Causes and Covariates of Perceived News Credibility by Chinese Audiences: An Experimental Study

Supervisor: ZHU Jian Hua Jonathan
Student: TAN Yue (enteresa@cityu.edu.hk)

Research Purpose
◆ Define news credibility
◆ Investigate the causes and covariates of perceived news credibility by Chinese audiences
◆ Find out how Chinese audiences perceive the news credibility in China

Summary of Hypotheses

Methodology
◆ Pilot survey in Guangzhou and Shenzhen (n=479)
◆ Main experiment in Shenzhen University
  ● 422 university students were randomly assigned to 12 groups
  ● Each student received 2 stimuli (reading news reports)
  ● Each student finished a questionnaire in which both news credibility and source credibility were measured

Experiment Design
◆ A 2 (source location) by 2 (geographic scope of media coverage) by 2 (event location) by 2 (content valence) by 2 (news topic) unbalanced designed experiment
◆ 24 treatment combinations
◆ Source location, geographic scope of media coverage, location of news event, and content valence are treated as between-subjects factors
◆ News topic is used as a within-subjects factor.

Main Finding
-impact on news credibility
◆ Main effects of source location and content valence
◆ Interaction effects of event location by content valence and event location by news topic
◆ Attitudinal covariates: the credibility of four public institutions, approval of democratic reform and communist value
◆ A weak correlation between news credibility and source credibility

Department of English and Communication