

Animated News: A Fascinating News Reporting Style in the Image Era

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Abstract

Taiwanese tabloid *Apple Daily*'s online version broadcasted animated news across niche markets and the expanding influence of digital technologies. The study analyzed the news narration of animated news by compared it to the traditional TV news. The results indicated that *Apple Daily*'s animated news continued the tabloid's lurid reporting style to focus on sensational topics and presented them with fascinating features. To catch the attention of young viewers who grew up in the image era, computer technique now plays a much more important role than ever before. Not only the possible news scenes were reenacted with animation and dubbed dialog between characters were designed, voice-overs, background music and special sound effect were applied along the news story to dramatize the news presentation and to provide viewers veracious pleasure out of watching. The study suggested that the introduction of animated news may not necessarily negative, if their tendency to attract the attention of audiences can be directed toward public affairs-related issues.

Keywords: animated news, tabloidization, news narration, computer animation, young viewers

1. Introduction

Taiwanese newspaper *Apple Daily* gained fame overnight when it turned a normal news story into a computer animated one. It all started when the famous golfer Tiger Woods was reported to have had an argument with his wife outside their Florida home on November 27, 2009. Since no one had actually seen what happened, many people followed the news with the TV news media playing the file footages (Kaplan, 2010); nevertheless, one Taiwanese news media, well-known of its provocative reporting style on lurid crimes, salacious celebrity gossip, and voyeuristic paparazzi photos, uploaded a digitally animated reenactment just hours after the incident. The clip vividly created and simulated the possible details of the incident with cartoon-like animations— showing Woods' wife smashing his car window with a golf club and ending with a collision with a tree. *Apple Daily*'s animated news quickly found a huge local and global audience.

Providing the public of a democratic society with accurate and unbiased information is an enduring journalistic value (Grabe, et al., 2000). This explains why animated news has been treated with bemusement rather than being viewed as factual records of events. Especially when simulating the news scene of the news events that often has no journalist actually witnessed, animated news has provoked debate over media freedoms, news responsibility, and government regulation. Over the years, journalism scholars and practitioners has been worried one thing-- too much emphasis on compelling stories that lack serious news content; thus, not to mention computer editing techniques enables flamboyant visual effects that traditional journalism has not been associated. These attention-grabbing news topics and presentation features are viewed as inappropriate and are thought to exaggerate factual content (Fiske, 1992; Kurtz, 1993; Grabe, Lang & Zhao, 2003). They are also suspected of blurring the line between information and entertainment (van Zoonen, 1998b; McChesney, 1999; Deuze, 2005). Thus, consider the format of animated news.

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1.1 Research Questions

While news tabloidization has grown in more and more media markets, Taiwan's is no exception. Began to publish in Taiwan on May 2003, *Apple Daily* pioneered color printing on all pages and aims to uncover political scandal and other hidden illegitimate events, but emphasizes abundant and stimulating visuals on specific topics (Peng, 2006; Wang, 2009). Within two years of its startup, *Apple Daily* succeeded in breaking the monopoly of Taiwan's three nationwide newspapers to become the country's most widely read newspaper. Yet worried about the future of print media, *Apple Daily* launched the computer-exclusive animated news videos which can be viewed online or cell phone. The animated news clips continue the tabloid's sensational style, not only to focus the news topics on arousing subject involving crime, sex, or gossips, but to simulate and reenact the news events with cartoon-like animations.

The consequences of lurid reporting content and presentation form for the well being of journalism cannot be solved here; however, academic inquiry into the news media environment and the shifts of the standards of journalism ideology could shed some light on the soundness of critical concerns. By comparing the news narration structure of animated news to that of the traditional TV news, the study described the different news presentation structures and news production approaches between the two news medias. The study also provided a way of examining the wider influences that shapes the news performance including the adoption of new technology on producing news and the shifts of the news ideology in contemporary society.

2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

2.1 The Journalistic Norms: From Proper Journalism to Tabloidization

For several decades, the principles of professional news standards of timeliness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, public accountability and independence from government control as a cardinal rule are commonly appear in statements drafted by professional journalism associations and individual print, broadcast, and online news organizations (Rampal & Adams, 1990). Yet attributed to market forces and commercialization, numerous studies have shown more and more news media adjust their focus from serious issues and public affairs to gossip-filled or sensational stories about sports, scandal, crime, and celebrity lifestyles (Sparks & Tulloch, 2000; Harris, 2006). For the kind of tabloid newspapers, lurid and difficult images, bold headline sizes, exaggerated diction, simple writing and the use of pictorial materials are commonly in use (Underwood & Stamm, 1992; McNair, 1999).

The proliferation of tabloid practices is not only seen in sections of print media, it is leveled against TV news (Dahlgren, 1995; Turner, 1999). Studies documented the prevalence of compelling news topics on TV news and found they have been transformed stylistically too. More specifically, they are presented in a fast-paced and condensed form and incorporated with flashy graphics and computer-aid pictorial materials (Turner, 1999). These structural components not only add a sensational quality to TV news reports (Fiske, 1987; Grabe, 1996), but are also condemned as a threat to democracy and superficialization of public discourse (Sparks & Tulloch, 2000; Kawabata, 2005).

Similar to Western countries, the development of the press and the media trends in Taiwan also witnessed the phenomenon of an increase of less newsworthy elements of secondary importance with a visually oriented layout, dramatic news content, sensational news coverage and erotic contents. News stories of major news organizations usually contain excessive coverage concerning the private lives of celebrities. Outsized headlines and lurid photographs are given to sensationalism and exaggeration (Peng, 2005). An analysis of prime-time news in Taiwan found 54% of the segments contained sensational elements (Wang, 2006). As for the presentation format, 66% of the segments featured the obtrusive and dramatic voice of a presenter, 80% contained emotional subtitles, and one-third of which were presented in multi-color and animated forms (Wang, 2006).

Although news media pundits of traditional values usually express a conservative hostility towards tabloidization, implementation of some of the practices of the tabloid has been successful. According to Bird (2000), tabloid news style is a storytelling news narrative that highlights individuals and their concerns. Some argued that standard news is not entirely devoid of the entertaining trivia that characterizes tabloid journalism, while tabloid journalism serves as an important source of information for many viewers (Bird, 1992; Knight, 1989). On the other hand, the legitimacy of what is defined as socially significant news has also been questioned. Stories about family conflicts, substance abuse, violence, disaster, and other disruptions of everyday life are regarded as more significant to the lives of ordinary people than the traditional political and economic issues that elites prescribe as important information for the masses (Bird, 1992; Grabe, 1997).

Graber (1994) pointed out that arousing news-packaging devices may serve journalistic ideals by enhancing viewer attention and interest than unarousing news content. Moreover, the growing use of visual images (i.e. photographs, sketches) over analysis and rational description, and techniques such as photo enhancement, reenactments and diagrams could also raise viewers' comprehension (Bird, 2000).

In fact, the increase of tabloidization in Taiwan is not necessarily bad as the tabloid business model often elicit angry calls for censure, given the unique Taiwan's circumstances (Chao & Chen, 2005; Su, 2006). Su (2006) said Taiwan lacks mechanisms for dialogue, whether between political parties or between the government and the people, and therefore an outspoken media has become a powerful method promoting justice and facilitating government dialogue. Goldkorn (2005), director of a research firm focused on Chinese media, internet and consumers, pointed out that whereas *Apple Daily* practices a tabloid journalism that highlights scandals and celebrities, the traditional newspapers are often reticent about naming names. Another example was *Apple Daily* was vigorous in following a story about the former cashier of Taiwan's National Security Bureau suspected of embezzling a huge amount of money. It was so successful at getting information out that prosecutors tried to put a muzzle on it, seizing thousands of copies of *Next Magazine*, the sister publication of *Apple Daily*, in a series of raids.

Though the result of some of the reports can be in the public good, *Apple Daily's* animated news, which reenact or even 'create' the news story out of 'related text,' would still cause debate for over-using of computer technology on news making and at the same time generate controversy for raising the bottom line of proper journalism.

2.2 New Technology Applied: From Computer Graphics to Animations

Journalism seems to benefit a lot from communication revolutions. The computer innovation has greatly changed how news organizations produce and disseminate news. In early times, character generators are primarily used in the broadcast areas of live TV sports or TV news presentations, given that high-resolution or animated graphics can be generated for use when an unforeseen situation or breaking news happens. As news stories become more complicated, computer-aid graphics such as tables, charts, and diagrams are used to help to increase viewers' comprehension and become a news media staple (Bird, 2009). Yet in the increasingly competitive business climate of news, news media producers are constantly looking for ways to capture viewers' attention. The techniques are employed not only for informative use, but to appeal aesthetically. The kinds of layout, vibrant colors and other pictorial materials are regularly seen in the newspapers (Bird, 2009). As for TV news, greater attention is paid to the décor of the studio and the personal style of the people anchoring newscasts. Nowadays highly skilled computer teams are hired by news media to make an art of mixing images, sounds and words to present news in compelling formats (Dahlgren, 1995; Sparks, 2000).

Compared to standard news generally uses computer techniques in a moderate way, animated news, however, adopts new technology in a much more dramatic format. To reach younger audiences growing up with digital media, the news animations not only continue the tabloid's lurid reporting style to focus on sensational topics, interaction or conflict among the main characters involved and the unseen scenes are reenacted out of the news story and are even motion depicted. Voice-overs, background music and special sound effects supplement to the plot help to dramatize the news presentation. Jimmy Lai, *Apple Daily's* former publisher who invented this bold news format, claiming that "watching animated news is like watching a video game, but it's the news" (CNN interview, 2010). Many people are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with the format of animated news and its always obscene contents. Taipei city government fined *Apple Daily* \$31,000 for failing to shield youth from its sensational and violent content, just two days after the animation service inaugurated. Animated news was also sharply condemned for ethical lapses that critics said threatened traditional journalistic values of objectivity, accuracy, and relevance. Western media claimed the animated news blurred the line between truth and fiction, and unanimously disparaged the use of 'thought balloons' to describe a news story. As Washington Post media critic Howard Kurtz wrote, "It didn't look like journalism. It didn't smell like journalism. And it didn't feel like journalism" (Beato, 2010). Western media urged *Apple Daily* "not to confuse cartoons with what people in the news business do" (Beato, 2010).

Putting aside widespread ethical concerns in public opinion, animated news might become a new face of journalism in the future –considering the continuing decline of print media and the rise of visual and audio effects. Scholars found graphics helped viewers store and retrieve information presented in TV news, and also enhanced encoding of harder stories for younger (Fox et al., 2004).

Detenber, Simons & Bennett (1998) concluded that moving images appeared to sustain the attention of TV viewers for a longer period of time than did the still images. Right before animated news clips were released, a multimedia producer speculated on the future of the news videos. Mulvaney (2009) stated that newspapers need to compete by offering breaking news videos as TV news stations get more Web-savvy. The high viewing rate of Taiwanese animated news somewhat support what Mulvaney said. Because of high attention from Western media, English subtitles were added to some of the animated news videos, and *Apple Daily* has produced custom clips for Western news and entertainment institutions. Reuters tapped the team to create an animation about the environmental risks of tuna fishing. BBC's News Night commissioned *Apple Daily's* animated team to come up with over-the-top video for the 2010 British general election (Kaplan, 2009).

As communication technology becomes more powerful, computer animation has become an important visual effects tool and is providing impacts in news packaging. The study compared the differing practices of animation news to TV news to describe the news presentation structures of the two news outlets. To a larger context, the study examined the news performance along the adoption of new technology. It further explained the shifts and trends of news ideology in contemporarily society.

3. Research Methodology

Simple statistics and narrative analysis were adopted to fulfill the research purposes. The percentages of types of news stories that TV news and animated news produced were calculated to reveal their preference of selecting news topics. Narrative analysis was used to describe the differing news narration structures and news production approaches of TV news and animated news. A narrative is a story created in a format to describe a sequence of events. According to Fisher (1987), narrative is a fundamental of communication which provides the structure for human experiences and influences people to share common explanations and understandings. One of the first theorists to define the pervasive nature of narrative was Russian formalist Vladimir Propp, who suggested that the power of narrative lies in its ability to govern the selection of relevant facts and to give shape to those facts (Propp, 1968). Many scholars regard news as narrative because news is told by a journalist-narrator. They also suggested that if a news narrative is consistent, logical, and meaningful, the audience is likely to believe the news story (e.g. Woodstock, 2002; Machill, Köhler, & Waldhauser, 2007; Caldiero, 2007).

Many scholars analyzed TV news with narrative theory and concluded that TV news as narrative for the following reasons: (1) the anchorperson is the storyteller who reports news in a narrative format to create an image of his/her authority and trustworthiness. (2) the plots of TV news are an assembly of heroes, conflicts and problems. TV journalists/anchorpersons are like movie stars who deal with confrontations of public and officials, and of good and evil. (3) TV news provides hope about problems, since journalists / anchorpersons are like Middle Age knights who save the princess' life or detectives in soap operas who stop bad things from happening (Machill, Köhler & Waldhauser, 2007; Huang, 1994).

3.1 Analysis Structure

The study used narrative analysis to describe the news narrations of Taiwanese TV news and animated news. The news presentation structure of each news reportage was analyzed in five categories: (1) main characters involved in the story: if they are ordinary people or public figures; (2) opening of the story: the news coverage is led by anchorperson or voice-over; (3) content introduction and the sequence of the news coverage: how the news story is addressed and how the images and sound effect are arranged; (4) sources cited in the news coverage; (5) ending of the story: how the news story ends.

Table 1: Narrative Analysis of the Study

Procedures	Analysis Description
Main Characters	ordinary people or public figures
Opening of the News Reportage	anchorperson or voice-over
Content Introduction and Sequence of the News Reportage	how the news was addressed and arranged
Source Citation	sources cited in the news
Ending of the News Reportage	how the news reportage ends

Source: by authors

3.2 Sample Selection

According to AC Nielsen research in Taiwan, CTV (Chinese Television Company) evening news airing from 8pm to 9pm acquired the highest viewing rates. The research was conducted from March 7 to March 13, 2010, when CTV news from 8pm to 9pm broadcasted 192 news stories and *Apple Daily's* animated news produced 191 news clips. Two coders categorized the news items into five news types: politics/public affairs, local/crime news, health/lifestyle news, sports/entertainment news, and international news. 23 identical news topics, both covered by CTV news and animated news, were analyzed for news narratives and compared to show their differing news presentation structures. The study provided the news narrative analysis results of five pairs of identical news topics, each one selected respectively from the five news categories, in details to reveal the news presentation structures and approaches of the two news medias (see Table 2 for headlines of the five pairs of identical news topics).

Table 2: Headlines of News Stories Compared in Pairs

News Media	CTV News	Animated News
News Type		
Politics/ Public Affairs	Health Minister in resignation conference: too many elections in Taiwan	The controversy over health insurance plan causes Health Minister's resign
Local/ Crime News	Suspect tells where dead body buried after having bad dreams	Man confesses dumping dead body after threatened to death by the victim in the dreams for six consecutive nights
Health/ Lifestyle News	Pregnancy leave up to one year benefits 3 million workers	Pregnancy leave for up to one year and will put effect at the end of May
Entertainment News	Winner of Woods-Mistress-Beauty-Pageant won 2.4 million	Model won Woods-Mistress-Beauty-Pageant: Woods was having sex with me when knowing his dad died
International News	Bangkok and seven other cities on alert over Thai Red-Shirts protests	50,000 soldier and police guard against Thai Red-Shirts protests

Source: by authors

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Preferences of News Types

The results showed that CTV news mostly emphasized on local/crime news and health/lifestyle news, with both accounting for more than one third of the total news reporting items. Entertainment news fell in the third place, accounting for 13.5% of total news coverage. The results also found *Apple Daily's* animated news with more than half of its news topics (51.8%) focused on entertainment news. Local/crime news was the second most commonly covered type, accounting for 19.8 % of total news coverage items (Table 3).

Table 3: Percentages of News Types of CTV News and Animated News

Type	Average % of News	CTV news		Animated News	
Politics/ Public Affairs		16/192	8.3%	5/191	2.6%
Local/ Crime news		67/192	34.9%	37/191	19.4%
Health/Lifestyle news		66/192	34.4%	30/191	15.7%
Entertainment news		26/192	13.5%	99/191	51.8%
International news		17/192	8.9%	20/191	10.5%

Source: by authors

4.2 News Presentation Structures of CTV News and Animated News

This study analyzed 23 pairs of news stories both covered by CTV news and animated news to compare their news narration structures and especially the usage of computer techniques on the news production. The results indicated the news narration structures of CTV news and animated news were not quite the same. In the opening of the CTV news, one photo was given as the background picture of the news story. The anchorperson, that played a leading role in the TV news reportage, read a brief passage of the news and led the audience to view related photos or footages as detailed information were introduced. The anchorperson of TV news maintained an official, serious, and impersonal tone on reporting. On the other hand, animated news showed one stunning picture of the news story as well as a sensational headline in the opening of the news reportage. Compared to CTV news, animated news was narrated by voice-over, with a more rapid-fire and obtrusive tone.

Both CTV news and animated news applied photos, footages, computer tools such as charts, tables or graphics depended on the news contents. When providing the main idea of the news stories, the anchorperson of CTV news led the audiences to view related materials and explained along the news story. Images shown on CTV news were all filmed from the realistic world such as streets, buildings, crowd, or people. Camera shootings were taken with a landscape shot and followed by a close-up shot onto the targets of the news story. There were no animations or background music applied in the reviewed cases in the study.

As for animated news, computer 3D animation played a critical role especially when news topics involving crime, disaster or news with dramatic news plots. The results found in many cases animated news not only reenacted the possible news plots and story scenes, designed dialogues between the main characters were added and played from the first person perspective. Background music and special sound effect were deployed along the news story. While CTV news adopted the technology as a supplementary device, animated news deployed computer skills in a bolder manner.

Statements quoted in the CTV news were from official elites such as legislative, police or authorities. Animated news had a different approach on citing sources. Besides the government-related sources, public opinions were cited and opinion polls were often conducted. In the end of the news coverage, CTV news often quoted statements from authority or governmental official, while animated news ended the news reportage with ordinary people's comments on the issue. Moreover, CTV news concluded in a more flexible attitude such as "further investigation needed". Contrarily, animated news wrapped up a story with a relatively solid conclusion. The results also referred to the phenomenon while CTV news was organized chiefly around continual news segments and updated with ongoing stories, animated news would not produce a new broadcast on the same topic unless there were significant developments.

4.3 News Narrations Compared in pairs

The following were the news narrations of five pairs of identical news topics both covered by CTV news and animated news. The analyzed results were provided in details and compared to reveal the differing news presentation structures and news making approaches of the two news medias.

4.3.1 Politics/ Public affairs: famous figures vs. public welfare

Taiwan's health insurance plan reform was heavily covered by CTV news and animated news when the "2nd Generation National Health Insurance" draft was passed, in which the insurance fees will be increased greatly for singles, resulting in the backlash of many singles. The Minister of the Department of Health Yang Chih-Liang who took lead in this reform, resigned following the passing of the bill, expressing regret that he was unable to obtain full support for the bill. Yang complained at the press conference that too many elections caused Taiwanese government's lack of urgency in dealing with critical issue, such as the health insurance system's rising debt, on a fear of upsetting the voting public.

CTV news media covered Yang's resignation much shorter than the animated news. When reporting this issue, while CTV news focused only on the reaction of one ruling party's governmental official who is Taiwanese President's right-hand man and also a famous politician, animated news quoted more statements from the government administrators and the legislators both from the ruling and the opposing party, and three ordinary people's opinions toward the reform.

Animated news also applied computer graphics to provide a general description on the draft's amendment and a table comparing the differences between the first and second generation of the health insurance plan. Yet the 3D animation technique was not applied to this case. In the political and public affair news, the study revealed traditional CTV news, compared to animated news, had the tendency to focus on the fame of the public figures involved. It was also affected by pack journalism, where herds of journalists storm the targets, in this case the political figures, with overwhelming presence.

4.3.2 Local/Crime News: authority response vs. possible scene reconstructed

The results showed CTV news and animated news had similar standards on selecting news topics of local/crime events. They largely focused on criminals, victims, disasters or casualties, and led the news coverage with the victim families' grief or anger; nevertheless, they were presented in quite different presentation structures. One of the major differences was animated news reenacted and simulated the scene of the news story by computer animation and with other attention attracting techniques when news story had dramatic plots. The example provided here was about a man who confessed dumping a girl's dead body after he kept dreaming of the victim who threatened to kill him.

Since this news story itself was filled with sensational plots including a dead body and dreams, animated news largely applied 3D animations on covering the news. Details of the crime procedures, from how the girl died in a drug party, how she was dumped, to how the suspect had bad dreams of the victim were vividly motion depicted. Anxious music was applied when the suspect threw the dead body in a deserted mountain in a dark and windy night. Dramatized music was also added when simulated the suspect's bad dreams, where the victim crawled to the suspect's bed with a creepy smile on her face threatening to kill him.

When compared the cited news sources, while CTV news asked a prosecutor to make comments on this criminal case, animated news interviewed a psychiatrist to explain the cause of the suspect's bad dreams. To protect the privacy rights and respect the dead, CTV news did not show the names of the victim and the suspect, and their photos were shown in mosaic. However, animated news not only revealed the suspect's face, name, age, photos of the victim's dead body were fully shown. While CTV news ended the news reportage with 'further investigation is needed', animated news concluded 'the suspect was arrested', in this case.

4.3.3 Health/ Lifestyle News: public interview vs. opinion poll

Health/Lifestyle news covered issues concerned to ordinary people. During the research time, the news media heavily covered one important issue of Taiwanese women who can choose to take pregnancy leave up to three years under specific circumstances and still be able to return to her former position. Since the reform will affect many people, both CTV news and animated news cited public opinions toward the plan. While CTV news cited two female workers' opinions, animated news interviewed four ordinary people, including a student, two female works, and a business owner, with their ages, job ranks and genders provided. A small-scale opinion poll was also launched. The results in this case indicated that animated news' narration logic is to show they care and wanted to create an atmosphere of its closeness with the common people.

The comparisons of this case showed animated news applied much more computer techniques than CTV news. CTV news simply used two tables to aid reporting, with one explained the length of women's pregnancy leave and its applying qualifications, and the other one listed the differences between maternity leave, pregnancy leave, and menstrual leave and their applying conditions of leaving. As for animated news, 3D animation was applied three times along the news coverage. The first one showed female workers applied for absent leave in different conditions; the second one portrayed an employer who was fined because of rejecting an application of a female worker's pregnancy leave; and the third one was a computer produced human anatomy used to illustrate the medical problems that a woman could face during pregnancy. This case revealed animated news presented the news story by using computer techniques to enhance ordinary people's comprehensions on the more complex or professional news topics.

4.3.4 Entertainment News: soft news content vs. news dramatization

During the research period, both CTV news and animated news covered one international news story -- Tiger Woods Mistress Beauty Pageant, held by Howard Stern, the host of a morning radio show in the US. The beauty contest featured the disgraced golfer Woods' many ex-lovers to compete for a \$100,000 prize. A cocktail waitress Jamie Jungers came out the winner of the contest after answering most of Stern's prying questions, including those about Woods' endowments and turn-ons.

Footage of the beauty contest was played in CTV and animated news. CTV news focused on the three contestants' body figures and showed the dialogues between the winner and the host to Tiger Woods' sexual interest. However, the animated news presented the news in a more compelling way. First, the animated news clip gave a rather sensational headline "*Model won Woods mistress beauty pageant: Woods was having sex with me when knowing his dad died*". Second, each contestant's photo, dimensions of their body figures and the alleged relationships with Tiger Woods were presented. The stunning allegation of the winner "Woods was having sex with me when knowing his dad died" was only chitchats on the show, but the scene was reenacted and vividly motion simulated. Other computer graphics included a tree diagram to illustrate the complicated Wood's relationships with women, as well as the exaggerated background music and the designed dialogic texts were used in the case.

4.3.5 International News: footage played vs. computer techniques applied

As for international news, the study compared the Red-Shirt's protest in Bangkok, Thailand. The news story was about members of the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), known as the Red-Shirts, were scheduled to start a protest march in Bangkok, Thailand. The protesters viewed the incumbent Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva as being illegitimate and undemocratic and asked him to dissolve the Parliament. The rally was seen as the biggest threat to the troubled administration of Abhisit. About 50,000 to 100,000 military and police forces would be deployed in the capital city, and another 46,000 "disaster prevention volunteers" were on standby.

The result found CTV news and animated news presented this issue in a similar way. Both headlines adopted figures to show the tense situations in Thailand. While CTV news gave the exact number of cities on alert, the animation news bore a substantial figure to astonish the audience. Both CTV news and animated news led the news story with a footage released by Associated Press (AP), and ended the reportage by addressing the impacts on Taiwan and the Taiwanese tourists. Though animation technique was not used for this story by animated news, the coverage included the comments of the deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra made on Twitter.

5. Conclusion

The tendency to news tabloidization and news sensationalism has been one of the most significant issues in journalism in recent years. By analyzing the news presentation structures of the fascinated news service of Taiwanese animated news, the study illustrated how advanced computer techniques were adopted and how they have had a great impact on the news narration structures in the news media in an era of images.

The study showed that news media with the norms of tabloidization and sensationalism may cover the same news topics as the mainstream journalism, but with a much more flamboyantly style both in the news content and in the news presentation form. Similar to traditional TV news, Taiwanese tabloid *Apple Daily's* online service animated news puts great emphasis on the entertainment news and local/ crime news events, but with sensational headlines and stunning photos. Different from traditional TV news coverage led by an anchorperson, animated news is narrated by a voice-over, with rapid-fire narration and obtrusive voice tones to promote identification, empathy, and involvement of viewers with news story content. News presentation features such as background music, sound effects, or slow motion are the routine approaches adopted to dramatize the news narratives. News sources of animated news are from not only celebrities or notable figures, but also from the public; moreover, opinion polls are often conducted to show its concerns over the public welfares. Computer graphics such as charts, tables or diagrams are commonly in use to enhance the news comprehension of audience. The most stunned presentation technique – computer 3D animation, is often deployed especially to crime, disaster, or entertainment news events with dramatic plots. Possible news scenes and details of the news content are designed and motion depicted to satisfy viewers' curiosity and to provide viewers veracious pleasure that they never experienced before.

The study suggested that Taiwanese animated news processes and produces news using a format and structure that differs from the TV news. More specifically, while TV news relatively subjects to the principles of proper journalism, animated news follows the norms and practices of tabloid journalism. However, the study also observed that there has been a tendency of TV news changing of the editorial standards of journalism on making news towards tabloidization, with the percentages of soft news topics are much higher than before. In the TV news coverage, the anchorperson plays an important role on directing the news to create the atmosphere of news professionalism. To legitimize an objective and professional news reporting, official, elite, and expert's statements are regularly cited as the main sources, yet public opinions are quoted at times. While computer skills are applied to TV news too, they are adopted as a supplementary device and used in a fairly rational way.

Compared to animated news which reenacts the story scene out of related texts, visual images displayed in the TV news are mostly from the realistic world to assure trustworthy and authenticity. In conclude, though affected by the trend of tabloidization, Taiwanese TV news following the standard journalistic norms is still recognizable (Table 4 is the comparison of news making of the two news outlets).

Table 4: Comparison of News Making of TV News and Animated News

News Media/News Production	TV News	Animated News
Broadcasting Device	TV	internet / cell phone
Journalism Ideology	proper journalism / shifting to tabloid journalism	tabloid journalism
News Editing / Production Time	in real-time/ continual updates ongoing stories	after one day/ one clip per issue unless necessary
Opening of the News Story	by anchorperson/ from the first perspective	by voice-over/ from the third perspective
Main Characters in the News Story	elite/ official/ celebrity/ ordinary people	ordinary people/notable figures
Procedure/Sequence of the News Reportage	photo/ footage/ computer graphic	photo/ footage/computer graphic/ animation
Sources Citation	expert / official / ordinary people	ordinary people/ expert /public opinion poll
Ending of the News Story	with flexible attitude/ tone	relatively solid conclusion

Source: by authors

This study highlighted a decline in traditional news broadcast model through a rise in content and format choices across niche markets and the expanding influence of digital technologies. The study suggested that through a process of tabloidization where values and status of traditional proper journalism were undergoing changes, the introduction of a flamboyant news service was not unusual. In other words, news narration features of eye-catching and the adoption of computer 3D animation in the news media may not necessarily be bad in journalism, if their tendency to attract general viewers' attention can be directed to public affairs. However, ethical problems of animated news such as the impact on the younger viewers and the possible degrading to the position of public credibility, should be further examined in the future study.

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