

Examining the rhetorical strategies employed in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows

Zhou Tianli

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
Tongren Polytechnic College, China
zhoutianli45@gmail.com

Nor Shahila Mansor

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
nsm@upm.edu.my

Lay Hoon Ang

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
hlang@upm.edu.my

Sharon Sharmini

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
s_sharmini@upm.edu.my

Xuan Tang

Leiden University, Netherlands
tangx3@vuw.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract

Researchers have pointed out that rhetorical strategies have a significant impact on producing humour in Chinese talk shows, while few of them have investigated the factors that affect the rhetorical choice in humorous discourse in that context. This study aims to identify the rhetorical strategies used in humorous discourse and investigate the factors that impact on the rhetorical strategies chosen by the hosts or comedians to produce humour. Thus, the current study selected 24 monologue samples from a popular programme called Rock & Roast and conducted a discourse analysis on them. Kenneth Burke's rhetorical theory is adopted to uncover the factors that influence rhetorical choice in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows. The findings reveal that the realisation of rhetorical strategies in the humorous discourse of talk shows is rich, including rhetorical devices, foreign language (English), and internet buzzwords, among other things. The main factors influencing the rhetorical strategies chosen in the humorous discourse in Chinese talk shows are the 'ratio' of 'agent and agency,'

which are talk show comedians and the Chinese language. This study contributes to helping the audience gain a better understanding of rhetorical humour in Chinese talk shows and provides a new perspective for humorous discourse analysis.

Keywords: rhetorical strategies, humorous discourse, Chinese talk show, Burke's Rhetorical Theory, factors

1. Introduction

“The TV talk show is a creation of twentieth-century broadcasting” (Timberg & Erler 2002: 1). According to Timberg & Erler (2002), the talk show is different from other forms of broadcasting because, while it is usually recorded live in front of a studio audience, it can also be transmitted to a mass audience at various locations around the world. Talk shows originated in the United States in the 1950s and they have since become popular all over the world. They have gradually been accepted by Chinese people since being introduced in China in the mid-1990s (Geng 2017) and are now one of their favourite types of programmes.

Talk show hosts have their own way of organising language to entertain their audience and to achieve the programme's goals. Some Chinese researchers have investigated the humorous discourse of Chinese talk show hosts or comedians from different perspectives; for instance, talk show humour discourse analysis (Hao 2018); humour pragmatic strategies (Zhang 2019); and humorous language production mechanisms (Zhou 2015; Chen 2019). In recent years, some research has focused on the rhetorical strategies in talk show humour. For example, Wang (2019) analysed the art of using rhetorical humour in talk shows and argued that mastering the rhetorical skills of humorous language is extremely important for talk show hosts and debaters to improve the artistry of their expression. In addition, Hu (2020) investigated the characteristics and pragmatic effects of humorous language in the talk show *Roast*. He found some rhetorical strategies in the talk show's discourse, such as euphemism and exaggeration. Further, Jiang (2021), through the analysis of the corpus of the programme *Talk Show Conference*, explored the features of talk show language in terms of word formation and the use of rhetorical patterns. She discussed the features of talk show language in terms of word meaning disassembly and substitution; the use of discourse; and the rhetoric of metaphor, contrast, exaggeration, and allusion applied in talk shows.

According to Burke (1945), *rhetoric* is the use of symbols to shape and change human beings and their contexts. He proposed that rhetoric is not a negative act but a strategic one, and the results of such strategies are effective arguments based on the choices of the speaker or writer. Although previous studies show that rhetorical strategies are used in Chinese talk shows and it is an important skill for a talk show comedian, the reasons why a talk show host or comedian chooses a certain rhetorical strategy or why a comedian prefers to use certain rhetorical strategies are questions that have still not been investigated by researchers. In addition, Burke (1945) emphasises that all human motives contain rhetoric; in effect, all human language is rhetoric. While previous studies have focused on exploring the rhetorical devices in talk shows' humorous discourse, they did not consider other kinds of linguistic aspects in achieving humour. So, the prior studies have some limitations in investigating rhetorical strategies in talk shows. To address the gap left behind, this study aims to identify the rhetorical strategies that have been used in humorous discourse in Chinese talk shows and investigate the factors that potentially impact the rhetorical strategies chosen by the host or comedian to produce humorous discourse. Specifically, the research questions of this study are the following:

1. What rhetorical strategies are used in humorous discourse by the hosts of Chinese talk shows?
2. Why do talk show hosts, or comedians, choose to use a particular rhetorical strategy?

This is one of the first studies to examine the factors that affect rhetorical strategy choice in humorous discourse, which will serve as a reference for further studies. This study will first discuss Burke's rhetorical theory, and it will then review the relevant studies and clarify the methodology. Finally, the findings of the study are presented and followed by a detailed analysis and discussion.

2. Theoretical background

Aristotle defined rhetoric as “the faculty of observing the available means of persuasion in any given case” and “the inventor of formal logic” (Aristotle 2004: 3). Aristotle employs the word *means*, which refers to a writer's tools and techniques. He presents a series of reasonable reasoning tactics to achieve this result. A speech situation, according to him, consists of “the three elements in speech-making – speaker, subject, and person addressed” (Figure 1) (Aristotle 2004: 7).

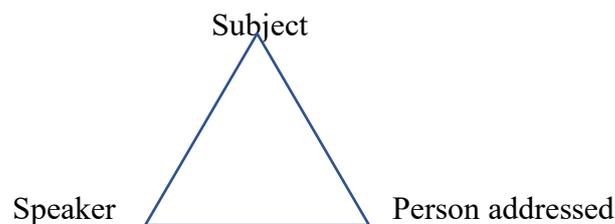


Figure 1: Aristotle's rhetorical triangle

However, Burke (1945) believes that rhetoric is the use of linguistic symbols by humans in certain contexts to shape and change people's ideas. Burke (1945) argues that language often has a strategic dimension and that the linguistic choices we make when we speak shape our perceptions and reveal our intentions. Whereas the old rhetoric was primarily concerned with the structure or content of discourse, the new rhetorician tries to understand what is going on when a text is created and what impact that text has on society (Ju 2004). Burke (1969) claims that language is not a neutral tool for describing factual reality. Symbols, on the other hand, are the mechanisms by which we comprehend ourselves and our surroundings and how we achieve change.

In 1967, Burke proposed that the key word of the new rhetoric is *identification*, which includes a partly *unconscious* element, while the key word of the old rhetoric is *persuasion*, which emphasises *intentional* design. Burke appears to be broadening the definition of rhetoric beyond its customary definition. He even claims a rhetorical motive in clothes, pastorals, courtship, among other things (Burke 1969: 115-127). Because for Burke rhetoric is much more than a way to help you debate, as traditional rhetoric does; it is a tool to help you analyse the world. Still, Burke does not restrict the use of rhetorical language in persuasion; he is concerned with making linguistic discourse that can be understood by his audience or that enables us to observe how all dialogue actively moulds our perceptions of the world. Despite their differences, Burke's rhetoric and Aristotle's rhetoric are very much related in terms of their operational mechanisms, as evidenced by a certain degree of intertwining and adaptation between them (Deng 2011).

Another core theory of Burke's rhetoric is the concept of *dramatical pentad*, which includes five basic elements: act, agent, agency, scene and purpose (see Figure 2). According to Burke (1945), human beings as language symbol users represent a kind of motive. In describing the five elements, Burke (1945) said that an *act* is what happens to ideas and things; a *scene* refers to the context in which this happens, or where the scene is, and at the same time, you must point out who or what kind of person did this (*agent*), by what means (*agency*), and what *purpose* was achieved. The pentad is a way of looking at language as action, human motivations, and human relationships. Finding the motivation for a given rhetorical act necessitates a thorough assessment of all five aspects of the pentad.

Burke coined the term *ratios* to describe the various combinations of phrases. Burke identifies 10 ratios that allow for a more extensive investigation of the numerous interactions between the terms: scene-act, scene-agent, scene-agency, scene-purpose, act-purpose, act-agent, act-agency, agent-purpose, agent-agency, and agency-purpose (Ju 2004). Herrick (2018: 229) claims that "[a] ratio of elements from the pentad may be highlighted as part of a rhetorical strategy." The elements of the pentad, as well as the various ratios, can be used to better understand human motivation. They can, however, be strategically employed to influence audiences, such as a means of identification. The rhetor may develop a rhetorical strategy with motives of persuasion by the pentad and ratios. For instance, when giving a speech or acting in a specific rhetorical situation, the rhetor may blend ratios to his or her advantage to become more consubstantial and, as a result, a better communicator. Therefore, the shape of the dramatical pentad is not always like the shape of a star; it would be changed by human motivation or rhetorical necessities of the situation, which could only be two or three elements of the pentad influenced by the 'ratio.' Thus, Burke's dramatical pentad could well explain why and what people do in some specific situations, and it could be deeply exploited in investigating the factors that encourage their motives for the use of rhetorical strategies, which is very crucial to analysing rhetorical situations. Pm et al. (2019) argue that Burke's rhetorical theory is a reasonable instrument for examining a communicator's motive for influencing audiences' perceptions to influence their behaviour and elicit certain desired responses. In addition, Burke's five pentads were applied in interpreting the motives of politicians' speeches (Cholid et al. 2019) and political texts (Ripley 2020).

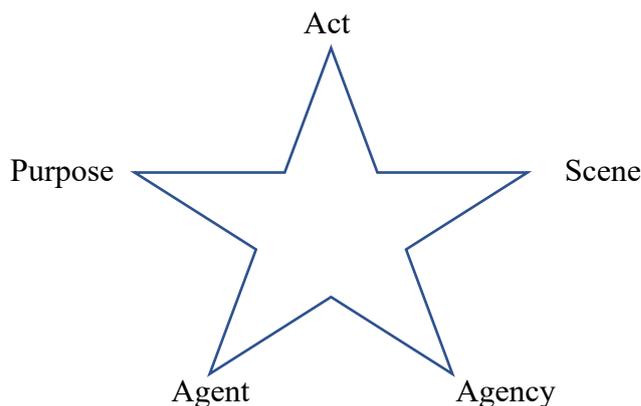


Figure 2. Dramatic Pentad

However, few studies have considered the ratio of rhetoric and applied it to the rhetorical analysis of humour. Therefore, this study tries to examine Chinese talk shows based on Burke's rhetoric theory and conducts an in-depth analysis of humorous discourse in talk shows. It aims to identify the rhetorical strategies in the humorous discourse of the talk shows. Then, to

investigate the reasons that affected rhetorical choice in different talk shows and illustrate how these factors work on rhetorical use according to different talk show comedians, it is necessary to investigate the pentad elements of the humorous speeches in different talk shows.

Based on Burke's (1945) dramatic pentad, from a micro perspective, the scene of the Chinese talk show is the talk show performance stage; the act is a talk show performance; and the purpose of the talk show is to achieve humour and provide entertainment. The agency is the Chinese language; and the agents are the talk show hosts and comedians. In a talk show scenario, the scene, act, and purpose are usually the same for all participants, but humorous discourse will be produced by different hosts or comedians using different arrangements of language. Therefore, this study argues that the talk show rhetorical strategies are impacted by the ratios of 'agent-agency.' Specifically, the Chinese language and the different presenters of the talk shows are the main elements that will influence the rhetorical choice of the humorous discourse in the talk show. Hence, this study will examine how these two factors affect the rhetorical strategies chosen in Chinese talk shows.

3. Studies on rhetorical strategies

Rhetorical strategies affect language expression and communication. Therefore, researchers examine it from different perspectives and in different contexts. Some rhetorical strategy studies concentrate on discussing rhetorical techniques based on phonetics, lexical items, syntax, and grammar. Fang (2011) uses Zhao Benshan's (a famous comedian in China) sketches as a corpus to investigate the comedy of Zhao's rhetorical strategies and language effects. She applies the perspectives of phonetic rhetoric, lexical rhetoric, and grammar rhetoric to analyse Zhao's sketches and concludes that all these rhetorical strategies play a significant role in achieving Zhao's humorous language effects. Also, Bu (2014) examines the phonetics, lexical, and syntax rhetoric in the rhetorical strategies stand-up comedians employ to add humour to a theme; especially in using phonetic rhetorical strategies to achieve the rhetoric of pun, misunderstanding and so on.

Some scholars argue that rhetorical strategy has some influence on real issues (Alvesson & Kärreman 2011) and that actors can only use rhetorical methods to appropriate the meanings of a policy that best serves their own goals (Mueller et al. 2004). Then, in 2017, Roberta Bernardi investigates how effective rhetorical strategies are at influencing the meaning, negotiation and legitimisation of health-care policies and information systems innovation. Her study suggests that the power balance between actors and how actors connect their interests and values with the social cognitive structure are two important factors in determining which rhetorical strategies actors use and the role of these strategies in disseminating and establishing the framework affecting information systems innovation (Bernardi 2017). Bernardi's study provides us with a new perspective to assess the rhetorical strategies in policy and shows the function of rhetorical strategy in negotiating and influencing reality.

Sushanta Kumar Sarma (2016) examines the rhetorical techniques of two Indian microfinance institutions as they transitioned from a non-profit to a commercial model. According to Sarma's study, two types of rhetorical strategies are attested: teleological and cosmological ones. His research also supports the idea that language has a performative function and introduces a new setting (India) in which to study rhetorical strategies (Sarma 2016). What is more, his paper proposes the augmentation of a rhetorical technique that demonstrates how rhetoric can be used as a *designed strategy* to persuade a target audience toward predetermined goals, which means that the rhetorical method explicitly links the use of language to the actors' interests.

In addition, rhetorical strategies were examined in different contexts by using different

support theories. A group of researchers, including Ko (2015) and Troje (2018) among others, adopted Aristotle's three models of persuasion as rhetorical strategies to analyse different discourses and speeches. According to Ko (2015), Aristotle was the first to divide persuasion into three rhetorical appeals that can affect the audience: the orator's authority (*ethos*); the audience's emotions and feelings (*pathos*); and logical reasoning (*logos*). Troje (2018) analyses the rhetorical strategies that were employed by the supporters of social procurement in Sweden. Her findings reveal that they used a variety of rhetorical strategies such as ethos, logos, and pathos, and arguments to persuade and appeal to the potential supporter's emotions. Her research provides an overview of many types of rhetorical arguments for those who intend to make social procurement. Troje's (2018) study emphasises the importance of argumentative rhetoric in the context of social procurement in Sweden.

Then, in 2018, political speeches examined by Švobaitė with the rhetorical strategies of Aristotle aim to compare the rhetorical uses of two presidents' pre-election speeches – the president of the Republic of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, and the president of the United States, Donald Trump. Švobaitė's (2018) research indicates that the two presidents tend to employ different rhetorical strategies when they deliver political speeches. Trump preferred to use ethos to convince the audience, while Grybauskaitė adopted pathos to appeal to the emotions of her listeners (Švobaitė 2018). In the same year, based on the three models of Aristotle's persuasive methods, Wachsmuth et al. (2018) proposed a model of rhetorical strategies for effective computational synthesis of augmentation. They claim that the previous strategic systems are only suitable for formal argumentation, while their synthesis-oriented model considers content, structure, and style properties that need to be known in advance (Wachsmuth et al. 2018). In their model, they argue that rhetorical strategies mean selecting, arranging, and phrasing a set of argumentative discourse units, and they asked 26 experts to synthesize argumentative discourse with different strategies on 10 topics. The result shows that when following the same strategy, experts are more consistent in their choices. However, Wachsmuth et al. (2018) discovered that the strategy had little effect on the placement of argumentative discourse units and the rephrasing of their linkages and that it needed to be further explored. Furthermore, Liu et al. (2019) did a text analysis of CEOs' rhetorical strategies and firms' corporate social performance (CSP). Based on Aristotle's pathos, ethos, and logos strategies, they investigated whether CEOs applied these strategies and what the impact was on the CSP. They found that both pathos and logos have a positive influence on CSP, but there is no significant link between the CEOs' ethos and CSP. Their findings contribute to upper echelon theory and CSR research, as well as offer advice to CEOs on how to use effective rhetorical strategies.

Moreover, some researchers explored rhetorical strategies in academic articles by using the three-move Create a Research Space (CARS) model (Marta 2019); others looked at the intricacies of how English euphemisms and dysphemism serve as rhetorical and strategic tools in political media discourse (Aytan et al. 2021); and finally, a pragmatic-rhetorical strategy was examined in the discourse of commencement speakers by Mubarak & Rhaif (2021).

Overall, this section reviews the research on rhetorical strategies in recent years. All these studies enrich our understanding of rhetorical strategies, enabling us to perceive rhetorical strategies from a more macro-direction and serving as a good reference for future research. However, many scholars examined rhetorical strategies in different discourse types in terms of Aristotle's (1954) rhetorical strategies (pathos, ethos, and logos), but they did not specifically address the rhetorical strategies achieved through different types of linguistic methods, and they ignored factors that may affect the choice of rhetorical strategies. Aristotle's rhetorical strategies are mainly used to persuade the audience and gain their support, and they are applicable to any context, although they are not necessarily related to humorous discourse. Very few studies of

rhetorical strategies are related to humorous discourse, especially in talk shows. Chinese talk show hosts employ many different rhetorical strategies to achieve humour (Wang 2019; Hu 2020; Jiang 2021). In addition, the studies did not explore the reasons that affect rhetoric. Thus, this study attempts to make an in-depth analysis of the rhetoric of humorous discourse and tries to use Burke's (1945) theory to analyse the factors affecting the choice of rhetorical strategies of the hosts of Chinese talk shows.

4. Methods

Since this study focuses on examining the rhetorical strategies used in the humorous discourses of Chinese talk shows, a qualitative discourse analysis approach is adopted.

4.1 Data sources

The data comes from a popular talk show programme in China named *Rock & Roast* (also known as *Talk Show Conference*) and released by Tencent Penguin Pictures and Shanghai Xiao Guo Culture Media Co., Ltd. *Rock & Roast*, which has had four seasons since it began broadcasting in August 2017, is a talk show competition programme. As an online talk show, each episode sets a different theme, and the comedians use their professional comedy creation skills to output their views, meeting the diverse information needs of the audience (Tu & Luo 2021). Several talk show comedians compete for the annual "Talk Show King" crown. *Rock & Roast* is a new exploration and continuous advancement in the field of talk show comedies. The programme topics concerned reality, ridicule hotspots, and societal insight. In the current social environment where self-mockery has become the common behaviour of young people, it makes the audience happy and gains information at the same time (Huo 2021).

4.2 Sample selection

From season four of *Rock & Roast*, 24 monologues from eight talk show contestants (three monologues from each contestant) were selected as data. Season four is dated from August 10 to October 14, 2021, which is the latest season of the programme and the most popular season for the audience, with 120 million video views. It depends on the participation of the third season talk show champion, Wang Mian, runner-up Wang Jianguo, and runner-up Hu Lan. The contestants were also competing for the title of "Talk Show King." Their linguistic performance was quite brilliant, which is worthy of attention and study. In addition, it invited cross-border contestants from different industries, occupations, and backgrounds, which met the study's requirements for the agency background investigation. All eight contestants' background information, such as their previous job experience and years of talk show engagement, was obtained from the programme's official website. Moreover, a data selection criterion was proposed and has been applied in the process of data selection. First, the duration of each talk show should be over five minutes, as monologues of less than five minutes are considered too short to include humour. Second, the theme of the monologues should relate to life, gossip, and entertainment to avoid some ethical issues. The video clips were downloaded from its official online platform, Tencent Video (<https://v.qq.com>), following the proposed criteria. The total duration of the 24 video clips is 144 minutes and the clips were given codes as Sample 1, Sample 2, and so on.

4.3 Data transcribing and coding

After downloading the video clips, the speech lines of the samples were transcribed. The MS-Word's dictation tool was used to recognise the speech lines automatically, followed by manual correction. All the collected data was saved in a MS Word file, with a total word count of 30,852 words. Next, the authors observed the transcribed text and watched the video carefully and repeatedly to identify all the rhetorical strategies that made the audience laugh, and then classify them into categories. Finally, the categories of the data were coded, each according to its main characteristics by Excel and NVivo. Excel was used to document the numbers of rhetorical strategies and make figures to present the data, and then the categories were coded by NVivo to map their relationship with the identified rhetorical strategies and comedians.

4.4 Data analysis

The data analysis follows the research objectives of this study. To begin with, this study identified all the rhetorical strategies used in Chinese talk shows' humorous discourse and summarised their numbers and percentages in the data, followed by in-depth analysis and discussion. The second step is to investigate the factors that may influence the choice of these rhetorical strategies and to examine how these factors impact them in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows. From the reviewed theoretical framework of Burke (1945), the 'ratio' that affected CTSs' rhetorical strategy adoption is 'agent-agency.' Therefore, this study has focused on this 'ratio' to conduct a profound analysis. The comedians' background information was first investigated to examine if their background and life experiences have an impact on the choice of rhetorical strategies and how this factor affects the rhetorical strategy selection. Then, factors related to the Chinese language were deeply analysed and discussed to explore their influence on rhetorical strategy use.

5. Findings

5.1 Rhetorical strategies used in Chinese talk shows' humorous discourse

In order to respond to the research objective of identifying the rhetorical strategies used in the Chinese talk shows' humorous discourse, Figure 3 is provided. As shown in Figure 3, the rhetorical strategy is the agency of the talk show comedians, through which they achieve rhetorical humour in their performance. After carefully screening the rhetorical strategies achieved through various methods, including rhetorical devices, foreign languages that are mainly in English, internet buzzwords, idioms, lexical misuses and collocations, coinages, self-deprecating colloquialism, and dialect accents.

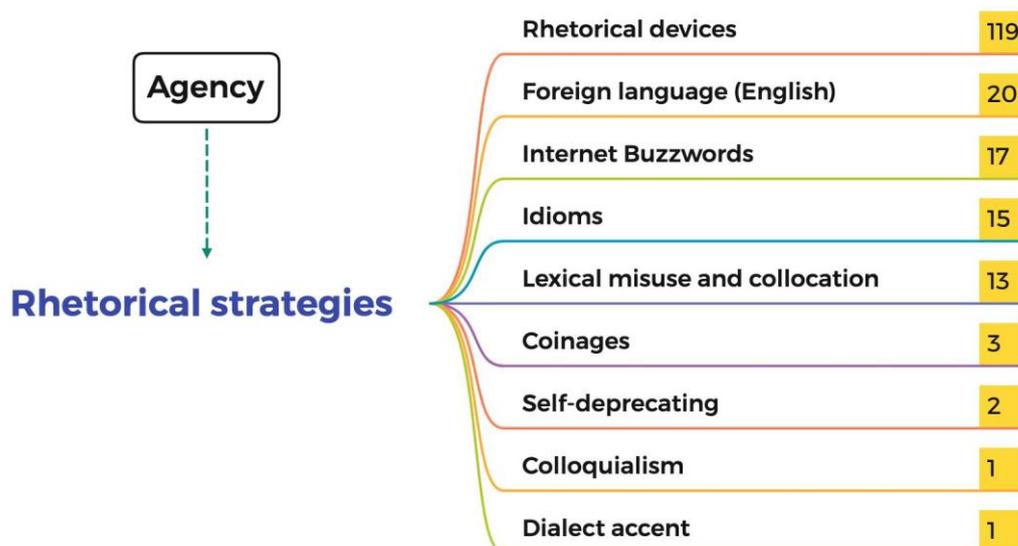


Figure 3. Rhetorical strategies identified in Chinese talk shows' humorous discourse

As reported in Figure 3, rhetorical devices were the most frequently used rhetorical strategy, and the various rhetorical devices were used 119 times to achieve rhetorical humour in talk show humorous discourse. In second place was the use of English rhetorical strategies, which reached 20 times. Next in line are the internet buzzwords, idioms, and lexical misuse and collocation, which appear 17 times, 15 times, and 13 times respectively, in the collected data. Coinages and self-deprecation were used less frequently, three times and two times respectively. The least used rhetorical strategies are the dialect accent strategy and the colloquialism strategy, both of which have been used only once.

To further clarify the proportion of each rhetorical strategy within the total rhetorical humour, this study calculated their proportion within the total rhetorical strategies (see Figure 4). Rhetorical strategies achieved through rhetorical devices account for more than 62.3 % of the total, which means that more than half of all rhetorical humour is achieved through rhetorical devices. It seems that the Chinese talk show comedians are good at applying rhetorical devices to produce humorous discourse. The second one is foreign language, accounting for 10.47 %, where foreign language mainly refers to English, and talk show comedians often resort to English to achieve rhetorical humour. In third place is the use of internet buzzwords (8.9 %). With the development of the internet, more and more buzzwords are emerging and slowly penetrating our lives, and internet buzzwords have become an important rhetorical means to achieve humorous discourse. The fourth one is the use of idioms, accounting for 7.85 %. The fifth place is taken by the misuse or mismatching of Chinese words (lexical misuse and collocation), and this rhetorical strategy accounts for 6.81 % of the total. This rhetoric makes the meaning of the sentence appear incongruous, thus allowing the audience to grasp the silliness and humour of this misuse. The least represented rhetorical strategies are coinages (1.57 %), self-deprecating (1.05 %), dialect accent (0.52 %) and colloquialism (0.52 %). Although these rhetorical devices are small in proportion, their rhetorical effect should not be underestimated, as they can also make the audience laugh.

In conclusion, the findings reveal nine types of rhetorical strategies that have been used by Chinese talk show comedians to achieve humorous discourse. From Figure 4, the study found that they were distributed unevenly. This suggests the comedians may have preferences in choosing rhetorical strategies to produce humour. The rhetorical devices rank the most, which means they were used more frequently, while other strategies were used less frequently,

especially for the use of dialect accent and colloquialism. The factors affecting the use of these rhetorical strategies are illustrated in the following section.

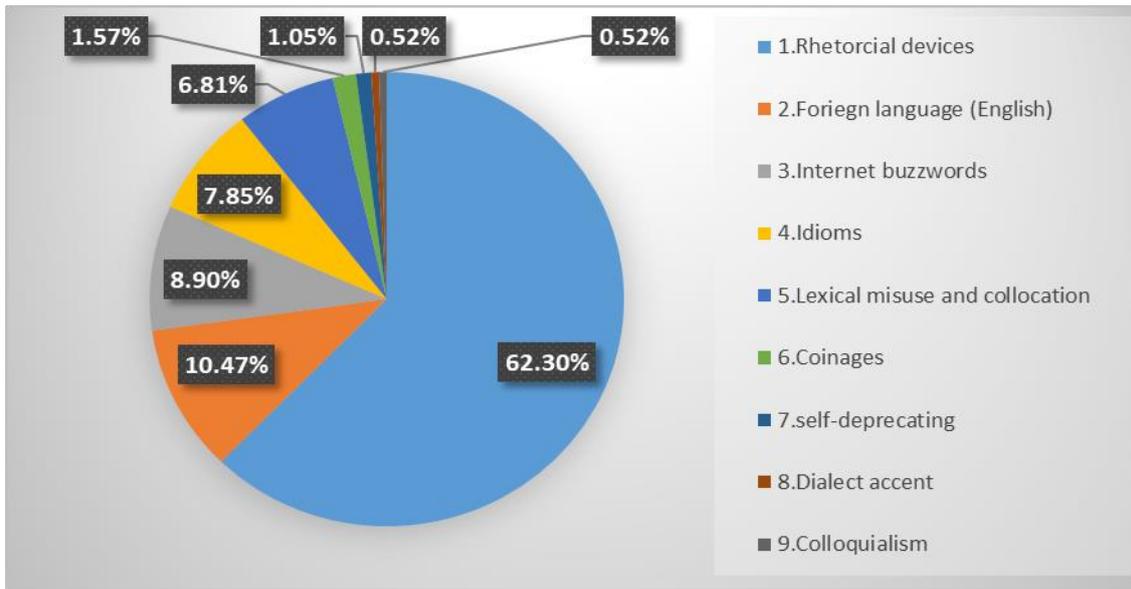


Figure 4. Each rhetorical strategy's percentage in the collected data

5.2 Factors influencing rhetorical strategy selection in humorous Chinese talk show discourse

This study stated that the rhetorical 'ratio' of Chinese talk show is 'agent-agency,' so these two factors are examined in this section as follows: first, this section investigates the backgrounds and life experiences of the eight talk show comedians and, second, this section examines the linguistic aspect of the Chinese language.

5.2.1 Talk show comedians' background and life experience: Agent

To examine whether the background and life experiences of talk show comedians have an impact on the choice of rhetorical strategies, this study obtained basic information about talk show comedians from the informational presentations of the talk show (see Table 1).

Table 1. Talk show comedians

TSC	Previous job	Years of talk show performance	No. of SS&RS
Tong	English teacher	3	3(33)
Yang	Clerk	4	3(32)
Pang	Programmer	5	3(26)
Zhang	Training teacher	2	3(26)
Hu	Programmer	4	3(24)
He	Worker	3	3(22)
Xu	Postgraduate student	2.5	3(16)
Zhou	Corporate Shareholders	6.5	3(12)

(TSC represents Talk show comedian, SS represents Selected sample, RS represents Rhetorical strategies)

Table 1 shows that before engaging in stand-up comedy performances, all the talk show comedians were engaged in jobs unrelated to the talk show, and they had different work

backgrounds and life experiences. All the contestants had been involved in talk shows for different lengths of time, with the shortest being two years and the longest being over six years. Zhou has been doing stand-up comedy for six and a half years but has used the least number of rhetorical strategies to achieve humour, hence there seems to be no significant correlation or pattern between the number of years of experience of the talk show comedians and the frequency of rhetorical strategies used. The relationship between the length of time spent on talk shows and the number of times they use rhetorical strategies, does not reflect a positive or negative correlation, which suggests that the length of time comedians spend on talk shows does not affect whether they use rhetorical strategies to achieve humorous discourse.

In order to check whether talk show comedians exhibit different choices while presenting talk shows, this study categorised the rhetorical strategies according to comedians, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Talk show comedian’s rhetorical strategies used in their monologues

<i>RS</i>	<i>TSC</i>	Tong	Yang	Pang	Zhang	Hu	He	Xu	Zhou	TT
Rhetorical devices		15	19	16	17	18	11	12	11	119
Foreign Languages		10	4	3	2				1	20
Buzzword		1	1	5	1	2	7			17
Idiom		6	6				3			15
Lexical misuse and collocation		1	1	1	6	3		1		13
Coinage				1		1	1			3
self-deprecating								2		2
Dialect accent								1		1
Colloquialism			1							1
TT		33	32	26	26	24	22	16	12	191

(RS represents Rhetorical strategies, TSC represents Talk show comedian, TT represents Total)

Table 2 shows that each talk show comedian has achieved discourse humour through rhetorical strategies but the frequency of their use of rhetorical strategies and the adoption of strategies differ. All the comedians use them more than 10 times. Six comedians used rhetorical strategies more than 20 times to achieve humour, while the other two used it only 12 and 16 times (i.e., Xu and Zhou). Tong and Yang used rhetorical strategies most often to achieve humour, 33 and 32 times, respectively.

Second, each comedian achieves rhetorical humour by using rhetorical devices. However, they differ in choosing other types of rhetorical strategies. The comedian who achieved the most rhetorical strategies using English was Tong, who used foreign language strategies 10 times. For example, he described the situation in which he and his students were walking in an unsafe district in luxury clothes. He described this both in Chinese and English “仿佛在街边流浪汉说, try me, try me, I have all you need, just try me. [As if to say to the tramp, try me, try me, I have all you need, just try me]”. Tong was an English teacher before he participated in the talk show programme, so his previous occupation or his second language may have influenced his choice of rhetorical strategies.

The comedian who uses buzzwords to achieve rhetorical humour is He: he uses buzzwords seven times to achieve humour, including “(tuan fen) 团粉 [Fans who like all members of an idol group and highly recognise the “member love” between them]; (tian gou) 舔狗 [a person being overwhelmed by love, forgetting dignity, and even forgetting to love himself],” among others. This shows that he is familiar with the meaning of buzzwords and can use them flexibly

in his daily discourse to achieve humour. He was a clerk before he joined the talk show, and his life and work environment were intertwined with the social environment, so he mastered many current popular social discourses, which had a profound influence on the rhetorical strategies he used.

Looking again at the use of lexical misuse and collocation, Zhang uses this strategy six times, which is more than other comedians; for instance “(lǜ pí fēi jī) 绿皮飞机 [a green plane],” but in China, there is only one saying “(lǜ pí huó chē) 绿皮火车 [a traditional green train in poor condition].” Zhang’s lexical misuse and collocation imply the poor condition of the airplane. From Zhang’s occupational background we know that he works in a training institution, so his occupation is challenging and requires good elocution and discourse skills to attract the attention of the trainees, which means he is good at splitting and reorganising words to achieve humorous discourse effects.

Some rhetorical strategies are rarely used. These include coinage, idiom, self-deprecating, dialect accents, and colloquialism. However, their use can often produce unexpected humorous effects in talk show comic discourse. Only Xu used the self-deprecating strategy twice, saying: “I am a postgraduate student who looks like a farmer” to satirise his discordant identity and appearance.

All the evidence suggests that the comedians’ background and previous life experience have an influence on their rhetorical strategy choices.

5.2.2 Linguistic factors of Chinese: Agency

Based on Figure 3, this study coded and categorised the attested rhetorical strategies and then found that the choice of rhetorical strategies in Chinese talk shows is mainly affected by the diversity of Chinese rhetorical devices, the diversity of Chinese lexical formation, Chinese grammatical rules and semantic characteristics, Chinese phonetic variation, and traditional colloquialism (see Figure 5).

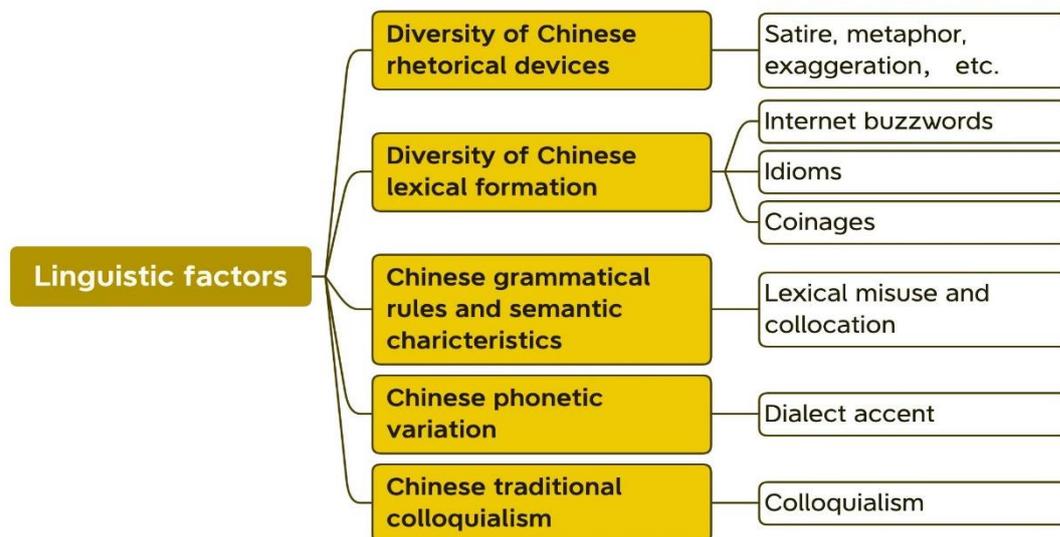


Figure 5. Linguistic factors in Chinese influence rhetorical strategy adoption

First, the linguistic characteristics of the Chinese language provide a rich variety of rhetorical choices and talk show comedians can achieve rhetorical humour through a variety of rhetorical devices (see Figure 6).

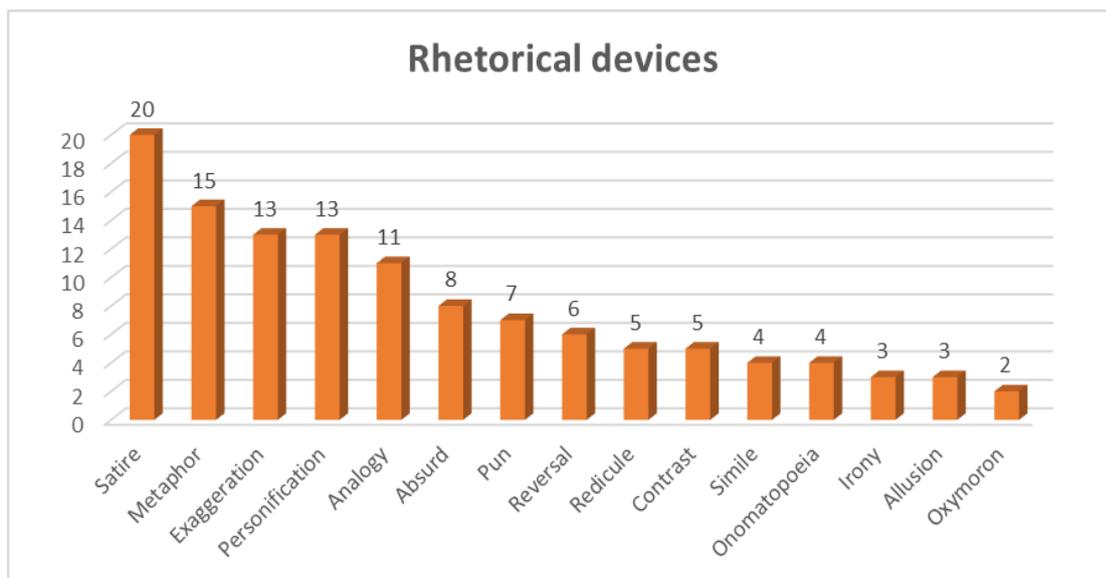


Figure 6. Rhetorical devices found in achieving rhetorical strategies of the data

Figure 6 shows how rhetorical devices were used in the data. There are 15 rhetorical devices in total, which are satire, metaphor, exaggeration, personification, analogy, absurd, pun, reversal, ridicule, contrast, simile, onomatopoeia, irony, allusion and oxymoron. Among them, satire was used 20 times, which indicates it was used more frequently than other rhetorical devices by the talk show comedians, followed by the devices of metaphor (used 15 times), exaggeration (13), personification (13) and analogy (11). While the rest of the rhetorical devices were used less than ten times, especially the use of oxymoron (2). Talk show rhetorical humour relies heavily on the realisation of rhetorical strategies through rhetorical devices. Therefore, the adoption of the rhetorical humour strategy in Chinese talk shows is supported by the diversity of rhetorical devices in the Chinese language. Here are two examples of the two most popular rhetorical devices, satire and metaphor, identified in the data.

Satire: When Tong was describing his awkward experience of studying English at Beijing Sport University, he was kind to everyone because most of the students at this university are stronger than him, and he was afraid he may come across some unexpected campus violence. So, he always liked to assist others. Then the other students were amazed and said, “这奥运会也过去一年多, 怎么还有志愿者呀? (It’s been more than a year since the Olympics, why are there still volunteers?).” The audience burst into laughter because this sentence satirised Tong’s cowardice and foolishness.

Metaphor: In Zhang’s monologue, he talked about his weight, and he shared his experience of using a lift. He said, “我走进电梯超载了, 而且这没什么, 我习惯了, 因为我一般都是那个压垮电梯的最后一个骆驼. (I walked in, and the lift was overloaded, and it’s nothing. I’m used to it because I’m usually the last camel that crushes the lift).” Through metaphorical rhetoric, Zhang compared himself to a camel to imply that he is overweight.

Second, the use of rhetorical strategies by Chinese talk show comedians is influenced by Chinese word formation. According to Figure 3, the comedians adopted many rhetorical strategies that were achieved using lexical flexibility, such as internet buzzwords (used 17 times), idioms (15) and coinages (3). Internet buzzwords that appear in the data such as “(nei juan)内卷[the rat race]”, “(jiu cai) 韭菜 [describe how some people in the stock market leave at a loss, but after cutting leeks, due to the tenacity of the leek they grow up again, which represents the new stockholders]”, “(hua shui) 划水 [It refers to the behaviour of not contributing in any group activity]”, among others. These strategies are very popular among the audiences.

Also, there are 15 idioms used to achieve humour including “(dan xiao ru shu) 胆小如鼠 [describe someone as very timid];” “(zhao mao hua hu) 照猫画虎[a metaphor for someone who imitates only formally but doesn’t actually understand].” “(cang hai yi su) 沧海一粟[a grain of sand in the sea. It means that someone or something is very small and insignificant];” and so on. While the coinages such as “(mo bi wu si juan) 莫比乌斯卷” which is created based on “nei juan,” while “nei juan” means “the rat race,” but the “mo bi wu si juan” refers to fiercer competition. The talk show comedians create a new word based on an existing buzzword, which expands and extends the meaning of the original base word and enriches the content of discourse.

Third, the choice of rhetorical strategies by talk show comedians is influenced by the rules of Chinese grammar and semantics. Rhetorical strategies that violate the rules of Chinese grammar, that is, lexical misuse and collocation (used 13 times), are found in Chinese talk show humour. Still, this misuse and mismatch of vocabulary leads to a confusion of semantic structures, making the semantics discordant or even confusing, and it is the humour of this semantic contradiction that is felt by the audience and makes them laugh. “(lv pi fei ji) 绿皮飞机” has been mentioned as an example before and another example, also from Zhang’s talk show clips, is presented here. Zhang describes himself as a “(shang wu da han) 商务大汉 [big fellow]” to indirectly satirise his large size. In general, “(shang wu) 商务 [business]” is a phrase used by Chinese people in conjunction with transportation vehicles, such as car, train, or plane, to express the business seat in the vehicle. Zhang’s use of the word “shang wu” with a person has an unexpectedly humorous effect. The audience felt the semantic confusion and incongruity in Zhang’s mispairing, and thus felt the humour. There are many more such mismatches in the data, such as “(mo dao huo xiang bo yang) 磨刀霍霍向博洋[quickly sharpen the knife and run to the competitors, it implies the fierce competition],” but the old saying is “(mo dao huo xiang zhu yang) 磨刀霍霍向猪羊 [Mulan’s brother quickly sharpened the knife and ran to the pigs and sheep to prepare food for Mulan (an ancient Chinese female hero)],” and “(che dao shan qian bi you lu) 车到山前必有鹿 [when we get to the mountain, there will be a deer],” while the correct saying is “(che dao shan qian bi you lu) 车到山前必有路 [when you encounter difficulties moving forward, and there will always be ways to solve them]” Interestingly, “(lu) 鹿 [deer]” and “(lu) 路 [roads, ways, or methods]” have the same pronunciation but totally different meanings.

Moreover, the adoption of rhetorical strategies by talk show comedians is influenced by the variation in Chinese phonetics. From Figure 5, the dialect accent (used once) can also be used as a rhetorical strategy to achieve discourse humour. The official language of China is Mandarin, so most of the output of various television programmes is in Mandarin. Although talk shows require the use of standard Mandarin, there are individual comedians who do not speak standard Mandarin due to the influence of dialects, or comedians who intend to use Mandarin with a dialect accent to achieve a humorous rhetorical effect. In a clip from Xu’s talk show, he describes his embarrassment experiences because he is colour-blind; he says that colour-blindness is a “(jue zheng) 绝症 [incurable disease; fatal illness]” that cannot be cured, but he pronounced it as “Jio zheng [Jio is a popular internet word, which comes from the dialects of Sichuan, Chongqing, Yunnan, Guizhou and other provinces. It means “foot.”].” Although the pronunciation of only one word was incorrect, the meaning was very different. He confused the pronunciation of the dialect with the pronunciation of Mandarin, making a variation of the standard pronunciation, but still had an unaware expression, which made the audience laugh.

Finally, the rhetorical strategy is also influenced by colloquialisms (used once) that are common in Chinese traditional culture. In a clip from Yang’s talk show, he said that, although he used to be in financial straits, his girlfriend was still committed to him and stayed with him, and he did not know how to describe the relationship. An audience member said that it was

called: “(jia gou sui gou) 嫁狗随狗。” In ancient China, no matter what kind of man a woman married, she could only obey her husband, just like chickens and dogs are loyal to their partners, so there is a colloquialism: “(jia ji sui ji, jia gou sui gou) 嫁鸡随鸡, 嫁狗随狗 [marry a cock and follow the cock, marry a dog and follow the dog].” In the talk show segment, Yang describes his relationship with his girlfriend through activating the colloquialism “jia gou sui gou,” added by an audience member, and thus finds a humorous way to express himself.

Through the above findings, this study provides a glimpse into the linguistic factors that influence the choice of rhetorical strategies and examines the linguistic characteristics of rhetoric in Chinese talk shows.

6. Discussion

This study intends to map the rhetorical strategies used by the hosts of Chinese talk shows and investigates the factors that affected their choice. The findings of this study will be analysed and discussed in this section.

The first findings of the study respond to the research question one. Nine types of rhetorical strategies are found in the collected data, including rhetorical devices, foreign language (English), internet buzzwords, idioms, lexical misuses and collocations, coinages, self-deprecating colloquialism, and dialect accents. This result suggests that the hosts used various rhetorical strategies to create humour during their performance, which supported the findings of studies such as Wang (2019). He has clearly stated that it is very important for a talk show comedian to master the skills of rhetoric in producing humour. However, this study has identified all possible types of rhetorical strategies used in the collected data in addition to rhetorical devices, and this enriches the dimension of rhetorical strategies that previous studies have mentioned. This is because, according to Burke (1945), rhetoric is the motivation behind all human language; hence, all kinds of linguistic points to make people laugh in the Chinese talk shows should be considered as rhetorical strategies.

According to each rhetorical strategy's percentage in the collected data (Figure 4), it shows that rhetorical devices are the most frequently used rhetorical strategy by Chinese talk show comedians, which accounts for more than half of them (62.30 %). While other rhetorical strategies are used less frequently, their language effects in talk show programmes are still impressive and well received by their audiences. Even though this study has explored the diversity of rhetorical strategies in the collected data, we could not claim that this study investigated all the rhetorical strategies included in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows because it only extracted them from some samples. There is no doubt that other kinds of rhetorical strategies may exist in these talk shows. However, in this study, we merely provide an initial look into the linguistic phenomenon of humorous discourse, which could form a base for future studies. All the rhetorical strategies found in this study play a very crucial role in producing humour in Chinese talk shows. These strategies enrich the language forms of humorous discourse in talk shows.

This study discussed research question 2 from two perspectives – agent and agency. This study argues that the ratio of ‘agent-agency’ is a factor influencing the rhetorical strategy adoption in humorous discourse in Chinese talk shows in terms of Burke's (1945) theory. First, after investigating the agents of the talk shows (eight comedians), according to their life background and work experience and their talk show performances, this study found that the frequency of rhetorical strategy use is not necessarily related to the duration of their talk show career (Table 1). However, their previous job experiences have a huge impact on their rhetorical preferences (Table 2). Most of their choices of rhetorical strategies in their humorous discourse are affected by the job skills that they had acquired before hosting the talk shows. Tong, for

example, who was an English teacher before doing talk show performances, is skilled at using the English language as a rhetorical strategy to generate humour and make the audience laugh. While He, who was a clerk before he took part in the talk show programme, liked to use internet buzzwords to achieve humour. Clerks in China are skilled at communicating with all kinds of people and know social interpersonal relationships well, so they acquire buzzwords quickly and can use them skilfully in their lives. Additionally, Zhang and Xu's rhetorical choices are also affected by their life background or personal characteristics. They take their life background and experience as advantages to help them with their rhetorical skills to produce humour. This study justifies the dramatic pentad of Burke (1945) that the agent could be a factor affecting a human being's motivation and rhetorical use. But, because of time and financial limitations, this study only examined the eight talk show comedians' previous job experience in relation to their rhetorical choices, so it is not enough to fully justify the theory of Burke. If possible, we could conduct interviews with these comedians in further studies.

Second, the linguistic factors of the Chinese language are examined due to their agency in rhetorical strategies. According to the findings, the variety of rhetorical strategies that appeared in the humorous discourse of the talk show hosts were affected by the diversity of Chinese rhetorical devices; the diversity of Chinese lexical formation; Chinese grammatical rules and semantic characteristics; Chinese phonetic variation; and traditional colloquialism (Figure 5). The biggest factor affecting the rhetoric is the diversity of Chinese rhetorical devices. As reported in Figure 6, 15 kinds of rhetorical devices are used to achieve rhetorical humour, and a total of 119 times, which accounts for 62.3 % (Figure 4) of the total number of rhetorical strategies. This indicates that the rhetorical devices of the Chinese language are diverse and play an important role in the construction of rhetorical strategies. Also, the diversity of Chinese lexical formation is another linguistic factor that affects the rhetorical choice in Chinese talk shows. It includes the use of internet buzzwords, idioms, and coinages. In addition, the lexical misuse and collocation do not follow the grammatical rules and semantical characteristics of Chinese to achieve rhetorical humour. What is more, Chinese phonetic variation (dialect accent) and Chinese traditional colloquialism provide the opportunity for rhetorical strategy construction and application as well. The findings suggest that the linguistic features of the Chinese language provide a basis for the diversity of rhetorical strategies in the humorous discourse of talk shows. As a result, this study agrees with Fang (2011) and Bu (2014), who argue that Chinese lexis, phonetics, and grammar are frequently used to form rhetorical strategies. More importantly, it is evident that the Chinese language as the agency of rhetorical strategies in talk shows has affected their adoption in humorous discourse combined with the motivation of the talk show host.

All in all, the rhetorical strategies used in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows are rich, while the use of rhetorical strategies is affected by the factors of talk show comedians and language application, which are the two main factors affecting rhetorical strategy choice.

7. Conclusion and implications

The aim of this study was to identify the rhetorical strategies used in the humorous discourse in Chinese talk shows and further explore the factors that impact on the rhetorical strategies. The findings reveal that the realisation of rhetorical strategies in the humorous discourse of Chinese talk shows is rich, including through rhetorical devices, foreign language (English), internet buzzwords, among others, while rhetorical devices are used most frequently to achieve rhetorical strategies. Burke's (1945) rhetorical theory proposes that the dramatic pentad of rhetoric is influenced by the 'ratios' which highlight the most important elements in the rhetorical strategies and could help us better understand human motivations through their

speech. From a macro perspective, this study discovered that the ‘ratio’ of agents and agencies – talk show comedians and the language employed in the Chinese talk shows – are the main factors influencing the rhetorical strategies chosen. This study investigated the life background and experience of the talk show comedians. The results indicate that their rhetorical strategy choices were related to their previous job experiences in certain ways, which proves that talk show comedians’ life backgrounds or experiences influence their rhetorical strategies chosen in humorous discourse. Moreover, the linguistic particularities of the Chinese language are examined. This study finds that the variety of Chinese linguistic devices, lexis, grammar, semantics, phonetics, and even traditional colloquialism could provide the basis for variable rhetorical strategy choice. The findings could not only encourage the talk show comedians and programmes to focus their energy on writing attractive lines through using rhetorical strategies to improve the programme effects, but also give an in-depth explanation and application of Burke’s (1945) dramatic pentad theory.

This study is one of the first studies that tries to explore the factors that influence rhetorical strategy choice in humorous discourse, which could help us gain a better understanding of the rhetoric used in Chinese talk shows. What is more, it offers a new perspective to investigating the factors affecting rhetorical choice and shed light on the application of Burke’s rhetorical theory in discourse analysis. However, some limitations should still be addressed in the study. First, this study extracts evidence based on humorous discourse texts and does not investigate the participants’ opinion of Chinese talk shows. Second, this study focuses on discussing the rhetorical strategies of humorous discourse in Chinese talk shows, but it remains to be investigated if its findings are applicable to other sorts of humorous discourse. Hence, future studies could investigate the factors affecting rhetorical strategy choice in different contexts, and the variables of participants and more research methods could be considered.

References

- Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. (2011). ‘Decolonializing discourse: critical reflections on organizational discourse analysis’. *Human Relations* 64 (9), pp. 1121-1146.
- Aristotle (1984). *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts. ed. Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Aristotle (2004). *Rhetoric*. trans. W. Rhys Roberts. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
- Aytan, A., Aynur, B., Hila, P., Aytac, E. & Malahat, A. (2021). ‘Euphemisms and dysphemisms as language means implementing rhetorical strategies in political discourse’. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies* 17 (2), pp. 741–754.
- Burke, K. (1945). *A Grammar of Motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Burke, K. (1969). *A Rhetoric of Motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Burke, K. (1967). ‘Rhetoric—old and new’. in Steinmann, M. Jr. (ed.), *New Rhetorics*. New York: Scribner’s Sons.
- Bu, S. Z. (2014). *A Study of Humorous Rhetoric in Huang Zihua’s Stand-up Comedy*. Jinan: University of Jinan MA thesis.
- Bernardi, R. (2017). ‘Challenging dominant frames in policies for IS innovation in healthcare through rhetorical strategies’. *Journal of the AIS* 18 (2), pp. 81–112.
- Chen, M. M. (2019). ‘Analysis of the production mechanism of humorous language in talk shows violating the politeness principle’. *Journal of Ka Shi University* 39 (2), pp. 46-49.
- Cholid, C., Choiriyati, W. & Al Khazim, I. (2019, August). ‘Rhetoric narrative in Prabowo. National speech 2019’, in *Proceedings of The First International Conference on Administration Science*. ICAS 2019, pp. 253-258.
- Deng, Z.Y. (2011). ‘On the affinity between Burke’s and Aristotle’s rhetoric in terms of

- operative mechanism'. *Foreign Language and Literature* 27 (4), pp. 45-50.
- Fang, S. S. (2011). *A Study on the Rhetorical Strategy of Zhao Benshan's Spring Festival Skit Language*. Qufu: Qufu Normal University MA thesis.
- Geng, Y. C. (2017). *The Theory of the Localization of Chinese Talk Shows*. Guangxi: Guangxi Normal University MA thesis.
- Hao, Z. H. (2018). *Discourse Analysis of the Web-Based Talk Show Roast*. Hebei: Hebei University MA thesis.
- Hu, T. (2020). 'Rhetorical analysis based on the humorous language in "Rock and Roast"'. *Chinese Character Culture* 26 (15), pp. 66-67.
- Herrick, J.A. (2018). *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Huo, Y. D. (2021). 'An analysis of the third season of "Talk Show Conference" from the perspective of media text and media audience criticism'. *Public Communication of Science Technology* 6 (4), pp. 65-67.
- Jiang, W. T. (2021). 'A rhetorical study of humorous language in talk shows'. *Sheng Ping Shi Jie* 5 (9), pp. 59-61.
- Ju, Y. M. (2004). *Communication As Action: Discourse Analysis from the Perspective of Burkean New Rhetoric*. Shanghai: Shanghai International Studies University MA thesis.
- Ko, H. C. (2015). 'Political persuasion: adopting Aristotelian rhetoric in public policy debate strategies'. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 5 (10), pp. 114-123.
- Liu, C., Chen, S. & Shao, Q. (2019). 'Do CEO rhetorical strategies affect corporate social performance? Evidence from China'. *Sustainability* 11 (18), pp. 4907.
- Mueller, F., Sillince, J., Harvey, C. & Howorth, C. (2004). "'A rounded picture is what we need": rhetorical strategies, arguments, and the negotiation of change in a UK hospital trust'. *Organization Studies* 25 (1), pp. 75-93.
- Marta, M. M. (2019). 'Research article sections: functions and rhetorical strategies'. *Multiculturalism through the Lenses of Literary Discourse* 148, pp. 98-104.
- Mubarak, A. S. & Rhaif, K. K. (2021). 'Investigating pragma-rhetorical strategies utilized by American commencement speakers to motivate graduates for managing future opportunities and challenges'. *Linguistics and Culture Review* 5 (S1), pp. 342-362.
- Pm, K., Khaemba, J. & Gachigua, S. (2019). 'The commodification of religion: A rhetorical analysis charismatic programmes in Kenya'. *Saudi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 4 (6), pp. 418-425.
- Ripley, J. M. (2020). *A Simplified Analysis of Scapegoating Rhetoric in Political Speeches With Kenneth Burke's Pentad System*. CA: California State University, Long Beach MA thesis..
- Sarma, S. K. (2017). 'Rhetorical strategies in Indian commercial microfinance'. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 37 (9-10), pp. 572-590.
- Švobaitė, J. (2018). *Rhetorical strategies in Donald Trump's and Dalia Grybauskaitė's political speeches*. Lithuanian: Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences MA thesis.
- Timberg, B. M. & Erler, B. (2002). *Television Talk: A History of the TV talk show*. Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Troje, D. (2018). 'Rhetorical strategies to diffuse social procurement in construction', in *Proceedings of the 34th Annual ARCOM Conference*, 3-5 September 2018, Belfast, UK, Association of Researchers in Construction Management: Belfast, UK
- Tu, L.Y. & Luo, B. (2021). 'An analysis of women's discourse in online talk shows - take the third season of "Talk Show Conference" as an example'. *Radio & TV Journal* 3 (6), pp. 58-59.
- Wang, Z. (2019). 'A rhetorical study of the art of humour language - taking "Qi Pa Shuo" as an example'. *Journal of News Research* 3 (16), pp. 91-134.
- Wachsmuth, H., Stede, M., El Baff, R., Al Khatib, K., Skeppstedt, M. & Stein, B. (2018,

- August). 'Argumentation synthesis following rhetorical strategies', in *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Computational Linguistics* (pp. 3753-3765).
- Zhang, P. (2019). *A Study on Pragmatic Strategies of Ridicule Language in the Online Talk Show Programme "Tu Cao conference"*. Wuhan: Central China Normal University MA thesis.
- Zhou, M. L. (2015). 'From the violation of the cooperative principle to see the humour in Huang Xi's Talk Show'. *Hebei Enterprise* 8, pp. 90.