

# Research on the Transformation Paths of TV Anchors in the Context of Oral Communication

## -- A Comparative Analysis based on Internet Celebrities' Live Streaming Commerce

Jie Wang

School of Journalism and communication, Sichuan International Studies University, Chongqing, China

1332889595@qq.com

**Abstract.** In the all-media era, information is ubiquitous. The trend of increasingly intellectualized and mobilized media convergence is building up a new social connection, which also brings new opportunities and challenges to the traditional TV hosting industry. Aiming at providing new paths for the TV anchors' transformation into new areas, this paper explored on cases like the live stream show for "helping Hubei Province" jointly held by China Media Group and Li Jiaqi, and other livestreaming commerce for public benefits and conducted a comparative study on the oral communication behaviors between the net celebrities (especially livestreaming hosts for commerce) and TV anchors. It was supposed to inductively analyze the characteristics of oral communication from two perspectives: linguistic communication and non-linguistic communication and offer new insights for the anchors' transformation.

**Keywords:** Oral Communication; Transformation of Anchor; Live Streaming Host; Livestreaming Commerce.

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous growth of the e-commerce platform, live streaming commerce has shown an unprecedented booming trend, with Taobao, Pingduoduo and other traditional e-commerce platforms and new e-commerce platforms represented by short video APPs such as Douyin and Kwai rapidly developing and growing, accomplishing a boom in online transaction.

At the same time, some traditional media have also tried to do online live streaming commerce and try to promote their own media transformation and upgrading through this way. on April 6, 2020, China Media Group launched the first live streaming commerce for public welfare themed "Thank you for helping Hubei" to contribute to the economic recovery of Hubei Province, whose economy was deadly struck by COVID-19. Since then, CMG also started the precedent of TV anchors hosting live streaming commerce. After that, "the four famous male hosts of CCTV"(Kang Hui, Sa Beining, Zhu Guangquan, and Nigemaiti, hereinafter the four), Wang Hao (known as Sister Moon in CCTV), Zhu Xun and other TV hosts have consecutively participated in a series of public welfare live streaming shows to help farmers resume work and production and to promote goodies during CIIE period. This reflects the self-awareness of TV anchors to actively transform and improve themselves.

Due to the "program consciousness" formed by long-term accumulation, anchors often treat living streaming show as a "program" and fully demonstrate their personal characteristics and comprehensive quality by mobilizing their own large knowledge reserves. In contrast, web celebrities, such as Li Jiaqi, have a younger and more networked language form of oral communication, and their experience makes them more professional and more suitable for the language expression on network platforms. Based on the perspective of oral communication, this paper analyzes and summarizes the oral communication characteristics shown by both of them in the process of live streaming commerce, and provides suggestions for the transformation and development of TV anchors in the new media environment.

## 2. Characteristics of Anchors' Oral Communication in Live Streaming

### 2.1 Precise and Normative Language with Rich Content

TV anchors always maintain a decent state in speaking, and they tend to present better articulation in the program. The use of words is also rigorous and appropriate, and when promoting goods, they change their cadence and shape it again, far more than changing a serious state for broadcasting into a mood of interviewing. [6] For example, in the special live event of "All for a better life", which was jointly organized by CCTV News and several famous e-commerce brands, "the four" served for different tasks and showed a more diversified status. Compared with Kang Hui in the news broadcast, he behaved more casual and spontaneous at this time, and he was also responsible for grasping the progress of the whole live streaming show; Sa Beining still undertook the role for making fun as usual, responsible for activating the atmosphere in the live broadcast room. Compared with other anchors, he appeared more natural in the live broadcast room; Zhu Guangquan kept telling some wordplays for introducing something or wrapping up. Nigemati, who was used to hosting entertainment program, showed more of a host's strong affinity, and acted as the comic relief in this live broadcast. The four anchors' professionalism and sincerity attracted more and more viewers and made the live streaming more contagious.

Apart from those, they also demonstrated their personal characteristics and made good use of them to turn the live show more unique. For example, in the first live streaming of "Thank you for helping Hubei", the host Zhu Guangquan said this when introducing hot dry noodles to the audience, "There are many places worth going to when you walk around Wuhan. You can stroll on the banks of the East Lake, look down on the Yellow Crane Tower, and admire the Jingchu culture. However, it is really a pity if you don't taste the hot dry noodles". Zhu Guangquan's introduction fully demonstrated his linguistic characteristics. He got closer to the audience, and also triggered a warm interaction between Li Jiaqi and the audience. More than merely introducing the product, he interpreted "Wuhan" and its cultural connotation. Zhu Guangquan's language use in live stream was rich and vivid, with a strong cultural atmosphere, showing the cultural competence that a TV anchor should have.

### 2.2 Agreeable Pace and Naivete

In oral communication, besides "speaking" and "listening", non-verbal behaviors such as eye contact, change of expressions, and gestures also play a complementary role for communication. [1] TV anchors also employ non-verbal communication during live streaming to make the show more engaging and to better convey the message. The most common of these is paralanguage. Paralanguage refers to the vocal element outside of the verbal content of speech. In other words, paralanguage refers to the "how" rather than the "what" of what is said. For example, pitch control, rhythm control, and vocal intensity, pitch and speed. [1]

For instance, In the first live streaming of "Thank you for Helping Hubei", Zhu Guangquan, when selling rice wine, first explained that he was not good at drinking wine. He spoke very fast then. When he emphasized the culture of rice wine, he obviously slowed down his speech and played the role of a "cultural explainer". "Without a pair of hands doing the work of steaming and stirring, without these tedious labors, there would be no mellow and sweet rice wine for us, so this is not wine, this is the time of experience." Zhu Guangquan can comfortably control his own pace, whether it's to introduce products, to play words, or interact with Li Jiaqi during his first live streaming show. In addition, when Zhu Guangquan introduced himself to Li Jiaqi and the audience, he first came up with a "four-word poem" to set the scene, "初来乍到，技术不高，手艺不妙，请多关照。"(I'm new to the show. I'm not very skilled, so please take care of me.) This down-to-earth way of his presentation is unobtrusive and calm, while simple and sincere, which easily draws the distance between him and the audience. Also, Zhu Guangquan's feelings are conveyed not only in his self-introduction, but also in his interaction with the audience and his recommending products to them.

### 3. Characteristics of Live Streaming Hosts' Oral Communication

#### 3.1 Concise and Humorous Language, Professional and Comprehensive Content

Before live-streaming, live streaming hosts will have a thorough understanding of the product, including its performance, price, and advantages. Since they have accumulated a long-term experience in live streaming, they have a strong sensitivity to consumers' preferences and know every product well. In the network platforms, they will select more appropriate words to describe the product, closer to the life of consumers. "During a live streaming show for promotion, hosts build the scene through personal or group discourse of emotional substitution, price stimulation, social relationship creation and identity to promote live viewing number and consumption behavior." [2] They usually capture the key points in very simple language to make consumers trust the product, thus establishing their position as KOLs in the live streaming commerce.

For example, in the first live show of "Thank you for Helping Hubei", Li Jiaqi introduced rice wine and said, "If you can't finish the rice wine, you can store it in the refrigerator, and you can use it to cook dumplings and crayfish, which will be more delicious." Obviously, he was thinking from the consumer's point of view. How the product can be used, (in this case, it is how to eat), is the most important topic for consumers. Live streaming hosts tend to pay more attention to the extensive, authoritative, and comprehensive nature of the content when they are promoting goods. If it is food, the host will introduce from the perspective of how to cook, how to eat and its savour; if it is daily necessities, the host will focus on product quality, user experience and discount. In short, the host will highlight the issues that consumers care about to promote the products.

In addition, the hosts will employ humorous language to enhance communication with the audience. During the double 11 pre-sale live streaming, one of the products in stock was 130,000 pieces, and Li Jiaqi directly joked that "if you cannot get one in the flash sale, let alone other products, you can sleep directly. When the Retinol Ceramide Capsules Line Erasing Night Serum (known as pink retinol in China) was sold out, Li Jiaqi told consumers that "the pink retinol said goodbye to the double 11." He also sang a farewell song to it. Such a humorous and funny introduction, captured the impulse consumption of consumers. It also stimulated the consumer's desire to consume. With these words, Li Jiaqi has gained a lot of fans.

#### 3.2 Smooth Rhythm and Strong Emotion

The e-commerce platforms provide a unique field for live-streaming to grow, and also provide a free and relaxing space for hosts to express themselves. As there are fewer constraints in live streaming commerce, hosts can better communicate and interact with consumers in real time. Their strong emotion and sincere attitude as well as their relaxed condition resonate with and even drive consumers' mood.

For example, Li Jiaqi often yells simple words such as "OMG", "买它" ("buy it") and "这也太好看了吧" ("extremely beautiful"), but the simple words have an immeasurable stimulating power. He also usually speaks with strong emotion. The people in the live room are mobile, but the strong expression can keep the consumers. Usually, Li Jiaqi's live streaming lasts for 3-6 hours. He speaks loudly, with a high pitch and fast speed, and shows high spirits from the beginning to the end. His audience referred to his state as "a state that only comes after drinking several bottles of Red Bull". With almost no time for rest, his powerful output has formed his own style among many celebrities. There are many things to be promoted in Li Jiaqi's live stream, but the time allocated to each product is very little. One sometimes takes 2-3 minutes, and sometimes even 50-60 seconds to sell out. Therefore, the fast-paced and continuous output is the reason why Li Jiaqi can continuously mobilize consumers' desire to purchase during the live commerce. The excitement fits with the atmosphere of the live streaming room, constantly leading the audience to participate in it. Whenever Li Jiaqi is mentioned, everyone will think of "所有女生" ("all the girls"), which is not only his affectionate name for his fans and consumers, but also a unique way of communication between them.

## 4. Possible Paths for TV Anchors' Transformation in the Context of New Media

### 4.1 Build the Personal IP a Brand

In the era of all media, ordinary people share their life, cosmetics and trip by casting vlog, and they have gained a large number of followers. They are continuously trying to be more innovative and gain a place of their own in the online platform. In such an era when everyone has a chance to express themselves, traditional hosts are facing unprecedented challenges, and how to better cope with these challenges and find their own way of transformation and development is a matter that every anchor must consider. They should take "I am" as the core concept of program hosting, break through the previous concept of "I am here", and present the audience with true feelings, attitude, and style.

In recent years, the anchors who have gradually become popular all have their own personal characteristics. For example, Zhu Guangquan, an anchor hosting news programs, is known as "a comedian who is caught in news programs". Unlike other people, his present news programs, through many wordplays, and the distance between the CCTV news program and the audience has been brought closer, so more people have started to pay attention to news delivered by this "comedian" news anchor. This is his own way to increase the audience's attention to national events. For instance, when he needs to broadcast news about the start of the school year, he said, "对于学生党们, 还有来自开学季的致命一击……你若军训, 便是晴天; 你若放假, 便是雨天; 你若发奋写作业, 便是开学前一天; 你若不发奋写作业, 便会遇到铁面无私"包青天"." ("For the students, there is also a piece of fatal news from the start of the semester ..... If you should take military training, it tends to be a sunny day (so the military training will not be cancelled due to the weather); if you take a vacation, it tends to be a rainy day (so you are not able to hang out); if you work hard on your homework, the day before school starts; if you don't work hard on your homework, you will encounter a strict "Bao Qingtian." ( Bao Qingtian is known as an upright justice who always seemed to be strict and serious serving as an official during the Emperor Renzhong of Northern Song Dynasty in ancient China. His name "天"(Tian) means the day. Here, it is rhymed with "晴天"(sunny day) and "雨天"(rainy day).)) Behind the seemingly effortlessly-made wordplays are the day-to-day innovation and consideration. Anchors in the era of all media should continue to explore their own potential and to create their own personal characteristics. By labeling themselves, they should create a good image of TV anchors and build their own IP to retain viewers, thus increasing the ratings of TV stations.

### 4.2 To Learn about the Network Knowledge Actively for Better Understanding and Internalizing New Expression Ways in the New Media Era

In the age of all media, individuals are more involved than ever before, so traditional media and TV anchors should also make appropriate changes. In recent years, traditional media are gradually integrated with new media, constantly delving into the new media environment, actively accepting the new media platform, and creating a set of "down-to earth" expressions that belong exclusively to them. A typical example of traditional media actively engaged in new media is the short video program "Anchor Talking about Broadcasting" launched by the China Media Group since July 2019. When talking about the epidemic that caused many people to stay where they are to celebrate New Year's Eve instead of going back to their hometown for family reunion, the anchor Haixia conveyed her comfort and sympathy through her kind and sincere commentary. "情在年就在, 心安即故乡, 就地过年过的是个安心". ("Where there is love, there is the New Year atmosphere. Where there is peace of mind, there will be the hometown. To stay where you are is a reassurance for your safety and the peace of mind".) Haixia's affinity from the inside out is conveyed through such new media-based expressions, profoundly showing the positivity and enthusiasm of traditional TV anchors to join the new media.

To enhance the influence of mainstream media discourse, it is not only necessary to be professional on traditional media platforms, but also to be accurate on new media platforms. It is important to innovate something new based on the mainstream values, and then give full play to the strengths of the people in the media, and use techniques that are easier to be accepted to spread the message, so that they can naturally gain more. [6]

Therefore, the combination of traditional media and new media discourse expressions can maximize the effect of communication. It is worth noting that the expressions adapted to the new media should not be overly entertaining. Instead, appropriately innovative language forms can close the distance with the netizens and better integrate into the all-media era.

### 4.3 Clarify the Responsibility and Improve Anchors' Overall Competence

As the spokesperson of the CPC and the government, the anchors and broadcasters must have a sense of the times and a clear responsibility. The content delivered by them will not only influence the audience, but also the values of the whole society. This places a high requirement on anchors' professional beliefs cultivation. A good TV anchor should have a strong sense of responsibility for the profession and strict requirements for themselves. They should always uphold the attitude of professionalism in journalism and improve their media literacy. "After experiencing the confusion of the information explosion, audiences are bound to see concise, objective and in-depth explanations and analyses, and the demand for content will certainly outweigh the pursuit of form, which requires program anchors to take innovation as the ultimate tool to compete among media and attract audiences." [5] While acting as a "spokesperson" role, shouldering the responsibility of conveying positive attitude, anchors should improve their own quality in all aspects, not only in expression, on-site scheduling and other professional skills, but also in the host's rich knowledge base, good psychological quality and strong humanistic care.

For example, Zhu Guangquan said at the beginning of the live streaming show of "Thank you for Helping Hubei", "烟笼寒水月笼沙，不止东湖与樱花，门前风景雨来佳....."(Mist over icy water and moon over the sands//What you see is far more than the East Lake and cherry blossom//the view in front so awesome) ("烟笼寒水月笼沙" (Mist over icy water and moon over the sands) comes from a poem written by Du Mu, a Chinese calligrapher, poet, and politician who lived during the late Tang dynasty. Here, this line is quoted and the latter two are created by Zhu himself. "沙"(sand), "花" (flower, blossom) and "佳" (appealing, awesome) are rhymed in Chinese.) When introducing the pickled lotus sprout, he said, "吃了藕就不单身了，吃了藕就不会变心了，因为奇变“藕”不变，符号看象限，所以吃了藕海枯石烂心不变." ("If you eat the lotus sprout, you will not be single, and if you eat the lotus root, you will not change your heart, because odd number will change the sign while even number (lotus) will not. ("奇变偶不变，符号看象限" is a doggerel created by Chinese math teachers while teaching students to remember the induction formula of trigonometric function. "偶"("Even numbers") shares the same pronunciation with "藕" ("lotus") in Chinese.) So, the eternity can be got if you eat the lotus sprout.") This can not only reflect his strong accumulation of knowledge in ancient poetry, but also his mastery of language.

TV anchors should form their own "corpus" through long-term thinking and accumulation to deliver their speech easily. The anchors should not only appear good, but also have a deep cultural mastery, rational thinking ability and logical and meticulous expression ability. The TV anchors in the era of all-media need to improve their comprehensive quality and grasp the mission given to them by the times. They should constantly put forth new ideas, innovate, and face up to their shortcomings. By striving to explore the development and transformation ways, TV anchors can build their own core competitiveness and be able to move forward steadily in the era of all-media environment.

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