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## The popularization of business news expression must balance professionalism and post-print versions.

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### Abstract

Industry news reports, when covering overall industrial development and its technologies and products, often employ popularized journalistic expression methods such as exemplification, comparison, and simplification to enhance readability and facilitate audience comprehension. An analysis of journalistic practice reveals that the practical application of popularized expression tends to give rise to issues including compromised news accuracy, content that violates patterns of industrial development and technological principles, and confusion regarding enterprises and their business operations. This paper, drawing upon numerous reporting cases including high-speed rail, 5G, industrial robots, and 3D printing, analyzes how to balance popularized expression with professionalism in industry news reporting and offers recommendations.

### Full Text

## Business News Must Balance Popularization with Professionalism

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### Abstract

When reporting on industrial development, technologies, and products, business and economic journalism often employs popularized expressions—such as examples, comparisons, and simplifications—to enhance readability and facilitate audience comprehension. However, analysis of news practices reveals that such popularization can compromise accuracy, violate industrial development and technological principles, and confuse companies with their business operations. This paper examines how business news can maintain professionalism

while using popularized expressions, drawing on numerous reporting examples including high-speed rail, 5G, industrial robots, and 3D printing, and offers recommendations for improvement.

**Keywords:** business news; popularized expression; professionalism

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Business news has long faced the dilemma that “insiders won’ t read it, and outsiders can’ t understand it.” To transform dry, abstract, and complex information into vivid, concrete, and accessible stories, journalists frequently employ various popularization techniques—listing examples, telling stories, adding comparisons, and using charts. However, these methods can introduce inaccuracies, incompleteness, and inappropriateness that undermine journalistic truthfulness. In business news, where subject matter often involves high technical barriers, popularized expressions sometimes result in “insiders rejecting it, and outsiders misunderstanding it.” This requires constant self-reflection and gradual improvement from journalists to ensure business news remains both accessible and professional.

## 1. Reflecting Industrial and Technical Realities Requires More Than Literal Interpretation

Conciseness, liveliness, and accessibility are requirements for all news writing, as only these qualities can bridge the gap between news and audiences and enhance communication effectiveness. The *Financial Times* demands that its reporters produce copy that is clear, economical, and vivid. An established convention in American journalism holds that newspaper articles should be comprehensible to eighth-grade students—equivalent to Chinese middle school second-year level. Business news, categorized alongside political economy, financial news, and socio-economic news, has always emphasized more accessible writing to enliven cold data and animate dry concepts, presenting facts with solid reasoning and evidence. It must be clarified that regardless of technique, popularized expression cannot violate professionalism; accuracy must remain the prerequisite to ensure journalistic rigor.

In reality, a certain degree of tension exists between popularization and professionalism, making both difficult to achieve simultaneously. Rather than exploring this theoretically, this paper categorizes and analyzes several practical cases encountered in news work. For instance, when reporting on China’ s high-speed rail, media coverage focuses on speed and stability. To vividly describe rail stability, journalists interview passengers about their experiences and conduct on-site demonstrations, most commonly by balancing mineral water bottles. Headlines such as “Three Mineral Water Bottles Stacked Upright on Trial-Run

High-Speed Train,” “Ten New High-Speed Rail Lines to Open Before Year-End: Three Upright Water Bottles Amaze Passengers,” and “China’s High-Speed Rail Trial Run Reveals Scene: Three Stacked Water Bottles Remain Motionless, Astonishing Onlookers” appear repeatedly, with a recent trend toward stacking more bottles at greater heights.

Undoubtedly, operational stability is a key metric for high-speed rail technology and represents a major achievement in China’s rail development. However, in-depth interviews reveal that high-speed rail stability is relative, and news expression cannot oversimplify or absolutize it. Vibrations inevitably occur during acceleration and braking, when two trains pass each other, and when carriages traverse bridge-tunnel junctions. Further analysis shows that high-speed rail lines cannot be perfectly straight; when negotiating curves, trains generate centrifugal force proportional to train mass and the square of speed. To ensure safety, track design incorporates superelevation to raise the outer rail, causing trains to tilt inward. This moderate tilt is a technical necessity, not an indication of instability, and in no way diminishes China’s technological achievements in high-speed rail.

The claim that “water bottles never fall throughout the entire journey” cannot withstand factual scrutiny and fails to objectively describe rail operations. Journalists must not simply follow the crowd, assuming such popularized expressions are reasonable. Instead, they should conduct thorough interviews to explore the technical breakthroughs behind China’s high-speed rail design and construction, providing more convincing content and more realistic examples.

## 2. Avoid Conflating Theoretical Data with Practical Application

Business news reporting should accurately cite data, professionally describe phenomena, thoroughly analyze problems, and scientifically assess trends. This requires solid news gathering and editing capabilities to better convey information to both industry and general audiences. When explaining 5G’s speed advantage over 4G, most media have adopted the example of movie downloads: “5G is Coming: Downloading a 1.2GB Movie Takes Only 8 Seconds,” “5G is Coming! Downloading a 6GB HD Movie Takes Less Than 2 Minutes,” “In the 5G Era, Netizens Can Download an HD Movie in Just 10 Seconds,” and “Besides Downloading Movies in 1 Second, What Else Can 5G Do?”

While using movie downloads to explain 5G speed is a familiar journalistic device, problems arise. First, calculations differ significantly across reports. Second, journalists typically use 5G’s peak download speed for these calculations, ignoring that 5G network speeds can vary by a hundred times between peak and minimum values. Actual download speeds depend on numerous variables: signal quality, network congestion, video quality, and the storage speed of users’ computers or phones. Real-world measurements from 5G networks under construction show that average outdoor download speeds differ markedly from theoretical peaks.

Using theoretical peak speeds alongside everyday applications creates easy misunderstanding. 5G construction involves multi-technical field station building and transmission upgrades; describing 5G's revolutionary impact solely through movie downloads appears simplistic and crude. Journalists must also distinguish between “scientific achievements” and “products,” clearly separating data from laboratories versus production lines. Over 90% of scientific achievements in China fail to achieve industrial conversion, and internationally, the gap between achievements and industrialization is called the “valley of death.” Industrialization requires supporting R&D, industrial participation, and lengthy processes of tracking, evaluation, decision-making, investment, and production. When popularizing, journalists should always clarify sources and applicable conditions for any data or facts cited.

### **3. Guard Against Overgeneralization When Describing Overall Industrial Development**

When reporting on an industry, journalists often insert overview background material to help audiences quickly understand the broader context and establish a framework for the news domain. However, such popularization risks overgeneralization. For example, industrial robot news frequently cites China's overall development level as background support. Yet interviews with industry insiders reveal strong dissatisfaction with such “broad-brush” descriptions.

Many reports mention that China has over 3,000 robotics companies—a market too crowded to sustain. Industry professionals point out that these 3,000 enterprises span the entire industrial chain, including R&D, production, sales, component manufacturing, system integration, and service provision. They are not strictly robotics companies in the conventional sense, just as gear factories and tire plants cannot all be generically called automobile companies. China has approximately 200 robot manufacturers. Comparing the 3,000 figure with foreign robotics enterprises leads to erroneous conclusions about industrial development—an statistical 口径 (statistical caliber) deviation that business news popularization must particularly note.

Similar issues exist in new energy vehicle reporting. While simple statistical reporting—1.27 million and 1.256 million vehicles produced and sold in 2018, representing year-on-year growth of 59.9% and 61.7%—is straightforward, deeper coverage requires specificity: manufacturing costs, batteries and range, charging infrastructure, license plate policies, and comparisons with gasoline vehicles. The characteristics of one industry segment cannot be presented as universal traits of the entire industry.

For virtually all industries, simplistic definitional expressions like “leading,” “too fast,” “too slow,” or “lacks core technology” should be avoided. Instead, analysis should be detailed: which areas show clear gaps, which are catching up or have reached international advanced levels, and to what extent unresolved core technologies hinder specific aspects of industrial development.

#### 4. Prevent Misattribution When Abbreviating Companies and Their Businesses

Popularized expression often simplifies complexity, avoiding obscure terminology or cumbersome exposition. Abbreviating and shortening company names is a common technique. However, as capital markets have evolved, corporate management and ownership structures have grown increasingly complex, with numerous subsidiaries and sub-brands, creating situations where companies are deeply intertwined.

Previous reports show that companies like HNA, Vanke, and Gree have complex equity structures. While business news may not always analyze these in detail, popularized expressions still require extreme caution when abbreviating company names or businesses to avoid factual misattribution. When New Oriental Online listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange Main Board in March 2019, reporters could not simply introduce the subject as a “New Oriental-affiliated enterprise” without explanation. They needed to briefly clarify the relationship between New Oriental Online and New Oriental.

Founded in 2005, New Oriental Online was spun off from New Oriental Group in 2014, listed on the New Third Board in March 2017, and delisted in February 2018. The necessary background is that New Oriental Education & Technology Group had already listed on the NYSE 13 years earlier, with New Oriental Online’s largest and second-largest shareholders being New Oriental Education & Technology Group and Tencent, respectively. Such popularization requires minimal space, yet regrettably, audiences often must piece together these facts from multiple reports, with many coverage instances glossing over or omitting them entirely, resulting in varying degrees of informational ambiguity.

Similarly, in March 2019, Zhejiang Geely Holding Group and Daimler AG announced a joint venture to globally co-operate the smart brand. Chinese signatory Li Shifu and foreign signatory Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of Daimler’s Board and Global President of Mercedes-Benz, represented the deal. The history and relationships among Daimler, Daimler-Benz, and Mercedes-Benz are complex and require attentive journalists to explain them accessibly.

Reflecting on Geely’s 2010 acquisition of Volvo Car Corporation from Ford—China’s automotive industry first overseas acquisition, famously called a “snake swallowing an elephant”—journalists must distinguish that Geely only acquired Volvo’s passenger car business, excluding its profitable truck, construction equipment, and marine businesses. It was not until late 2017 that Geely Automobile acquired 8.2% of Volvo Group, becoming its largest shareholder. These two acquisitions have entirely different implications, and news expressions that simply state “Geely acquired Volvo” are inaccurate.

The same applies to Lenovo Group’s 2005 acquisition of IBM’s PC business and ThinkPad brand, which did not equal acquiring entire IBM. In 2014, Lenovo announced a \$2.3 billion acquisition of IBM’s low-end x86 server hardware and

related business. When reporting such corporate and business segmentation news, journalists can easily make errors in abbreviation or generalization.

Similarly, news about Alibaba's Double 11 shopping festival often contains errors. Alibaba Group's business is vast; the statement "Alibaba's Double 11 final transaction volume reached 213.5 billion yuan" is incorrect. More specifically, within Alibaba, Double 11 refers primarily to Tmall, while Double 12 refers to Taobao—the two are distinct.

Journalists often provide simplified definitions of companies, including nationality and main business, which risks various errors. For example, Dia, which operated Dia Tiantian supermarkets in Beijing and Shanghai, originally belonged to Carrefour Group, headquartered in Spain, entering China in 2003 through a joint venture with Lianhua Supermarket and Shoulian Group. Dia separated from Carrefour in 2011, and in 2018 sold 100% of Dia China to Suning. Media cannot easily summarize Dia Tiantian in China as a Chinese or Spanish supermarket.

Likewise, Xiaomi's financial reports show revenue from smartphones, IoT and lifestyle products, internet services, and other categories, so journalists should not simply abbreviate it as "phone maker Xiaomi." Japanese multinationals like Panasonic and Hitachi, though they entered China's market through home appliances during the reform and opening-up period, have seen their appliance businesses shrink for years. Their main businesses are now B2B sectors like transportation, environmental protection, and industrial internet. Referring to them as "home appliance companies" no longer reflects reality.

## 5. Missing Key Points Results in Evasive Expression

Business news cannot stop at describing technological advancement and uniqueness. One purpose of popularization is to enhance relevance, telling audiences how news relates to them and enabling quick assessment of potential impacts on their production and operations to determine responsive measures.

In early 2019, China's first 3D-printed polymer landscape bridge with a multi-dimensional curved surface debuted in a Shanghai park, receiving extensive media coverage. Reports emphasized details: the bridge "measures 15.25 meters long, 3.8 meters wide, and 1.2 meters high," was "3D-printed in one piece," with a "printing cycle of 35 days and a service life of 30 years." Some media noted that "the bridge can bear 250 kilograms per square meter, equivalent to at least four adults standing simultaneously," an effective and vivid popularization.

However, news reports universally omitted the cost or price of this 3D-printed bridge—the very element audiences care about most. Traditionally, 3D printing focuses on electronics, molds, cultural creativity, heritage restoration, and dentistry, producing small, complex items. For bridges, cost comparison with traditional construction methods is key to widespread adoption. In such reports, journalists should include material costs, transportation and installation,

manufacturing expenses, and information about the printing equipment itself.

With rapid media technology development, journalists—especially text reporters—should leave factual details like “the bridge body is champagne gold” to widely used news photos and videos, leveraging new media’s advantage that “one picture is worth a thousand words,” while devoting more text to pursuing difficult yet crucial points like cost and price.

In business news, corporate audiences need accurate, concise, clear, and effective information about product pricing, origin, launch time, and purchase methods. How to popularize such information tests journalists’ competence.

Popularized expression encompasses many methods without fixed rules, relying on journalists’ long-term accumulation and flexible application in specific reports. Media imitation and herd behavior, or journalists’ presumptuous extensions or abbreviations, inevitably introduce flaws. The frequent violation of professionalism in popularized expression stems from insufficient editorial experience and lack of frontline reporting, as well as the complexity and rapid evolution of industries themselves. True popularization wins recognition from both “insiders” and “outsiders.” Journalists must anticipate audience concerns and potential confusion, addressing them appropriately. Equally important, journalists must deeply understand industries—knowing not just the surface but the underlying mechanisms—to achieve true mastery before simplification. Ultimately, balancing accessibility with professionalism in business news represents a long-term demand and significant challenge for editorial work and media communication capabilities.

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*Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.*

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