A Study on the Formation Path of Cultural Identity among Elderly Sojourners in Yunnan

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Abstract: *With the rise of the sojourn-based elderly care model, many older people from all over China have been attracted to Yunnan's rich ethnic culture and highland scenery. However, the participation of elderly sojourners in ethnic culture is still at the level of sightseeing and experience, and it has not been transformed into deep cultural identification through external symbolic exposure. The reason is that there is no good way to link the spread of cultural symbols with the cognitive traits and needs of older adults in learning. According to the theories of cultural gerontology and semiotics, this paper puts forward a three-level analysis system for ethnic cultural symbols at the symbolic foundation level: the material layer, the meaning layer and the regeneration layer, and a transformation path of "decoding-reconstruction". At the level of the need for adaptation, a three-dimensional system of needs has been established: "health tolerance", "cultural cognitive preference" and "digital skill level", and thus the dynamic generation mechanism of personalised learning paths can be explained. The three parts of the cooperative Design Model for age-friendly micro-learning products in carrier design are authenticity, multimodality and emotionalisation. The theory in this paper will help us understand how cultural identity is formed by older people in different places, and also provide theoretical support for the educational reform of ethnic cultural resources.*

Keywords: *elderly sojourners, cultural identity, ethnic cultural symbols, three-dimensional need adaptation, micro-learning products, age-friendly design*

Introduction

As the number of older people increases and culture and tourism are merging, sojourn-based elderly care has begun to appear as a new way of life that integrates health care with cultural activities. Yunnan is a place with a cool climate and rich ethnic culture, so many older people live there now. However, in the current service system, cultural presentation is mainly at the level of landscape display, and the cultural participation of elderly sojourners has the characteristics of superficiality and fragmentation; thus, it is difficult to achieve a leap from sightseeing experience to cultural assimilation. The two problems above are the main theoretical problems. First, how to effectively transmit the rich cultural connotations of ethnic symbols and cultivate a sense of identity among different groups of elderly sojourners after they have been separated from their original environments. Semiotic theory, the cognitive psychology of ageing and theories of educational design will be integrated to build an organised system of theoretical support for studying the formation of cultural identity in older adult sojourners at three levels: symbolic foundation, need adaptation and carrier construction; thus, an analytical system will be established to understand the mechanism of identity formation for older persons in various societies.

1. Symbolic Foundation for Constructing the Cultural Identity of Elderly Sojourners: From "Decoding" to "Reconstruction"

1.1 The "High-Context" Features and Meaning Stratification of Ethnic Cultural Symbols

A basic feature of ethnic minority cultural symbols in Yunnan is that they are "high-context"; that is, the meaning of the symbols is not obvious at first but is deeply rooted in the specific history of a particular ethnic group, their cosmology and social structure, etc. The outer form of such a symbolic system is a material support, and within this support are collective memories, values, ecological knowledge, etc.; therefore, there is an elaborate mapping relationship between the "signifier" and the

"signified". The first contact for older sojourners is often visual, and it is difficult for them to understand the profound cultural logic of these symbols. The first problem in achieving cultural assimilation of the tourist experience is that people only see it and do not know the true meaning of the culture. Therefore, in order to build a road for cultural identity, one must first understand the many levels of meaning in ethnic cultural symbols[1].

According to the theory of signs, ethnic cultural symbols can be divided into three levels: the material layer, the meaning layer and the regeneration layer. Material culture refers to the physical carriers of symbols, such as ritual vessels, clothing patterns and building styles; it can be observed directly. The layer of meaning refers to the ethnic beliefs, historical memories, ethical norms and ecological cognitions carried by the symbols; these are mainly expressed in an indirect way, such as metaphor, symbolism and narrative. The regeneration layer shows that symbols can be activated and modified under certain conditions; that is, the inherent nature of a symbol can be changed from that of an "object of observation" to that of a "medium for participation", and the three layers form an unbroken chain of meaning transmission. Research on the formation mechanism of cultural identity for older adults living away from home should be based on the above stratification to go beyond the superficial consumption of symbols and reach the deep level of cultural assimilation.

1.2 The "Decoding-Reconstruction" Pathway for the Educational Transformation of Cultural Symbols

In fact, the change in the function of cultural symbols from "objects of observation" to "learning materials" is in fact a double process of "decoding-reconstruction". Decoding is the organised extraction and analysis of the three levels of meaning in a symbol, identification of the elements of perceptual form at the material level, distillation of the understandable core concepts at the level of meaning, and anticipation of micro-tasks that can be integrated into educational scenarios at the regeneration level. Based on the above, we can reconstruct the dynamic structure of meaning production for symbols, and they should not be treated as independent "knowledge points"; the range of decoding directly affects the cultural essence of the following reconstruction. If only the extraction of forms at the material level is carried out in this way, then the educational transformation of symbols will be limited to a superficial imitation of techniques and fail to achieve the main goal of cultivating cultural identity.

"Reconstruction" is, on the other hand, the arrangement and organisation of symbolic elements in light of educational goals based on decoding. The three stages of the above process are extraction of symbolic elements, mapping of educational goals and multimodal packaging. Extraction of symbols is to select necessary parts from the three levels of meaning that can be turned into learning tasks. Mapping of Educational Objectives is to organise all of the above elements in a way that supports the learning goals of cognition, skills and emotions. All kinds of carriers can be used to present the reconstructed learning materials in a friendly and interesting way for people of all ages. Therefore, the symbols of ethnic culture are no longer fixed cultural heritage but living learning resources, and the way of participation for older sojourners has changed from "spectating performances" to "joining creation"; thus, an effective cognitive path for the formation of cultural identity has been provided[2].

1.3 Preservation of Authenticity and the Risk of Dissipation in the Transformation of Cultural Symbols

As the cultural symbols have moved out of their original environments and entered the field of education, they have lost some of their rich meanings; thus, this problem needs to be addressed. Dissipation is the loss or change of the original meaning of a symbol due to detachment from context, simplification of form or deviation from reality. As symbols of ethnic minority culture in Yunnan, they are "high-context" and deeply rooted in their origins. Separated from the whole system of meaning provided by ethnic rituals, nature and community life, symbols will lose their rich original meanings and be isolated. If dissipation is not controlled properly, then the educational reform will be nothing more than a pleasure for the senses, and the foundation for cultivating a sense of national identity will be damaged in the process.

To keep the original spirit of the symbols is to preserve the cultural connotations that have been passed down through generations. Not all parts of the meaning layer of a symbol need to be included in the reconstruction; instead, we should identify which meanings constitute the "cultural gene" that distinguishes this symbol from others and ensure that this gene is not lost or damaged in the process of

reconstruction. It should be possible to distinguish between the "core meaning" and the "peripheral form" of a symbol in the transformation mechanism. The former should be presented in its original form in the teaching materials, and the latter can be modified according to the learning goals and age of the students. Preservation in its original form does not have to be done mechanically; rather, one should find a way to transmit the main idea in a new environment and be aware of changes in context. A problem of authenticity and innovation has arisen in the transformation of cultural symbols, and this is one of the main theoretical problems in building the pathway for the cultural identity of elderly sojourners; it directly affects whether the reconstructed symbols can achieve the goal of cultural assimilation effectively.

2. Differentiation in the Generation of Cultural Identity for Elderly Sojourners: A Three-dimensional Dynamic Need Adaptation Mechanism

2.1 The Three-Dimensional Composition and Interactive Effects of the Learning Needs of Elderly Sojourners

The generation paths for the cultural identity of elderly sojourners are very diverse, and this difference is due to all sorts of reasons among individuals. In brief, we need to abandon the old idea of static analysis and build a three-dimensional needs model for "health tolerance", "cultural cognitive preference" and "digital skill level". A person's ability to live in a particular environment is called health tolerance, and it will directly affect the strength and length of learning. Cultural cognitive preference is the desire to learn about a particular culture, and it can take the form of simple sensory awareness or deep contemplation of values and ideas. The extent to which a person can obtain and use information on the Internet is their degree of digital literacy, and we know which learning platforms are available and how widely they can be used. The three kinds of needs mentioned above are the reasons people want to build a cultural identity.

The three kinds of needs are closely related and together form the learning behaviour pattern of elderly sojourners. The upper limit of how far cultural cognitive preferences can be realised is health tolerance; in a hypoxic environment, there is a shortage of cognitive resources, so the demand has dropped from deep learning to light entertainment. There is an accompanying relationship between cultural cognitive preferences and the level of digital literacy; that is to say, people who favour deep learning will find it difficult to achieve their educational goals due to a lack of digital skills. Digital skills can help people manage their own health to some extent; that is to say, those with good digital skills can use the Internet to learn about their own health. Any change in one of the above factors will lead to a serious disruption of the entire system of needs, and precisely because of the interaction among the three dimensions of need, cultural identity for elderly sojourners is formed in various ways.

2.2 Path Evolution Logic Based on the Dynamic Drift of Needs

The structure of the needs of elderly sojourners will change with the length of time they have lived away from home and changes in their physical condition. At the beginning of their stay, people are more concerned with adjusting to life in a new place and learning the basic rules; thus, they do not learn about the local culture in detail at first. After a long time, and when physiological adaptation has stopped, people begin to seek deeper cultural integration and meaning. By the end of their stay, some people will have learned some skills or developed their own ways of expressing culture to a certain extent. With the changing demands of the people at different times, participation in culture has moved from the first stage of adaptation to a period of immersion, and is now heading towards creation; there are different demands at each stage.

The degree of health and interest in culture of older adults living with others varies greatly, so their demands are changing in different ways. Short-term recuperators help people recover from illness, so the cultural demand for them is generally lower than that of health management products. The long-term sojourners have been living here for a long time and are more willing to learn about the culture. Although it is the same group, the reasons for wanting something may change with the seasons or due to changes in health and mood. Due to the phenomenon of dynamic drift, the construction path of cultural identity will be changed. Only when we build an early warning system to track changes in people's needs will we be able to provide timely help and support for the construction of our collective cultural inheritance[4].

2.3 The Generation Mechanism and Adaptation Logic of Personalized Learning Pathways

The first step in building an individualised learning path is to determine what the students need and what learning materials are available. According to the profiles obtained from combining the three factors of need, different arrangements of learning content, presentation forms and participation times will be introduced. At the highest level of learning activity intensity is health tolerance; that is to say, how long a person can study and at what cognitive load. Cultural cognitive preference determines the depth of learning content; accordingly, people choose a position on the spectrum of "superficial experience" and "in-depth study", set a technological threshold according to their level of digital literacy, and thus the form of learning products will be suitable for their abilities. The intersection of the three is a person's "feasible learning area" at a particular time and place, and personalised paths will be set out in this area.

The aim of revising the personalised learning path is to meet the actual learning needs of elderly sojourners by adding all kinds of teaching materials in line with the closed-loop mechanism of "dynamic tracking, real-time feedback and resource reallocation". Continue to collect signals of change in the dimensions of health, culture and skills to determine the migration path of the focus of need for an individual, and dynamically adjust the combination scheme of learning products so that resource provision is within the "feasible learning domain" of the individual. Therefore, the personalised learning path is not a fixed road but a flexible one that needs to be adjusted according to changes in the needs of elderly sojourners. At this time, the sense of culture has begun to be absorbed and integrated internally; it is no longer just external recognition.

3. Carrier Construction of Cultural Identity among Elderly Sojourners: Application of the Theory of Age-Friendly Design to Micro-learning Products

3.1 The Cognitive Load in Highland Areas and the Spatiotemporal Adaptation of Micro-learning Products

One of the serious problems in the design of micro-learning products is the inhibitory effect of the highland area on the cognitive functions of older adults living there. All three areas of cognitive function in older people are reduced under hypoxic conditions: the ability to concentrate, working memory capacity and speed of information processing; thus, an increase in cognitive load will directly affect the continuity and efficiency of learning. In terms of the distribution of cognitive resources, the highland environment needs to allocate some of the person's limited cognitive resources to physiological regulation and thus has fewer available for learning participation. Based on the above mechanism of physiological-cognitive interaction, if the length and time interval of micro-learning products do not meet the demands of the lowland area, there will be a structural mismatch in the learning load and people's tolerance, and thus the effective dissemination and absorption of cultural content will be hampered[5].

The reason for the strategy of spatiotemporal adaptation is that the size of the learning unit should be in line with the cognitive rhythm of the highland area. In terms of time, to help people concentrate better under hypoxia, the length of the learning module should be reduced; therefore, we divide one learning task into several small parts to reduce mental fatigue. Regarding the environment of study, it is recommended to organise it according to one's own sleep-wake cycle to prevent mental exhaustion caused by prolonged periods of study. It is based on the idea that the patterns of utilisation of cognitive resources in high-altitude areas are different. Divide the cultural content into small modules that are suitable for the cognitive rhythm of the people, allow for some time of cognitive rest between learning sessions, and thus micro-learning products can continuously provide all kinds of learning activities in different situations and offer a stable cognitive foundation for the gradual formation of cultural identity.

3.2 The Design Paradigm of "Authenticity-Multimodality-Emotionalisation" Triadic Collaboration

As carriers of material culture and the formation of cultural identity, the Design Paradigm for micro-learning products should be in harmony with all these values. The degree of authenticity refers to how well the original meaning of a cultural symbol is preserved in the process of change, and it is required for the construction of cultural identity. When converting the layers of meaning in symbols into teaching modules, we need to identify and preserve the "cultural gene" of a symbol so that it can be distinguished from other symbols and not lose meaning due to formal simplification or detachment

from context. Authenticity can be achieved if one can distinguish between the essential meaning and the outer form of a symbol, and it is also necessary to continuously check whether the meaning has been effectively transmitted after modification; thus, the cultural contents experienced by elderly sojourners should genuinely belong to their own culture.

Multimodality refers to the many carriers in the presentation forms of learning products, and it can meet the different cognitive demands and levels of digital literacy for people in various ways. One way of presenting the information is not suitable for all older people living alone. Multimodal packaging has many kinds of sensory information, such as sight, sound and touch, so it is relatively easy for people with some sensory disabilities to use. Selection of low-technology-threshold carriers will improve the accessibility and participation of information for all people. Emotionalisation is the reason for students' learning in educational works, and it is associated with positive emotions. A closed-loop structure of "learning-creating-displaying" can be built to spread cultural knowledge and provide a place for people to express and share their ideas, thus boosting their self-confidence and sense of belonging to a group. Authenticity can be based on real cases, and many kinds of experiences can be shown in different ways; emotions can make them more moving. The three are in agreement and together form a whole system for the age-friendly design of micro-learning products[6].

3.3 The Mutually Constitutive Relationship between Learning Products and the Internalisation of Cultural Identity

Micro-learning products and the construction of cultural identity are closely related, and they have an intimate, bidirectional relationship. Products can be symbols of identity at all times, so age-friendly micro-learning modules have been developed to present cultural symbols and help older adults learn about and experience the spirit of Chinese culture. Reduce the abstraction of cultural ideas to small, obvious, achievable and modifiable tasks so that the learning products can reduce the mental burden of cultural study and help people gradually learn external symbols by giving them personal meaning within the limits of their own abilities. This is the result of many learning activities that have accumulated over a long time, and every small success also helps to boost a person's cultural confidence.

In terms of the feedback of identity on the product, the understanding and emotions experienced by elderly sojourners in the process of cultural assimilation will also affect how learning products are used and what meanings are created. People do not passively receive the content provided by the product; rather, according to their own cognitive framework, emotional inclination and cultural background, they actively interpret and reconstruct the learning tasks to derive all sorts of meanings from the learning product in their actual use that go beyond the original design intention. Joint construction of learning products and the internalisation of cultural identity show that one way for the formation of cultural identity is not direct inheritance from the product; rather, it is an ongoing process of mutual construction by individuals and learning products. As a material intermediary in the above process, the design of micro-learning products should enable individuals to actively interpret and creatively participate in order to achieve the final goal of cultural assimilation through joint construction of products and identity.

Conclusion

The three levels of the organised theoretical system for the formation of cultural identity among elderly sojourners in Yunnan presented in this paper are the symbolic foundation, need adaptation and carrier construction. At the level of the foundation for symbols, there are three divisions in the analysis of ethnic cultural symbols: the "material layer", the "meaning layer", and the "regeneration layer", and there is an inherent conflict between the need for authenticity and the loss of meaning in the process of "decoding-reconstruction". At the level of the need adaptation, a three-dimensional framework for needs has been established, consisting of "health tolerance", "cultural cognitive preference" and "digital skill level", and thus a generation mechanism for personalised learning paths under the closed-loop mechanism of "dynamic tracking", "real-time feedback" and "resource reconfiguration" has been developed. At the level of carrier construction, three types of cooperative design models for age-friendly micro-learning products have been put forward: "authenticity", "multimodality" and "emotionalisation", and it has also been decided that learning products and the internalisation of cultural identity are in a bidirectional and mutually constitutive relationship. In the future, various kinds of educational reforms for all kinds of cultural symbols will be further explored, more quantitative

descriptions will be added to the dynamic development pattern of the three-dimensional needs, and more precise theoretical models of learning paths for older adults at different stages in life will be built.

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