

# Research on short Video Communication of Variety Show in New Media Environment

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**Abstract:** With the development of new media, short video platforms provide new ideas for the communication and promotion of variety shows. However, variety short videos failed to gain widespread attention on the platform, with most content receiving low likes and comments. Taking Tik Tok as an example, this paper makes a systematic analysis of variety content and audience attitude on the platform by means of statistical analysis and personal interview. Among them, the unique "agenda setting" function of short video has a great impact on the promotion of variety shows. The author will discuss this situation in detail.

**Keywords:** Short video, Variety show, Agenda setting.

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## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, short videos are booming. According to the 2018 Tik Tok Big Data Report released by Tik Tok Platform, as of December 2018, the daily active users of Tik Tok in China have exceeded 250 million, and the monthly active users in China have exceeded 500 million[1]. According to the data report of Tik Tok in 2021, the platform has more than 600 million daily active users and more than 10 million works uploaded to Tik Tok every day[2]. While short videos attract a large number of viewers, they undoubtedly have an impact on variety shows. More and more viewers begin to indulge in fast paced short videos. Variety shows, as a representative of "long videos", are greatly affected in this environment. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, from 2019 to 2021, the number of entertainment shows dropped from 490 to 428, and online shows from 245 to 215[3]. In the face of the development dilemma, variety shows have also started to promote themselves through short-form video, hoping to attract more viewers and enthusiasm from the huge user base with more streamlined content. As a result, the Tik Tok platform is currently filled with a large number of short videos about variety shows, with a variety of content forms. However, the short videos of variety shows do not attract widespread attention from users, and the content of the "Tik Tok Variety" account, which has millions of fans, has very low likes, forming a huge contrast. In this regard, how can variety shows spread in the short video platform to attract more viewers? What kind of content can easily trigger viewers' attention and discussion? To address these questions, this paper analyzes and studies the content of short videos about variety shows on the Tik Tok platform.

## 2. Literature Review

The early variety shows were mostly in the form of evening parties, but after that, there were many different kinds of variety shows with richer contents and genre models, and they had a strong comprehensive nature, so there are many definitions for them. Wei Long in his book "TV Program Production" emphasizes the comprehensive nature of the program, and he believes that variety show refers to a comprehensive literary and entertainment program, namely, a program form that uses multiple artistic means to organically

combine individual programs of multiple artistic subjects[4]. Nowadays, with the continuous progress of technology, variety shows no longer depend on TV as a communication carrier, and the emergence of short videos has undoubtedly provided a new path for the promotion and development of variety shows. Wang Jianli, in "The Integration and Development of Short Video and TV Variety Program Creation in the Era of Integrated Media," explains "the symbiosis of the integration of large and small screens." In "Research on the short-form video dissemination of online variety shows[5]," Leng Song proposed the development path of "linking short and long channels to achieve channel victory"[6]. They believe that in the era of integrated media, the integrated development of short video and TV variety shows is sustainable and long-term. However, these studies are only limited to the idea of the linkage development between variety shows and short videos during the broadcast period, and the communication of "short variety videos" on the platform is still a question worthy of investigation.

Agenda-setting theory first appeared in the 1972 paper "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media" by American communication scholars Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw. They argued that mass communication has a function of setting the public's "agenda," and that the media's news coverage and messaging activities influence people's judgment of the world around them by giving various "issues" varying degrees of prominence[7]. With the continuous development of new media, various researches on the theory of "Agenda Setting" have emerged one after another. In "Research on the Agenda Setting of Short Video for Urban Image Construction ", Han Xinran and Jia Ping mainly analyzed the characteristics of the unique "agenda setting" function of short video for urban image construction[8]. He believed that with the progress of the Internet and mobile terminals, the emergence of mobile short video provides a new carrier and communication mode for the construction of city image. This new communication mode provides reference value for the marketing and promotion of variety shows.

## 3. Methodology

The research methods of this paper will be statistical analysis and personal interview. The author mainly focuses

on short videos about variety shows on Tik Tok and investigates people who have the habit of watching variety shows, and solves research problems through statistics and summary of specific data.

Specifically, the author started a 15-day investigation on Tik Tok platform from October 3, 2022. Among them, the variety works in the official account of "iQIYI Variety" on Tik Tok were watched and analyzed. It should be noted that among many Tik Tok accounts, iQIYI is chosen as the main research object in this study because iQIYI, as a video website, covers rich video content such as TV series, movies and variety shows. It is also the official account of a few video websites registered on Tik Tok platform with variety shows

as the specific category. According to statistics, this account has released a total of 7,542 works on the Tik Tok platform, including videos of various variety shows, and gained a total of 1.532 million followers. This account usually produces multiple short videos of the same kind of variety show to promote it regularly, and the number of likes it receives varies. The author selected the representative variety show "The Voice of China" among various contents. There were 42 related videos in total, and the information was listed based on the number of likes, main characters in the videos and the number of Tik Tok followers of the main characters.

**Table 1.** Short videos of "Voice of China" in the official account of "iQIYI Variety Show"

Video number	Main characters	Video likes	Number of Tik Tok followers
No.15	Liang Jingru Fan Bentong	222 thousand	Liang:1.11 million Fan: 52 thousand
No.3	Huang Xiaoyun Xilinnayi Gao	47 thousand	Huang:1.84million Xilin:1.25 million
No.38	Li Wen Wang Zepeng	34 thousand	Li: 2.05 million Wang:13 thousand
No.32	Li Keqin	22 thousand	5.11 million
No.19	Li Ronghao	8632	2.17 million
No.31	Yang Can	131	5002
No.30	Die Chang	374	47 thousand
No.13	Dong Mingli	90	3907
No.21	Yang Chun	202	99 thousand
No.28	Yao Yusheng	174	11 thousand

On the other hand, this study adopted a semi-structured and combined online and offline interview format to investigate the audience's attitudes and perceptions toward variety short videos. In the interviews, the author can flexibly make necessary adjustments according to the actual situation of the interviews. There were no specific requirements on the way and order of questions, the way the interviewees answer, the form of interview recording, as well as the time and place of the interviews, all of which were handled flexibly by the author according to the situation. As a result, the interview process was free and flexible, and the questions could be deepened at the right time in order to draw better conclusions. Second, the selection of interviewees was representative, and the author selected specific groups of people around the topic of "variety arts" to ensure support for the research content.

Specifically, 20 interviewees were randomly selected from the comment section of variety and Tik Tok videos and the author's family and friends, all of whom were 20 to 30 years old and had the habit of watching variety and Tik Tok videos, of whom 8 were male and 12 were female, and each had about 30 minutes of conversation. During the interview process, the author and the interviewees focused on the topic of short-form video variety content, which covered two parts. The first was about what kind of variety videos respondents usually prefer and what elements they find objectionable. The other part of the interview was about what influences the respondents usually have on the short-form video content that makes them willing to share and discuss the variety show with others.

**Table 2.** Interviewer Information

Number	Gender	Age	The frequency of watching Variety shows	The frequency of watching Short videos
S1	M	22	Usually	Always
S2	F	21	Always	Always
S3	F	25	Always	Usually
S4	F	21	Usually	Usually
S5	M	22	Usually	Always
S6	F	22	Always	Always
S7	F	22	Always	Usually
S8	M	21	Usually	Always
S9	M	24	Often	Always
S10	M	26	Usually	Always
S11	F	23	Always	Usually
S12	F	22	Always	Always
S13	M	22	Usually	Always
S14	F	21	Always	Always
S15	M	23	Always	Always
S16	M	25	Usually	Always
S17	F	23	Always	Usually
S18	F	22	Always	Usually
S19	F	21	Always	Always
S20	F	25	Always	Always

## 4. Result

### 4.1. "Celebrity symbol" boosts "Agenda Setting"

In variety shows, celebrities often have a crucial influence on ratings. For short video content, "celebrity faces" still have a high correlation with them. According to my research, the number of Tik Tok followers of the main characters in a short video will largely affect the popularity of the short video. The main characters in the top five liked short videos have significantly more Tik Tok followers than those in the bottom five. It can be seen that the number of followers accumulated by stars on the platform of Tik Tok has a direct impact on the "re-communication" of their related content. The more familiar users are with a certain "celebrity face", the more favorable the related content will be to gain popularity advantage.

I often see some interesting variety shows on Tik Tok, but sometimes some Tik Tok bloggers will make videos to recommend some good variety shows, and they can arouse my curiosity by telling some interesting plots or some reasons..... For me, most of the time I will watch a variety show because some bloggers recommend it. If the show is really good, I will share it with my friends.

Interviewee No. 12

In addition, through talking with interviewee No. 12, it is found that Tik Tok bloggers, acting as "opinion leaders", play an obvious role in promoting variety content. They gain followers by recommending the "product" to a large number of users, and the more followers they have, the higher the quality of the "product" they recommend, thus having a higher degree of trust. "Opinion leaders" often take the initiative to recommend a variety show, and they "set the agenda" of the content they tell to the audience directly, and the number of likes and followers will be an important factor of the influence of "Agenda Setting". When users receive information, they can use the convenient sharing channel of Tik Tok platform to share the content, so that the information can form a fissile spread in a short period of time and trigger the attention of a large number of people.

### 4.2. "Attribute Agenda Setting" creates emotional resonance

A variety show promotion doesn't have to be funny to be attractive. On the contrary, the intentionally funny plot is cheesy, and some of the content is not suitable for short video clips. I prefer to share some serious variety shows, which can not only arouse the audience's emotions, but also have educational significance.

Interviewee No. 7

If short videos want to attract a large number of viewers in a short time, the content itself is a factor that cannot be ignored. Nowadays, the "homogenization" of short video content leads to aesthetic fatigue, which is not attractive enough to viewers, but rather, it can be resistive. For variety shows, a timely "sensational strategy" can effectively trigger the audience's emotional identity. For example, certain variety shows cleverly use some old songs to remind viewers of the past. In addition, the creators sometimes combine traditional culture with stage performance to spread elite culture in a popular way, which not only brings the audience closer to the program, but also creates a strong influence on the audience. Therefore, short videos can highlight the attribute of "touching people" in variety shows and break the mold of "homogenization".

## 5. Conclusion

There is no doubt that short-form video platforms offer a new way for variety shows to develop. Promoting variety shows through short-form video is a complicated process, and effective "Agenda Setting" can make its dissemination twice as effective with half the effort. Therefore, future creators should not only understand the new media environment correctly, but also cater to users' needs and deliver the right values.

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