

# **“You can’t say ‘Chinese!’”: Negotiating Taiwan’s National Identity Crisis Discourses on Political TV Call-In Shows**

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*Within Taiwan, two national identity ideologies prevail. One considers Taiwan as a part of “China” and its people as being “Chinese”, while the other declares Taiwan as a sovereign nation-state with a separate “Taiwanese” identity. Thus, discussing the nation’s or presenting one’s own national identity is not only sociopolitically controversial in Taiwan, but also proves personally complex for the individual. In my analysis of call-in show discussions, I examine how participants use reported speech, or constructed dialogue, to discuss the issue of national identity. As the literature on reported speech suggests, what is considered to be “quoted speech” or “reported speech” can be more accurately described as constructing dialogue in an active, creative, and transforming manner (Tannen, 1989). Hypothetical reported speech allows speakers to enact “thought experiments” of “real world” tensions while reconciling opposing views (Myers, 1999). Drawing from these perspectives, this paper explores how TV call-in show participants strategically use constructed dialogue to animate, negotiate, and perpetuate contesting discourses surrounding Taiwan’s national identity crisis.*

## **1. Introduction**

On May 6, 2000, two weeks before being inaugurated, President of the Republic of China (ROC) (a.k.a.Taiwan), Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) declared at a press conference<sup>1</sup> that the country faced an “identity disorder problem”<sup>2</sup> and that the “feeling of being unrooted was the [country’s] greatest crisis.”<sup>3</sup> The “crisis” he referred to was the issue of Taiwan’s national identity; that is, did the people of Taiwan regard themselves as

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<sup>1</sup> The Taiwanese TV program *2100* replayed selected footage of this press conference in a video clip at the beginning of the episode (“Big reconciliation: what is our (national) identity?” May 31, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Chen Shui-bian’s original comments in Mandarin Chinese were: 認同錯亂的問題 (*rentong cuoluan de wenti*).

<sup>3</sup> Chen’s original remarks were: 沒有根的感覺就是一個最大的危機 (*meiyou gen de ganjue jiushi yige zuida de weiji*).

“Chinese” (*Zhongguoren* 中國人) or “Taiwanese” (*Taiwanren* 台灣人)? Similarly, is Taiwan a “part of China” or a sovereign country?

Taiwan's ambivalent status and identity has dominated the island-nation's sociopolitical arena for over half a century. In short, two contesting worldviews vie for legitimacy. One worldview seeks to reunify Taiwan and China under “one China,” which is pursued to varying degrees by the mainland China-derived Kuomintang (KMT) or Nationalist Party and its splinter parties, including the New Party (NP) and People's First Party (PFP). The other worldview advocates Taiwan independence, which the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the current ruling party, has traditionally promoted.

Since the legalization of cable television in 1993, however, the issue of Taiwan's national identity has taken on “infotainment” overtones in the mass media. Shortly thereafter, the television station TVBS introduced the country's first political TV call-in show, *2100: All People Open Talk* (全民開講), whose *modus operandi* revolved around featuring sociopolitical “crisis” issues. Despite its *Larry King Live*-inspired style—most evidently embodied by *2100*'s moderator, Lee Tao, who sports the same trademark suspenders and poses in the same hunched-over, elbow-leaning posture—the crisis issues these programs feature are decidedly “Taiwanized.”<sup>4</sup>

Drawing from the Mandarin Chinese notion of crisis as *weiji* (危機), which is comprised of the two ideograms—*wei* (危), meaning “danger,” and *ji* (機), meaning “opportunity”—this paper examines how program participants augment and negotiate the featured topic's “dangers” and “opportunities.” Focusing on one *2100* episode that deliberates Taiwan's national identity crisis, I explore how the program dramatizes the issue through the selective use of video clips and, subsequently, how participants find inspiration for their remarks in the form of reported speech from these same video segments. Moreover, I demonstrate that participants' speech reporting practices can be more accurately described as “hypothetical reported speech” (Haberland, 1986) or what Tannen (1989) refers to as “constructed dialogue.” In this sense, participants perform reported speech in an “active, creative, and transforming manner” (p. 109).

Specifically, by engaging in a discourse analysis of the first excerpt, I illustrate how a moderator uses constructed dialogue in conjunction with parodic stylization (Bakhtin, 1981), codeswitching, and bodily gestures to animate and editorialize (Buttny & Williams, 2000) socially-recognizable personas. In the second excerpt, I investigate how a guest panelist engages in a verbal “thought experiment,” which involves using hypothetical reported speech to “enact tensions in [one's] own thinking [in order to] deal with opposition between possible views” (Myers, 1999). In this example, the panelist uses hypothetical reported speech to reconcile and embrace two conflicting sociopolitical discourses, that is, Taiwan's Chinese and Taiwanese national identities. In addition, I argue that speech reporting allows participants to distance themselves from the controversial issues they deliberate and, thus, mitigate their remarks by presenting themselves as the animator and not the author (Goffman, 1974) of the constructed dialogue.

<sup>4</sup> During its one-hour weeknight broadcast, *2100* generally invites three to five guests representing different political perspectives and receives 20 to 30 calls per episode. In contrast, *Larry King Live* prefers a conversational format that features one to three guests across a range of professions and accepts on average five heavily screened calls during its hour-long program (Kurtz, 1996).

Before turning to the excerpts, it is first necessary to situate the episode's crisis topic and introduce the video clips that later influence participants' speech reporting practices.

## 2. Setting Up the "Crisis" Topic: "What is Our (National) Identity?"

Entitled "Big reconciliation: what is our (national) identity?" (大和解:我們是什麼人?),<sup>5</sup> the *2100* episode I examine aired on May 31, 2000. It was inspired by an event, a "Big reconciliation coffee,"<sup>6</sup> which several legislators had organized earlier that day at the Legislative Yuan.<sup>7</sup> The event-cum-spectacle was orchestrated to demonstrate cross-party unity among Taiwan's four main political factions, including the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, the KMT, the New Party, and the soon-to-be established People's First Party (PFP).<sup>8</sup> *2100*'s coinciding episode invited several of the legislative organizers to address increasingly divisive and literally paralyzing political practices. This included the targeting of governmental officials within President Chen's administration to identify themselves as being Chinese or Taiwanese and to declare their stance regarding Taiwan sovereignty.

In *2100*'s introduction of the program topic, it presented a three-part video segment that featured various public figures being subjected to these forms of interrogation. For instance, in the first segment, a female KMT legislator is featured interrogating the chairperson of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Commission, Tsai Ing-wen, as to why as a scholar she can claim to be both Chinese and Taiwanese, but why in her current position she "cannot do so" (*jiu bu xing* 就不行). In the second segment, a male KMT legislator renders the deputy director of the Department of Defense momentarily speechless when he demands to know whether the director supports Taiwan independence. After being taunted that he "doesn't dare comment" (*bu gan shuo* 不敢說), the director replies that "it is difficult to say" (*zhe ge hen nan jiang* 這個很難講). In the third and final segment, a caller on *2100* is heard asking the moderator Lee Tao whether he identifies himself as Chinese (*Zhongguoren* 中國人).<sup>9</sup> These edited video clips, which are strategically selected segments from a longer video recording, create the impression that Taiwan's national identity is in crisis.

<sup>5</sup> Another interpretation of the program title might be "who are we?" However, as this leaves the underlying issue of national identity rather ambiguous, I opted to include national identity within my translation.

<sup>6</sup> The Chinese name for the event was: 大和解咖啡 (*da hejie kafei*).

<sup>7</sup> The Legislative Yuan (*lifayuan* 立法院) or Parliament represents Taiwan's highest parliamentary body and represents one of the five "yuans" (院) at the central (national) governmental level. The other four include the Executive, Judicial, Examination, and Control Yuan. The Yuan system is based on a system of checks-and-balances similar to that of the U.S. government.

<sup>8</sup> The New Party and People's First Party are splinter KMT parties whose members left the KMT due to political differences. The New Party was founded in 1994 while the People's First Party was established in 2000, shortly after the 2000 presidential election.

<sup>9</sup> The caller's question was phrased as: "可不可以告訴我你是中國人 (*ke bu keyi gaosu wo ni shi zhongguoren*)".

### 3. Animating “Danger/Opportunity” (*Weiji*) Discourses through Reported Speech

In the following two excerpts, I demonstrate how these three video segments become strategically reappropriated and creatively incorporated in participants' remarks in the form of constructed dialogue.

#### 3.1. Performing “Crisis” Voices/Voices-in-“Crisis” through a “Constructed Monologue”

The first excerpt I examine illustrates how these video segments are reappropriated by Lee Tao in a reported speech-laden monologue. While his speech reporting practices are inspired by the aforementioned three video vignettes, Lee Tao's performance is creatively embellished through several linguistic devices, including prosodic stylization through a high pitched register, codeswitching from Mandarin to Taiwanese, and exaggerated gestures. In this excerpt, I also demonstrate how Lee Tao dramatizes the “dangers” of Taiwan's contentious national identity issue.

- (1) Lee Tao: “What is your (national) identity?”/“What do I say?”<sup>10</sup>
- |    |                                    |  |
|----|------------------------------------|--|
| 1  | 是。那但是，                             | Right. Then but,                                       |
| 2  | 在 <u>且</u> 前來講，                    | <u>currently</u> speaking,                             |
| 3  | 如果說，                               | that is if,  |
| 4  | 大家想基於知道，                           | anyone wants to know,                                  |
| 5  | 說我到底是個什麼樣的人                        | to ask what my (national) identity is                  |
| 6  | 我可以說的出口。                           | I can say it aloud.                                    |
| 7  | 然後我的老 師：，也可能--                     | But then my <u>teacher</u> ， it is perhaps—            |
| 8  | 放心的去教，                             | to safely teach (this issue),                          |
| 9  | 不要老師教完以後，                          | (And) to not have parents immediately                  |
| 10 | 家長馬上跑過來，                           | run over after every class,                            |
| 11 | {rushed speech in a strident tone} | {rushed speech in a strident tone}                     |
| 12 | “你講你是((nonsense speech))！”         | “You say you are a ((nonsense speech))!” <sup>11</sup> |
| 13 | {laughter from panelists}          | {laughter from panelists}                              |

<sup>10</sup> The following represents the transcription conventions for all excerpts.

Transcription Notation	Explanation
.	End of utterance
,	Slight pause
(.)	One second pause
:	Elongated sound
--	Abrupt stop
<u>Underlined text</u>	Add emphasis
<i>Italicized text</i>	In Chinese text, code-switch from Mandarin to Taiwanese; In English text, original use of Mandarin
Arial Font	In English text, code-switch from Mandarin to Taiwanese
(xxx)	Additional information, not uttered in original language
((nonsense speech))	Additional commentary within an utterance
{ }	Additional commentary pertaining to quality of speech or reactions of surrounding participants

<sup>11</sup> Nonsense speech refers to an utterance that cannot be linked to any recognizable language.

14	罵的以後啊。	After being criticized (this way).
15	{general laughter}	{general laughter}
16	那這個老師會得神經病的。	This teacher would go nuts.
17	{laughter, male voice}	{laughter, male voice}
18	我都主持節目	Even when hosting a program
19	也會被問：	I am asked:
20	{falsetto, points index finger at panelists}	{falsetto, points index finger at panelists}
21	“你這個是那裡人？(.)	“Where do you come from? (.)
22	“你是什麼人？”	What is your (national) identity?”
23	{normal speaking voice}	{normal speaking voice}
24	啊，每個官員	Uh- when each official
25	到立法院，	goes to the Legislative Yuan,
26	{falsetto, pointing at panelists}	{falsetto, pointing at panelists}
27	“噢，你是什麼人？”	“Uh, what is your (national) identity?”
28	{general laughter}	{general laughter}
29	Uh-uh-uh，	Uh-uh-uh,
30	那個官員都要拿出	the official then has to take out
31	一個小抄本。	a notepad.
32	{looks down at open hand, palm side up while muttering}	{looks down at open hand, palm side up while muttering}
33	“我是什麼時候講什麼話。”	“What do I say?”

I regard the four instances of speech reporting in this passage as representations of constructed dialogue. Each of Lee Tao's shifts from commentary to reported speech is prosodically stylized and accompanied by a higher tone of voice, or marked “interrogative intonation patterns” (Fónagy, 1986, p. 259). The moderator's prosodic shifts also denote the linguistic boundary between Lee Tao's personal and performed voices.

In the first hypothetical reported utterance, Lee Tao portrays a troubled parent who confronts a schoolteacher by angrily stating, “You say you are a...,” which trails off into nonsense speech (line 12). Interestingly, Lee Tao uses Taiwanese rather than Mandarin when voicing the parent. This codeswitch ascribes the parent with a Taiwanese identity, while depicting the teacher by default as a non-Taiwanese speaker.<sup>12</sup> Álvarez-Cáccamo (1996) claims that code choices in reported speech reveal socio-indexical relationships of “distance, dominance, or resistance” (p. 34). Here, the moderator inserts Taiwanese in an otherwise Mandarin-based monologue to illustrate power imbalances between a Taiwanese-speaking parent and a Mandarin-speaking teacher, which in turn, recalls sociopolitical tensions between Taiwan's two main ethno-political groups, Taiwanese (*benshengren* 本省人) and Mainlanders (*waishengren* 外省人).

<sup>12</sup> Although it is possible the parent could be a Mainlander, Hakka, or a person of Aboriginal descent who speaks Taiwanese, Lee Tao's marked codeswitch in this segment of speech, and nowhere else in this passage, suggests otherwise. Moreover, Lee Tao is not proficient in Taiwanese and limits his use of Taiwanese on 2100 to several key phrases such as “thank you” (*do hsia li* 多謝你) and the title of the program “All People Open Talk” (*Quanmin Kaigan* 全民開講).

In the second constructed dialogue, Lee Tao reenacts the caller who demanded if he identified himself as Chinese. To heighten the stridency of his inspired speech reporting—"Where do you come from? What is your national identity?" (lines 21-22)—Lee Tao rises from his seat, extends his arm, and points his finger in an accusatory fashion at an imaginary interlocutor. In his third insertion of constructed dialogue, Lee Tao reiterates the query, "What is your national identity?" (line 27), which he again punctuates with more finger-pointing and high-pitched voicing. In this instance, his speech reporting recalls two KMT legislators who interrogated DPP government officials regarding their national identity and attitude toward Taiwan independence, scenes featured earlier in the program in two short video clips.

In the final instance of constructed dialogue, Lee Tao enacts the second pair part (Sacks et. al, 1974) to the query, "What is your national identity?" Here, the hypothetical reported speech appears to respond to the previous three speech reporting performances. Moreover, Lee Tao recalls the silencing of the deputy director in the earlier video segment in his portrayal of a besieged government official. For instance, as he mutters the constructed dialogue "What do I say?" (line 33),<sup>13</sup> Lee Tao dramatically performs the character's confusion and discomfort by lowering his head to glance at an imaginary notepad for guidance on how to answer. Interestingly, this performance captures the "feelings of unrootedness" and "identity disorder" that President Chen had mentioned in his press conference three weeks earlier, which was featured in an edited video clip earlier in the program.

In sum, Lee Tao's constructed utterances succeed in portraying socially recognizable characters as "emotional, unpredictable, and with generally negative character traits" (Besnier, 1993, p. 175). Moreover, his reported speech-laden commentary highlights the "dangers" that Taiwan's national identity "crisis" evokes, namely, the public shaming of teachers, legislators, and call-in show moderators alike. In this sense, Lee Tao's overt dramatization of the various political stances and voices that the issue of national identity touches and targets covertly "editorializes" these behaviors as "show" (*xiu* 秀) or "putting on an act" for ideological purposes.

### 3.2. *Reconciling Chinese/Taiwanese Identities Through a "Thought Experiment"*

In this second excerpt, I explore the manner in which Legislator Diane Lee (hereafter, Leg. Lee) uses constructed dialogue to reconcile Taiwan's disparate sociopolitical national identity discourses in a verbalized "thought experiment" (Myers, 1999). In contrast to Lee Tao's augmentation of the contentiousness of Taiwan's national identity discourses, Leg. Lee attempts to mitigate sociopolitical disaccord regarding the issue. She thus takes the opportunity to claim that both "Chinese" and "Taiwanese" identities are equally viable for Taiwan's citizenry. To achieve this rhetorical balancing act, Leg. Lee resorts to hypothetical reported speech, which performatively theorizes Taiwan's national identity conundrum.

<sup>13</sup>

In another reading of this utterance, the official could be consulting his notes from previous interpellation sessions or similar question and answer forums in order to seek a consistent response to his interlocutor's identity query. Given that officials frequently have administrative aides who prepare notes for their use in anticipation of sensitive questions, this is a possible scenario. I thank Heng-rue Lin for bringing this to my attention.

- (2) Diane Lee: “I am Chinese (*Zhongguoren*), I am also Taiwanese (*Taiwanren*)”

<p>1 我想如果說是談到說 2 你是那裡的人噢， 3 那這個問題好像現在 4 變的很 複雜很敏感。</p> <p>5 但其實它也應該是很簡單阿。 6 那：當然我會認為說： 7 我們是中國人。 8 那麼如果人家問我說 9 國名是什麼， 10 我們(國)家是中華民國：， 11 所以我們是簡稱 12 中國：，中國人民：。 13 那麼，如果問你是，生在那裡，</p> <p>14 那我們是，我是生在台灣：阿。 15 所以我就說“我是中國人， 16 我也是台灣人。” 17 那當然就是說 18 有人講說 19 “不能說是中國人。” 20 其實沒有不 21 說中國人的道理。 22 我們的憲法， 23 我們是中華民國：嗎， 24 我們 終不是中國人？ 25 (...) 26 我們不能說， 27 “大家的全部是非得叫台灣人。” 28 但是我是生在台灣 29 我當然是台灣人阿。 30 所以我覺得這個 問題 31 其實不要把它顯得 32 那麼，那麼嚴：肅。 33 那麼複雜。那麼基於說 34 今天我們的和：解 35 我到不認為說， 36 一定 要在這類的 37 名詞上說， 38 “大家都要有個同意的名詞 39 才叫和解。”</p>	<p>I think that if this is about saying where are <u>you</u> from then this problem has now perhaps become very complex, very sensitive. But actually it should be very simple. So: of course I would think that: we are Chinese (<i>Zhongguoren</i>).<sup>14</sup> Then if someone asked me “what is the name of (your) country?” Our country is the Republic of China:, so we abbreviate that to China:, <i>Zhongguo Renmin</i>:.<sup>15</sup> So, if you were asked, “Where were you born,” then we are, I was born in Taiwan:. So I then say “I am a <i>Zhongguoren</i>, I am also a <i>Taiwanren</i>.”<sup>16</sup> So of course that is to say there are some people who say “(You) can’t say <i>Zhongguoren</i>!” Actually there is no <u>reason</u> not to say <i>Zhongguoren</i>. (In) our constitution, we are the Republic of China: aren’t we all then <i>Zhongguoren</i>? (...) We cannot say, “<u>Everyone must</u> be called <i>Taiwanren</i>.” But I was born in Taiwan so of course I am a <i>Taiwanren</i>. So I feel that this issue actually should not be considered so, so seriously. So <u>complicated</u>. So according to our big <u>reconciliation</u> today I don’t believe that, we must use this type of terminology [and] say, “<u>Everyone must agree</u> upon the same term for it to be called a <u>reconciliation</u>.”</p>
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<sup>14</sup> Meaning “Chinese.”

<sup>15</sup> Meaning “Chinese citizens.”

<sup>16</sup> Meaning “Taiwanese” or “people of Taiwan.” See Chapter Two for background on the difference between *Taiwanren* and *benshengren* (“people of this province,” indicating the province of Taiwan).

According to Myers (1999), speakers typically state what the result of the thought experiment will be before presenting the conditions for how it will be achieved (p. 585). For instance, Leg. Lee states at the onset of her comments that Taiwan's national identity issue "should be very simple" (line 5). However, she prefaces this statement that the issue has also become "very complex, very sensitive" (line 4). Thus, her thought experiment enacts the factors that make Taiwan's national identity so complex and sensitive on the one hand, yet simple on the other. That is, Leg. Lee must reconcile two competing ethnopolitical identities (Chinese vs. Taiwanese)—the "complex" and "sensitive" aspects of Taiwan's national identity—while maintaining her party's (PFP) political stance that Taiwan's residents should identify with being Chinese—which, from her perspective, represents the "simple" solution.

To accomplish this dual task, she frames her remarks as constructed dialogue between a figurative "someone" (*renjia* 人家) and an alternating "we" (*women* 我們) and "I" (*wo* 我). This dialogue both animates the ideological issue while rendering it in hypothetical terms. She thus begins the thought experiment by posing the hypothetical query, "If someone asked me, 'What is the name of (your) country?'" (lines 8-9) and promptly provides the second pair part (Sacks et. al., 1974) by answering, "Our country is the Republic of China (*Zhonghua Minguo* 中華民國). So we abbreviate that to China (*Zhongguo* 中國), Chinese citizens (*Zhongguo renmin* 中國人民)" (lines 10-12).

Leg. Lee's theoretical line of inquiry continues through her imaginary interlocutor when the hypothetically-voiced character poses a second question: "So if you were asked, 'Where were you born?'" (lines 13). The legislator begins to answer in the first-person plural "we are" (line 14), but quickly amends her response to the first-person singular, "I was born in Taiwan" (line 14). Leg. Lee's use of the plural "we" reveals a momentary lapse in her thus far carefully constructed dialogue between herself and an imaginary interlocutor. She quickly recovers, however, as demonstrated by the marked deictic shift.

The next hypothetical utterance thus signals a movement back to the thought experiment frame. By presenting the following statement as constructed dialogue, Leg. Lee neatly reconciles her earlier claim to having a Chinese citizenship despite being born in Taiwan: "So then I say, 'I am Chinese (*Zhongguoren*), I am also Taiwanese (*Taiwanren*)'" (lines 15-16). The hypothetical utterance allows the PFP legislator to embrace both terms without alienating listeners who identify with either one or the other (or both) identity markers (Myers, 1999).

Realizing that her verbal thought experiment has reached a controversial juncture, Leg. Lee anticipates her imaginary interlocutor's response and inserts a hypothetical protest to her declaration of being both a *Zhongguoren* and a *Taiwanren* with the constructed objection, "(You) can't say *Zhongguoren* (Chinese)!" (line 19). Here, the represented utterance acts as a counter-argument to her earlier remarks, and moreover, voices sentiments that those who identify as *Taiwanren*, and perhaps pro-Taiwan independence supporters, might express. This imaginary counterpoint is significant as it exposes an "irreducible contradiction or tension" in Taiwan's national identity struggle as well as in Leg. Lee's ongoing thought experiment (Myers, 1999, p. 580).

Leg. Lee then reaches the crux of her contemplations, which coincides with her use of hypothetical reported speech. The PFP legislator's use of a collective "we" attempts to



establish a conciliatory frame when she asserts, “We cannot say, ‘Everyone must be called *Taiwanren*’” (lines 26-27). This declaration returns her to her earlier declaration, which she reiterates here, that Taiwan’s national identity should not be considered to be “so serious” and “so complicated.” (lines 31-33)

Several lines after the excerpt described above, Diane Lee unveils how she imagines the reconciliation of Taiwan’s two main national identity ideologies in a final hypothetical utterance: “I don’t believe that we must use the terminology [of *Zhongguoren* and *Taiwanren*] and say, ‘Everyone must use the same term in order for it [the national identity issue] to be called a reconciliation’.” Ironically, by voicing her conclusions through constructed dialogue, Leg. Lee reemphasizes the issue’s sensitivity, as demonstrated by her avoidance of authoring the remarks.

#### 4. Conclusion

Speech reporting thus epitomizes Vološinov’s (1929/1973) notion of dialogism or “double voiced discourse” in which an utterance references numerous other utterances. As “speech within speech, utterance within utterance and at the same time speech about speech, utterance about utterance” (p. 115), reported speech foregrounds the metadiscursiveness of language as a whole.<sup>17</sup>

As demonstrated in the two call-in show excerpts, constructed dialogue serves as a powerful and persuasive device for participants to animate Taiwan’s national identity crisis discourses. Interestingly, while being inspired by pre-selected and edited video footage, participants’ comments augment the urgency of the featured topic through their speech reporting practices. In terms of the call-in show’s “crisis” frame and Taiwan’s national identity “crisis” discourses through hypothetical reported speech, this paper illustrates that reported speech as “constructed dialogue” (or in Lee Tao’s case “constructed monologue”) allows participants to strategically articulate the “dangers” and “opportunities” latent within this complex issue.

In this sense, reported speech serves as a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) for call-in participants in this mass mediated venue. That is, hypothetical reported speech facilitates the presentation and negotiation of disparate interpretations of sensitive issues without compromising the participants’ ideological perspectives and social identities. The two call-in participants featured in this paper draw upon what Myers (1999) describes as “represented discourse” in the attempt to “experiment with [the] wording and rewording” of knotty issues (p. 581), which in this case were Taiwan’s competing national identity discourses. Thus the participants’ strategic use of reported speech in conjunction with other linguistic devices allowed them to capitalize upon and highlight the “dangers” and “opportunities” of the “crisis” issue of the moment. Overall, their creative blending of personal commentary with speech reporting, while drawing upon technological resources within the call-in show setting, illustrates how Taiwan’s sociopolitical “crisis” discourses are performatively reproduced on political TV call-in shows.

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<sup>17</sup> This concept is also reflected in the Chinese saying: *hua zhong you hua* (話中有話) or “within speech there is speech.”

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