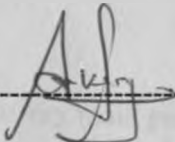# POLITICAL RADIO PANEL INTERVIEWS: A DISCOURSE

ANALYSIS

BY:

SAMMY GAKERO
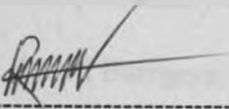
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted in any other university.

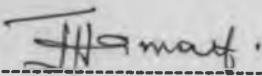**Sammy Gakero**

This thesis has been written under our supervision and submitted for examination with our

approval.

Doctor G. N. Marete

Doctor John Habwe

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a project like this, apart from the mental exhaustion, the side issues that arise are testimony that any academic pursuit is a team effort. I would therefore want to sincerely thank my parents - Henry and Lucy Gachigua, whose faith in education and hard work I have immensely benefited from, over the years. Thanks a lot.

Many thanks go to my main project supervisor Dr. Gideon N. Marete for his dedication and insights in the development of the once hazy idea that matured into this project. I also owe a lot of gratitude to Dr. John H. Habwe whose many insights in our discussions concretely shaped my understanding of Discourse Analysis. I am also heavily indebted to my lecturers at the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, for their rigorous, firm and fair approach to their teaching assignments. I would particularly want to mention Professor Bureng George Vincent Nyombe, Dr. Alfred Buregeya, Dr. Francis Eshun, Mr. Maurice Ragutu and Mr. George Oloo. Any weakness in this work is entirely my making and not theirs.

A lot of thanks go to my classmates in the Department, particularly Wekesa Maloba, Magare, Kamau, Amadi, Kingati, Kigamwa and Omwenga Makori; you were true comrades.

DEDICATION

To my Dad, Henry Gachigua and Mum, Lucy Wangu from whom I learnt hardwork

and optimism.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER THREE

CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE TOPICAL PHASE

CHAPTER FOUR

CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE CLOSURE PHASE

CHAPTER FIVE

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an investigation of the general structure of political radio panel interviews, and that of some individual conversational strategies by participants in the programme *Crossfire* interviews. The investigation also relates the conversational strategies in political panel interviews to their function. Finally, an attempt is made of how coherence is achieved in broadcast interviews.

To guide the investigation, we have tested three hypotheses. Firstly, that the topic is the strongest coherence principle in broadcast interviews. Secondly, that the conversational strategies in broadcast interviews are goal directed, where the functions are reflected in the structures realising them. Finally, that despite the adversarial nature of the political interviews we investigate, each of the interactants actively seeks the co-operation of other participants.

The investigation has revealed that conversational strategies are highly structured in conformity to the functions they serve, and that the strategies involve a lot of social work among participants. We have also demonstrated how the topic, through the notion of relevance, forms the basis unifying disparate issues discussed in broadcast interviews.

Chapter one of the thesis provides the overview of the approach of study. It includes the background to the study, research problem, aims and objectives, hypothesis, the scope and limitations, justification of the study, the conceptual framework, literature review and the methodology.

Chapter two contains the discussion of the opening phase of broadcast interview *Crossfire*. It contains general remarks on conversational opening, the definition of opening, use of social reinforcers, establishing of rapport etc.

Chapter three is a discussion of conversational strategies in the topical phase, which include formulation, pre-sequencing and coherence.

Chapter four discusses conversational strategies in the closing phase, which include pre-closing, non-task comments and acknowledgement statements.

Finally, chapter five contains the summary, and suggestions and recommendations for further research.

ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATIONS

(i)   Abbreviations

D1   - Data 1 (programme broadcasted on 24th February 2002)

D2   - Data 2 (programme broadcasted on 16th December 2001)

D3   - Data 3 (programme broadcasted on 9th December 2001)

DP   - Democratic Party of Kenya

FORD-Kenya -Forum for Restoration of Democracy – Kenya

KANU   - Kenya African National Union

KBC   - Kenya Broadcasting Corporation

MP   - Member of Parliament

NAC   - National Alliance for Change

NCEC   - National Council Executive Council

NDP   - National Development Party

SDP   - Social Democratic Party.

(ii)   Initials of interview participants

DM   - David Mwenje

Dr.   - Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi

GN   - George Nyamweya

Intv   - Interviewer (Patrick Quarcoo)

MK   - Mutula Kilonzo

NN   - Norman Nyaga

Prof.   - Professor Kivutha Kibwana

TG   - Tony Gachoka

(iii)   Transcription Notation

—   A single dash indicates a short untimed pause within an utterance

(   )   Single parenthesis which are empty, indicate no hearing could be achieved for the
             string of talk or item.

[Left-hand bracket indicates utterances starting simultaneously or overlapping
             utterances, at the point the overlapping occurs.

]   Right-hand bracket indicates the point where the overlapping stops.

=   Equal signs indicate that there is no interval between adjacent utterance, the
             second being latched immediately to the first (without overlapping). The equal
             signs are also used to link different parts of a single utterance when those parts
             constitute a continuous flow of speech that has been carried over to another line,
             by transcript design, to accommodate an intervening interruption.

]=   Right-handed bracket and equal signs indicate overlapping utterances end
            simultaneously and are latched on to by a subsequent utterance.

=[A combination of equal signs and a left-handed bracket indicate that more than
            one speaker has latched directly onto a just-completed utterance.

→   An arrow indicates that a particular utterance pointed to is highlighted for study.

Capital letters indicate an utterance that is spoken much louder than the surrounding talk.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Conversation is seen as the most fundamental and pervasive means of conducting human affairs. As such. it has received scholarly attention under the body of works in discourse analysis. In discourse analysis the concern is in the analysis of the connected speech beyond the limits of a single sentence: it also correlates social context and language.

According to Malmkjaer (1991) there are two main directions involved in discourse analysis. One is essentially linguistically based and influenced by M.A. K. Halliday. whose main proponents are Coulthard and Sinclair and the other sociologically based and influenced by the work of Harold Garfinkel under what is known as conversational analysis. with key practitioners being Sacks. Schegloff. and Jefferson. Other influential approaches include critical linguistics. which pays specific attention to the relationship between language and ideology. as practiced by Kress. Fairclough. and Fowler among others. Yet another direction of discourse analysis is the model based on speech act theory (Edmondson 1981).

Because of the basic concern of the different approaches in language as used in the social context. there are many insights to be gained in an eclectic approach to the study of conversation. It is from this perspective that we undertake such an approach to the study of political discourse in radio panel interviews: however. the study will primarily be based on conversational analysis. Edmondson's speech act theory that integrates the conversational analysis methodology and the speech act's illocutionary force of speech. and finally. the topical framework in the discussion of coherence in broadcast interviews.

The news interview has been defined as "a functionally specialized form of social interaction produced for an overhearing audience and restricted by institutionalised conventions" (Heritage in Dijk 1985:112).

Panel interviews in political discourse derive their importance from bringing together different political points of view, which are communicated, probed, challenged or sustained. They thus considerably expand the potential pool of talk on political issues of concern to the public (Aspinall 1971: 88). They are therefore an important meeting point of ideological discussions and an aid to informed decision making for an audience.

The opening up of political space in Kenya in the 1990s saw the emergence of privately owned broadcast stations and the enhanced importance of political panel interview programmes as open fora for competitive political discourse. This is unlike in the days of government owned (KBC) monopoly as Karanja (1993) points out, where such programmes were "rigid", "highly censored" and "not natural".

One incisive interview programme today is *Crossfire* broadcasted in the privately owned *Kiss 100 FM* radio station. In this study, we focus on the programme with a view to investigating the conversational strategies employed by the interactants in furthering their different goals. In doing so, we also seek to compare the panel interview conduct with natural conversation.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Broadcast news interviews, Heritage (in Dijk 1985: 85) points out, have attracted little systematic analytic attention. This, he observes, has been as a result of lack of a coherent analytic framework. He however contends that the development of conversational analysis has evolved a powerful technique that would provide a systematic analysis of broadcast news interviews, and compare them with natural conversation.

2

Heritage's observations about the lack of systematic analysis of broadcast interviews holds true of the Kenyan situation. where there is scant scholarly study from a linguistic perspective of the broadcast interview. To the best of our knowledge. only Karanja (1993) has made a study of broadcast interviews from a linguistic perspective based on the Kenyan context. However. she focuses on the structure of KBC TV interviews. We propose to go further and investigate how the structure of the broadcast interview is designed to achieve various functions of broadcast interview as institutionalised talk.

On the other hand. journalistic studies of interviews generally concentrate on how they ought or not ought to be conducted. and not on the actual on goings of interviews (c.f. Hohenberg 1966: Aspinall 1971: Berry 1976: Lewis 1984).

This study therefore seeks to examine political radio panel interviews. specifically focusing on the conversational strategies employed by radio interviewers to elicit information. agree with and challenge the information so elicited. while maintaining neutrality. On the other hand we shall also examine the strategies used by panellists in furthering their ideological goals. Finally we propose to investigate coherence in these interviews.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The study is be based on four aims:

1. To investigate how radio panel interviews are structured.

2. Analyse some conversational strategies used by the interviewer and panellists in achieving their different goals.

3. To investigate how these strategies conform to the general co- operative principle underlying the production of natural talk.

3

4. To attempt an analysis of how coherence in panel interviews is achieved.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

The hypotheses to be tested are, that:

1. The topic is the strongest coherence principle in broadcast interviews.

2. Conversational strategies in broadcast interviews are goal directed, where the functions they realise are reflected in the structure that realises these strategies.

3. In spite of the adversarial nature of incisive political panel interviews, each of the interactants actively seeks the co-operation of other participant.

1.5 RATIONALE

Political radio interviews are important instruments of journalistic inquiry and a medium of political communication (Heritage in Dijk 1985). They are an important source of commentary on matters of public policy that touch a peoples' life. In the more open political interviews, unrestricted by censor, there is much more pressure for the interviewer to maintain neutrality while at the same time controlling the ensuing discourse, and for the panellists to be more tactful and persuasive of their points of view.

Thus central to political discourse as perceived in our study, strategic use of language for the attainment of specific goals is important. In examining strategic use of language therefore, the study intends to illuminate on the use of language in the management of human affairs. It is further intended that the investigation of both media language and political rhetoric would help cultivate critical appreciation of the two forms of communication that pervade modern day life.

4

The implication of the study findings, it is hoped, will be of significance to communicators, radio producers and linguists. The significance of the study to communicators is in its attempt to explicate the structure of communicative acts, strategically structured as persuasive devices, which are important in communication.

Radio producers are bound to benefit from the study in so far as the findings illuminate on the various communicative strategies employed by both the interviewer and interviewees, thus furthering a systematic understanding of broadcast interview production. It is also anticipated that in drawing parallels and differences between broadcast interviews and spontaneous conversation, more light can be shed on how broadcast interviews can be fruitfully modelled along natural conversation, thus enhancing their reception by the audiences.

Linguists are bound to benefit from the study in so far as it illustrates features of message production, and how coherence is achieved in talk.

Finally, it is hoped that the study will open up further research in broadcast media language use.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The study examines the general structure of the radio panel interviews under study. Within this general structure, we focus on some of the conversational strategies employed by interactants in the interviews. The conversational strategies we focus on are classified according to their functions:

i) Those that realise propositional content.

ii) Those that realise interpersonal content.

iii) Those that act to organize the text that is spoken so that there is coherence, continuity and emphasis.

The strategies mentioned above are not necessarily realised independently, they can be realised simultaneously by the same linguistic codes; they have been separated here for explicitness.

The study is based on English language broadcast interviews, further focusing on linguistic strategies, as opposed to paralinguistic ones such as tone.

Finally, the study makes comparison of radio panel interview as an institutionalised talk with findings from other studies, which are based on naturally occurring conversation.

The study is based on one particular radio panel interview programme: *Crossfire* on *Kiss 100 FM*. The programme is chosen because it provides an open forum for political discourse with clear competing ideologies held by panellists, thus a rich site for the study of conversational strategies. The richness of the site is informed by the assumptions that:

1. The competitive nature of the programme will put a lot of strain on the co-operative principle that underlies production of talk.

2. The panellists are under pressure to be more persuasive of their points of view, given that issues they raise are constantly subjected to critical appraisal by the other participants.

3. Due to its adversarial nature, the interviewer is under strain to control talk as well as ensure neutrality.

The core interactants in the programme having consistently appeared in the programme once a week for one year makes it plausible for us to assume that their talk is unmarked by the discomfiture of a broadcast environment, hence lending itself to comparison with natural conversation.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses an eclectic approach in the study of discourse. It principally draws from conversational analysis to provide the structural basis of our study, with Edmondson's model of spoken discourse, topical framework by Brown and Yule, and Goffman's approach about the presentation of face complementing it.

Conversational analysis employs the ethnomethodological approach as expounded by Harold Garfinkel (in Gumperz 1972) and used by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, among others, as cited in Levinson (1983). This theory is relevant to our work because of its consideration of such central notions to the organization of talk like turn-taking, adjacency pairs, formulation and pre-sequence.

Turn-taking is the distribution of talk across participants in talk. Adjacency pairs are paired utterances, such that in the event of the existence of one, a response is expected of the other. Formulation is the summarising, glossing or developing the gist of an informant's earlier statements. Pre-sequencing is the talk that pre-figures a specific kind of action that an ongoing conversation is about. These notions are an important basis for the structure of interviews, both at the macro and micro levels of organisation.

In examining the functional organization of interviews in terms of strategy in achieving goals, we necessarily take talk as action having illocutionary force in context. In this perspective, we draw from Edmondson (1981) model of analysis of spoken discourse. In this model, a communicative act is characterized as both an interactional and an illocutionary act.

The interactional act is defined, as "the smallest identifiable unit of conversational behaviour, but does not necessarily further the conversation in which it occurs in terms of conversational goals" (ibid:82). Its function in discourse includes the introduction of various presuppositions into the operant discourse world, strategic usage to get advance commitments

7

from participants. or to provide linkages to previous discourse. among other functions. The illocutionary act draws from the traditional speech act theory as formulated by Austin. as cited by Levinson (1983) and systematised by Searle. The illocutionary force is the act performed in saying something.

However. Edmondson ameliorates the problem of assigning function to speech acts. which the classical speech act theory suffers by suggesting the subscription to a hearer-knows-best principle. where "the function of an utterance is determined by the way in which it is treated" by the hearer (McLaughlin 1984: 77). By using this approach. the perlocutionary force of speech is discernible in the effect it has in the hearer. and in case of misunderstanding of the illocutionary force. there is room for repair in the later sequences of talk.

In discussing coherence. this study uses the topical framework organization of conversation. Here. we are interested in how the topic forms the overarching concern of talk that all that follows must bear relevance to. The topic here is not treated as a single proposition. but it is taken to constitute several activated elements in the discourse and physical context that talk takes place. The approach used here draws from Brown and Yule (1983). In our discussion. we shall be concerned with how local coherence is achieved and how the contributions of interactants adhere to the wider relevance of discourse. what is called global coherence. More emphasis will be placed on coherence than cohesion here because spoken discourse is characterised by less emphasis on cohesive devices. unlike written discourse. Coherence is equated to interpretability while cohesion refers to one set of devices that can be seen explicitly in a text e.g. anaphora. repetition. etc. (Edmondson 1981: 5).

Our study also draws from Goffman (1955). where he explores the presentation of face in human interaction. Of relevance to our work in this study are the various social motivations that inform the choice of linguistic strategies by participants in talk. The notion of impression

8

management he explores is very crucial in the interface of political and mass media discourse, which is oriented towards an overhearing audience.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is divided into two parts. The first part reviews theoretical literature that is relevant to our study, while the second section reviews literature that is based on the media, and related institutionalised talk.

1.8.1 Review of Theoretical Literature

The study draws from Levinson (1983) as an important source in the review of the speech act theory, and other central notions in the study of talk based on conversational analysis approach to discourse. Such notions include turn taking, adjacency pairs etc. The works in conversational analysis reviewed by Levinson are based on natural conversation.

Edmondson (1981) is an insightful source in his characterisation of a communicative act as interactional and illocutionary act and the perception of communicative events as strategically structured to achieve conversational goals. His work is a significant source in the study of the range of strategic possibilities to be found in pre-sequencing. Edmondson however uses elicited data.

Brown and Yule (1983) are illuminating in their perception of discourse analysis as language in use, hence the need for the description of language in terms of its function in human affairs. They are also a useful source in the discussion of coherence using the topical framework approach.

Stubbs (1983) is invaluable to our study in his characterising discourse analysis as the study of the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore the study of larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. Stubbs also looks at discourse analysis as the study of language in use in social context. Of interest too to our study is his exploration of coherence and cohesion as functional or speech act organization. He is also a useful source in the discussion of strategies of conversation such as formulation, indirection and alignments. Finally, Stubbs insightfully discusses various theoretical and practical considerations in the collection and analysis of conversational data. Issues considered include the amount of data sufficient for analysis, theoretical biases in collection and transcription of data, biases in the use of transcription codes, and theoretical sampling.

As an integrative discussion of the body of literature in conversation from a variety of disciplines, McLaughlin (1984) is an important source. She reviews literature on how talk is organised, the role of context, and cognitive processes associated with intent and interpretation. Of particular relevance to our study is the discussion of coherence, both in terms of the various shades of topical approaches, and speech act organization.

Another important source to our study is Goffman (1959). It is particularly essential in the discussion of impression management during interaction: an ever-present concern both in the media and political rhetoric.

Cockroft (1992) provides an illuminating discussion of how rhetoric is connected to modern linguistics theory. Of significance is his analysis of Saussure's concept of choices within paradigms, and Jacobson's concept of choice within binary oppositions, which have relations to the dialogic structure of rhetoric, which employs choice of linguistic elements within a range of options for its effectiveness.

Rhetoric as the art of persuasion shares insights with the speech act theory in the perception of language use as intended to produce effect on other people. Cockroft further points to the connection between discourse theories' concept of the cooperative venture of talk, and rhetoric concerns of persuasion as a skill that incorporates a creative interaction of the audience, text, and projection of personality. Halliday shares a similar perspective in his study of language and its function in social context. Finally, Cockroft makes a link between persuasion and Bakhtin's notion that discourse is dialogic i.e. it echoes other voices, while anticipating rejoinders.

Other essential sources that have relevance to our study are to be found as chapters in various books. One such book is Atkinson and Heritage (1984). This volume deals with studies in conversational analysis, and contains a comprehensive catalogue of transcription notations as developed by Gail Jefferson.

In the volume is also a chapter by Harvey Sacks expounding the philosophy behind the methodology in conversational analysis. Sacks espouses the view that the examination of common everyday occurrences is invaluable in illuminating how humans conduct their affairs.

Anita Pomerantz in yet another chapter of this book makes an insightful discussion of how preference organisation of talk is achieved in the agreement and disagreement of assessments. Agreement and disagreement of assessments are ever-present concerns in political discourse, which makes it worthwhile to examine their form and motivation in political broadcast interviews.

Atkinson in a different chapter examines some techniques used by public speakers to invite applause in the audience. This orientation of a speaker's talk to an audience is very important in the discourse we seek to investigate, since political rhetoric in the mass media is meant to persuade an audience to accept or reject views propounded by panellists.

Harold Garfinkel's chapter in Fishman (1972) contains a discussion of the ethnomethodological approach, which is the investigation of the participants' own methods of interpretation in their interaction. He lays the basis of method of investigation employed by conversational analysts.

Another source that has theoretical relevance to our study is Dijk (in Dijk 1985 a), where he discusses the multi disciplinary approach that discourse analysis takes, integrating approaches to the study of fields common to the humanities such as rhetoric argumentation, persuasive communication, conversational interaction among others. Disciplines that find common ground in discourse analysis include Philosophy, Anthropology, Sociology, Linguistics, psychology etc.

A final theoretical source that is relevant to our study is Saunders (in Hargie 1989), Where she insightfully examines the social relevance of openings and closings in human interaction, and the many options available in the execution of these two pervasive, yet understudied, elements of human discourse.

1.8.2 Review of literature on media

Media studies that are related to our research include Karanja (1993), who investigates the structure of KBC television discussion programmes. To this extent, her work has many parallels to our study. However, it is different from this study in that ours is based on political radio panel interviews that have clear competition of political points of view, with a further focus on strategies of language use in such discourse. Our study thus pays close attention between discourse structure and function.

A study based on radio programmes is that of Kiai (1996) whose primary focus is the adaptation of written scientific material into an audio medium for consumption by farmers. Hers is an important source in the discussion of the distinctive nature of spoken language when

compared to written language, and the radio as a mass medium. Her work however differs from our study in its orientation of investigation.

Heritage (in Dijk 1985) is a study of formulation as a journalistic tool of inquiry, based on news interviews in the United Kingdom. He further compares news interviews with natural conversation. His work's relevance to our study is in the examination of formulation and comparison of interviews and natural conversation. It is however, different from ours because it focuses on one-on-one interviews while ours focuses on panel interviews. Our study is also broader in scope: examining the general structure of interviews, investigating various other strategies used in interviews, and analysing coherence.

In the discussion of the organization of arguments, Schriffin (in Dijk 1985) is relevant in so far as arguments are central components of the political discourse we focus on.

Drew (ibid) examines an account of cross-examination in court, which has many parallels to interviews both in terms of the institutional context and conversational strategies. One such strategy examined is how counsels elicit evidence towards making accusations and how witnesses and defendants may anticipate this process by treating questions as prefacing specific allegations about their conduct. In the media interview, the interviewer regularly adopts a counsel's role. Again, much of the court's talk is oriented to convincing an overhearing audience, just like in the interface between the mass media and political discourse.

Aspinall (1971) provides a comprehensive study of the distinctive nature of radio as a mass medium. He too examines the various stages in the production of radio programmes, and particularly the production of interviews, and their design along natural conversation. This work is significant in providing background information that goes into the production of radio interviews.

Hart (1991) discusses a number of issues that are important in understanding media. These include the composition of media audience, media influence, and the use of persuasive language in the media. Hart's work is important therefore in examining central concerns to both media practitioners and the public that are integral to the discourse we seek to investigate.

McLuhan (1969) undertakes a discussion of how mass media is an extension of human communication, and propounds the view that "the medium is the message". Though his view of technological determinism is controversial, his position is relevant in so far as it is redefined to accept that indeed the medium influences how a message is produced, and received, but it is not the sole determining factor. The medium and message are elements within complex institutions, which are created and sustained through social interaction. From the perspective that the medium influences the shaping of the message, McLuhan is relevant to our study.

1.9 METHODOLOGY

The study uses audio tape recordings of ten programs of *Crossfire*, for the period running from December 2001 to February 2002. Random sampling is then undertaken, picking out three programmes to form the basis of our analysis.

Library research and initial non-participant observation while taking notes complements the study. Because of the enormity of the data involved (about thirty handwritten pages of each transcribed programme), transcription is only provided for the extracts that we deem necessary in highlighting features that we focus on at any particular point in our study. Data cited in illustrating a certain feature of study may again be cited on another occasion to illuminate on yet another feature, since it must be borne in mind that different features can be simultaneously realised by the same linguistic code.

We are aware of the complexity of transcription of conversation, since spoken conversation is characterised by false starts, hesitations, self-corrections, ungrammatical and unfinished sentences, and overlapping utterances. It is also characterised by elisions, phonological obscurities, consonant cluster simplifications, etc. (Stubbs 1983:228). Stubbs further notes that the presentation of spoken interaction in a transcription has an estrangement effect, since it looks odd in the written medium. To minimise the estrangement, Conventions have been developed by scholars such as Gail Jefferson, to capture the myriad complexities of spoken discourse. Unfortunately, these conventions tend to make data cumbersome, and inaccessible to the non-specialised reader.

For our data, we have adopted the conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (in Atkinson and Heritage 1984), however, for purposes of accessibility, we have taken the policy of using as few conventions as we deem necessary to illustrate features we focus on. We have also stuck to standard orthography, even when some instances suggested variation in pronunciation.

We were however keenly aware of the rapid delivery of speech used in our data: the lack of pauses where our knowledge of written discourse would have them. We resorted to placing the pauses where they were perceptible to us, and not where our knowledge of written language would demand.

A final remark to make is that the entire tape recordings of the data used are available for anyone interested in them.

CHAPTER TWO

CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE OPENING PHASE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The model news interview Mulholland (1991: 98) observes:

> Is a cross between a conversation and a legal cross–examination; it is expected to show signs of a relationship between interviewer and interviewee; it is required to have a theme or a story to form a coherent unity, to be more than a sum of the questions asked and the answers given; it should give the impression that it is an in-depth interaction- investigating, probing and personal.

It is evident from the quotation above that broadcast interviews though specifically produced to serve specific goals in an institutionalised setting, they have a strong human element in them. Being an enactment of a human affair, interviews necessarily draw on the social bonding of interactants in order that mutual transactional benefit accrue of the encounter.

The interplay of the social and the goal directed elements in interviews, like other speech interactions is reflected in their structure. The structure is conventionally accepted and has phases primarily serving conventional functions.

At the macro-level, broadcast interviews have three clearly defined phases. These are the opening, topical phase, which might have multiple topics, and finally the closing phase. Each phase transition is signalled by a boundary move.

In this chapter we shall examine the opening phase of the political panel interview programme *Crossfire* and some functions involved in this phase vis-à-vis the strategies employed to achieve the functions in the broadcast interview context.

2.1.1 Definition of the opening phase

Saunders (in Hargie 1989:176) defines openings as:

> The interactors initial strategy at both personal and enviromental level utilized to achieve good social relationships. and at the same time establish the development of a communicative link between the expectations of the participants and the realities of a situation.

Openings in human transactions are a universal phenomenon that derive their importance as a means of achieving access. and as Goffman (quoted ibid: 175) observes. "are structured. formalised sequence during which interactants have a greater opportunity to make important points or create effective impact upon others."

2.1.2 Opening structure

As a pointer to the ritualised nature of openings in the programme *Crossfire*. it takes the following form:

i)   Greeting of the audience.

ii)   Invitation of the audience to the programme

iii) Introduction of the participants of the day's programme.

It is worth noting that the sequence is initiated and controlled by the interviewer. indicating his social role as an agent of the station. a role he maintains throughout the interview as seen in the speech acts he performs: setting the agenda. allocating turns. interrupting when the topic is lost e.t.c.

The time involved in the opening phases of an interview might be a good indicator of the type of opening the station favours. It might be factual, where the common frame of reference, the roles of participants, and goals of the interview are established on the outset (Karanja 1993). On the other hand, the opening phases might be elaborate and appealing to the human element. This latter approach has been termed as the "social opening" by Saunders (ibid:177).

Our data suggests the use of this approach in the programme *Crossfire*. An examination of the strategies involved here would reveal this.

2.2 USE OF SOCIAL REINFORCERS.

2.2.1 Greetings and invitations to the programme.

Greetings are a universal opening device and as such ritualised. They are important social gestures for getting the attention of a potential audience. Thus greeting of the audience and their invitation to the programme are seen in this context as warm gestures that help break the interpersonal distance between the audience and interviewer.

Greetings and invitations to the programme are of two kinds. There are those that mainly target the overhearing audience and come at the very onset of the interview. Two examples will suffice here, the first from D3:

(Example 1)

Intv:Hallo good evening Nairobi...

In D1, the salutation proceeds:

(Example 2)

> Intv:Hallo good evening Nairobi and welcome to this one and only one—This is the big
>
> one this is *crossfire*...

The other kind of salutation and invitation to the programme is intended for the individual panellists. Though it is obvious that the interviewer and panellists have met before the start of the programme, and of course exchanged greetings and pleasantries, it is important to enact the salutation to potray spontaneity of interaction to the audience. The sense of spontaneity is one distinct advantage that electronic media enjoys and relies upon to capture audience attention.

One advantage to be gained by spontaneous coverage is that news unfolds as it happens, and with this comes the possibility of the unexpected and interesting material being broadcasted, uncensored by the editor, an experience that creates a sense of participation in the programme in the audience (McLuhan: 1964). Other than this, the opening with enactment of greetings also gives a wholistic structure to the interview.

Some of the unexpected happenings in live coverage that give a sense of naturalness during exchange of greetings and pleasantries are illustrated below. In D3, during introduction of DM, we have this example:

(Example 3)

> Intv: ... across me – a man whose reputation precedes him – He's got a big reputation I
>
> hear he's got balls – David Solomon Mwenja
>
> DM: No not Mwenja – MWENJEE

Intv: Forgive the poor West African – let me go over it again – DAVID SOLOMON

      MWENJE=

DM: =The deputy treasurer of the Democratic party of Kenya

Intv: = Give me more

Like in natural conversation, spontaneity of negotiation of topic of talk is enacted

between a panellist and the interviewer in a casual, and seemingly natural way.

Another example that enables Spontaneous emergence and negotiation of topic resulting

in casual banter comes from D2, where after exchange of greetings Dr. and the interviewer

proceede:

(Example 4)

    Intv: ... Mukhisa welcome

    Dr: Yeah thank you very much

    Intv: I was with you up to yesternight up in Kitale

    Dr: Yes – I last saw you at 2 o'clock last night and I heard you were leaving at 5 in the

       morning

    Intv: Yes I ⌈ (   )

    Dr: ⌊you are very nocturnal

    Intv: I had to come here

    MK:What were you two guys doing there

    Intv: We won't discuss that on air

    (Laughter)

The enactment of spontaneity through exchanging of greetings and pleasantries is a social gesture bringing about a warm and friendly disposition to the interactants and audience. The spontaneity "reproduces naturalistic codes and conventions that make the illusion of participation easier and enable more personal involvement" (Hart 1991:197).

2.2.2 The use of address terms

The use of address terms is yet another important social reinforcer. Addresses as used here refer to names and titles serving the function of summons. "Summonses are attention getting devices", (Schegloff in Fishman 1972: 101).

Zwicky, cited by Levinson (1988: 71) looks at addresses as a grammatical category falling under vocatives. Vocatives he observes, "are noun phrases that refer to the addressee but are not syntactically or semantically incoporated as the arguments of a predicate; they are rather set apart prosodically from the body of a sentence that may accompany them".

Summonses, Schegloff (ibid) points out, necessarily require an answer from the addressee and then the summoner is obliged to talk again, taking the sequence A– B– A, for instance:

(Example 5)

> A: John?
>
> B: Yeah?
>
> A: Could you please pass the salt?

This sequence, called the summon-answer sequence, is meant to address the availability and co-ordinated entry into talk, thus (ibid: 116), "…a person who seeks to engage in an activity

that requires the collaborative work of the parties must first establish, via some interactional procedure, that another party is available to collaborate".

In a broadcast interview context, there is the prevalent usage of summonses. The examples here are thus taken randomly from the three phases of the interview. The following example from D1 illustrates the importance of summons, much in the same fashion as in natural conversation. In the preceding turn, Dr. has with passion made the point that the constitution ought to be changed to require that the president of Kenya get 50% of the popular vote cast, unlike in the prevailing situation where the ruling president – Moi – got 34% of the popular vote. Dr. then alleges that MK supports the status quo because he is a beneficiary of Moi's regime, and hence his support for the lopsided democracy. MK begins to make a response to the allegations, but the interviewer steps in to put focus to the issues at hand, through allocating TG a turn by the use of a summon:

(Example 6)

> Intv: Tony – Tony – To – Tony – Imean – Just try – You are a political animal – Does this make sense

In the broadcast interview context however, the summon-answer sequence takes a slightly different form, where the summoned party's response is not realised immediately after the summon. The summoner, who is invariably the interviewer, conflates his first and second turn into one continous turn. The fact that the address is a summon is visible in the summoned parties' responses which are two part responses. For instance, in D3, in the closing phase, we have this example:

(Example 7)

Intv: Let me come to Norman before we actually wrap up

    Intv: Norman, any comments on this

    NN: Yes I do

    NN: the collective land title…

NN's response here appears in two parts. The " Yes …" is the first part, seemingly in response to the summon, and the section starting with "I do …" is the response to the interviewer's question whether NN has comments to make. An alternative explanation would be that "yes …" is a double duty utterance, both acknowledging the summon, as well as responding to the interviewer's question whether he has any comments. "I do …" in this case would be a reinforcer to the fact that he has a comment to make.

Another example is in D2, in the opening phase:

(Example 8)

    Intv: Next to him Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi member of Parliament,

        Legislator sportsman and many more things

    Intv: Mukhisa welcome

    Dr: Yeah

    Dr: Thank you very much

Again in this example, the two-part sequence is evident. The "Yeah" seems to respond to the summon, while "Thank you very much" is the response to invitation to the programme.

It seems plausible to suggest that this sequence is so realised by the interviewer because the availability of the summoned party in a broadcast interview is never in doubt. The mere fact that the interviewee is present in an interview session is taken to mean acceptance to be available and thus confirmation of availability is deemed unnecessary.

Apart from addresses being important devices for getting the attention of the addressees, they also commit them to hear the speaker and thereby enabling them to make appropriate responses. Summonses are in this respect, like in natural conversation, an important strategy for ensuring co-ordinated entry to talk.

Summons are also very important coherence cues to an overhearing audience as their prevalence in broadcast interviews attests. Since radio audiences are not accessible to visual cues, summonses are an aid to following the flow of talk. This becomes even more crucial given that panel interviews are not a bi-party interaction where pronouns such as *you* would be adequate references.

From the foregoing, it is evident that summonses, as prevalently used in broadcast interviews ensure co-peration between the interviewer and the interviewees by initiating and sustaining turn-taking. Turn-taking takes the form of alternating turns at talk, albeit with slight modification to cater for the taken for granted assumption of co-operation as seen above, where two turns are conflated into one because of the presumptive availability of interviewees in broadcast interview context.

However, as again seen above, summonses are such powerful devices that summoned parties feel obliged to respond to them despite the oddity of their response. Schegloff provides plausible explanation of the power of summons as deriving from the inferences that can be made for non-response to them in social settings. These inferences include- cold shouldering, insulting,

24

and many such negative readings. Such social awareness seems to be transfered to broadcast interview context even when such responses are evidently unnecessary

Though the use of address terms is common to both factual and social openings, other strategies used in the programme *crossfire* will confirm the social inclination of its opening, as we shall see below.

2.3   ESTABLISHING RAPPORT.

Like in natural conversation, a prevalent means of establishing rapport in our data is the use of non-task comments.   These comments are highly dependent on the particular context obtaining.   This relates to some feature of the interacting member or the immediate environment, or even comments on happenings prior to the interview encounter.

A   common   reference in the opening phase of the programme *Crossfire* is the manner of dress. This is common when the interviewer is making introductions, for example in D2, the interviewer makes elaborate comments on MK's dress:

(Example 9)

      Intv: …on my left advocate Mutula Kilonzo, today dressed like

          an absolute West African =

      Mk: = No no I'm dressed like a prince Patrick, what is wrong

          With you=

      Intv: =No I was coming I was coming ⌐ on to it

      Mk: ⌊ Oh oh go on

      Intv: =He is looking good (   ) in my part of town they would donate a few things

          for him but I wouldn't say what I'll get into trouble – welcome Sir.

MK: Hi Patrick thank you its nice to see you.

In D2, the non-task comments focus on a prior meeting outside the studio of the interviewer and Dr., also cited in (example 4)

(Example 10)

Intv: (Introduces Dr.) ... Mukhisa welcome

Dr: Yeah – Thank you very much =

Intv: I was with you up to yesternight up in kitale

Dr: Yes – I last saw you at 2 o'clock last night and I heard you were leaving at 5 in the

morning

Intv: Yes I ⌈ (   )

Dr: ⌊ you are very nocturnal

Intv: I had to come here

An example in D3 relates to the weather. Here, Tony Gachoka, a regular panelist, could not make it to the studio and was participating in the programme from Kilifi, over the phone:

(Example 11)

Intv: ehm ehm he is the SDP publicity secretary Tony Gachoka – Hi Tony

T.G: Hi there Patrick – how are you

Intv : Iam alright – what is the weather like in Kilifi

T.G: The Kili weather is actually good the sun is just setting...

We are of the opinion that rapport is simultaneously established here in two intertwined ways. There is the rapport established through the preliminary non-task comments at the level of the participants in the studio, and that these comments also set induce the overhearing audience to be in a receptive frame when the actual topic of discussion begins. This is done through initiating points of talk out of the impending debate that secure an interactive social atmosphere by providing the audience with snippets of personal and social details of the interactants in the interview.

2.4   SETTING OF A RECEPTIVE ATMOSPHERE.

Another strategy that is commonly employed in the opening phase of the programme *Crossfire* is the setting of a receptive atmosphere. The atmosphere here refers to the physical and psychological setting of the interactants and the audience. Since the physical environment is not available to a radio audience, verbal resources become an important element in creating a receptive atmosphere. In our data, this is done in two main ways, that is, by the use of figurative language, and the setting up of verbal conflict.

2.4.1 Use of figurative language and lexical choice.

The use of figurative language and lexical choice though not strictly extra-sentential elements, they are salient features in the opening phase that have a bearing on the overall interpretation of the phase under discussion.

The use of figurative language is such that, vivid images are created through association of a phenomenon to the more familiar and dramatic objects that are easily accessible to an audience. An example from D2 will illustrate this:

(Example 12)

> Intv: Hallo good morning Nairobi this is me this is Patrick and right here in the studio its
>
> absolutely steaming because the team is bigger the fire is cooking up and I tell you
>
> coffees are right on the table – I must say its amazing because today this studio
>
> holds six people – I have brought the best brains they say the greatest hearts and the
>
> biggest mouths with the biggest passion right here this is *Crossfire…*

The six people being referred to here are the regular panellists, Tony Gachoka, Dr.
Mukhisa Kituyi, Mutula Kilonzo, the host Patrick Quarcoo and two guest panellists from the
opposition party, *Democratic Party of Kenya*, Norman Nyaga and David Mwenje; who are
members of Parliament in the city constituencies.   The topic of discussion is the Violence that
had rocked Kibera Slums in Nairobi city.   Ten people had lost their lives while several others
were injured and many residents of the slum left homeless.   The violence was alleged to be
instigated by politicians allied to the ruling party *KANU*.

The figurative language here i.e. "…in the studio its absolutely steaming", "… the fire is
cooking up" is used to capture the volatile situation that obtained then, with opposition leaders
enraged by incitement to violence of the slum dwellers by politicians. The use of figurative
language is such that it makes an audience conjure up images of the situation through the transfer
of the characteristics of the mentioned objects. The immediacy and vividness of the
characteristics activated in associating an event to another provides an audience with the
analogical leap that recreates the situation as a palpable experience (Tennan 1984).

Another noteworthy element is the use of superlative adjectives – "greatest hearts",
"biggest mouths", "biggest passions", to create a sense of explosive drama that is to be
anticipated in the coming debate.

Another example of similar usage of language is in D1:

(Example 13)

> Intv: Hallo good evening Nairobi and welcome to this one and only one – This
> is the big one this is *Crossfire* where they say the talk rocks because right here in
> the studio its not a gang of three – today it's a gang of four and its big talk for
> big people of the city.

This too is an indicator of verbal communication use meant to create anticipation of the coming talk. Again here, the descriptive terms used i.e. "This is the big one this is *Crossfire*" seeks to capture the notion that *Crossfire* is a programme of its kind where talk comes in barrage of assults and counter assults that can only result in excitement. Also notice the use of the word *gang* in place of the more polite terms like interviewees or panellists. This use seems to indicate the informal usage of the word, meaning a group of regular associates that come together to debate. The informality as used here projects to an image of familiarity between the interviewer and panellists on the one hand, and the interview participants and the audience on the other. The feeling of familiarity enhances receptability of communication.

2.4.2.   Setting up conflict

Mulholland (1991: 103) Comments that "setting up of conflict makes good entertainment and interests the audience..." . This creation of conflict is yet another strategy employed in creating a receptive atmosphere in *Crossfire*. An interesting example is the earlier cited example in D2 (Example 11) where Tony Gachoka, a regular panelist, could not make it to the studio in time for the day's programme. Incidentally, the topic of discussion is the

29

resignation of one pivotal founder member of the radical opposition Party. the SDP - a party Gachoka is the publicity secretary. The resignation of Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o as the head of the political bureau dealt a big blow to SDP. Tony Gachoka and a group of collegues were seen as responsible for hounding Prof. Nyong'o from office.

Mutula Kilonzo (MK) is a supporter of the conservative ruling party KANU and is evidently revelling in SDP's troubles. clearly because TG and the SDP had always accused KANU as undemocratic. dictatorial and imposing – ills that SDP seems to suffer on this occassion.

After the introduction of Tony Gachoka. who is away in Kilifi. Mutula gets a go at him:

(Example 14)

    Mk: Tony you couldn't wait to meet with me could you

    TG: Mutula (   )=

    Mk: = I mean it is like you are out of a job (laughter)

        poor man =

    Intv: = Let me try to put this to rest my – I came here I couldn't find I mean have

        you run away

    Mk: (laughter)

    TG: Absolutely not I actually was ⌈(   ) ⌉=

    Mk: ⌊of course he has run away⌋

    TG: = to make it back in time for the show and of course that is why *Kiss* is able to

        telephone me I don't know why Mutula is shaking I can fight him this far as

        I do when I'm near

Mk: Well – ehm Tony what happened to this famous so called Social Democratic

        Porojo (" lies")   conference that you were calling for the 14th =

TG: =The last time I was on *Crossfire* the moderator was one Patrick Quarcoo =

Mk: =But what happened to this conference you were supposed to call =

Intv: Well let me start lets start with where it counts…(proceeds to introduce the

        topic)

The interviewer tacitly supports the unfolding conflict between the two panelists by allowing the accusations and counters to them to persist through several turns. Again. when he intervenes for the first time he craftly suggests to be putting the matter to an end. only to fuel it further on. It is only several turns at talk later that he actually intervenes. and this is only when the conflict seems to have dissipitated. with Mutula Kilonzo losing steam and repeating his earlier question to Tony about the aborted SDP conference.

This enactment of verbal conflict. like in other instances in our data. bears close resemblance to verbal duelling as discussed by McDowell (in Dijk 1985). and Dundes et al (in Gumperz et al 1972) on Turkish boys verbal duelling. Verbal duelling generally takes the form of a verbal exchange between two competing parties. The competition is such that it is done in a jocular spirit. The verbal duel starts with a challenge from party A that is thrown to party B. Reciprocation is expected of party B. who tops up his challenge a notch further. B's challenge is taken up by A and topped up further. to which B takes up and tops up further. and on and on the duel goes. each challenge acting as a stimulus for a further challenge.

The communicative intent of duels is to put one's opponent down or to test his ability to maintain presence of mind in interaction. Therefore. a retort to a challenge should be sufficiently clever so as not to provide an opponent with potential ammunition for a counter attack.

31

A weaker challenge than that previously proffered by the former party results in the termination of the duel. The party with the weaker challenge becomes the loser and the other party the winner. The winning party in such duels gains higher social prestige.

The evaluative procedure for duels is open to the audience, resulting in formal or informal recognition of the winner as the level of formality and ritual elaboration might demand in any society, culture, or social context.

An important ingredient too of verbal duels is the set of unsaid rules, which are known and accessible to the participants and audience alike. The rules vary greatly from one society to another, in context of the duel, and in terms of formality or informality. However, it is noteworthy that verbal duelling is pervasive in varied context in most cultures, ranging from the casual banter to ritualised duelling.

We hold that, *Crossfire* seems to capture audience imagination because it is produced along the lines of a verbal duel, which is done through bringing together panellists holding divergent political points of view debating on political issues of the day. This results in verbal duels of varied nature. Those in the opening phase seem to be of the more informal nature and generally carried out in the more Jocular spirit than those that appear in the topical phase. We shall concentrate here on those in the opening phase.

Generally, it seems verbal duels in *Crossfire* call for wit and a knack for making a neat connection between seemingly disparate issues, or what might appear a hazy relation at first sight. This display of wit separates a good debater from a poor one, of which an overhearing audience can judge. Verbal duelling seems to receive tacit, and at times explicit encouragement from the interviewer as seen above (Example 14).

The general rule that seems to be at play in these verbal duels is that any member of the panel can initiate the duel, and that any of the interactants can join in at any point in support of any of the duelling parties. Another general rule seems to be that the subject of challenge might be about political affiliations, political failings, professional issues, or circumstantial aspects touching on dress, political events or personal encounters that are brought up. Avoidance seems to be made of matters touching on the person, such as personality and family.

The example above (Example 14) centres on TG's political tribulations and has a winner in TG as the party who makes a weaker challenge is MK, as seen above. In the following example from D1, though not as elaborate as (Example 14), and the notion of winner and loser is not given primary concern, has the competitive jocular spirit that characterise verbal duels at this stage of the interview. Again, the interviewer craftily plays a part in its initiation:

(Example 15)

  Intv: ...Let me say on my left today in an absolute – impeccable – savoury ehm ehm=

  MK: = with strips =

  Intv: = Am just coming to that =

  MK: = Okay go on =

    (Laughter)

  Intv: = black pinstripes suit with red (   ) inside and a red tie inside – Advocate
    Mutula Kilonzo

  MK: Hi Patrick

  Intv: How are you sir =

  MK: = I am very well – I decided I should tell – show Tony Gachoka that I am not in his
    league

(After comments on MK's dressing, TG (Tony Gachoka) is introduced and responds thus to MK's challenge:

(Example 16)

> TG: Patrick how are you (laughs) you have got to stop Mutula Kilonzo trying so hard to
> come here so that you can describe him on radio so Moi can notice him – He was
> fired as the president's lawyer last August – Mr. Moi give him a pardon
>
> (Laughter)
>
> Dr: Can you – can you describe for us what Tony is wearing
>
> Intv: Now I woul – I woul – I would spare Tony a description
>
> (Laughter)

In the turn that follows, the interviewer describes Tony whom we learn is wearing a T-shirt and a cap, which is in direct contrast to MK's formal dress. From this knowledge we observe that the interviewer conspicuously goes to great lengths to make the contrast between MK and TG noticed, and hopefully commented upon (though the reason for his concentration on Mutula's dress is unknown to the audience at that point). MK implicitly comments on this, at the same time throwing TG a challenge. TG diverts the issue of contrasting dress code and gives an explanation for MK's dress, which is in itself a cheeky challenge, putting MK on the defensive. Dr. however, notices TG's diversion and attempts to throw back the unresolved matter of TG's dress, which does not match up to MK's, to which the interviewer makes fun of. The interviewer then explicitly highlights the contrast in dress by giving a description of TG's attire, and at this point the audience gets to know the reason for the fuss over dress.

34

A further illustration of a verbal duel is in D1. In the turn before, the interviewer had introduced Dr., then proceeds to congratulate him for having been elected as the secretary general of his party FORD Kenya:

(Example 17)

     Intv: And congratulations – You know – I hear as they say back somewhere you ate a

            post

     Dr: Yeah let us see how it goes around

     Intv: We hope that you make a real change in that party

     Dr: Just you read this space

     Intv: Lets move =

     TG: =That's the election for secretary general for FORD Kenya

     Intv: Yes

     TG: When are they

     MK: Unless he is moving to KANU of course

     Intv: Aaah you've invited him

     MK: Yeah I don't know what Mukhisa is waiting for

     Dr: KANU hasn't had elections since 1988

The interesting comments to note are by TG. Notice the sarcasm in the seemingly innocent question about the election of Dr. as Secretary-general of FORD Kenya, and his follow-up question about when they are to be held. As was common knowledge at the time, Dr. had been hastily appointed, and not elected, to replace the then secretary general, Gitobu Imanyara, who had resigned his post claiming lack of democracy in the party. Notice too MK's glee at the

35

implication of TG's questions and his invitation of Dr. to join KANU, a party Dr. is vehemently opposed to. Dr.'s response to MK is further interesting since it shoots down MK's gleeful questioning of the merit of Dr's election. He points out the democratic rot in KANU, MK's party, that has not held party elections for the last 14 years, which flies in the face of the party's manifesto that requires that elections be held after every five years.

CHAPTER THREE

CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE TOPICAL PHASE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The topical phase forms the central phase of the broadcast interview. It comes between the opening and closing phases. Within this phase more than one topic can be discussed, which is often the case in the programme *Crossfire* where two or more unrelated topics are often discussed. The beginning of this phase is marked by a boundary move followed by the announcement of the topic, which is done by the interviewer. Boundary moves and subsequent announcement of each different topic is marked by focusing signals such as the examples in our data will attest. In D1 we have:

(Example 18)

    Intv: ...Ok gentlemen welcome to the show – we got an interesting menu today – we got the proposal that have been tabled by the National Alliance for change to the review commission...

In D2, we have the following example:

(Example 19)

Intv: Well gentlemen it is great to have you here and today I think we got

Nairobi absolute Crossfire because the thing that we need to talk about today is

Kibera ...(proceeds to recount the recent history proceeding Kibera violence)

In D3 the boundary move starts as follows:

(Example 20)

Intv: Well lets start lets start with where it counts – because I mean I just came into

town and find there is a terse letter – its only two lines and Professor Peter

Anyang' Nyong'o a founding member of SDP and Chairman of its political bureau

has resigned.

The topic so announced serves as a macro-topical structuring and forms the basis for the

ensuing discussion.   The topic announcement is referred to as the first topic slot, which

according to Schegloff and Sacks cited in Levinson (1983: 312) is a priviledged position such

that it is almost completely free from topical constraints arising from prior turns. This priviledge

is enjoyed in each topic announcement, in cases where there is more than one topic to be

discussed.

From then onwards, all the other speech acts produced within this topical phase will be

constrained by the topic. They will seek to explain its terms, reinforce it, seek to vary some

interpretation of it, select part of it for attention, seek to weaken its force by adding

qualifications, exemplify either to strengthen or weaken it by selection of particular examples,

narrow its applicability, distract others from its weakness, challenge position taken, seek

clarification and so on. All this is done with an overhearing audience in mind.

However, not every act produced relates to the macro-proposition under discussion. Side

issues that have no bearing on the topic might be introduced, either unintentionally when a

speaker gets carried away by issues or emotions, or intentionally as a form of distraction to

prevent some thorny issue in the proposition from being noticed.

An instance of the introduction of a side issue to distract is seen in this fragment from D2. The topic of discussion is the reasons for the resignation of Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o as SDP's chair of its political bureau. Tony Gachoka, the publicity secretary of the party tries to create the impression that it is not an issue within the party's knowledge, and that Nyong'o's resignation was personal and not reflecting a rift within the party ranks. This proposition that Gachoka introduces is seen for what it is, a distracting device, and duly treated as such:

(Example 21)

TG: eh Patrick squarely anywhere in the world anybody who elects to resign eh the
        person who should give comments about why they've resigned or what led them to
        resign is the person that has given that ⎡(res   )   ⎤
Intv: ⎢Tony don't give me that- look if you if⎥=
MK   ⎣double talk   ⎦

Intv: =You have a wife and you have a problem with her you know exactly where the
        problem is don't you

It is especially here in the topical slot, with numerous possibility of divergence from the macro-topic, stating unsubstantiated claims, introducing pressupositions into the discussion that are worth illuminating further, stating ambigous positions, among others that the skills of the interviewer are put into focus. Being a social agent whose task is to facilitate the movement of the interview into a coherent whole for the benefit of an overhearing audience, he is compelled to refocus debate and seek clarifications without imposing his opinions in the discussion (Lewis 1984).

It is the strategies that are employed by both the interviewer and the panelists, at the micro-level of the interaction in the topical phase that we now turn to.

3.2 FORMULATION

Formulation refers to the description by a speaker of a section of prior talk, providing a sense of its interpretation, making inferences, or making something explicit that was previously implicit in the prior talk or shifting the utterance focus (Levinson 1983; McLaughlin 1984). As proposals, formulations are subject to confirmation or disconfirmation by the speaker of talk that is formulated, thus taking the sequence A –B –A. A being the prior speaker whose talk is formulated by B.

In news interview context, formulations are an important tool of journalistic inquiry, and as Heritage (in Dijk 1985: 114) insightfully observes, deriving their importance from the range of functions they serve. "They can be used to clarify prior talk, to draw points from talk that were unfocused or differently focused, to underline the significance of prior response or to probe or challenge earlier stated positions".

All the above functions are accomplished while simultaneously enabling the interviewer to enact two principal roles that are crucial to interviews as institutionalised talk. Firstly, that through formulation the interviewer by clarifying , focusing and challenging talk shows an orientation towards an overhearing audience. Secondly, the interviewer is able to respond to an interviewee's stated position while maintaining the stance of neutrality by re-presenting the interviewee's position and hence the ownership of the utterance remaining with the interviewee.

Heritage (ibid) identifies three standard usages of formulation in news interviews i.e. the prompt, co-operative recycle, and inferentially elaborate probe. In the following section, we are going to look at formulation in our data along this categorisation.

3.2.1 The Prompt

As the name suggests, this form of formulation is used in a rather straight-forward way, having minimal inference by the interviewer to an interviewee's prior talk, spurring on the interviewee to elaborate further on his talk. An instance of prompting is the following fragment in D2. The topic of discussion is the demands by some quarters of the civil society and politicians that the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission be entrenched into the constitution so as to prevent its being disbanded by political forces in government, when the commission would be perceived to be taking an independent stance, and thus threatening the political forces' interests. Professor Kivutha Kibwana, a political activist of repute and convener of NCEC does not see the merit of entrenching the review commission. He comments thus:

(Example 22)

Prof: I don't really think it matters eh it matters in terms of even if you entrench the Constitution of Kenya Review Act – it can still be torpedoed – this is why from earlier on the National Convention Executive Council said that the review law had so many eeh flaws that actually it couldn't it couldn't back a proper constitution eeh in this country and that is why we are saying and we've said and we will always continue to say that until

this country mobilizes adequate political will to do democratic

constitutional making then we are going to get nowhere ⌐and indeed

(1) Intv: └You seem to be very

skeptical

Prof: I am not skeptical I am actually saying that eeh this process as it

is cannot go far

(2) Intv: You don't think so =

Prof = I don't think it can go I don't think it can go far because for example eeh the

Commission Professor Yash Ghai is already taking views and will have taken all

the views a lot of civic education has not been done so one is wondering where

they are collecting the views from and indeed =

(3) Intv: = You don't think it is broad enough =

Prof: = eh of course it isn't because if the people don't know substantially what this is all

about... (goes on to detail that that is why the Commission has gone to places

where no one presented views and further gives examples of areas experiencing

clashes. in Kibera and Tana River. where it was not possible to collect people's

views).

In the fragment. Professor Kibwana's turn is stretched into three further turns. In each of

the three formulations by the interviewer. the gist of the Professor's prior utterance is

maintained. In the first instance of formulation (1), the professor rejects the inference made of

his prior talk that he is as a person skeptical and attributes his skepticism as borne out of the

flawed act and not anything personal . In the second formulation (2). the professor agrees with

the inference made that he doesn't think the review process will go far and elaborates on why he

42

thinks so. The Professor further agrees with the third formulation (3), that he does not think the process is broad enough and proceeds to qualify why he holds that opinion.

It will also be noticed that at no one time does the interviewer take sides in his formulation, showing affiliation or disaffiliation to the Professor. He appropriately maintains neutrality by attributing in each case, his inferences to the Professor's talk – 'you seem to be skeptical, 'You don't think so', and 'You don't think its broad enough'.

Again, in each instance the interviewer selects a section of the prior talk to focus on, for instance in his first formulation (1), he focuses on the firm conviction the Professor has that the process is bound to fail. In this event, he ignores other possible propositions like what the flaws in the Review act are, or what political will is lacking, issues that were also raised by the professor.

Another example of the formulation that is used as a prompt is taken from D3. The topic of discussion here is the Kibera Violence. The violence was attributed to incitement by President Moi of the ruling party KANU and Raila Odinga, the leader of NDP, whose party had entered a co-operation pact with KANU. In the prior turn, Norman Nyaga, an opposition party MP, had lambasted President Moi and Raila for having directly precipitated the violence. Tony Gachoka swiftly takes over from there:

(Example 23)

TG: = Patrick anywhere else in the world the government would have had to resign =

(1)   Intv: = What do you mean =

TG: = I am saying that other than Kenya can this nonsense continue when a government

causes the kind of mayhem – The senseless loss of life in any other kind of

democracy the government of the day would have had to resign – Secondly

43

Mutula Kilonzo has a habit of coming to *Crossfire* and defending the undefendable – The President of Kenya uttered words that have led to the loss of life – At a minimun he owes an apology to the republic and the KANU-NDP merger has now become a merger of death and destruction it must be condemned completely – what Raila both and the President Moi have done to try and use politics of this low level to get votes in Nairobi despite the electors loss of life it has brought =

(2) Intv: = You think this is politics =

TG: = I squarely blame the President and Energy Minister Raila Odinga because their utterances caused incitement…

Again in this example the interviewer by-passes the option of moving to the next panelist or the next question and stretches TG's turn into two more turns. In so doing he prompts TG to elaborate, first in (1), his entire assertion in the first formulation. Notice that in natural conversation, the formultion "what do you mean" would be considered rude or as a reprimand but here it is interpreted as a prompt. This is a pointer to the interviewer's lack of affiliation to interviewee's talk. In the second formulation (2), TG's position that the violence was instigated as a political strategy is highlighted. In this case too, TG takes the formulation as a prompt to elaborate on his comments.

It is also evident that the ownership of the utterance entirely remains with the interviewee who through confirmation of the formulation makes a stronger assertion of his earlier talk in (2), that the president and Raila are squarely to blame for the violence.

In both the examples, we notice a turn at talk stretched into several further turns, which is done by the interviewer actively paying attention to a prior speaker's turn and extending talk

further by shifting focus through selecting a section of prior talk. This is an option that can be seen against moving to another panelist or to the next question.

3.2.2 The Co-operative recycle

This kind of formulation is such that in formulating a prior speaker's talk, an interviewer accurately and agreeably re-presents the interviewee's stated position (ibid 106). Such a formulation occurs in D3 where the Kibera Violence is discussed. In this fragment, David Mwenje an opposition MP makes a direct accusation on Raila:

(Example 24)

DM: The the real genesis to this problem is one there are 2200 landlords in Kibera –
There are about 600 ( ) but there must be about 3-4.00.000 tenants in Kibera –
You see when I talked to Raila he said we should be more concerned about tenants
and not the landlords because this is where we get the votes and I told him I will
not equate this matter with votes =

(1) Intv: = You you spoke to Raila =

DM: = I spoke to Raila in ( )=

(2) Intv: = and Raila said you should care about the ⌐ landlords ⌐
DM: ⌐ about the tenants ⌐=

(3) Intv: = about the tenants ⌐ and not the landlords ⌐
DM: ⌐ and not the landlords ⌐ =

DM: = and infact he was telling me why don't you do it even in your
place – you go you talk to them because we get the votes from
tenants not the landlords =

45

(4)   Intv: So this is about votes ⌐ not the rights of the people ⌐

DM: not about rent   ⌐ ⸗

DM: ⸗ Because in any case not the government or even the president has a right to

intervene between the two the tenant and the land lord because it is their

treaty…

DM in this fragment attacks directly the person of Raila in a manner not directly

verifiable.   For the broadcasting station not to be seen as peddling unsubstantiated and

potentially defamatory statements. it becomes imperative for the interviewer to make clear who

owns the potentially defamatory statements.   By use of a series of co-operative recycle

formulations ⸚(1-4). to which DM readily accepts ownership. the interviewer   distances the

station from the statements. This distancing then obviates libel proceedings from being brought

upon the station.

Another illustration of the co-operative recycle formulation is taken from D1.   The

discussion is about the proposals brought forth to the Constitution Review Commission by the

National Alliance for Change. a grouping of opposition political groups. The immediate issue of

discussion is the proposal that the Law Society of Kenya and the association of Judges and

Magistrates should propose to the Judicial Commission a person to be appointed Chief Justice to

the president. unlike in the prevailing situation where the president is the sole appointing agent.

Mutula Kilonzo a lawyer and KANU supporter thinks otherwise:

(Example 25)

MK: The president at the moment should nominate a member of the Judiciary either the

Chief Justice or a Judge then that person should be vetted by the Judicial Service

Commision and by Parliament =

Intv: = So you want a vetting process =

MK: = Oh I agree with the vetting process this is a good idea from the national

dealliance – I'm not calling them alliance – dealliance for change (The next turn

the interviewer changes topic and panelist)

From this example, which is one among others in our data, it would seem that co-operative recycle formulation is commonly used as a prelude to change of topic and/or panelist, though not all kinds of formulation are used in this way. Others are used as a prelude to a challenge. The former usage seems to suggest that - *now that we have understood you on this, let us move on or get to know what the others have to say.* This notion seems to be in tandem with the observation by Heritage and Watson and McLaughlin and Cody cited in (McLaughlin 1984: 118) and also Edmondson (1981: 101) about one use of formulation which is to terminate topical talk preferatory to the launching of some new topic or to the termination of topic as a whole.

3.2.3 The inferentially elaborative probe

This kind of formulation is used to test or probe some aspect of an interviewee's actions, intentions, or attitude. It commonly focuses on what the interviewer takes to be implied in prior talk or its real world context (Heritage in Dijk 1985: 108). As Heritage observes further, (112), these formulations are designed such that, "the interviewer formulates a version of the interviewee's position that the latter might be expected to deny". The inferentially elaborate probe is a powerful journalistic tool for challenging presuppositions brought into the interview as the following examples illustrate.

47

In the example from D1, the topic of discussion is Uhuru Kenyatta – a political novice – having rapidly risen politically (evidently through patronage) to be a front runner for one of the four vice chairmanship seats of the ruling party KANU, and his being touted as KANU's nominee for Kenya's presidency. The discussion is about what his candidature portends for Kenya. TG, a well known critic of Uhuru Kenyatta and perceived rival in Thika district politics comments:

(Example 26)

TG: = You see Patrick to be the president of the republic of Kenya you must possess various qualities – some of them is to be nominated by a political party – that is one of them but another is to have had experience necessary to have had clout to become an effective President but if for example Uhuru is being brought in as a nominee simply because the KANU chairman wants to retain sweeping powers in KANU =

Intv: = Do you have a problem with Uhuru I mean ⌐ he is enlightened ⌐
TG: └ I – I – I am saying ┘ you have to read the background of the statement that KANU will transform its constitution so the chairman will retain control of KANU – that the president of Kenya will be in future a vice president of and so forth what does this mean – it means that if you take a weaker person to nominee and hopefully KANU wins an election the chairman of KANU remains a *de-facto* leader of Kenya and we are always saying president Moi will go nowhere and he wants a weakling so that he can control him.

48

The interviewer makes an inference about the known dislike (from context outside the present interview) TG has for Uhuru Kenyatta, challenging him to deny whether it is not the cause of his dismissal of Uhuru as a novice. Tony rejects this inference by skilfully analysing why Uhuru is being groomed for the presidency, stating the desire for President Moi to rule Kenya through proxy as chairman of KANU; and hence the push for a weak candidature in Uhuru Kenyatta.

A similar is from D2, where the topic of discussion is the hounding out of Professor Anyang' Nyong'o from SDP, a party he so dedicatedly served, by a group fronted by Tony Gachoka and Appollo Njonjo. Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi dissects the problem in SDP:

(Example 27)

Dr: ...there is another thing – that the group seems to be in ascendency in SDP is the lone ranger group which is not ready to sacrifice certain ideological purity for the purpose of accomodating electable groups of parties and individuals to compete effectively with KANU-NDP axis eeh and the these affected persons are persons who believe that you cannot be a lone ranger where where ideology doesn't have sufficient gravitas in politics – in electoral politics in the country include Beth Mugo they include Shem Ochuodho and this includes Anyang' Nyong'o =

→ Intv: = These are good people in your opinion =

Dr: = These are good people ⌈even the other people are good people

→ Intv: =   └─ who have been sidelined by the Tony Gachokas of this world =

Dr: =Who are also good people in some other regards

49

In the two formulations above, the interviewer wants to commit Dr. to the categorization of the two differing groups as good and bad. This is a stronger and narrower version of the inference to be made of Dr.'s comments. He rejects this version by introducing a broader scale of goodness that can accommodate all concerned as good in their own respect, but implying that one group is mistaken on the issue of wider accomodation of political positions that Nyong'o's group embraces.

A final example of the inferentially elaborate probe comes from D3. The topic is Kibera Violence. In the proceeding section of Dr. Mukhisa's contribution, he enumerates what needs to be done so that such violence does not recur in Kibera. He states the immediate need for the government to resettle the displaced families and the need to criminalize incitement of people by political leaders and then proceeds thus:

(Example 28)

Dr: ...And then as a country do something we are not used to doing – think about long term
     solutions to problems – don't accept this anarchy of the market place about willing-buyer-
     willing-seller – actually rents are unfair in this city – in Kibera slums are too high but
     solutions can't come from decreeing

→ Intv: What what do you mean the rents are too high this is an open market

     Dr: No no no you know there has to be a bearing between what you are vending on the
          market – the cost of getting it and what you are being paid

The interviewer focuses on Dr.'s last utterance and challenges its seeming contradiction with his earlier views that rent in Kibera should be determined by tenants and landlords on willing-buyer-willing-seller basis. Dr. introduces another dimension in response to the challenge that in

50

as much as the earlier position is true, it can only hold where landlords are not allowed to exploit tenants. By implication, he emphasises his earlier stated position in previous contributions that the government can implement housing policies that make it difficult for landlords to charge beyond what their houses are worth.

3.3 PRE-SEQUENCES

The other conversational strategy we focus on in the topical phase is the use of pre-sequences. Pre-sequences prefigure or precede a specific kind of action that an ongoing conversational business is about (Levinson 1983: 345: Edmondson 1981: 46). Pre-sequences in conversations are largely concerned with interaction management, and as such are a prelude to other conversational activity. By 'other conversational activity' we mean the substantive content of conversation that has the illocutionary force, and which is characterised following the notion of adjacency pair, i.e. that a question needs an answer, offers require acceptance or rejection and so on. Thus the sequence that precedes the tied pairs is the pre-sequence. Going by this characterisation, and as advocated by Edmondson (ibid: 54), a conversational unit should be seen as both illocution and interaction.

As used here, pre-sequence can be looked at in two ways. It may refer to a kind of pre-figuring within a turn by a speaker, or as Edmondson (ibid: 84) prefers, the uptake in a move, where a move is composed of uptake, Head and Appealer. Uptake and Appealer are optional elements. Uptake he says "validates the preceding move performed by the previous speaker, the head contains the illocutionary force of the utterance, while the appealer is forward looking and solicits uptake from the hearer".

The second type is pre-figuring at the level of an exchange. It contains at least two interactional moves. one by a speaker and the other by the hearer. and it is at this level that turn-taking takes place.

Pre-sequences have various functions. which can be subsumed in the notion that they both refer backwards to a preceding conversational act and forwards to an upcoming action. thus showing and inviting collaboration from participants and hence ensuring co-ordination of talk. Being at the control of current speaker. pre-sequences can be used strategically by the speaker to achieve his or her conversational goals.

It is the strategic usage of pre-sequences that we now turn to in the next sections. in an attempt to see how they are used in radio political panel interview context.

3.3.1 Pre- sequences in exchange structures.

Pre-sequences in exchange structure. (also called pre-exchanges by Edmondson). in broadcast interview context. it seems. are only initiated by interviewers. We suggest the explanation for this to be two-fold. Firstly. that by virtue of the interviewer controlling the allocation of turns. only he has the prerogative to initiate such pre-exchanges. Secondly. and more important. a panellist initiated pre-exchange would be inappropriate because it would demand that the interviewer show affiliation to panellist talk. thus compromising his neutral stance. This would undermine the interviewer's social role as a facilitator of talk for an overhearing audience.

It is noteworthy that the exercising of the prerogative to initiate pre-exchanges is goal directed. Illustrations from our data will demonstrate this. From D1, the discussion is the merit of National Alliance for Change (NAC) proposal to the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission that the country adopts proportional representation system of government in place

52

of the prevailing constituency representation. After hearing the merits of the proposal, the interviewer shifts to divergent opinion:

(Example 29)

(1) Intv: Let me swing to you Mutula – Mutula you are an advocate

     MK: Yes

(2) Intv: You are a member of KANU – you are a respected lawyer in this community –

            Let me just ask you this issue of proportional representation is this something

            the country should go to =

     MK: = No it's day dreaming of course and I hate to be party to it – the fact is that

            proportional representation cannot work in a country like this.... (Elaborates on

            this)

It is evident that substantive content of the interviewer's talk is the question about the merit of proportional representation discussed earlier. Everything else before that, including the pre-exchange, is optional and its absence would not affect the gist of the question. An examination of the optional content would reveal the relevance for its inclusion. The optional content includes:

1) A placement statement of the interviewer's activity: " Let me swing to you Mutula".

2) A question to confirm Mutula's profession. (which Mutula

   confirms).

3) Mention of his political affiliation.

4) Mention of his standing as a lawyer.

5) Seemingly permission to ask a question.

Apart from (1) and (5) above, which are basically placement markers for the purpose of coherence, we are of the opinion that (2), (3) and (4) above are introduced in the operant discourse to commit MK to express his official position on the matter and hence respond with the gravity that is due to the matter at hand. The pre-sequence thus restricts the reply's point of view to the official, and away from the personal – which has less force and has room for evasiveness. The restriction of MK to make the official version of his comments to the qusetions asked by the interviewer is achieved through a series of compliance gaining strategies.

Compliance gaining is trying to get other people to do what you want them to do. The basis of compliance gaining is such that, people essentially act to gain something from others in exchange for something else (LittleJohn 1991: 122- 131).

In the fragment above, the interviewer seeks to get compliance from MK to speak in his official capacity through appealing to his esteem as a lawyer of standing in the community- (4), and highlighting his party affiliation in (3). With these elements serving as the background against which his answer should be interpreted, MK is obliged to respond with the gravity expected of him if his reputation is not to suffer.

A similar example is taken from D3. The discussion is on Kibera Violence where it is alleged that president Moi uttered a statement that led to the violence, leaving nine people dead, hundreds homeless and destruction of property. In the preceding turn, TG has attacked the president for being irresponsible. The interviewer proceeds thus:

(Example 30)

      Intv: Let me swing to you advocate Mutula Kilonzo – You know the president

      MK: Yeah of course =

      Intv: = You always come and sit here and say he is a responsible man with a big

heart — Tony is suggesting that your president has been irresponsible

enough to cause all these what do you say =

MK: = That is nonsense president Moi was dragged to Kibera by Raila and of course

Raila has demonstrated the excess baggage he is bringing in KANU in this

merger the fact of the matter is that both president Moi and Raila own rental

houses you can't go demand of landlords to reduce rent it it it is

ridiculous but but to blame the president is also not right because

In this fragment also, notice that the substantive content statement is Tony's suggestion that the president is irresponsible which the interviewer wants Mutula to respond to. The optional elements brought into the discourse world are:-

1. Placement statement of interviewer's action i.e. focus on advocate Mutula Kilonzo. (Notice the use of title 'advocate' and full names).

2. Mention of Mutula's acquaintance with the president (Mutula was a long serving personal lawyer to the president), which Mutula accepts.

3. Mutula's well known stand (from context outside the present interview) that the president is reasonable and compassionate.

Apart from the first section of (1), which is intended for coherence purposes, all the other elements i.e. the second section of (1) emphasising Mutula's profession (which demands objectivity), his acquaintance with the president at a personal level, and his knowledge of the president's level headedness and compassion – borne out of acquaintance – are optional. In this illustration too, the optional elements are brought into the discourse by the interviewer for purposes of gaining compliance from MK.

The use of MK's name in full alongside his professional title in (1), are deliberate strategies intended to warn MK that his response to the perceived contradictions in president Moi's nature and actions in (3), will be interpreted against the background of his profession, which is concerned with the dispensation of justice, and hence the need for objectivity. Anything short of this principles having force in his response would result in loss of esteem in MK.

By use of pre-sequence, all these presuppositions are introduced by the interviewer and ratified by the interviewee to test Mutula's stand. In the following turn, MK is at pains trying to reconcile the contradictions put forth about the president while trying to protect the loss of face (Goffman 1959) alluded to by the interviewer's reference to his legal profession and the objectivity it demands.

From the brief discussion above, it can be seen that pre-sequencing is yet another powerful tool of journalistic inquiry. It employs the collaboration of both the interviewer and the interviewee in the introduction and ratification of presupposition as a prelude to questions or challenges. As in the use of formulation, the collaborative work helps the interviewer in maintaining a neutral stance, while probing certain knowledge or stand held by a panellist.

3.3.2   Pre-sequence in the move structure

The move or turn is an important resource to an interviewee, since he does not control the allocation of turns; it is at the turn level that he/she must exercise his/ her conversational skills to achieve the desired goals. Some of the skills employed in the use of pre-sequence are discussed below.

3.3.2.1 Agreement – disagreement structure

The agreement – disagreement turn organization is such that the agreement component prefaces the disagreement component . The implication of disagreement is usually interpreted as the central component in the turn: the agreement component being seen as a ritualistic interactional act. The reason for having such agreeing acts in an essentially disagreeing move is motivated by the desire for individuals to orient to agreeing with one another as "comfortable, supportive, reinforcing, perhaps as being sociable" (Pomerantz in Atkinson and Heritage 1984:77). This is emphasized in circumstances where outright disagreement would result in the loss of face in the speaker or the referent (Goffman 1959).

However, it is interesting to note that in our data, the consideration of loss of face in disagreeing is very selective. It would seem that bitter political opponents are not shown such considerations while disagreement with like-minded or urbane politicians, and overwhelmingly, callers-in from the audience are prefaced with agreements.

Fragments from our data will demonstrate the shape of agreement plus disagreement turns. An example, from D1 is based on the discussion of the merits of the prospects of Uhuru Kenyatta - the son of Kenya's founding president, but also a political novice, of becoming Kenya's president, succeeding president Moi. Dr. comments of Uhuru's candidature:

(Example 31)

(1)   Dr: ... I have said it here before in *Crossfire* and I want to say it again – I have absolutely

nothing personal against Kenyatta ⌈ as a matter ... ⌉

Intv: ⌊ You don't   ⌋ =

Dr: = of fact I consider Uhuru to be a decent human being decent Person ⌈ and I ⌉ =

Intv: ⌊ You do ⌋

Dr: = think the next leader of this country should ⌈ be a decent person ⌉ =

Intv: ⌊ be a decent person ⌋

Dr: = But having said that there are a number of things you have to consider in a

(2)   transition not just about your friendship to persons – You have to look at it this

        way – at one time the concern was how can the constituency that is guilty of

        historical problems – fearing what will happen to them when Moi era is over –

        How will they influence the succession (continues to detail how the constituency

        wanted to influence the appointment of a prime minister, but eventually president

        Moi settled for a weak president, as Uhuru Kenyatta's candidacy provides, so as

        to remain the power behind the throne to protect the said constituency).

Dr. Here makes a distinction between Uhuru the person and presents him in favourable
terms in (1), but essentially disagrees with reasons behind his being pushed to contest for the
presidency in (2). Dr. thus through the favourable preface presents a positive face of Uhuru
while criticizing actions surrounding his presidential candidature as unfavourable because of the
behind the scene political manoeuvres, intended to exploit a weak Uhuru president to
unconstitutionally extend president Moi's stay in power so as to protect wrong doers in his reign.

Another instance of agreement plus disagreement structure is in D2. The discussion
focuses on political parties in Kenya as revolving around personalities and thus in cases of
disagreements between the personalities in leadership, parties break up. In the preceding turns,
Prof. and MK have emphasized the importance of leaders building institutions and organizations
in parties rather than basing their operations on personal influences. Dr. seems to hold a
different view:

58

(Example 32)

    Dr: Now I I I appreciate the importance of institutional development and organization

           that are separated from political leaders but I have been in a political party now for

           eleven-twelve years and what I have painfully learned is that Kenyan political

           consumers are not consumers of ideology of party positions =

    Intv: = what are they =

    Dr. = They are consumers of which paramount chief of which tribe is leading which party

Dr. demonstrates agreement with previous speakers' arguments for the need for institutionalization of parties but then disagrees with them, as shown by the constrastive conjuction *but*, about who is to blame for non-institutionalization of parties. Giving an account of his personal experience, Dr. is able to transfer the blame from party leaders as earlier alluded to by the prior speakers onto the Kenyan public.

Dr. is able to effect this transfer of blame through juxtaposion of two contrastive elements, taking the form of a "puzzle-solution" format (Atkinson 1984). The first part of the contrast is such that Dr. states a position that projects a second part that is expected by the hearer, as the interviewer's question attests. By virtue of his asking the question, the interviewer ratifies the disagreement as a valid contribution to the prevailing discourse, but its ownership remaining with Dr.. Dr then procedes to both answer the interviewer, and proffer the second part of the contrast through a rhythmic punchline by repetition of the word *which*, "... *which* paramount chief of *which* tribe is leading *which* party".

Yet another example of pre-sequencing taking the agreement –disagreement shape used strategically is in D2. TG has been put on the defensive about a coup in his party targeting one

founder member of the party SDP. Professor Anyang' Nyong'o. The strategy as used here backfires. a pointer that agreement –disagreement is actually a conscious debate strategy:

(Example 33)

Intv: Le me let me come to you Tony – Tony there is real concern in the media and political circles about what is happenning to your party I think when James came in – and James came into the studio – there was a feeling expressed that you Appollo Njonjo and others without regard to the party were planning a coup and the coup was to replace Anyang' Nyong'o with eeh Orengo – alot of people predicted at the time that Prof. would just walk out – what actually happened Tony

(1) TG: I think that you raise a very important question and I think SDP has failed in the public relations exercise in being able to deal with the public and their concern for

(2) transparent elections at SDP and I I agree this is not a unique problem to SDP –

(3) KANU has not held elections for thirteen years ⌐ But not but not (   )

Intv: └ Surely we hold

you to a higher level of responsibility

TG: = ⌐ I do agree I
      └
MK: exactly you have professors

In this sequence. TG tries to employ the agreement–disagreement strategy without success. He first affiliates his turn in (1) with that of the interviewer. agreeing about the importance of the interviewer's question. Secondly. he uses a disarmer. admitting the failure of his party. Finally using a co-ordinating conjuction *and* in (2). he evades answering the question asked and tries to project his party's problem by incorporating KANU into it. His ploy is

60

rejected by both the interviewer and MK. and his use of *but* in (3) is an attempt at damage control for failure to clearly bring KANU into a discourse that was essentially about SDP's problems. The lack of a neat connection between the discourse worlds in the agreement and disagreement is seen for what it is – a distraction. and outrightly rejected as valid contribution in the on-going debate.

3.3.2.2 Supportive moves

Supportive moves in talk as Edmondson (1981) argues. have their motivation as anticipation of certain hearer responses. Two supportive moves that we focus on here are the grounders and expanders. The grounders are supportive moves by speakers which orient to answering the question *why we state or assert P*. while expanders answer the question *how* the hearer can do something or before he/ she objects that he/she can't do so. the speaker says how.

In so far as these anticipatory strategies pre-empt possible pre-exchanges by answering potential *why. how* or rejects by the hearer. they can be characterized as pre-sequence oriented and can be derived via pre-sequences. Supportive moves are an intergral part of debate and arguments because in such kinds of discourse. a speaker's contribution is a development of talk a notch further and thereby bringing in new propositions and insights that need to be justified before they are ratified as part of the ongoing discourse. Thus an interconnection has to be made between the old and the new. The ability to make this interconnection in a novel way in political debate enhances a politician's reputation. and can distinguish a good and bad debater. Some illustrations from our data will show some ways supportive moves are used.

From D1. the focus of debate is the merits of the NAC proposal to have a prime ministerial post in Kenya. in place of the prevailing situation where the president is the head of state and government and does not directly participate in parliamentary business:

(Example 34)

    Intv: Gentlemen I want to focus on this issue of a prime minister elected by the largest

        party or parties or whatever it is- does it make sense

(1)   Dr: = ⎡ Yes it does ⎤ let me just react to that =

    GN: ⎣ Yes it does ⎦

(2)   Dr: = a little –You see one of the most important tenets of a democratic system is that the

(3)   leader of government is answerable to the representatives of the people – He who

        leads the appropriation of people's taxes justifies his actions to representatives

(4)   of the tax payers – That principle is best expressed in a system where you have a

        prime minister who sits in parliament and on weekly basis justifies what

        government is doing to the representatives of the people –

(5)   That is the prime minister of necessity the leader of the largest slate of votes –

        They may be an absolute majority if the party has more than 50% of the voters.

The speaker (Dr.) in (1) states a position that agrees to the notion that the election of the prime minister by the largest party makes sense. in response to the interviewer's question. All else that follows is the support to position (1). Within the support. Dr. states position (2). which is a principle of democratic system. a position he restates further in (3) but this time by being more specific – through exemplification by bringing in the idea of taxes. tax payers. and the appropriation of taxes. In (4). he makes the explicit connection between the principle of democratic system. the prime ministerial post. and parliament (hitherto referred to as ˙peoples representatives) in a support move. In (5) Dr. Makes yet another connection to the prime minister and the largest number of voters using the conditional marker *of necessity* as a position that refers back to (1) and interviewer's question and in essence reafirming position (1).

In the whole, Dr.'s contribution answers the questions (a) why the need for a prime minister with the largest number of voters and (b) how he works in a democratic system. These are questions not explicitly asked by the interviewer but are anticipated by the speaker.

A similar example is in D2, focusing on Prof.'s contribution to the resignation of Professor Anyang' Nyong'o as SDP political bureau chair. In the preceding contribution, TG – SDP's publicity secretary – has adamantly refused to disclose the reasons for Professor Nyong'o's resignation. Other panelists – Dr. and MK, have held the common view that professor Nyong'o has resigned as a result of being sidelined from the party by his erstwhile comrades in the party leadership. MK has further hinted that Professor Nyong'o's resignation portends total disengagement from SDP party affairs. Prof. in this fragment addresses this last issue raised by MK:

(Example 35)

(1)   Prof: Well, I think we are prejudging this matter too early- because my suspicion is that a

(2)   resignation can also be a way of engagement because if collegues perhaps are not

              treating you as you expect you can also pull the rug under them by engaging them

              but in a different way and ⌈ I mean

(3)   Intv: ⌊ is this what you think the professor is doing =

(4)   Prof: = and and I would be suprised if Professor Anyang' Nyong'o would not really want

              to be a serious contender in terms of leadership of SDP when the meeting which

              is to determine that eh ⌈ comes up ⌉ =

       Intv: ⌊ comes up ⌋

       Prof: = because I don't really think that Anyang' Nyong'o is ready to throw away the

63

(5)   Social Democratic Party and I am saying this because – If the ideas of social

democracy die if SDP dies then there will be a big gap in the opposition.

In position (1), Prof. states a position which brings in a proposition in the debate hitherto

not mentioned i.e. looking at the matter in a different way, thus changing the direction of the

debate. Whatever follows is the support of (1), which starts with another position in (2) in form

of a general proposition about resignation and what it may mean. (2) Concretises the general

proposition by contextualising it to Professor Nyong'o's resignation by making implicit

references to SDP-Professor Nyong'o's case. Notice that the interviewer's question in (3) does

not impede or change the flow of Prof.'s talk and its abscence would still maintain Prof.'s

contribution in (2) and (4) as a coherent whole. However, the interviewer's question in (3) gives

credence to the position that support moves are anticipatory strategies for challenges from

hearers, which are seemingly embedded in speakers' minds. (4) provides support for (2), and

appeals to Prof.'s personal knowledge of Professor Nyong'o and hence his unlikelihood to

disengage completely from SDP. In (5), which seems a support move for (4) is also a position

which ties up the gist of Prof.'s argument by referring to (1) above. The reference is implied

such that, Professor Nyong'o realises that SDP is the only party that provides the most viable

vehicle for social democracy, ideas that Professor Nyong'o holds, and his total disengagement

from SDP would amount to abandoning his ideals. By implication, it reaffirms position (1) that

Anyang' Nyong'o's resignation being interpreted as total abandonment of SDP is a

misconception.

The argument advanced in the discussion of supportive moves as being anticipatory of

pre-exchanges, which are questions from hearers, gives credible explanation to the structure of

rhetorical argument as discussed by Schiffrin (in Dijk 1985: 38-41), which she defines as

"discourse through which a speaker presents an intact monologue supporting a disputable position".

3.4 COHERENCE IN RADIO PANEL INTERVIEWS

Coherence is the sense in which a discourse may be said to "hang together", and hence its interpretability as a unitary whole. Coherence is closely tied to the notion of relevance, which is the concern of discourse both at the local and global levels.

Local relevance refers to a conversational contribution being relevant to the preceding contributions while global relevance is where a contribution is relevant to the overriding concerns of the discourse as a whole (McLaughlin 1984; Brown and Yule 1983; Edmondson 1981).

In looking at the relevance of conversational contributions to the ensuing discourse, a deduction of goals and plans of a speaker at the given point of discourse is invaluable. This is because a speaker uses whatever linguistic and conversational resources available to him/her to produce a message aimed at realising some goal (McLaughlin 1984: 40 – 45).

Valuable research in the notion of coherence in conversation takes two main directions. One approach is the functional organisation of conversation, which is interested in the organisation of action as it is manifested in sequence of utterances. Important to this approach is the illocutionary force of utterances. The illocutionary force draws from the classical speech act theory by Austin and Searle (cited in Levinson 1983), but subjected to improvement in the function assignment procedure, where the illocutionary force of an utterance is as it is treated in the conversation by the hearer (Edmondson 1981).

Of importance too to the functional organisation of talk is the notion of conditional relevance. Conditional relevance is such that an utterance in conversation is a determining

condition for what may reasonably follow. as proposed by Schegloff and Sacks. quoted in McLaughlin 1984: 68: Levinson 1983: 303 – 307; Coulthard 1985). However, the notion of conditional relevance as conceived by Sacks and Schegloff has been criticised for not accounting for many structurally related utterance sequences. and why some utterances get to initiate pairs. while others do not. Foster (cited in McLaughlin 1984: 72) is of the opinion that speech act organisation at the utterance by utterance level is a very early acquisition for children. which is later supplemented by topic management skills.

The other approach to organisation of talk is the topical approach. where topic is the something the talk is about. There are various shades to this approach: firstly. there is the approach that treats topic as the subject in a subject-predicate utterance. This treatment of topic is best suited in the study of sentence coherence. and not the kind of discourse we investigate.

The second approach examines topic in form of a proposition that can be summarised as a title. This analysis is problematic in that: there can be several accurate titles for any one given type of discourse.

The third analysis of topic. which is what we propose to use here. is the topic framework as postulated by Brown and Yule (1983). Theirs has a broader perspective of topic. which they treat as constituting several activated elements in the discourse and physical context that talk takes place.

3.4.1 Topic Assignment

In broadcast interview context. the debate topic is announced on the onset of the topical slot by the interviewer. The topic then forms the overarching global concern of debate; constraining talk for the duration the debate is based on the topic. Illustrations from our data will

show the kind of topic framework within which debates are based. In D1, the topic announcement proceeds thus:

(Example 36)

> Intv: ...but gentlemen lets start because the National Alliance for Change came up with a draft of legal reforms that they hope will be included in the new constitution and which is going to be tabled eem before the Review Commission and it talks about two things – big constitutional reforms and electoral reforms – George this is an alliance of which you are part of

The activated elements in this announcement of topic are:

i. The National Alliance for Change (NAC) as the principal players (A group of opposition political parties).
ii. Draft constitutional reform to be tabled to the review commission by NAC.
iii. The addressee is primarily George Nyamweya, Democratic Party of Kenya deputy secretary general, and a key player in NAC, but also addressed to other panellists and the overhearing audience simultaneously.

In D2, we have this topic assignment, as earlier cited in (example 20):

(Example 37)

> Intv: Well let me start – let's start let's start with where it counts because – I mean – I just come into town and find that there is a terse letter – its only two lines and

67

Professor Peter Anyang' Nyong'o a founding member of SDP and chairman of its political bureau has resigned – Tony you are the publicity secretary of SDP why did the Prof. resign.

The activated elements in this fragment that announces the debate topic include –

i.   Professor Anyang' Nyong'o, a founding member of SDP and chairman of its political bureau, as the main subject of discussion.

ii.   The matter of concern is professor Nyong'o's resignation as political bureau chairman of SDP.

iii.   The time he did so is a recent while back in the preceding week as the present tense attests, "I just come in town and find...."

iv.   No reason given by the professor for his resignation.

v.   The addressee is primarily Tony Gachoka, SDP's publicity secretary.

vi.   The interviewer's intention is to get an insider's view of what is happening in the SDP for the benefit of the panellists and overhearing audience.

In each of the topic framework announcements, the activated elements serve as the guidelines upon which the debate rests. In the next section, we look at how the speaker's topic is negotiated to fit in the topic framework constraining the global concern of debates.

3.4.2 Speaker's topic

Brown and Yule (1983:87-94) argue that conversational discourse is a dynamic process, which involves the negotiation of topic. On the one hand there is the discourse topic, as seen above, and on the other there is the speaker's topic. The speaker's topic, which is 'what I think we are talking about', is essentially a personal topic within the general framework of the discourse as a whole. Speakers do introduce what they want to say via a form of personal reference, thereby advancing the discourse to a new point where a new set of presuppositions are brought to bear in the discourse and thus widening the pool of activated elements. In the broadcast media context, when the speaker's topic is concentrated on too much without a linkage to the topic framework evidently seen, the interviewer is seen to prompt "what's your point" or "go straight to the point". Let us now examine instances of speaker's topic.

From D2, as cited earlier (Example 32), Dr. is contributing to the need for the institutionalising of political parties in Kenya. He comments thus:

(Example 38)

> Dr. Now I I I appreciate the importance of institutional development and organisation that are separated from political leaders but I have been in a political party now for eleven-twelve years and what I have learned painfully is that Kenyan political consumers are not consumers of ideology of party positions =
>
> Intv: = what are they=
>
> Dr: =They are consumers of which paramount chief of which tribe is leading which party.

In this fragment, we observe Dr.'s movement from the on-going topic framework about the institutionalisation of political parties, to recounting a personal experience in politics.

spanning "eleven-twelve years", which is a long enough period that enables him to credibly comment on the political habits of Kenyans. His comment (from personal experience) is given salience in the ensuing discourse by the interviewer's question and hence ratifying Dr.'s personal comment as a valid contribution to the current discourse.

Another example is from D3. The topic framework is Kibera Violence and the alleged involvement of the area member of parliament, Raila Odinga, in the incitement of tenants to violence. The debate proceeds thus:

(Example 39)

> Intv: Let me swing to you Norman – Norman you are a member of parliament and I am not asking to criticise your colleague – but if this happened in your constituency – I mean - would you be satisfied with honourable Raila Odinga's public position and what he's done
>
> NN: There is nothing wrong in criticising a colleague – this is the game of politics - The Raila I knew of 1995 when him and I went to Mozambique to try to broker peace on the two warring factions is a different Raila today – Raila currently is fighting for his political survival within Nairobi... (Proceeds to recount how Raila now keeps the company of publicly known inciters)

NN here deviates from the discourse topic as constrained by the interviewer, that is, Raila's public position and conduct at the time before and during the violence. He recounts a personal experience based on his knowledge of Raila in 1995 and before. Raila for many years was a radical critic of the KANU regime; claiming it was dictatorial, high handed, and insensitive to peoples plight. Raila was as a result detained on a number of occasions. Because

of his valiant fight against the oppression of his people. Raila could merit an invitation to broker peace in the long running civil strife in Mozambique. This personal comment by NN runs in marked contrast with what he then says of Raila's present conduct, who has warmed up to the KANU regime and is not only alleged to incite his people to violence, but keeps company of alleged inciters. NN's personal topic stands out as a sharp indictment of the deterioration of Raila's public standing as a people's representative and thus illuminates on the topic framework.

A final example is from D1. The debate centres on the merits of the NAC proposals to the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission for proportional representation to replace the prevailing constituency representation in Parliament. TG comments:

(Example 40)

> TG: Well first of all I must criticise the National Alliance approach of putting these reforms to the Review Commission as not necessarily intelligent - Patrick as you are aware intelligence is the capacity to discover relationships and to deduce correlates that are relevant to the solution of a problem - The problem here is that the opposition lost and fatally so the control of the Review Commission and we argue therefore that any attempt to take before this Commission ...(proceeds to argue that it is a waste of time to put proposals forward to this Commission)

Again here, we observe TG make a general comment, which is in consonance with the ensuing discourse topic. He then deviates to a personal topic, giving a description of what intelligence constitutes, and finally making a connection of his own topic to the general topic framework. The motivation for the speaker topic here by TG is to support his position by using

an objective definition of intelligence, and hence through this objectivity, giving credibility to his argument that the National Alliance approach is wrong.

CHAPTER FOUR

*

CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE CLOSURE PHASE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The closing phase of an interaction has some similarities with the opening phase. They are both periods of "heighted access" with the potential for making an impression upon others about the nature of the social relation. They are also marked by commonly occurring ritualised sequences that are distinctive to each of them (Saunders in Hargie 1991).

However, by nature of its placement at the end of an interaction, the closing phase has its unique characteristics. As Goffman quoted in (ibid:189) observes, "greetings mark a transition to increased access and farewells to a state of decreased access".

Closings are therefore worked out to take into account the movement in an interaction from increased access to decreased access, and the problems inherent in breaking up the interpersonal contact without undue abruptness (Levinson 1983: 316).

4.1.1. Definition of the closing phase.

Schegloff and Sacks quoted by Saunders (in Hargie 1991:189) define the closing phase as:

> The ability to organise the simultaneous arrival of the conversationalist at a point where one speaker's completion will not occasion another speaker's talk and that will not be heard as some speaker's silence.

This definition seems to emphasise the negotiation of closing as is commonly found in natural conversation, where parties are on equal footing and their closure is an alternating give-take interplay.

On the other hand, Saunders (in ibid: 190), defines closings as:

> The directing attention to the termination of social exchange by summarising the main issues which have been discussed, drawing attention to what will happen in the future and, finally, breaking interpersonal contact without making participants feel rejected or shunned.

Saunders definition is broader and seemingly encompassing institutionalised talk where because of the complexity of information discussed, summaries are deemed as necessary and that a plan for a future encounter is outlined as is commonly done in classroom lessons or counselling interview sessions.

However, both definitions are suggestive of a ritualised sequence of closures, and the need for sensitivity in executing them by avoiding embarrassment, as manifested in silence or abruptness. Having noted this, we shall now examine the structure of closing in the programme *Crossfire*.

4.1.2 Closing structure

The closing structure of the programme *Crossfire* is highly regular and takes the following sequence:

 i) Pre-closing sequence.

 ii) Non-task comments sequence.

 iii) Acknowledgement statements.

Within this structure, we now turn our attention to the examination of strategies employed in the closing phase in broadcast interviews in our data, and their functions.

4.2. PRE-CLOSING SEQUENCE

The pre-closing sequence comes before the actual closing sequence, and in fact anticipates it. The pre-closing sequence in broadcast interviews, as our data demonstrates, seems to serve two fundamental functions. One function is the summarising of the gist of the preceding debate, often in the form of concluding the debate topic, and the second is the mitigation for abruptness in closure.

These two functions seem to be most conspicuous in instances where debate is based on a controversial or emotive topical framework and in these instances, the two functions are likely to be realised simultaneously. In the less heated debates, the interviewer can less conspicuously work out the conclusion of debate and bring about mitigation for abruptness separately. Below we shall discuss the two functions in relation to the pre-closing sequence.

4.2.1. Debate conclusion

As used here, conclusion refers to the formal and final arrangement or settlement of debate, which in some cases might take the form of summation of debate. Conclusion sequences are important in lengthy discourse in that they bring together diverse elements and ideas discussed earlier to a conceived settlement, and thus giving clarity and structure to what has gone on before. Conclusion sequences are also important aids in the retention of knowledge of an interaction, because they conflate the gist of the preceding debate. Viewed as such, conclusions have both retrospective and prospective elements in them. They bring to an end the debate and anticipate the closure of an encounter.

75

There are two ways in which the conclusion to a broadcast interview might conceivably be undertaken. The first way is for the interviewer to take it upon himself to summarise the gist of the debate and any possible conclusion arrived at, if any. On the other hand, a conclusion to an interview may be worked out through a question-response sequence, by the interviewer initiating such a sequence of all the panellists in the interview.

The programme *Crossfire* seems to favour the latter approach to the conclusion of debate. We are of the opinion that the programme's choice is informed by the fact that, firstly, it brings together panellists with divergent political opinions discussing political topics, which by their very nature rarely carry a clear-cut agreement of issues. Such debates also thrive on tearing apart opponent's arguments, and advancing one's position. This is more so because the panellists wish to score political capital out of their arguments and hence the need to make them decidedly better than those of opponents while trying to discredit those of the opponents.

A second and more compelling reason is that a summation of the gist of competitive political debate necessarily brings with it an evaluative tinge that risks being interpreted as advocacy for particular political points of view by the overhearing audience. To avoid the perception of advocacy by an audience, and to conform to the politically liberal approach taken by the station *Kiss FM*, it is imperative that ownership of political views in debate remains with the respective panellists. This approach leaves the decision of what is the more important or appealing of the positions in debate to the overhearing audience.

As noted in 4.2.0, the conclusion to the more controversial debate topics results in a greater coincidence with mitigation for abrupt closure. An important aspect to note as a result is that there are more explicit markers of pre-closure, as we shall see in the next section.

4.2.2 Mitigation for abruptness.

Unlike in natural conversation where closing is negotiated between interactants, broadcast interviews are highly constrained by time limits that are adhered to in the station's programming. As such, the interviewer in his role as the agent of the broadcasting station initiates the closure.

Despite the knowledge by the interactants of the time constraints in the broadcast interviews, the need for sensitivity towards closure is still as eminent as it is in natural conversation. An abrupt closure is undesired and hence appropriate mitigation has to be carried out in cases where closures have to be made while panellists still have further contributions to make. Because of the competitive nature of *Crossfire*, the panellists and interviewer acutely feel the time constraint.

An example of how mitigation is made in our data is in D1. The topic of discussion is the controversy surrounding the merger of the ruling party KANU, and the opposition party, NDP. The merger was to be held on the 18th March 2002. This merger was perceived as a betrayal of the opposition politics by opposition sympathisers and a move to entrench the much-discredited KANU into power for the selfish gain of a few individual NDP party stalwarts, who would be co-opted into political positions in the newly constituted government. KANU sympathisers on the other hand saw it as a clever strategy at strengthening their party and democracy in the country. As the debate of the impending merger rages on, time for winding up the programme catches on:

(Example 41)

Intv: Gentlemen you know – I mean – I wish we could talk about this

more but the weeks will unfold new things will come up – and I just

77

want you to know I am waiting for 18th because the coin will fall-

but after having said that I would like to ask you about the good or

   bad event of the week.

Mitigation here is seen in the opening section of the interviewer's utterance, marked by hesitation: "Gentlemen you know – I mean – I ", and a double duty task related comment: "I wish we could talk about this more": which is in the form of a direct apology about the imminent closure that means cutting down debate, and appreciation for the preceding debate.

Another example that demonstrates the constraints of time and how the interviewer works mitigation for abrupt closure is in D2:

(Example 42)

   Intv: We must do the traditional thing and the traditional thing in this show is to ask

      about your good and bad event.

The abrupt closure is mitigated by a redirection of the next sequence of events that will lessen the impact of abruptness by changing focus onto the traditional non-task comments. This point will be elaborated at length in the next section.

Sometimes because of the knowledge that a topic generates a lot of heat and thus is unlikely to be given exhaustive discussion within the allocated time, the interviewer has to prepare for the initiation of closure long before the actual closing point. This is done through a series of pre-closing sequences.

In our data, D3 provides such an example: the topic of discussion being the earlier mentioned Kibera violence. This topic involves a complex history that preceded the violence.

The history dates back around a century ago. and deals with emotive laden issues of contentious land ownership. rent disputes and loss of lives and property – issues that could easily provoke similar violence in other parts of Nairobi city and even the country. The interviewer proceeds thus in preparation for closure:

(Example 43)

Intv: Let me come to Norman before we actually wrap up – Norman any comments on this (after Norman's response).

Intv: We need to wrap up Dave your final solution.
(After several turns. with the interviewer challenging DM's position. the pre-closure sequence proceeds).

Intv: Let me swing to you because this is the final and we got to do the round-up em Hon. Mukhisa Kituyi (After Dr. Kituyi's contribution).

Intv: = and it's sad gentlemen I have got to cut you short because the time has been short – Its been great having you at the people's parliament because that is what *Crossfire* is and the traditional thing we do we ask you to talk about the good event or the bad event of the week and you are free to do that and I would like to start with you Hon. David Mwenje.

Firstly. preparation for the imminent closure is done several turns away before the initial closing phase actually begins. This is done to avert what would seem an abrupt closure. through

psychological preparation. by the interviewer explicitly drawing attention to the coming closure. This is done through explicit markers that the turn given to each panellist is a summation of the debate. These markers are:

     i)   Norman before we sum up...

     ii)   We need to wrap up Dave...

     iii)   ... this is the final and we got to round up...

Secondly, an apology is proffered in the opening section of the initiation of closure to mitigate for the incomplete conclusion to the discussion: " and it's sad I have to cut you short because time has been short..."

Thirdly, an appeal is made to the liveliness of the preceding discussion i.e. "It's been great having you at the people's parliament". This we contend other than acknowledging the panellists contribution, is meant to further soften the impact of abruptness in closure by focusing on the positive nature of the encounter and hence neutralising the negative effects of abruptness.

4.3 CONCLUDING NON-TASK RELATED STATEMENTS.

Concluding non-task related comments are utterances situated in the closure phase, which are not tied to the ensuing topic of debate.

The use of concluding non-task related statements or questions is yet another strategy in the closing phase designed to show a warm or friendly disposition after the business of an encounter has been completed in the programme *Crossfire*. Non-task related comments show recognition of the human aspect of leave taking (Saunders in Hargie 1991). To this end, they serve social interpersonal function in talk.

In broadcast interviews, concluding non-task related comments are optional elements whose omission would preserve the closure sequence, resulting in a factual closure as observed

in Karanja (1993). However, because of their permanence in the programme *Crossfire*, a close examination would reveal their import.

The ritualisation of concluding non-task related sequence in the programme *Crossfire* is evident in the common reference to the sequence as "doing the traditional thing". The sequence takes the form of question-response turns, with each panellist being asked by the interviewer about his/her good or bad event of the preceding week. Some examples of the panellists' comments will suffice. In D2, prof. has this to say:

(Example 44)

    Intv: We must do the traditional thing and the traditional thing in this show is to

             ask you about your good or bad event of the week

    Prof: The fact that from what I saw in Parliament in terms of this law — our case is

             not being given a hearing I think we are set for the long haul

We notice that Prof.'s comments refer back to the ensuing discourse topic through his reference to *this law*, which is the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission act, the topic of the day. However, it is out of choice that he constrains his comment to the prior debate, but does so by giving it a personal perspective not raised in the debate.

In the same interview, MK has this to say:

(Example 45)

    Intv: em Mutula your good or bad event of the week

    MK: This was a very nice week because I wasn't in court any of the days.

             sometimes it is very gruelling but I'm in court the whole of next week

MK's comments do not at all touch on the constitution review debate; they are free of the ensuing debate topic. They are comments about his professional schedule, which is in essence a private affair.

In the whole, the comments made by the panellists are free from the topic of discussion and can only be constrained to it by the individual panellist out of choice. They are largely personal comments or topics, as the panellists deem fit to highlight.

A further example is from D1:

(Example 46)

Intv: The last word - Your good or bad event of the week Tony Gachoka

TG: Yes - I don't have much to say just that I got a frightening number of letters from students at Thika Technical about a principal who collected two thousand shillings from 800 hundred students - a total of 1.6 million to dig a bore-hole and there is no sign of a bore-hole six months later only that the man is driving a left hand limousine - so I think that is tragic for a school and the president has been talking about the misuse of funds - We have to be very careful about spending public funds

Again here, as above, the topic is entirely TG's personal topic, completely unrelated to the issue of constitutional review topic discussed in the topical slot.

The import of the concluding non-task related comments in *Crossfire* could be appreciated in two ways. Firstly, *Crossfire* is a combative programme by its very nature of bringing together panellists with different and at times conflicting political viewpoints. Thus the social opening and closing, though serving different purposes due to their placement in the

interview structure, we contend help to strike a balance between the largely business segment and humanness of the business interaction.

Secondly, the social closing in the two sections appeal to the station's editorial policy. The editorial policy is the principles and stylistic practices, which the media house sets as a guide for itself in doing its work (Berry 1976). *Kiss FM* programming reflects an emphasis on the social rather than factual programming. *Crossfire* stands out as one of the most serious and factual programmes in the station's repertoire. The forceful human element elaborately and ritually pursued in the two sections is a strategy in the programme for conformity to *Kiss FM's* target audience expectations, as reflected in the station's editorial policy. This human element is communicated to the audience through offering glimpses to the political commentators' personal lives or issues that are close to their personal lives that might interest the audience.

We contend that the glimpses of panellists' personal lives help reduce the distance between them and the audience. By so doing, social proximity is enhanced, and a sense of familiarity is developed – a familiarity that can be used by the media house to form a bond with the audience, and an attachment to a particular programme.

4.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENTS

Acknowledgement statements in broadcast interviews are largely interviewer specific tasks. They serve to show appreciation for the preceding encounter and in that case are backward looking. They are also forward looking in anticipation of a future encounter. Appreciation is demonstrated by direct acknowledgement of the panellists and audience participation, while anticipation is shown by reference to the next programme. The interviewer as the station's agent carries out the task. Example in D1 and D2, with all these elements of leave-taking obvious, will demonstrate this:

(Example 47)

Intv: Well let me say thank you very much indeed to you three gentlemen Tony Gachoka, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi and Advocate Mutula Kilonzo and if you have been listening this is *Crossfire* my name is Patrick Quarcoo keep listening to this great show and thanks so much for listening Nairobi have a great great Sunday

A further illustration is from D2:

(Example 48)

Intv: Thank you Tony – I must say to all of you who've been listening to the show we are going ehm – you know- its been great having you – when we started the show we didn't think it would be this big- Today all of you listening – you are tuned in- we are going to take a break until January so forgive us for the next 2 or 3 Sundays you wouldn't hear of us but we will advertise when we are there – I have had a lousy week but Christmas is coming – you must have a great Christmas and take care of all those you love

All: Merry Christmas

In the second example, the retrospective and prospective movements in the acknowledgement are even more explicit. There is an acknowledgement of the immediately preceding contribution by TG. The interviewer then acknowledges the presence of an overhearing audience. He further goes back in time to other past programmes and acknowledges the contribution of the audience and panellists for the success the programme enjoys now. Then

in a prospective move, he comments of a break from the usual weekly encounter, occasioned by the Christmas holiday. And finally ends with the verbal closure cue of well wishing –"great Christmas and take care of all those you love" it corresponds with the well wisher in (Example 47) above, "have a great great Sunday".

Though these well-wishers as elements of leave-taking are minute and easily dismissible, they are powerful indicators of interpersonal sensitivity (Saunders in Hargie 1991: 196-7). They are thus important social reinforcers ensuring future positive interactions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study, we set out to investigate how political panel interviews are structured. We also sought to make an analysis of some conversational strategies employed by the panellists and interviewer in achieving their different goals in the interview. We proposed too to investigate how the strategies used in interviews confirm to the general co-operative principle underlying production of natural talk. Finally we were to make an analysis of how coherence in radio panel interviews is achieved.

To guide our investigation, we tested three hypotheses. Firstly, that the topic is the strongest coherence principle in broadcast interviews. Secondly, that conversational strategies in broadcast interviews are goal directed, where the functions are reflected in the structures that realise them. Finally, that despite the adversarial nature of the political interviews we sought to investigate, each of the interactants actively seeks cooperation of other participants.

The study focused on three interviews from one broadcast station *Crossfire* in *Kiss FM* radio. The choice of the particular programme was informed by the fact that it is a rich site for the testing of the hypotheses we set out. It is a programme where the panellists hold divergent, and at times conflicting political perspectives, hence our assumption that the co-operative principle underlying talk is greatly undermined. The adversarial nature of the programme calls for a lot of tact and skill from the panellists as they propound their political positions. The interviewer on the other hand is under strain to both remain neutral in the ensuing discourse, while exercising control in the direction of the interview.

The competitive nature of the programme too lends itself to an investigation of how speakers' topics are negotiated to fit into the prevailing topic framework of the interview.

Our findings have revealed that the broadcast interview is structured into three basic phases: the opening, topical and closure phases. In the opening and closing phases, there is extensive social work done.

Primarily, the opening phase is so structured as to establish a communicative link between the expectations of the participants and the overhearing audience. As discussed in chapter two, various strategies are employed to achieve this function, such as the use of social reinforces like greetings, which are conventional opening devices exploited by the programme to enact the sense of spontaneity that gives the aura of participation in the overhearing audience. There is also the use of address terms as summonses, which apart from being empathetic devices also ensure co-ordinated entry into talk.

Other devices used include those that are meant to establish rapport such as non-task related opening comments. There is also the enactment of verbal conflict or verbal duelling whose communicative intent is to put one's opponent down while trying to test his ability to maintain presence of mind in an interaction. In so doing, solidarity is fostered in the pursuits of the encounter. Verbal duels also put the audience in a receptive mood of the imminent encounter of "crossfire", a varied enactment of verbal duels.

The topical phase, we have seen is the central component of the broadcast interview and it is here that the purpose of the encounter is to be found. All the communicative acts in the topical phase are constrained by the topic, where within the topic there are such acts which will seek to reinforce the topic, weaken its force, vary its interpretation, distract others from its weakness, challenge issues raised, and so on. In this phase, we have examined some strategies employed both by the interviewer and panellists in their different pursuits. One of the strategies we have investigated is formulation, which is interviewer specific. In the examination, we have made the observation that it is a powerful journalistic tool that enables the interviewer to

challenge, probe and seek clarification of a panellist's view without compromising his neutral stance. This he does with the co-operation of the panellists.

Pre-sequence is yet another strategy we have investigated both as a tool for the interviewer and panellists. As a tool at the disposal of the interviewer, we have seen that it can be used to introduce presuppositions in the discourse world. Through the co-operation of the panellist, compliance of the panellist to accede to the presupposition so introduced in his/her response is demanded because by not doing so, the panellist could lose face.

As a strategy employed by panellists, we have shown how it is used to acknowledge other participants' contribution while laying ground for launching into a divergent course, and the underlying motivation: which is the need to seem agreeable to interlocutors and overhearing audience. The other strategy we have examined is the supportive moves which we have argued obviate pre-exchanges, and in so doing act to forestall potential questions such as why, how and objections. Hence supportive moves are attuned towards an orientation to co-participants in an interaction and by extension an overhearing audience.

Finally we have demonstrated that the topic framework is the strongest coherence principle. That the activated elements in the topic framework serve as the overarching reference to which other elements introduced in the operant discourse must bear relevance to. We have further seen that speakers' personal topics introduced in the debate must have connection to the debate topic.

The final phase in the broadcast interview is the closure phase. We have demonstrated that it is worked out to accommodate a transition towards decreased access, and to do it without undue abruptness being discerned by participants and the overhearing audience. Closure also acknowledges the fruitfulness of the encounter and shows anticipation for a future encounter.

In our discussion, we revealed a pre-closure stage, which sums up the gist of the debate. Summation of debate is necessitated by the enormity of issues covered. We also showed how mitigation for abruptness is worked out in cases where time demands closure before all participants have made all their contributions, and how concluding non-task comments serve the social function of highlighting the humanness of the encounter.

Finally, acknowledgement statements and an invitation to a future programme demonstrate orientation to an overhearing audience, through appreciating their participation and showing interpersonal sensitivity to leave-taking in anticipation for a future positive encounter.

We thus were able to demonstrate that a broadcast interview is a highly structured genre, that its talk is goal-directed, and that a topical framework holds it together. We also demonstrated that in the negotiation that ensues in broadcast interviews: great appeal is made to an orientation to co-participants in talk and the overhearing audience.

5.1 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As pointed out in chapter one, there is scant literature in the study of broadcast media discourse from a linguistic perspective based on the Kenyan context. However, the growth of broadcast media, in tandem with the opening up of political space since the early 1990's demand that it is subjected to rigorous scholarly research.

It is against this background that our study is set. It has therefore taken a broad perspective of the political broadcast interview. Further studies, we suggest should take a narrower perspective particularly in the analysis of strategies in the topical phase, which we believe are more than what we have had space to examine here. One possible direction in such research would take is the use of argumentation model in the analysis of debate, following Shiffrin and Kopperschmidt (in Dijk 1985)

Another worthwhile direction that future studies should take is the examination of paralinguistic elements such as tone, and how they contribute in the shaping of meaning in such discourse.

Finally, our research has only exhibited conversational strategies of political discourse in the broadcast context. This has no doubt got to do with the rather broader need that comes with the infancy of the study of broadcast interview in Kenya. We suggest that future research pay closer attention to the strategies and their exposition of ideology either of the broadcast stations or politicians, along the lines of critical discourse analysis as Kress and Fowler (in Fowler and Kress et al 1979) have attempted with non-media related interviews.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andrew, V. (1995). Modern political ideologies. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

Aspinall, R. (1971). A manual for training radio programme production. UNESCO.

Atkinson, M. J. Public speaking and audience response: some techniques for inviting applause. In J. Atkinson and J. Heritage (Eds.), (1984). Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis (370 – 409) . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berry. T. J. (1976). Journalism in America: An introduction to the news media. New York: Hasting.

Brown, G. and Yule, G. (1983). Discourse analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cockcroft, R. & Cockroft, S. M. (1992). Persuading people: An introduction to rhetorics. London: Macmillan.

Coulthard, M. & Montgomery, M., (1981). Studies in discourse analysis. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul.

Coulthard, M. (1985). An introduction to discourse analysis. London: Longman.

Crystal, D. (Ed) (1997). The Cambridge encyclopaedia of language 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dijk, T. A. V. Discourse analysis as a new cross-discipline. In T. A. V. (1985). Handbook of discourse analysis Vol. 1: Disciplines of discourse London: Academic Press.

Drew, P. Analyzing the use of language in Courtroom interaction. In T. A. V. Dijk (1985) Handbook of discourse analysis Vol.3 Discourse and dialogue. (133 – 147). London Academic Press.

Dundes, A., Leach, J. W., & Dzkok. The strategies of Turkish boys verbal duelling rhymes. In J. Gumperz & D. Hymes. (1972) (Eds), Direction in sociolinguistics (pp. 130 – 160) New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Edmondson, W. (1981). Spoken discourse: A model for analysis. New York: Longman.

Garfinkel, H. Remarks on ethnomethodology. In J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (1972) Direction in sociolinguistics. (pp. 301 – 324). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. (Reprinted in London: Penguin group in 1990)

Habwe, J. (1999). A discourse Analysis of Swahili political speeches. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Nairobi.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978) Language as a social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning. London: Edward Arnolds.

Hart, A. (1991). Understanding media: A practical guide. USA: Routledge.

Heritage J. Analyzing News interviews: Aspects of the production of talk for an overhearing audience. In T. A. V. Dijk (1985). A handbook of discourse analysis Vol 3: Discourse and dialogue (pp. 95 – 117). London: Academic Press.

Hohenberg, J. (1969). The professional Journalist: A guide to the practices and principles of the new media. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Jamieson, G. H. (1985). Communication and persuasions. Hampshire: Helm Crom Dover.

Karanja, L. (1993). A discourse analysis of the structure of KBC TV discussion. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. University of Nairobi.

Kiai, A. (1996). A discourse analysis of educational Radio programmes to farmers: Adaptation in register. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. University of Nairobi.

Kopperschmidt, J. An analysis of argumentation. In T. A. V. Dijk (1985) (Ed). A handbook of discourse analysis Vol 2:Dimensions of discourse (pp. 159 – 168). London: Academic Press.

Kress, G., and Fowler R. Interviews. In R. Fowler, G. Kress, T. Trew and R. Hodge. (1979). Language and control (pp. 63 – 80). London: Routledge & Keegan Paul.

Levinson, S. (1983). Pragmatics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewis, C. D. (1984). Reporting for television. New York: Columbia University Press.

LittleJohn, S. W. (1992). Theories of human communication 4th Edition. California: Wordsworth.

Malmkjaer, K. (Ed), (1991). The linguistic encyclopaedia. London & New York: Routledge.

Mazrui, A. A. (1975). The political sociology of the English language. The Hague: Mouton.

McDowell, J. H. Verbal duelling. In T.A.V Dijk (1985) (Ed). Handbook of discourse analysis: Discourse and dialogue. (pp. 203 – 211). London: Academic press.

McLaughlin, M. L. (1984). Conversation: How talk is organised. London: Sage.

McLuhan, M. (1964). Understanding media: The extension of man. New York: Mentor.

Mulholland, J. (1991). The language of negotiation: A handbook of practical strategies for improving communication. London & New York: Routledge.

Pomerantz, A. Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: Some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes. In J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage. (1984). Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis. (pp. 57 – 101). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks. H. Notes on methodology. In J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage. (1984). Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis. (pp. 21 – 27). Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Sacks. H. On doing "being ordinary". In J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage (1984). Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis (pp. 413 – 429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saunder, C. Opening and closing. In O. Hargie. (1989). A handbook of communication skills. (pp. 175 – 200). New York & London: Routledge.

Schegloff. E. A. (1972). Sequencing in conversational openings. In J. A. Fishman. Advances in the sociology of language Vol. 2: Selected studies and applications (pp. 91 – 125). The Hague: Mouton.

Schiffrin, D. Everyday argument: the organisation of diversity in talk. In T. A. V. Djk. (1985) Handbook of discourse analysis: Discourse and dialogue (pp. 35 – 46). London: Academic Press.

Searle, J. R. What is a speech act. In P. P. Giglioli (1972) (Ed.), Language and social context. (pp. 136 – 156). Harmondsworth: Penguin

Stevenson, N. (1985). Understanding media culture: Social theory and mass communication. London: Sage.

Stubbs, M. (1983). <u>Discourse analysis: The sociolinguistics analysis of natural language.</u> Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Tannen, D. (1984). <u>Conversational style: Analysing talk among friends.</u> New Jersey: Abblex.