

Pragmatic Norms for Hosts of Legal Popularization Programs: A Comparative Analysis of Chinese and British Rule-of-Law Radio Programs

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Abstract: Legal radio serves as a core medium for legal popularization and public rule-of-law communication. The standardization, accuracy and neutrality of hosts' pragmatic expression directly shape the communication effectiveness of legal information and the quality of public rule-of-law cognition construction. Currently, legal popularization broadcasts in China suffer from pragmatic deviations including dramatized narratives, colloquial terminology and emotional expressions, and have yet to form a standardized pragmatic system adapted to the attributes of rule-of-law communication. Drawing on theories of pragmatics, media discourse ethics and cross-cultural communication, this paper adopts comparative case study and discourse analysis. Taking CCTV rule-of-law radio programs and BBC rule-of-law special radio programs as research samples, it compares pragmatic differences between Chinese and British legal popularization programme hosts regarding narrative logic, terminology conversion, prosodic voice and value expression. This study further explores deep-seated causes stemming from institutional positioning, media functions and public legal literacy, and identifies core pragmatic dilemmas confronting domestic legal popularization broadcasting. Drawing on communication practices in China and the United Kingdom, this study constructs pragmatic expression norms for legal popularization broadcasting from four dimensions: terminology conversion systems, narrative discourse logic, broadcasting voice norms and professional training mechanisms. Balancing the professionalism of rule-of-law communication and the accessibility of mass communication, it offers theoretical support and practical pathways for high-quality rule-of-law communication and standardized broadcasting practice in the new era.

Keywords: Legal Popularization Broadcasting; Host Pragmatic Expression; Media Ethics; Sino-British Comparative Study; Rule-of-Law Communication

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of comprehensive law-based governance and normalized national legal popularization, rule-of-law radio acts as a core carrier for authoritative public legal outreach.

Driven by media convergence and industrial competition, mainstream domestic legal publicity broadcasts adopt story-telling and emotion-oriented narrative approaches to fit the aesthetic and receptive habits of general audiences. This operational orientation triggers a range of pragmatic problems in actual program production and presentation. Typical issues include over-dramatic narration, distorted legal expressions from improper term simplification, and biased subjective tone in hosting. These non-standard linguistic behaviors blur the professional boundaries of legal communication and prevent the public from forming objective legal cognition.

Current academic studies mainly focus on the overall communication strategies and operational models of legal popularization programs. Few studies conduct micro-level comparative analysis on the pragmatic norms of legal broadcasting. This leaves an obvious research gap in this academic field.

Grounding on pragmatics, media discourse ethics and cross-cultural communication theories, this paper adopts case comparison and discourse analysis to explore pragmatic differences between Chinese and British legal broadcasting. It summarizes the core pragmatic dilemmas of domestic legal programs and constructs a localized pragmatic standard system suitable for China's media environment. The research results can provide practical references for improving legal broadcast quality and enhancing the overall effect of national legal popularization work.

2. The Theoretical Foundations and Evaluation Dimensions of Pragmatic Expression in Legal Popularization Broadcasting

2.1. The Dual Communication Attributes of Legal Popularization Broadcasting

Unlike traditional radio and television programs, legal publicity broadcasting possesses dual inherent attributes, namely judicial authority and mass communication characteristics. The dynamic balance between the two attributes serves as the fundamental prerequisite for the standardization of hosts' pragmatic expression and constitutes the essential feature that differentiates rule-of-law broadcasting from other broadcasting categories.

From the perspective of its intrinsic judicial attributes, legal popularization broadcasting undertakes public functions including judicial publicity, rule-of-law education and legal rule dissemination. Strictly grounded in national legal provisions, judicial procedures and jurisprudential logic. The dialectical unity of the dual attributes determines that pragmatic expression in legal popularization broadcasting must set clear and standardized boundaries between legal rigor and communicative accessibility. Essentially, various pragmatic deviations in domestic legal popularization broadcasting are communicative alienation caused by the imbalance of its dual communication attributes.

2.2. Core Theoretical Foundations

Pragmatics serves as the core theoretical basis for this research. It investigates how discourse adapts to specific contexts, and sets reasonable boundaries and expressive principles for simplifying specialized content for public audiences^[1]. The pragmatic transformation in legal-popularization broadcasting essentially reworks rigid legal texts to fit mass-media scenarios. Pragmatic requirements for accuracy, moderation and appropriateness provide theoretical support for term adjustment, narrative building and vocal control.

Pragmatic research examines how discourse generates meaning in given communication settings, and draws a line between literal meaning and context-driven implied meaning. Legal provisions are rigid and logically tight, with fixed standard interpretations. Broadcasting, by contrast, is real-time oral communication facing audiences with diverse knowledge backgrounds. Hosts need to convert formal written legal texts into easy-to-understand spoken language. This work involves semantic screening, together with proper addition and simplification of information. Achieving a good balance between professionalism and popular appeal represents the central pragmatic contradiction in legal broadcasting research. Unlike regular radio-television programs, legal popularization broadcasting faces extra normative constraints, so its linguistic and pragmatic choices differ greatly from those in entertainment or ordinary news output.

Media discourse ethics requires public media discourse to follow objectivity, neutrality and value rationality^[2]. It establishes ethical baselines for rule-of-law broadcasts and supports the analysis of discourse irregularities such as emotional and overly dramatic presentation. Rather than static rules, media discourse ethics forms a dynamic constraint system shaped by real-world media practice. General news mainly stresses factual accuracy and balanced reporting. Legal-popularization broadcasting adds further requirements for legal strictness. Hosts have clear limits for personal emotional output: empathetic storytelling cannot twist case facts or mislead audiences over legal responsibilities. This theory tells apart proper empathy from excessive emotional sensationalism, supplying value standards for evaluating strengths and flaws in legal-popularization broadcasts.

Cross-cultural communication theory states that differences in media systems, rule-of-law cultures and public literacy across countries create varied media discourse patterns^[3]. Pragmatic differences between Chinese and British legal-popularization broadcasts do not stem from individual hosts' personal styles. They come from gaps in media positioning, communication ideas and rule-of-law environments between the two countries, which lays solid theoretical support for the comparative work and cause-effect analysis in this paper.

2.3. An Evaluation System and Research Value of Pragmatic Expressions in Legal Popularization Broadcasting

Building on the above-mentioned theoretical foundations and communication characteristics, this study constructs a pragmatic evaluation framework tailored for legal-popularization broadcasting. The framework includes two core dimensions: external practical performance and internal value

orientation^[4].

External indicators cover accurate term conversion, coherent narrative structure, steady vocal delivery and objective language use. These external indicators evaluate legal broadcast content from the dimensions of public acceptance and professional standardization. Internal indicators involve communication neutrality, positive value guidance and normative ethics, which measure the credibility and educational significance of rule-of-law communication.

Standardizing pragmatic expression in legal popularization broadcasting is of great theoretical and practical value. In academic terms, this study combines pragmatic theories and cross-cultural perspectives to analyze broadcast discourse, supplementing and improving interdisciplinary research in the field of legal media communication^[5]. In practical application, formulated pragmatic norms can correct prevalent non-standard behaviors in the broadcasting industry. Such norms balance professional rigor and public communication, guarantee the accurate dissemination of legal knowledge, and help the public establish rational legal awareness.

A large share of existing legal-popularization research looks at broad topics, for instance communication strategies and how short-video accounts run their content. Far less work dives into concrete practical details. Few researchers examine real-world program language and how legal content gets reworked for spoken broadcast use. Setting down practical, usable evaluation rules can fill gaps found within current applied-research work.

This set of evaluation tools also works across many different situations. It fits traditional television legal shows, and it equally applies to newer online content. That includes independent self-media hosts talking about law, as well as official short-video channels run by government bodies. Broadcasters can use this framework to review their own output. In this way, they are able to spot improper language choices and fix frequent issues, such as misstated legal points and overly emotional delivery during case narration.

3. A Comparison of Pragmatic Expressions between Chinese and British Legal Popularization Broadcasters and the Causes of Differences

3.1. Pragmatic Features of Broadcasters in Chinese Legal Popularization Programs

For domestic samples, this research draws mainly from radio excerpts taken from CCTV's Today's Law and China National Radio's Voice of the Rule of Law. Material from local converged-media legal radio shows is also considered, to sort out recurring language characteristics seen across China's legal-education broadcasts.

When building narratives, most domestic legal radio content puts case stories before legal analysis. Producers pick real-life court cases marked by sharp conflicts. They walk listeners through case facts to hold audience attention, before going over relevant legal points. This storytelling approach fits what local audiences tend to prefer, and helps programs reach people effectively.

When dealing with legal terms, broadcasters aim to make content easy for ordinary listeners. Hosts rephrase hard-to-grasp legal words and formal clauses into everyday speech, so more people can follow what is being said. Still, there are no agreed-upon rules for this kind of on-air adaptation. In practice, some points get oversimplified, key components are left unclear, and explanations remain incomplete. Under such conditions, core judicial ideas can become misrepresented. Legal messages no longer come across accurately, creating a common industry pitfall: chasing broad audience appeal at the cost of professional accuracy. Hosts will also shift their tone according to case context and use empathetic language. This brings them closer to listeners and makes program output more influential.

On values, domestic legal radio sits within mainstream authoritative media. It has two major jobs: sharing legal knowledge and steering public opinion. Hosts weave positive judgement and moral guidance into their commentary, drawing on real, representative cases to pass on sound social ideas. This lets programs teach legal content while shaping healthy public perceptions. It also gives this type of broadcast its clear public-service and educational nature.

3.2. The Underlying Causes of Pragmatic Differences Between Chinese and British Legal Popularization Broadcasters

Differences in how Chinese and British legal-education broadcasters use language are not simply

caused by individual hosting styles. These gaps take shape under the influence of three key factors: media frameworks, audience cognitive levels, and the broader media environment. Looking at media systems, domestic legal radio sits within official media structures. It has to handle several tasks at once, spreading legal knowledge, educating the public, and guiding public opinion. That explains why its content leans heavily on story-telling and emotionally-charged delivery. The BBC's legal radio output in Britain works purely as a public-service medium. Its main task is nothing more than passing on legal information. When putting programs together, its presenters keep to objective, neutral and fact-based ways of speaking.

China's public legal literacy remains at an early popularization phase. Most audiences find complex judicial content hard to follow, so domestic legal broadcasts adopt story-driven, easy-to-follow formats suited to public viewing habits. In comparison, British audiences have solid legal awareness and rational thinking, and they prefer program styles that prioritize legal principles over case-focused storytelling.

For the media environment, China's integrated media industry faces fierce market competition. By contrast, British public broadcasters are free from traffic-based performance assessments, allowing their legal programs to sustain consistent professionalism and rational expression over long-term operation^[6].

These communication differences also root in the separate development paths of the two countries' legal popularization systems. China launched legal popularization relatively late, and lifting public legal awareness remains a long-term social task. Media-led legal education thus takes on basic public-service obligations, mainly to lower understanding barriers and expand legal knowledge coverage.

In common-law countries, rule-of-law media output has developed over many years. Regular access to live court broadcasts and legal interviews helps local audiences get used to receiving specialized legal discourse. It should be noted that neither model is inherently superior. With accessible narrative styles, domestic legal popularization broadcasts can efficiently reach grassroots audiences.

A comparative analysis of representative Chinese and British samples reveals prominent differences in broadcasting narration, term conversion, and vocal expression between the two countries. China adopts a dramatic narrative model of "cases first, legal principles second". The absence of unified standards for term conversion easily leads to information distortion, and its vocal expression is highly empathetic with obvious emotional fluctuations. By contrast, the UK follows a rational narrative approach of "legal principles first, cases as supporting evidence". It possesses a standardized system of term conversion, with restrained, neutral vocal expression free from subjective value inclinations^[7].

3.3. Summary of the Comparison of Pragmatic Features Between Chinese and British Legal Popularization Broadcasts

Taken as a whole, Chinese legal popularization broadcasts rely on vivid story-telling to engage general audiences. As summarized in Table 1, this set of programs adopts a case-driven dramatic narrative structure, yet it suffers from inconsistent term-conversion rules and obvious emotional swings in vocal delivery; hosts also tend to integrate value-oriented commentary into program output. These characteristics often lead to insufficient objectivity in content presentation.

By contrast, British legal popularization broadcasters follow well-defined professional norms. As shown in the comparison table, they arrange program content around legal principles rather than dramatic case plots. They apply standardized rules when rephrasing legal terminology, keep vocal delivery steady and neutral, and focus purely on knowledge dissemination without subjective value judgment. Such rigorous processing guarantees professional accuracy, though it may create barriers for ordinary public audiences.

These practical differences stem from diverging core positioning: Chinese programs prioritize mass-oriented public outreach, while British productions lean toward strict professional standardization. This contrast offers practical insights for domestic legal broadcasting to draw on foreign experience and address existing defects. The following section analyzes host pragmatic performance from the four dimensions laid out in Table 1, namely narrative logic, terminology expression, speech tone and rhythm, and value expression.

Table 1: Comparison of Pragmatic Expression Features of Chinese and British Legal Popularization Broadcasters

Comparison Dimensions	Chinese Legal Popularization Broadcasters	British Legal Popularization Broadcasters
Narrative Logic	Case-first, dramatic narrative, legal principles secondary	Legal-principles-first, facts as supporting evidence, non-dramatized narrative
Terminology Expression	Lack of uniform standards, overly simplified expressions, prone to information distortion	Standardized term adaptation, appropriately accessible, professionally complete
Speech Tone and Rhythm	Pronounced emotional fluctuations, prominent empathic rendering	Steady and restrained tone, non-emotional, rational and neutral
Expression of Values	Integrates legal popularization and value guidance, with obvious subjective commentary	Pure knowledge popularization, fact-oriented, free from value bias

The pragmatic gaps between Chinese and British legal broadcasting models essentially stem from differences in public communication positioning and industry professional norms. This comparative finding can guide the iterative upgrading of domestic legal programs. It also offers credible research support for future studies on pragmatic defects and targeted optimization strategies in legal popularization broadcasting.

4. Pragmatic Dilemmas of Domestic Legal Popularization Broadcasting and Its Standardization Optimization Paths

4.1. Core Pragmatic Dilemmas of Domestic Legal Popularization Broadcasting

Drawing comparisons of how Chinese and British legal broadcasts use language, alongside observations of domestic industry reality, this paper singles out three key pragmatic issues within China's existing legal-education programs.

For one thing, over-reliance on dramatic storytelling creates confusion over production standards. Hoping to draw larger audiences, quite a few legal shows blow up case conflicts and sad real-life plots. Heavy dramatic content crowds out time meant for thorough legal analysis. Such production choices run counter to what public legal education is supposed to achieve. If left unchecked, this trend will keep eroding professional standards and public confidence in legal-themed media output[8].

Next, poorly handled simplification of legal terms produces misleading broadcast material. The broadcast sector still lacks shared guidance on turning formal legal ideas into spoken language. While recording episodes, hosts sometimes cut down core judicial points too far. Important professional meanings get lost in the process, legal information becomes twisted, and ordinary viewers end up misunderstanding legal rules.

Third, certain hosts do not keep their own tone and emotions under control on air. They adopt over-the-top delivery and insert personal moral judgements as they narrate cases. This violates the neutrality expected for legal content and basic media ethics, making it harder for audiences to build rational thought around the law.

Short-video legal outreach suffers these flaws far more acutely. Tight time limits and algorithm-driven click-seeking push content makers to chase dramatic clashes instead of full legal explanation. Many short-video pieces leave out complete legal logic, showing only disconnected case snippets built around conflict. Hosts often state personal views while giving only surface-level legal

notes, which yields scattered, incomplete legal reasoning.

Traditional long-form TV legal shows face less fierce competition for viewers, so these language-related faults show up less sharply. Even so, producers still find it hard to strike a workable balance between easy-going popular delivery and factual legal precision. Up to now, the broadcast field has no dedicated, systematic rules for legal speech practice. With no agreed-upon professional benchmarks, hosts shape their delivery from personal experience rather than formal requirements. That lack of shared industry standards keeps these pragmatic mistakes coming back in legal-popularization programs.

4.2. An Analysis of the Core Causes Underlying Pragmatic Dilemmas

Lots of language-related flaws appearing in China's legal broadcast work cannot be explained by any single cause. Different internal and external conditions interact together and create these issues. Looking closely at those internal contributing factors helps complete our line of reasoning, and links naturally to the China-Britain pragmatic comparison we went through in earlier chapters.

First, today's integrated media industry is highly audience-oriented. To compete for views and popularity, most legal programs prefer vivid, emotion-driven story narratives. This gradually forms a common tendency that values audience attraction more than professional accuracy.

Second, many legal program practitioners lack solid professional competence. Most anchors have not received formal and systematic legal training. They lack a clear understanding of legal discourse boundaries and basic media ethics, making it hard for them to balance popular expression and professional rigor in daily program presentation.

Third, the legal broadcasting industry still lacks complete institutional constraints. At present, there are no targeted pragmatic standards or evaluation systems exclusively for legal popularization programs. Without effective institutional supervision, various pragmatic non-standard behaviors persist and cannot be fundamentally resolved.

4.3. Standardized Optimization Paths for Pragmatic Expression of Domestic Legal Popularization Broadcasting

Combining the practical flaws of domestic legal broadcasts and mature normative practices in the UK, this paper puts forward three optimized improvement measures suitable for China's media context.

First, we need practical standards for turning legal terminology into spoken broadcast language. Legal researchers and media workers can work together to draw up unified adaptation guidelines. The guidelines mark out acceptable and improper expressions for legal outreach, and lay down different requirements for in-depth special episodes and light-weight popular-science content. These tiered standards help audiences understand the content while keeping professional precision, and lower the chance of distorted term usage in legal communication.

The standards can be modified to fit different media forms. Longer TV legal programs may keep professional terms, and hosts can give on-the-spot explanations for hard legal points. New-media short videos, however, have limited runtime. They may simplify confusing legal terms, yet core legal meanings must not be changed under any circumstance.

In addition, program teams can carry out routine checks before recording. Hosts and legal advisors go over scripts ahead of time, pick out misleading legal wording, and work out proper conversion plans. This pre-production check can prevent most pragmatic mistakes brought by poorly written scripts. Apart from regulating written texts, legal broadcasters should receive long-term interdisciplinary training. Such training raises their legal awareness and critical judgement, cutting down subjective mis-expression in regular program output.

Second, the industry needs to reconstruct neutral narrative logic that puts legal reasoning in the first place. Producers ought to give up drama-heavy creation purely for higher clicks. They may refer to Britain's rational broadcast practice, where legal principles come first and cases serve only as supporting material. Programs should focus on interpreting legal rules and spreading relevant theories, instead of telling sensational case stories. Broadcasters have to tell objective factual description apart from personal moral comments, reduce over-emotional processing, and keep public legal communication accurate and neutral.

Finally, the industry must optimize training and evaluation arrangements for people engaged in legal-popularization broadcasting. Standardized regular training on legal knowledge, pragmatic rules and media ethics can make up for practitioners' professional shortcomings. A dedicated evaluation mechanism should be implemented to assess term accuracy, narrative standardization, discourse neutrality and professional ethics. Institutional supervision restrains irregular emotional and arbitrary expression, and supports the standardized, high-quality and sustainable development of domestic legal popularization broadcasting.

5. Conclusions

Standardized language use matters a great deal if nationwide legal outreach is to achieve high-quality progress. This paper compares real-world legal broadcast output from China and Britain. It identifies gaps in how each side chooses its language, and traces those gaps back to institutions, media surroundings, and the competence of industry workers. Three key practical problems stand out for domestic legal broadcasts: how stories are built, how legal terms are rephrased, and the tone speakers adopt.

Working within local media conditions and learning from proven overseas practice, this paper suggests concrete improvements covering term rules, narrative adjustment, and industry-wide mechanisms. The present work seeks a sensible middle ground: legal content should stay professionally accurate while remaining easy for ordinary audiences to follow. The analysis centers mainly on traditional broadcast legal shows, and its observations can guide better standardized practice for domestic legal broadcasting.

Later research may look into newer forms of legal outreach, including short-video clips and live-stream content. If pragmatic rules for legal broadcasting keep getting revised, researchers and practitioners will gain stronger theoretical backing as well as usable solutions to push legal-related media work forward.

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