The Social Interaction Characteristics of Mobil-Mediated Communication:
An Exploration Study of Interpersonal Communication Behavior in Mobile Channel

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Abstract

   The digital technology has changed the efficiency of communication and affected people's communication pattern as well.   In the early days of internet usage, the concerns of academic research of interpersonal communication from the past face to face communication, change to the evolution of the computer-mediated communication (CMC).   Nowadays, the popularity of smart phones generates a new interpersonal communication pattern - mobil-mediated communication (MMC). This change involves not only different communication device, but also function expansion, contact efficiency and economy.   The communication relationship and social interaction, along with the technology transition result new models.

   Mobil-mediated communication in the academic field is still a new topic, relevant researches mainly focus on the technic innovation of communication technology or message properties.   However, there are more and more studies direct to the social relations of communication.   Yuan (2012) studied mobile phones for social relations in Chinese society which provide many practical observations of communication behavior.   On indirect and high-context patterns of Chinese social interaction, mobile phones play an important role and develop relation-oriented cultural norms.   Communication through mobile phones are used to define and mediate group members, maintain social cohesion and harmony.

Chinese society highly values social relationship.   In this study, mobile phone is regarded as intermediary vehicle which links people's social relationship netwok. On one hand, people interaction through moble phone, the social media, can establish contact and strengthen each others' affection connection.   On the other hand, instead of face to face communication, smart phone's mediated effect omit the social context clues so that interpersonal relationship possess the flexibility of avoidance.   Therefore, this study analyze the characteristics of social reaction in the mobile-mediated situation.   There are two research questions developed . First, how people use mobile phone to proceed interpersonal communication and establish positive effect of warm feeling?   Second, , how people use mobile phone to take the avoid effect for buffering emotional conflict?   The research adopts quality method of focus group interview to examine communication exerperience of smart phone usage.   There are six business professionals as focus group interviewers.   The discussion focuses on the phenomenas of positive and advoid effect in mobile-mediated situation.

The research found that smart phone offers many communication convenience, allowing users able to have a positive emotional warming effect, then bring a better interactive experience.   Common experiences of respondents believe that smart phones not only provide basic voice calls, but also have important advantages to facilitate communication.   For example, all users installed Line or FB community communication APP, which can replace the voice dialogue so that the contact become more economical and convenient.   Some APP stickers even improve the texts communication to a more lively type and increase the pleasure of communication behavior.   Respondents also reveal mobile-mediated communication can lower the interpersonal relation stress and avoid psychological burden.   Precisely the avoid effects come from smartphone's powerful functions.   For example, response time has considerable flexibility when phone call.   Receiver does not have to bear the direct communication of pressure, and take easy to read message.

In conclusion, mobile-mediated communication provides a convenient channel for interpersonal contact.   It towards a very positive impact on the development of social relationship.   Especially mobile phones with a variety of affiliated functions, users can adopt it for different situations and communication purposes.   It contributes to human interaction with a positive and conflict avoidance effect. Without physical contact like face to face interaction, mobile-mediated communication create a new social relation pattern and helps to strengthen the development of the collective consciousness and social cohesion.

Key word: Mobil-mediate communication, social interaction, smart phone