Cross-Cultural Game Communication: The Impact of Chinglish on International Players' Perception of Chinese Culture—— A Case Study of Black Myth: Wukong

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Abstract:

As globalization continues to advance, cultural output has become a key metric for measuring a nation's soft power. The widespread adoption of the internet and social media platforms has enabled cultural products such as films, music, games, and literary works to quickly cross national borders, being accessed and appreciated by people around the world. The rapid development of China's gaming industry has turned video games into an emerging cultural medium, with increasing global dissemination capabilities and significant economic and cultural influence. This study takes "Black Myth: Wukong" as a case study to explore the impact of Chinglish in games on international players' perceptions of Chinese culture.Through a systematic analysis of player reviews, game texts, and discussions on social media, the study found that the majority of international players have a positive attitude towards Chinglish, despite some comprehension barriers. This indicates that Chinglish serves as an important tool for cultural transmission in the game, facilitating cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Keywords: Cultural output; Chinglish; cross-cultural communication; "Black Myth: Wukong"; cultural cognition.

1. Introduction

"Black Myth: Wukong" was released in August 2024 and has garnered widespread attention, with its associated information spreading globally.

As a landmark in the evolution of domestic games from mere commodities to cultural products, "Black Myth: Wukong" takes the classic Chinese novel "Journey to the West" as its setting, deeply embedding Chinese cultural elements and exuding an overall mythological tone. Its widespread appeal globally provides a unique case for studying the application of Chinglish in the gaming field.

Chinglish refers to English expressions influenced by

Chinese language habits, which may carry phonetic and semantic features of Chinese, including direct translations of specific idioms, differences in word order, or unique ways of expression [1]. This linguistic variant holds significant importance in cross-cultural communication, as it not only reflects the integration of Chinese and English cultures but also provides non-native Chinese speakers with a means to engage with and understand Chinese culture [2].

This study focuses on the phenomenon of Chinese culture being disseminated through the emerging medium of video games in the context of globalization. This research is of significant importance for understanding cross-cultural communication and enhancing the international influence of Chinese culture [2]. This study primarily delves into the application of Chinglish in video games, employing a literature analysis method and conducting searches and readings of relevant materials and documents. The advantage of this method is its ability to systematically analyze the use of Chinglish in games and its impact on international players, which facilitates in-depth research. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore how the application of Chinglish in *"Black Myth: Wukong"* affects international players' perceptions of Chinese culture. To achieve this goal, detailed textual analysis and player feedback surveys have been conducted.

2. Method

2.1 Social Media and Player Forum Analysis

In the digital age, social media and player forums have become treasure troves for gathering player feedback and opinions. Research indicates that through content analysis methods, we can gain a deeper understanding of players' experiences with online games [3]. The data source involves collecting player feedback from the social media platform Metacritic, a website that aggregates reviews and ratings from various media, providing users with comprehensive scores and comment summaries. By analyzing discussions on social media and player forums, we aim to understand how international players evaluate Chinglish when discussing *"Black Myth: Wukong"*. Identify common viewpoints, discussion focal points, and emotional reactions. The specific issues of interest are twofold: firstly, whether players feel puzzled or appreciate the language used in the game, and secondly, whether players believe Chinglish adds a unique cultural flavor to the game.

2.2 Data Screening

Due to the limited content related to Chinglish in the

chosen data sources, the collected sample size tends to be small. Therefore, to ensure the representativeness of the sample, further accuracy in filtering relevant comments is necessary. Firstly, comments from Chinese players were excluded to ensure an international perspective on the data. Secondly, the ratings given by users for the game were ignored, focusing instead on the content of the comments. Existing research emphasizes the importance of analyzing game localization from the player's perspective, including language and cultural adaptability [4]. This study will adopt this strategy by defining a set of keywords, such as "Chinglish," "Chinese mythology," "translation," "grammar," "vocabulary," etc., to further filter relevant comments, ensuring the data's international perspective and cultural relevance [4].

2.3 Content Analysis

Content analysis is an important method for understanding players' perceptions of game elements. Existing research indicates that analyzing how players interact and learn within game environments provides valuable insights into understanding how players comprehend and accept cultural elements in games [5].

Through content analysis of the selected comments, this study will identify common perceptions and emotional responses of players towards Chinglish, with particular attention to any comprehension barriers and cultural acceptance players may have regarding Chinglish. The analysis aims to uncover the typical viewpoints and emotional reactions towards Chinglish, focusing specifically on the difficulties players face in understanding it and their willingness to embrace the cultural aspects it represents. Through textual analysis, this study extracts specific evaluations from players regarding Chinglish, such as detailed feedback on phonetic subtitles and character names.

3. Literature Results

3.1 Comment on the Segmentation Results of the Dataset

The collected sample comments were processed using word segmentation, and the top 50 frequent words in the comments were identified (Figure 1), generating a corresponding word cloud (Figure 2). These words tend to be more representative.

It is evident that the majority of the relevant words are positive and proactive. However, the appearance of words like "bugs" and "issues" also points out potential problems and shortcomings in the game.
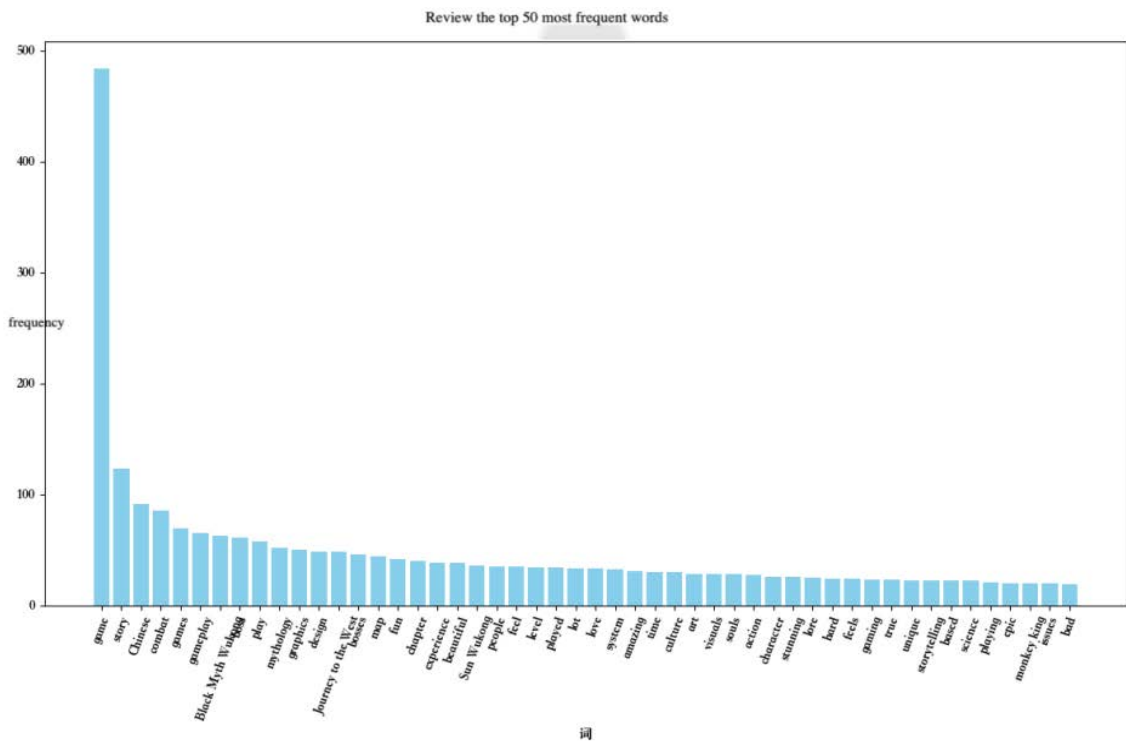
Fig. 1 Review the top 50 most frequent words

Fig. 2 Word cloud

3.2 Sentiment Analysis

Through sentiment analysis results (Figure 3), it was found that 89.5% of user sentiments were positive, indicating that the vast majority of players have favorable evaluations and feelings towards the game.This could mean that the game has received widespread praise from players in various aspects, such as gameplay, storyline, visual arts, and cultural elements.

Neutral emotions account for 1.1%, which may reflect a polarized response to the game, indicating that players tend to either really like it or hold critical views, with few taking a neutral stance.

Negative emotions account for 9.5%, indicating that only a minority of players have negative perceptions of the game. This further suggests that the game design and development process has addressed potential issues or effec-

tively managed player expectations.Additionally, this also reflects the positive atmosphere within the gaming community, where discussions and exchanges among players tend to be positive and constructive.

According to the data results, the majority of players have positive evaluations and feelings towards the game. However, the source of positive emotions may not be solely attributed to Chinglish but also includes various factors such as the overall quality of the game, storyline, visual arts, and more. Therefore, further analysis of specific player feedback on Chinglish is needed to determine its role in this context.
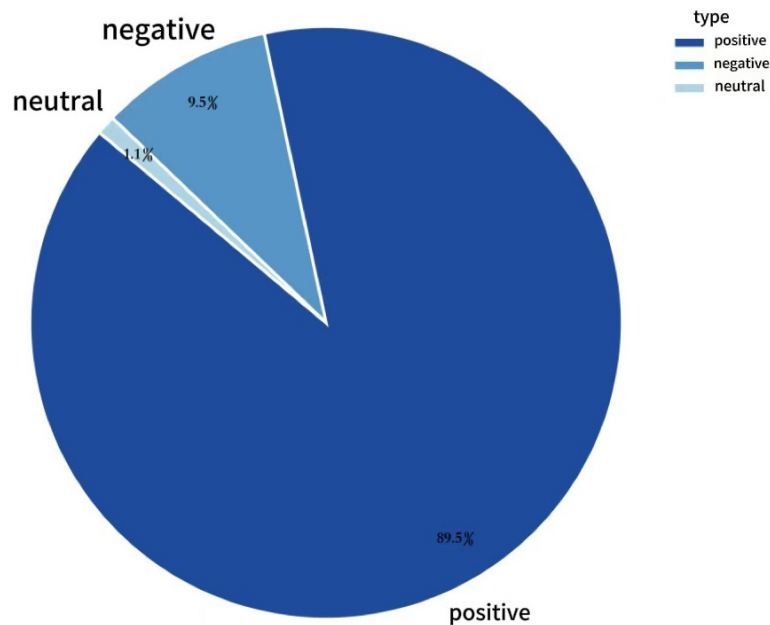

Fig. 3 Sentiment Analysis

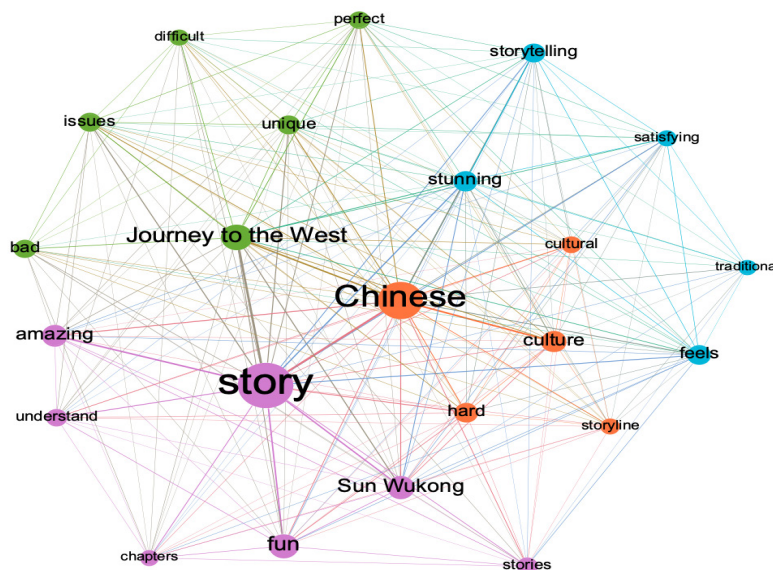### 3.3 Keyword Co-occurrence Network Diagram

Fig. 4 Keyword network co-occurrence map

As shown in Figure 4, each node represents a keyword from the text, which are selected from the secondary screening of word segmentation results of all collected comment data to construct a custom keyword dictionary, thereby enhancing the accuracy of word segmentation. The connecting lines indicate the co-occurrence relationships between keywords, with the thickness of the lines being proportional to the frequency of co-occurrence of

the terms.

In the network diagram, *"Journey to the West"* serves as the primary backdrop of the game, and the presence of this node indicates that international players frequently mention the story of *"Journey to the West"* and Sun Wukong, the main character of the game, in their comments. The nodes connected to it are mostly positive terms, reflecting the international players' discussions on the importance of the character within the game's story and cultural context, as well as their interest in the game's narrative approach based on the classic tale. These players' curiosity and desire to explore Chinglish may drive them to delve deeper into the game world and the cultural stories behind it, which aligns with the concept of exploratory engagement in the theory of immersion. The curiosity and exploratory urge of these players towards Chinglish may propel them to gain a deeper understanding of the game's world and the cultural narratives that underpin it, which is in line with the exploratory engagement aspect of the immersion theory. Simultaneously, the global release date of *"Black Myth: Wukong"* was August 20th, after which the global Google search volume for *"Journey to the West"* reached its peak. This further demonstrates that the game, as a medium of communication, has provided international players with a new window to engage with Chinese culture.

4. Discussion

Chinglish serves as an intermediary language between Chinese and English, exhibiting a diversity of forms [5]. For instance, the character "Tudigong" in the game, which is a local deity in Chinese culture that protects and blesses the land and its inhabitants, is translated as "keeper" to help foreign players better understand the concept of "The Earth God" in Chinese culture. Another character, "Lang-Li-Ge-Lang," is translated phonetically as "Baw-Li-Guhh-Lang," a direct transliteration that reflects the Chinglish translation method.

The visual arts and sound effects in the game are also crucial means of conveying Chinese elements. Combined with the text in Chinglish, these elements work together to create a game world rich in Chinese cultural atmosphere, to some extent, conveying the rich connotations of Chinese culture to international players [6].

The analysis of the aforementioned research results reveals that the use of Chinglish in *"Black Myth: Wukong"* has had a positive impact on international players. The majority of players have a positive attitude towards Chinglish, indicating that they can appreciate and accept this cultural difference. However, some players still experience comprehension difficulties with Chinglish, likely due to cultural differences or varying linguistic habits. Therefore, game developers need to strike a balance between preserving cultural characteristics and ensuring player comprehension during the localization process.

Furthermore, the source of positive emotions may not be solely due to Chinglish but also includes various factors such as the overall quality of the game, storyline, visual arts, and more. Future research on the dissemination of cross-cultural games should consider the combined effect of these factors to more comprehensively understand player experiences and cultural acceptance.

When localizing games, developers need to find a balance between preserving cultural characteristics and ensuring player comprehension. By enhancing multi-language support, offering cultural explanations, and improving translation quality, the gaming experience and cultural understanding of international players can be further enhanced.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the use of Chinglish in *"Black Myth: Wukong"* has had a positive impact on international players, enhancing their understanding and awareness of Chinese culture. The further research conclusion is that Chinglish, as a tool for cultural transmission, plays a significant role in games, helping to facilitate cross-cultural communication and understanding. This study provides valuable reference significance for future research in this direction, primarily influencing the application and effectiveness evaluation of Chinglish in game localization. Future research should focus more on how to further optimize the use of Chinglish to better meet the needs of players from diverse cultural backgrounds, enhancing their gaming experience and cultural understanding.

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