



Media Salience and the Process of Framing: Coverage of the Professor Prostitution

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Abstract

This study examines how the media can build a news event's salience by emphasizing different aspect of the event during its life span. A content analysis examines the coverage of the prostitution of one professor from FUDAN University in the Beijing News and the BUNDPic.documents, the use of multiple frames on space dimension. It visualizes framing as a process over time, and identifies certain frame-changing patterns in the coverage of this highly salience news event, which has inspected that the media how to use of the way to emphasize the difference of attribute. This analysis could resolve three problems as follow: 1.The media how to adopt attribute agenda setting to emphasize the difference of attribute property of one event to construct news framework. 2. How is the subversion and regression about the influencing of agenda setting. 3. What is the relationship between the media affection and the specific details of media. Another one is the relationship between the narrative plot of media and the influence they have give to audiences.

Keywords: Attribute, Salience, Framework

The agenda-setting researcher pays close attention to the salience of events and regards it as focal point. One of the underlying assumptions about the agenda-setting theory is that once an event had appeared in agenda setting, the increasing percentage of this news event would also increase the importance and salience of it. For a time, all of the media agenda-setting research have concentrated in the mutually affection between the percentage of the report about a news event and its salient level. However, they have ignored the dynamical process, which have had been constructed by media. This kind of dynamical process has already taken important affection to help the agenda setting to salience the importance of event. News media stress the different aspect of the details in the events intentionally or unintentionally to construct the salience. This is the so-called attribute agenda setting theory.

And the research of attribute agenda-setting article get through the discourse analysis about the especial report of the prostitution event of one professor from FUDAN university, to inspect the importance of agenda-setting and investigate the particularity of its attribute, that how to raise the salience of itself by means of media agenda construction.

A news event narrowly circumscribed in time, the professor prostitution, was selected as the object for study in this initial exploration of frame changing rather than a broad public issue to facilitate a comprehensive but manageable examination of its life span. This is not the first time that agenda setting researchers have turned their attention to a news event rather than public issues, among many others, have noted that agenda-setting theory is relevant to any set of objects -or even a single object –competing for attention.

1. Literature Review

Attribute Agenda Setting .Since the Chapel Hill study by McCombs and Shaw, more than 350 empirical studies have had been conducted to examine the agenda-setting influence of the news media. In recent years, the theory has expanded to include the second level of agenda setting, where the unit of analysis shifts from an object, for example, an issue to aspects or attributes of the object. Second –level agenda-setting research examines how media organizations select and present certain characteristics and properties of an object and how that selection and presentation influence the public's perception of an object and its attributes. While the first level focuses on the transfer of object salience from the media agenda to the public agenda, the second level deals with attribute salience among the public. By examining shifting patterns of attribute salience in the media over time, this study analyzes how a specific news event gained salience on the media agenda through its cumulative coverage. While the selection of attributes by the news media is identified as a powerful agenda-setting role: the media agenda with details how to influence the public agenda , the in-depth study of the second-level agenda setting shows that: the view of media could not decide the audiences how to think but would be successful in deciding what to think (Cohen,1963) ,at least is incomplete, so that media could not

only what to think ,but also what to think about the event which stressed the aspect of attributes.

2. Research Approach: Content Analysis

According to the substance of report about the affair of FUDAN professor prostitute, which published in newspapers and magazines, we could analyze and have tried to determine to make sure that media agenda has salient report what characters and details of event. Certain kind of characteristics have been selected or been abandoned by media. Journalists would incline to hand the utterance rights to the right person. Where the media agenda intend to direct the audience thoughts mode flow? Whether or not there is a positive correlation between the cumulative coverage and the percentage of audience attention, what kind of influence has had been made by characteristic of the news on the audience's thoughts and remarks?

The theme of news discourse borrow the theory of semantic which means the outline, the main idea and main point or the most important information of news article, that is a kind of research on discourse in global and macroscopic level. Article theme is base on the worldwide common sense knowledge and individual belief and interest that pass though the macro processes which means regulation and strategy, and strategically derives a macro proposition from the sequences of propositions. This kind of macro proposition as a part of framework of article theme, could be expressed by a summary, and subjectively definite the most important information, main idea and main point.

According to the derivation theory about the theme of news discourse, we analyze the first report about the professor prostitution event that published in the Beijing News, November 1, 2004:

Institute of Economics Dean resigned due to whoring

A few days ago, the famous economist, Institute of Economics Dean of FUDAN University, Lu Deming resigned.

In October 28, reporter telephoned the party branch secretary of Institute of Economics, FUDAN University. A woman officer expressed that, Dean Lu Deming have resigned due to prostitution activity. Incumbent acting Dean Yuan Zhigang has assumption of duty about early September. And this officer stated that, she dose not know the inside information about what time Lu had prostituted, what processing opinion the academe had had, and the outcome after Lu had resigned.

In addition, before, Wu Zhaolu, vice-secretary of Propaganda Department of Party Committee, FUDAN University confirmed this in October. During the interview, Discipline Inspection Commission and Institute of Economics of FUDAN University both point out that the whoring activity of Lu Deming is verity

DIC disclosed the truth to the press; Lu Deming had been hunt down at the scene while he was whoring by local police station, Yangpu Direct, Shanghai city. In addition, he had had been detained by operation of law.

The whoring activity of Lu is execrably, which have bad influence upon the image of FUDAN University. Therefore, University seriously punished Lu: He could not be the Institute of Economics Dean; also, he could not be allowed to teaching, but he can continue his researching; and his professor qualification would be written off for three years. After then, Lu resigned the position of Institute of Economics Dean.

While the reporter telephoned the Wu Zhaolu for a interview in October 27th, Wu said, there was not any further punishment in view of Lu had voluntarily resigned and left.

As the first report about the professor whoring affair, this article turn the folk rumor into a social issue rapidly. The article gains a vivid theme and expresses it in the title through a macro propositional type. What worth while to be mentioned is that an important feature of news discourse is article theme always be conveyed and hinted in the title, which gets a characteristic that typify in message—briefing summarize. Deducing the macro proposition from the text, that is according to the abridged message, which would not hinder the audiences from understanding the rest messages in the way of Deletion, Generalization, and Construction. Then the writer would like to set this report as an example to deduce the macro proposition from the text. First, we would conclude every macro proposition from each passage to gain the initial macrostructure (M1).

M1.1. Institute of Economics Dean of FUDAN University resigned.

M1.2. One of the Institute of Economics officers confirmed it.

M1.3. In Propaganda Department, the person in charge confirmed it.

M1.4. Local police station confirmed that Lu Deming has whoring activity, and FUDAN University seriously punished him.

M1.5. Wu Zhaolu said no any further punishment because Lu had voluntarily resigned and left.

Macro abridgement would include details of time, place, event, irrelevant background, and features of other people. According to the analysis of initial macrostructure, spectators might get the point that the message abridgement principle of macro regulation is not to prune the text to the highest-level of macro theme directly; instead, macro theme

expression is obtained from deep-rooted abridgement of macrostructure:

M2.1. The resignation of Institute of Economics Dean of FUDAN University has been confirmed.

M2.2. The whoring activity of Lu Deming is verity.

Nevertheless, it could be abridged further that the highest-level of macrostructure, M3, comes out. The most refined theoretically summary of this report is: M3 Institute of Economics Dean of FUDAN University resigned due to whoring. In this structure level, the information, which has been saved, is relevant news main role, macro event (resign), and relevant detailed issue (whoring). After describing the discourse structure of each level in this article, to inspect that description, there is need to combine the visual angle of language situation and the visual acknowledge procession, reproduction, and social culture. From escort service of woman college student, to whopping price of college enrollment, public opinion is sensitive for those keywords, such as professor, common college student. Sexual implication directly leads to sexual excitation. Press has provide plenty of imaginations and associations, and acutely, the mass easily to be excited by a non-obvious expressional news report rather than the obvious one (Bancroft & Mathews, 1971). The spectators imagine and associate those messages, which have been abridged from news report, then to construct a more provocative fact, to instead reading a pre-given ending. The spectator could imagines that the family life of this professor does not harmony, the personal appearance of him, and details when the professor and whore having sex, even though the power struggle behind erotica.

Achieving the theme of news discourse by means of converted usage of macro regulation, Owing to specification of the whole event, abstract information has been detailed express out. In addition, Five W, the news basic elements, merely summarized the abbreviated feature about the news report. Coding categories for space variable (McCombs, 2004) are (1) individual level: if the story focuses on individuals, the interaction among them, or descriptions of their acts, reactions, or background information, editorial pieces telling personal stories also are in this category. (2) Community level: the story focuses on certain single community. (3) Regional level: the story on the state or region. (4) Societal: the story focuses on concerns, event, or the discussions with nation-wide interests. (5) International level: the story focuses on related phenomena or social problems seen in the other countries, or the interaction between multiple countries. For example, another report about FUDAN professor's whoring affair is on the BUNDpic, November 9. We would like to dwell on semantics detail of the news article, and analyze the details type of each article theme passage to passage.

The whole story about a whoring affair of famous economist Lu Deming, a FUDAN University professor.

- (1) Passage of news lead explains the main body, time, event, attitude, arrangement, and the attitude of person involved.
- (2) The second part is variety of the popular folk rumors about the affair.
- (3) The third part explain definitely arrangement, attitude of client, and the attitude of DIC
- (4) The fourth part explain the background of client
- (5) The fifth part report the view of students about the client
- (6) The last part presents the current condition of client

The detailed analysis of this news report could make out a quantifiable analysis of this news report for its property selection. In denomination of semantic, this kind of divided property arrangement acutely is one sentence a unit. If there has been a semantic gene, it could be dividing into one unit. As the picture follow:

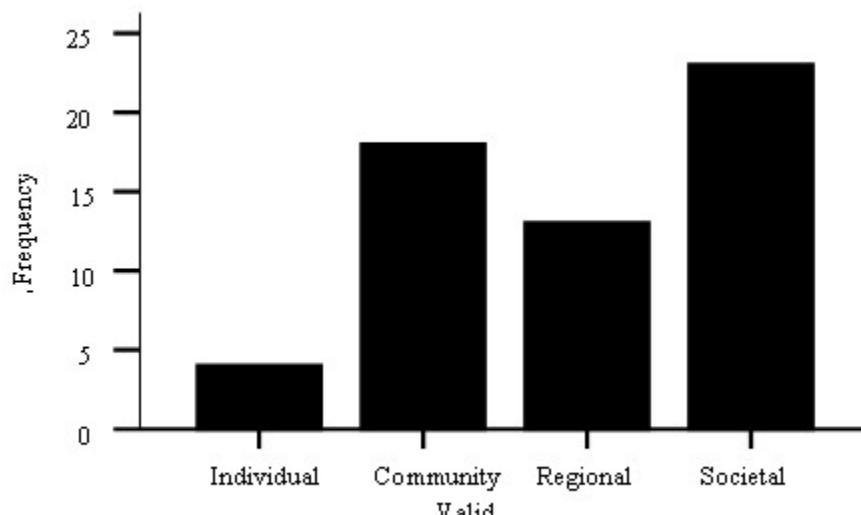


Figure 1. Frame changing on the space dimension

Table 1. Frame changing on the space dimension

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
individual	4	6.9	6.9	6.9
community	18	31.0	31.0	37.9
regional	13	22.4	22.4	60.3
societal	23	39.7	39.7	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

In quantifiable analyze of the property of this news report, the spectator might acknowledge individual level report about this affair is weak. There are only four sentences about Lu Deming whored in whole text, and all of the four are merely reporting what Lu has confessed and declared that hardly to find out the judicial case report. Critical details of a news report always stressed that: (1) Community level, 30%. Particular community (students of FUDAN University and other professor) have some attitude to the news event (resigned due to whoring). (2) Societal level, 39.7%. Significance of news event is about society and nation (widely dissemination of newspaper and network). (3) Regional level, 22.4%. The attitude of common group (leadership of FUDAN University)

The property salience by reporter is that: the attitude towards the whoring affair of Institute of Economics Dean, which led to his resign among the students and professors of FUDAN University and the huge influence that caused by this affair, however, except for definitely procession. That aspect of fact has been salient in the dissemination text and has been especially dealing with in the report. Through out this way, significance expression, analog of cause and affect, morality evaluate, and countermeasure suggestion, have been reflected. For reporter's special dealing, it could be read: Lu Deming had been punished by both spirit and social moral. For a famous scholar who has great deal of contribution for economical field, publish opinion should better to sympathize and feel sorry for him rather than to take mean advantage of him when he is down. Reporter has successfully leading spectators to be appeased.

3. Discussion and conclusion

In this case, if the "core" frame that made this a news event is the individual level, all the other dimensions then constitute "extended" frames, which the story is base on the background of the professor wore to introduce the happening time , the location ,the case itself. Why did reporters convert the core framework to community - societal dimensions in the coverage of the Professor Prostitution? Whether the security cases itself or the selective reporting news affect audience thought. In other words, do the media agenda have influenced the public agenda?

According to the Analysis of that, the coverage of the dean resignation due to whoring clearly highlighted the societal dimension of attributes. Media agenda emphasized the societal level of the event, and led the audience concerns and thoughts toward to the societal dimension in the means of attribute agenda setting which successfully gave rise to the discussion of the event. As follow, there has been sympathy, sorrow, heartache, regret, unfortunate, such opinion of compromise. The core frame geared individual to societal, does not lie in the social influence owing the event self, but is to depend on the social influence intermediary adds the person involved in the event constructed by dignity and position. This kind of media affection, say, the selection and salience for the detailed content, achieve the expected influence on the thoughts trend of audience

The primary purpose of this study is not to describe the specific details of the woring coverage, but to apply to the dimensional measurement to examine framing as a process in journalistic practice. After all, the specific details of news story obviously change from day to day and from event to event, but the narrative strategies employed in journalistic storytelling are enduring. Overall, a major contribution of agenda-setting theory is to link media effects with specific content in the media. However, agenda-setting effects also are the result of media emphasis on specific attributes of the objects in the news. Mapping the narrative strategies and their impact on the public is an important goal for continuing research to enhance our understanding of journalism and of agenda setting.

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