

# Research on Lu Xun's Publications from the Perspective of Communication Studies

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## Abstract:

The research topic of this article is Lu Xun's publications from the perspective of communication studies. Firstly, this article summarizes and roughly introduces the publications run by Lu Xun. Secondly, it analyzes the characteristics of publications as a medium of communication. Then, it analyzes the dissemination subjects, content, objects, and effects of Lu Xun's publications. Finally, it reflects on and analyzes Lu Xun's literary and artistic communication ideas and the purpose of the publication. This article provides an overview of the publications edited by Lu Xun throughout his life, introducing their founding time and the main content. The conclusion drawn from the analysis is that Lu Xun believed that journals had excellent effectiveness in disseminating spiritual values, cultivating youth values, and guiding readers. Therefore, Lu Xun regarded publishing as the first main force in promoting the development of Chinese literature and art, which was the purpose of Lu Xun's publishing.

**Keywords:** Communication Studies, Lu Xun, publication

## 1. Introduction

From Liang Qichao of the Neo Confucianism movement to the early stages of the New Culture Movement, communication activities developed rapidly, and various media emerged from the ground. As a pioneer in the dissemination of new culture, Lu Xun took the development of communication to a new height, and the effectiveness of communication activities was also very intuitive. He greatly shattered the fog deep in the hearts of the people, and activated their thoughts, and the regeneration of national culture was just around the corner.

Lu Xun was an important participant in the New Culture Movement and one of the founders of modern

Chinese literature. Lu Xun made significant contributions in various fields throughout his life, including literary creation, literary criticism, ideological research, literary history research, translation, the introduction of art theory, the introduction of basic science, and collation and research of ancient books. He had a significant impact on the development of Chinese social, ideological, and cultural thought after the May Fourth Movement, and was renowned in the world literary scene, known as the "writer who occupied the largest territory on the cultural map of East Asia in the 20th century". Mao Zedong once commented, "Lu Xun's direction is the direction of the new culture of the Chinese nation."

Mr. Lu Xun wrote 6 million words in his lifetime, including 5 million words of works and 1 million words of compilations and letters. Lu Xun had a clear and profound dissemination of ideas and strategies in his novels and magazine editors. There is still a relative lack of research on Lu Xun in the field of communication studies. When searching for “communication studies” and “Lu Xun” on CNKI, only 43 articles were included in the total database. It can be seen that using communication studies as a research perspective is still a relatively new perspective and a relatively vacant research field. A total of 21 articles were searched using the keyword “Lu Xun’s publications” in the database. However, there is relatively little research on Lu Xun’s publications, and the content mostly stays at the stage of introducing the publications created by Lu Xun, which is still in a stage where research is not yet in-depth [1]. The research topic of this article is to study Lu Xun’s publications from the perspective of communication studies. The innovative aspect of this article lies in studying Lu Xun’s publications from the perspective of communication studies, using communication analysis methods to analyze the dissemination subjects, dissemination objects, and dissemination effects of Lu Xun’s publications.

The article will introduce Lu Xun’s publications and analyze their dissemination ideas. Taking the publications as an example, it will analyze Lu Xun’s dissemination strategies used in them, in order to derive his literary and artistic dissemination ideas and the purpose of his publication.

## 2. Basic Introduction and Analysis of Lu Xun’s Publications

### 2.1 Overview of Lu Xun’s Publications

Lu Xun’s novel writing has had a great influence and is well-known in both the academic community and the daily lives of ordinary people. However, Lu Xun’s novel writing was not his main field. The literary works he produced throughout his life as a translator, essayist, editor, and founder of journals were the most significant contributions to the history of Chinese literature [2]. Mr. Lu Xun devoted himself wholeheartedly to the work of publishing, not because it was merely a physical labor, but because it was a work that elevated the shaping and dissemination of spiritual strength. Mr. Lu Xun believed that journals have excellent effectiveness in disseminating spiritual values, cultivating youth values, and guiding readers. Therefore, Mr. Lu Xun regarded publishing as the first main force in promoting the development of Chinese literature and art, criticizing old traditional literary ideas, enlightening national thinking, and cultivating new youth in the field of literature and art.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Lu Xun founded and edited more than a dozen journals such as *The Wilderness*, *The Threads of Language*, and *Translation*. These journals covered various literary fields, including publishing essays and prose, translation, and creative works. There were a wide variety of journals, which played a crucial role in the field of journal research in China (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Basic Information and Main Content Introduction of Lu Xun’s Publications**

Founding Date	Journal Name	Main Content	Founding Date
April 1925	<i>The Wilderness</i>	Exposure and Criticism of Social Reality and Feudal Culture	April 1925
November 1924	<i>The Threads of Language</i>	Essays, other forms of prose	November 1924
June 1928	<i>Rolling Stream</i>	Translate works, literary theories, and socially significant creative works, introduce some foreign books, illustrations, and prints	June 1928
December 1928	<i>Morning Flowers</i>	Both translated works and creative works are emphasized, as well as a large number of book illustrations and foreign prints	December 1928
May 1930	<i>Literary Research</i>	Translate and introduce progressive literary theories from abroad	May 1930
January 1930	<i>Sprout Monthly</i>	The literary theory and works of the proletariat	January 1930
April 1931	<i>Frontier (Literary Guide)</i>	Official publication of the Chinese Leftist Writers’ Union	April 1931
December 1931	<i>Crossroads</i>	Mainly consisting of comments and essays	December 1931
April 1930	<i>Baldi Mountain</i>	Essays and Comments	April 1930
March 1930	<i>World Culture</i>	Mainly introducing the cultural situation of the Soviet Union at that time	March 1930
September 1934	<i>Translation</i>	Specially publish translations	September 1934

## 2.2 Communication Analysis of Publications

In the context of Lu Xun's founding of the publication, China was in a turbulent revolutionary era. Lu Xun founded the publication to spread new ideas and cultures, enlighten national thinking, awaken the people, criticize the old feudal culture, advocate democracy and science, accelerate China's modernization process, and stimulate the regeneration of national culture.

As a medium of communication, journals play an important role in the accumulation and dissemination of culture. As a regularly and continuously updated publication, journals are timelier and more continuous compared to books. At the same time, compared to books, which are a more specialized medium of communication, journals have more diversity and richness. Compared to newspapers, although newspapers have serialization like journals, they focus on timeliness and highlighting key points. Journals have more ample production time, provide more complete and systematic coverage of events or articles, and offer more profound and comprehensive discourse and narration. Zhang Bohai once said, the advantage of continuous publication endows journals with vitality, making them a means of dynamically expanding knowledge and deepening understanding. This characteristic is unparalleled by other media, and is indispensable for observing social dynamics, accumulating cultural knowledge, and expanding scientific research fields [3].” As for the social responsibility theory of newspapers and magazines, the following views are held: authenticity, separating news and opinions; Expressing different opinions; Reflecting the interests of various social groups and eliminating racial prejudice; Clarifying the goals and virtues of society; Newspapers should be agents of the public [4]. American political scientist J Both Blaise and French scholar Tald noticed the social and political functions of newspapers, and they regarded newspapers as the earliest birth of the public, a pure “spiritual collective” [5].

## 3. Communication Analysis of Lu Xun's Publication

### 3.1 Analysis of Communication Subject

As the editor in chief of the publication, Lu Xun had a clear concept and goal of running the publication, with the main purpose of spreading new culture and ideas. He strictly screened the selection of articles, and based on the reputation of Lu Xun's novels and other literary works, the publication had a high degree of recognition in the minds of the people, with high dissemination effectiveness. At the same time, it could attract more scholars

and the masses to submit articles, such as Hu Shi, Zhou Zuoren and other writers who shared the same ideological pursuits, literary hobbies and ideals as Lu Xun. Their appearance and cooperation enriched the richness of the publication and expanded its influence.

### 3.2 Analysis of the Dissemination Content of Publications

Lu Xun's publications cover a wide range of topics, such as essays, novels, poetry, and other literary genres. The articles in Lu Xun's publications all have strong ideological connotations and profound criticality. These articles have sharp language and distinct viewpoints, and deeply criticize old culture, old morality, and old social systems to awaken the people. For example, the works published in *Wilderness* and *The Threads of Language*, which sounded the horn of “civilization criticism” and “social criticism”, mostly exposed and criticized the dark social reality and old feudal culture at that time. Lu Xun once said to Xu Guangping, “When selecting manuscripts for *Wilderness*, I intended to publish more shrewishness articles [6].” Therefore, most of the articles published in *Wilderness* were more radical in ideology and existed for the literary and artistic struggle at that time.

### 3.3 Analysis of the Target Audience for Publication Dissemination

In the context of that time, the audience of Lu Xun's journals was mainly young students and intellectuals. These groups have a higher acceptance of academic works in journals, and based on their literary literacy, they are more receptive to the dissemination of ideas. This is also due to their higher attention to social issues, and their large base is widely distributed throughout the country, including urban and rural areas. Lu Xun had a high acceptance of manuscripts from young scholars. When selecting manuscripts, Lu Xun was relatively tolerant of new writers, as long as there were some desirable aspects. Lu Xun once said that with the manuscripts of old writers, editors can avoid worrying and a lot of trouble, but without using new authors, they will never be able to grow [7].

This type of dissemination object will also form a good interactive relationship with the dissemination subject. In the context of ideological enlightenment at that time, it was common for various ideas to arise and conflict. Readers would provide feedback and comments on the reading experience of the journal through letters and other means. After receiving feedback, Lu Xun continuously improved the journal, which greatly promoted the ideological dissemination of the journal and further strengthened its dissemination effectiveness.

### 3.4 Analysis of Communication Effectiveness

In the social context of that time, the publications edited by Lu Xun had a great social impact. Lu Xun once awakened an era and finally awakened a nation with this unique style and posture.

*The Scream and Battle Standing at the Top of the Thought of the Times: A Study of Lu Xun's Communication Studies* by Hao Yimin evaluates Lu Xun as “the nation's soul” that will forever stand in the hearts of every citizen. At the same time, his outstanding communication practice has provided many profound inspirations for the theoretical construction of communication studies. In any field, a practitioner who not only constructs theory themselves but also provides unlimited development of theory through their own practice is the most outstanding [8]. It has promoted the process of ideological enlightenment and has extremely high dissemination effectiveness in the context of cultural change, making great contributions to China's modernization process. In addition to its influence on the people of the time, Lu Xun's journals also have great inspiration for future generations. The purpose and spirit of Lu Xun's founding of publications are worth learning for modern journal founders, and his dissemination experience provides great reference value for contemporary publications.

### 3.5 Lu Xun's Publication Purpose and Literary Communication Thought

When recalling Lu Xun's youth, Zhou Zuoren was deeply touched and pointed out that Lu Xun advocated using literature to influence society and revitalize the national spirit, which can be said to belong to the art of life [9]. From this, it can be seen that the first step in Lu Xun's literary and artistic dissemination thought is to establish the spirit. Lu Xun believed that to establish a spirit, one also needs to establish people, and to establish new people. Based on the analysis of the target audience in the previous text, it can be seen that Lu Xun paid great attention to and tolerated young scholars, which reflects his expectations for new forces.

To establish oneself, one must also oppose tradition. Lu Xun once wrote a letter to Qian Xuantong from the perspective of comparing publications and cultural dissemination, proposing anti-traditional ideas, “Chinese national quintessence, although equivalent to farting, is not surprising for a group of bad seeds to be published in a series. The bad seed and others, but they still want to eat people... But the founding of the bad seed and others' magazine, which was specifically published for New Youth, is slightly different. At first, it was unexpected that New Youth would be so sad to them. If you publish it, then listen to

it and see how it is published, how it is governed by the law, how it is refined, how it faints, how it farts, how it dreams... [10]”

Based on this letter, it can be seen that Lu Xun regarded national quintessence as “fainting”, “farting”, etc. From this angry language, it can be seen that he hated the national quintessence. It reflects his attitude of opposition to tradition, anti-traditional thinking, and profound cultural enlightenment and dissemination of ideas. Based on the above analysis, Lu Xun's editorial purpose is very clear. Lu Xun believed that the primary task of saving China was to reorganize the spirit of the people, defeat the old society, old culture, and old ideas, and confront these feudal cultures. Lu Xun advocated literary and artistic dissemination activities as the main means, and as the editor-in-chief, he founded and edited more than ten journals to inspire the national spirit of the people. Regarding Lu Xun's dissemination ideas, “Scream and Battle at the Summit of Contemporary Thought: A Study of Lu Xun's Communication Studies” by Hao Yimin raises the issue of the “style” of communication studies. That is to say, any excellent communicator will inevitably develop a unique style. In the article, he commented that Lu Xun's basic style is “shouting”, and Lu Xun's outstanding posture is that of an unstoppable fighter. Lu Xun is like a great warrior standing tall in the hearts of countless citizens, possessing immense spiritual strength.

## 4. Conclusion

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the publications edited by Lu Xun from the perspective of communication studies, examining their communication characteristics. Based on this analysis, it reflects on Lu Xun's ideas on literary and artistic communication as well as the purpose of the publication. In terms of the dissemination subject, Lu Xun played a crucial role as the editor-in-chief of the publication. Lu Xun's editorial philosophy and the recognition of his literary works greatly promoted the dissemination of the publication. The dissemination content mainly includes various literary works, essays, novels, poetry, etc., and the dissemination target is mainly young scholars. The dissemination effect of Lu Xun's publications is extensive and influential, promoting the process of ideological enlightenment. In the context of cultural change, it has a high dissemination effectiveness and has made great contributions to China's modernization process. Through the above analysis, it can be concluded that Lu Xun's ideas on literary and artistic dissemination and the purpose of publishing were profound. Lu Xun had a deep contempt and hatred for national quintessence, and tried to save China and revive national ideology through

literary and artistic dissemination. Lu Xun believed that journals had excellent effectiveness in disseminating spiritual values, cultivating youth values, and guiding readers. Therefore, Mr. Lu Xun regarded publishing as the first main force in promoting the development of Chinese literature and art, which is the purpose of Lu Xun's publishing.

This study has achieved certain results, but there are some shortcomings, such as limited research scope and not covering all Lu Xun publications, in order to conduct more empirical research. Also, there has been no research on the dissemination of Lu Xun's publications in the current information society era. For future research, the scope of study can be further expanded to explore the dissemination status and characteristics of Lu Xun's publications in the era of new media.

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