

# Authenticity Through Cooperation of the Host and the Guests in a Chinese TV Talk Show

## AUTHENTICITÉ À TRAVERS LA COOPÉRATION ENTRE L'ANIMATEUR ET L'INVITÉ DANS LE TALK SHOW TÉLÉVISÉ CHINOIS

### 主持人和嘉賓齊心合作下的中文脫口秀節目的真實性

Zhou Xiaomei      Wu Yue

周曉梅              吳 玥

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**Abstract:** TV talk shows have always been the focus of attention in mass media studies from the perspective of discourse analysis. Many studies are centered on how the hosts and guests achieve their respective authenticity. What remains largely unexplored is how the hosts and guests cooperate to construct authenticity for the talk show. By focusing on the cooperative nature of the relationship between the hosts and the guests in the realization of this authenticity intended by the talk show *Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao*, this paper explores the content and form to demonstrate how the talk show successfully provides news information and entertains the audience in a genuine sense through cooperation strategies.

**Key words:** talk show, authenticity, cooperation

**Résumé:** Le talk show est depuis longtemps le foyer d'attention dans l'étude des mass médias dans la perspective de l'analyse du discours. Beaucoup des recherches sont centrées sur comment les animateurs et les invités accomplissent leur authenticité respective. Ce qui reste largement exploré, c'est comment les animateurs et les invités coopèrent pour construire l'authenticité du programme. En concentrant sur la nature coopérative de la relation entre les animateurs et les invités dans la réalisation de cette authenticité attendue par le programme de talk show *Derrière le gros titre avec Wen Tao*, le présent article explore le contenu et la forme afin de démontrer comment le talk show offre avec succès de nouvelles informations et entretient l'audience avec des stratégies de coopération.

**Mots-Clés:** talk show, authenticité, coopération

**摘 要:** 近年來，電視脫口秀一直是大眾媒體話語分析研究的焦點，其中的很多研究把重點放在主持人和嘉賓如何實現各自在節目中表現的真實性上，但是，主持人和嘉賓如何齊心合作構建節目的真實性卻未得到深入細緻的分析。本文通過分析鳳凰衛視《鏘鏘三人行》中主持人和嘉賓為節目真實性進行的合作，研究了節目的內容和形式，探討了他們如何成功的通過合作策略真實的向觀眾提供新資訊和娛樂元素。

**關鍵詞:** 脫口秀；合作；真實性

## TALK SHOW

A talk show is a television or radio program where a group of people come together to discuss various topics put forth by a talk show host. Talk shows often feature a panel of guests, usually consisting of a group of people who are learned or who have great experience in relation to whatever issue is being discussed on the show for that episode. Like the soap opera, the

television talk show is an invention of twentieth century broadcasting. It takes a very old form of communication, conversation, and transforms it into a low cost but highly popular form of information and entertainment through the institutions, practices and technologies of television. Television talk shows originally emerged out of two central traditions: news and entertainment. Over time hybrid forms developed that mixed news, public affairs, and entertainment. These hybrid forms occupy a middle ground position between news and entertainment. One heated focus of the study of TV talk

show programs is on authenticity from the perspective of discourse analysis.

## THE DEFINITIONS OF AUTHENTICITY

Leeuwen (2001) examines a wide range of various authenticity in different walks of life, such as art, music and photography and mass media. According to Leeuwen (2001), authenticity is not as straightforward as thought to be, but rather an evaluative concept. Firstly, authenticity can be understood in different ways, "something can be called 'authentic' because it is thought to be true to the essence of something, to a revealed truth, a deeply felt sentiment, or the way these are worded or otherwise expressed" (p. 393). Secondly, the authenticity of talk is not an all or none matter, or authenticity cannot be seen as an objective and fixed feature.

Complex as it is, authenticity should be understood as a semantic field suggested by Coupland (2001). Authenticity is about validity. Authentic talk is the talk that can be regarded as truthfulness, sincerity, trustworthiness and even beauty and so on. And according to Leeuwen (2001), authenticity can also be considered to be "a special kind of modality, or a special aspect of modality, concerned more with the moral or artistic authority of the representation than with its truth or reality" (p. 396).

## PREVIOUS DISCOURSE STUDIES ON AUTHENTICITY

The media have played a key role in representing this view of authenticity. Discourse Studies deals with the question of authenticity of mass media in several ways. Leeuwen (2001) examines the various notions 'authenticity' in different aspects of life. He suggests authenticity is not an absolute concept, it is socially defined and there are different levels of authenticity in discourse. Mass media has its own new set of norms and criteria to construct and judge authenticity in the sense of being reliable, valid, trustworthy and objective.

Montgomery (2001) specifically studies the relationship between authenticity and the naturally occurring talk, or the spontaneous talk. It is traditionally held that fresh talk commonly presents the congruence among animator, author and principal and in this respect may be seen as the most authentic type of talk. Through his own study, he identifies three main types of authenticity in talk: 1) talk that projects itself as nothing more or less than talk itself, or the spontaneous talk; 2) talk that is true to experience; 3) and talk is true to the person. In the broadcast talk, the most relevant type is 'true to experience'. It means that the authenticity is

judged on accounts of witnesses to events as 'fresh' talk from speakers' experiences of those events. He also points out that broadcasters have been learning to communicate with their audience and giving spontaneous, unscripted and unrehearsed talk in order to make the program to be approximately 'fresh' or 'naturally occurring' and authentic.

The first two articles is a theoretical introduction to the theme, which lays the common ground of the understanding of the authenticity and its realization in mass media discourse. There are several studies examining the authenticity in specific TV or radio programs, focusing on specific texts as data. The following four papers develop and elaborate the theories on authenticity in mass media and raise some contemporary questions about the complex relationships between self and authenticity: how the news presenters construct the new form of authenticity; how the audience take part in the media discourse and how lay participants establish authentic and 'grounded' positions for them to speak.

Scannell (2001) explores whether television provides authentic experience for its viewers. By analyzing one live political television program, he proposes that "television can create the possibilities of participation, effects of being-there, in ways that entitle people to claim the viewing of an event as an entitlement to an experience" (p. 409). According to Scannell, authentic experience is tied to a particular structure of the self: one's own self. One's own self is not understood in a narrow sense, but a social self of everyday existence. On the one hand, it has its own identity, and on the other hand, it is also a part of the shared and common world. The reasons why television can be an authentic form of public and social experience is that it can create new kinds of publicness in which events are presented at the same time for one and for anyone who are watching the program. Therefore it creates entitlements for one and for anyone to talk about it.

Coupland (2001) focuses on the way to construct authenticity on the part of news presenters' discourse. He explores aspects of performance-produced authenticity in the talk of professional media presenters and personalities. His data were collected from the Johnny Vaughan's 'news review' in the Channel 4 morning show *The Big Breakfast*. By analyzing the concept of authenticity-from-below through burlesque and individual performance of the news presenters, he contrasts the authenticity-from-below with the traditional and institutionalized forms of authenticating news discourse.

Not only the media professionals have to construct authenticity in their own sense but the lay people who participate in the program also have to learn how to produce and perform authenticity. Hutchby (2001) studies the discourse of the callers in phone-in radio program and points out some features and methods to

construct authenticity in the talk on the part of non-professionals. He examines how the callers use 'witnessing' in the radio phone-in program as a device to make claims of first-hand knowledge of an event, and subsequently make themselves as valid speakers as the host and make their words significant and trustworthy to all the other listeners.

Thornborrow (2001) mainly explores the discursive resources that lay speakers use to build their public identities before moving on to their opinions, or how lay participants establish authentic and 'grounded' positions for them to speak. He focuses on ordinary members in television and radio broadcasts. The focus of this paper is mainly on opening turn sequences, which means the first few moments that callers call in or TV audience is given the first ratified turn to speak. Given the limited identification that common lay speakers receive from hosts when they participate in the program, these opening sequences is significant for speakers to establish their position as currently selected speakers. He presents some general observations on the nature of participant status in these programs. Then he goes on to examine how speakers design their local participant identities in other contextually relevant ways.

Many studies have been carried out to examine the authenticity on the part of the presenter and audience respectively. Yet fairly little attention has been devoted to the relationship between the presenter and audience and how they together construct the authenticity of the program. In this paper, we explored how the host and guests in the TV talk show cooperate to construct the authenticity for the show.

## METHODOLOGY

Nowadays, TV talk shows are very common across the country ranging from local TV stations in major metropolitan cities to nationally syndicated TV talks shows. The most typical examples are *Tell It Like It Is* (*shi shua shi shuo*) on CCTV in mainland and *Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao* (*qiang qiang san ren xing*) on the Chinese Channel of the Phoenix Cable TV station in Hongkong. In this paper the renowned talk show of the Phoenix TV station is included for analysis. The authors think that this talk show can best illustrate the cooperation between the host and guests constructing authenticity that are foci of the present study. According to the authors, for one thing, Hongkong has been enjoying a relatively longer and more thorough media freedom; for another, *Tell It Like It Is* on CCTV has been sufficiently explored from different angles by many scholars. However, *Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao* as a popular TV talk show has not received enough attention. So the authors prefer the show of Hongkong to the one of mainland.

*Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao* premiered on the Chinese Channel of the Phoenix Cable TV station in April 1998 with Dou Wentao as its recurring male host. It occurs at daytime from Monday to Friday, normally scheduled between 12 am and 12:30 am. The host himself is responsible for choosing and inviting two guests from mainland, Taiwan or Hongkong for each episode. These guests are celebrities in various fields, such as directors, writers, statesman or people with high reputation in mass media. They exhibit diverse and distinctive personalities, and their speech often fall outside the audience' expectation. In each program, the host and two honorable guests express themselves freely around a certain topic. The talk lasts for 25 minutes and the commercial break runs twice for 5 minutes, so the talk show is segmented into three sessions: the first two sessions each run for 10 minutes and the third run for 5 minutes. Since the establishment in 1998, the talk show has achieves great economic success and popularity across the whole country.

## DISCUSSION

Firstly, we will introduce the content and form of this talk show to demonstrate how the talk show successfully provides news information and entertain the audience in a genuine way.

The host himself plays a very important role in the realization of the authenticity of the talk show. As the host Dou says, the talk show pursues topic's wide coverage, warmth and fun instead of significance, depth and definite conclusion. The host Dou Wentao, native of Shijiazhuang city in Hebei province, graduated from Wuhan University with journalism training background in 1989 and worked for many years as a host with Guangdong People's Radio Station. His work involved radio program of different sorts, such as children, family, news reporting, entertainment and service. In 1996 he joined Phoenix Cable TV station and two years later he became the famous host of *Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao*. Dou says that the talk show pursues topic's wide coverage, warmth and fun instead of significance, depth and definite conclusion. Consequently, his distinctive personality and management style contribute to a renowned and successful TV talk show.

The physical setting also helps to construct the authenticity. Unlike most studios extravagantly furnished, this talk show's studio is similar to a living-room of ordinary families: a small round table is in the middle of the room and the host and two guests sit around the table, on which there are several sheets of newspaper in disorder and three homely cups. The three people all wear casual clothes, sitting comfortably in the armchair in a relaxed manner. All these create pleasant atmosphere for smooth and informal hearty talk, just

like conversation among family members, close friends. When the host speaks out his constant opening words: "Qiang Qiang San Ren xing, say whatever you want, hello, everyone, I'm Dou Wentao.....", the talk show begins displaying the secularization, individualization and authenticity through the discourse of the host and two guests.

As to the specific form of this talk show, during the 30 minutes talk show, the host and two guests employ folklore-like narration or informal interpersonal chatting ways of ordinary people to discuss social hot issues. Their unprepared heated conversation unfolds without fixed themes, heavy fetters. When the show comes to the end, the conversation is still going on without marked closing remarks. It ends within the rigid time limit, but no conclusion is drawn. It seems that the three people keep diverting from an underlying topic to pursue sincerity, boldness, fun and entertainment. In a sense, the talk show is like a pleasant journey without a destination. According to the host Wentao, it is impossible for the three people to figure out something in limited 30 minutes; even the ultimate solution to a problem actually doesn't exist. He insists on introducing entertaining elements into the talk show. The topics of the program cover youth psychology, corruption, environmental protection, homosexuality, etc. in this sense, this talk show mixes news, public affairs and entertainment and occupies a middle position between news and entertainment.

How the host and guests contribute to the realization of authenticity will be discussed in the following session. Despite that the host and the guests try to achieve the authenticity in their own sense, they together construct the authenticity for the show by adopting some cooperation strategies. In terms of the actual strategies adopted in the cooperation between the host and the guests, there are mainly three sub-types in this talk show, namely:

Both the host and the guests emphasize authenticity by trying help to link their own life and work.

The host and the guests try to make the discourse as spontaneous as possible, so as to guarantee truth, or a high degree of accountability.

Both the host and the guests employ secular language to make the discourse more true to life.

These strategies will be discussed in detail in the next two extracts.

Extract 1 is a transcript of a part of sequence of the talk show on 11 June 2007 (some data unrelated to the analysis are not shown in the Extract and the transcription conventions are based on those adopted by Potter (1996).

Extract 1 (D=the host Dou Wentao; Z= Zha Jianying; X=Xu Zidong)

1 D: [...] 許老師, 查老師, 瞧我這襯衫好嗎?

[...] Xu teacher, Zha teacher, look I this shirt good?

[...] Professor Xu, Professor Zha, do you think my shirt fantastic?

2 Z: = 非常亮啊(.) [像]

= very bright ah(.) [like]

= very shiny(.)[like]

3 X: [高科技] IT業的(.) 你最近轉行了?

[high technology] IT industry(.) you recently change?

[high technology] IT industry(.) have you changed your career recently?

4 D: 他們說聊偽科學嘛(.) 所以我就穿的偽科學一點(.)

They say chat false science ma(.) so I just wear false science a little(.)

They will talk about pseudo-science(.) so I am dressed in a pseudo-science way.

5 Z: 我以為是搖滾明星上咱們這來了(笑).

I think is rock star up we here come ((laugh))

I had thought a rock star is coming to the show((laugh))

6 D: 我得打扮打扮(.) 昨天那個鏘鏘論壇人有說

I must dress up dress up(.) yesterday that forum person have say

I must dress up and pay attention to my appearance(.) yesterday some audience on the show's BBS

7 觀眾說 竇文濤 穿一皺巴巴

audience say Dou Wentao wear one crimple

- say that Dou Wentao wears a crimped shirt
- 8 襯衫(,) 就 一 北方土 老男 [(笑)](.)  
Shirt (,) just one north earth old man [laugh](.)  
And he is just like a vulgar farmer in north of China[laugh](.)
- 9 Z: [笑 ]  
[laugh]  
[laugh]
- 10 X: [笑] 皺巴巴 是 很 貴的(.)  
[laugh] crimped is very dear(.)  
[laugh] a crimped shirt costs a packet(.
- 11 D: 那 就 穿(.) 你 看看(.) 閃閃 亮的(.) 不 就 愛 看 這個嗎(.)  
That just wear(.)you see see(.) shiny bright(.) no just love see this?  
At the request of the audience(,)I wear this fashionable shirt(.) so shiny(.) they just love this style(.
- 12 而且 這 有點 偽 科學的 氣氛(.)  
And this a little false science atmosphere(,)  
and this seems a typical exam of pseudo-science(.
- 13 你 覺 不 覺得? 跟 今天 的話 題 也 有 關(.) 啊(.) (0.8)就 何 祚 庥(.)  
You think not think? With today's topic also relate(.) ah(0.8) just He Zuoxiu(,)  
Do you think so? The shirt is related to today's topic(.) er(.) He Zuoxiu(.
- 14 聽 說 跟 你 們 家 也 有 關(.) 我 現 在 就 喜 歡 扯 私人 恩 怨(.)  
Hear with you house also relate(.) I now just like talk personal enmity(.
- It's said that he is closely related to your family(.) I'm now very interested in gossip(.
- 15 知 道 何 祚 庥 嗎?  
know He Zuoxiu ?  
Do you know He Zuoxiu?
- 16 X: 就 那 個 兩 個 字 特 別 難 寫 特 別 難 讀 的(.)  
Just that two word special difficult write special difficult read(.)  
The last two characters of his name is very difficult to read an write(.
- 17 D: =對(.) 我 一 直 不 知 道 那 字 是 念 xiu(,) 我 以 為 是 念 you 什 麼 的(.)  
= right(.) I always no know that word read xiu(,) I think is read you what(.)  
= right(.) I don't know the correct pronunciation is xiu(,) I had thought it reads you or something like that(.
- 18 X:= 我 作 為 中 文 系 的 這 個 成 員(.) 每 次 讀 這 樣 的  
= I as Chinese department this member(.) every time read these  
Even though I am an associate professor(,) every time I read the
- 19 字 每 次 都 感 到 嘔(.)  
word every time all fell omit(.)  
two words I find they are vomitive(.
- 20 D: 理 論 物 理 學 家 了(.) 很 有 名 的(.) 對 何 祚 庥 老 人 我  
Theory physicist (,) very famous(.) to He Zuoxiu old man I  
A theoretical physicist (,) very famous(.) I  
不 太 瞭 解(.) 但 我 覺 得

No too understand(.) but I think  
know little about He Zuoxiu(.) but I think

21 他挺 猛的(.)

He very awesome(.)

He is very awesome(.)

[...]

In this extract, the host changes his dressing style and wears a pretty fashionable shirt to invite praise and naturally elicit the discussion about pseudo-science. Zhang, a famous female writer and X, an associate professor of Chinese Department of Lingnan University in Hongkong, make jokes with the host, just as the close friends chatting in similar situations of everyday life to make the discourse spontaneous. Zhang comments that the fashionable shiny shirt makes the host like a rock star; Xu says that the new shirt indicates a change of professional career. This part of conversation serves as a good beginning of free exchange between them.

Dou goes on to say that wearing this just meets the requirement of audience who says that his normal image is like a vulgar farmer in north of China in line 8. This example illustrates that the host enjoys a pleasant and harmonious relationship with audience and he is always ready to accept their advice or criticism, thus creating his own sincere, trustworthy and likable image. Meanwhile, he displays his wisdom in organizing a successful talk show.

In line 11, the host mentions the famous theoretical physicist He Zuoxiu and says that this person is closely related to the female guest's family with a funny voice and a gossipy manner. The female guest responded with a smile. This behavior of ordinary people who show interest in famous people's life and who show passion for trivial things of celebrities illustrates secular

language that contributes to the authenticity of the talk show. More importantly, by linking the guests personal they again emphasize the authenticity of the show.

As for the name He Zuoxiu, the last two characters are not familiar to most people and therefore difficult to pronounce them accurately. In line 13 and 15, the male guest Xu speaks out the difficulty of correct reading and writing of these two words: it is even troublesome for him, a associate professor of Chinese Department of a renowned university. In this way, he gets closer to audience and ordinary people who will feel happy that this learned man has a certain difficulty in life and that he is so sincere to frankly speak out his limitations. What's more, Xu uses fashionable word "vomit" to express his dislike for the complexity of the name; the host also uses fashionable informal "awesome" to show the high status of the physicist. These two words are very popular among young people in China. The male guest and the host relate popular entertaining elements to the serious scientific and academic issues, which is another perfect illustration for the secular language used in the discourse.

Extract 2 is a transcript of a part of sequence of the talk show on 19 January 2007. Some data unrelated to the analysis are not shown in the Extract in order to save space.

Extract 2 ( D= the host Dou Wentao; H=Huang Jianxiang; Z=Zhang Liangying)

1. D: 今天 還是 刺激 天(.) 啊(.) 黃建翔 幹嗎 歪著 眼睛?

Today still exciting sky ah Huang Jianxiang why slant eye

Today is extremely exciting(.) ah(.)Huang Jianxiang(.) why do you squint at me?

2. 黃建翔(.) 還有 張靚穎(.)

Huang Jianxiang yet have Zhang Liangying

Huang Jianxiang(.) and Zhang Liangying(.)

3. H: 看他一副 壞 相(.)

Look he pair bad appearance

Look at his cunning face(.)

4. D: 不是(.) 我 高興 吶(.)

No I happy Na(.)

No, I'm just so happy(.)

5. H: 對(.) 你 收視率 上來了 是吧?

Right(.) you rating go up be?

Yeah, your rating will increase(,) right?

6. D: 對 對(.)

Right right

I can't agree with you more(.)

7. H: 你 得 請 我 們 兩 吃 飯(.)

You must invite we eat

You must invite us to a fancy restaurant(.)

8. D: 那 天 許 老 師 說 我 們 都 被 收 視 率 這 條 狗 追 的 撒 尿 的

That day teacher Xu say we all be rating the dog chase urine

The other day Professor Xu said we are helplessly chased by the dog "high rating"

功 夫 都 沒 有

Time all without

that we have no time to do our business(.) [...]

9. D: 你 知 道 嗎(.) 黃 建 翔 每 天 九 點 鐘 哄 女 兒

You know ma Huang Jianxiang every sky nine o'clock coax daughter

Do you know that(.) Huang Jianxiang takes good care of his daughter 9 O'clock every night

10. 睡 覺(.) 每 天 一 大 早 起 來 送 女 兒 上 學(.) 是

Sleep every day morning rise send daughter go to school be

To go to bed and he gets up very early to send the daughter to school(.)

11. 這 樣 的 一 個 父 親(.) 咱 們 來 看 看 照 片(.) 這 是 給 女 兒

These a father we come look photo this be give daughter

He is a good father(.) let's look at this pohto(.) he is putting

12. 穿 衣 服(.)

Wear clothes

a coat on his daughter(.)

13. H: 這 很 正 常(.) 任 何 一 個 父 母 都 應 該 這 樣 對 待 自 己 的 孩 子

This very normal any a parents all should this treat own child

This is very normal(.) all parents will do these for the child(.)

這 沒 什 麼(.)

This without what

This is the parents' responsibility(.)

[...]

14. Z: 本 來 我 喜 歡 跟 我 媽 一 起 上 街(.) 上 菜 市 場 啊(.)

Originally I like with my mother together shopping up food market ah (.)

I enjoy going shopping and picking things at food market with her dear mother(.)

[...]

15. D: [...] 我 在 猶 豫 要 不 要 生 孩 子(.)

I be hesitant want no want living child

I am hesitating in giving birth to a baby(.)

16. 生 了 孩 子 之 後(.) 我 的 生 活 會 不 會 被 剝 奪 一 大 部 分?

Living le child after my life will no will bereft a most

- When I have a child(,) will most of my time be spent on the child?
17. 他 跟 我 說 其 實 是 會 的 (.) 你 總 是 要 拿 出 一 [大 部 分]  
He with I say in fact be will you always want take a most  
He tells me yes(.) you must take a lot of time
- 18 H: [是 (.) 是 有 代 價 的 (.) 但 你 是 心 甘 情 願 (.)  
[ be be have price but you be willing  
[ yes, you must sacrifice something(.) but you're willing to do this(.)
19. 你 獲 得 回 報 (,) 但 你 自 己 內 心 的 充 實  
You get return but you self inside full  
you get a lot(,)but your life is meaningful and full.
20. 有 時 候 你 看 著 孩 子 的 眼 睛 會 感 覺 自 己 在 受 教 育 (.)  
Sometimes you look child's eye will feel self be educated  
Sometimes when you look into a child's eyes, you will be moved and learn something(.)

The male guest Huang Jianxiang is a famous anchorman of sports program on CCTV; the female guest Zhang Liangying is a celebrated singer. The mass media has been reporting the seemingly existing romantic relationship between the divorced male guest and the attractive female guest. In the beginning of the show, the host jokingly says to audience: "today is extremely exciting." When he has eye contact with the male guest who is squinting at him, he spontaneously speaks it out. It appeals to the audience's interest for the personal life of the stars, and more importantly, by connecting with personal life, they appear to be more close and real to the audience.

He admits in line 8 that he is without exception striving for high ratings, so he grasps the chance of inviting the two guests. Meanwhile, the host openly cites what Professor Xu (the male guest in Extract 1) comments on the TV programs' craving for high ratings; obviously the language in line 8 is very secular: they are so helplessly chased by the dog "the high rating" that they have no time to do their business. These illustrate that the host and this TV talk show open heart to audience. On the surface, the discourse is unrelated to the topic parenting. In fact, the host and the guests often get carried away and far off the topic. The loose conversational structure between the host and the guests shows that the discourse is unprepared and unrehearsed, produced in a spontaneous manner.

Next the three people discursively talk about the family warmth. The host praises the male guest is a good father, who takes good care of his daughter every night and gets up very early to send her to school. Huang modestly claims that all these are just what a father should do for the child. The female guest also shares her family life with her mother: she enjoys going shopping and picking things at food market with her dear mother. And the host expresses his dilemma whether to bring a baby into this world and feel worried about his life being bothered by a baby. Huang comforts

him that what a baby brings you deserves what a parent pay for the baby. So through this conversation, the host and the two guests use their own life experience to present ordinary pleasant images to audience: a great kind-hearted father with a strong sense of responsibility, a nice happy daughter who has deep love for her mother and is being loved by the mother, a married man who is anxious about being a father. Apparently, by doing this, they succeed in achieve their authenticity. The talk show is a convergence of three people's authenticity. Consequently, the program is regarded as authentic and trustworthy.

## CONCLUSION

TV talk show is a media discourse genre. In the discussion of the TV show *Behind The Headlines With Wen Tao* ( *qiang qiang san ren xing* ) on the Chinese Channel of the Phoenix Cable TV station in Hongkong, this paper brings into play the cooperative nature of the hosts and the guests. Firstly, the authors define authenticity with the theory of semantic field, and then relative studies on authenticity from the perspective of discourse analysis have been reviewed. Through the discussion on the data in this study, it is concluded that in the context of the TV talk show, despite the hosts and the guests have to achieve authenticity in their own sense, they have to construct the authenticity for the show together. Throughout the show, the both the two parties discursively and cooperatively attribute to provides news information and entertain the audience in a genuine sense. The three main cooperation strategies are: 1) trying help to link their own life and work; 2) trying to make the discourse as spontaneous as possible; 3) employing secular language. Cooperation is understood not in a narrow sense, but in a wider sense that all kinds of interaction between the two parties

participating the talk show have been taken into account.

In addition, the content and form the talk shown that also work for authenticity of the talk show have been studied. This brings into play what other factors helps to construct the authenticity of this talk show, more importantly, it lays the ground for the discussion of the cooperation between the host and the guests by defining

the meaning of authenticity in this talk show has been shown in a clearer and more specific way.

In short, cooperation between the hosts and the guests in TV talk show helps these two parties construct the authenticity for the show together. Hopefully, more future studies will devote to the complex and cooperative nature of the relationship between these two parties in the mass media context.

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## APPENDIX

### TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

- underlining indicates words or parts of words which are stressed by the speaker.
- ? the question mark marks a questioning intonation(there is no necessary correspondence with utterances participants treat as questions.
- the full stop marks a completing intonation( not a necessarily a grammatical full stop).
  - ， the comma marks a continuing intonation not a necessarily a grammatical comma).
- [] the bracket marks the onset and completion of overlapping talk.
- = the equal symbol marks no interval when one turn runs into another.
- [...] the square bracket around three full stops indicates that material from the tape has been omitted for reasons of brevity.
- (( )) the double parentheses indicates clarifactory comment.

## THE AUTHORS

**Zhou Xiaomei**(周晓梅), female, postgraduate, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Linguistics and Applied linguistics (major). Beijing, 100089, P.R. China.

**Wu Yue**(吴玥), female, postgraduate, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Linguistics and Applied linguistics (major). Beijing, 100089, P.R.China.