

# **The Role and Strategy of Cultural Soft Power in International Communication from the Perspective of the Belt and Road**

**Baojin Liu**

Liaoning Communication University, Shenyang, 110136, Liaoning, China

**Keywords:** Belt and Road; Cultural soft power; International communication

**Abstract:** This article aims to explore the role and strategy of cultural soft power in international communication from the perspective of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). By using the methods of literature study, case analysis and comparative study, we find that cultural soft power plays an important role in enhancing national image and international influence, and promoting cultural exchanges. Furthermore, we also put forward a series of effective cultural communication strategies. The research results show that the dissemination of cultural soft power under BRI has broad prospects and potential. The conclusion of this article has important reference value for countries along the route to formulate and implement the communication strategy of cultural soft power.

## **1. Introduction**

Under the background of globalization, the competition between countries is not only reflected in hard power such as economy and military, but also the cultural soft power has gradually become an important aspect of international competition [1]. As a major international cooperation initiative proposed by China, BRI aims to promote economic cooperation and cultural exchanges among countries along the route and bring common development opportunities to participating countries [2]. In this context, studying the role and strategy of cultural soft power in international communication from the perspective of BRI will not only help deepen the understanding of BRI, but also provide theoretical support and practical guidance for enhancing the cultural soft power of China and countries along the route.

This study aims to explore the specific role of cultural soft power in international communication under BRI, and how to promote and spread cultural soft power through effective strategies. Specific research questions include: How does BRI combine with cultural soft power? What role does cultural soft power play in international communication? How to formulate and implement effective communication strategies of cultural soft power? The purpose of this study is to put forward an effective path to promote and spread cultural soft power from the perspective of BRI through in-depth analysis.

## **2. The Belt and Road and the theoretical basis of cultural soft power**

### **2.1. Overview and development process of BRI**

BRI is a major international cooperation initiative put forward by the government of China, aiming at promoting economic cooperation and development of countries along the route by strengthening infrastructure construction, promoting trade and investment facilitation and deepening financial cooperation [3]. Since it was put forward in 2013, BRI has received responses and support from more and more countries and has become an important platform for international cooperation [4]. The development of BRI reflects China's strategic thinking of opening to the outside world and its broad vision of international cooperation.

### **2.2. Definition and connotation of cultural soft power**

Cultural soft power refers to the influence and attraction of a country or region in the international community through intangible factors such as cultural charm, values and lifestyle [5].

It is different from military, economic and other hard power, and pays more attention to enhancing mutual understanding and trust and promoting international cooperation and development through cultural exchanges and mutual learning [6]. The connotation of cultural soft power includes cultural charm, values, lifestyle, innovation ability and many other aspects, and it is an important part of the comprehensive strength of a country or region, as shown in Figure 1.

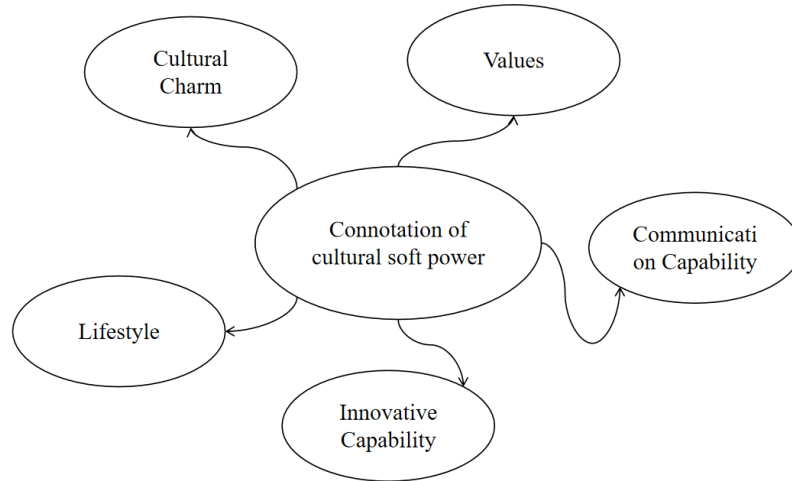


Figure 1 Connotation of cultural soft power

### 2.3. The relevance between BRI and cultural soft power

There is a close relationship between BRI and cultural soft power. On the one hand, BRI provides an important opportunity to enhance the cultural soft power of countries along the route by promoting economic cooperation and cultural exchanges [7]. On the other hand, the promotion of the cultural soft power of countries along the route will also help to enhance the attractiveness and influence of BRI and promote its in-depth implementation. Therefore, BRI and cultural soft power promote each other and complement each other.

Cultural soft power plays an important role in international communication. It can convey a country's values, lifestyle and cultural charm to the international community through cultural exchanges, media communication, educational cooperation and other channels and ways, thus enhancing the international community's understanding and cognition of the country [8]. Furthermore, cultural soft power can also influence the public opinion and agenda setting of the international community by shaping the national image and enhancing the right to speak internationally, so as to win more support and cooperation for the country in international affairs. Therefore, giving full play to the role of cultural soft power in international communication is of great significance for enhancing a country's international status and influence.

### 3. The role of cultural soft power in international communication

#### (1) Enhancing national image and international influence

With the promotion of BRI, cultural soft power has become an important way to enhance national image and international influence. By demonstrating rich cultural connotation and unique cultural charm in international communication, countries along the Belt and Road can create a more positive and positive national image and improve their popularity and reputation on the international stage [9]. The enhancement of this national image not only helps to enhance the international community's understanding and identification with countries along the Belt and Road, but also earns more support and cooperation for these countries in international affairs, thereby further enhancing their international influence.

#### (2) Promoting cultural exchange and mutual learning

BRI emphasizes cultural exchanges and mutual learning, which provides valuable opportunities for countries along the Belt and Road. Through cooperation in cultural projects, organizing cultural activities, and exchanging cultural products, countries along the Belt and Road can gain a deeper

understanding of each other's cultural traditions, values, and lifestyles, enhancing mutual understanding and respect. This kind of cultural exchange and mutual learning not only helps to promote friendly relations between countries along the Belt and Road, but also brings new opportunities for cultural innovation and development to these countries [10].

(3) Enhance international discourse power and agenda setting capabilities

From the perspective of the Belt and Road, cultural soft power has become an important tool to enhance international discourse power and agenda setting ability [11]. By actively speaking out in international communication, showcasing their cultural charm and values, countries along the Belt and Road can strive for more voice and influence in international affairs. Furthermore, these countries can also guide international public opinion and agenda setting through the dissemination of cultural soft power, and promote the development of international affairs towards a more just and reasonable direction.

(4) Promoting economic diplomacy and connecting people's hearts

Cultural soft power also plays an important role in promoting economic diplomacy and people to people connectivity in BRI. Through cultural exchange and cooperation, countries along the Belt and Road can enhance mutual understanding and trust, laying a solid foundation for economic cooperation and development. Furthermore, the spread of cultural soft power will also help close the psychological distance between people in countries along the line, promote people to people connections, and create a more favorable social environment for the in-depth implementation of BRI.

#### 4. Strategies of cultural soft power in international communication from the perspective of BRI

(1) Innovative cultural communication content and form

Under the Belt and Road vision, innovating the content and form of cultural communication is an important way to enhance cultural soft power. Countries along the route should fully tap their own cultural resources and create cultural brands and cultural products with unique charm and international influence. Furthermore, these countries should also pay attention to the innovation of cultural communication forms, and use modern scientific and technological means and international expressions to make cultural communication more vivid, interesting and acceptable.

(2) Building platforms and channels for multicultural communication.

In order to spread cultural soft power more widely and effectively, countries along the route need to build multiple cultural communication platforms and channels. This includes traditional media channels, such as TV, radio, newspapers, etc., as well as emerging digital media channels, such as social media and online video platforms, as shown in Figure 2.

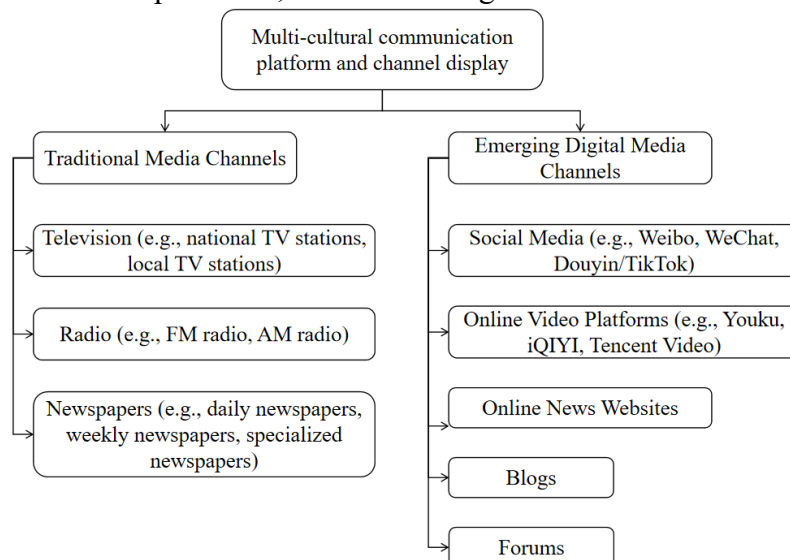


Figure 2 Multi-cultural communication platform and channel display

Through diversified communication platforms and channels, countries along the route can convey their cultural charm and values to a wider international audience.

(3) Strengthen the training and cooperation of international communication talents.

Talent is the core element of cultural communication, and it is very important for countries along the route to cultivate international communication talents with international vision and cross-cultural communication ability. These talents should not only be familiar with international communication rules and master advanced communication technology, but also have the ability to tell stories of countries along the route in an international language and way. They will become an important bridge and link for the international spread of cultural soft power. In order to cultivate such international communication talents, countries along the route need to take a series of measures. First of all, strengthen the construction of international communication specialty in higher education, and provide students with systematic theoretical knowledge and practical skills training. Secondly, encourage and support students to participate in international exchange activities, such as international academic seminars and cultural exchange projects, so as to broaden their international horizons and cross-cultural communication skills. In addition, countries along the route can also establish cooperative relations with international communication agencies and organizations to jointly carry out talent training programs to enhance the professionalism and international competitiveness of local communication talents. In addition to personnel training, countries along the route should also strengthen cooperation with international communication agencies and organizations to jointly promote the international spread of cultural soft power. This includes cooperating with internationally renowned media organizations to jointly produce and promote programs and works that reflect the cultural characteristics of countries along the route; Cooperate with international cultural communication organizations to hold cultural exchange activities and exhibitions to show the cultural charm and unique value of countries along the route; And cooperate with international academic institutions to jointly study new theories and methods of cultural communication and provide intellectual support for cultural communication in countries along the route.

(4) Implement differentiated cultural communication strategies.

Different countries and regions have different cultural backgrounds and audience needs, so countries along the route should pay attention to differentiation when implementing the communication strategy of cultural soft power. This means that the specific needs and preferences of the audience need to be considered in the content, form, channel and time of communication. For example, for the audience who pay attention to traditional culture, they can attract their attention by telling stories with historical and cultural connotations; For more modern audiences, digital media and emerging technologies can be used to present cultural content to meet their information acceptance habits.

(5) Using new media technology to improve the communication effect.

The development of new media technology provides new opportunities for the international spread of cultural soft power. Countries along the route should make full use of the advantages of new media technologies, such as interactivity, immediacy and personalization, to enhance the effect of cultural communication. For example, these countries can interact with international audiences in real time through social media platforms to understand their needs and feedback, so as to adjust and optimize cultural communication strategies. Furthermore, new media technology can also help countries along the route to show their cultural charm and values in a more vivid and intuitive way.

## 5. Conclusions

This study deeply discusses the role and strategies of cultural soft power in international communication from the perspective of BRI. Through the comprehensive application of various methods, we have found that cultural soft power plays an important role in enhancing national image and international influence, promoting cultural exchange and mutual learning, enhancing international discourse power and agenda setting ability, and promoting economic diplomacy and people to people communication. Furthermore, this article also proposes a series of effective

cultural communication strategies, including innovating the content and form of cultural communication, building diverse cultural communication platforms and channels, strengthening international communication talent training and cooperation, implementing differentiated cultural communication strategies, and using new media technology to enhance communication effectiveness.

Looking ahead, the dissemination of cultural soft power under BRI will face more opportunities and challenges. This article suggests that countries along the Belt and Road further strengthen cultural exchange and cooperation, deeply tap into their own cultural resources, and build cultural brands with international influence. Furthermore, these countries should also focus on utilizing new media technologies, innovating cultural dissemination methods, and improving the targeting and effectiveness of cultural dissemination. In addition, strengthening the cultivation and cooperation of international communication talents is also an important way to enhance cultural soft power. Through these efforts, we are confident that the dissemination of cultural soft power under BRI will achieve more remarkable results.

### Acknowledgements

This topic belongs to the research results of the SWOT model for the dissemination strategy of Liaoning's cultural soft power under the "Belt and Road" perspective, which is a project funded by the Social Science Planning Fund of Liaoning Province in 2023 (L23BXW009).

This topic also belongs to the research results on enhancing the dissemination power of Liaoning's culture from the perspective of cultural soft power, which is a basic scientific research project of Liaoning Provincial Education Department in 2023 (JYTMS20230346).

### References

- [1] Du Xuemei. Research on the promotion of Lianyungang's cultural soft power by foreign language education in colleges and universities under the background of "Belt and Road" [J]. *Boutique Life*, 2023(9):0124-0126.
- [2] Wang Lihong. Dilemma and countermeasures of the spread of foreign tea culture under the background of "Belt and Road" [J]. *Fujian Tea*, 2023, 45(7):185-187.
- [3] Huang Jie. Cross-regional communication of Central Asian culture under the background of "Belt and Road" [J]. *Middle school geography teaching reference*, 2022,(01):87-88.
- [4] Lai Xionglin, Yu Yanbin. "One Belt, One Road" Initiative: Four Dimensions of Enhancing Cultural Soft Power [J]. *People's Forum Academic Frontier*, 2019,(24):118-121.
- [5] Zhang Li. Research on the path of cultivating college students' cultural self-confidence from the perspective of "One Belt, One Road" [J]. *Teaching and Research of National Common Language*, 2022(1):101-103.
- [6] Zhang Liyu. Research on the promotion of Socialism with Chinese characteristics's cultural soft power in the new era under the "Belt and Road Initiative" [J]. *Journal of Jilin Teachers College of Engineering and Technology*, 2020,36(02):38-40.
- [7] Li Fengyu, Min Xue. On the promotion of China's cultural soft power from the perspective of "Belt and Road" [J]. *Modern Communication*, 2020,(07):237-238.
- [8] Ma Rui. Research on Enhancing the Soft Power of Chinese Culture under the Background of "Belt and Road"-Based on the Perspective of Cultural Consciousness [J]. *China Collective Economy*, 2021,(28):27-28.
- [9] Gu Qingyou. Research on the Innovation Path of China's Communication Soft Power from the Perspective of "Belt and Road" [J]. *Journalism Research Guide*, 2019,10(10):31-32.
- [10] Wang Renxing, Quan Changping. Research on the development countermeasures of China's

cultural industry under the "Belt and Road Initiative" [J]. Straits Science and Technology and Industry, 2023, 36(6):30-32.

[11] Diao Junxin. Cultivation of cultural self-confidence of college students from the perspective of "Belt and Road" [J]. International Public Relations, 2023(3):146-148.