

Communication And Knowledge: An Investigation In Rhetorical Epistemology

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The joint construction of a journalistic expert identity in studio interactions between journalists on TV news

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Abstract

The overall aim of this study is to examine how journalistic expert identities are constructed and displayed in the context of intraprofessional journalist-to-journalist interviews on live television news. Previous research has, in detail, explored how journalists orient to the identity of a critical and impartial interrogator, especially in political news interviews. By focusing on journalistic expert identities, this article contributes to a wider perspective on the multiple and changing identities performed in contemporary journalism. The overall argument is that the expert identity is enabled and promoted in collaborative activities on different levels of discourse such as: (i) the media format, (ii) the question-answer based organization of the interaction, (iii) the orientation to liveness, and (iv) how knowledgeability and epistemic stance are constructed and displayed in the actual design of questions and answers. The data consist of interviews from the prime-time news program *Aktuellt*, broadcast on Swedish public service television in 2008 and 2009.

Keywords: *journalistic identities; expert identity; intraprofessional interviews; television news; liveness; epistemic.*

1. Introduction

This article examines how the journalistic identity of "being an expert" is achieved in talk and interaction between a newscaster (interviewer) and an in-house correspondent on television news. Our aim is to show how an expert identity is enabled on different levels of discourse; both by the format itself, by the organization of talk and its orientation to liveness, and by exploiting detailed discursive resources in the design of questions and answers. In relation to the latter question, we relate to research arguing that knowledgeability and

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