

# China's International Communication in 5G Times: Changes and Strategies

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**Abstract:** This paper mainly analyzes international communication in 5G times. 5G technology is changing the current pattern of international communication in many ways: the subjects, content, context, process, and information processing. To confront the new situations, we can form a joint force of multiple communication subjects, change the narrative pattern, accelerate the media's digital transformation, adopt regional strategies and try to stimulate the emotional resonance of human beings.

**Keywords:** International communication, 5G technology, Communication strategy.

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## 1. Introduction

International communication is the communication practice that occurs across international borders. It includes interactions among governments, corporations, and individuals at a global level. With the new historical background of globalization, international communication has become a crucial issue for all countries. Looking back in history, the innovation of technology always played a decisive role in the development of communication, which also affected the development of international communication. Nowadays, the emerging 5G technology is changing the characteristics of international communication in many ways, which raises several challenges to China's international communication practice. It is urgent to propose the according strategies, which can help us perform better in the new era of international communication.

## 2. Changes in International Communication Taken by 5G

### 2.1. Diversification of Communication Subjects

For a long time, state actors have been the main body of international communication. Relying on their resources and capabilities, the state actors played a primary role in the whole process of international communication. However, with the rise of new communication technologies, the cost of information transmission has been unprecedentedly reduced. It is increasingly easier and quicker to spread information across international borders. As a consequence, non-state actors like NGOs, transnational enterprises, and even individuals have sufficient capacity to participate in the process of international communication. Through international social platforms, an ordinary person can become a famous influencer with a large number of followers. Then they can contribute a lot to the flow of transnational information. The role of national organizations has been weakened to some extent accordingly. The advent of 5G technology exacerbates the trend. The advent of 5G technology exacerbates the trend. International communication among transnational individuals is becoming so frequent and convenient that almost everyone with digital devices can use various ways to disseminate information as long as they want. All kinds of non-state actors are being

promoted from the secondary subject of international communication to one of the main subjects. In addition, the virtual subject will also have a marked effect. The robot, which combines the 5G and AI technology, can gather and transmit information independently. It will become a new virtual subject engaged in international communication. All of these will greatly promote the diversification of communication subjects.

### 2.2. Complexity of Communication Content

Traditional international communication focuses more on the necessary information in the field of "high politics", such as politics and economy. In the age of 4G communication, due to the limitation of transfer speed and capacity, short video platforms like TikTok have risen. The content of international communication has begun to change to topics like culture and life, which were traditionally considered "low politics". The pattern of international communication has gradually shifted from mass communication to interpersonal communication. Professional media are no longer the only source of news and information, everyone can become the first-hand source of information by texting, photographing, and uploading what they see or hear. At the same time, the involvement of digital media such as VR, AR, and panoramic video has enriched the types and quantity of information products. As a result, the amount of information has increased hugely. The complexity of the communication content has also been intensified. The emerging 5G technology is characterized by super speed, large capacity, low delay, large flow density, and greater mobility, allowing us to have more imagination for the renewal of media, which foreshadows the possibility of more new forms of communication content that we have not yet anticipated.

### 2.3. Diversity of Communication Context

L.Peng pointed out that the context has become the fourth core element of media after the content, form, and social interaction. With the development of 5G, the "five elements of the scene" proposed by Robert Scoble and Sher Israel — mobile devices, social media, big data, transducer, and positioning systems will become more and more mature, which will bring the following impacts on the communication context:

Firstly, the content of the communication context will be

more realistic. With the application of interactive 3D dynamic technology, the virtual world is becoming immersive to the audiences. New products represented by the metaverse will play an increasingly important role in international communication. Secondly, the integration of online devices and offline scenes will be more closely. 5G technology makes users more connected to their own mobile devices. Big data analysis can fully extract the users' relevant information, such as their geographic locations, shopping preference, and physical conditions. Thus it can provide accurate information based on their life contexts. Thirdly, the time limit of the context will gradually disappear. Audiences can "travel" into the future or the past through advanced communication technology. For example, the use of Holographic Laser Projection can create historical or future scenes vividly. All of these will make the communication context more and more diverse.

#### **2.4. Interactivity of Communication Process**

For one thing, 5G technology will greatly accelerate the flow of information with its super transmission speed. The audience can quickly give their feedback on the information, and then have a real-time interaction or dialogue with the communicator. The audiences shift from the passive position to an active one. To some extent, this will promote the unification of the communicator and the audience. In addition to the interaction between the communicator and the audience, the audiences can interact together too. They are free to express their agreement or disagreement with others. Then they may reach an agreement or have a conflict of their views.

For another, 5G technology strengthens the accessibility of the communication content and shortens the distance between the receiver and the content itself. In the past, users could only receive information through text, pictures, or videos. New technology products like the metaverse equip audiences with the opportunities to see more realistic scenes. They can easily interact with the content with the click of a finger. International communication has changed from a unidirectional output process from the communicator to the receiver to a bidirectional interaction process between the communicator and the receiver. How to obtain positive feedback from overseas audiences, how to optimize their experience in the process of receiving information, and how to maintain good interaction with them, will be important issues of international communication in 5G times.

#### **2.5. Simplification of Information Processing**

With the development of 5G technology, the traditional information process is increasingly simplified. Advanced information collection devices can record real-time environmental information, reducing the workload of information collectors. New communication subjects like intelligent creation robots can independently help the journalist in the process of the news report, whose functions include intelligent interviewing, edit assisting, and news tracking. The simplification of information processing saves the production time of the communication content and further improves the speed of information transmission.

### **3. Strategies for China's International Communication in 5G Times**

#### **3.1. Form a Joint Force of Multiple Communication Subjects**

At present, China's international communication is mainly undertaken by the government and domestic mainstream media. The folk force is weak. However, the information from official institutions and organizations can easily cause misunderstanding and exclusion of the audience in the process of international communication. So the effect is always weakened to a certain extent. In the age of 5G communication, we should first adhere to the role of the government and mainstream media, strengthen the construction of software and hardware facilities, and pay special attention to the improvement of 5G technologies. We can use the 5G technology to improve the transmitting speed, accuracy, and attraction of the information. Secondly, 5G makes interpersonal communication on social media more frequent and convenient. The effect of the opinion leaders and ordinary people must also be emphasized. We can assure full cooperation with Grandpa Amu, Geng Shuai, Li Ziqi, and other online influencers that have great popularity on overseas platforms, encouraging them to output positive content about China. Varied forms can be used — short videos, long videos, live broadcasts, and so on. In addition, we should attach importance to the influence of ordinary people in China. Individuals usually use a micro perspective to record their lives, which can better match the acceptance habits and cognitive structure of oversea audiences. These details are more receivable, and the emotions involved are more sincere, which will be easier to arouse the resonance of overseas audiences. It is also necessary to encourage Generation Z to show their thoughts, lives, and values, using the form of new media like online diaries, short videos, and dynamic pictures. All of these will be beneficial to show the vibrant image of Chinese youth, then update people's perception of China.

#### **3.2. Change the Grand Narrative to Story-telling Description**

In the past, China's international communication was based more on the communicators themselves. The communication content is mainly from grand perspectives with serious narratives and clear positions, which lacks story-style descriptions. The application of 5G technology accelerates the transformation of international communication from Communicator-centered to Audience-centered. The feedback from the audience and the interaction between the communicator and the audience will be more vital. We need to transcend the traditional thinking set and create new ways to spread the information.

The 5G network equips us with diverse forms of new technology to innovate the international expression of Chinese political views, economic development, and cultural discourse. Take the English product Sixth Tone for example. It targets people in English-speaking areas, which comprehensively introduces the livelihood, economy, culture, and many other fields of modern China. It selects representative Chinese characters and uses individual stories to reflect the general background of the whole era, which focuses on the micro perspective and is based mainly on reality. It can be a pretty good reference. All communication subjects should change the serious expression to a more story-

telling one, and try to build an appropriate narrative system with Chinese characteristics. It can be conducive to promoting the attractiveness of international communication and make more overseas audiences sympathize with our stories.

### **3.3. Accelerate the Digital Transformation of the Media**

5G technology forms the technical foundation for the digital transformation of media. Chinese media can take the advantage of the 5G technology to accelerate the exploration and practice of digital communication, enrich the forms of communication, and move towards all-media communication.

First of all, we can launch various forms of medium and long videos like films, documentaries, or others. For example, the Documentary Center of Shanghai Media Group and Lion Television from British jointly produced a series of documentaries "China on the move" in 2021. It described the Fight against Poverty in China with vivid character stories and cases, which got popular overseas very soon. What's more, we can cooperate with the individuals, encouraging them to record their own lives in digital forms to present their everyday lives on international social platforms. It helps to show Chinese residents' real life to the world.

Secondly, taking advantage of the characteristics of 5G technology, we can selectively broadcast the authentic scenery of China to the world. New China, the overseas platform of Xinhua News Agency, broadcast the construction of The High-speed railway on June 21, 2018. It quickly attracted attention from overseas audiences on Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms, achieving a great communication effect.

Thirdly, we can utilize new technologies to provide immersive scenes for overseas audiences. It requires us to fully combine the advantages of mobile Internet and communication context. For instance, we can use virtual reality technology to reproduce some classic plots in historical stories, scenes of economic construction in real life, and even the picture of future life. It will be an attractive way for overseas audiences to know more about China.

### **3.4. Adopt Different Strategy in Different Regions**

International communication aims at audiences in different countries around the world. There are huge differences in their language, culture, nationality, and acceptance habits of information. What's more, people in different countries have different attitudes towards China. In most western countries and regions, the audience has some negative stereotypes and cognitive biases toward China. However, people in developing countries and regions have positive perceptions of China. A comprehensive understanding of the targeted audience is conducive to enhancing the communication effect. Therefore, our international communication needs to adopt different strategies according to different regions, using personalized content, selected platforms, and certain methods to better communicate.

First, we should cultivate talents who are familiar with local language and domestic conditions of the target country, so that we can accurately convey information and views according to local social and economic conditions. Second, we should choose the appropriate platform for communication. In addition to some traditional social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube, Tiktok,

whose number of users is continuing to grow these years, can also be used. Kwai, whose main target market is South America, and snack video, which targets people in Southeast Asia, can also play a role in the corresponding regions. Third, we should choose the appropriate content and form. Ways like posters and comics are easy to be accepted by western audiences, which can be used in communication toward western countries. In contrast to China's communitarianism values, people in western countries hold individualism values. The communication content aimed at the west should combine the story of China with individual experiences so that it can easily echo the sentiment of the audience. For people in developing countries, we can make use of new media platforms such as Tiktok while keeping long-term cooperation with local media. The communication content can be focused on the collaboration of the Chinese government and local government, serving the layout of our foreign policy to convey a friendly national image of China. All of these require close cooperation of our communication enterprises and international media.

### **3.5. Stimulate the Emotional Resonance of Human Beings**

There are various resources in China's history, culture, and real life. We need to find out about the stories that can stimulate people's common emotional resonance and transform them into the common issues of human beings. To ensure that, we should lay stress on the human's universal moral sense to make overseas people sympathize with the story of China. Only in this way can we stand out from the miscellaneous information and obtain more recognition and respect.

In 2021, Chinese media carried out a series of reports on the migration of African elephants in Yunnan, China. The event quickly attracted the attention of the media in Britain, the United States, Italy, Australia, Japan, South Korea, India, and many other countries. The serial reports fully showed the Chinese government's care for nature and citizens, as well as its outstanding management capacity. The common love for animals aroused the emotional resonance of global audiences. People worldwide gained a more comprehensive understanding of China. We can learn a lot from this issue. While reporting the events, the media should also pay attention to emphasizing the human's common feelings and emotions in them. Try to turn our national propositions into common beliefs for human beings, and correctly convey them to the whole world. Spreading our story in a more sincere, inclusive, and friendly way can help to arouse a sense of identity from the overseas audience.

## **4. Summary**

The influence generated by 5G will lead international communication into a new era. It requires the joint efforts of the government, the media, and the folk force. In 5G times, we should pay attention to the renewal of the communication strategy, constantly improving the strategic layout and specific methods to keep pace with the times. With such an attitude, we can earn more identity and respect from the world.

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