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跨文化訊息策略研究：台灣與美國電視競選廣告之比較

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計畫主持人：莊伯仲

計畫參與人員：周祖誠（致理技術學院兼任講師）

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《摘要》

創意策略是設計廣告訊息的指導原則，廣告的本質與特色從而呈現。基於「文化決定廣告內容，廣告反映文化」的觀點，本研究藉由系統性的內容分析，從166則台灣和美國2000年總統大選的電視競選廣告中探討雙方的異同。

研究發現指出，台美雙方不同者多於相似者，與依據Hall (1976) 高低文本之說以及Hofstede (1980) 個人 / 集體主義面向的理論基礎所建立的東西文化模式相符，也驗證了研究假設。總的來說，美國總統候選人較重視負面文宣，而且內容偏向直接、開放的攻擊，形式上也使用較多的負面製片技巧。然而台灣總統候選人較不倚重負面文宣，若有使用，內容也偏向間接、含蓄的攻擊，在形式上則使用較少的負面製片技巧。

關鍵字：跨文化比較、選舉廣告、政治傳播、台灣、美國

<ABSTRACT>

Creative strategy is a policy or guiding principle that specifies the general nature and character of messages to be designed in advertisements. It always mirrors important cultural meanings. By conducting a content analysis, this study examines the creative strategies of 166 political spots from the 2000 Taiwanese and American presidential campaigns in order to compare the cultural aspects depicted in each. Since content (what is said) and execution (how it is said) are the two key elements of creative strategy, the primary concern of this comparative research lies in the cultural aspects of message content and message execution in political advertising in two different cultures.

Generally, the findings demonstrate Taiwanese and American presidential hopefuls differed regarding the use of negative appeals in the message strategies and production techniques of political spots, which are highly reflective of perspective cultural patterns. Despite similar democratic political systems, cultural differences may play a striking role in the practice of indigenous political advertising.

Keywords: Cross-cultural Comparison, Political Advertising, Political Communication, Taiwan, the US

Purpose and Significance

Creative strategy is a policy or guiding principle that specifies the general nature and character of messages to be designed in advertisements (Frazer, 1983). As the heart of great advertising, a creative strategy mirrors important cultural meanings. Since content (what is said) and execution (how it is said) are the two key elements of creative strategy (Laskey, Day, & Crask, 1989), the primary concern of this comparative research project lies in the cultural aspects of message content and message execution in political advertising in two different cultures. The goal is to analyze and compare Taiwanese and American political spots in an effort to explore how cultural differences influence creative strategies regarding political spot advertising.

In this study, the researchers will present a way of looking at communication by analyzing the assumptions in Taiwanese culture, and comparing them with the cultural assumptions underlying their U.S. counterparts. More specifically, this study will examine the creative strategies of political spots from the 2000 Taiwanese and American presidential campaigns in order to compare the cultural aspects depicted in each.

Research significance hinges on two considerations. First, the findings eventually reported here may better and further establish the notion that political advertising reflects the uniqueness of an indigenous culture in which it appears, as business advertising does. Second, by conducting a study of comparative political advertising, it is possible to extend the scope of our understandings about creative strategy research to the political field. Currently, our knowledge is limited to business applications. Such an inquiry is meaningful for both academic and practical reasons.

Why Compare Taiwan with the U.S.?

This research contrasts Taiwan with the U.S. for several reasons. Most important, the United States is regarded as the leading Western culture, and Taiwan can serve as a solid representative of Eastern culture. In fact, the bulk of the comparative studies of cultural content in business advertising have used the United States as either a "reference frame" or a "model" of Western culture. Only through a comparison with political advertising in the United

States can the "Westernness" and "Easternness" of political advertising in Taiwan be convincingly decided.

In addition, the rationale for analyzing televised political commercials is that television is the largest advertising medium in both countries. The choice of the 2000 presidential campaigns instead of other local elections in Taiwan and the U.S. is based on the fact that these elections are equivalent and significant events within both cultural settings.

Literature Review

Cultural Assumptions

Since culture is a major parameter in a political system, the use of cultural concepts or dimensions to explain differences in political advertising between two cultures is consistent with the often-expressed belief that consumers' responses to business advertising are influenced by their cultural norms (Mueller, 1987). Two cultural considerations appear to be particularly relevant to this study because they impact societal communication patterns and suggest that political advertising in Taiwan and in the United States are different. Specifically, they are: (1) the degree to which the cultures are high or low in context (borrowed from anthropologist Edward T. Hall's (1976) concept of cultural differentiations), and (2) the degree to which the cultures are individualistic or collectivistic in orientation (taken from organizational psychologist Geert Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of cultural variability).

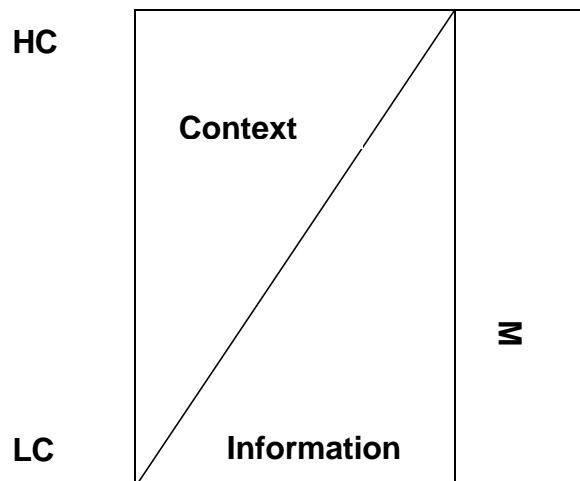
Throughout his book, Beyond Culture, Hall (1976, p. 39) proposed that the dimension of high versus low context is a way of understanding cultural orientations. In his view, a high-context (HC) culture is one in which people are deeply involved with one another. As a result of intimate relationships among people, a structure of social hierarchy exists, wherein individual inner feelings are kept under strong self-control, and information is widely shared through simple messages with deep (implicitly understood) meaning. In contrast, a low-context (LC) culture is one in which people are highly individualized, relatively disconnected, somewhat alienated and fragmented, have relatively little involvement with others, and meaning tends to be explicit.

In addition, when facing confrontation, people in HC cultures are more

likely to repress their own feelings and interests to maintain harmony. Also, because the bonds between people are so strong, there is a tendency to allow for considerable bending of the system. In contrast, LC culture people are less likely to avoid direct and open confrontation at the expense of expressing and defending the self (Hall, 1976, p. 159). Criticism is more direct and is formally recorded. In HC cultures, however, criticism is more subtle and verbal; “what is not being said can carry more meaning than what is said” (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 1990, p. 134).

Hall (1976, p. 101) clearly considered Taiwan and the U.S to be representatives of the HC and the LC cultures respectively. His dimension is quite useful because it characterizes how people in a culture relate to one another, especially with respect to communication patterns. This concept may be easily explained by the following model: HC transactions feature preprogrammed information that is in the receiver and in the setting, with only minimal information in the transmitted message. LC transactions, however, are the reverse. Most of the information must be in the transmitted message in order to compensate for what is missing in the context (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Hall's HC-LC Communication Model



Source: Hall (1976, p. 102).

Literature based on Hall's model also suggests that there is a distinct difference between the contextual levels of Eastern and Western cultures

(Kim, Pan, & Park, 1998; Tak, 1993; Taylor, Miracle, & Wilson, 1997). Given the contextual differences between Taiwan and U.S. cultures, one would expect communication styles used in political spots to be similarly different between the two countries.

In addition to Hall's concept, Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension can be applied to cross-cultural advertising research, even though it has rarely been adopted before. Recently, researchers in marketing have begun to use Hofstede's model of culture as a framework for testing cross-cultural differences (Albers-Miller & Gelb, 1996). In his comprehensive empirical study of work-related values, Hofstede identified four major dimensions of cultural variability: (1) Individualism (IDV), which is the degree to which members of a society perceive themselves as separate from others; (2) Power Distance (PDI), or the degree to which people automatically accept the unequal distribution of power; (3) Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), the degree to which people are able to tolerate uncertainty and risk in everyday life; and (4) Masculinity (MAS), which refers to the degree of value placed on aggressive and materialistic behavior.

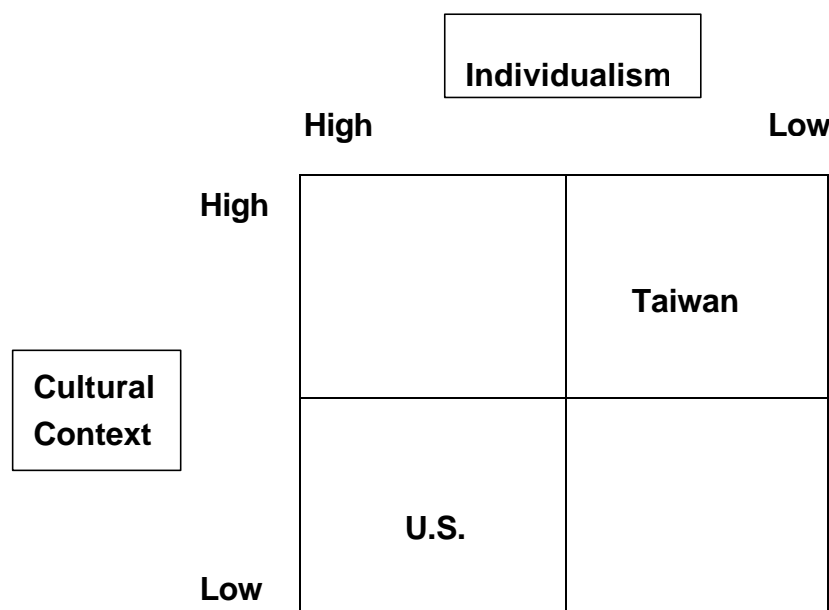
Individualism is the major dimension of cultural variability which serves to explain cross-cultural differences in communication behavior. Hofstede (1980) defined *individualism* as "a preference for a loosely knit social structure in which individuals take care of themselves and their immediate families only," and *collectivism* as "a tightly knit social organization in which individuals can expect other in-group persons to look after them" (1980, p. 87). Individualism (IDV) is the degree to which individual decision making and actions are encouraged by society. Hofstede explained that it reflects the way people live together. In a collectivistic society, at the lower end of the individualism-collectivism continuum, individualistic behavior may be seen as selfish.

Of the 39 countries Hofstede analyzed, the U.S. was the most individualistic (IDV dimension) country with a raw score of 91. Taiwan ranked 35th on IDV with a score of 17. Since Taiwan and the U.S. largely differ only with respect to the IDV dimension, there is little need to analyze political advertising from both sides using the other three dimensions -- power distance (Taiwan vs. the U.S. -- 18 : 25), uncertainty avoidance (19 : 31), and masculinity (27 : 13).

Taking both Hall's and Hofstede's assumptions into consideration, members of a low-context, individualistic culture therefore tend to communicate in a direct fashion and express conflict or dissatisfaction openly, whereas members of high context, collectivistic culture tend to communicate more indirectly. We may further expect that creative strategy in political advertising will likely be different between Taiwan and the U.S. In order to further explore this possibility, the definitions and typologies of creative strategies in advertising are examined next.

By integrating the two cultural dimensions from Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980), we may position Taiwan in the quadrant of high-context and collectivistic culture (i.e., low individualism), while the U.S. is in the other quadrant of low-context and high individualistic culture (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Cultural Dimensions for Taiwanese and Americans



Note. The original idea of designing this figure as a way to communicate the expected differences in cultural dimensions between Taiwan and the U.S. is from Taylor, Miracle, and Wilson (1997, p. 3).

A Framework for Creative Strategies in Advertising

Creative strategy is essential, and, in fact, “the heart of great advertising.” It is a policy or guiding principle that specifies the general nature

and character of messages to be designed in ads (Frazer, 1983). It is particularly difficult to classify because there is no clear definition of what the term means. A number of classification schemes have been developed to aid researchers, practitioners, and educators in identifying various types of advertising strategies employed in business advertising. These classification schemes range from simple dichotomies to very elaborate typologies (Laskey et al., 1989).

According to Cannon, Yoon, and McGowan (1993), however, creative strategy may be roughly divided into three general categories: industry-based creative philosophies, observational classifications, and theory-based models. In the creative philosophies category, the related literature has grown primarily from the work of noted practitioners, such as David Ogilvy's Confessions of an Advertising Man and Ogilvy on Advertising, or Rosser Reeves' Reality in Advertising. Walter Armbrusters' discussion of D'Arcy-MacManus and Masius' system of Belief Dynamics, or Richard Vaughn's discussion of the Toote, Cone, and Belding Creative strategy model (FCB Grid) also fall in this category. Generally, the creative philosophies consist of rules of thumb with no theory to suggest under which conditions one style should be chosen over another.

In contrast to the creative philosophies, observational classifications have grown primarily out of academic research (Cannon et al. 1993). For instance, Simon (1971) proposed a typology of creative strategies along with a content-analysis scheme to classify ads according to the strategy used. Simon's elaborate approach consists of ten categories, namely: informational, argument, motivation with psychological appeals, repeated assertion, command, brand familiarization, symbolic association, imitation, obligation, and habit starting. Resnik and Stern (1977) classified creative strategy in terms of information level in advertisements, such as price, performance, packaging, and warranties among others.

The third general category of creative strategy consists of theory-based models. The major feature which distinguishes the category is its strong theoretical roots. The Cannon approach (Cannon and Boglarsky, 1991), based on Katz's (1960) functional attitude theory, is perhaps such a useful model. Cannon extended the work of psychologist Daniel Katz whose integrative theory is considered one of the most powerful and widely accepted

approaches to attitude change. The functional attitude theory maintains that people operate from one of four different psychological functions/needs: (1) utilitarian, which prompts people to value objects (products, services, ideas, or even political candidates) that are instrumental in addressing other important needs; (2) ego-defensive, which prompts people to value objects that protect their ego from ideas that would be damaging to their self-image; (3) value-expressive, which prompts people to value objects that reflect their central values; and (4) knowledge-oriented, which prompts people to value objects that help establish clear, consistent meaning in their inner world. Each of these functions can be used as a basic appeal for developing creative strategies.

The emphasis in Cannon's approach lies with classifying creative strategies by the framework according to the four general categories noted above. Each can be regarded as an appeal and assigned a differential value depending on whether audience members are likely to be motivated toward high or low message involvement, and whether or not the product being advertised is likely to address a problem for which they are looking for a solution. It has been accepted as satisfactory, and, moreover, has managerial, pedagogical, and research implications (Cannon & Boglarsky, 1991).

It is noteworthy that fear appeals and negative appeals, in some cases, may also be ego-defensive strategies based on external threat. In terms of Cannon and Boglarsky's framework, the fact that fear appeals affect the collective whole might imply that a voter who chooses the wrong candidate is being socially irresponsible. This would constitute an aspect regarding ego-defensive. In the same consideration, negative appeals may possibly be ego-defensive, which aims at making voters feel guilty or ashamed of voting for the wrong one. However, an analysis of the political ads considered in this study suggests fear appeals and negative appeals are preliminarily utilitarian.

Methodology

Population

The population of interest is all nationally televised political ads broadcasting during the official campaign of the 2000 presidential elections in both Taiwan and the U.S. The Taiwanese population consisted of 90 ads from four tickets: Chen-Lu (23 ads), Soong-Chang (18 ads), and Lien-Shaw (49 ads).

The TV spots were obtained from the personal collection of one of the researchers. A complete set of American spots consisted of 76 ads from two political tickets: Bush-Cheney (35 ads), and Gore-Lieberman (41 ads).. They were acquired from the Political Commercial Archive in the Political Communication Center (Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma).

Category Construction

The coding instrument includes three categories for assessing the creative strategy implicit in both aspects of the “message content” and the “message execution.” They are: (1) negative appeals, (2) negativity by type, and (3) negative production techniques.

Intercoder Reliability

Two bilingual Taiwanese, both fluent in Chinese and English and familiar with the political contexts in both Taiwan and the U.S., were retained for coding purposes. One coder is a graduate student in business. The other, a naturalized American citizen, works for Detroit area newspaper. One of the researchers served as the third coder.

To determine intercoder reliability, simple percentage of agreements were calculated for paired comparisons among the several coders (Holsti, 1969). The pilot study data generated an average reliability of .93 across all categories for the Taiwanese sample, with scores for individual categories ranging between .87 and 1.00. In the American sample the average was .88, with coefficients for individual categories ranging between .85 and 1.00.

Hypotheses Testing and Result

This study uses cultural dimensions to account for possible differences in political advertising between two diverse cultures and the following comparisons were formulated and tested as research hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Taiwanese candidates will use fewer negative appeals than will their American counterparts. As is shown in Table 1, 55.3 percent of American spots rely on conducting negative appeals. On the other hand, only 41.1 percent of the total Taiwanese spots are classified under this category.
 $\chi^2(1, n=166) = 3.31, p < .05.$

Table 1
Negative Appeals

	Taiwanese (%) (N=90)	American (%) (N=76)
Present	37 (41.1%)	42 (55.3%)
Absent	53 (58.9%)	34 (44.7%)

$$c^2 = 3.31 (df = 1); p < .05$$

As expected, the finding reported in Table 1 indicates that American candidates are much more liberal than their Taiwanese counterparts in the use of negative appeals which focus on attacking the competitor “for the purpose of imputing inferiority,” or comparing themselves with the competitor “for the purpose of claiming superiority.” It is evident in the literature that American election campaigns are probably the most negative in the world.

Unsurprisingly, the finding here reveals that American candidates use more negative appeals than appear in Taiwanese election. This finding suggest that the cultural assumptions of Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980) are a good index to predict the use of negativity in different cultural settings. It is clear that Americans tend to express their conflicts and dissatisfactions openly, while Taiwanese prefer to keep them under control for group harmony.

Hypothesis 2: When using negative appeals, Taiwanese candidates will display an implicit approach with a greater frequency than their American counterparts. As shown in Table 2, the analysis of the data exploring relationship between the usage of negativity and different cultural orientations indicates that a higher percentage (37.8%) of Taiwanese use implicit negativity in spots than do Americans (0%), $c^2 (1, n=79) = 19.32, p < .001$.

Table 2
Negative Appeals by Type

	Taiwanese (%) (N=37)	American (%) (N=42)
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Explicit	23 (62.2%)	42 (100%)
Implicit	14 (37.8%)	0 (0%)

$$c^2 = 19.32 (df = 1); p < .001$$

The difference in Table 2, as expected, shows Taiwanese candidates are more generous in using implicit negativity than their counterparts. Implicit negativity includes indirect attacking or comparing with the opponent by offering cues of association to voters without referring to his/her name or picture. On the other hand, American candidates (100%) are more liberal than Taiwanese (62.2%) in using explicit negativity, which includes direct attacking or comparing with the opponent by referring to his/her name or picture.

This finding is once again consistent with Hall's (1976) and Hofstede's (1980) cultural assumptions that Americans prefer to communicate more directly and to express confrontation explicitly for personal initiative. Taiwanese prefer to communicate indirectly and to express confrontation implicitly for group harmony because "what is not being said can carry more meanings than what is said" (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 1990, p. 134).

Hypothesis 3: In creative execution, Taiwanese candidates will utilize fewer negative production techniques than will American candidates. A significant difference was noted between Taiwanese and American presidential candidates with respect to usage of negative production techniques, $c^2 (1, n=79) = 4.02, p < .05$. A much higher percentage (42.9%) of American candidates use negative production techniques in their negative ads than Taiwanese (21.6%) do. The data are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Negative Production Techniques

	Taiwanese (%) (N=37)	American (%) (N=42)
Use	8 (21.6%)	18 (42.9%)
Does Not Apply	29 (78.4%)	24 (57.1%)

$$c^2 = 4.02 (df = 1); p < .05$$

The difference here, as expected, reveals that Taiwanese candidates are more conservative, that is, less likely to use negative production techniques than are Americans. Negative production techniques include misleading by distorting an opponent's original audio/video messages or images to make him/her look more sinister, ridiculous, and negative. Again, this finding confirms Hall's (1976) and Hofstede's (1980) assumptions of culture are valid determinants toward the usage of negative production techniques in different cultural settings. The underlying reason is the same as the use of negative appeals in **Hypothesis 2**.

Conclusions and Suggestions

As the prior proposition of most previous cross-cultural comparison, this research hypothesizes that culture determines advertising content and also advertising itself is reflective of culture. The results demonstrate Taiwanese and American presidential hopefuls are "more different than alike" with respect to the use of creative strategies in political spots. Presumably, this is because cultural traits independently affect the practice of creative strategy.

The findings indicate that Taiwanese and American samples are significantly different. Generally, the results demonstrate that Taiwanese and American presidential hopefuls are "more different than alike" in their use of creative strategies in televised political spot advertisements. The implication is that cultural traits do serve to impact creative strategy differently.

First of all, Taiwanese candidates were expected to use fewer negative appeals in their televised political spots than their American counterparts. The data reveal that to be the case with over 55% of the American spots relying on negative appeals. Just 41% of the Taiwanese spots were so categorized. Generally negative appeals attack the competitor in an effort to establish superiority by imputing inferiority to the other. The degree to which a negative appeal utilized an implicit or explicit approach was also assessed.

Secondly, we hypothesized that when a negative appeal was used the Taiwanese candidates would tend to be more implicit and subtle than American candidates who would be explicit and direct are. An implicit

approach to negative appeals includes indirect attacks or comparisons with the opponent by suggesting undesirable associations without actually referring to the other by name or visual image. An explicit approach includes direct attacks or comparisons with the other, usually by referring to his/her name or image. American candidates used explicit negativity in all of their negative televised political spots. Taiwanese candidates used explicit negativity in just over 62% of their negative televised spots.

The last hypothesis associated with utilitarian strategies involved the creative execution of the political spots. Creative execution concerns the use of negative production techniques such as misleading viewers by distorting an opponent's original audio-visual message or incorporating images to make him/her look more sinister, ridiculous and undesirable. We anticipated that Taiwanese candidates would use negative techniques significantly less frequently than would their American counterparts. And that is what we found, with Americans using negative production techniques in 42.9% of their negative televised spots. Taiwanese candidates not only used significantly fewer negative appeals (See hypothesis 1), but rarely (21.6%) used negative production techniques in their negative spots to undermine an opponent.

As expected, the finding is consistent with the cultural assumptions guiding this research effort, namely that members of a high-context and collectivistic culture, such as Taiwan, prefer group consensus.

In sum, based upon the data analysis, the results of this preliminary study provide empirical evidence consistent with Hall's (1976) and Hofstede's (1980) conceptualizations regarding cultural patterns in Eastern and Western societies. Consequently, it seems manifest that culture plays an important role in the practice of indigenous political spot advertising, and televised political advertising messages are generally reflective of their cultural orientations.

Certain limitation need to be noted. One must be cautious not to overgeneralize the results since both Taiwanese and American samples only cover the spots of the 2000 presidential campaigns. Stated another way, the samples may lack representativeness and the findings may be oversimplified and cannot be applied to all election campaigns in either Taiwan or the U.S. Ideally, representativeness can be achieved by acquiring a larger sample size over longer time span (e.g., including spots of more presidential campaigns)

for observing differences or trends which could more clearly be attributed to respective cultural setting.

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計畫成果自評部份：

- 一、本研究內容與原計畫尚能相符，也能達成預期目標。
- 二、本案研究成果之學術價值，彌補了國內競選廣告研究領域缺乏跨文化比較之憾，也建立了後續研究的初步基礎。相關成果已發表於下列二場學術研討會中，並尋求進一步發表於專業學術期刊之可能。

莊伯仲（2003）

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