



Host Power and Triadic Conversation Management in Radio Phone-in Talk Shows in Hong Kong

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The C-Centre

Centre for Chinese Media and
Comparative Communication Research
中華傳媒與比較傳播研究中心



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Student Paper

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Published by C-Centre x jcMotion, School of Journalism and Communication, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Editor-in-Chief: K. W. Ma

Editor: L. S. Chan

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To cite this publication:

Li, M., & Lee, F. L. F. (2013). *Host power and triadic conversation management in radio phone-in talk shows in Hong Kong* [Electronic version]. K. W. Ma & L. S. Chan (Eds.). Hong Kong: jcMotion. Retrieved from <http://jcmotion.com.cuhk.edu.hk>

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Foreword

Winning an award at a peer-reviewed conference is an honor that most academics cherish. We like it because we enjoy being recognized by the research community. In addition, when rightly done, an award speaks to the quality of a paper. All this probably explains why the annual conventions of major communication associations of the world—ICA, NCA, AEJMC, WAPOR, IAMCR and the like—have set up awards for top student papers. While the authors will find the awards encouraging, the award-winning papers can be a source of inspiration to many others. Graduate students and budding scholars are particularly curious about these papers.

The graduate students in our School have been very active in joining all the aforesaid conferences. As teachers, we are happy to find that quite a few have won awards for their outstanding works. To meet the demand for easy access to these papers, the Centre for Chinese Media and Comparative Communication Research (the C-Centre) has launched this Award-winning Student Paper series as part of its e-publication plan. As the copyright owner, the authors are expected to revise and publish the e-papers in the more traditional venues of journals and books later. We publish the e-version as working monographs in order to speed up the dissemination of research ideas. We encourage you to share the e-papers with others. You are also invited to refer student award-winning papers to us for possible inclusion in the series.

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Miao Li and Francis L. F. Lee (faculty)

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Abstract

Past research on talk radio discourses have illustrated the crucial role of the hosts in managing the conversation and shaping the voices of the callers expressed. However, past research focused mostly on dyadic host-caller interactions. Radio talk shows in Hong Kong, in contrast, often have more than one host. This study is interested in the implications of the triadic setting of radio talk shows in Hong Kong. It uses Radio Television Hong Kong's Open Line Open View as a case study. Employing the techniques of conversation analysis, this study replicates some of past studies' findings about the source of host power. More importantly, the analysis shows that the second host in a triadic setting can play two important roles: the program conductor and the counterweight. More generally, it illustrates the utility of paying attention to the differences between dyads and triads in micro-sociological analysis of conversations in broadcast media.

This paper was awarded the Top Six Papers in the Language and Social Interaction Division of the International Communication Association (ICA) annual conference 2012.