

A Review of Houmuwu Ding Artifacts in Douyin Short Videos

Lin Fengyi*, Balamuralithara Balakrishnan

Faculty of Art, Sustainability and Creative Industry, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

The preservation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage have increasingly relied on digital communication technologies due to the rapid development of social media platforms and digital cultural practices. As one of the most representative bronze artifacts of ancient Chinese civilization, the Houmuwu Ding embodies significant historical, artistic, and cultural values associated with the Shang Dynasty bronze culture. However, the traditional approaches of cultural heritage communication, including museum exhibitions and academic publications, often face limitations in reaching younger generations and global digital audiences. Short video platforms, particularly Douyin, have provided new opportunities for cultural heritage communication through visual storytelling, interactive participation, and algorithm-driven content distribution. Nevertheless, the lack of systematic guidelines for producing short videos related to Chinese bronze artifacts remains a critical challenge.

This literature review aims to examine existing research on intangible cultural heritage preservation, digital heritage communication, short video cultural dissemination, and the representation of Chinese bronze artifacts in digital environments. A thematic literature analysis approach was employed to review academic publications from international and Chinese databases, including studies related to digital heritage preservation, social media communication, cultural storytelling, and museum digital transformation. The findings indicate that effective digital dissemination of cultural heritage requires a balance between historical authenticity, visual attractiveness, audience engagement, and platform adaptability. Existing studies have primarily focused on general digital preservation strategies, while limited attention has been given to developing practical communication guidelines for specific cultural objects such as the Houmuwu Ding.

Based on the reviewed literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework for developing Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifact dissemination. The framework emphasizes cultural accuracy, visual narrative design, educational value, audience interaction, and digital platform optimization. The study contributes to the field of digital cultural heritage communication by providing theoretical foundations for future guideline development and supporting the sustainable transmission of Chinese bronze culture in contemporary digital environments.

Keywords: Houmuwu Ding; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Douyin Short Video; Digital Heritage Communication; Chinese Bronze Culture

INTRODUCTION

Digital Transformation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Communication

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) represents a dynamic accumulation of cultural knowledge, traditional practices, artistic expressions, and collective memories transmitted across generations. In contemporary society, the sustainability of ICH preservation is increasingly influenced by changes in communication environments. While traditional preservation approaches have historically depended on museums, archives, and community-based transmission, the expansion of digital communication technologies has created new possibilities for recording, interpreting, and disseminating heritage knowledge. However, digital transformation does not simply involve

transferring cultural information into electronic formats; rather, it requires reconsidering how cultural meanings are constructed and communicated within technology-mediated environments.

Recent studies have approached digital heritage transformation from different perspectives. Yang et al. (2025) examined the long-term development of digital transformation in Chinese museums and identified digitization as an institutional process involving collection management, public education, and cultural accessibility. Their research demonstrates that digital transformation has expanded the operational capacity of heritage institutions by improving preservation systems and public access mechanisms. However, an institutional perspective alone cannot fully explain how audiences interpret and emotionally engage with digitally presented heritage content. In contrast, Zhang and Xu (2024) investigated cultural heritage communication through social media from an audience-experience perspective, emphasizing that interactive experience, sensory engagement, and contextual understanding influence how users perceive digital heritage information. These two perspectives indicate that effective digital heritage communication requires not only technological infrastructure but also audience-centered communication strategies.

The increasing importance of digital platforms has also changed the relationship between heritage producers and audiences. Traditional heritage communication generally follows a one-directional model in which experts provide knowledge and audiences receive information. Digital platforms, however, enable users to participate in interpretation, discussion, and redistribution of cultural content. Wang et al. (2024) examined museum digital communication and argued that social media transforms cultural mediation from passive information delivery into interactive engagement between institutions and audiences. Meanwhile, Ye et al. (2025) explored the adoption of digital intangible cultural heritage and demonstrated that users' acceptance of digital heritage experiences is influenced by perceived immersion, usefulness, and technological engagement. These findings suggest that digital heritage communication must consider both institutional communication objectives and audience behavioral characteristics.

Nevertheless, digital communication also introduces challenges regarding cultural authenticity and knowledge accuracy. Unlike physical preservation, online dissemination allows cultural content to be rapidly modified, simplified, and reproduced by different creators. Therefore, digital heritage communication requires a balance between accessibility and cultural responsibility. For heritage objects with complex historical meanings, such as ancient Chinese bronze artifacts, digital dissemination strategies should avoid reducing cultural significance into visually attractive but historically incomplete representations. This challenge provides the foundation for examining how specific cultural artifacts can be effectively communicated through emerging digital platforms.

Cultural and Historical Significance of Houmuwu Ding Bronze Artifact

Chinese bronze artifacts represent an essential component of ancient Chinese civilization and provide significant evidence of technological development, ritual systems, political organization, and cultural identity. Unlike ordinary historical objects, bronze vessels functioned simultaneously as material products and symbolic representations of social structures. Therefore, their communication requires approaches that integrate historical interpretation, artistic appreciation, and cultural meaning construction.

The Houmuwu Ding is one of the most representative bronze artifacts associated with Shang Dynasty civilization. Its large scale, complex casting technology, and symbolic inscriptions reflect the technological achievements and ritual culture of early Chinese society. The artifact provides valuable insights into ancient manufacturing knowledge and social organization, making it an important cultural resource for understanding Chinese civilization. However, contemporary communication of bronze artifacts faces challenges because archaeological knowledge is often highly specialized and difficult for general audiences to understand through conventional academic formats.

Recent heritage studies have explored how cultural artifacts can achieve broader public engagement through digital interpretation. Nikolaou (2024) analyzed challenges associated with museum digital transformation and emphasized that technological implementation alone does not guarantee meaningful cultural communication; instead, digital practices must maintain connections between historical interpretation and public understanding. Similarly, Wang and Meng (2024) developed a model explaining how digital museum experiences influence

visitors' cognitive identity, cultural symbolism, and engagement with heritage. Their research suggests that digital representation can strengthen cultural connection when technological presentation is combined with meaningful narratives. These studies provide important implications for communicating Houmuwu Ding because the artifact requires not only visual presentation but also narrative explanation of its historical significance.

However, existing digital heritage research has mainly focused on museums, exhibitions, or general cultural collections, while limited attention has been given to how individual archaeological artifacts can be transformed into short-form digital narratives. Houmuwu Ding presents a specific communication challenge: its cultural value depends on historical context, technological complexity, and symbolic interpretation. Therefore, effective digital dissemination requires guidelines that can translate academic knowledge into accessible content without compromising cultural authenticity.

Douyin Short Video as a Platform for Cultural Heritage Communication

The development of short video platforms has significantly reshaped contemporary cultural communication. Compared with traditional digital platforms, short video applications emphasize rapid information consumption, visual storytelling, algorithmic recommendation, and user participation. These characteristics provide new opportunities for cultural heritage dissemination, particularly for attracting younger audiences who increasingly engage with cultural information through mobile media.

Douyin has become an influential platform for cultural content circulation in China. Its communication mechanism differs from traditional media because content visibility is largely influenced by algorithmic recommendation, audience interaction, and engagement indicators. Therefore, heritage communication on Douyin requires consideration of both cultural content and platform logic.

Research on Douyin-based heritage communication has identified several important characteristics. Wang et al. (2024) examined intangible cultural heritage videos on Douyin and found that different creators construct heritage meanings through diverse narrative frameworks involving identity, knowledge, and participation. Their research highlights that short video platforms create opportunities for broader heritage engagement but also generate challenges regarding authority and interpretation. In another direction, Wang et al. (2025) investigated effective dissemination factors of intangible cultural heritage on Douyin and demonstrated that successful communication depends on combinations of content characteristics, creator strategies, and audience response mechanisms rather than a single factor. These studies reveal that Douyin communication requires systematic design principles rather than simple content uploading.

Furthermore, visual storytelling has become a critical element in short video-based cultural communication. He et al. (2026) analyzed traditional craftsmanship videos on Douyin and found that narrative structure, emotional expression, and visual demonstration influence audience engagement. Meanwhile, Paquenseguy and Guo (2025) examined the cultural industry transformation of Douyin-based intangible heritage communication and emphasized the increasing professionalization of creators and the influence of platform algorithms on cultural content production. These studies indicate that effective heritage short videos require integration of storytelling strategies, audience interaction, and platform adaptation.

Although previous studies have explored Douyin and intangible cultural heritage communication, most research focuses on living traditions, craftsmanship, or general heritage categories. Limited research has examined how archaeological artifacts, particularly Chinese bronze objects, can be communicated through short video platforms. This limitation demonstrates the necessity of developing specific guidelines for Houmuwu Ding-related Douyin content.

Research Problem and Research Gap

The integration of cultural heritage and digital media has created new possibilities for cultural preservation; however, significant research gaps remain. First, current studies mainly examine digital heritage transformation at institutional levels or investigate general intangible cultural heritage communication. Although these studies provide valuable theoretical foundations, they provide limited guidance for artifact-specific digital communication.

Second, existing Douyin heritage research has demonstrated the importance of visual storytelling, audience participation, and algorithmic distribution, but practical frameworks for producing culturally accurate and educational short videos remain insufficient. Many digital heritage videos prioritize visibility and engagement while lacking systematic principles for maintaining historical authenticity.

Third, Chinese bronze artifacts such as Houmuwu Ding possess unique communication requirements. Unlike traditional craftsmanship or performance-based heritage, archaeological artifacts require interpretation of historical context, symbolic meaning, and material characteristics. Therefore, communication strategies developed for other heritage categories cannot be directly applied.

Based on these gaps, this study conducts a literature review to examine existing research on intangible cultural heritage preservation, digital heritage communication, short video dissemination, and Chinese bronze artifact representation. The ultimate objective is to establish a conceptual foundation for developing Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifact dissemination.

Literature Review Approach

This study adopts a thematic literature review approach to examine existing academic knowledge related to intangible cultural heritage preservation, digital heritage communication, short video dissemination, and the digital representation of Chinese bronze artifacts. A literature review methodology is appropriate for this research because the objective is not to evaluate a single digital intervention but to identify conceptual relationships, research tendencies, and unresolved issues within an emerging interdisciplinary field. Through systematic examination of previous studies, this research seeks to establish theoretical foundations for developing Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifact communication.

Recent methodological discussions in heritage research indicate that literature-based studies can provide valuable frameworks for understanding complex relationships between technology, culture, and communication. Xiao et al. (2023) emphasized that systematic analysis of existing heritage studies enables researchers to identify technological trends and conceptual limitations within digital heritage development. Their work demonstrates that literature synthesis is particularly useful in emerging interdisciplinary areas where research approaches remain fragmented. In a different methodological context, Snyder (2022) highlighted that literature reviews contribute to knowledge development by organizing previous findings, identifying contradictions, and constructing new research directions. These perspectives support the selection of a thematic literature review approach for examining the relationship between digital communication technologies and cultural heritage dissemination.

The thematic approach adopted in this study focuses on identifying recurring concepts rather than simply summarizing individual publications. This method allows different research perspectives to be compared, including technological perspectives emphasizing digital preservation, communication perspectives focusing on audience engagement, and cultural perspectives concerning authenticity and interpretation. By integrating these dimensions, the study aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of how Douyin short video communication can support the dissemination of Houmuwu Ding bronze cultural heritage.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted to identify recent academic studies published between **2022 and 2027**. This time range was selected because digital cultural communication has experienced rapid transformation during this period, particularly due to the increasing influence of social media platforms, short video applications, and digital heritage technologies. The search process focused on internationally recognized academic databases, including Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, and China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI).

The literature identification process followed three stages: keyword selection, database searching, and relevance screening. The keywords were developed according to the main concepts of this research topic. For intangible cultural heritage communication, search terms included “intangible cultural heritage,” “digital heritage,” “heritage communication,” and “digital preservation.” For digital media communication, keywords included “Douyin,” “short video,” “TikTok,” “social media communication,” and “digital storytelling.” For the artifact-

specific dimension, terms such as “Chinese bronze culture,” “bronze artifacts,” and “Houmuwu Ding” were considered.

The selection strategy was designed to ensure that collected studies directly contributed to understanding the relationship between cultural heritage and digital communication. Xiao et al. (2023) suggested that digital heritage research requires interdisciplinary literature selection because heritage communication involves technological, social, and cultural dimensions simultaneously. Similarly, Page et al. (2021) explained that rigorous literature identification procedures improve transparency and reliability in review-based research by ensuring that included studies are selected according to clear criteria. Although Page et al. (2021) is outside the preferred publication range, the methodological principle remains relevant; therefore, it will only be used as a methodological reference and will not appear in the final research literature analysis section.

To maintain consistency with the research objective, the inclusion criteria were established as follows:

1. Studies published between 2022 and 2027;
2. Peer-reviewed journal articles or recognized academic conference publications;
3. Research related to digital heritage, cultural communication, social media platforms, or museum digital transformation;
4. Studies providing theoretical or practical implications for digital heritage dissemination.

Studies were excluded when they focused exclusively on technical development without cultural application or lacked relevance to digital communication and heritage preservation.

Literature Analysis Framework

Following the literature collection process, selected studies were organized through a thematic classification framework. The framework was developed based on the central research question: how can Douyin short video guidelines be developed for communicating the intangible cultural heritage value of Houmuwu Ding bronze artifacts?

Table1.The analysis framework consists of four major themes

Theme	Research Focus	Contribution to Current Study
Digital Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage	Digital documentation, preservation methods, cultural accessibility	Establishes theoretical foundation for digital heritage communication
Representation of Chinese Bronze Cultural Heritage	Historical interpretation, cultural symbolism, artifact communication	Defines cultural requirements for Houmuwu Ding representation
Douyin Short Video Communication	Visual storytelling, audience participation, algorithmic dissemination	Explains platform characteristics influencing heritage communication
Guideline Development for Cultural Heritage Videos	Content design, authenticity, education, engagement strategies	Supports the construction of a practical communication framework

The classification process was designed to avoid treating digital heritage communication as a purely technological issue. Instead, the framework considers heritage dissemination as an interaction among cultural knowledge, communication methods, and audience experiences.

Recent methodological research in digital heritage supports this multidimensional analytical approach. Martínez et al. (2024) argued that digital heritage studies require consideration of both technological capabilities and cultural interpretation because digital tools influence not only preservation practices but also how heritage meanings are constructed. Meanwhile, Nikolaou (2024) examined museum digital transformation and identified that successful digital practices depend on the integration of technological implementation, professional knowledge, and public engagement. These studies provide methodological justification for analyzing Houmuwu Ding communication through multiple interconnected dimensions rather than a single technological perspective.

Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis procedure consisted of four sequential stages.

Stage 1: Identification of Relevant Literature

Academic publications were collected according to predefined keywords and database criteria. Each publication was evaluated based on its relevance to digital heritage communication and its potential contribution to understanding short video-based cultural dissemination.

Stage 2: Categorization of Research Themes

Selected studies were classified according to their primary research focus. Studies concerning digital preservation were separated from those examining social media communication, while artifact-related studies were analyzed independently to identify specific requirements for cultural representation.

Stage 3: Comparative Thematic Analysis

The selected literature was compared to identify similarities, differences, and unresolved issues. Rather than assuming that previous studies provide identical conclusions, this analysis examined how different disciplines approach digital cultural communication from distinct perspectives.

Stage 4: Development of Conceptual Guidelines

Based on the identified research gaps, the study synthesizes existing knowledge to propose dimensions for Douyin short video guidelines related to Houmuwu Ding. These dimensions include cultural accuracy, visual narrative design, educational communication, audience interaction, and platform optimization.

Through this analytical procedure, the methodology establishes a systematic foundation for reviewing existing research and developing a conceptual framework for digital dissemination of Chinese bronze cultural heritage.

Digital Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The digital preservation of intangible cultural heritage has gradually developed from a documentation-oriented approach toward a communication-oriented framework. Earlier preservation practices mainly focused on recording endangered cultural expressions through archives and databases; however, contemporary digital heritage research increasingly emphasizes the importance of accessibility, interpretation, and public participation. This transformation reflects a broader shift in heritage studies, where digital technologies are considered not only as preservation instruments but also as communication environments that influence how cultural meanings are created and shared.

Recent studies have examined digital preservation from different analytical perspectives. Chen et al. (2024) investigated digital media strategies for global intangible cultural heritage dissemination and argued that digital platforms expand heritage visibility by enabling cross-cultural communication and broader public participation. Their research primarily focused on communication strategies and emphasized the role of digital media in extending the social influence of heritage beyond geographical limitations. In contrast, Ye et al. (2025) examined the adoption of digital intangible cultural heritage from a user acceptance perspective and found that perceived immersion, technological experience, and perceived value influence whether audiences are willing to engage with digitally presented heritage. While Chen et al. (2024) emphasized the external communication potential of digital platforms, Ye et al. (2025) highlighted the internal psychological mechanisms affecting audience acceptance. Together, these studies demonstrate that successful digital heritage preservation requires both effective dissemination channels and meaningful user experiences.

The development of digital preservation has also changed the role of cultural institutions. Rather than functioning only as custodians of historical resources, museums and heritage organizations increasingly operate as digital

knowledge providers. Yang et al. (2025) conducted a systematic review of digital transformation in Chinese museums and identified that digitization has improved collection management, educational functions, and public access to cultural resources. However, their study primarily examined institutional transformation and technological development. Differently, Kefi et al. (2023) analyzed museum transformation from the perspective of social mediation and argued that digital platforms reshape museum-audience relationships by encouraging interactive and collaborative engagement. These studies reveal two complementary dimensions of digital heritage preservation: institutional capability and audience communication. For the dissemination of Houmuwu Ding, both dimensions are essential because the artifact requires authoritative historical interpretation while also needing communication strategies suitable for contemporary digital audiences.

Despite the advantages of digital preservation, current research identifies several challenges regarding authenticity, contextualization, and cultural interpretation. Digital technologies enable heritage content to reach larger audiences, but they may also simplify complex cultural meanings when information is transformed into highly accessible formats. Nikolaou (2024) examined challenges in museum digital transformation and pointed out that technological adoption does not automatically produce meaningful heritage communication because digital practices must remain connected with professional interpretation and cultural responsibility. Similarly, Wang et al. (2025) explored the relationship between digital cultural experiences and public engagement, demonstrating that audiences' connections with heritage depend not only on technological novelty but also on cultural symbolism and meaningful narratives. These findings suggest that digital preservation should not be evaluated only by technical accessibility but also by its ability to maintain cultural depth. This issue is particularly relevant for Houmuwu Ding because its historical significance relies on complex relationships among material characteristics, ritual meanings, and ancient Chinese social structures.

Representation of Chinese Bronze Cultural Heritage in Digital Environments

The digital representation of Chinese bronze cultural heritage requires particular attention because bronze artifacts contain multiple layers of historical, technological, and symbolic meanings. Unlike contemporary cultural products, ancient bronze objects cannot be fully understood through visual appearance alone. Their cultural significance depends on archaeological interpretation, historical context, manufacturing knowledge, and social symbolism. Therefore, digital communication strategies for bronze artifacts must address the relationship between visual presentation and knowledge transmission.

Recent research on cultural heritage visualization has demonstrated that digital technologies can enhance public understanding of archaeological objects by creating more immersive interpretive experiences. Wang et al. (2024) investigated immersive technologies in cultural heritage presentation and found that digital visualization methods allow audiences to experience historical objects through interactive and multidimensional approaches. Their study emphasized technological innovation as a means of improving accessibility. In another perspective, Li et al. (2024) examined virtual museum curation for Chinese bronze wares and proposed that interactive digital environments can increase audience curiosity and learning motivation by transforming static objects into experiential cultural resources. While Wang et al. (2024) focused on immersive heritage technologies broadly, Li et al. (2024) specifically addressed Chinese bronze artifacts, demonstrating that digital interpretation can provide new possibilities for communicating bronze culture.

However, digital representation of bronze artifacts involves challenges beyond technological presentation. The transformation of archaeological knowledge into digital narratives requires careful consideration of authenticity and interpretive responsibility. Liu et al. (2024) examined digital archives and immersive experiences for Chinese traditional cultural practices and found that emotional engagement increases when digital experiences combine historical information with culturally meaningful storytelling. Meanwhile, Zheng et al. (2024) investigated digital integration in museum cultural communication and highlighted that interactive digital platforms can strengthen connections between audiences and cultural narratives. These studies indicate that effective digital representation requires more than displaying artifact images; it requires constructing narratives that connect objects with historical experiences. For Houmuwu Ding, this means that short video communication should not merely present the physical appearance of the bronze vessel but should explain its historical role, technological achievement, and cultural symbolism.

The existing literature also indicates a limitation in current digital artifact communication research. Many studies concentrate on technological applications such as virtual reality, digital archives, or immersive exhibitions, while fewer studies examine how archaeological artifacts can be communicated through short-form social media content. Compared with museum-based digital experiences, short video platforms require condensed narratives, immediate audience engagement, and visually attractive presentation. Therefore, developing communication guidelines for Houmuwu Ding requires integrating archaeological interpretation with short video storytelling principles.

Douyin Short Video and Cultural Heritage Communication

Short video platforms have introduced a new communication environment for intangible cultural heritage by combining visual storytelling, algorithmic recommendation, and audience participation. Unlike traditional cultural communication methods, short videos require creators to transform complex cultural knowledge into concise and engaging narratives. This transformation creates opportunities for heritage dissemination but also raises concerns regarding content quality, authenticity, and educational effectiveness.

Recent studies have investigated the mechanisms influencing cultural heritage dissemination through short video platforms. Zhang (2024) examined the impact of short videos on intangible cultural heritage transmission and argued that short video platforms contribute to heritage revitalization by transforming static cultural resources into dynamic communication content. However, the study also identified challenges related to content quality and audience engagement. In contrast, Cheng (2024) analyzed creative transformation strategies for intangible cultural heritage short videos and emphasized the importance of balancing cultural inheritance with innovative digital expression. While Zhang (2024) focused on communication outcomes, Cheng (2024) examined creative production strategies, demonstrating that effective heritage short videos require both audience-oriented dissemination and culturally appropriate content development.

The algorithmic nature of Douyin further influences how cultural heritage content is produced and consumed. Unlike traditional educational media, Douyin determines content visibility through recommendation mechanisms influenced by user interaction, viewing behavior, and engagement indicators. Wang et al. (2025) examined effective dissemination factors of intangible cultural heritage on Douyin and found that successful communication results from combinations of content characteristics, creator strategies, and audience responses. Meanwhile, Liu and Qiu (2024) analyzed official intangible cultural heritage videos through multimodal content analysis and demonstrated that visual elements, narrative structures, and symbolic expressions influence how audiences interpret heritage messages. These studies suggest that Douyin heritage communication requires systematic consideration of both platform mechanisms and cultural representation.

For Houmuwu Ding dissemination, Douyin provides opportunities to overcome limitations of traditional artifact communication. Through short videos, complex information about bronze casting techniques, historical background, and cultural meanings can be transformed into accessible visual narratives. However, because Douyin emphasizes rapid consumption and emotional engagement, specific guidelines are required to ensure that visual attractiveness does not replace historical accuracy.

Existing Limitations in Current Digital Communication of Houmuwu Ding

Although existing studies have demonstrated the potential of digital technologies and short video platforms in cultural heritage dissemination, several limitations remain when applying these approaches to specific historical artifacts such as the Houmuwu Ding. Current research has mainly concentrated on broad digital preservation strategies, general intangible cultural heritage communication, or technological innovation, while insufficient attention has been given to developing practical communication frameworks for individual cultural objects. As a result, the transformation of archaeological artifacts from museum-based knowledge resources into platform-oriented digital narratives remains an underexplored area.

One major limitation concerns the imbalance between cultural authenticity and digital accessibility. Digital platforms encourage simplified and visually attractive content, yet historical artifacts require accurate interpretation based on archaeological evidence and cultural context. Mo and Huang (2024) examined digital preservation and network communication of intangible cultural heritage and argued that digital dissemination

must maintain connections between cultural knowledge and communication effectiveness. Their research primarily emphasized the importance of communication structures in heritage transmission. In contrast, Wang et al. (2024) investigated social media-based cultural heritage communication and revealed that different stakeholders construct heritage meanings through diverse narratives, which may create tensions between professional authority and public interpretation. These studies suggest that digital heritage communication requires mechanisms to balance expert knowledge with audience-oriented presentation. For Houmuwu Ding, this indicates that short video guidelines should include principles for historical verification and responsible cultural interpretation rather than focusing only on visual attractiveness.

A second limitation relates to the lack of systematic storytelling frameworks for cultural artifact short videos. Existing digital heritage studies have confirmed the importance of storytelling, but many studies focus on general communication effects rather than specific narrative structures suitable for archaeological objects. Traditional museum interpretation often relies on chronological explanations and professional descriptions, whereas short video platforms require condensed narratives capable of attracting audience attention within a limited time frame. Chen et al. (2025) examined digital media strategies for global intangible cultural heritage dissemination and highlighted the importance of communication design in expanding heritage influence. However, their research primarily focused on broad dissemination strategies rather than artifact-level narrative construction. Similarly, Liu and Qiu (2024) analyzed multimodal representations of official intangible cultural heritage short videos and demonstrated that visual elements, language, and symbolic expressions influence audience understanding. Their study focused on content presentation patterns rather than developing production principles for individual historical artifacts. Therefore, further research is required to establish narrative frameworks specifically designed for objects such as Houmuwu Ding.

Another limitation concerns the insufficient integration between educational objectives and platform optimization. While Douyin provides opportunities to reach younger audiences, algorithm-driven environments often prioritize engagement indicators such as views, likes, and sharing behavior. This creates potential conflicts between educational depth and platform popularity. Wang et al. (2025) investigated factors influencing effective intangible cultural heritage dissemination on Douyin and found that communication outcomes depend on the interaction between content characteristics, creator behavior, and audience response. Their research contributes an understanding of platform effectiveness but does not specifically address historical artifact education. Meanwhile, Ye et al. (2025) examined user adoption of digital intangible cultural heritage and demonstrated that immersive experiences and perceived value influence users' willingness to engage with digital heritage content. Their research highlights audience acceptance mechanisms rather than content production strategies. Together, these studies indicate that effective Houmuwu Ding short videos require integration of educational design, audience psychology, and platform communication mechanisms.

Furthermore, current research lacks practical guidelines connecting archaeological heritage characteristics with short video production requirements. Existing studies provide valuable insights into digital preservation, museum transformation, and social media communication; however, these studies rarely translate theoretical findings into operational principles for content creators. The communication of Houmuwu Ding requires specific considerations because the artifact combines material characteristics, historical symbolism, technological knowledge, and cultural identity. Unlike performing arts or traditional craftsmanship, archaeological artifacts cannot demonstrate their cultural meanings through living practice alone; they require carefully designed visual explanations and contextual storytelling.

Therefore, a guideline framework for Douyin short videos on Houmuwu Ding should address several unresolved issues identified in previous studies. First, cultural accuracy must be protected through reliable historical interpretation. Second, visual narratives should transform complex archaeological knowledge into accessible digital experiences. Third, educational objectives should be integrated with audience engagement strategies. Finally, platform characteristics, including algorithmic recommendation and user interaction mechanisms, should be considered during content development.

These limitations demonstrate the necessity of developing a structured guideline model that connects cultural heritage principles with digital communication practices. Such a framework can contribute to the sustainable dissemination of Chinese bronze cultural heritage by ensuring that digital visibility is achieved without compromising historical authenticity and educational value.

DISCUSSION

The literature reviewed in this study demonstrates that digital cultural heritage communication requires an integrated approach that considers historical knowledge, visual expression, audience engagement, and platform characteristics. Existing research has established the importance of digital preservation and social media dissemination; however, a practical framework for communicating specific archaeological artifacts through short video platforms remains insufficiently developed. Therefore, this study proposes a conceptual guideline framework for Douyin short videos focusing on Houmuwu Ding bronze artifacts. The proposed framework consists of five dimensions: cultural accuracy, visual narrative design, educational communication, audience interaction, and digital platform optimization.

The framework is developed based on the understanding that Houmuwu Ding is not merely a visual cultural object but a complex historical symbol containing technological, social, and cultural meanings. Consequently, successful short video communication should not prioritize popularity alone but should establish a balance between cultural responsibility and digital accessibility.

Cultural Accuracy Guideline

Cultural accuracy represents the fundamental principle for developing Douyin short videos about Houmuwu Ding. Unlike ordinary digital content, cultural heritage communication involves the transmission of historical knowledge and collective memory. Therefore, digital representation should maintain reliability by ensuring that historical explanations, visual reconstructions, and narrative interpretations are supported by academic evidence.

Recent heritage research emphasizes that digital accessibility should not compromise cultural authenticity. Yang et al. (2025) examined digital transformation practices in Chinese museums and argued that digital heritage initiatives require effective integration between technological innovation and professional cultural interpretation. Their research highlights the institutional responsibility of maintaining reliable heritage knowledge during digital transformation. In contrast, Ye et al. (2025) investigated user acceptance of digital intangible cultural heritage and demonstrated that users' trust and engagement are influenced by perceived authenticity and meaningful cultural experiences. While Yang et al. (2025) focused on heritage institutions, Ye et al. (2025) emphasized audience perception, indicating that cultural accuracy influences both knowledge credibility and user acceptance.

Based on these findings, the cultural accuracy guideline for Houmuwu Ding short videos should include several principles. First, video content should be based on verified historical information, including archaeological discoveries, museum documentation, and academic research. Second, visual reconstruction should clearly distinguish between historical evidence and creative interpretation. Third, creators should avoid excessive simplification that removes important cultural contexts.

For example, a Douyin video introducing Houmuwu Ding should not only describe its size and appearance but also explain its relationship with Shang Dynasty ritual culture, bronze casting technology, and social symbolism. Through this approach, digital communication can transform the artifact from a visually attractive object into a meaningful cultural narrative.

Visual Narrative Design Guideline

Visual narrative design is another essential component of Douyin short video development because short video platforms primarily communicate through audiovisual experiences. Although cultural heritage contains complex historical knowledge, audiences on short video platforms often encounter content within a limited attention period. Therefore, the challenge is to transform academic information into visually engaging narratives without reducing cultural complexity.

Recent studies indicate that digital storytelling influences how audiences understand and emotionally connect with heritage content. Wang et al. (2024) examined digital heritage experiences and found that technological presentation becomes more effective when combined with meaningful cultural narratives. Their research emphasizes that digital experiences should create connections between audiences and historical meanings rather than simply display information. Meanwhile, He et al. (2026) analyzed traditional craftsmanship videos on

Douyin and demonstrated that narrative structures, emotional expression, and visual demonstrations significantly influence audience engagement. Although Wang et al. (2024) focused on digital heritage experiences broadly, He et al. (2026) examined short-video-specific storytelling mechanisms, providing complementary perspectives for designing Houmuwu Ding videos.

Based on these findings, visual narrative design for Houmuwu Ding should adopt a structured storytelling approach. The first stage should attract audience attention through visually significant elements, such as detailed views of bronze patterns, casting techniques, or digital reconstruction scenes. The second stage should provide historical explanation by connecting visual elements with archaeological knowledge. The final stage should encourage reflection by linking the artifact with broader cultural identity and historical understanding.

A possible narrative structure can include:

Opening (0–5 seconds):

- Present the visual uniqueness of Houmuwu Ding;
- Introduce a historical question or cultural mystery.

Development:

- Explain historical background;
- Present bronze technology;
- Interpret cultural meanings.

Conclusion:

- Connect ancient culture with contemporary identity;
- Encourage audience interaction.

Through this narrative approach, Douyin videos can maintain both visual attractiveness and educational depth.

Educational Communication Guideline

Educational value is a critical dimension because cultural heritage communication should not only increase visibility but also promote understanding. Short video platforms provide opportunities to reach younger audiences; however, effective communication requires transforming complex historical knowledge into accessible educational experiences.

Previous studies demonstrate that digital cultural experiences can enhance learning when technological interaction is combined with meaningful interpretation. Wang and Meng (2024) developed a model explaining relationships among digital museum experiences, cultural symbolism, and public engagement, suggesting that digital tools can strengthen historical connection when audiences actively participate in interpretation. In another perspective, Liu et al. (2024) investigated digital cultural archives and immersive experiences and found that emotional engagement and cultural understanding influence audience willingness to participate in heritage transmission. These studies indicate that educational communication depends not only on information delivery but also on the creation of meaningful cultural experiences.

Therefore, Houmuwu Ding short videos should adopt an educational communication strategy that combines historical explanation with accessible presentation. Content creators should avoid presenting isolated facts, such as artifact size or discovery location, without explaining their cultural significance.

Recommended educational elements include:

- historical background explanation;
- bronze manufacturing knowledge;
- interpretation of inscriptions and patterns;

- relationship between artifact and Shang Dynasty society;
- connection between ancient culture and contemporary life.

Through these approaches, Douyin short videos can function as informal educational resources that support cultural learning among digital audiences.

Audience Interaction Guideline

Audience interaction represents a distinctive advantage of short video platforms compared with traditional cultural communication methods. Digital audiences are no longer passive recipients; instead, they participate through comments, sharing, discussion, and content creation. Therefore, Douyin heritage communication should incorporate interactive strategies that encourage users to engage with cultural meanings.

Research on social media heritage communication indicates that audience participation influences how cultural meanings are negotiated online. Chen et al. (2025) examined digital media strategies for global intangible cultural heritage dissemination and emphasized that interactive communication contributes to expanding cultural influence across different communities. Meanwhile, Wang et al. (2025) analyzed Douyin dissemination effectiveness and found that audience responses and creator strategies jointly influence heritage communication outcomes. While Chen et al. (2025) focused on broader cultural dissemination, Wang et al. (2025) specifically examined platform-level communication mechanisms, providing different perspectives on audience engagement.

Based on these findings, Houmuwu Ding videos should encourage meaningful interaction rather than simply seeking high engagement numbers. Possible strategies include:

- asking audiences historical questions;
- encouraging discussion about cultural meanings;
- responding to educational comments;
- creating follow-up videos based on audience interests.

Such interaction can transform viewers from passive audiences into active participants in cultural heritage communication.

Digital Platform Optimization Guideline

The final dimension concerns adaptation to Douyin's technological environment. Unlike traditional cultural communication channels, Douyin operates through algorithmic recommendation systems that influence content visibility. Therefore, heritage videos must consider platform characteristics while maintaining cultural objectives.

Recent research indicates that successful digital communication requires understanding the relationship between content design and platform mechanisms. Wang et al. (2025) identified that effective Douyin heritage dissemination depends on combinations of content quality, creator characteristics, and audience response. Similarly, Paquenseguy and Guo (2025) explored Douyin's role in intangible cultural heritage dissemination and emphasized the influence of professional content production and algorithm-supported cultural circulation. These studies demonstrate that heritage communication strategies must adapt to platform logic rather than simply transferring traditional exhibition methods into digital formats.

For Houmuwu Ding short videos, platform optimization should include:

- appropriate video duration;
- clear visual structure;
- accurate keywords and hashtags;
- consistent content themes;
- audience feedback analysis.

However, optimization should serve cultural communication goals rather than replace them. Algorithmic visibility should be considered a method for expanding cultural access, while historical authenticity remains the primary principle.

Proposed Guideline Framework Summary

Table 2. Based on the literature synthesis, this study proposes the following framework

Guideline Dimension	Main Objective	Application to Houmuwu Ding Videos
Cultural Accuracy	Maintain historical reliability	Verified historical explanation and interpretation
Visual Narrative Design	Improve communication effectiveness	Story-based audiovisual presentation
Educational Communication	Promote cultural understanding	Knowledge-oriented content development
Audience Interaction	Encourage participation	Comments, discussion, community engagement
Platform Optimization	Improve digital reach	Adaptation to Douyin communication mechanisms

This framework provides a conceptual foundation for developing practical Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifact dissemination.

CONCLUSION

The rapid development of digital communication technologies has significantly transformed the ways in which intangible cultural heritage is preserved, interpreted, and disseminated. This literature review examined the relationship between digital heritage communication, Chinese bronze cultural representation, and Douyin short video dissemination, with particular attention to the development of communication guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifacts. By reviewing recent studies published between 2022 and 2027, this research identified the opportunities and challenges associated with integrating cultural heritage preservation with contemporary short video platforms.

The findings indicate that digital dissemination of cultural heritage requires a balance between historical authenticity, visual attractiveness, audience engagement, and platform adaptability. Existing research demonstrates that digital technologies have expanded possibilities for cultural preservation by improving accessibility and enabling interactive experiences. However, technological advancement alone cannot guarantee effective heritage communication. Cultural meaning, historical interpretation, and educational objectives remain essential components in transforming digital content into meaningful heritage experiences.

This study also identifies a significant research gap in the communication of specific archaeological artifacts through short video platforms. Although previous research has extensively examined digital heritage preservation, museum transformation, and intangible cultural heritage communication, limited attention has been given to developing practical guidelines for individual cultural objects such as the Houmuwu Ding. Unlike living cultural practices, archaeological artifacts require additional interpretive strategies because their meanings depend on historical context, material characteristics, and cultural symbolism.

Based on the reviewed literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework for developing Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifact dissemination. The framework consists of five interconnected dimensions: cultural accuracy, visual narrative design, educational communication, audience interaction, and digital platform optimization. These dimensions provide theoretical guidance for transforming academic heritage knowledge into accessible digital narratives while maintaining cultural integrity.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to digital cultural heritage research by connecting three previously separated research areas: heritage preservation, short video communication, and artifact-based cultural representation. Existing studies often examine these areas independently; however, the present study argues that effective digital heritage communication requires integration among cultural knowledge, communication strategies, and platform characteristics.

From a practical perspective, the proposed framework provides potential guidance for museums, cultural institutions, and digital content creators seeking to communicate Chinese bronze heritage through Douyin. By emphasizing both cultural responsibility and digital engagement, the framework may support the creation of short

videos that are not only visually attractive but also educationally meaningful. For Houmuwu Ding specifically, such guidelines can contribute to transforming the artifact from a static museum object into an interactive cultural narrative accessible to contemporary audiences.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, as a literature review, the research does not empirically evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed guideline framework through actual Douyin content production or audience experiments. Second, although the study focuses on Houmuwu Ding as a representative Chinese bronze artifact, the applicability of the framework to other archaeological objects requires further investigation. Third, the rapidly changing nature of digital platforms means that future communication strategies may need continuous adaptation according to technological and social developments.

Future research should therefore conduct empirical studies involving the production and evaluation of Houmuwu Ding-related Douyin videos. Audience surveys, content analysis, and experimental studies could further examine how different storytelling approaches influence cultural understanding and engagement. Additionally, comparative research between different cultural artifacts and digital platforms may provide broader insights into sustainable digital heritage communication.

In conclusion, the development of Douyin short video guidelines for Houmuwu Ding bronze artifacts represents an important step toward integrating traditional cultural heritage with contemporary digital communication practices. By combining historical authenticity, visual storytelling, educational value, audience participation, and platform optimization, digital media can support the sustainable transmission of Chinese bronze culture and strengthen connections between ancient heritage and modern audiences.

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