

How Does People's Daily Frame Hong Kong National Security Law?

10 Semester Project

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Abstract

In June 2019, the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement began. It lasted more than a year and escalated into violence, severely undermining the economic and social stability of Hong Kong. To end this, the Chinese Central Government has decided to establish and improve Hong Kong's legal system and law enforcement mechanism to maintain national security at the national level. On June 30, 2020, the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress passed the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China", referred to as the "Hong Kong National Security Law".

Through the two functions of "selection" and "highlighting", the media selects a certain part of the event that it knows about and specializes in the text to provide its unique interpretation. Based on the framing theory, this project uses People's Daily as the research object, and selects the relevant commentary reports of People's Daily on the Hong Kong National Security Law from May 29, 2020, to February 6, 2021, to conduct a news framing analysis.

In this project, I first conducted a simple quantitative analysis of the time quantity distribution and layout distribution of the reports, and classified and constructed the topics of news reports. I found that the People's Daily emphasized the positive impact of Hong Kong's national security law on the stability of Hong Kong's society and One Country, Two Systems policy, and strongly condemned the US government's interference in China's internal affairs.

Then, I inspected the medium structure and rhetoric strategy of the reporting frame, so as to improve and supplement the details of the reporting frame. In the medium structure, I found that the People's Daily has given positive meaning to Hong Kong's national security law by describing and portraying it in terms of definition, attribution, and influence. At the microstructure, People's Daily uses metaphors to construct news reality.

Keywords: People's Daily, Framing theory, Imagined communities, Hong Kong

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1.0 Introduction

On 1 July 1997, the British Government of Hong Kong returned sovereignty over Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China. Article 23 of the Basic Law of Hong Kong¹, which came into force on the same day, empowers the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to enact its legislation to safeguard national security. After entering the twentieth century, Beijing's control and Hong Kong's demands for a high degree of autonomy contradict each other, and the differences between the two sides have become more and more serious. In 2003, Hong Kong's government tried to legislate on Article 23, but hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets to oppose the legislation, which led to the abortion of this legislation. In September 2014, there was an Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong, and in June 2019, the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement started, which lasts more than one year and escalated into violence and severely undermined Hong Kong's economy and social stability.

To end this, the Central Government of China has decided to establish and improve Hong Kong's legal system and enforcement mechanism for safeguarding national security at the national level. On June 30, 2020, the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress passed the Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of National Security, referred to as the Hong Kong National Security Law. On the same day, it was incorporated into Annex III of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the form of national law and promulgated for implementation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The Chinese government's decision has been questioned and opposed by Western governments. The US government says that the national security law will destabilize Hong Kong society and that it will remove the "special and important status" of Hong Kong such as Hong Kong's relatively independent customs zone. Also, the US has extended arms restrictions on China.

¹ Article 23 of the Basic Law stipulates that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit any acts of treason, secession, sedition, subversion of the Central People's Government and theft of state secrets, and prohibit foreign political organizations or groups from conducting political activities in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; it is forbidden for political organizations or groups in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to establish contacts with foreign political organizations or groups.

The New York Times criticised Hong Kong's National Security as "a law to curb opposition in Hong Kong", and said it would lead to Hong Kong's move into the police community¹.

Despite all this, China still promoted Hong Kong's national security law legislation. And in its official media, China counterattacked the criticism and censure of other countries, pointing out the necessity and legitimacy of the Hong Kong National Security Law. Therefore, I think it might be important to know what kind of message the Chinese official media try to convey about the Hong Kong National Security Law, how it defines the Hong Kong National Security Law, what role and influence it thinks Hong Kong National Security Law has, and how it responds to criticism from the Western world, how it chooses and builds its own medium truth and affect the audience's perception. So, here, I bring up this research question:

How does People's Daily frame Hong Kong National Security Law?

¹ China's New National Security Law Looms Over Hong Kong, New York Times, June 28th, 2020

2.0 Methodology

In the methodology part, I will explain the steps that form this project and the reasons for those steps. Firstly, I will introduce my view of the world in this project, and then I reflect on my choice of theories and data. Lastly, I will discuss how I process the analysis and the delimitation of this project.

2.1 Philosophy understanding

In this project, I hold a view of constructive. Constructivists believe that there are three kinds of reality in the world: objective reality, symbolic reality and subjective reality (Zang Guoren, 1999: 27). The objective reality is made up of real existence and matter; the symbol reality is formed by various symbols of words and images; the objective reality is formed and constructed by viewpoints of human and the meanings that are given by human beings (Bryman 2016: 28).

From the point of view of social constructivism and cultural researchers, news cannot simply reflect and convey social facts, which means that as the content is full of symbols and words, news cannot present the truth objectively, neutrally or completely. On the contrary, the news is a constructed cultural product influenced by the practice of news organizations, the ideological biases of journalists and the power structure (Li Yanhong, 2003). Meanwhile, the news is used as an action to composite things that people see and think of as reality (Rasborg 2013: 405-406).

In the ever-changing reality environment, the world view or social reality constructed by the news media provides a possible explanation for the audience's perception of the world. This process of influencing the audience's perception of the world is accomplished through the symbolic methods and social events of the text through symbols, metaphors, conceptual symbolic tools, and deconstructed synths, plots, themes, and rhetoric (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Therefore, by analysing the topic setting and narrative structure of the news framework, we can explore the news production process and how it selectively constructs the facts and influences the perception of the audience.

But it needs to be pointed out that this analysis is not testing hypotheses, but studying the symbols and terminology of the text and its narrative, and how they are presented. These

symbolic terms constitute the social reality recognized by journalists, and at the same time affect or even reconstruct the audience's perception of reality (Esmark et al., 2005: 11-12).

Therefore, in this project, I will use a perceptual method rather than a hypothesis testing process to explain the structure of the news in reality and understand how the Chinese official media uses news text to construct and convey its knowledge and view of Hong Kong National Security Law.

2.2 Choice of theory

In this project, I will use two theories to help to explore the answer to the research question: framing theory and imagined communities.

Since I am going to analyse the news commentary articles in this project, I believe these theories I chose will help me to find out how does People's Daily frame Hong Kong National Security Law and what kind of messages they convey.

I choose framing theory because framing theory can help me better understand the meaning of news. The frame is the central idea that people develop in response to a series of symbolic activities, and it is also the origin of meaning construction (Gamson, et al., 1993). People use frames to construct meanings to understand the causes and context of social events.

The positive meaning of the framing theory is to help people think or organize information, but on the other hand, it has also become the main source of people's ideology or stereotypes, restricting the activities of subjective perception of the world, and inevitably generating prejudice (Zang Guoren, 1999). Using framing theory to analyze the news of People's Daily can help me clarify the structure and main content of its news.

Anderson's theory of imagined communities explains nationalism as a discursive thought and practice. Anderson believes that the development of capitalism makes printing one of the most important foundations of the origin of the nation. The widespread circulation of newspapers within a country has allowed people who are far apart geographically and have never met to "see" each other. The introduction of the imagined communities theory can help me understand how the news embeds the grand and distant concept of the country into the structure of the newspaper through daily, small discourses and references.

2.3 Choice of data

Because I will mainly apply the news framing theory and the imagined communities for analysis in this project, the relevant data used in the research are mainly quantitative, that is, the relevant reports of the Chinese news media on the Hong Kong National Security Law. In order to make the project more actionable, I made some trade-offs in media selection and article genre. Below I will explain why I made these choices.

First of all, considering the authority and representativeness of the sample, I choose People's Daily as my main research object. The purpose of this project is to understand the Chinese official narrative of Hong Kong's National Security Law. Published on May 15, 1946, People's Daily was and is the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCP). It is listed as the three official media organizations of the CCP and the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), as well as Xinhua News Agency and China Central Radio and Television. As one of China's most authoritative and influential newspapers, People's Daily is also one of the few media that has the right to publish information on major events and has become one of the weather vanes for international media and politics to understand the political development of mainland China. The People's Daily media has a wide range of influence and important representation in China.

The second is the reason for the choice of article genre, which is why I choose commentary articles as research samples. I made this choice mainly for the following two reasons. Firstly, if the genre of news articles is not restricted, the sample number of articles obtained is too large. On the People's Daily website, there are more than 300 articles on Hong Kong's national security law. However, due to my limited time and ability, I am unable to read and classify all those articles. Secondly, although the main content of a newspaper is not commentary, the commentary is a concentrated expression of the core position of a newspaper, and the most direct and significant public opinion guidance effect appears in the commentary of the newspaper. Therefore, news commentary plays a pivotal role in media articles. In view of the above two reasons, I decided to use the People's Daily commentaries on Hong Kong National Security Law as the object of analysis in this project.

The third part is about setting the time range of the article. Since I limited the article genre to review articles, I did not limit the time range of the article. I set Hong Kong National Security Law as a keyword on the People's Daily website, and through searching and exclusion, as of

February 28, 2020, I got a total of 27 relevant review articles. These articles are the research samples of this project. The specific article titles and publication date can be viewed in the appendix.

2.4 Method of analysis

To deal with this project, I will use qualitative analysis as the main research method, supplemented by quantitative analysis. Because it is mainly based on the framing theory, I will try to use text analysis methods to describe and analyse the reports of the People's Daily on Hong Kong National Security Law issues, hoping to understand the framework of news construction topics through a comprehensive deconstruction of the news text.

In this project, I will complete the analysis part of the project based on Zang Guoren's analysis of the macro, medium and micro framing, combining Gamson's "interpretation package" framework, Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis and Anderson's imagined communities theory.

Specifically, first of all, I will conduct a general and quantitative analysis of the article samples of People's Daily, analyse the number and time distribution of articles, the layout of articles, the sources of the information, to find out the basic attributes of the samples.

Next, I divide the analysis framework of People's Daily into three levels: macro, medium and micro. In the macrostructure, I will discuss the main topics of news and construct the main topics of the main news by reading the text. In the medium structure, I will combine Gamson's "reasoning device" to understand how the People's Daily reports on the Hong Kong National Security Law incident from the definition, attribution, and influence. At the micro-level, I will first use some rhetorical techniques of linguistics to analyse the rhetorical style of the text, understand the various rhetorical methods used in the text, and explore the ideology and position hidden behind it. Meanwhile, I will combine imagined communities with in the structure to find out how the People's Daily constructs national identity in the writing of those commentary news.

2.5 Limitations

The first is the limitations of the media and articles. In this project, the sample is limited to a single news genre which is news commentary, so the construction of the news frame may be biased. Also, in terms of media selection, this article selects only the news reports of the People's Daily newspaper on Hong Kong National Security Law. Although the People's Daily is a very representative official media in China with a high authority status, it can only represent the attitudes and opinions of the mainland of China on this incident, and the attitude of the Hong Kong media on this issue is also worth discussing. Future research can appropriately increase the number and types of media, such as comparing the different discourse construction strategies of Chinese and foreign media on the same news topic, in order to more objectively demonstrate the influence of media organizations in news production.

Secondly, in the research on the news framing, this project still lacks effective measurement and mastery of the framing effect, that is, a specific discussion on the role of the audience in the framing construction process in designing the framing analysis method. There are more scientific statistical methods which can also be used in this project. Also, critical discourse analysis has its objective limitations when applied, and there is the possibility of over-interpretation for the convenience of criticism in this project.

3.0 Theories

3.1 Framing theory

3.1.1 The source of the framing concept

The news media does not operate in a vacuum environment. Society, politics, economy and ideology will all have an impact on it. When reporters try to understand and organize events in real life, they will participate in a cognitive process called the news frame.

The concept of "frame" originated from sociology and psychology. Later, in his book, *Framing analysis: an essay on the organization of experience*, Goffman (1974) formalized the concept of "framework". Introduced into cultural sociology, it is pointed out that individuals organize their daily lives through "frames or diagrams of interpretation". Since the 1980s, the concept of the frame has been adapted by journalism and mass communication and integrated into the theory of news framing (Entman, 1993). Because the framework can help us understand why subtle word changes in reports can also lead to changes in the overall position, viewpoints, and behaviours, and therefore it is more popular in communication studies (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Tuchman (1978) believes that daily life and reality are organized by frames. Meyers (1992) believes that a frame is a coherent whole that can provide a special explanation for individuals or organizations. McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver (1997) classify the framework as an extension of agenda-setting. Akhavan-Majid and Ramappasad (1998) believe that the framework is an important mechanism for disseminating ideology through the news.

Gamson (1987: 603) believes that the frame consists of two parts. First of all, the frame is a kind of boundary, that is, the norm of social events. This means that the frame is the lens through which people observe the world. Only the scene within the lens becomes a part of the cognitive world, while the behaviour outside the lens, that is, outside the boundary, is not seen (Gamson, 1987: 603). Second, the frame is also a building frame that interprets social phenomena. Through the framework, people construct the meaning of social events and understand the causes and consequences of the events (Gamson, 1987: 603). It can be seen that the former represents the norms of the frame pair and the scope of the material, while the latter affects people's perception of meaning. Although people use frames as the basis for thinking

about or explaining external events, they are therefore more accustomed to understanding and commenting on external events with more familiar things, and therefore intentionally or unintentionally "ignoring" facts beyond the boundaries of the frame. Therefore, although the framework can help people think or organize activities, it is also the main source of people's outdated ideas or stereotypes.

Pan & Kosicki (1993) believe that the media frame is a process in which symbol authors organize their speech process through long-term mass media, and thus become a fixed cognition and interpretation and the form of expression ultimately affects the choice, emphasis and elimination of social events.

The media framework is usually viewed as a coherent package of information, which contains "a central organizational vision or storyline that provides meaning for evolving events" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987: 143). The news media adopted such a framework in order to organize its presentation of issues to the public. According to work procedures, journalists use information classification to provide an overall background for a certain issue in public debate. This is then called "the process by which the source of communication constructs and defines social or political issues for the audience" (Nelson et al., 1997a: 221). Therefore, the news frame is not just an isolated argument or position on a topic, it represents a coherent construction of an issue (Nelson & Kinder, 1996; Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

Frames are textual practices that embody the cultural values and beliefs that journalism adheres to. Entman (1991) believes that a news frame is not only the principle of information processing but also a feature of news text. He also pointed out that the frame is an invisible template embedded in the workflow of news organizations and reporters to help reporters quickly identify and categorize information, organize the text. The reporter perceives and selects some aspects of reality through the keywords, metaphors, concepts, symbols, and images emphasized in the news narrative, so that these parts can be highlighted in the text, thereby promoting specific problem definitions, causal explanations, moral evaluations, etc. (Entman, 1993). The news formed through a specific framework which directly affect the audience's understanding of related events and information (Price, Tewksbury & Powers, 1997).

However, the framework is less influenced by the personal values of journalists. It is formed based on external values such as social norms, organizational constraints, and interest group pressures (Tuchman, 1978; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In the same way, although journalists

themselves may not be aware of it, the events or problems they report are not randomly selected, but follow a news frame and logic within their organization.

Therefore, Reese (2001) believes that the news frame is an organizational principle that is shared and persisted in society, and the social world is constructed through symbolic work. However, the frame is not equal to the direct text it expresses, but a highly abstract cultural logic that can be combined together to provide meaning for several texts. By providing the structure of this meaning, the framework can guide the content included and excluded in these texts and their tone, but it is not limited to these implementation cases. The framework can be identified in the structure of meaning condensed in the cultural logic, and it can be expressed in multiple reports and analyses of events or problems, as well as in different events and problems.

In order to achieve the frame effect, the media uses a variety of framed news methods, such as repeating a theme, highlighting a photo of an event, and using reasoning devices to stimulate readers' explanatory understanding of certain issues. However, Debbie Goh (2008) pointed out that no matter which media alternative frame method is adopted, its orientation is to distinguish significant perception deviations in reality through “selection” and “prominence”. From another perspective, the news media uses a specific framework method to guide stories that do not conform to the real perception of reality, so as to use the framework to convey some deviations (Goh, 2008).

In this study, I conceptualized the news frame as a certain mode of news media reporting, highlighting certain aspects of the problem rather than others, and thus selected relevant aspects. Through this choice, the news frame suggests to its audience a specific explanation for a certain piece of news.

3.1.2 Analysis path of framing theory

Frame analysis can be effectively used to detect biases in news media and cause viewers to explain the direction supported by political news reports in the media. News frames are the results of routine news releases. Journalists use these results to convey their own values and look at related issues and events. The role of these news frames is to lead reports (D'Angelo, 2002).

Paul D'Angelo (2002) has identified three paradigms for the study of journalism: constructivism, cognitive paradigm, and critical research. Constructivists view the news frame as an explanatory process which explores how social structures and news organizations interact to create meaning; the focus of the cognitive paradigm is to explain the psychological process, and through this psychological process, the news frame affects the perception of reality by a single listener; the critical framework research has drawn people's attention to the hegemonic influence of the "power elite" on the news framework.

Dietram Scheufele (1999) divides the research type of news frame into two dimensions: media frame and audience frame. Media frame is a kind of dependent variable research, which analyses news frame from the perspective of news practitioners and news providers, mainly for the content research of news frame. The audience framework is independent variable research, which analyses the effect from the reader's perspective.

This project focuses on the construction of the People's Daily' news framework for the Hong Kong National Security Law, that is, how the People's Daily interprets and creates news texts related to the Hong Kong National Security Law and gives them specific meanings. It is based on the perspective of constructivism, which belongs to the research category of media framework. Therefore, the analysis path discussion here will mainly focus on the research of the news media framework.

Taiwan scholar, Zang Guoren (1999) divides the news framework into three structures: macrostructure, medium structure and microstructure. The macrostructure of the news framework is the definition of the subject of news events, and its meaning often appears in some specific forms, including headlines, introductions, and even direct quotes. The medium structure includes main events, results, attributions, and comments and so on. The microstructure focuses on the content of the text level, analysing the rhetoric, grammar, and metaphor of the article. Below we will discuss the analysis methods proposed by different scholars on the news framework according to this classification.

3.1.2.1 The macrostructure of the framework

De Vreese CH (2002) conceptualized and categorized news topics, the macrostructure framework of news, and proposed two dimensions: a specific topic framework and a general framework. The specific topic framework means that each topic can be defined and divided

into a specific framework according to its own situation, especially when it involves a specific topic or news event (Matthes, 2009). Using the topic-specific framework method for frame analysis will allow researchers to specifically understand the framework of related topics or events, and in-depth analysis of how news writers embed the choice, structure and interpretation of the framework in the report (de Vreese, 2005).

James W Tankard (2001: 101-104) came up with the frame list of the framework checklist. First, it requires the selection and definition of categories for each news event, and the construction of classification indicators and specific definitions for all categories. By reading and recording relevant reports, selecting and categorizing them into their respective categories, these categories constitute the so-called frame checklist. Finally, it will compare the news frames behind these lists (Tankard, 2001: 101-104).

Compared with the specific topic framework, the general framework transcends the limitations of a single topic. The general framework is not reported on the same topic and between different regions provide the possibility of comparison. However, since the general framework is suitable for the analysis and identification of various issues, the general framework is lacking in the detailed explanation of an event (Crigler, et al., 1994). The general framework classification with a wide range of influence was proposed by Ann N Crigler, Marion Just and Neuman, W. Russell. They divided the general framework into five categories, including the attribute of responsibility, morality, conflict, human interest, and economic consequences (Crigler, et al., 1994)).

3.1.2.2 The medium structure of the framework

The medium structure of the framework is derived from van Dijk's concept of news archetypes (Zang Guoren, 1999: 37-38). Van Dijk divides news stories into two parts: "Summary" and "Story". The summary is composed of the title and introduction, and the story is subdivided into the main story and the commentary (Zang Guoren, 1999: 37-38). The main story includes the main events and results, background, etc., and the commentary includes a verbal response, temperature and evaluation.

Gamson's "interpretation package" analysis theory believes that news has the main storyline, which includes two categories: "framework" and "reasoning device". Through the themes, keywords, descriptions, metaphors and other parts of the frame installation, the mainline of the

story is revealed, and the definition and interpretation of the mainline of the story by the news media can be clarified through the reasoning of the definition, the source of the problem, the event risk and the solution (Gamson & Lasch, 1981).

3.1.2.3 The microstructure of the framework

The frame needs to be expressed through language and symbols, and the rhetoric and style composed of characters, words, sentences and such constitute the microstructure of the frame. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis and Pan Zhongdang's and Kirski's discourse structure analysis both explore the news framework from the wording of news.

Based on the analysis of cognitive psychology, Van Dijk (1988) conducted an in-depth analysis of the discourse of news reports, and thus explored the ideology and political stance of the news media. The most important part of critical discourse analysis is to criticize linguistic signs. Specifically, it uses some linguistic analysis techniques to explore the form in the text and discover its implicit ideology

Pan Zhongdang and Kirski (1993) proposed an analysis of the discourse structure. They adopt a constructivist attitude to test the opinions in news texts. By quoting the analysis of news discourse and comprehensively combing the concept of "frame" by communication scholars, the news text is decomposed from the micro and macro perspectives and analysed to find the news frame.

3.2 Imagined Communities

The imagined communities is the point raised by Benedict Anderson in redefining the term nation, which understands nationalism as a kind of discourse thought and practice through a non-Eurocentrism social construction method (Beruilly, 2016: 635). Anderson believes that nation is "an imaginary political community and it is imagined as a community that is limited in nature and also enjoys sovereignty (Anderson, 2005: 6)."

Compared with the previous concept of nation, Anderson's concept is different in at least two points: imagination and the political community. The so-called imagination, Anderson believes that "all communities larger than primitive villages where members have face-to-face contact, (perhaps even such villages are included) are imaginary. The basis for distinguishing different

communities is not their false authenticity, But the way they are imagined. (Anderson, 2005: 6)”

Anderson re-considered that there are two decisive factors that determine the possibility of this kind of imagination, including cultural roots and national consciousness. In terms of cultural roots, religious communities and dynasties have gradually diversified and declined due to the advent of printing capitalism, and the newspaper industry under printing technology has also turned people’s vertical time concepts into "homogeneous and empty" horizontal time -- “More and more people are able to think about themselves in profound and new ways and connect themselves with others (Anderson, 2005: 33).”

As far as the origin of national consciousness is concerned, “printed language lays the foundation of national consciousness” (Anderson, 2005: 43). It makes possible a new form of imagined communities, and from its basic perspective, this new community has actually set the stage for the appearance of the modern nation (Anderson, 2005: 45).” Anderson explores "immigration", "language", "patriotism", "census" and other content analyzed in detail the cultural roots and the many factors that produced national consciousness. These different factors have a common feature, that is, "imagination."

In the process of imagination, these secondary factors include language policy, education system, census and other factors. The secondary factors use institutions and data to draw a three-dimensional space for the imagined communities. In this sense, the formation of a national community is also an imagined process, and it is constructed through institutions and data. It can also be clearly shown that neither cultural factors nor the generation of national consciousness can erase the shadow of printing technology.

The printing technology and printing language emphasized here are the connections between the media and its shaping of national consciousness. Anderson believes that printed language lays the foundation of national consciousness in three different ways (Anderson 2005: 43-45). The first is that the printing language creates a civilian language system, relying on the media to promote smooth communication; secondly, printing makes the selected language a universal and fixed language, creating a time basis for the generation of national consciousness; third, it is printing that creates the language of power, allowing the selected language to shine, while the language that does not belong to it gradually loses its momentum or even disappears.

It is the dissemination of printed language using novels and newspapers as the carrier that makes readers realize that other people who have the same printed language and the same reading experience as themselves have the basis for the existence of the cognitive foundation and sense of identity that constitute the national community. Therefore, newspapers have two functions: it is a centralized identification process (Humphries 2006: 50), and it enables individuals to participate in abstract ethnic communities (Humphries 2006: 59).

Anderson (2012: 40) also recognizes that in addition to creating simultaneous experiences, newspapers also connect scattered readers to each other at two other levels, namely events and language. The important contribution of the newspaper as a medium is the invention of "news." News generally does not limit in the local area. Most of the time, it happens to people who have never met, and narrates events around the "country".

4.0 Analysis

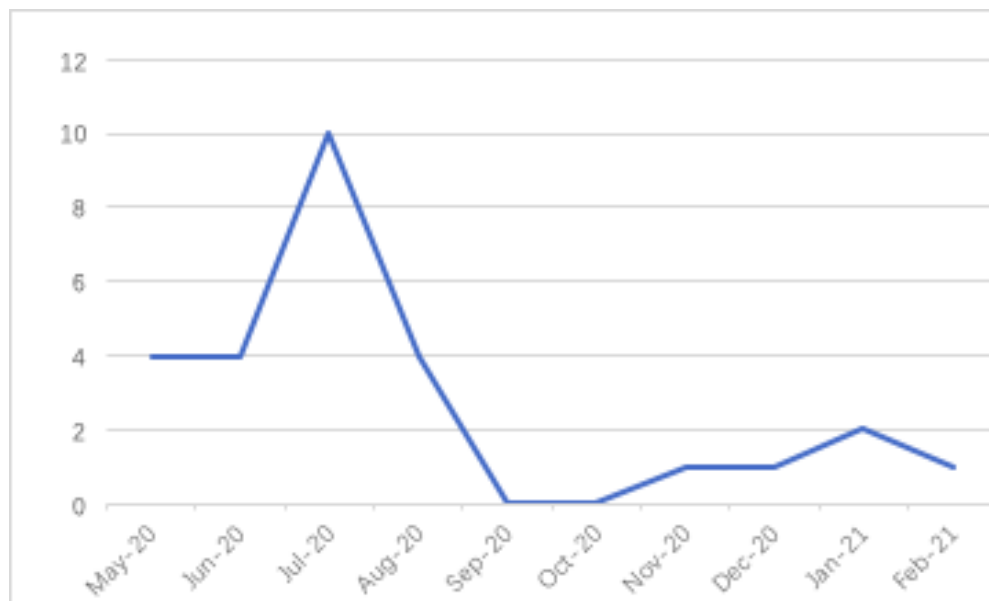
4.1 Basic circumstance of the samples

After searching on the People's Daily website with the Hong Kong National Security Law as a keyword, and categorizing and sorting out articles with lower relevance, I collected a total of 27 relevant commentary articles.

Below, I will carry out some simple quantitative analysis on the distribution of time and quantity of these articles, the distribution of published pages and the sources of the information, to present the general characteristics of the People's Daily report on Hong Kong's National Security Law.

4.1.1 Time and quantity distribution of the news

Table 1 Time and quantity distribution

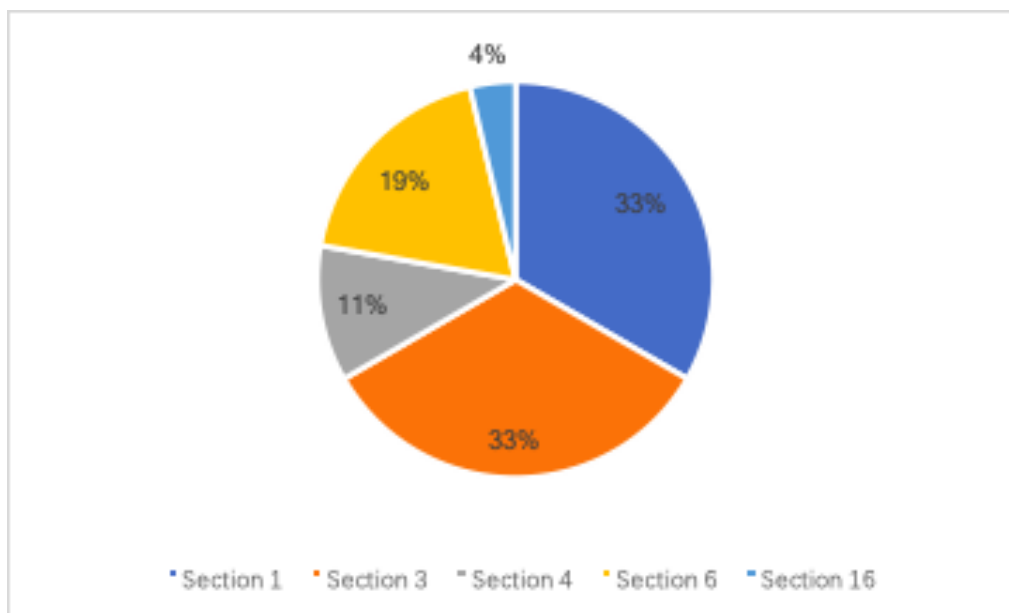


By dividing the collected articles and reports by months, it can be found that the number of news commentaries on Hong Kong's National Security Law in the People's Daily presents a fluctuating state. From May 2020 to July 2020, the number of relevant news commentaries is relatively large. Among them, the number of comment articles published in July 2020 is the largest, reaching 10, accounting for about 37% of the total sample; and in 2020 From September to October 2020, there were no relevant news comments, while from November

2020 to February 2021, there were a small number of news commentaries. I think this is because from May to August 2020, when the Hong Kong National Security Law has just been introduced and entered into force, the event got a more relatively high degree of attention, and there are more discussions at home and abroad, so there are more commentaries. After August, the popularity has declined slightly. However, with the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law and the arrest of some related activists, there have been more discussions on the Hong Kong National Security Law.

4.1.2 Newspaper layout

Table 2 Layout distribution



I also made simple statistics on the layout of relevant comments in the People's Daily. As can be seen from the figure above, 33% of the comments published in the People's Daily are published on the front page of the newspaper, namely Section 1. Section 3 also accounted for 33%, followed by Section 6 and Section 4.

The front page of the news is on the first page of the newspaper, which is the first time readers can notice when reading through it. More than one-third of the comments on Hong Kong's National Security Law is published on the front page of the People's Daily, which shows that the People's Daily attaches great importance to this matter.

4.1.3 Information Sources

As an important factor affecting the effect of the framework, the source of the news plays an important role in the construction of the framework. Zang Guoren (1999: 161) believes that the sources of the news are competitors in social action, competing with each other to gain control of the incident in the media environment. The argument of the source of the news will become the core and basic position of the news framework, thereby influencing the general public and constructing mainstream social thoughts.

American communication scholars, Carl Hovland and Walter Weiss (1951), pointed out that the source of information largely determines the effect of mass communication, and the difference in effect sometimes depends on the people who convey the information. Therefore, in this part, I will classify and count the sources of the sources cited in the sample text, so as to try to find the source builders of the People's Daily report on Hong Kong's national security law.

By analysing and counting the information sources used in each article, I have obtained the following data, as shown in the following table. It is worth noting that 4 of the 27 reports did not mention any source, and each of the other reports contained one or more sources of information, for a total of 29 sources of information. In all the samples, the People's Daily cited information from obscure sources, such as international people of insight, 10 times; experts and scholars ranked second, 7 times; there were 5 times for sources including the Hong Kong and Chinese governments; there are 4 times for international organizations or institutions such as the United Nations; the People's Daily also quoted the views and opinions of the US government twice.

Table 3 the Distribution of Sources

Source	Frequency	Percentage
The U.S. Government	2	6,90%
Chinese Government	5	17,24%
Scholars and Experts	8	27,59%
Others (Institutions, UN, ect..)	4	13,79%
Fuzzy Source	10	34,48%
Total	29	100,00%

4.2 Core topic and keywords

Zang Guoren (1999: 18) believes that a macrostructure framework is the definition of the subject of a certain event, that is, what it is. In news, the meaning of macrostructure frames often appears in some specific forms, including headlines, introductions, and direct quotes. Any news has its related theme, and the theme is composed of the proposition. The basic topics of news constitute the macrostructure meaning and connotation of news. In this analysis part, by reading and classifying the news topics, I will try to find out the main subject that People's Daily wants to convey in the commentaries of Hong Kong National Security Law reports.

4.2.1 Core topic: A necessary law to safeguard China's national security

Entman (1993) said, "the framework makes the reality more prominent in the dissemination text by selecting some of the reality it perceives." What the framework highlights is the core theme. The analysis of the news framework is primarily to summarize the core and secondary themes.

By reading the text and classifying its reporting angle, and then extracting the overall framework, I found that the core theme of the People's Daily report on Hong Kong's National Security Law is that Hong Kong's National Security Law is necessary to safeguard China's national security.

The reports discussed the core topic from four perspectives: Hong Kong's national security legislation is a legitimate and reasonable move; opposing US interference in Hong Kong affairs; opposing Taiwan independence, Hong Kong independence and other anti-China forces; National Security Law helps Hong Kong restore stability.

The reports pointed out that national security legislation is the central power. It condemns the US interference in Hong Kong affairs, Taiwan independence and Hong Kong independence attacks on One Country, Two Systems, and opposes all violent and illegal acts. It pointed out that only a stable political and social environment can enable Hong Kong to continue to develop its economy and maintain prosperity.

Also, given that one reports may have multiple perspectives, I limit each sample to a maximum of three topics. Therefore, the number of reporting angles of related samples exceeds that of

the total numbers of the samples. After sorting, the final distribution of the 4 report angles of the 27 articles of the People's Daily is as follows.

Table 4 the Distribution of Core topics

No.	Core topics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Hong Kong's national security legislation is a legitimate and reasonable move	15	31,25%
2	opposing US interference in Hong Kong affairs	10	20,83%
3	opposing Taiwan independence, Hong Kong independence and other anti-China forces	12	25,00%
4	National Security Law helps Hong Kong restore stability.	11	22,92%
Total		48	100,00%

As can be seen from the above table, the degree of the frequency of distinction between topics is not very obvious. Among all the secondary core topics, the topic that Hong Kong's national security legislation is a legitimate and reasonable move accounts for the largest number, with 15 times, accounting for 31,25% of the total; the difference in frequency of the remaining topics is only one or two times, which is really close.

4.2.1.1 Hong Kong's national security law is legal and reasonable

People's Daily highlighted the legitimacy of Hong Kong's national security law legislation in many articles. In its articles, it attempts to demonstrate the necessity and rationality of Hong Kong's National Security Law from the following two perspectives.

First of all, the People's Daily pointed out that national security legislation is the central power of a country, and Hong Kong is a part of China, therefore China has the right to legislate on national security:

"In any country in the world, whether it is a unitary system or a federal system, national security legislation belongs to the national legislative power. The central government has the greatest and ultimate responsibility for the national security of all local administrative regions.

*This is the basic theory and principle of national sovereignty. It is also a common practice in all countries in the world. "*¹

*"In all countries in the world, national security belongs to the central authority. The central authority is not abstract, but specific, including legislative power, law enforcement power, judicial power, and administrative power."*²

Secondly, the People's Daily pointed out that since the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement started in 2019, Hong Kong's social violent conflicts have continued, and the economy has suffered tremendous damage. A law is urgently needed to stop the violence:

*"As the national security situation in Hong Kong is becoming increasingly severe and it is difficult to complete the relevant national security legislation on its own, the National People's Congress and its Standing Committee have established and improved the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's legal system and national security maintenance at the national level. The enforcement mechanism is both necessary and urgent, and has unquestionable legitimacy."*³

It can be seen that the People's Daily believes that the legitimacy of Hong Kong's national security law lies in the fact that the issue of turmoil in Hong Kong is China's internal affairs. China has reasons and the ability to solve internal affairs on its own. Moreover, the turmoil in Hong Kong has seriously affected the lives of Hong Kong people, and even it touches China's core interests. Therefore, China's promulgation of the Hong Kong National Security Law is reasonable and legal.

4.2.1.2 opposing US interference in China's internal affairs

A total of 8 articles commented that any country, external organization or individual has no right to interfere in China's internal affairs. Among them, articles criticizing and responding to the United States are the most. According to the People's Daily, the U.S. has imposed sanctions

¹ The "ballast stone" for the stability and long-term development of One Country, Two Systems, People's Daily, July 1st, 2020

² Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security, People's Daily, July 4th, 2020

³ The "ballast stone" for the stability and long-term development of One Country, Two Systems, People's Daily, July 1st, 2020

on China for no reason, and the U.S. adopts double standards on national security and human rights issues.

The double standards of the United States are first manifested in the fact that the United States pre-completed and rigorous national security laws in its own country, but criticized China's introduction of national security laws in Hong Kong, believing that it would harm the freedom of Hong Kong people:

*“The United States has enacted dozens of laws on national security issues, and members of the United States Congress must also comply with the requirements for allegiance to the United States Constitution. In history, more than 20 members of Congress have been disqualified due to violations of political allegiance.”*¹

Secondly, the People’s Daily refuted the U.S. attack on human rights issues in China, pointing out that there are more serious human rights problems in the U.S. The People's Daily believes that the government of the U.S. has not done enough to fight against the new coronavirus, which has seriously endangered the lives and health of American citizens. At the same time, there is serious racial discrimination in the U.S. The status of African Americans urgently needs improvement.

*“At present, there are more than 5 million confirmed cases of new coronary pneumonia in the United States, and more than 160,000 deaths. The right to life and health of the American people is being greatly threatened. The insensitive performance of some American politicians shocked the world.”*²

“U.S. police violent law enforcement led to the death of George Floyd. The 43rd meeting of the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution strongly condemning the continued racial discrimination and violence against Africans and people of African descent by U.S. law enforcement agencies. As the comment on the website of the US ‘Political News’ pointed out,

¹ Tell the US side: The Chinese people do not believe in evil and are not afraid of evil, People’s Daily, December 20th, 2020

² Human Rights Card highlights "American Double Standards", People’s Daily, August 12th, 2020

*when it comes to human rights issues, people are increasingly focusing on the United States as a 'villain' rather than a 'hero'."*¹

In this part, the People's Daily accused the United States of double standards towards China, believing that American politicians have grossly and unreasonably interfered in China's internal affairs for their own national interests. In the articles, the People's Daily warned American politicians that their conspiracy would not succeed.

4.2.1.3 opposing Taiwan independence, Hong Kong independence and other anti-China forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs

A total of 4 news reports discovered how the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) authorities and the "Taiwan independence" forces interfered with Hong Kong's legislative amendments and warned the Taiwan authorities not to interfere in Hong Kong's internal affairs. The articles accuse the Taiwan authorities of cooperating with the U.S.'s anti-China actions, using the new crown vaccine to criticize and attack the mainland, and criticizing China for arresting Hong Kong opposition leaders by the law and so on:

*"Recently, the Hong Kong police arrested anti-China chaos in Hong Kong in accordance with the law. The DPP authorities repeated their tricks and tried their best to slander and discredit the island in order to sell terror and incite populism on the island."*²

*"The DPP authorities and the Taiwan independence forces spare no effort to follow the United States' strategy of playing the Hong Kong card, and cooperate with the United States to interfere in Hong Kong affairs in every possible way..."*³

The People's Daily has severely criticized organizations and behaviours that split the country and endanger national security, and believes that with the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law, these behaviours will be effectively contained.

¹ Human Rights Card highlights "American Double Standards", People's Daily, August 12th, 2020

² All attempts to "independence" are doomed to fail, People's Daily, January 31th, 2021

³ Cut off the black hands of the DPP authorities who disrupted Hong Kong, July 19th, 2020

4.2.1.4 National Security Law helps Hong Kong restore stability.

At the same time, People's Daily also gave a prospect for Hong Kong's future, believing that under the blessing of the National Security Law, Hong Kong will gradually restore stability, develop its economy and become more prosperous:

*"We believe that under the condition of ensuring national security, Hong Kong will develop better and better, continue to write new chapters of economic prosperity and development of citizens' happy lives, and continue to make a unique and important contribution to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Contribution."*¹

*"Looking forward to the future, we believe that under the protection of national security legislation, Hong Kong can gradually improve and improve the special administrative region system, and write a new chapter in economic prosperity and the citizens' happy life."*²

The reason why People's Daily can reach this conclusion is related to the above. The People's Daily believes that with the implementation and deepening of the National Security Law, Hong Kong's legal loopholes will be repaired, and the space for anti-China chaos in Hong Kong will be greatly reduced. Also, severe punishment measures will make terrorists need to consider repeatedly before carrying out subversion and terrorist activities. With the disappearance of these violent activities on the streets, Hong Kong will usher in a better and more prosperous tomorrow.

4.2.2 Keywords

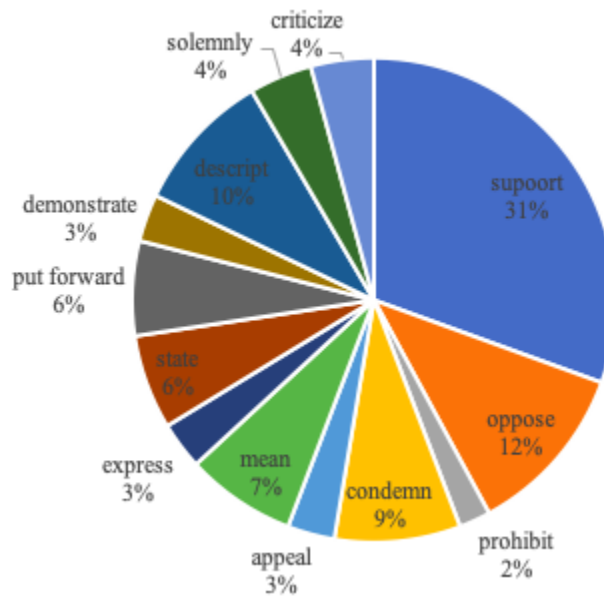
This part adopts the word frequency analysis method, uses the Chinese word frequency analysis software WIS word cloud, and quantifies the core content and the frequency of the keywords in the news samples. In this part, I arrange the full text of 27 related articles of People's Daily according to the publication date, import the generated text into the WIS word cloud, use the tool to derive high-frequency words, after the manual screening, delete some non-specific pronouns, prepositions, etc., get find out the top 100 vocabularies in terms of usage frequency,

¹ Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems", People's Daily, May 29th, 2020

² Only with stability and unity can we set off again, People's Daily, June 7th, 2020

4.2.2.2 Different ways of speaking

Table 6 Frequency of Different Expressions of Speaking



As shown in the figure, People's Daily adopts a variety of "speaking" methods. When reporting core themes, it expresses the central government's attitude towards Hong Kong's National Security Law, when reporting Hong Kong citizens' support for the National Security Law, and foreign society's affirmation of the National Security Law. At the time, the People's Daily adopted a more positive "speaking" method, such as "support (支持)", "appeal (呼吁)", and objectively stated "speaking" methods, such as "state (说明)", "put forward (提出)", "mean (表达)", "Express (表达)" and so on. In the face of foreign opposition forces, Hong Kong chaos in Hong Kong, and US anti-China politicians, the people mainly use more hard-line "speaking" methods, such as "condemn (谴责)", "oppose (反对)", "serious" and "prohibit (禁止)", "demonstrate (示威)", etc.

4.2.3 Nationalism in core topic

Zeng Jie (2010) pointed out that in Tibet-related reports, "the sense of national belonging is sometimes equated with 'Tibet is part of our territory'." The sensitivity to sovereignty is also reflected in the People's Daily report on Hong Kong's National Security Law. Due to the

particularity of Hong Kong's status and problems, the People's Daily News commentaries undertook the mission of anti-separatism. From the above analysis, we can see that the People's Daily has exposed and criticized the conspiracy of anti-China separatist forces and Western hostile forces to seek "Hong Kong independence". Any attempt to split China is intolerable.

Since the anti-amendment law turmoil, the stability of Hong Kong society has been greatly disturbed. After the introduction of the Hong Kong National Security Law, the People's Daily published relevant comments, conducted arguments from various angles and different aspects, refuted criticisms from Western countries, and strengthened the guidance of domestic public opinion, all of which invisibly deepened readers' awareness of national concepts.

The People's Daily's general emphasis and in-depth dissemination of China's sovereignty over Hong Kong have deepened community members' self-awareness of national sovereignty, and truly felt their mastery and recognition of national sovereignty, and further promoted the construction of a solid political identity foundation for the nation-state.

In addition, the People's Daily has also implanted various allegations about China into the structure of the news. News headlines prioritize China's national perspective and characteristics through various methods, arousing readers' perceptions of "us". The methods even include directly omitting the country subject. For example, in the title, *Resolutely oppose external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs*, there is no clear subject. But it is easy to understand that the actor hidden here is (we) China, and the object of execution and opposition is external forces, or the United States. Therefore, the People's Daily has clearly distinguished "us" from "them" from the title, and the two countries of China and the United States have also become the framework for explaining their respective actions.

4.3 Reasoning device and Nationalist narrative

4.3.1 Reasoning device

Reasoning devices are elements that remind people how to deal with a certain issue, including definitions, attributions, consequences or impacts of events, measures, responsibilities and so on (Gamson, 1975). That is to say, the reasoning device is a structure that prompts the reader "why happened" and "how to solve this problem". In the following, I will discuss the reasoning

device adopted by People's Daily in relevant reports on the Hong Kong National Security Law through the definition, attribution and influence of major events.

4.3.1.1 Define: A necessary guarantee for the stability of the one country, two systems political system

Through selection, the media highlights the social reality and generates news reports. The events show different states under different reports and are affected by the integration of different media news frameworks. As the mainstream media in Mainland China, the People's Daily has positioned Hong Kong's National Security Law as a "legal support for safeguarding national security" and is a necessary guarantee for the stability of the one country, two systems political system:

*"The central government chose to authorize the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to formulate relevant laws to safeguard Hong Kong's national security through the National People's Congress, to safeguard the bottom line of the principle of 'one country, two systems' and national security, which fully demonstrated the belief and pursuit of governing the country in accordance with the constitution and governing Hong Kong according to law, and demonstrated its deeds the mind and responsibility of the most staunch defender of one country, two systems reflects the high level of trust in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and full respect for the one country, two systems."*¹

To demonstrate the support of Hong Kong and other countries for Hong Kong National Security Law, the People's Daily quoted Hong Kong youth representatives and other countries as speaking at the UN Security Council:

"A few days ago, more than 70 countries have spoken at the UN Human Rights Council in support of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China's national security legislation and opposed interference in China's internal affairs under the guise of 'human rights.' 'We cannot see Hong Kong being taken away by violence again', 'please keep the black hands of the anti-China forces away from our homeland.' The voice of Hong Kong residents

¹ Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security, People's Daily, July 4th, 2020

and the voice of justice in the international community are a solemn condemnation of the wrong actions of the United States.”¹

4.3.1.2 Attributions: Fill the legal vacancies and protect national security

In the articles, the People's Daily pointed out that China implemented the Hong Kong National Security Law for several reasons.

The first is historical reasons. Since the return of Hong Kong, the legislation related to Article 23 of the Basic Law has not been completed. As a result, Hong Kong has a blank legal system and lack of enforcement mechanisms in terms of safeguarding national security, which lead to the weakness of Hong Kong is very weak in maintaining national security:

“The various activities endangering national security in Hong Kong have intensified. An important reason is that Hong Kong has obvious legal loopholes and a lack of enforcement mechanisms in maintaining national security. The local legislation of Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law has not been completed for a long time, and some people with ulterior motives have even been unable to complete the local legislation. Severe stigmatization and demonization have caused the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to be in a state of undefence that is rare in the world in maintaining national security.”²

“Since the return of Hong Kong, it has been "undefended" in safeguarding national security. The legal system is blank and the enforcement mechanism is lacking. There is no single soldier in the SAR government's law enforcement agencies dedicated to safeguarding national security. Article 23 of the Basic Law has yet to be completed.”³

Second, since the turmoil in Hong Kong's legislative amendments, the national security situation facing Hong Kong has become increasingly severe, posing a serious threat to China's national sovereignty, security, and development interests.

“Since the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement occurred last year, the national security situation facing Hong Kong has become increasingly severe, posing a serious

¹ Crude intervention in Hong Kong affairs is doomed to failure, People's Daily, July 16th, 2020

² Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems", People's Daily, May 29th, 2020

³ Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security, People's Daily, July 4th, 2020

threat to China's national sovereignty, security, and development interests, and causing serious harm to the rule of law and social order in Hong Kong.”¹

“...the ‘Hong Kong Independence’ organization and local radical separatist forces have become increasingly rampant, violent terrorist activities have continued to escalate, and external forces have deeply intervened in Hong Kong affairs, seriously challenging the bottom line of the ‘one country, two systems’ principle and seriously undermining the rule of law. Serious harm to national sovereignty, security, and development interests must be prevented, stopped, and punished in accordance with the law by taking effective measures.”²

4.3.1.3 Influences: Life returns to peace

The People's Daily has a very positive attitude towards Hong Kong's National Security Law. It mainly discussed the influence of Hong Kong's National Security Law from two aspects.

First, the unsafe factors that endanger Hong Kong's stability will be brought under control. With the implementation of the National Security Law, the crimes and penalties that endanger China's national security have been clearly stipulated, and various acts of chaos in Hong Kong will be effectively controlled.

“We believe that with the implementation of the Law on the Maintenance of National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the ‘political virus’ and the biggest hidden dangers affecting the rule of law in Hong Kong will be effectively eradicated.”³

Secondly, the society will return to stability, the people will live and work in peace and contentment, the economy will continue to develop, and Hong Kong will become increasingly prosperous.

“With the implementation of Hong Kong's National Security Law, Hong Kong's society has restored stability, citizens' rights and freedoms have been more protected, and the business

¹ Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security, People's Daily, July 4th, 2020

² Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems", People's Daily, May 29th, 2020

³ Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security, People's Daily, July 4th, 2020

environment has continued to improve. The central government's support for Hong Kong has increased. Hong Kong has become more prosperous."¹

*"We believe that under the circumstance that national security is effectively guaranteed, Hong Kong will definitely develop better and better, continue to write new chapters of economic prosperity and development of citizens' happy lives, and continue to make unique and important contributions to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."*²

4.3.2 Nationalist narrative

4.3.2.1 Emphasize the ownership of Hong Kong and safeguard national unity

The rise of modern Chinese national consciousness has a specific historical context. Luo Zhitian (1998: 12) said that Chinese nationalism "if there are no major internal and external troubles, it will probably remain at the latent level." The "internal and external troubles" in this sentence points out the conditions for the formation of Chinese nationalism and also the motivation for the Chinese people to seek to establish a united nation-state.

People's Daily has repeatedly emphasized China's sovereignty over Hong Kong in its commentary articles and clearly defined Hong Kong's ownership. The sentence "Hong Kong is the Hong Kong of China " appeared three times in different articles.

"Hong Kong is the Hong Kong of China and the Hong Kong of 1.4 billion Chinese people, including 7.5 million Hong Kong compatriots."

*"Hong Kong is the Hong Kong of China. No one cherishes and loves Hong Kong more than the central government. No one cares more about the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and the welfare of Hong Kong residents than the central government. No one sincerely implements the One Country, Two Systems policy and the Basic Law."*³

¹ There will no longer be a safe haven for anti-China chaos in Hong Kong, People's Daily, July 5th, 2020

² Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems", People's Daily, May 29th, 2020

³ Resolutely oppose external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People's Daily, May 30th, 2020

“Hong Kong is the Hong Kong of China. Hong Kong affairs are purely China's internal affairs, and the United States has no right to interfere.”¹

At the same time, the articles also reflect China's strong aversion to the division of the country. The People's Daily has repeatedly emphasized that independence is unpopular and any attempt at independence will end in failure.

“These separatist acts of seeking ‘independence’ seriously damage the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation and the vital interests of compatriots on both sides of the strait. They run counter to the well-being of Taiwan compatriots and are doomed to fail in the face of national justice and historical trends.”²

“Anti-Hong Kong independence and anti-crime violence is the biggest consensus of Hong Kong society at present, and it is also the common interest of all Chinese people, including Hong Kong compatriots.”³

It can be seen that in the comments of the "People's Daily", opposing secession and safeguarding the unity of the motherland is an important propaganda content. By emphasizing China's sovereignty over Hong Kong, the People's Daily emphasized the concept and perception of "we", and at the same time established an unacceptable sense of independence and division in the minds of readers.

4.3.2.2 Humiliating history and national rejuvenation

As a heavy victim of modern history—war failures, the opening of ports, cessation of land indemnities, invasions, etc., "China's modern nation-state consciousness was promoted under the historical conditions of resisting the aggression of foreign powers." (Liu He, 2007: 2)

In People's Daily commentary on Hong Kong's National Security Law, China's tragic modern history has also been mentioned many times. The colonial history of Hong Kong being taken over by Britain and the modern history of being invaded by the West has served as a painful

¹ Tell the US side: The Chinese people do not believe in evil and are not afraid of evil, People's Daily, December 10th, 2020

² All attempts to "independence" are doomed to fail, People's Daily, January 31st, 2021

³ Punishing "Hong Kong Independence" and "Black Violence" in accordance with the law is the aspiration of the people, People's Daily, June 1st, 2020

historical memory to strengthen the Chinese recognition and to further recognize the people's homeland feelings:

*"On July 1, 1997, a heavy rain washed away Hong Kong's centuries of humiliation."*¹

*"In modern times, the Chinese people have gone through too many tribulations and sacrifices. They have unforgettable memories of the tragic history of poverty, weakness and fragmentation, and tirelessly for the bright prospects of national rejuvenation and national reunification. pursue. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, we swore boldly: 'Imperialism can conquer a country and a nation by setting up a few cannons in the East. The history is gone forever!'"*²

*"Gone are the times when the Chinese looked at people's faces and listened to them. No intimidation and sanctions can shake Hong Kong's international economic status, nor can it frighten the Chinese people who have risen from the state to the strong."*³

Corresponding to China's humiliating history is the desire for the great national rejuvenation. The People's Daily pointed out that the Chinese nation has become rich and powerful and will no longer be humiliated by foreign countries and that with the implementation of the National Security Law, Hong Kong will also join the cause of national rejuvenation.

*"In the new era of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, if there are people who think that through intimidation and threats, they can force China to make concessions on core interests such as sovereignty and security, it can only be wishful thinking and daydreaming!"*⁴

"We believe that under the condition of ensuring national security, Hong Kong will develop better and better, continue to write new chapters of economic prosperity and

¹ Punishing "Hong Kong Independence" and "Black Violence" in accordance with the law is the aspiration of the people, People's Daily, June 1st, 2020

² Resolutely oppose external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People's Daily, May 30th, 2020

³ A legal sword to restrain external forces from interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People's Daily, July 5th, 2020

⁴ Resolutely oppose external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People's Daily, May 30th, 2020

development and citizens' happy lives, and continue to make a unique and important contribution to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. ”¹

“The sanctions wielded by the U.S. side cannot frighten Hong Kong, let alone bring down China. No one, any so-called sanctions, can stop Hong Kong from integrating into the overall situation of national development and the resolute pace of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. ”²

In the People's Daily narrative, the Chinese nation that originated in ancient times should be consistent and continuous. Since the second half of the 19th century, Hong Kong has been tragically occupied by the British and has become a heartbreaking pain for the entire country. Until the return of Hong Kong in 1997, this humiliating history came to an end. These texts and descriptions place Hong Kong's history in the common future community of the Chinese nation. It is precise because Hong Kong compatriots have collectively experienced the shame of the Chinese nation that Hong Kong should join the pursuit of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

4.4 Text Analysis

In the text, the rhetoric and style composed of words, words, etc. belong to the microstructure of news reports. Language is the reflection of the external world. Through the use of language, people connect cognitive experience with external reality. Van Dijk (1988) believes that the usage of sentences and the style of the text can show the evaluation of events and characters. Roger Fowler (1991) pointed out that different combinations of words and fragments will lead to different worldviews or frameworks of writers. Language skills have the function of cognition, and thus can provide organized reproduction. The use of sentences and syntactic structure is not random, but a social activity that creates reality.

¹ Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems", People's Daily, May 29th, 2020

² Sanctions on Hong Kong are doomed to be in vain, People's Daily, May 31st, 2020

4.4.1 Metaphor analysis

Metaphor, as an abstraction of people’s common-sense cognition of external things, is not only a rhetoric of speech, but also a stable way of thinking (Gan Laihao, 2011). Metaphor reconstructs people’s direct experience by organizing knowledge in the field of common-sense, and constructing Social interaction and social identity with discourse as the medium (Gan Laihao, 2011). Critical discourse analysis believes that metaphor is the most persuasive tool in media discourse to quietly convey values, stereotypes and influence public opinion. Because of the abstractness and powerful persuasiveness of metaphor, it is often used in political discourse with rich but vague expressions, and political rhetoric is used to simplify information interpretation concepts and convey opinions.

Politicians often use metaphors in speeches to express abstract political terms, so as to conceal certain intentions and better win the trust of the audience. A complete metaphorical rhetoric includes a source domain and a target domain. Each metaphor is the result of the mapping and correspondence between the source domain and the target domain, and its meaning is through the literal interpretation of the source domain and the target domain (Lakoff, 1993). The tension between the metaphorical interpretations is constructed. In this section, I will analyse the use of metaphors involved in the People’s Daily’s commentaries on Hong Kong National Security Law.

4.4.1.1 Historical metaphor

Table 7 Historical metaphors

	Event	Meaning
the Source Domain	McCarthy maliciously slandered and wantonly persecuted people who appear to be the Communist Party and democratic progressives	Political persecution of dissidents
the Target Domain	U.S. politicians accuse China of Hong Kong's national security law	U.S. anti-China politicians are full of prejudice and accusations against China

“They (American anti-China politicians) did so in order to revive the specter of "McCarthyism", to destroy the ties between China and the United States, to instigate the opposition between the two peoples, and to damage the foundation of mutual trust between the two countries, thus dragging China and the United States into the conflicts and conflicts between major powers. The trap of confrontation¹.

McCarthyism refers to the typical representatives of the anti-communist and extreme right in the United States caused by U.S. Senator McCarthy between 1950 and 1954. It maliciously slanders and wilfully persecutes people who are suspected of the Communist Party and democratic progress, and even all people with dissident political opinions. Here, the People's Daily cited McCarthyism to indicate that the accusations made by American politicians towards China on the Hong Kong issue are unfair and irresponsible, and are a means of suppressing China.

Table 8 Historical metaphors

	Event	Meaning
the Source Domain	The colour revolution took place in the former Soviet Union and other places	Secretly funded by Western countries, regime change took place in these countries
the Target Domain	The Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement occurred in Hong Kong	Western countries aim at China, trying to change China's political system starting from Hong Kong

“... (anti-China forces) attempt to kidnap the future of Hong Kong, destroy "one country, two systems", turn Hong Kong into an anti-China "bridgehead", "base camp" of riots, and export of "colour revolutions"²

¹ China's determination to defend its national interests is unwavering, People's Daily, January 21th, 2021

² A legal sword to restrain external forces from interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People's Daily, July 5th, 2020

The colour revolution refers to a peaceful and non-violent regime change movement that took place in the former Soviet Union and the Middle East and North Africa in the early part of the 21st century, which were named after colours.

For China, the colour revolution is a terrorist activity that is instigated, funded, and supported by Western countries, led by the United States, to subvert the regime and threaten national security. Therefore, China believes that the turmoil in Hong Kong is supported by anti-China forces at home and abroad, with the intention of subverting Hong Kong and even China's political system. And the protests in Hong Kong are seen as a hotbed of the colour revolutions which will pose a huge threat to the stability of its regime.

4.4.1.2 War metaphor

“Hong Kong’s National Security Law has built a solid barrier to safeguard national security, and has built the bottom line of ‘One Country, Two Systems’, making it an insurmountable ‘red line’ and an intangible ‘fire line’”¹.

Fire line (火线) refers to the frontier zone that the two sides of the battle can reach by confrontation and firepower. In this sentence, the People’s Daily used the line of fire to illustrate the key role of Hong Kong’s national security law in China’s adherence to one country, two systems. The line of fire is extremely difficult to traverse as a frontier zone in war. Through this metaphor, Hong Kong’s national security law has also become a solid protection for China’s national security, making it difficult for criminals who wish to endanger national security to move forward.

¹ There will no longer be a safe haven for anti-China chaos in Hong Kong, People’s Daily, July 5th, 2020

“... (anti-China forces) attempt to kidnap the future of Hong Kong, destroy ‘one country, two systems’, turn Hong Kong into an anti-China ‘bridgehead’, ‘base camp’ of riots, and export of ‘colour revolutions’”¹.

In Chinese, bridgehead (桥头堡) means a bunker or stronghold built near the bridgehead or ferry to guard and protect important bridges and ferry crossings, and it can also refer to an offensive stronghold. The base camp (大本营) refers to the highest command of the army during the war or the base area for certain activities.

In this example sentence, the People’s Daily pointed out that anti-China forces regard Hong Kong as a bridgehead and stronghold, that is, they regard Hong Kong as a starting point against China. At the same time, the bridgehead and base camp have a very important position in the war, which also hints at the important position of Hong Kong in the struggle between China and the anti-China forces in the West.

4.4.1.3 Other metaphor

“For those very few people who endanger national security, this law is a hanging sharp sword; for the vast majority of Hong Kong residents, including foreigners in Hong Kong, this law is the ‘Patron Saint’ that precisely protects their rights, freedom and peaceful life.”²

In this sentence, the People’s Daily used the words “hanging sharp sword (高悬的利剑)” and “guardian deity (守护神)” to compare the Hong Kong National Security Law, pointing out that to lawbreakers, the Hong Kong National Security Law is like a sword which makes they frightened. For Hong Kong residents, the laws of Hong Kong's national security have become their Patron saint to protect them safety.

¹ A legal sword to restrain external forces from interfering in Hong Kong affairs, People’s Daily, July 5th, 2020

² Interference in internal affairs must never succeed, People’s Daily, July 6th, 2020

It can also be seen from here that People's Daily believes that Hong Kong's national security law has two functions: first, it can shock criminals, and second, it plays a role in protecting people's lives and property.

“On the one hand, the United States continues to build a ‘bronze and iron wall’ to maintain its national security, while on the other hand, it tries to ‘cut holes’ in the national security of other countries.”¹

In Chinese, the “bronze and iron wall (铜墙铁壁)” means that something's defence is very strong and indestructible, and here, The People's Daily describes national security as a wall. The United States has constructed the wall of national security strictly, but tried to make holes in the walls of other countries. Through this metaphor, the People's Daily hints at the double standard of the United States, that is, the U.S. is strict in its own country's security protection, but it tries to undermine China's national security laws.

“Hong Kong's long-term “undefended” state in terms of national security has been changed, and a breakwater is being built to ensure Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability.”²

Breakwater (防波堤) protects against wave intrusion and forms a hydraulic structure needed to shelter the waters. In this sentence, People's Daily used the breakwater to indicate that Hong Kong's national security law can help Hong Kong resist external interference and ensure Hong Kong's prosperity.

“No one should underestimate the central government's determination to safeguard Hong Kong's national security. Don't underestimate the rigid constraints imposed by the Hong Kong National Security Law after the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law. There will no longer be a safe haven for anti-China actions against Hong Kong.”³

¹ Tell the US side: The Chinese people do not believe in evil and are not afraid of evil, People's Daily, December 20th, 2020

² Hong Kong's long-term prosperous and stable "breakwater", People's Daily, July 2nd, 2020

³ There will no longer be a safe haven for anti-China chaos in Hong Kong, People's Daily, July 5th, 2020

A safe haven is a port without loading and unloading equipment, whose only purpose is to protect the ship during a storm, it also refers to a place where danger can be avoided. In this example, the People's Daily used a safe haven to describe Hong Kong's laws when the National Security Law was not passed, that is because Hong Kong's laws did not restrict it specifically, anti-China forces were able to make troubles in Hong Kong. With the passage and entry into force of the Hong Kong National Security Law, these things will no longer happen again.

4.5 Affecting Factors of the News Framing of People's Daily

The news framework gives communication scholars the possibility to explore the factors affecting news selection and production. Zang Guoren (1999) pointed out that at least the following five factors will have an impact on a certain event in a journalist's framework, including social habits and values, organizational pressures and restrictions, interest groups, news norms, and journalists' ideology or political orientation. Usually, in the frame research, the media frame is regarded as an independent variable, the audience frame is regarded as the dependent variable, and scholars try to find out how the media frame influence the audience frame.

Of course, the influencing factors of a news report are complex and difficult to summarize. In this project, I believe that the national interests and the media attributes are the main influencing factors of the People's Daily's reports on Hong Kong's National Security Law.

4.5.1 National Interests

Among the factors that affect international political news, national interests and international politics are the most direct and powerful factors, and they are also unique factors that affect international political news. A senior editor engaged in TV international news in China once clearly pointed out that "any news has its own inclination. For this reason, the editor of China TV International News must take on the important task of gatekeeper." The standard for the gate is "China's country interests and national interests (Zhang Sen, 2006: 23)." The People's Daily report on Hong Kong's National Security Law was also affected by this aspect.

When it comes to national interests, news reports will be more biased towards the country and serve the interests of the country or the nation. When national interests are affected, its nationalism tendencies will become more obvious and prominent. Reports and comments on

the Hong Kong are related to the evaluation of a series of Chinese policies after Hong Kong's return, and to China's national sovereignty. Therefore, the People's Daily report on the Hong Kong National Security Laws will definitely bring the national interests first and therefore the nationalist tendencies is inevitable.

The People's Daily commentary and report on Hong Kong's National Security Law is based on the standpoint of safeguarding China's interests, highlighting China's sovereignty over Hong Kong, criticising the chaos leading by the protests and the infringements of the U.S. on China's internal affairs. In related news, a series of terms such as "unreasonable" and "infringement" have obvious tendencies. This shows that when it comes to national sovereignty interests, the news media of each country will stand on the side of its own national interests. People's Daily is not the exception. Safeguarding national sovereignty and interests has also become an important factor to be considered in the reporting process of news.

The incident of the Hong Kong National Security Law was originally a highly political news, and it would inevitably be affected by national politics and national interests. The People's Daily report is also based on China's interests and is consistent with the Chinese government. Safeguarding national interests is an important political principle reported by the People's Daily.

4.5.2 Media Attributes

People's Daily is the best representative of China's official voice. It has long been widely concerned as a tool for the party's ideological and policy propaganda. Because of this tradition, the newspaper's reports have always been in line with Marxist news concepts. The media attribute of People's Daily has always put propaganda before the news.

However, the reform of China's news system has been going on for more than 30 years. Under the background of market-oriented media competition, in order to meet the needs of social development, a single propaganda function is completely insufficient. In the context of the market, the development of our party newspapers is controlled by the triple logic of propaganda, market and news. But these three logics are often not satisfied at the same time. When conflicts occur, the propaganda logic is often ranked ahead of the news logic. As mentioned earlier, the People's Daily has a party and government mouthpiece attribute. Its propaganda logic has a history of origin, and its propaganda calibre and main purpose are more strictly followed.

Due to a high degree of political sensitivity, the People's Daily has always followed the will of the party and the country, insisting on propaganda and guidance of major policies and correct public opinion. Since the return of Hong Kong, for many years, China has been unremittingly using the national discourse led by the high-rise building to strengthen its political significance to the readers over and over again, and the internal text censorship is highly stringent to maintain a high degree of uniformity of speech, and for other newspapers or public opinion, propaganda agencies provide reference and vane.

Therefore, when studying the report text of the Hong Kong National Security Laws, it is common to find a lot of national discourse and praise for the Hong Kong National Security Laws. Whether it is the choice of report content, the selection of information sources, or the consideration of writing methods, the People's Daily has been coordinated and carefully planned and designed when reporting. People's Daily maintain the purpose of grasping the direction of public opinion, paying attention to politics, promoting harmony, and creating a positive attitude in the framework.

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the framing theory, this project analyses the commentaries of the People's Daily on Hong Kong's national security law, starting from the macro, medium, and micro of the framework structure, combining the narrative of imagined communities, to gain insights into People's Daily news framing strategy on this incident.

First, in the macrostructures of the news framework, that is, the topic setting of the news framework, this study found that the People's Daily's report on Hong Kong's national security law emphasized the legitimacy and rationality of the national security law, protested against the US's opposition and sensations to the incident, accused "Hong Kong independence" and "Taiwan independence" of attempting to split the country, and also has a good expectation for Hong Kong's future. In addition, through the repeated emphasis on Hong Kong's sovereignty and hints in news headlines, the People's Daily has strengthened readers' sense of belonging and identification with the country.

Secondly, in the medium structure of the news framework, this project uses reasoning devices to sort out the narrative structure of the report and finds that the People's Daily believes that Hong Kong's national security law is a necessary measure to ensure the smooth operation of One Country, Two Systems, which has filled the legal loopholes in national security since the return of Hong Kong. When anti-China forces such as Hong Kong independence are increasingly rampant, the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law is even more necessary. People's Daily believes that with the introduction of the Hong Kong National Security Law, any separatist and violent actions will be strictly restricted, Hong Kong society will return to calm, and social and economic development will be better. At the same time, the People's Daily included the future of Hong Kong into the revival of the Chinese nation through the narrative of humiliating history.

Thirdly, this project analyses the microstructure of the news frame, that is, the composition and rhetoric of words and sentences to understand the construction of the frame at the micro-level. This project found that People's Daily used a variety of historical metaphors, war metaphors, and so on to criticize the US's double standards and its intervention in Hong Kong issues, and satirize Hong Kong independence and other anti-China forces.

Finally, this project explores the reasons for the formation of the aforementioned news reporting framework from the perspectives of national interests and media attributes. The Hong Kong issue concerns China's core national interests, so it is impossible for China to change the basic position of news reports. What's more, the party media nature of the People's Daily has further strengthened its tendency to reports on this issue and determined its position and attitude in news reviews.

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Appendix: List of Commentaries

Date	Title	Layout
2020.5.29	Build a safe dam for "One Country, Two Systems"	4
2020.5.30	Resolutely oppose external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs	4
2020.5.31	There is no "double standard" in maintaining national security	1
2020.5.31	Sanctions on Hong Kong are doomed to be in vain	3
2020.6.1	Punishing "Hong Kong Independence" and "Black Violence" in accordance with the law is the aspiration of the people	1
2020.6.2	Punish addiction, domineering	3
2020.6.7	Only with stability and unity can we set off again	6
2020.6.21	Cut off the black hand, save the child	6
2020.7.1	The "ballast stone" for the stability and long-term development of One Country, Two Systems	3
2020.7.2	Hong Kong's long-term prosperous and stable "breakwater"	1
2020.7.2	U.S. political suppression deviates from the purpose of human rights	3
2020.7.3	A solid guarantee for the rights and freedom of Hong Kong residents	1
2020.7.4	Legal support for Hong Kong to maintain national security	1
2020.7.5	A legal sword to restrain external forces from interfering in Hong Kong affairs	1
2020.7.5	There will no longer be a safe haven for anti-China chaos in Hong Kong	6
2020.7.6	Interference in internal affairs must never succeed	3
2020.7.16	Crude intervention in Hong Kong affairs is doomed to failure	3
2020.7.19	Cut off the black hands of the DPP authorities who disrupted Hong Kong	6
2020.8.12	Constitutional, legal and reasonable important decision	1
2020.8.12	Human Rights Card highlights "American Double Standards"	3