

The Research on Expression Form of Sport News in China Media Group Short Video Column “News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors” from CCTV News’ Weibo Account

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Abstract. With the development of the Internet, the popularity of short videos in the new media environment has led to the transformation of traditional media to new media forms. Apart from that, sports events have become an indispensable means of international exchange in a time when the tide of counter-globalization is becoming increasingly severe. This paper explores the expression form of sport news in CCTV News’ “News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors” series released on its Weibo account through case studies and qualitative research. Based on the unique political nature of the Chinese news media, for the analysis of the columns under the CCTV news account will focus not only on their visual form, but also on the ideological factors implicit in the discourse. The features of the column’s innovation are analyzed from three perspectives: verbal mode, non-verbal mode and content setting, which has reference significance for the transformation of traditional media and the development of international communication patterns for China in the Internet environment.

Keywords: Expression form; new media; China Media Group; Sport news; Weibo.

1. Introduction

China Media Group is a combination of China National Video, China Radio International, China Central Television and China Global Television Network. It is the state radio and television media organization of People’s Republic of China. It was officially founded in 2018. As the media agency of the Communist Party of China, CMG has the responsibility of propagating ideas both at home and abroad. It has political and strategic significance. The original names of the parts are retained internally, and the unified name is “Voice of China” externally, which usually publishes political, social, cultural, sports and other news content.

According to the 50th Statistical Report on the Development Status of the Internet in China released by CNNIC in 2022, as of June 2022, the size of China’s Internet users was 1.051 billion, and the Internet penetration rate has reached 74.4%. Among them, the scale of Internet news users reached 788 million, up 16.98 million from December 2021, accounting for 75.0% of the overall Internet users. Thus, major mainstream media shift their bases to new media.

Weibo is a representative new media platform. It was launched in August 2009, as of August 2022, Sina Weibo was ranked 64th in Forbes’ Top 100 China Digital Economy 2022. Up to June 2021, Weibo had 566 million monthly active users and an average of 246 million daily active users. It is currently one of the most influential online media platforms in China, similar in status and function to Twitter. Sina is already one of the most expensive stocks. The company’s current shares are trading at a P/E ratio of 40 times based on fiscal 2014 earnings per share estimates. By comparison, Sina and Tencent have values around 25 times. Over the past 13 years, Sina Weibo has received a total of 20 prestigious awards, both large and small.

The CCTV News’ account on Weibo is set up in the process of transition from traditional media to new media in 2012. The account has over 130.1 million followers now, and it has posted 160,784 tweets, which is influential and spreadable. The “News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors” column is a short video column officially launched by CMG on July 29, 2019. The column adopts a daily shift pattern and positions the video as vertical short video, which is suitable for mobile viewing. Different CCTV anchors will broadcast the day’s major events or hot news in popularized language in each

video. Up to now, the related topic has 11.19 billion total reads, with a total of 595 media participating in the release. The peak time of topic reading and discussion is at 10pm and 8am [1].

According to statistics, there are currently about 20 sports-related news items under the topic of "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors", mostly related to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games and 2021 Tokyo Olympic Games, in which the stage competition summary, the technological level of the competition venues and the introduction of representative competition players are the main reporting directions. Compared to professional sports channels, the sports news coverage in this section is more oriented towards political commentary and propaganda.

2. Literature Review

There have been many studies on the video discourse model of "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors". Zhou has found that personality communication plays an important role in the setting of the column format. The anchors adopt personification in the narrative from four perspectives: perspective, content, language and scene. This is in line with the style of network communication, which can break the barrier between the audience and the news, and helps to make the mainstream media content living and socialized, and realize empathetic communication [2].

While in Zhou and Chen's research, the use of memes in the "Anchor Talk Syndication" program was also mentioned. It has enabled video communication to reach a wider range of Internet users than the original audience. First of all, the use of memes makes the expression of news content more direct and popular, which helps audiences make emotional connections. Secondly, the use of memes makes the official vocabulary easier to understand, compared with one-sided announcements, such expression is conducive to audience interaction. Finally, the use of memes helps reverse the public stereotype of mainstream media as "serious" and makes the communication content more acceptable [3].

In addition to the advantages of communication brought about by the innovation of discourse mode, some language style of "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors" also causes several disadvantages for the communication. Firstly, the misuse or overuse of memes can make the homogenization of short video content, leading to aesthetic fatigue of viewers, who will then become bored with the image of mainstream media [3]. Secondly, the personification of news tends to lead to excessive entertainment, which causes the subject of the news to lose focus, lose seriousness and professionalism, and even produce a wrong direction of public opinion [2]. What's more, in terms of production techniques for new media videos, "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors" has outdated production techniques. The design of the music, subtitles and images is too traditional and unconventional to attract the audience's attention. At the same time, there is a lag in the concept of current affairs news, which is difficult to meet the needs of new media audience for vivid expression [4].

Many scholars have studied the expression mode of the short video column "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors", but there is a lack of research on the expression mode of sports news communication in this column. As sports news used to be considered as entertainment, it actually involves much information [5]. According to Liu's research, most of sport news base on traditional medias [6]. While with the development of the internet, new media become an important part of news platforms. Due to the trend of media innovation, the media production model is also gradually breaking through to PUGC (Professional User Generated Content) [7]. In recent years, international events have continued to be a focus of public attention. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, international sporting events have become an important means of international exchange as the world landscape gradually moves from globalization to reverse globalization. Therefore, sports news coverage of international events also occupies an important position in both internal and external communication [8]. Thus, mainstream media has an important role to play in sports newscasts on the new media [9]. The "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors" is a series of short videos representative of the trend of transformation from traditional media to new media, and "CCTV News" is a new

media account of traditional mainstream media. The case study for this account and this section has value and significance for the research. Through qualitative research and case studies, this paper will investigate the expression form of sports news broadcasted by CCTV News' Weibo program "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors", and the focus is on generalization from different perspectives of verbal and non-verbal [10], combined with content sets.

3. Methodology

Qualitative Research. By observing and comparing 26 sports news videos published by the CCTV News' Weibo account "News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors" column from 2021 to 2022, explore the characteristics of its expression mode and the changes of its content focus. The expressions of the subset will be analyzed in terms of verbal and non-verbal modes, as well as specific examples of the arrangement of content.

4. Results

The first part is about its expression mode. The expression mode of the program can be divided into two parts: verbal and non-verbal perspectives. In terms of verbal perspective, the use of internet buzzwords is common in the program. For example, sentences such as "You never know, how good you are", "A ride to the top of the break", or "Anyone who has a dream is great" are used in the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games series. Also, the enumerated data is an important part of the program. There are a lot of expressions as follows in the videos: 212 technologies, 33 first-time uses, 8 Olympic records, over 150 bioaerosols deployed, 207 medals, 29 world records... and many other expressions with obvious numbers. In addition, application of proverbs and ancient poems are commonly used. The following expressions can be seen in some single sets: "The lack of the moon does not change the light, the sword breaks but does not change its rigidity", "The snowflakes on Yanshan Mountain are as big as a mat", etc. While from the aspect of non-verbal perspective, the anchor gestures and tone of voice are matched to the anchor's lines. For example, in the episode "What Athletes Go Through to Get to the Top", the anchor delivers the "good job" line by giving a thumbs up, accompanied by an upward tone of voice. What's more, the anchor's dressing and the studio background are matched to the news themes. For example, in the National Games theme "Time for All Sports!" episode, the hosts broadcast in sports shirts, or set the backdrop for the Winter Olympics theme broadcast as a mascot icon, and the anchor wear thematic colors such as blue or red. Other than that, post-editing is done with large subtitles and highlights in yellow so as to adapt to the reading habits of vertical screen short video users.

Another important result of the paper is about the content focuses. It is not limited to the sports event itself, but also contains content in the fields of science and technology, diplomacy and culture. For example, some episodes focus on the letters written to athletes by their families, while others focuses on the new technologies used in the arena. Beyond that, the program likes to use an example of a star athlete or an exciting moment in a game as a case. Boyang Jin, Bingtian Su are singly commented by the anchor in two episodes to praise their spirits, and some athletes born after 2000 like Eileen Gu, Yiming Su are categorized and making summary comments. What's more noteworthy is that the focus is on the value behind the commentary event and the themes that lead to it, rather than the course of the race. Almost all the episodes that relate to sports news are argumentative instead of narrative.

5. Discussion

Firstly, in the perspective of verbal forms, the use of words is popular and straightforward, and through the fusion of popularized and traditionalized language, the message is disseminated while incorporating cultural characteristics, and without being vulgar. The characteristic of this verbal form bases on the current situation of short video length, wide platform audience and fragmented viewing

time. The innovation of verbal mode brings both advantages and disadvantages. The good impact of this mode is that it allows the audience to get the main idea expressed more clearly, adapts to the fragmented reading habit of short videos, and outputs profound ideas in a shorter period of time. And through the combination of different languages of ancient and modern, it subconsciously feeds the audience with media content in a distinct cultural style, which is conducive to consolidating the people's sense of belonging and identification with the country and political parties. The shortcomings of this model are that the use of some Internet buzzwords is rather rigid, without flexible use of various derivations, and the display of some data is relatively single, relying only on the anchor's dictation, which brings an implication of verbal bragging achievements. In these modernized expressions, more expressions can be tried, such as the use of harmonic words, special sentences or memes, etc., to show the data and examples to the audience from a witty and humorous perspective, so as to enhance the audience's acceptance of the content.

Secondly, compared with the traditional sports news, the anchor sits in the studio and narrates the game broadcast mode, the "anchor says broadcast" column adopts a standing mode, increasing the anchor more gestures and expressions, and with its commentary content and theme, design broadcast actions, clothing and background, then use multi-angle combination of audio-visual elements to resolve the traditional sports news sense of seriousness and tension, which is closer to the preferences of non-professional viewers. This kind of characteristic bases on the short video in a short period of time need to use visual content to grab the audience's attention, the output of the core content of communication needs, and the properties of entertainment and pastime properties of sport news. The innovation and design of these non-verbal modes add a sense of Internet and popularity to the dissemination of sports news on new media platforms in a positive way. The biggest contribution is that they allow viewers who are not sports fans to participate in the discussion of events, reduce the barrier of audience circles brought by jargon, etc., and bring sports-related contents into the life of the public, with a certain value of science popularization. But the column in the non-verbal mode of reform is still less, in both editing or picture performance lack of sports dynamic, difficult to bring young viewers visual stimulation. It is not deep enough to grasp the preferences of young audience, the form of innovation is not thorough enough. The production also needs to refer to the popular trends of today's short video platforms, such as staggered editing, more dynamic transitions, and more vivid details in the background and the design of the anchor's dress, and set a few "eggs" to enhance the audience's expectation of the program.

In the content focus, there's also both positive effects and shortages. The selection of content is politically and culturally, focusing on the people or events in a particular sporting event, with the emphasis on conveying the ideology and political mission behind the case rather than the case itself. The sports events used are also national to world-class competitions, such as the Olympic Games and the World Championships. The use of extensive polemical statements weakens the storytelling and emphasizes the theme. This feature bases on the nature of China's media, CCTV news, as an official media, is for political parties, not just commercial media, and its political propaganda nature is higher than the commercial communication nature, and the focus for sports news is on spreading ideology and politics. In the content selection tendency of the column, for the dissemination of national governance ideas and the ideological education of the nation has certain advantages. It can effectively disseminate to the public of the current focus on the political objectives through the powerful communication power and accompanying nature of the new media platform, and guide the public to have directional unity, with cohesion. However, too much homogeneous propaganda content tends to cause audience boredom, and at the same time tends to lead to stereotypes of the public about the subject of communication, such as athletes should have the qualities of hard work, frugality and perseverance, resulting in the flatness of the characters in the case, lacking authenticity, which is not conducive to the propaganda of the sports business itself. In terms of content expression, it is suggested to add more dramatic plots to shape the image of athletes in a more stereoscopic way, so as to promote good qualities and at the same time alleviate the stereotypes of the audience about this group, thus accepting more harmoniously the political theme that the media wants to promote.

6. Conclusion

In the new media environment, the short video news column “News Broadcasts from CCTV Anchors” released by CCTV News’s Weibo account has innovated its expression form in three aspects: verbal mode, non-verbal mode and content focus, in order to explore the traditional media transformation path in the general environment of quality Internet. From a verbal perspective, the flexible use of internet buzzwords, data as well as proverbs and poems makes the video much more popular and youthful. While from a non-verbal perspective, the set of the studio background, the gesture performance and voice of tune of the anchors as well as their dressing make the news vivid in the recording stage. During the editing phase, subtitles and transitions are processed in a more popular way on short video platforms. In addition, the selection and presentation of the content uses polemical expressions with obvious political overtones, and is more thematic than storytelling. According to the case study and qualitative research, balancing the share of traditional and popular, serious and lively, political positioning and entertainment positioning presented by sports news in official media broadcasts is advised through the innovation. At the practical level, editors of sports news content should flexibly use youthful expressions, achieve an organic combination of professionalism and universality in both images and words, meet the political nature of sports news while also meeting the communication characteristics of new media, respect the reading habits of users, and strive to meet the interactive needs of audiences.

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