

## Exploration of the Methodology for Theoretical Research in Journalism and Communication Studies

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**Abstract:** In the exploration of the methodology for journalism theoretical research, with the continuous development of the times, big data and self-media technologies have integrated into all walks of people's daily life, making journalism and communication an extremely important link. Especially when facing online public events, problems in news communication media will not only cause public panic but also lead to negative biases in people's information cognition, further resulting in incomplete or unclear understanding of facts due to information deviations. The emergence of a new methodology for journalism theoretical research is guided by problem-oriented research. It adheres to dialectical thinking and logic as the foundation for news analysis. Throughout the theoretical research process, an attitude of not blindly trusting or following others is maintained, enabling the public to understand that the core of news communication theory lies in analyzing problems, exploring issues, and innovating theories.

**Keywords:** Journalism; Theoretical Research in Communication Studies; Methodology

### 1. Introduction

The methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies is part of China's modernization drive. Through exploring this methodology, news can be better presented to all people, and the facts contained in news can be conveyed to the public, allowing people to analyze and understand the truth of a news event from a more objective perspective. Under the new news paradigm communication theory, the theoretical system of traditional journalism is further analyzed, opening up a unique Chinese-style news communication space and finding an innovative path for journalism that

suits China's national conditions. The constructed news theory, rich in Chinese cultural connotations, can convey information to people more truly and effectively, break the information cocoon, and enable people to quickly obtain the information they want to know. It also helps people develop critical thinking when facing information and analyze and explore the content of the information from multiple perspectives.

### 2. Adhering to Problem-Oriented Research

Journalism and communication studies cover not only theoretical issues of journalism and historical issues of news but also a large number of practical issues related to media. Based on practical media issues, with the actual problems of news communication as the guide, new ideas and methods are constantly applied for discussion in the context of media convergence and new media. In academic research, it is necessary not only to start from problems but also to aim at solving them. Specific contexts should be analyzed, new ideas, theories, and methods should be explored to further improve the quality of news practice. More attention should be paid to universal practical media issues to prevent people from having an unclear understanding of information and being unable to quickly grasp the true situation of information.

This includes the following aspects:

First, the issue of academic innovation in news communication. From the perspective of academic practice, this includes strengthening problem awareness and following research traditions. From the perspective of the academic ecology, this involves the subjectivity of academic issues, the independence of academic research, and the construction of an academic community.

Second, in the current construction of a Chinese-style news communication paradigm, especially in dealing with people's livelihood

news, it is necessary to address key issues, correctly understand the similarities and differences between the communication paradigm of people's livelihood news and other news communication paradigms, and clarify the relationship between people's livelihood news and public news<sup>[1]</sup>.

Third, the aspect of news planning. For a long time, news planning in China has had three different meanings: planning of news events, planning of news reports, and planning of both reports and events. This has caused semantic confusion in news planning. In the exploration of the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies, these issues are re-analyzed and resolved. Starting from scientific concepts, the unity of conceptual language in form and connotation is ensured, the generalized concept of news planning is abandoned, and specific events are classified into categories such as public news, news reports, planning, and media events based on specific circumstances.

Fourth, online collective events. In the process of studying online collective events, it is necessary to understand the causes, processes, and overall development context of the events, have a clear understanding of the events, and figure out the theoretical framework to discuss specific academic issues such as online public opinion and collective behavior. This approach not only enables more media practitioners to have the awareness to solve problems and the ability to recognize and analyze problems but also makes news communication more effective, allowing more people to obtain more comprehensive and true information when reading news.

### **3. Adhering to Speculative Logic as the Research Method**

#### **3.1 Dialectical Thinking**

In the exploration of the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies, speculative logic is always regarded as the most important research method. All humanities and social sciences emphasize the importance of speculation and philosophy, which is the most important proposition in academic research on journalism and communication. The purpose of this academic proposition is to enhance the persuasiveness of theoretical discussions, and

speculative logic should always be adhered to. Marxist dialectics tells us that many things in contemporary society have dual characteristics. When facing and analyzing problems, we should not be absolute; otherwise, it will be difficult to think correctly and find solutions to problems. Problems should not be viewed in an absolute way but should be analyzed and understood with dialectical thinking. The same applies to discussions on academic issues in journalism. If only one-way thinking is adopted, it cannot provide as comprehensive and in-depth insights as three-dimensional thinking. Only by analyzing and elaborating from both positive and negative directions and considering issues from a more comprehensive perspective can sufficient thinking space and reference value be provided to people, allowing the relatively young academic field of journalism and communication to demonstrate its unique value at the current stage<sup>[2]</sup>.

With the continuous development of the times, new concepts, categories, theories, and ideas continue to pour into the field of journalism. How to conduct scientific, accurate, and reasonable research and discussion on existing journalism requires not only the accumulation of time but also scholars' tireless efforts in making bold assumptions and conducting careful verifications in academics. Practice has proven that the full application of speculative thinking is an extremely feasible, efficient, and useful research method.

Dialectical thinking makes research conclusions more thorough. Taking "online collective events" as an example, when reflecting on such events, it should be understood that the concept of "online collective events" is not entirely scientific. From a more scientific perspective, such events can be summarized as "online public events". However, the concept of "online public events" cannot fully cover all contents and events from online collective behavior to online group behavior and even collective action. Therefore, when establishing concepts, an open and diversified concept group is needed to effectively summarize the content. In current news events, the research objects are more complex and intricate, requiring scholars to conduct research from multiple different perspectives, including online public spheres and other aspects. This can promote practical and effective progress in academic research in this field and provide strong theoretical support

for social governance in the Internet era. Scholars should always view and analyze the thinking mode contained in a discipline or a professional concept from a dialectical perspective. While sorting out the logic and mechanisms behind news communication more thoroughly, people can be guided to think about the development context of a news event from a more dialectical perspective<sup>[3]</sup>.

### 3.2 Rigorous Logic

Rigorous logic is essential in academic research. Whether it is the thinking structure of a thesis or the language expression of the thesis, rigor in logic should be achieved. Since most news reporters and news readers share the same cultural background, news reports and communication should truly conform to people's cognitive habits and common sense of thinking; otherwise, readers will not be able to understand and analyze the same issue. In severe cases, this may lead to cognitive obstacles, even many errors, and ideological estrangement and confusion. When discussing and debating academic issues involved in the theory of journalism and communication, if the problem itself lacks rigorous logic, it will be impossible to analyze and discuss the theory before the problem is solved. Discussing issues with lax logic may lead to the loss of logic in the process of analysis, making it difficult for scholars to fully present their unique viewpoints at this stage. It will also be harder to achieve true equality in discussions, consultations, or debates with others. The lack of rigor and logic in theoretical issues of journalism and communication is a difficult problem in research. It should be clear that self-consistency and sound reasoning in the process of theoretical research are effective guarantees for achieving results in academic theoretical research and an indispensable part of standardized requirements<sup>[4]</sup>.

In the current discussion on the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies, it can be found that there have long been two opposing views in China's journalism circle, namely the "fact theory" and the "report theory". These two different theories reveal the definition of news that is both reasonable and incomplete. The "fact theory" essentially describes the process of news generation through factual reports and provides a reverse or traceable explanation of

the connotation of news. However, this process does not fully clarify the concept and meaning of news itself, nor does it fully and completely reveal the essence of news. At present, when discussing the essential connotation of news, further analysis is still needed. The "report theory" clearly points out that news is a type of information but does not scientifically reveal the concept of news itself. A complete definition of news can be derived through logical reasoning. It should be clear that all news reports are information that approximates changing facts; news is information about newly changing facts reported to the public. At the same time, in the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies, some scholars have once again pointed out that all news reports focus on newly changing facts and reflect the real life awareness of the current society. Only by combining the general essence and special essence of news for research, revealing the contradictory movement of unity of opposites contained in both, and revealing the essential core of news can we firmly and deeply grasp the relevant laws in the process and path of news communication, understand the logic of news, and clarify the characteristics of rationality, persuasiveness, and scientificity of news itself, thereby further demonstrating the application effect of the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies<sup>[5]</sup>.

### 4. Conclusion

In summary, in the new era, analyzing and exploring the methodology for theoretical research in journalism and communication studies helps us understand that the methods of news communication in the new era are significantly different from those in the past. Currently, the rapid changes in the media industry are dazzling. We should understand the development direction of journalism at the current stage, fully combine the general essence and special essence of news, understand the core of news, and truly grasp and comprehend the fundamental laws of news communication. This ensures that the analysis of the methods and laws of news communication at the current stage is rational, persuasive, and scientific, and conforms to the development laws of news communication.

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