

## Study on the shaping of discourse power of Global South countries from the perspective of international communication

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**Abstract:** The countries of the “Global South” are gradually breaking the international discourse system that has long been dominated by developed countries, and promoting the development of the international order in a more equitable and inclusive direction. In this context, how to enhance the position expression and discourse presentation of the “Global South” has become a key issue in shaping the new global communication order. This study mainly uses the literature analysis method and the historical research method to sort out the common value foundation of the communication theory of the countries of the “Global South”, analyze the obstacles in the process of discourse power construction, and finally draw corresponding suggestions. The study believes that the shaping of the discourse power of the “Global South” countries must first promote the construction of communicability between national cultures; second, promote the deep integration of AI and cognitive justice; third, build a new paradigm of communication for 1mutual learning among civilizations, and respect the differences in the development of civilizations among countries. When every civilization can participate in the global dialogue equally, we can truly realize the democratization of communication.

**Keywords:** International communication. Global South. National discourse. Cross-cultural communication. Democratization.

## Estudo sobre a formação do poder discursivo nos países do Sul Global sob a perspectiva da comunicação internacional

**Resumo:** Os países do “Sul Global estão quebrando gradualmente o discurso do sistema internacional que tem sido amplamente dominado pelos países desenvolvidos e vem promovendo o desenvolvimento de uma ordem internacional mais equitativa e inclusiva. Nesse contexto, como realçar a expressão da posição e a apresentação discursiva do “Sul Global” tem virado uma questão chave na formação de uma nova ordem de comunicação global. Esse estudo utiliza principalmente o método de análise literário e o método de pesquisa histórica para resolver a fundação de valores comuns da teoria da comunicação dos países do “Sul Global”, analisar os obstáculos no processo de construção de poder discursivo e finalmente traçar as sugestões correspondentes. O estudo acredita que a formação do poder discursivo dos países do “Sul Global” precisa primeiro, promover a construção da comunicabilidade entre as culturas nacionais, segundo

promover uma integração profunda de IA e justiça cognitiva e terceiro, construir um novo paradigma de comunicação para mutua aprendizagem entre civilizações e respeito das diferenças no desenvolvimento de civilizações entre os países. Quando cada civilização possa participar no diálogo global equitativamente, nos poderemos verdadeiramente realizar a democratização da comunicação.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação internacional. Sul global. Discurso nacional. Comunicação intercultural. Democratização.

## 1. Introduction

The world is undergoing a major change that has not been seen in a century, among which the collective rise of the “Global South” countries has become a prominent feature of the change in the international landscape. This group has not only made important breakthroughs in the fields of economy and politics, but also demonstrated an increasing influence in international affairs. As the global power structure shifts from the “Western-centered” to pluralistic co-governance, the “Global South” countries are gradually breaking the international discourse system that has long been dominated by developed countries, and promoting the development of the international order in a more equitable and inclusive direction. In this context, the transformation of the field of international communication is particularly important – how to enhance the position expression and discourse presentation of the “Global South” has become a key issue in shaping the new global communication order.

As an important member of the “Global South”, China has always been committed to promoting the transformation and innovation of the international communication system. At the Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, President Xi Jinping clearly put forward the strategic deployment of “promoting the reconstruction of the international communication landscape”, emphasizing that this process not only involves the reorganization of international communication forces and the optimization of communication effects, but also includes enhancing the overall voice of the “Global South”, enhancing its international discourse power, and ultimately building a more equitable and diverse new global communication order. China’s strategic posi-

tioning goes beyond the traditional geopolitical or “South-South cooperation” framework, and instead regards the “Global South” as an international force based on common identity and development demands, with the core goal of striving for greater representation and influence in global governance.

However, the current international communication system is still deeply influenced by Western discourse hegemony, and the voices of the Global South countries are often marginalized or misinterpreted. Therefore, the study of the shaping of the discourse power of the “Global South” countries cannot only stay at the level of communication technology or laws, but should deeply explore how to promote the evolution of the international order in a more just and progressive direction through communication practice. Especially in the context of the profound transformation of the world pattern, international communication research needs to focus on the following core issues: How to build a more representative “Global South” discourse system? How to use emerging media technologies to break the Western-dominated communication monopoly? And how to enhance the narrative ability of the Global South countries through cross-cultural communication?

This article will explore the shaping path of the discourse power of the “Global South” countries from the perspective of international communication, analyze the role played by China in it, and think about how to promote the formation of a more balanced global discourse order through communication practice. This study not only helps to enrich international communication theory, but also provides an important practical reference for the Global South countries to enhance their international influence.

## **2. Thinking about the common value foundation of the “Global South” communication theory**

As the wave of digitalization sweeps the world, the revolutionary development of information technology has completely reconstructed the space-time boundaries of traditional communication. The widespread application of cutting-edge technologies such as 5G communications, artificial intelligence,

and big data has not only enabled information dissemination to break through the limitations of physical space, but also created an all-weather, instant global communication network. This technological change has brought two significant effects: on the one hand, the dissemination subjects have shown a trend of decentralization and diversification, and the rise of social media platforms and self-media channels has given the “global South” countries unprecedented opportunities to speak out; on the other hand, the speed and scale of information flow have increased exponentially, and the pattern of traditional Western media monopolizing international discourse power is fundamentally loosening. According to data from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), about 75% of global Internet users in 2023 will come from developing countries, and this number is still growing, indicating the huge potential of the “global South” in the field of digital communication.

International communication is essentially a complex process of civilization dialogue. It goes beyond simple information transmission, but involves deep interactions in multiple dimensions such as political ideas, economic models, and cultural values. In this process, cognitive docking, emotional resonance, and value identification between different civilizations constitute the core elements of effective communication. The current global communication ecology presents distinct contradictory characteristics: on the one hand, peaceful development and win-win cooperation have become an irreversible trend of the times; on the other hand, the Western-centric mindset and cultural hegemony communication practice are still creating a profound cognitive gap. For example, Western mainstream media often report on the affairs of developing countries with obvious value bias and framework presuppositions. This narrative method seriously hinders true cross-cultural understanding. Although peaceful development and win-win cooperation have become the irreversible mainstream of the times, realistic obstacles such as hegemonic thinking and cultural friction still pose severe challenges to cross-cultural communication.

As an emerging theoretical paradigm, the theoretical construction and practical exploration of “Global South” shoulders the important mission of reshaping the international communication pattern. The construction of this

theoretical framework is based on three key dimensions: first, it emphasizes the diversity and equality of communication subjects and advocates breaking the narrative monopoly of Western media; second, it focuses on the global expression of local experience and encourages developing countries to tell their own modernization stories; finally, it advocates the establishment of a civilization dialogue mechanism based on mutual respect and promotes the formation of a more inclusive international communication ethics. The purpose of studying the “Global South” communication theory is to integrate the communication power of developing countries, break through the traditional “North-South opposition” mindset, and promote a more equal and inclusive global communication system.

The communication interaction between China and the “Global South” countries is based on a deep consensus on values. This consensus is reflected in three interrelated levels, forming a unique communication cooperation paradigm.

In the dimension of historical emotions, the common memory of colonial resistance constitutes a strong emotional bond. From the anti-colonial struggle in the 19th century to the national independence movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America in the mid-20th century, and then to the vigorous development of the Non-Aligned Movement, these collective historical experiences have cultivated a strong consensus on opposing hegemony and pursuing international fairness. Taking the Bandung Conference in 1955 as an example, the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” proposed by the 29 Asian and African countries participating in the conference not only became the basic norms of international relations, but also shaped the common value stance of developing countries. This deep historical resonance provides rich emotional resources for contemporary international communication, making the exchanges between China and the countries of the Global South naturally have emotional closeness. In recent years, the “Oral History” project jointly carried out by China and African countries has systematically organized and digitized the historical materials of the anti-colonial struggle, further strengthening the contemporary value of this historical memory.

In the dimension of value cognition, although the countries in the “Global South” have their own characteristics in cultural traditions, they are highly consistent on three key issues: first, the principle of sovereign equality, opposing any form of neo-colonialism and hegemonic politics; second, the claim of development rights, insisting on the right of countries to independently choose their own development path.

Finally, the concept of civilizational diversity, opposing cultural hegemony and civilizational superiority. These consensuses stem from the common psychological structure and value pursuit of mankind, and provide a solid conceptual foundation for cross-civilization dialogue. The reason why the concept of “a community with a shared future for mankind” proposed by China can resonate widely in developing countries is that it deeply embodies these common values. The 2023 Global Development Initiative has been supported by 78 countries, which fully proves the breadth of this value recognition. It is worth noting that this value consensus is not static, but is continuously deepened and developed through multilateral mechanisms such as the “China-Africa Cooperation Forum” and the “China-CELAC Forum”.

In the dimension of development practice, China has formed a new type of mutually beneficial and win-win cooperative relationship with the countries of the Global South. The successful experience of China’s modernization provides a realistic reference for theoretical innovation. Through independent exploration, China has embarked on a development path different from the Western model. This practice has broken the misunderstanding that “modernization is Westernization” and strengthened the confidence of developing countries to explore a development path suitable for their own national conditions. This practical wisdom is vividly interpreted through specific cooperation projects: for example, in Latin America, green development cooperation provides new ideas for addressing climate change. These practices are different from the traditional Western aid model, and are characterized by equality, mutual benefit, focus on capacity building and sustainable development.

The consensus framework of the countries of the Global South is promoting the formation of a new international communication paradigm. China

adheres to the concept of authenticity, affinity and sincerity and the correct concept of justice and interests in international communication, strengthens solidarity and cooperation with developing countries, and demonstrates an equal and mutually supportive relationship different from the Western aid model through specific cooperation such as the joint construction of the “Belt and Road”. This shows that international communication is not only the flow of information at the technical level, but also a dialogue of civilizations at the value level; it is not only an external manifestation of national strength, but also an internal expression of cultural consciousness. The exploration of the “Global South” communication theory has important practical significance for solving the structural contradictions in the current global communication and promoting sincere dialogue between different civilizations.

### **3. Obstacles of “global south” countries in the process of international communication**

#### **3.1. Discourse hegemony of western centrism and its influence**

Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations” is a theoretical product of the Cold War. The ideological oppositional thinking it contains is still profoundly shaping the basic pattern of international communication. This discourse system rooted in Western-centrism has constructed a set of cognitive frameworks with strong exclusivity through institutionalized communication mechanisms and knowledge production systems.

This framework presents three typical characteristics: First, at the epistemological level, this discourse system takes the nation-state as the basic communication unit, deliberately strengthens cultural boundaries in the process of information production, and simplifies the complex interaction of civilizations into a rigid binary opposition model through essentialist cultural views. When reporting on the affairs of developing countries, Western mainstream media often use simplified binary coding frameworks such as “democracy-autocracy”, “modern-traditional”, and “civilization-barbarism”, seriously ignoring the complexity and diversity of local social development. This cogni-



tive framework not only distorts the audience's cross-cultural understanding, but also reproduces the knowledge system of Western superiority.

Second, at the level of discourse practice, Western media systematically construct the non-Western world as “others” through Orientalist narrative strategies. On the one hand, the global South countries are objectified and positioned as objects that need to be educated, disciplined or resisted; on the other hand, they are mystified and their essential differences from the Western world are emphasized. For example, when reporting on African development issues, more than 60% of the content focuses on negative issues such as conflict and poverty, while its positive aspects such as scientific and technological innovation and cultural vitality are rarely paid attention to. This selective reporting has caused serious cognitive bias and reinforced the stereotypes of Western audiences.

Third, at the level of value norms, Western-centrism presupposes the universal applicability of its own values, universalizes local knowledge as global standards, and completely ignores the cognitive gap between different civilizations and the possibility of co-construction of meaning. Most of the ethical norms in current international communication are derived from the Western philosophical tradition, and seriously ignore the value systems of other civilizations. This mode of thinking has led to a structural dilemma in contemporary international communication, making cross-cultural communication a one-way output of ideas, and it is difficult to achieve understanding and empathy between subjects of different civilizations.

This mode of thinking has led to multiple dilemmas in contemporary international communication: in terms of communication structure, an unequal pattern of “center-periphery” has been formed; in terms of communication content, serious distortion of meaning has been caused; in terms of communication effect, real civilization dialogue has been hindered. To break through this dilemma, we must fundamentally deconstruct the epistemological foundation of Western-centrism and rebuild an equal and diverse global communication order. This requires both the global South countries to strengthen communication capacity building and the international community to jointly reflect on existing

communication ethics and norms. Only through such two-way efforts can we truly achieve understanding and empathy among different civilizations and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

### **3.2. Communication dilemma brought about by language diversity**

Language diversity constitutes the core challenge of the communication process in the Global South. According to statistics, 134 countries in the “Global South” use more than 7,000 different languages, forming the most complex language landscape in the world. Language is not only a key medium for cultural cognition, but also a fundamental factor in determining the effectiveness of international communication. This language diversity brings communication barriers at three levels: at the level of communication technology, the systematic lack of digital resources for minority languages used in some countries in the Global South has caused a serious “digital language divide”. The first is that data support for minority languages is seriously insufficient. About 98% of the world’s Internet language resources are concentrated in 12 major languages such as English, Chinese, and Spanish, while digital content accounts for less than 0.3% of languages with a population of over 100 million, such as Swahili in Africa and Bengali in South Asia. At the same time, there is a gap in the translation and communication technology for minority languages. The mainstream translation software has a low translation accuracy for the languages of some countries in the Global South, which seriously restricts the development of localized language solutions. At the level of cultural cognition, language is not only a communication tool, but also a key medium for cultural cognition. If the localization of language cannot be achieved, the communication content can only remain on the surface of culture. For example, proverbs and metaphors in many African languages often lose their cultural connotations in the process of literal translation, resulting in a significant reduction in communication effectiveness. Finally, at the level of communication effectiveness, the phenomenon of communication distortion caused by language differences is particularly prominent. There are fundamental differences between the oral traditions of many countries and the Western text

communication model. This difference in communication methods often leads to distortion of information transmission. Effective cross-cultural communication must go beyond simple language conversion and strive to achieve the dual goals of emotional resonance and value identification. It is worth noting that the challenge of language diversity also breeds new opportunities. Countries in the global South are using language technology localization strategies to enhance their international communication capabilities while maintaining cultural characteristics. In the future, with the development of artificial intelligence technology, the cost of language conversion is expected to be greatly reduced, but the accurate transmission of cultural connotations still requires continuous investment in humanistic wisdom.

### **3.3. Bias in the development of artificial intelligence technology**

The application of artificial intelligence technology in the field of international communication is reconstructing the global communication power structure in a hidden and systematic way. First, the bias at the data level is very significant. The imbalance of data will cause AI systems to often misinterpret cultural content when dealing with developing countries. The training data of the current mainstream AI system mainly comes from the language system, value standards and communication paradigm dominated by developed countries. This data architecture causes the AI system to not only reproduce the existing cultural bias, but also institutionalize and expand it through technical means. Secondly, the algorithm recommendation mechanism strengthens the hegemony of Western discourse. The algorithms of social media platforms are more inclined to push content that conforms to Western values, forming an “information cocoon” effect. The AI system may establish the communication paradigm of developed countries as a universal criterion, and through mechanisms such as algorithm recommendation and content filtering, users gradually internalize a single communication cognitive model. This process will lead to the lack of systematic expression of the culture of the global South in the digital space. In terms of AI technology, it seems that cultural bias is transformed into a more objective output, but in fact it conceals the power relationship

implicit in the data collection, labeling and modeling process between developed and developing countries, which leads to the systematic marginalization of cultural expression in the South. Finally, the right to formulate technical standards is monopolized by developed countries, and developing countries seriously lack the right to speak in the formulation of technical rules.

The above points make it difficult for the global South countries to establish their own cultural subjectivity, and they continue to lose the ability to participate in the construction of global discourse, and the fairness and diversity of international communication are facing obstacles. To break through these obstacles, not only technical innovation is needed, but also in-depth reform of the international communication order and collective action of the global South countries.

#### **4. Ways to shape the international discourse power of the “Global South” countries**

##### **4.1. Promote the construction of communicability between national cultures**

The first way to shape the international discourse power of the “global South” countries is to promote the construction of communicability between national cultures. The core of this process is to build a multi-level and multi-dimensional dialogue system and break the traditional communication barriers through innovative communication paradigms. Taking the Chinese game “Black Myth: Wukong” that is popular all over the world as an example, this new form of digital cultural communication has creatively constructed a cultural dialogue field that transcends geopolitical restrictions. In this virtual space, global players not only experience the charm of Chinese mythology through role-playing, task collaboration and community interaction, but also subtly understand the values of Chinese culture in the design of game mechanisms. This communication model shows three significant advantages: first, it breaks through the one-way nature of traditional international communication and realizes the organic penetration of cultural values through game mechanisms;

second, it creates a cultural decoding process in which users actively participate, transforming cultural communication from “passive acceptance” to “active exploration”; finally, it establishes the dual communication effects of emotional connection and cognitive resonance. This spontaneous cultural contact effect far exceeds the traditional external propaganda method.

The deep value of communicability construction is reflected in three key dimensions: first, in terms of national image shaping. Through new media such as games, film and television, a more friendly national image communication paradigm has been constructed. This communication method transforms cultural symbols into experiential narrative elements, achieving a dual improvement in cultural identity and narrative appeal; second, in terms of innovation in dialogue mechanisms. An equal dialogue platform based on common interests has been created for the “global South” countries. This virtuous cycle mechanism of “communication-identification-cooperation” effectively avoids the problem of power asymmetry in traditional international communication; ultimately, this construction transcends the mindset of civilization conflict and provides a practical path and theoretical imagination for establishing a more just and inclusive global communication order. This innovative communication governance model not only responds to the current practical dilemma of global communication, but also opens up new possibilities for civilization dialogue in the digital age.

#### **4.2. Promote the deep integration of AI and cognitive justice**

At present, the countries of the “global south” are gradually dismantling the traditional information hegemony system dominated by Western countries by systematically promoting the autonomy and decentralized governance of digital infrastructure construction. This process presents three significant characteristics: First, at the hardware level, the countries of the global south are accelerating the construction of local data centers and cloud computing platforms, such as the “Smart Africa” digital infrastructure project of the African Union; at the software level, countries are actively developing AI systems that adapt to local language and cultural characteristics, such as Portuguese and Chinese translation; at the governance level, the countries of the south jointly



advocate fairer global digital governance rules through multilateral platforms such as the BRICS cooperation mechanism and the Non-Aligned Movement.

In the historical evolution of the digital economy, the countries of the “global south” have long been constrained by the structural dilemma of Western technology monopoly. Data show that 90% of the world’s large data centers are controlled by Western technology giants, and 85% of AI patents are concentrated in North America. This technological dependence not only leads to the outflow of tens of billions of data rents each year, but also causes a serious cultural security crisis. The rapid development of AI technology has made it more aware that digital sovereignty is directly related to the strategic autonomy and development initiative of national security. Therefore, looking to the future, we need to deepen the relationship between AI and cognitive justice in three dimensions. First, in the dimension of technology research and development, we must focus on improving the cultural fidelity of AI systems. This requires building a cultural corpus covering the main languages of the “global South” and developing algorithmic models with cultural sensitivity. These efforts will ensure that the cultural characteristics of southern countries are truly and completely presented in algorithmic representation, avoiding cultural misunderstandings and symbolic violence common in Western AI systems. Second, in the dimension of application innovation, cognitive liberation must be achieved through disruptive technological innovation. Specific paths include developing AI applications based on local knowledge systems, such as Brazil’s use of AI to organize the oral history of indigenous peoples. These practices are helping southern countries reconstruct cultural expression paradigms and break the cognitive framework set by the West. Finally, in the dimension of governance mechanisms, a global cognitive dialogue mechanism with multiple participation must be established to break the knowledge hegemony of Western centrism. This transformation will not only help reshape the global digital power structure, but also lay the foundation for building a truly equal international communication order. This systematic transformation has far-reaching strategic significance at the technical, economic and cultural levels. AI is not only a technical tool, but also a cultural battlefield in the 21st century.

When the civilizational wisdom of the “global South” countries is fully expressed through AI technology, and when various cultural traditions have equal dialogue in the algorithmic space, mankind will usher in a new era of digital civilization with true diversity and symbiosis. In this process, the countries of the global South need to maintain strategic focus, avoid the trap of technological nationalism, prevent falling into the myth of neoliberalism, and embark on a distinctive development path that takes into account both technological innovation and cultural awareness. With the help of AI technology, cultural subjectivity can be restored, and ultimately autonomous empowerment and equal dialogue at the cognitive level can be achieved.

#### **4.3. Constructing a new communication paradigm for mutual learning among civilizations**

Respecting the differences in the development of civilizations of various countries and building anti-hegemony consensus through “seeking common ground while reserving differences” is the fundamental path for the “Global South” to enhance its international discourse power. The deep logic of digital technology in reconstructing the international communication paradigm is reflected in the three-dimensional framework of cognitive synergy, value symbiosis and emotional interconnection. We must transcend the simple “opposition” thinking and establish a civilizational view of pluralistic symbiosis. The concept of “harmony but difference” proposed by China provides important ideological resources for this transformation. In practice, it is necessary to transcend the limited cognition of technological instrumentalism and reposition digital technology as a medium carrier for civilization dialogue and a way to generate truth. We can promote direct communication between communication subjects of different cultural backgrounds by establishing a transnational media cooperation network and holding civilization dialogue forums, reconstruct the perception and cognitive framework of the knowledge world, explore new communication paradigms facing the future, and approach the essential laws of mutual learning among civilizations.

The core of international communication is to elevate the value expression of national subjects from the defense of language symbols to the practical ability to solve real problems. In this process, more attention should be paid to cultural differences between countries, and a dialogue space based on common feelings should be built in communication to avoid the potential risks of civilization conflicts. This process is not only a return to the essential laws of communication, but also a positive response to the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind.

## 5. Conclusion

The collective rise of the “Global South” has become the most significant geopolitical phenomenon in the 21st century. This process has not only profoundly reshaped the map of the international power structure, but also created a historic opportunity for change in the field of global communication. At present, we are witnessing the most profound paradigm shift in the international communication system since the birth of modern communication technology – from the unipolar domination of Western-centrism to a new stage of equal dialogue among multiple civilizations. This transformation is not only an inevitable response to the global power transfer, but also a rational return to the essence of human communication.

In the era of digital civilization, countries in the “Global South” face unprecedented opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, the popularization of digital technology has broken the traditional information monopoly and provided the global South with a communication channel that directly reaches the global audience; on the other hand, new inequalities such as algorithmic hegemony and data colonization are still restricting the communication capacity building of the global South. In this context, the “global South” countries need to build a three-dimensional communication framework based on historical resonance, value consensus and win-win development. In historical resonance, activate common historical memory and emotional connection, use memory as an emotional bond for cross-cultural communication, and



provide spiritual motivation for building a new international communication order; in terms of value consensus, extract the consensus elements in the traditions of various civilizations. The global South countries all have the pursuit of universal values such as fairness, justice, and tolerance. These value consensus should become the ethical basis of global communication; in the process of win-win development, we must innovate the practical model of win-win cooperation, and through specific projects such as the Digital Silk Road and the Media Cooperation Network, organically combine communication capacity building with economic and social development to form a sustainable communication ecology, which will help move towards a more equal and inclusive new global communication order and gain more national discourse power in the international community.

Communication should be a bridge connecting different civilizations, rather than a high wall that creates barriers. The shaping of the discourse power of the global South countries is not only to enhance the national discourse power, but also to protect the diversity of human civilization. When every civilization can participate in the global dialogue equally and when every culture can freely express its own values, we can truly achieve communication.

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