

A Study of Innovation-oriented New Traditional Crosstalk Writing Styles-- Taking “Baofu” and Character Relationships as Examples

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Abstract: As social and cultural changes and the evolution of audience aesthetics, traditional crosstalk is also facing the need to update its content and form. By means of synthesis and theoretical analysis, this paper explores that while inheriting the essence of traditional crosstalk, crosstalk as an art form needs to be adapted to the needs of modern audiences through innovations in jokes and character relationships, in order to adapt to the innovation and development of modern society. While analyzing the core elements of traditional crosstalk, including the use of jokes, the construction of character relationships, and the reflection of social and cultural backgrounds, the paper points out the limitations that these elements face in modern times, such as the timeliness of the content, the rigidity of the form, the regionality of the language, the singularity of the themes, and the conservatism of performance. On this basis, the essay proposes a series of innovative strategies to evolve traditional crosstalk while meeting the contemporary audience's aesthetic needs, including content reflecting the spirit of the times, breakthroughs in traditional performance forms, overcoming linguistic locality, expanding thematic diversity, innovative performance styles, and strengthening interactivity with the audience.

Keywords: Traditional crosstalk, innovation-oriented writing styles, Baofu, character relationship, improvement

1. Introduction

As an art form deeply rooted in Chinese society and culture, traditional crosstalk is beloved by audiences of all ages for its unique humor and satire. As a form of entertainment, it is a form of entertainment but also a reflection of the socio-cultural background and the audience. Following the trend of social development and changes in audience aesthetics, there is an urgent need for traditional crosstalk to explore innovative methods to adapt to the needs of modern audiences while maintaining its artistic characteristics. The current innovation in traditional crosstalk is mainly reflected in the modernization of "Baofu" (punchlines) and the reconstruction of character relationships. However, these innovative directions have certain limitations in current practice, such as the timeliness of content and the flexibility of form. Therefore, this paper analyzes the innovative strategies of traditional crosstalk through case analysis and theoretical discussion, aiming to solve the problem of how to rejuvenate traditional crosstalk in modern society.

By exploring the innovative paths of traditional crosstalk in content and form, especially the innovative practices of "Baofu" and character relationships, it can provide new perspectives and strategies for the inheritance and development of crosstalk art. The analysis of innovation in traditional crosstalk is of great significance to its development. While helping the traditional crosstalk performers to grasp the pulse of the times in the creation and performance as well as to fulfill the aesthetic needs of the modern audience, offering the audience a richer and more lifelike cultural enjoyment. For society, the innovative practice of crosstalk also contributes to the integration of traditional culture and modern values, thus promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness [1-2].

2. Analysis of the elements of traditional crosstalk

2.1. "Baofu"

The "Baofu" in traditional crosstalk is the core of its artistic form, creating unexpected humor through various comic techniques such as puns, exaggeration, contrast, misunderstanding, and self-deprecation. While Baofu retains the purpose of entertaining the audience in the process of inheriting traditional crosstalk, it is also one of the important factors in the inheritance of the culture of crosstalk. Therefore, the main task of inheriting crosstalk is the need to inherit and continuously improve Baofu from the traditional crosstalk creation routines [3].

Traditional Baofu provides abundant materials and inspirations for actors in the process of creation and innovation, so it needs to be adapted to the flavors and aesthetics of contemporary audiences while preserving the essence of tradition. This kind of innovation can revitalize traditional art and enable traditional crosstalk to continuously reflect social changes and comment on the phenomena of the times, and ultimately resonate with the audience. Moreover, the use of traditional Baofu ensures that comedians maintain basic performance skills and an accurate grasp of language during their performances, which enables young actors to ensure basic performance effects while in turn continuing the traditional crosstalk Baofu with improved performance. For instance, many young performers can gain the audience's recognition by simply memorizing the lines and performance actions when performing the classic traditional crosstalk routine "Dabaobiao." Whereas in the growth process of performers, analyzing the actions and language design of the "Dabaobiao" can enhance their self-understanding of performance techniques.

Additionally, during the process of creating Baofu, performers make a series of adaptations of traditional crosstalk, through this behavior can display the performer's artistic talents, as well as deepen the audience's understanding and appreciation of the art of crosstalk. Audiences familiar with traditional crosstalk will maintain their enthusiasm for traditional Baofu because of the adapted parts, and new audiences will gradually begin to understand and appreciate crosstalk and Baofu due to successful changes, thus enlivening the entire crosstalk ecosystem in a positive form. Therefore, Baofu serves as a catalyst in the development of crosstalk art, which can help the art of traditional crosstalk to adapt and continuously satisfy the development of the times and the needs of the audience while maintaining its own unique charm.

2.2. Character relationships in traditional crosstalk

The relationships between performers on stage in traditional crosstalk performance are an indispensable part of forming a crosstalk performance, specifically referring to the relationships between the characters portrayed by the performers. In traditional crosstalk, these relationships create a unique comedic situation by imitating real-life interpersonal interactions on stage, such as teacher-learner, couples, friends, etc., thus generating humor and laughter. Through the skillful design of dialogue and action, these relationships present the characters' personality collisions and emotional entanglements, thereby gaining the resonance and recognition of the audience.

For example, the relationship between teacher and learner in traditional crosstalk performances is often humorous by showing the apprentice's respect for the master and the master's strictness or indulgence towards the apprentice, with this relationship being given a special comedic hue in crosstalk. Traditional crosstalk involving couples depicts the fun and wisdom of family life through the mutual teasing, arguments and reconciliation between husband and wife. Those involving father-son relationships often construct humorous scenarios through generation gaps, misunderstandings, and affection, reflecting interactions and conflicts between different generations. Crosstalk routines involving friendships show the complexity of interpersonal relationships and the multifaceted nature of human nature through jesting, mutual assistance, and betrayal among friends [4].

The use of these relationships in traditional crosstalk performances reflects the social values and cultural traditions of the time while bringing joy to the audience. Through the techniques of exaggeration, contrast and misunderstanding, the performers transform the contradictions and conflicts in daily life into stage humor, which brings the audience closer to them.

3. The Transformation Needs of Traditional Crosstalk

Firstly, the content and humor of traditional crosstalk may differ from the life experiences of modern audiences, making it difficult for some routines to resonate. The selection of themes is also overly concentrated on certain traditional topics, lacking a broad reflection of contemporary social issues. Therefore, it is necessary to restate the performance of the content in the context of today's society and to redesign the narrative themes of the crosstalk according to different era backdrops when creating modern crosstalk. For example, "Jie Wa "(Stealing Tiles) is a traditional crosstalk routine that is revolving around removing and selling the tiles of the rented house. However, during the performance, it was gradually realized that some audiences had the problem of not understanding what tiles are. In response to this phenomenon, modern crosstalk should integrate more elements that keep pace with the times, such as internet slang, pop culture, and social phenomena, so that crosstalk works can maintain the basic characteristics of humor while being closer to modern life, and thus easily resonate with young audiences.

In terms of performance style, traditional crosstalk may have a certain conservatism, which limits the innovation and diversification of performance forms. Modern crosstalk performers can make their crosstalk performances more vivid and interesting by adopting a more liberal performance style and combining modern pop culture elements. At the same time, crosstalk performers should also pay attention to interaction with the audience, enhancing the improvisation and interactivity of performances, making the art of crosstalk more vivid and close to real life.

Secondly, traditional crosstalk performances often revolve around the table on stage, with the greatest movement being to move the table to the back, which limits the diversity and innovation of performances. Modern crosstalk dramas have improved on this point; for example, the crosstalk dramas from Xiangshengwashe have broken free from the shackles of stage form to create more innovative crosstalk, attracting a broader audience. Performers can perform without a table or use a table as part of the performance. Additionally, crosstalk performers often appear on television without a table, leaving only the crosstalk duo on stage. In the crosstalk routine "Da Shen An," the table is also used as the judgment desk. Such innovative approaches to crosstalk can free traditional crosstalk from the shackles of the stage.

Furthermore, some traditional crosstalk routines have a strong regional linguistic characteristic, such as the famous "Qie Kou Baofu", which essentially mock dialects from certain regions of China. These traditional crosstalk can face significant resistance from local audiences during dissemination. Therefore, modern crosstalk needs to strive to overcome the regionalism of language by using more universally understandable language and humor, as well as by innovating with a combination of dialects from various regions, to expand its universal appeal.

4. Innovative Practices in Modern Crosstalk

4.1. Characteristics of modern crosstalk

On the basis of inheriting traditional crosstalk, modern crosstalk is more related to modern life by incorporating network slang, popular culture, social phenomena and other elements that keep pace with the times, thereby attracting the attention of more young audiences. In addition, the application of multimedia technology increases the interaction with the audience, which diversifies the performance form of traditional crosstalk and provides a completely new viewing experience for the audience.

In terms of reflecting social culture, modern crosstalk is not just a form of entertainment; some modern crosstalk also possesses a deep critical stance on society and a profound understanding of life. Many modern crosstalk works contain satire and criticism of real social issues, such as the exposure of certain social phenomena and discussions on human nature, all of which demonstrate the social and cultural value of modern crosstalk. Through humorous and witty methods, modern crosstalk conveys profound social significance and humanistic care.

Further, traditional crosstalk places special emphasis on interaction with the audience, making the audience part of the performance by adding segments such as direct dialogue with the audience or improvisational interaction with the audience. Distinguishing itself from traditional crosstalk, which regards the audience as mere bystanders, modern crosstalk considers audience interaction as an integral part of the performance. This increased interactivity also enhances the audience's sense of participation and the vividness of the performance, thus making the art of traditional crosstalk more in line with the aesthetics of the masses and arousing the audience's empathy.

Consequently, while maintaining the charm of traditional art, modern crosstalk also has more distinct contemporary characteristics and a broad social influence. Through continuous innovation and development, modern crosstalk has enriched its artistic expression, simultaneously expanded its influence and dissemination in modern society, and eventually becoming an important bridge connecting tradition and modernity, art and life.

4.2. Innovative Baofu in Modern Crosstalk

4.2.1. Merging

The merging technique refers to the process of combining two or more structurally similar and non-conflicting jokes into a series of jokes to enhance the coherence and layering of humor. By merging jokes, the punchlines in a crosstalk performance can be more concentrated, providing the audience with a richer and more coherent humorous experience. Typically, during the creative process, crosstalk authors can look for jokes that are thematically or contextually related and skillfully arrange them into an organic whole.

For example, in the traditional crosstalk routine "Lun Meng," the entire segment is interspersed with descriptions of absurd dream scenarios and down-to-earth characters. After reorganization, the descriptions of characters from the first half that introduce the dream are removed and concentrated in the second half of the performance. This strengthens the clarity of the overall structure of the jokes and enhances the audience's impression of the plot and characters.

4.2.2. Adapting

The adaptation technique refers to the process of updating and improving jokes that are outdated or ill-suited to contemporary tastes, making them compatible with the preferences and values of modern audiences. Adaptation is not only about maintaining the freshness of the jokes but also about ensuring

they reflect current social phenomena and cultural trends. Creators of traditional crosstalk can research the preferences and concerns of modern audiences and modify and innovate traditional jokes appropriately to ensure that it retains its original comedic essence while giving them a modern twist.

4.2.3. Baofu Replacement and Period Adaptation

In the process of innovating crosstalk, the skill of conceiving innovative jokes is crucial, and the replacement of jokes in line with the times is also an important aspect of innovative writing. Replacement refers to the innovator's process of updating jokes based on the changes in modern society and the demands of the audience, replacing those that no longer suit the tastes of modern audiences. For example, the social concepts conveyed in traditional jokes cannot be recognized at the social level with the development of the times, and in order to continue the contemporary nature of the art of traditional crosstalk, these unacceptable jokes need to be replaced by new jokes, which need to resonate with the audience by touching on social hotspots, internet phenomena, etc.

Replacement also requires the creator to first identify outdated jokes, then conceive, write, and test new jokes or routines based on the interests of modern audiences. Finally, the tested jokes are integrated into the complete crosstalk routine and rehearsed anew. Through these techniques, crosstalk creators can ensure that their works have both traditional charm and modern aesthetic appeal, allowing the art of crosstalk to continue to develop while maintaining its unique charm and vitality.

4.3. Character relationships

4.3.1. Merging

In the merging of character relationships, creators attempt to make a single character fit into two or more different contexts, thereby increasing the multidimensionality and complexity of the character. By merging character relationships, characters can exhibit a richer array of personality traits and behavioral patterns in crosstalk performances, thereby enhancing the appeal of the story. During the creative process, authors can delve deeply into the character's background and cleverly design the character to reveal different aspects of their personality in various situations.

4.3.2. Re-creation of character relationships

Re-creation refers to the process of endowing characters with new identities or characteristics on the basis of existing relationships, thereby enriching the images of the characters and the connotations of the story, so that the audience can have a more in-depth and multi-faceted understanding of the characters. Creators can design new storylines and personality traits for characters through in-depth contemplation and innovation, making them more distinct and interesting in crosstalk performances.

For example, in the work "Huang He Lou" by Guo Degang and Yu Qian, the main character was initially just an amateur opera singer. However, through the re-creation of character relationships, the character was additionally given the identity of a bun seller, thus adding new character relationships. This change enriched the character's image and also provided more material for setting up jokes.

4.4. Actor impressions and character innovations

Modern traditional crosstalk demonstrates the trend of advancing with the times in terms of performers' impression and character innovation. Modern traditional crosstalk demonstrates the trend of advancing with the times in terms of performers' impression and character innovation. Through observation and experience of modern life, performers no longer stick to the rigid pattern of traditional roles, but integrate new elements and the spirit of the times into the characterization from the multiculturalism of modern society and the expectations of the audience, and finally create characters

with distinctive characteristics of the times and strong personalities. Simultaneously, the emphasis on the interaction with the characters during the performance process requires the performers not only to play the roles well, but also to show their personalities and styles, which makes the traditional crosstalk performances more vivid and interesting. These allow the emotions and thoughts of the characters to be conveyed more deeply to the audience.

Furthermore, modern crosstalk performers are actively building their personal brands, displaying their unique artistic charm through various media and platforms, forming a distinct personal impression. This personal impression is not only reflected in their external image but also in their language style, performance skills, and artistic pursuits, which aids in the dissemination and development of crosstalk art and contributes to the long-term development of the performers' individual artistic careers.

In summary, modern crosstalk performers contribute to the prosperity and development of crosstalk art through character innovation, performance interaction, and personal brand building, while also providing audiences with a richer and more diverse artistic experience.

5. Innovation methodology and case studies

5.1. The Logic of Adaptation

The adaptation logic of crosstalk is a meticulously balanced process between traditional essence and modern innovation, which strives to retain the backbone of traditional crosstalk while getting closer to the aesthetics and life experiences of modern audiences. In terms of joke innovation, it is required to integrate new social contexts and modern elements, while retaining the essence of classic humor. The language expression should be replaced by modern colloquialisms, and the story background and character settings should be modernized. In adjusting character relationships, new conflicts or contradictions should be introduced to make character interactions more attractive, while traditional character relationship characteristics should be retained to appeal to both modern and old audiences.

Moreover, crosstalk is not just a form of entertainment; many crosstalk programs can also reflect and comment on social phenomena. Adaptations should appropriately enhance the social criticism and cultural value of crosstalk, trying to make it a vehicle for conveying positive values and life wisdom without destroying its entertainment value. In terms of enhancing interactivity with the audience, improvisational performances and live interactions can be used to increase the audience's sense of participation, making crosstalk performances more vivid and interesting. In addition, the adapted crosstalk needs to retain the artistic characteristics and cultural value of traditional crosstalk, ensuring that the inheritance and innovation of crosstalk art are given equal importance. Through this meticulous adaptation work, the art of crosstalk can maintain its unique charm and vitality in the ever-changing times, continuing to bring joy and thought to the audience.

5.2. Case study

5.2.1. “Da Shen An”

The original content of the traditional crosstalk routine "Da Shen An" typically involves the teasing role using various wits and tricks to make the supporting role take on guilt. However, with the changes of the times, this kind of plot may no longer be as attractive to modern audiences. Therefore, transforming this traditional routine into a theme that reflects modern social issues can make it more relatable to the audience's life experiences while also increasing the modernity of the humor.

In the transformed "Da Shen An", the teasing role is set up as a master swindler, who entices the supporting role to participate in a so-called “fortune plan” in the north of Myanmar through rhetorical tricks and a variety of modern communications tools, and the supporting role eventually discovers

that the plan is a network swindle. This adaptation retains the essence of the teasing role deceiving the supporting role with wit and trickery, while also making the overall plot development more in line with the audience's cognition, and enhancing the educational significance behind the entire crosstalk. In triggering the audience's attention to the current social issue of fraud, it also criticizes and ridicules fraudulent behaviors through exaggeration and satire.

During the adaptation process, the personalities of both the teasing and supporting roles are further deepened. The teasing role are more cunning and the supporting role are more greedy to match the personality traits of the characters in the new episode. At the same time, new jokes are added to make the humor more abundant and novel, such as satire on online fraud and humorous expressions on personal information protection. Through such transformation and adaptation, "Da Shen An" is presented to the modern audiences with a completely new aspect.

With meticulously designed plots and characters, and additional interaction with the audience, the adapted "Da Shen An" entertains the audience while prompting them to think about real social issues, thus achieving a combination of traditional crosstalk art with the context of modern society. This kind of adaptation not only provides an example for the innovation of crosstalk art but also offers a reference for the modernization of other traditional art forms [5].

5.2.2. "Kai Zhou Chang"

From "Kai Zhou Chang" to "Ni De Shan Liang", it also demonstrates the crosstalk art's effort to adapt to the needs of modern audiences while maintaining its core charm. Ma Sanli's "Kai Zhou Chang" is a classic traditional crosstalk that presents a story of a man who seems to be kind-hearted and virtuous, but in reality is unscrupulous, through the form of rapid-fire dialogue. This method of creating humor through the contrast between a character's appearance and reality was once beloved by audiences. However, over time, the difficulty of the rapid-fire dialogue and the homogenization of content have made this crosstalk less appealing to a new generation of viewers. Hence, Guo Degang innovatively adapted "Kai Zhou Chang," and renaming it "Ni De Shan Liang".

In the new version, Guo abandoned the complex rapid-fire dialogue, focusing more on highlighting the contrast between the good person's character and the plot development of the story. This adaptation not only made the punchlines more concentrated but also significantly reduced the difficulty of performance, allowing more crosstalk performers to learn and perform this piece. The success of the adapted "Ni De Shan Liang" lies in its emphasis on the character's contrast, making the audience more directly feel the hypocrisy and contradiction of the character through more exaggerated and obvious actions. Additionally, the adapted traditional crosstalk enhanced the entertainment of the comedy by concentrating the laughs through elaborate lines and plots. The addition of numerous modern life elements makes the story more relatable to the experiences of modern audiences. While being humorous and satirical, it also conveyed a positive message about the importance of being kind and principled in life.

Such adaptation not only retains the essence of traditional crosstalk but also endows the work with new vitality, allowing it to continue to be widely circulated on the crosstalk stage. This case demonstrates the balance between the inheritance and innovation of crosstalk art and provides valuable experience for the modern transformation of other traditional art forms. In this way, crosstalk art can continuously adapt to societal changes, maintaining its vitality and relevance through innovation [6-7].

5.3. Challenges and insights from innovative practices

The innovative practice of crosstalk provides important insights, emphasizing the balance between traditional art and the needs of modern society. Firstly, the modernization of crosstalk needs to keep

pace with the times, closely integrating traditional elements with modern life to ensure the relevance and appeal of the content. Secondly, innovation should be based on inheritance, preserving the core spirit and artistic charm of crosstalk while introducing new performance styles and forms of interaction. Audience participation is key to the success of modern crosstalk. By incorporating interactive segments and content that reflects the audience's life experiences, the sense of participation and satisfaction can be enhanced. Additionally, as an art form, crosstalk should not only be entertaining but also take on social responsibilities, commenting on and reflecting on social phenomena through humor.

Furthermore, the integration of technology provides new avenues for the performance and dissemination of crosstalk. Utilizing modern technological means such as multimedia and the internet can expand the audience base and influence of crosstalk. Encouraging personalized expression allows crosstalk performers to attract audiences with their unique personal styles and brands, increasing the diversity of the art. Continuous experimentation and innovation are important driving forces for the development of crosstalk art. The willingness to try and accept failure is an indispensable part of the innovation process. To cultivate a new generation of crosstalk audiences, it is necessary to promote crosstalk art through various channels and platforms to stimulate the interest of young people.

The innovative practice of traditional crosstalk also emphasizes the need for traditional arts to constantly adapt to social changes and maintain their vitality and relevance through innovation. At the same time, these insights also emphasize the importance of preserving the uniqueness and cultural value of traditional art in the process of modernization. Through these methods, crosstalk art can continue to flourish and provide a reference for the innovation of other traditional arts [8].

6. Conclusion

This paper provides an in-depth analysis of the transformation needs, innovative practices, and challenges faced by traditional crosstalk in modern society. The results indicate that the innovation of traditional crosstalk should focus on the timeliness of content and the diversity of forms, while the construction of character relationships should be more closely aligned with the life experiences and emotional resonance of modern audiences. Through merging techniques, adaptation skills, and character innovation, the innovative “Baofu” and character relationships in modern crosstalk effectively enhance the artistic expressiveness of crosstalk and the viewing experience for audiences. Combining traditional crosstalk with modern social issues by reflecting social issues, updating contexts, deepening character personalities, innovating humor, and enhancing interactivity can make crosstalk works more relatable to modern audiences and convey positive social values. Furthermore, the adaptation examples of “Da Shen An” and “Ni De Shan Liang” demonstrate the practical application value of the methodology of crosstalk innovation. the innovation of jokes Innovative practices not only rejuvenate the art of crosstalk but also enhance its socio-cultural value and influence. Therefore, the innovation of traditional crosstalk not only rejuvenates the art of crosstalk, but also enhances the social and cultural value and influence of crosstalk.

The research in this paper provides theoretical support and practical guidance for the future development of the traditional crosstalk art, emphasizing the importance of integrating into modern society while maintaining the traditional charm. However, with the development and progress of social culture, the innovation of traditional crosstalk still needs to be explored and attempted in terms of content and form, so as to obtain continuous prosperity and development. The analysis in this paper only focuses on the innovation of Baofu and character relationships, and future research needs to explore more innovative possibilities and ways in order to better explore how to balance the traditional and modern innovations of crosstalk and utilize emerging technologies to expand the dissemination and influence of crosstalk.

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