

DOCTORAL THESIS

Dynamics within blogosphere: research in the relationship among bloggers, followers, and online media in China

Yuan, Yuan

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ABSTRACT

The blog is a typical content production platform after BBS and QQ. Despite the launches of the Micro-blog, WeChat, and other emerging social media applications, blogs possess the basic features and mode of operation of social media in general. To study the environment of the blog, the relationship between bloggers, followers, online media and the changes in blogging practices have important theoretical and practical significance. These reveal the influential factors of contemporary online content production; reflect the logic of practices of content producers, the relationships between content producers and consumers, and development trends; and have theoretical and practical significance.

Scholars have mainly focused on typical problems in the blogosphere, such as blogging behaviour and the influential factors impacting this. It is important to position the blog into a social context and comprehensively analyse it. Except political and economic field mentioned in this Bourdieu's field theory, this research added media ecology as an additional macro environment factor. Meanwhile, motivations theory and Uses and Gratifications theory were used to support micro-level analysis. This research holistically and systematically investigated the social environment, blogging practices and key relationships within the blogosphere by employing interviews and content analysis of blog posts. It reflected on the features and patterns of content production, dissemination and consumption. Moreover, it provided a new paradigm in studying content production in the social media era.

This study found that as key content producers, bloggers' practices are not only influenced by political and economic factors but also constrained by the Internet and media technology. The features of the relationships between bloggers and the political field centre on dialogue and compromise, the relationships between bloggers and economic field involve support and integration, and the relationships between bloggers and media ecology are essentially interdependence and symbiosis.

This study pointed out that the field is constantly changing and full of choices and the change of the field itself determines changes in blogging practices. It is a dynamic relationship. The motivations for blogging impact on blogging strategies. Extrinsic stimulation, intrinsic motivations and emotional reasons all influence blogging practices and strategies. The changes of blogging practices are influenced by the

macro environment and the agency of bloggers. The basic blogging strategy is to assess the gain and loss.

The research sorted out the relationships between the three main groups in the blogosphere, i.e. bloggers, followers, and online media. Blogger-to-blogger relationships are moving from competition towards cooperative relationships. Blogger-to-follower relationships have developed from a "writer-reader" relationship to "producer-customer" relationship. Blogger-to-online-media is transiting from dependence to the diversification of content operations.

The primary contributions of this work are as follows. First, it has extended the application of field theory. When analysing the field of cultural production, Bourdieu only discusses political and economic influences. However, this study considers media ecology as the most important and direct factor. Second, it has revealed the paradigm of text-based content production by analysing blogging practices. The blogosphere is dynamic. Bloggers exert their agencies in response to the environment. The common features of the blogosphere and even the field of content production itself are changing from simple to complex and from simplification to diversification. Third, it has perfected the application of the concept of "cultural capital". Bourdieu noted that cultural capital is basically represented by educational qualification. This study found that in contemporary online content production, prior experience of working in media should be regarded as a vital indicator of cultural capital and assessing content production as it directly influences bloggers' content production. Fourth, it has emphasised the relationship between content producers and consumers. Field theory only focuses on the relationship among cultural producers and between cultural producers and brokers (publishers). However, the relationship between content producers and consumers is an essential interdependent and contradictory relationship. Therefore, by adding this relationship, this study holistically elucidated relational paradigms within the blogosphere.

Key words: blogging practices, motivations, social milieu, dynamic relationships, capital

摘要

博客是继 BBS、QQ 之后出现的具有社交功能的内容生产平台。虽然微博、微信等社交媒体应用相继出现，但博客已具备了社交媒体的基本特征和运作模式，在社群中有一定的影响力。本论文主要研究博客生存、发展环境，博主与博主、博主与粉丝、博主与平台之间的关系及互动，以及博主行为变化的规律，并对当下内容生产的影响因素、生产者的行为逻辑、生产者及受众间的相互关系及其发展趋势进行分析，具有重要的理论价值和现实意义。

学界围绕博客使用的行为特征及其影响因素等问题，进行了有价值的探讨，其中多是针对博客的某一具体议题进行分析。而将博客作为内容生产媒介，并放在社会大背景下，进行全方位、多角度分析的研究，并不多见。本研究以布尔迪厄的场域理论为基础，除了本理论强调的政治场域和经济场域以外，还加上媒介生态作为宏观环境的因素，加上动机理论及使用与满足等相关理论作为微观理论。通过深度访谈法及内容分析法，访谈博主、分析博文、检阅文献，对博客所处的宏观社会环境、博客的写作行为、场域内的主要关系进行了较为全面、系统及深入地研究，分析内容生产、传播、消费的特征和规律，进而为社交媒体下的内容生产研究提供新的范式。

本研究发现，博主作为内容生产的主体，其写作内容不仅受到社会政治、经济场域的影响，同时还受互联网和媒体技术场域的制约。主要关系特征表现为：与政治场域的对话与妥协，与经济场域的支撑与融合，以及与媒介生态的依存与共生。

本研究指出，场域是一个不断变化且充满不定项选择的空间。场域的发展变化，决定博主写作行为的演化，是一个动态关系。博主的不同动机决定相应的行为策略。从场域刺激到情感内化是博主选择写作主题和决策的过程，这一过程既受客观环境的影响，又受主观能动性的制约，权衡得失是基本策略。

研究也发现，在博客场域的三大主体，即博主、粉丝与平台的关系方面，博客主之间的关系由单纯的竞争关系向竞争与合作关系发展；博客主与粉丝的关系由单纯的“作者—读者”关系向“生产者—客户”关系转化；博客主与在线媒体的关系由单纯的依赖关系向多元化运作过渡。

本文主要贡献有以下几点：一、拓展了场域理论。传统的场域理论在研究文化产业场域时，仅考虑到政治和经济两大因素，而本文将媒介生态作为一个重要的直接的因素来考量。二、通过分析博客场域，揭示了基于文字的内容生产的发展范式。博客场域具有动态变化的特征，博客的写作行为具有能动性。由简单到复杂，由单一到多元，是博客乃至所有内容生产场域的共同特征。三、完善了布

迪厄“文化资本”概念的内涵。布尔迪厄强调文化资本主要是以教育资质为形式的制度化资本。而本研究发现，在当下的网络内容生产中，不仅要考虑到学历，媒介工作的经历，也是评估内容生产、文化资本的一个重要指标，直接影响博主的内容生产与传播。四、强调了内容的生产者与消费者的主体关系。场域理论仅关注了文化生产者之间、文化生产者与中间商（出版社）的关系。而内容的生产者与消费者是内容生产场域或传播领域最基本的依存及矛盾关系。因此，本文增加了这一主体关系，使得场域内各主体关系的分析更加全面。

关键词：博客行为，动机，社会环境，动态关系，资本

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