Technological Advances Affect Journalists' Reporting Styles

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Abstract: This study focuses on exploring how journalists' reporting style is affected by the continuous development of emerging technologies. This paper analyzes how journalists' reporting styles are affected by technological advances by analyzing four reporting styles in the digital domain. On the other hand, it also puts forward new requirements for current journalists to constantly learn and have digital skills. From a macro point of view, the change in reporting methods also positively impacts current journalism and journalists. For example, in data journalism, journalists introduce different data to support the validity of the news. It enables readers to understand important information about the content of the news, based on the fact that data is added to support the news. At the level of narrative journalism style, journalists are increasingly using news stories to attract readers and expose them to real news sources. In the case of interactive journalism, this style of journalism (such as news games) has been shown to help journalists run news stories smoothly and meet the needs of readers. In inverted pyramid journalism, some journalists stick to this style, for the obvious reason that it allows readers to get to key news content in a concise and clear way. This is undoubtedly positive.

Keywords: Technological development, Reporting Style, Data journalism, Affect

1. Introduction

This essay focuses on how journalists' reporting styles are affected by technological advances. As the news industry moves from traditional media to digital media, the reporting style of journalists will inevitably change. As a result of technological advances, journalists' ability to report on the news has been effectively enhanced. At its core, reporting is concerned with the objectivity of reporting. But with the advent of the internet, journalists have developed a diverse and more transparent style of reporting. As news websites and social media become more popular, the way in which news is reported is changing (Eldridge and Franklin, 2018)[3]. British journalism, for example, includes the collection and dissemination of news by journalists. UK journalism continues to evolve across technology and trade, and it is characterized by journalists who regularly gather, report and disseminate news and information. In addition, it is vital to understand the style of reporting in the digital news arena. After all, journalism is one of the key components of journalism. As Wagemans, Witschge and Harbers (2019) states[14], technology has been a driver of change in journalism and journalists' reporting styles and has led to the development of at least four new reporting styles for journalists. They are the data journalism style, the narrative journalism style, the narrative style, the interactive journalism style and the inverted pyramid journalism style. For this reason, this essay will focus on four of these five styles, i.e. excluding the narrative style. These five styles critically explain how journalists rely on verified news sources when expressing their opinions in a story, foreseeing the future or explaining why something is happening. Specifically, this essay will explore the shift in journalistic styles of journalists in the context of technology to do so, based on relevant theoretical knowledge and examples.

2. Changes in Journalistic Style of Reporting

2.1 Data Journalism Style

Data journalism, also known as data-driven journalism, refers to a new type of news report based on data capture, mining, statistics, analysis and visual presentation. Data journalism comes into being under the background of big data technology. It is a new form of reporting that appears with the advent of the data era. It is the inevitable result of the comprehensive penetration of data technology into journalism,

and its appearance has changed the traditional news production process to some extent. In the context of the digital age, journalists who are required to cover breaking news need to specialize to some extent in data collection. This is because it develops core media practitioners who understand how to use resources. The use of data in journalists' news reporting has undergone an evolving process (Nelson et al., 2019)[9]. According to Jamil (2021)[5], with the rise of the polling industry in the US, journalists have been able to appropriately use social science research methods in the interviewing process to gather material, fact-check, and apply findings to news stories (e.g. experimental content and experiments). In other words, analyzing news events based on precise concepts and data can avoid human error and lead to more objective journalism. It is a type of research that quantifies news facts and introduces statistics into journalistic reporting. In fact, data is not only the result of the observation and recording of facts, but it is also the expression of information and the subject of content. As Appelgren (2018) puts it[1], it is in fact text, numbers, symbols, video, and sound images in many forms. This means that the essence of the data journalism style is that it is a collection of truths and facts. So while data is an integral part of news, it is also one of the key sources of news.

The development of graphic production technology has made it possible to present a certain amount of data in a more visual and vivid way in the media. Journalists such as *The New York Times* in the USA and *Der Spiegel* in Germany are increasingly presenting data as graphs and charts to present news facts. At the same time, the majority of journalists use data as a basis for embedding graphics in the presentation of news stories. This is partly an indication that the data journalism style is causing the media or journalists to take on the function of providing context, detail and evidence. In the case of South Korea and China, for example, the *Korean Yonhap News Agency* is gradually producing data charts with interactive features. In China, the *Xinhua News Agency's* chart editorial office has made the use of 'data' in technology and finance charts a regular feature of news reporting in 2019. It can be said that this "data + graphics" presentation has been widely accepted by the news industry and journalists. In addition, a journalist from Malaysia said: "Data charts are effective in capturing readers' attention and visual graphics help them absorb key information. As a core way of driving traffic, visualization can affect the number of viewers of online news stories (Eldridge et al., 2021)[4]. That's why more and more journalists are taking the material they collect from various digital sources and analyzing it further in their current and future journalistic work.

2.2 Narrative Journalistic Style

The new media technology, as a material tool, is constantly influencing journalists to move towards a narrative style of journalism. So in the current media environment, journalists' obligations go beyond delivering information and reporting news; they also have to better understand their niche and develop their journalistic skills. The narrative style of journalism is a new form of storytelling for journalists. According to Wahl-Jorgensen and Schmidt (2019)[15], a narrative journalistic style often means that journalists use the success of narrative storytelling to provide a subjective description of reality. This suggests that a good journalistic framework must examine the journalist's positive attitude towards storytelling. Narrative journalism is a style that appeals to the public psyche. Humans, being highly curious creatures, are naturally drawn to stories when they find or see something that interests them. And they are likely to be delighted and angered as the story progresses, so narrative journalism is often a style of journalism that satisfies the curiosity of the audience. As Perreault, Johnson and Klein (2022) point out[10], when a journalist is reporting on an event that is happening or has happened without the use of narrative journalism, the story will not be noticed by the public for a certain period of time. Conversely, a good narrative journalistic style will be memorable to the audience and will be recognized by the audience. It is clear that a narrative journalistic style is in fact an acknowledgement and return to the essence of a news event.

In the *Wall Street Journal*, a financial journalist claimed that readers today do not want to read simple news stories. Readers rely on the narrative style of the news to engage with social life. It is clear from this that readers want more than just the '5Ws' from the news, they want the narrative to help them vent their pity and fear. Through the narrative news style of reporting, readers not only gain interest in reading the news stories, they also witness and participate in the richness of daily events in the real world. As a result, they can further modify or reshape their own behavioural and cognitive patterns. It is clear that the vast majority of current news is far removed from the real lives of readers (Perreault and Ferrucci, 2020)[11]. However, it is clear from the above that readers still expect news stories. It is through news narratives that readers can ascertain whether there is a psychological or cultural connection between themselves and society. Indeed, the function of news narratives is in satisfying a certain psychological need of the masses and helping them in depth to perform a certain 'social mind ritual'. Based on his experience as a journalist, he further claims that: the proliferation of online media channels has led to a gradual replacement of traditional journalism by narrative journalism. So for journalists, they are constantly changing by digital news sites to add colour to the news.

2.3 Interactive Journalistic Style

Further developments in technology have forced today's journalists to use an interactive journalistic style for their news reporting. Interactive journalism is "a visual presentation of storytelling through code, with multi-level, tactile user control, in order to achieve the goal of obtaining news and information". An interactive journalistic style is a style of journalism that uses interactive technology and is completely open. In terms of technology, the interactive journalistic style is mainly based on databases and sometimes uses news apps or news games to emphasize the personalization of the news and information product. This is to a greater extent able to meet the needs of the audience for specific news information. As stated by Jones and Jones (2019)[6], the interactive news style helps journalists to develop a personalized reporting system. Moreover, audience groups can also gain more from the reading experience and proliferate the visual product, which in turn facilitates the construction of a stronger connection between the communicator and the receiver. Interactive journalism is a means of presentation for journalists, making it easier for audiences to judge the value of news content and to access the data they need. In interactive journalism, the journalist does not directly represent the news content. In fact, journalists do so through the use of scenarios and participatory experiences designed to accomplish the news story. On the surface, the audience has autonomy in the process of accessing information. However, journalists have subtly hidden communication intentions in the form of rules in the relevant news stories. As Soler-Adillon and Sora (2018) point out[13], when confronted with a news story, the audience follows the journalist's predetermined rules to read it in a state of immersion.

Most of the interactive journalism style journalism pieces are database based. However, in the fusion of macro-narrative and micro-narrative, this style of journalism places more emphasis on the satisfaction of individual information and namely journalists try to meet the information needs of the audience at different levels. In the case of *The Euro 2016* coverage, for example, some journalists used "self-organizing" news games to keep users engaged. Users can also organize their own teams if they wish. In addition, in *CNN's Euro 2016*: Choose your ultimate five-star dream team, journalists provided users with data on the teams and players (Ekström and Westlund, 2019)[2]. This allows the user to view further information about a player's stats (including number of appearances, goals scored and value) by clicking on the player's avatar. As you can see from these two examples, the interactive style of journalism allows journalists to provide valuable data to users in a personalized way. In addition, this style of reporting enhances the user experience, sticks with the user and uses the 'halo effect' to spread the news content. It can also influence users' perceptions of an issue, thus changing behaviour and achieving a deeper effect on communication. This is why many journalists are experimenting with interactive journalism in order to achieve this effect.

2.4 The Inverted Pyramid Style of Journalism

In addition to the three reporting styles mentioned above, social changes and technological developments have led journalists to move towards an inverted pyramid style of journalism. Inverted pyramid journalism means that journalists organize content using an inverted pyramid style, namely presenting news information in descending order of importance. It is also the writing rule of most objective news reports, is widely used in the writing of serious journals, and is the most common and shortest narrative structure of news writing. As Leeds (2022) points out[7], the inverted pyramid is the basic structure of journalism that most journalists use to convey their message. It is also considered to be one of the key elements of objectivity in news reporting. This in a way implies that the inverted pyramid style of journalism requires objectivity and involves constructing stories so that the journalist lists the most important details. It allows viewers to quickly read the most critical details so that they can decide whether to continue reading or stop reading the news in question. This is why the inverted pyramid style of journalism is important for journalists. This is because this type of reporting is easier to accomplish within the short deadlines imposed on journalists, especially in today's fast-moving journalism. In addition. This style also facilitates reporting, and journalists can report effectively without losing important information (Makki and White, 2018)[8]. For traditional readers, the vast majority of them will appear to skim news essays or read only a few paragraphs. But the inverted pyramid style of journalism allows them to get more of the core information out of this quick read.

Being a journalist in the digital age is less easy than it used to be, because information is now everywhere. So for journalists, the speed of data access, the speed of data connection and the speed of communication are all crucial. You could say that it is very crucial. Kini, a journalist from Malaysia, gave his opinion on this issue: In journalism, it is essential for journalists to get to the point (Quandt and Wahl-Jorgensen, 2021)[12]. He went on to say that when I report on a story, his bosses do not allow me to cover long stories. This is because each type of news has a different content. The example of the Malaysian journalist shows that the inverted pyramid style of journalism has a greater degree of influence in digital media writing. This further suggests that all journalists can follow the inverted pyramid style of

journalism to some extent when covering breaking news. In fact, the shift in journalistic news reporting style contributes to the development of interactivity and multimedia.

3. Conclusion

Overall, this essay has shown that in the context of technology, journalists are gradually moving towards four different forms of journalistic styles: data journalism, narrative journalism, interactive journalism and inverted pyramid journalism. Technological developments, particularly the Internet, have caused a shift in journalistic styles of reporting. Data journalism and narrative journalism may help to a more compelling picture for a wider audience (rather than just reporting the facts of the news). Because data news can provide more direct data and charts so that the audience can see the picture that the journalist wants to present to the audience more directly, the audience can trust the reports of the news media better through data and charts. In the case of journalism, the change in journalistic style is a relatively positive development for journalists. Different reporting methods will correspondingly bring different positive developments. In the case of data journalism, journalists introduce different data as support for the validity of the news. Based on the fact that data is added to support the news, it allows the reader to understand important information about the content of the news. At the level of the narrative journalism style, journalists are increasingly using news stories to interest readers and expose them to real news sources. In the case of interactive journalism, this style of journalism (e.g. news games) has proven to help journalists to run a smooth news story and meet the needs of readers. In the case of inverted pyramid journalism, some journalists have adhered to this style for the obvious reason that it allows readers to access key news content in a concise and clear manner. According to this essay, it is clear that the development of journalistic style affects the ability of readers to understand news content.

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