How Short Films Could Improve Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become such a crucial part of our lives that 59% of the population uses it for 2 hours and 29 minutes at minimum. Such exposure has undeniable repercussions on the user; such as the overflowing of countless pieces of information, spamming or false advertisements etc that make it difficult for users to find correct information. For reference, more than 80% of all blog content is identified as spam. This data shows the current situation in social media that it is difficult to find healthy information. The solution to this issue might come from an unexpected source. This study proposes that short films could gradually improve delivering healthy pieces of information on social media. However, before getting into the solution, this study will further address the problem social media is causing by information overflowing.

**Keywords: social media, information, short films**

INTRODUCTION

The impact of social media has already been proven before, like affecting the Iranian elections in 2009 or causing full-out uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011 (Niekerk & Maharaj, 2013). These events were motivated not by weapons but through information, and it is very natural to think of the possibility of social media being manipulated for particular purposes. This manipulation often occurs in the form of fake news. Fake news proved to be very effective propaganda which was the crucial trigger that encouraged American citizens to vote for Donald Trump, eventually leading to his victory in the presidential election in 2016 (Goswami, 2018). On the contrary, the citizens are attempting to impact society positively using the virality of social media. However, that brings new problems that need fixing, such as acknowledging the difference between healthy and unhealthy information (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012). A question often surfaces, "why would people believe fake news?" Bringing it to another severe problem that social media causes, the overwhelmingness of information negatively affects how people process information. Thus, we are not living in the era of information, it's the era of disinformation. The researchers discovered that over half of social media users, being exposed to endless fake news, follow their biases and choose to believe them even though they are faulty (Moravec, Minas, & Dennis, 2018). In contrast, if any articles challenged their belief, the users would ignore them and prefer the fake news (Moravec, Minas & Dennis, 2018). Even without the fake news, the sheer information that is poured down on the users such as phone calls, messages, and notifications for new youtube videos, gives them a sense of anxiety and constant desire to check their mobile devices (Yuanyuan Feng, n.d.). It is possible to use this vastness to its advantage, by scientists constantly communicating with one another by spreading numerous useful scientific information, however normal people haven't still fully figured out a proper way to comprehend the information (Van Eperen, 2011). Thus, all of the problems stem from the faulty way of delivering information, and from the look of this, the situation seems so huge that it is impossible to improve it, but there still is hope with the usage of short films.

METHODS

The media has already proven itself that it could surpass from just being a visual entertainment to a positive impact on our society. It already has in the form of education. There has been a study that shows high school students agreeing on the notion that short films help education by increasing creative thinking and visual comprehension, university students also concur by stating that it improves their understanding of the subject they are learning Kabadayi, L. (2012, August 18). Short films could also help in the education of changing perspectives. For example, there has been a successful case of using short films among 90 randomly selected Chinese Americans who had misconceptions about dementia. At the end, they successfully fixed 80 people's stigma (Zheng, Chung & Woo, 2015). However, it does not mean it always delivers on a positive effect, with a problem of short film's copyright problems possibly getting teachers fired, and the research saying the majority of teachers who were unprepared to fully utilize the visual media results in using them in a visual textbook that can easily be ignored (William, 2012). Apart from education, short films are also capable of improving the way information is delivered. There have been

several occasions of using short films to efficiently send a piece of information or a message, one of the examples being to promote kindness during harsh COVID-19 ages with the help of visual media. In the end, it encouraged over 90% of viewers to be kind towards others, proving the potent power of short films (Ford, 2022). Another helpful instance is the short film "Si Tintin," which made viewers aware of how to correctly use their hand sanitizers (Aldila & Pramono, 2021). Thus, we can already see that short films have the capacity to fix social media's problem of information overloading.

An analogy is that of good information delivery being like good conversation; since both require participants to listen and let their thoughts out efficiently. Thus, making a well-made short film is equivalent to having a good conversation, being the ultimate key to solving the social media information problem. The second phase of having a good conversation is called "Human Judgement of Conversational Aspects." The methods are avoiding repetition, interestingness, making sense, fluency, and listening/inquisitiveness (Roller, Kiela& Weston, 2019).
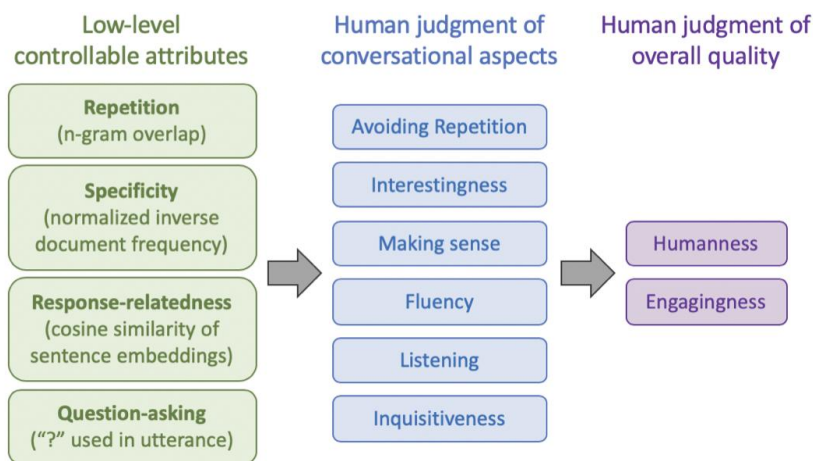
The short stories should also focus on the guideline of a well-written narrative - having a self-contained story, having plausible events, living up to people's expectations of a genre, presenting unique original conflict, and smooth transgression of a story (Kinnebrock & Bilandzic, 2006). We can see a lot of connections between the two, starting with avoiding repetition, the tactic needed in conversation to decrease redundancy and possible boredom, this connects to the short film's advice of presenting unique conflict, which also has the same motivation as avoiding repetition, to keep audiences from getting bored from seeing the same types of short films over and over again. Interestingness brings up the connection with having a self-contained story, where it needs little knowledge to be engaged/interested in the narrative. There is another connection between making sense and having plausible events for the listener or the audience not getting disengaged in conversation or a short film due to faulty logic. Fluency has a connection to smooth transgression. Both need to move onto one topic from another with no jagged pace, or the listener/audience would lose interest or have no idea what the film or the speaker is trying to inform. Finally, listening/inquisitiveness connects directly to living up to people's expectations of a genre because both show the fundamental reason for short film and conversation, knowing the people's desires and delivering them. People desire conversation to be listened to and the audience desire to watch short films to experience the genre. These connections show how much of the same thing a good conversation and a good short film truly are, thus a great chance of fixing the information problem in social media.

CONCLUSION

Social media's problem of information manipulation and overflowing is not expected to decrease. However, knowing the short film's potential usage for good and its connection with conversation, short films may be the solution to the discussed problems.

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