



The Enhancement of Scene and Expression: Deconstructing and Activating the Discourse Strategies of E-commerce Anchors ——Based on A Comparative Study of Two Kinds of Anchors' Words

Yi Liu^{a*}, Lewei Chen^b, Erqi Sun^c

Communication University of Zhejiang, Jiaxing, 314500, China

^{a*} 3315453761@qq.com; ^b996026176@qq.com; ^c304872770@qq.com

Abstract. At present, E-commerce platforms, such as TikTok and Taobao have endowed Chinese online audiovisual industry with continuously economic power. Based on the capital profit-seeking and data accumulation, the E-commerce anchors need to deepen their innovation in the limited space, so that they can hold the confidence not to be engulfed by consumption and network flow. According to the discipline theory of Michel Foucault and the scene theory of Joshua Merowitz, this paper compares, analyzes and summarizes the discourse of "passionate e-commerce broadcasting" and "gentle e-commerce broadcasting", creating new discourse strategies to promote the healthy development of e-commerce anchors.

Keywords: E-commerce anchor; scene; discourse; discourse strategy

1 Introduction

According to the China Network Audiovisual Development Research Report (2023), the market size of the pan-networked audiovisual industry reached 727.44 billion yuan in 2022, an increase of 4.4% from 2021. Among them, network live broadcasting is 124.96-billion-yuan, accounting for 17.2%, becoming an important channel for daily sales.^[1] Based on Michel Foucault's theory of regulation and Joshua Merowitz's theory of media context, this paper compares two types of anchors in live broadcasting - Passionate Live and Gentle Live. And this paper further revitalizes and optimizes the discourse strategies of the e-commerce anchors through the deconstruction of the linguistic styles and discourse logic.

2 Methodology

In order to realize the objectives, this study mainly conducts semi-structured interviews with e-commerce anchors, who are working on TikTok or Taobao live rooms. The in-

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terview follows the "snowball sampling" method in qualitative research, choosing anchors who have a strong live broadcasting style (currently only doing passionate broadcasting/gentle broadcasting) to sell goods. Considering the diversity and heterogeneity of e-commerce live broadcasting, the researchers made some distinctions between age, gender, products for sales and character setting of e-commerce anchors, and finally interviewed seven e-commerce anchors, whose current basic situation are as follows.

Table 1. The Current Basic Situation of the Research Subjects

Number	Name	Gender	Age	Live Platform	Products for Sales	Character Setting	Type of anchor
1	Mai Xuan	Female	25	TikTok	Ladies 'wear	gentle	passionate
2	Mei Xiao	Female	21	TikTok	Bags	humorous	gentle
3	Mie Mie	Female	27	Taobao	Ladies 'wear	humorous	passionate
4	Yao Xiao	Male	19	TikTok	Potted Plant	humorous	gentle
5	Kai Kai	Male	21	TikTok	Ladies 'wear	Patient	passionate
6	kath	Female	20	TikTok	Men's Clothing	Patient	passionate
7	Jingle	Female	32	Taobao	'wear	Gentle	gentle

3 Deconstruction: Logic of Two Kinds of Live Broadcasting

3.1 Discourse of Information Provision

In live broadcast of e-commerce, the information provision mainly includes basic information of product, users' feedback, commodity preferences and others. The type of live broadcast will be differentiated by different products and prices. According to the industry's situation, the range of audience who prefer low-priced product is wider, and the volume of target consumers is larger. So, it is often used in the way of passionate broadcasting; on the contrary, the consumers who are used to purchasing high-priced commodity is narrower, and that group needs more detailed information about the product, so it is usually used in the way of gentle and patient broadcasting. To summarize, there are significant differences in the content discourse of the information, which are provided by the two major types of live broadcasting: passionate broadcasting and gentle broadcasting.

3.1.1 Differences of Product Introduction.

The introduction of product in the passionate broadcasting uses a single-cyclic discourse, which repeats one or a few prominent qualities of the product to leave a deep memory for the audience, thus increasing the liquidity ratios. "For example, we will repeatedly emphasize the slimness of this dress, which is suitable for all types of body shapes, so as long as the people who come into the live room, they would be attracted." (Mie Mie) This has higher requirements for the anchor's ability to control the scene, timely control of the live rhythm, and be more effectively guide the audience's consumption behavior.

In the gentle broadcast, the introduction of high-priced products appears to be more detailed and specific. The anchor and the audience establish a "point to point" relationship, and user's mind occupies a dominant role. "We have to understand the international division of fur standards, cashmere stitch length type, so that our entire live room looks more professional and reliable." (Mai Xuan) Anchors of Gentle broadcast have more accurate capture on the audiences' feedback and demands and provide a variety of information in a timely manner, including the product itself as well as the wearing skills and the use of the scene which are extended by product.

3.1.2 Consumption Guides Difference of Words and Techniques.

Poking the audience's sore points in passionate broadcast is a key mean to stimulate consumption, and the sense of security discourse provides psychological security for consumers. "Directly poke the sore point, if you are selling women's clothing, then repeatedly emphasize the thick waist, meaty arm and so on, so that the audience feel that they need this dress very much." (Mie Mie) In this type of broadcasting, the anchors use the audience's psychological need to improve themselves or make up for their deficiencies to stimulate consumers' behavior. At the same time, the anchors will continue to emphasize the "freight insurance", "no reason to return in seven days" and other after-sales policies. This discourse establishes a sense of trust and provides security at the psychological level for the audience.

In the gentle broadcast, the anchor fast caters to the audience's demands for higher-quality services, through the precise service to meet the audience's emotional needs. Additionally, the anchor catches the audience's consumer psychology of "get what one pays for", emphasizing the audience's importance of the positive correlation between the quality of the product and the price, supplementing by the product's applicable life and social scenarios, creating more needs for the audience, and thus guiding the consumer behaviors.

3.2 Discourse of the Relationship of Interaction

In the live broadcast of e-commerce, the anchor releases signals and establishes interactive relationships with the audience to ultimately achieve sales. After observing and analyzing different types of live broadcasts and interviewing the anchors, it is summarized that the differences between "Passionate Broadcast" and "Gentle Broadcast" an-

chors in establishing interactive relationships with the audience, which are mainly divided into the differences: the emotions constructed, and the scene and atmosphere constructed.

3.2.1 Differences in the Construction of Emotional Categories.

In the passionate broadcasting, the anchor is more inclined to establish a "leader" in front of the audience. Compared with the gentle broadcast, capacity of audience in passionate broadcast is often larger, the anchor and the audience establish a "one to many" relationship. Facing a large number of the audience, the anchor is difficult to accurately capture the characteristics of their demands. So, the anchor is more like to lead the audience to buy the product. Bowman proposed that modern society is an "addiction" society, in which consumption is driven not by needs but by desires [2]; Foucault proposed in the "discipline" system that "a well-trained soldier begins to obey any order, and his obedience is rapid and blind. In the system of "discipline", Foucault suggests that "a trained soldier begins to obey any order, his obedience is swift and blind, and any disobedience or delay is a crime" [3]. In the passionate live broadcast, the anchors repeat "3, 2, 1! Order!" or "Buy it now!", etc. These words are used to guide and command the audience, so that the audience unconsciously substitutes the identity of the commanded "soldier" and produces consumption demand and obeys the instruction under the stimulation of the anchor's words.

However, the anchor is still the "service provider" image in the gentle broadcast. The pace of live broadcasting is slower, and the volume of the audience is smaller than that of passionate broadcasting. Therefore, the anchors can use the audience's feedback to analyze the characteristics of the target users, including age, hobbies, behavior, and other characteristics. Then according to the needs, anchors can make great progress in understanding and recommending products. Under this relationship, the anchor can serve almost every audience.

3.2.2 Differences in Live Scene and Atmosphere Construction.

The term "scene" originally refers to a scene or situation in a play, film or literary work. With the development of commercial society, the concept of "service scene" has emerged, that is, "a tangible environment built by people" [4], which is composed of three elements: atmosphere environment, spatial display layout and functionality, symbol and artefact. The live streaming of e-commerce, which relies on video technology, constructs personalized virtual shopping and social scenes and elevates the influence to "real existence" to awaken the purchasing memory of the audience [5]. Two different forms of live broadcasting also differ with the scenes built in the live room.

In many passionate broadcastings, in addition to the "front stage" behavior of introducing the product, the anchors will also produce videos to show more work details, like production, packaging, express delivery, etc., this behavior will also be displayed in front of the audience, and there will even move the live broadcast location to the production site and other field workplaces. This adjustment can greatly satisfy the audience's curiosity and enable the audience to have a deeper sense of trust in the product and the live room, eliminating their doubts about the product, and thus consuming with

confidence^[6]. Foucault writes: "From minor punishment to deprivation, in which the spectator finds himself caught in a net of culpable punishment."^[7] In the passionate live room, "only × pieces", "we link again", "restore the original price" and other punitive terms are commonly used by anchors to stimulate consumption. This kind of disciplinary language makes the audience become a submissive role without realizing it, or in situations where they are obliged to comply.

In addition, the gentle broadcast rooms build different types of use scenarios according to the styles of products to create consumer demand. "We will match different scene construction, on the one hand, to make up more attractive screen; on the other hand, to let the audience know that I need these clothes at certain moments." For example, new Chinese style clothes, we will match some screens, paper umbrellas; Cashmere clothing will emphasize 'warmth', 'comfort' and so on the background structure." (Mei Xiao) At the beginning of introducing product, the anchor will not only introduce the product itself, but also recommend the occasions where the product may be applicable. "This dress is perfect for my sisters to wear when they are traveling...This outfit is more suitable for walking out after dinner or dancing in the square at night." (Jingle) The concrete and creative discourse on the use of the scene provides the audience with more imagination space, and more consumer demands will be generated.

4 Activation: Strategies of E-Commerce Scene and Speech Improvement

The two types of live, in essence, "a social restriction which is also a form of alienation and unfreedom."^[8] In spite of this, e-commerce anchors still need to play their own initiative in the narrow space, from the image to speech, from the scene to the derivative charm, in order to deepen more their own subjectivity and professional main responsibility.

4.1 Deep Cultivation of Credit and Identity

Nowadays, Anchors are mostly committed to deepening the audience's trust by expressing more information. However, the anchor Mie Mie does not fully support the existing image like "experts" and "brand agents" and believes that a sincere attitude can impress consumers more than information content and can form a long-term friendly relationship with consumers. This integrity mechanism is not only linked to the company's products, but from the anchor level, they need to have enough recognition and sharing desire to immerse the audience. "When I explain the product, I will first get close to the camera, as if I were close to the audience in real life, with a light in my eyes, it looks like I want to share the product with them." (Kath) "The reason why my customers trust me is that the image I create and fit our product style." (Jingle) It can be seen that anchors' sincerity can actively mobilize the audience's emotions. This kind of sincere training needs the image of the anchor, but also needs the anchor to have enough recognition of the product.

4.2 Derivative Scene Discourse, Creating New Functions

"Now our customers are very smart, praise products can not only use 'good', but also needs to think about where to praise specifically the products." (Xuan Mai)

In these interviews, many anchors emphasized the importance of optimizing scene discourse. From the imagination to the content expression, in order to enhance the language aesthetic and expression effect of speech, and to promote the "auditory imagination" of audience. In addition to the diverse scenes, new needs of the live broadcast functions are also variable. Due to the integration of virtual and real space, people can make new interpretations of the broadcast room. For instance, the relatively quiet style of the broadcast room has the possibility of replacing white noise to calm the audience's restless mood and help them immersive read and study; The relatively humorous ones have the possibility to replace listening music, so that the audience can be amused when doing housework or taking a walk, etc. In this way, the live broadcast room can create multiple functions, enabling more discourse power for more needs.

4.3 Observe the Code of Ethics and fulfill the responsibility of Anchor

With the economic growth, compared with material needs, the public has more potential needs for spiritual ones, which means that the public is focusing on the original willingness of subjectivity, and social values.^[9] However, under the power advantages of profit-seeking capital, technology platform and team operation, e-commerce anchors (mostly full-time anchors, whose commissions are closely linked to the company's products and strategies) do not have main rights change the strategy. In this process, e-commerce anchors will inevitably weaken their main sense of responsibility. "I don't like a product, but the company asks me to broadcast it, I will still broadcast it, and try to find its bright spot." (Kath) This behavior will make them lose the enthusiasm of innovation and lose the sense of professional belonging. Therefore, although the e-commerce anchors pursue economic benefits, they need to better play the authenticity and fulfill the main responsibility through the existing discourse power and interaction ability. Network anchor has a strong media influence and control, affecting the user's decision and emotion, which is also one of the reasons for the global popularity of e-commerce.^[10]

5 Conclusion

In this paper, the researchers compare two discourses of live broadcast, mainly from "information provision" and "relationship construction". After completing this semi-structured interview, this paper argues that the analysis of the tactical strategies of e-commerce anchors is still of great practical significance, as it has a subtle impact on media functions, economic benefits, the relationship between the audience and the subject of live broadcasting, and the in-depth analysis of which can be used to more deeply observe and optimize the principles of action and the development path of live broadcasting labor under the field of capital interests.

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