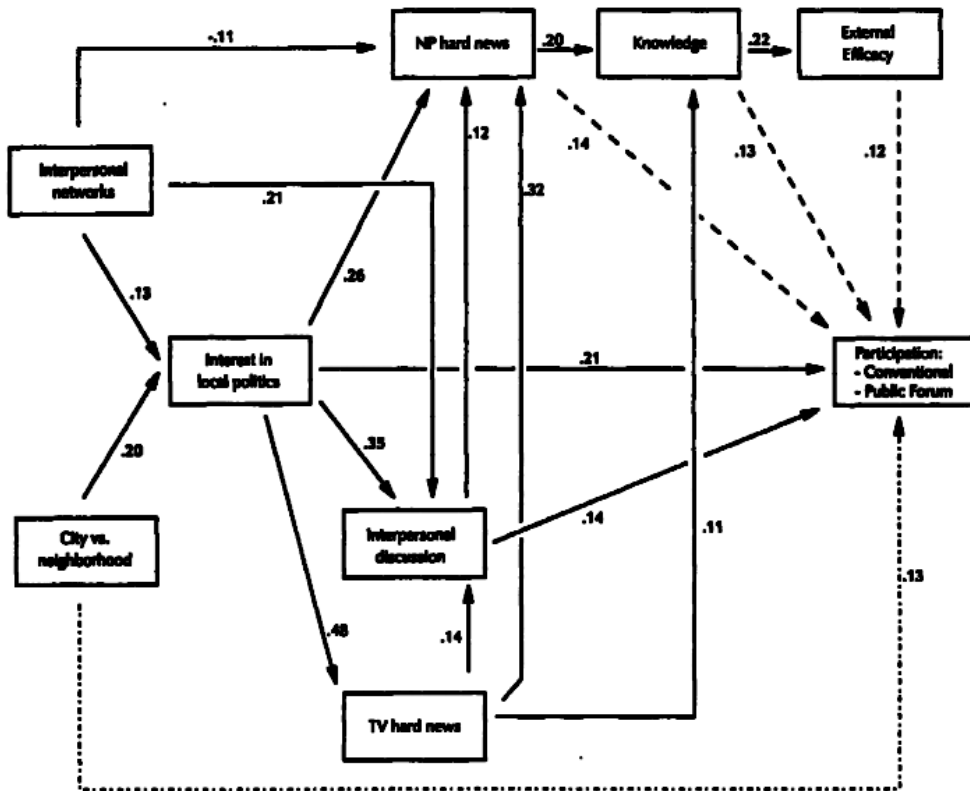
(McLeod, Scheufele et al. 1999), A simple analogy can be made, and TV dramas exported overseas as part of the mass media of the importing country will indeed have a profound impact on the interaction between foreign people and Chinese policies. Chinese TV dramas are rapidly forming a surging tide overseas. The 2017 Chinese TV drama exports exceeded US$85 million (China National Bureau of Statistics), and this number will be broken again in 2018. Curtin concludes in his article : that in the realm of globalization, Chinese film and television companies have established additional and increasingly powerful hubs of activity in Hong Kong, Taipei, and Singapore. (Curtin 2007).

It can be said that the current Chinese TV drama industry has an urgent need to release production capacity, so it has begun to go out of China. Steve Fore said that: while for transnational corporations, the original dream of globalized consumer markets was of complete erasure of boundaries, a situation in which the same product could be sold to everyone, everywhere (Fore, 2008),

Malaysian Society

Steve Fore said in his article : In fact, transnationals from McDonald's to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation have discovered that national and local institutions and traditions continue to be highly relevant and that they have to spend a lot of time and money figuring out what kinds of things people want in different geographic and cultural locales. This view points out the necessity of cultural exporting countries to examine the social culture of cultural importing countries (Fore, 2008).

Zhao Hai Li of Xiamen University (Nanyang Research Institute and Southeast Asian Studies Center) took the "identity" mechanism as a starting point and used Malaysian Chinese as an example to analyze the social situation in Malaysia. He summed up the three groups of Malaysian Chinese groups: 1. Chinese immigrants before the Second World War, 2. New generations of overseas Chinese who favored the British Empire, 3. New generations of overseas Chinese favored the Communist Party of Malaya. (华侨华人历史研究 2005).

This group division still has some reference significance. With the expected death of Chinese immigrants before World War II, the proportion of the Chinese population in Malaysia has slowly declined, and new immigrants after World War II (including the MM2H and foreigners who own real estate). With the entry of the threshold, the differentiation and integration of Malaysian Chinese will continue to change under the combined effect of the three. In the short term, there will still be a differentiation trend between the above three groups.

Fiske critically inherited the text's "intertextuality" idea.
He gave an example in the article "Reading the Popular": "The meaning of the shopping mall is created and spread in social practice." He believes that the meaning of the text of popular culture is not fixed. It can only be produced and circulated in the text but the communication process. (Fiske 2017)Moreover, he applied this "intertextuality" perspective to studying TV texts, extending and expanding the concept of horizontal-vertical intertextuality. Horizontal intertextuality refers to a relationship that develops according to the direction of

the category of TV text.

Fiske said that "Although intertextual relationships can easily cross category boundaries, categories can still organize intertextual relationships in a highly (Fiske, 2002); he also emphasized that "TV is a highly categorized media... and when considering categories, we must give priority to the similarities between programs rather than the differences between them".(Fiske, 2002) Because these similarities constitute "common rules," it is these "rules" that make text and audience, text field text producer, text producer and audience connected. Vertical intertextuality is an intertextual relationship between primary text (the initial form of cultural goods), secondary text (advertising, reviews, etc.), and tertiary text (ethnographic research). In short, Fiske emphasizes the important role of academic research in "text growing into the public." As Douglas Kellner said in his article "Critical Theory and Cultural Studies: The Unreachable Combination," "We cannot stop at the boundary of text, or even at the boundary of intertextuality, but should continue to build from the text. The context, culture, and society of the text, and interpret the text in this context"(Hammer & Kellner, 2009).

Research Methodology

A mass communication study describes this. China's export web dramas' text is under investigation. Online dramas are researched like TV dramas. Text content can be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Due to the intricacy of cultural exports, a critical and qualitative semiotic analysis was used. Semantically, TV shows are visual and audio symbols. Fisk's theoretical achievements include active audience, activated texts, television intertextuality, and financial financial-economy, cultural-economy notions for the television industry. TV viewers are a commodity. This study focuses on Chinese web dramas' text content. Hence it accepts the first three theories described above. It examines the intertextual role of Chinese internet drama abroad, using Chinese TV dramas as the active text and overseas audiences as the active audience, Rashid, M. H., & Sipahi, E. (2021).
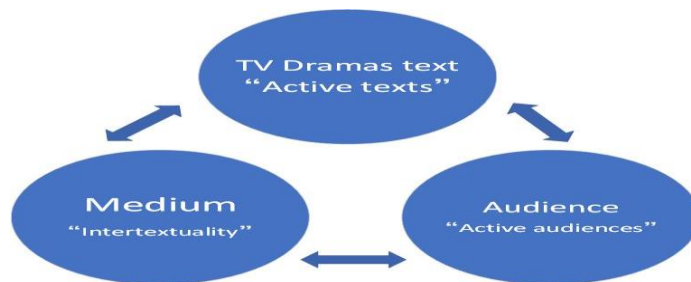
The criticality of Fiske's theory is reflected in his view of "one audience, two economies." Through an in-depth understanding of Fiske's "one audience, two economies," the following summary is proposed: meaning and symbols flow between the TV drama text and the active audience to form a mass culture, and mass culture has become a communication commodity economy and culture Economic intermediary. (Figure 2) Under this logic, the semiotic analysis of TV drama texts has become the core and focus of TV research, which is also the main

direction of this article.
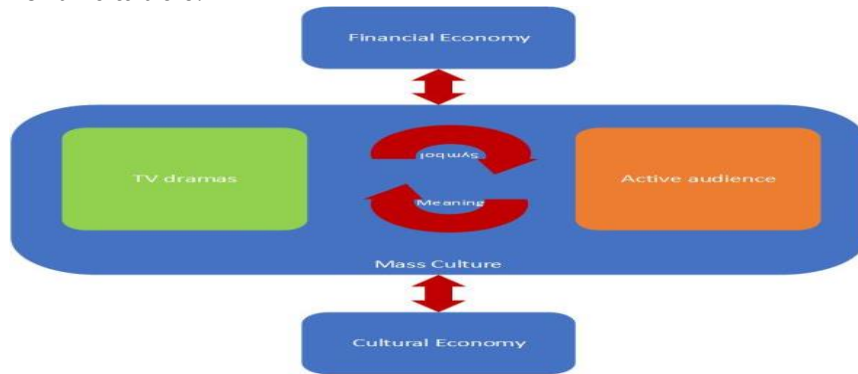
Research Design

This research is mainly divided into three stages. *Phase 1* is the pilot study, which analyzes and summarizes the publicly published online viewing comments for foreign (Malaysia) audiences. *Phase 2* is a summary and introduction of the origin and development of Chinese online drama. *Phase 3* is the main stage of this study, that is, the semiotic analysis of the text content of Chinese online dramas. The research at this stage will be divided into three modules, applying Fiske's active audience, activated text, and intertextuality.

Nvivo-Based Online Drama Audience Comment Analysis

Two results are predicted from this pilot study. First, describe Malaysians' perspectives on Chinese web dramas. Focus on audience comments and input for RQ3 research. The Internet-era TV drama viewing situation survey is comparable to and different from the conventional one. This study examines customer reviews on Internet distribution platforms.

First, these user reviews are spontaneous and written by TV viewers. It has more reference value than random audience sampling. This form of remark collects the user's rating and text comment. Open poll responses reveal the user's multi-angle view of this TV series. This module's investigation should help compare intertextual effects later. The implementation steps for Nvivo are as following the figure.
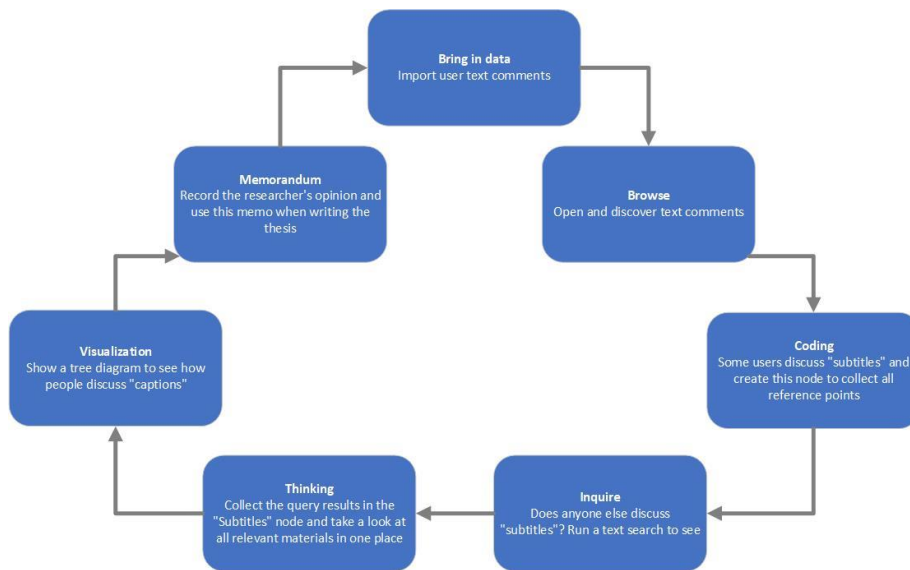
Analysis of Chinese Export Online Dramas Based on Literature Research

The current research pertains to RQ1, which reviews China's export network dramas. History of Chinese internet drama, export status, etc. Chinese online and TV dramas are intertwined. Text form and creative expression are similar. Creativity, operation, and marginal effects use are different. This component includes mainly literature research, augmented by the researcher's observation of Chinese TV dramas and web dramas. Keep an open mind while studying and take supplements whenever necessary. Fisk inherited intertextuality. According to him, a text can only have the desired social interaction with the reader if it is read and the underlying meaning is triggered. For mainland Chinese audiences, the historical background setting of the movie Ye Wen is significantly different from historical realities.

However, the powerful "Kung Fu Star" screen image of actor Zhen Zidan can still attract the public. Therefore it is possible. A successful series of films; for foreign audiences who do not know much about Chinese history, the historical background introduced in this film may be misunderstood to restore real people, especially in Malaysia, where such a high proportion of Chinese Countries, the more potent "Xia Nanyang" complex will make the Malaysian audience more emotionally resonant. All this is based on semi-fictional stories and characters— this module analyses Chinese internet drama in Malaysia using Fiske's horizontal-vertical intertextuality paradigm.

Results

The study will analyze Chinese dramas' impact on Malaysian audiences and analyze their reaction. In this section, three Chinese drama series have been selected that have helped analyze the active texts from the derived reviews and comments. Moreover, it has helped in understanding Fiske's Theory in terms of visual content consumption for its audience. The three dramas have been selected

based on their popularity in recent times and have been examined in the context of this theory. Moreover, 3 participants who have watched the series consecutively have been chosen, and an evaluation has been made based on their dimensions in watching. The chosen 3 participants have been observed throughout their watching series. The frequency and period of their watching have reflected their lifestyle as the participants are Malaysian, and their culture can be analyzed. Hence, the study has culminated through an elaborated discussion of the observational study based on Malaysian culture.

Table 1: Observational table

Participant	Chosen drama	Number of episodes	The period of watching	Frequency of watching	Impact
Participant 1	The eternal love	84	Three weeks	More than 2 hours per day	The participant has been seen to be engrossed due to the suspension of the series.
Participant 2	The ghost bride	6	Five days	Around 1.30 hours a day	The participant has been observed to enjoy the concept as the attempt of the drama is marvelous.
Participant 3	The Psychologist	40	Three weeks	Approximately 1 hour a day	The participant has started to watch the drama due to its popularity and attractive reviews on online platforms.

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(Source: Learner)

The above table has been provided that summarizes the result of watching Chinese Dramas among the Malaysian participants. A vast number of the population in Malaysia have been seen to be Chinese who follow Confucianism and Taoist traditions (World Travel Guide, 2022). Moreover, a violent uprising of the communist could also be seen in the history of Malaysia between 1948 and 1960. Hence, according to Zhang et al. (2019), the culture of the country is diverse, and it has several other religions living in the country. A drive was also examined between the Chinese population and the Malay. Therefore, the cultural preference is also diverse in this that can be seen and reflected in the TV programs watched by the Malaysian population in recent times.

(Source: IMDb, 2022)

In the country's culture, there is respect for the rulers, and social harmony is a primary factor of Chinese culture. In the culture, the country is viewed as the central position of the world, and a reflection of this factor can be seen in the movies of China. The citizens of the county are proud of their ancient history. In order to gather the citizens' opinions, three individuals have been chosen in this case. These individuals have watched the three online movies, which are Importance's given to the family and the families structure in China's culture. Children are considered the essential parts of the families, and on the other hand, marriage is seen as a vital institution in Chinese culture.

Recommendations

This study uses semiotic analysis and Fiske's TV culture theory to describe Chinese online dramas. Yoon (2018) says cultural and spiritual needs are growing in China. Active text, active audiences, and intertextuality are part of Fiske's TV culture theory. Export TV dramas must improve quality, attract new audiences, and expand their market in Malaysia. Chinese TV dramas' business performance has improved with a better culture. Zhang (2019) suggests changing TV decor, accessing live shows, improving social interaction, and increasing global information consumption. The online drama's visuals are improved by digital technology. Otmazgin (2021) argues that Fiske's framework improves TV series culture. Chinese export TV must follow this theory to improve culture. Digital technologies have improved the film industry's value chain, says Zhang (2019). These industries customize ads for audiences. TV policy and foreign policy will help Chinese TV exports.

Digital TV technology introduces visual effects, and post-processing images give viewers visual enjoyment, according to Otmazgin (2021). The foreign policy promotes trade policies. Lee, Chae, and Lew (2020) argue that international labor division constrains economic globalization and film industry society and economy. The foreign policy prioritizes national security, peace, trade, and human rights. Foreign policy guides other countries' relationships and activities, per Beattie

(2019).

Chinese TV must maintain a foreign policy to improve its culture. Fiske's TV Culture theory improves China's film industry. Different TV economics improve audience pleasure and TV drama production; according to Ramrez-Castillo et al., Malaysians prefer Chinese fantasy romances. Ruddock (2019) argues that TV culture produces correctly, and culture induces TV drama quality, which increases community well-being, Rashid, M. H., Shamem, A. S. M., & Hui, W. (2022). This theory affects Chinese TV dramas. Yoon (2018) explains how industrial extension and self-regulation increase economic value. This theory promotes the Chinese export of TV dramas. Chinese TV exports must have good content for Malaysians. Chinese cultural values include benevolence, harmony, courtesy, righteousness, loyalty, and honesty. Malaysian audiences dislike political dramas, so China must avoid them. Ruddock (2019) counters that political TV shows reduce business preference.

Conclusion

The study above uses Fiske's TV culture theory to analyze Chinese online dramas. Digital technology and value chain improvements help Chinese exporters compete. Chinese online dramas boost cultural production. This study examines how Chinese online dramas boost interest. Domestic video sites and Chinese online dramas are linked. This study describes Chinese drama export research methods. Malaysians like Chinese online dramas, research shows. Demography spreads Chinese dramas to Malaysia. Similar Chinese language and culture help Malaysian business and online TV dramas. Internalization improves motivation and beliefs. Malaysia's large Chinese population boosts exports. Malaysians love Chinese web dramas. "Psychologist" influences young Malaysians. They are adopting Fiske's TV culture theory and intertextuality. A Chinese online TV drama in Malaysia was analyzed using Fiske's horizontal-vertical intertextuality framework. Fiske's TV culture theory says capitalist and industrialized society's cultural products reflect demographic culture. Malaysians benefit from Chinese exports that follow cultural theory. The study examines Malaysians' reactions to Chinese dramas. China's export TV industry strives to produce high-quality series. Internalization enhances viewership.

Chinese export TV must consider public opinion to boost its market position and competitiveness. Intercultural research described media and national image. Media, policy makers, public opinion, and China's image affect China's online TV industry. Fiske's TV culture theory boosts the industry's competitiveness and improves TV culture. Chinese export TV must follow TV and foreign policy before airing OTT dramas. Chinese TV dramas are booming, and social media is significant in Malaysian advertising. This study suggests Malaysia imports Chinese TV dramas, so the population's needs and preferences must be met. Chinese online TV monitors Malaysian culture for viewership. Malaysia's communication culture is explained. Culture, language, intercultural mediation, linguacultural components, and communication channels are essential. Chinese dramas will be on Amazon Prime and Netflix. This study analyzed Malaysian online comments. TV dramas are audio-visual symbols that improve with culture and money. Online Chinese TV should follow Fiske's theory to improve culture.

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