
AI translation · View original & related papers at
chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-202310.01645

On the Essence of News, the Extension of News Content, and the Transformation Trends of News Connotation in the Ecology of New and Traditional Media: Post-print

Authors: Zhang Caihong

Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

This paper primarily addresses the limitations of traditional media in the presentation of news content, the principal advantages of new media products regarding news content, as well as the positive impacts on news content from the involvement and application of cutting-edge technology products in the journalism field, the problems they introduce, and predictions for future trends. However, as these cutting-edge technologies have not yet achieved widespread adoption, this paper merely attempts to conduct analysis (focusing primarily on positive impacts) and forecasting based on existing experience, with the aim of exploring pathways for better development.

Full Text

Preamble

Journal: ChinaXiv Cooperative Journal

Column: Media Theory · Theoretical Research

Title: A Discussion on the Essence of News and the Extension of News Content and Transformation Trends of News Connotation Under Old and New Media Ecologies

Abstract: This paper primarily discusses the limitations of traditional media in presenting news content, the main advantages of new media products regarding news content, and the positive impacts, problems, and future trends arising from the participation and application of frontier technological products in the news field. However, as these frontier technologies have not yet become widespread, this paper only attempts to analyze (mainly focusing on positive impacts) and predict based on existing experience, in order to seek better development.

Keywords: Old media ecology; New media products; People-oriented; News connotation

CLC Number: G206

Document Code: A

Article ID: 1671-0134(2019)01-032-02

DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2019.01.002

Author: Zhang Caihong

1. The Impact of Pre-Internet News Media Changes on News Content

Before the industrial era became mainstream, human society remained in a small-scale, self-sufficient agricultural mode. However, this model could not serve as a universal law for society. The ideological currents generated in humanity' s subjective world were pulled by the natural laws emanating from the objective world, which three-dimensionally expanded humanity' s original spiritual dimensions. Consequently, the contradiction between backward social production and increasingly sophisticated human spiritual needs continuously intensified, driving technological progress. In the agrarian era, news was merely a natural phenomenon—an inevitable result of inertial development. Expositions on news content contained little or no layered ideological depth, appearing somewhat thin, and were based merely on redescription of the objective world.

However, upon entering the industrial era, news content became needed as a resource, a demand that endowed news itself with commodity attributes. When a production and consumption mechanism grounded in practical significance emerged, a news view anchored in industrial thinking was subsequently presented as reasonable. Guided by market behavior, the telegraph and telephone entered public view in the 19th century, while the appearance of television in the 20th century greatly accelerated news production and circulation. The expression of news content also became more concrete, moving from surface to depth. Simultaneously, the combination of audio and visual elements enriched news content itself, and people began to engage in deeper contemplation of news content. The continuous use of this approach eventually formed a pattern, solidifying the production process of traditional media and consolidating the foundational status of old media.

2.2 The Emergence of New Media Technology and the Transformation of News Content Essence

When the contradiction between supply and demand became irreversible, the Internet emerged as a new medium, enabling news content expression to no longer be confined to “points” and “lines,” but rather to be output in a “surface” format. It allowed audiences to participate in production from the bottom up, reshaping

the media ecology and enabling more associations between different industries. No longer limited by sectoral or regional segmentation, they instead intermingled and permeated each other, forming a new media matrix and initiating internal convergence marked by the “central kitchen” model. Through different media channels, connections were realized between traditional media content producers and new media content producers, as well as between producers and audiences, gradually establishing effective communication and comprehensive coordination within different business units. According to data trends from various news information flow products in recent years, the emergence of the Internet has even changed people’ s reading habits, with fragmented reading becoming mainstream.

3.1.1 Typical Mainstream New Media Products

Traditional media has “three big mountains” : first, newspapers; second, radio; and third, television. Operationally, traditional media is layout-dominated, following a workflow of “reporter frontline + editor backend.”For a long time, traditional media has demonstrated its unique irreplaceability, forming relatively authoritative news brands, with CCTV’ s *Xinwen Lianbo* (News Broadcast) belonging to this category. Using this as an example, traditional media has accumulated substantial human and material resources since its inception, yet has exposed enormous deficiencies in production and life applications. Affected by program time constraints, news content settings lack concretization, selecting only partial essentials, thus greatly limiting richness. The information needs of some audiences cannot be satisfied, and such linear narrative in communication status remains constrained in a “one-point to multi-point” model. Audiences are limited to one-way reception, with “input” but no “output,” failing to achieve the expected integration of transmission and reception. Simultaneously, producers mostly elaborate relatively objective news reports based on their own will or media will, inevitably leading to macro-level guidance, and news content is not completely transparent.

3.1.2 New Media Products Implementing “People-Oriented” Content Construction

Professor Zhou Qiren of Peking University once mentioned that China’ s innovation must seek solutions through both “upstream” and “downstream” paths. This paper argues that the current upstream focus should mostly be placed on technology research and development and content construction, while downstream should continuously attend to audience needs. By capitalizing on media transformation and upgrading, news reporting should extend its reach to the grassroots level, break boundaries and catalyze synergy, comprehensively enhance the use value of news itself, and achieve a breakthrough in the essence of news. As time progresses, the Internet has demonstrated irreplicable advantages: openness, compatibility, and immediacy. Compared with traditional media, various media derived from the Internet have shaken the long-formed industrial chain,

and through traffic conversion from PC to mobile terminals, have occupied the new mainstream media market. In this process, new media such as Toutiao have emerged prominently. How did Toutiao achieve this? The core reason lies in its specific integration and classification of news content, accurately pushing different news content to different audiences, displayed in the form of “big titles” and “keywords,” endowing the Toutiao new media product with certain humanistic care. In this way, news content can better reach audiences, and after receiving immediate feedback, conduct ideological construction of content. This attempt has surprisingly revealed the importance of interaction.

The involvement of two new media types has a certain shaping effect on the essence of news. First, when traditional media expresses news, constrained by time and space limitations, it cannot guarantee the timeliness of breaking news, nor can it elaborate on all major news stories. Except for designated broadcast times, content cannot be repeatedly viewed, affecting audience memory of news and thus limiting audience construction of news ideology, which finally reflects back on news production and causes stagnation in news content. Simultaneously, news content disseminated through traditional media institutions has strong subjective color; in a sense, this is a guided news perspective that fails to adhere to people-orientation, largely suppressing original news individuality. Due to technical limitations, audiences are extremely passive when receiving messages—that is, the singularity of communication status prevents audiences from making corresponding feedback within effective time. Over time, the information asymmetry of news content expands, always like a chasm stretching between producers and consumers, causing audience interest to decline. Traditional media’s user base gradually decreases, and news use value is greatly diminished. News content without improvement is tantamount to a news framework, so content construction is the best way to fill the news shell.

3.2 Insights from the Participation of Frontier New Media Products in News Reporting

We frequently bestow upon this era a name—the Internet of Everything. In the past news industry, however, “empathetic” interactive connections were not achieved. I attribute this reason to the lack of “embodied” experience or related experiences. In 2015, with the application of VR technology in news, this deadlock was broken. In the commemorative coverage of the 70th anniversary of the Victory of the Anti-Japanese War, our country adopted VR technology, pioneering and applying the first domestic 360-degree panoramic video reporting, bringing audiences a brand-new immersive news experience and changing the dull sensory experience of old news reporting that only used audio-visual approaches in content presentation, making it an audio-visual feast. Additionally, if AR technology can be applied in news reporting, allowing audiences to become news participants, it may guide public opinion toward a more objective direction.

In the past two years, a new concept has been proposed called the Internet of

Intelligence. This notion is derived from AI technology—artificial intelligence. As early as November 7, 2015, Xinhua News Agency launched the intelligent robot “Kuai Bi Xiao Xin” [1], mainly used for writing Chinese and English sports news drafts and financial information drafts. From the production process perspective, artificial intelligence will greatly accelerate news output efficiency. However, can robots guarantee that every report written is accurate and error-free provided their systems are not compromised? Can robots’ existing programs keep up with the speed of mass culture updates? Will reports written under the guidance of robots’ purely rational thinking be too rigid? Or will the application of such frontier technologies pose a threat to existing news ethics? This paper believes that we are currently only in the development and testing stage; if truly applied nationwide on a large scale, we must wait until the technology is fully mature and the news industry has greater freedom. Therefore, if such frontier technology can be applied in practice, the scientific nature of its content will improve compared to the present, and due to the introduction of artificial intelligence, it will inject fresher connotation into news content for the future era. In summary, news content that can withstand the test of time will inevitably be a product of its time, possessing relatively authoritative and progressive practical content in the survival-of-the-fittest environment. Moreover, perhaps in the future, artificial intelligence will not only not challenge news ethics but will make the entire news industry order more pure, just as Jack Ma mentioned at the Wuzhen Internet Conference— “In the future, fake news will become fewer and more difficult. Artificial intelligence should first be used on bad people, because as long as there is logic, machines will definitely do better than you.” Undoubtedly, future news trends will be more distinct, and future content construction will better connect “upstream” and “downstream,” becoming a hub connecting the state, society, and audiences, making new media an important tool for the comprehensive transformation of news content.

Throughout the transformation of media, we can say that in the news field, economy, technology, and ideology all continuously develop, mutually promoting each other and forming a positive cycle. However, the rejection reactions brought by such rapid development similarly concern media workers. Pan-entertainment is gradually eroding the news industry—how should regulatory strength in the news industry be grasped? Will fragmented reading methods affect audience cognition, raising public opinion waves with a metaphysical attitude? Or will the participation of these frontier new media products bring about a new concept of “pan-mechanization” ? Will they slow down the construction speed of ideology due to inertia traction while comprehensively liberating labor force, making the external prosperity of the news field building merely superficial? Such questions will continuously be placed on the table for discussion in the future. Despite some contradictions between rapid development and slow adaptation, we still have reason to believe that the future trend of “a hundred flowers blooming, a hundred schools of thought contending” in the news industry is inevitable. At present, to stabilize the foundation of the news industry, we must take content construction as the main theme of news development, lever-

age new media products, supply the most indispensable nutritional base [2] for the news food chain, make C2B the core of media manufacturing, and promote the effective upgrading of Industry 4.0' s soft support.

Therefore, this is an era of faith and also an era of doubt—faith concerning the extension of people-oriented news content, and doubt concerning the constant need for transformation of news connotation. Maintaining news vigilance while preserving news sentiment, the future news industry is certainly promising.

References

- [1] All-China Journalists Association. Report on the Development of China' s News Industry (2016) [R]. 2017(5).
- [2] Jerome. From Content Production to Content Platforms to Algorithms: Clarifying the New Media “Food Chain” [OL]. 2017(1).

(Author Affiliation: Liaoning Normal University)

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

Source: ChinaXiv –Machine translation. Verify with original.