

# Research on Beijing Winter Olympics Media Coverage Framework: A Comparative Perspective between China and the West

Jingshuo Zhao<sup>1</sup>, Xiaowei Gong<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Shaanxi Forestry Group, Shaanxi, 710000, China

<sup>2</sup>School of Journalism and Communications, Tianjin Normal University, Tianjin, 300382, China

## Abstract

The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics has once again made China the focus of the world's attention, but in the eyes of some Western media, this Winter Olympics was also an "excellent opportunity" for them to smear and slander China. Western media tended to "politicize" the Beijing Olympics issue, and the politicized negative reports neutralized the positive signal China was trying to send to the world. This essay presents the differences between Chinese and Western media's interpretation and reporting frameworks about the Winter Olympics through content analysis.

## Keywords

Winter Olympics; Media framework; News reports.

## 1. Introduction

The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics had come to an end. For the first time during the pandemic, China successfully organized another modern international sports event which was safe, healthy and well-functioning. In addition, it fully carried forward the international Olympic spirit of peace, promoted more unity, peace and fraternity among all mankind, and demonstrated China's great power and strength International organization capabilities. However, in the reports of some Western media, we can see the content of many tricky angles and peculiar viewpoints, which can be described as jaw-dropping. Most of the Western media focus their news attention on sports issues, and continue to over-report on political issues such as infectious disease epidemic policies, restrictions on online speech, citizens' religious beliefs, and human rights. of news reports. Based on the theory of social construction, and combined with the relevant research methods of the social construction of news frame, this paper makes a preliminary analysis on the differences in the theme and content, tone and frame of the news reports of the Beijing Winter Olympics between Chinese and Western media.

## 2. The Theme of the Report: Positive Factual Statement and Accusatory Factual Statement

The theme tendency is an important core idea that runs through an important news report, and it is the inner main logic of the report running through the whole text.

The Chinese media's feedback was relatively direct and positive. The genres were mostly short news reports and small event special comments, etc, and the content presented a direct and positive statement of relevant news facts. Leaders attended the opening and closing of the Winter Olympics" and so on. For example, during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, CCTV News made use of its network-wide new media matrix, including Weibo, Douyin, WeChat official account and video account, etc. Through the emerging media integration platform, Chinese media further expanded the scope and influence of news coverage of the Winter Olympics.

"CCTV News" mainly used "sports events" as the main reporting framework:

The first was sports events and the Olympic spirit: the situation itself, outstanding reports on athletes, and explanation of the competition (Wang Meng);

The second was hardware facilities and humanistic care: scientific and technological strength (low-carbon environmental protection in ice rinks), Winter Olympic Village volunteers, meals and accommodation, and epidemic prevention systems;

The third was the surrounding areas of the Olympic Games and Chinese culture: mascots (Bing Dwendwen, Xue Rongrong), commemorative coins, publicity for the opening and closing ceremonies (Chinese-style romance, Chinese culture).

It was worth noting that through the rapid spread of online media, CCTV News had set a centralized agenda for outstanding athletes in the Winter Olympics, such as Gu Ailing, Su Yiming, Yuzuru Hanyu, Wu Dajing, Fan Kexin and other athletes. It had attracted the attention of the society to the Winter Olympics, and formed an upsurge in ice and snow sports in the society; secondly, CCTV News not only reported domestic athletes, but also commended outstanding foreign athletes, which won the attention of foreign athletes and audiences for the Winter Olympics, support and praise.

In stark contrast to this, some western media reported on the Winter Olympics under a negative and narrative framework, and did not report the Winter Olympics in a comprehensive, fair and balanced manner. In terms of keywords, in addition to high-frequency words such as "Olympics" and "Beijing", "China" and "Uyghur" appear most frequently, followed by "diplomacy", "boycott", "Putin" and "athletes", etc.

In the women's 500-meter short track speed skating quarter-finals held on February 7, Chinese player Fan Kexin was brought down by Canadian player Allison Charles and fell off the track, and ultimately missed the cut. The cause of Charles' fall became the focus of attention in the West. A moving picture widely circulated on overseas social networks seems to show Fan Kexin pushing the obstacles on the track to Charles' feet with his hands. Canada's "National Post" and many other Western media have accused the Chinese team of cheating with this moving picture. This directly caused many foreign netizens to express their disgust for China after reading their reports. Some comments believed that "Fan Kexin's precise push of obstacles to the feet of other players was the result of long-term (cheating) training". It had to be said that these Western attacks were very ingenious and deceptive. In response to the complex physical conflicts on the field, foreign media intentionally or unintentionally ignored the full picture of the matter, and specially released angles that were unfavorable to China. These reporters used specious pictures and words to incite foreign readers to hate the Chinese team and the Chinese, which perfectly explained what is called "a lie mixed with part of the truth is more effective than a direct lie."

### **3. Tone of Reporting: Typical Discourse Positions and Conflicts**

The news media that masters the discourse position can form a distinctive reporting tone by disseminating a large number of positive, negative or relatively neutral and objective news reports, build a news framework, strengthen the effect of media communication, and affect the image of the entire country to varying degrees. common purpose of dissemination.

The Chinese media adopted a multi-dimensional, objective and truthful reporting tone, focused on positive propaganda, and chose bottom-up typical and social hotspot reports to fully reflect the grand occasion of the Winter Olympics bid. Through news reports, it has mobilized the participation and enthusiasm of the whole country in ice and snow sports, promoted the economic development of ice and snow sports, greatly promoted the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese people, and strengthened the sense of national identity, pride and honor and cohesion. Externally, as the host, it will show the world the demeanor of a big country that is

inclusive, warm, friendly and strong, promote the progress of Olympic cultural exchanges, and create an unparalleled and splendid sports event for the world.

In sharp contrast to this, the proportion of negative comments in the articles about the Beijing Winter Olympics by the western media is much higher than that of the domestic positive reports, and their basic political stance is generally more extreme. It is mainly reflected in the following five aspects:

One is to take the whole picture of the incident out of context, and deliberately present an unfavorable angle to China in order to mislead readers. For example, slandering Fan Kexin for pushing obstacles and Ren Ziwei pulling down Liu Shaolin, only reporting the decline in TV ratings but not the increase in streaming media ratings, and replacing the international gold medal list with the ranking of the total number of medals. For example, the notorious anti-China media "Deutsche Welle" in Germany is not idle either. A reminder from the German Anti-Doping Agency got the media excited and hyped. The anti-doping agency has warned athletes not to eat meat in China, saying that Chinese meat contains "clenbuterol", which would imply doping risks. The second is to enlarge the case infinitely, which violates the principle of proportionality. For example, I went to interview a very few retired athletes who were not used to artificial snow, reported overwhelmingly three or five people who were dissatisfied with the food and isolation conditions of the Winter Olympics, and explored the nationality issues of a few people on Sina Weibo who entangled Gu Ailing or believed in Zhu Yi. It is the Internet trolls and conspiracy theorists who got their places by "going through the back door".

The third is to talk nonsense, talk nonsense, and oppose it for the sake of opposing it. For example, the New York Times used the doping controversy of Russian athletes and the tension in Ukraine to attack the organization of the Beijing Winter Olympics. For example, Belgian media reported that the Olympic Committee has advised athletes going to China to participate in the Beijing Winter Olympics not to bring personal mobile phones and computers to avoid cyber theft.

Fourth, it targets human rights issues and damages China's international image and reputation. For example, the German weekly "Focus" reported on the so-called "surveillance and challenges" faced by German TV 1 reporters in China covering the Winter Olympics. "At the time, he said that "many people will be called or called by the police after being interviewed" and that they are "surveilled and followed" in China. According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison told reporters on the same day that Australian athletes will participate in the Winter Olympics starting in February next year, but officials and politicians will not participate, citing "human rights issues" and the Chinese government's unwillingness to engage in it. Talks with Australian officials. He claimed the decision was "not surprising" given the diplomatic differences between Australia and China. Morrison also said it would be unacceptable for China to strike back against Australia economically or politically because of Australia's decision to follow the US position on the Winter Olympics.

The fifth is to accuse "epidemic prevention regulations are too harsh". For example, these headlines: "Omicron variant adds uncertainty to Beijing Winter Olympics", "Outbreak continues to haunt Olympians preparing for competition", as well as The Guardian, Mirror, United Several Western media outlets, including news agencies, National Public Radio and USA Today, spent much of their time criticizing the Beijing Winter Olympics' anti-epidemic regulations and quarantine hotels.

Sixth, he said that the Beijing Winter Olympics used a lot of artificial snow, but did not mention that this was a common practice in previous Winter Olympics, and completely ignored China's great efforts to protect the ecological environment.

Due to differences in ideology, values, positions, history and culture, etc., the news reporting frameworks of Chinese and Western media are vastly different. For China, in order to break the situation of being trampled by foreign media, from the perspective of communication means, the most important thing is to get on the new media train, adopt media integration methods, expand reporting forms and ideas, and cultivate technical talents in the new media field. In addition, from a strategic point of view, we must first strengthen the national collective identity and sense of mission internally, and follow the "four self-confidences". Only the whole country can fight against external slander; secondly, we must make outstanding achievements in various fields. And use this to strengthen international publicity work, strengthen the efficacy of agenda setting, expand the influence of foreign media, improve international status and discourse power, and build an international discourse system.

li. Keynote of the report: Typical discourse positions and conflicts

The media of discourse standpoint can spread a large number of positive and negative reports or relatively neutral news reports, form the tone of discourse reports with distinct characteristics, construct the discourse news frame, strengthen the effect of media communication, and achieve the common purpose of influencing the whole national image communication from different degrees.

The Chinese media have introduced the bid in a diversified and three-dimensional way. In the process of positive news coverage, they have mostly chosen to reflect the grand situation of the bid with a large number of typical and hot social reports from the bottom up. Through news reports, it has mobilized the participation and enthusiasm of sports across the country, promoted the economic development of ice and snow sports, greatly promoted the cultural confidence of Chinese people, strengthened the sense of national identity, pride, honor and cohesion. Externally, as the host country, it will show the world the style of an inclusive, enthusiastic, friendly and powerful country, promote the cultural exchange and progress of the Olympic Games, and create an incomparable and wonderful sports event for the world.

As a result of the sharp contrast, the proportion of negative comments on Beijing Winter Olympic Games in western media is much higher than the large number of positive reports in China, and their basic political stance is generally extreme. It is mainly reflected in the following five aspects: First, the whole picture of the event is taken out of context, deliberately presenting an unfavorable Angle to China, to mislead readers. For example, they slandering Fan Kexin for pushing obstacles and Ren Ziwei for bringing down Liu Shaolin, only reporting the decrease of TV audience rating without reporting the increase of streaming media audience rating, and replacing the international gold medal tally with the total medal count. The second is the case of infinite amplification, which violates the principle of proportion. For example, they specially interview a few retired athletes who are not used to artificial snow, extensively report three or five people who are not satisfied with the food and quarantine conditions of the Winter Olympics, and dig up a few Internet trolls and conspiracy theorists on Sina Weibo who are obsessed with Gu's nationality or believe that Zhu Yi got his place through the "back door". Third, rambling, talking nonsense, opposing for opposing's sake. For example, The New York Times used the doping controversy of Russian athletes and the tension in Ukraine to attack the organization of the Beijing Winter Olympics. Four is accused of "epidemic prevention provisions is too harsh," such as the title: "Mr Mick Dijon variants increased the uncertainty of the Beijing Olympics", "the outbreak continued obsession are getting ready for the Olympic Games the players, including the UK, the guardian, the daily mirror, the Associated Press, national public radio and USA today, many western media spent a lot of space Blame Beijing winter Olympics epidemic prevention regulations and quarantine hotels. Fifth, Dao said the Beijing Winter Olympics used a lot of artificial snow, but did not mention that this is a common practice in previous Winter Olympics, completely ignoring China's great efforts to protect the ecological environment.

## 4. Conclusion

Due to the differences in ideology, values, standpoint, history and culture, the reporting frames of Chinese and American media were vastly different. For China, in order to break the situation of being trampled by foreign media, from the perspective of communication means, the most important thing was to take the train of new media, adopt integrated media means, expand reporting forms and ideas, and cultivate technical talents in the field of new media. In addition, from the perspective of strategy, first of all, we should strengthen the sense of national collective identity and mission internally, walk the "four self-confidence", only the whole country can fight against external slander; Secondly, we need to make outstanding achievements in various fields to strengthen international publicity, strengthen the efficacy of agenda setting, expand the influence of foreign media, improve international status and discourse power, and build an international discourse system.

## References

- [1] Lu Zhenpeng. (2021). A comparative study of metaphors in the news coverage of the Beijing Winter Olympics between China and the United States (Master's thesis, China University of Geosciences(Beijing)).<https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFDTEMP&filename=1021167065.nh>
- [2] Yu Juanjuan. (2018). Research on the news framework of the Winter Olympics coverage by mainstream western newspapers (Master's Thesis, Wuhan Institute of Physical Education). <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201901&filename=1018259742.nh>
- [3] Feng Siyu. (2020). From the perspective of overseas media, the impact of the Winter Olympics on the national image of the host country (Master Thesis , Shanghai Institute of Physical Education).<https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD202101&filename=1020654321.nh>
- [4] Shi Mengshi & Tang Shihui. (2013). Sino-US media "Ten "Eight major reports" framework analysis - taking People's Daily Online and the New York Times Chinese website as examples. *News World* (03), 7-9.
- [5] A comparative study of China's 73rd World Health Assembly speeches as an example. *Science and Technology Communication* (22), 108-112. doi: 10.16607/j.cnki.1674-6708.2021.22.035.
- [6] Tian Weigang & Xie Runjia .(2020). Framework Analysis of Sino-US Media Reports on Sino-US Trade Friction: Taking People's Daily and New York Times as Examples. *China Journalism and Communication Research* (04), 152-164. doi:
- [7] Hu Bai Jing, An Ruocheng: Cognitive gap, media narrative and the global imagination of the Winter Olympics [J] *Journal of Shanghai Institute of Physical Education.*. 2020, 44(1): 30-38.
- [8] Li Sha: Analysis of the 2006 Capital of Japanese Media The reporting framework of the Olympic Games: Reflections on the promotion of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in China. *News Lover* (first half month), 2007, (3).