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Diana Boxer
University of Pennsylvania

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The News Interview on Morning Television

THE NEWS INTERVIEW ON MORNING TELEVISION: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS¹

Dianna Boxer

Television news interview programs are subject to a certain set of rules that guide the discussion from initiation to termination. As the mediator of the interview, the interviewer has the responsibility of setting out these guidelines, albeit tacitly, in order to assure the accomplishment of the goals of the interview. Although the morning news interview show on television has been in existence for the past thirty-five years, only recently have sociolinguists looked at the rules for this type of mediated discussion.

The interviewer must accomplish several tasks. S/he must 1) introduce the topic for discussion; 2) welcome the participants in a manner consistent with the general rules of politeness; 3) introduce the parties taking part in the interview, including their names, titles and the organization they represent; 4) manage the allocation of turns, making sure to grant each participant adequate opportunity to respond to questions; 5) treat the respondents without bias; 6) grant each participant an opportunity for a closing statement, particularly in the case of multi-party interviews; and 7) close within the time constraints of television programming.

At present there are three major live morning news interview programs on television, one on each of the three major networks. For the purpose of this paper I videotaped the morning news interview programs during a seven-day period in early 1987, obtaining fourteen hours of videotape for analysis; five hours were taped from the NBC morning news program, five from ABC and four from CBS. I decided early in my preview screening to use only interviews in which two or more interviewees participated in the segment, preferably with opposing viewpoints. My purpose in doing so was my belief that

multi-party interviews would provide a greater challenge to the interviewer to comply with the aforementioned rules.

Of the three programs, NBC's "Today" offered the most material in interviews with more than one person. I chose to include three of these interviews, two in which the interviewer is a male anchorperson and one with a female anchor. ABC's "Good Morning, America" had only one multi-person interview in the five hours videotaped, in this case with a male interviewer; CBS had no multi-person interview. Excerpts from the transcripts used for this paper, therefore, are taken from four multi-person interviews from two of the three morning programs.

The focus of this study will be on how the interviewers on these programs abide by the rules for T.V. interviewing discussed above. We will see that the styles of interviewing differ to the extent that rule-breaking is tolerated more by some interviewers than others; indeed, each program's style is to a certain extent determined by the degree to which the interviewers comply with the rules or feel free to break them.

Salutations and Introductions

The four interviews included for this study vary in their adherence to the rules for introduction and salutation. There is a decline in adherence from interview A to D. Interview A, from "Good Morning America," is on the topic of the appointment of a new director of the CIA. Although not included in the transcript itself, preceding this interview was a short clip done by one of the ABC reporters about the recent problem of appointing a new director of the Agency. The male interviewer is therefore able to take off from the introductory segment to a direct greeting of the participants:

A: Male interviewer
B: Admiral X
C: Mr. X

A: Good morning to both of you, nice of you to join us this morning.

B,C: Good morning (simultaneously).

A: Mr. X, let me start with you. How bad a blow is this, do you think, uh...to the Agency itself?

The interviewer follows closely the rules of introduction and salutation. The interviewees are politely welcomed with a "good morning" as well as an additional "nice of you to join us this morning." In his first question, the initial address term is followed by "let me start with you." We will see that such additions are absent from the other three interviews.

Interview B, from NBC's "Today," is on the topic of President Reagan's reaction to the Tower Commission Report. Since there is no introductory segment preceding this interview, the interviewer must introduce the topic. The interviewees and the newspapers they edit have already been introduced. In all the interviews on all of the programs, the names and titles of the respondents also appear periodically in print under their faces:

- A: Male interviewer
- B: Editor of the Atlanta Constitution
- C: Editor of the San Diego Union

A: President Reagan has to make major repairs to his image tonight when he speaks to the country on the findings of the Tower Commission. Just how he should handle it is the subject this morning. Gentlemen, good morning and welcome.
B,C: Good morning (overlapping).
A: First and foremost, what do your readers want to hear from Ronald Reagan tonight, Mr. X (Interviewee C)?

Although the interviewer in this segment satisfies the rules of introduction and salutation, he appears more eager to get to the questioning than to dwell on the introductions. The initiation of his first question with "first and foremost" leads us to believe he wishes to delve right into the heart of the matter at hand and treat the subject directly. This is all done, however, within the confines of the rules of politeness.

Interview C is also taken from NBC's "Today," but the interviewer here is female. This interview, on the topic of the First Lady's role in firing cabinet members, is preceded by an introductory segment by another reporter about the role of First Ladies historically, ending with the following:

As the Reagans celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary this week, the President angrily rejected the suggestion that his wife is "some kind of dragon lady."

A: Female interviewer

B: Senior editor of The New Republic

C: Former White House aide

A: Admirable or inappropriate? One outspoken critic of the way the First Lady has handled the ouster of Don Regan is the New Republic Senior Editor, X. With him in our Washington studio is X, a long-time political advisor to the Reagans, former White House aide. Gentlemen, good morning.

B,C: Good morning (overlapping).

A: Mr. X (Interviewee B), do you agree with conservative columnist, William Safire, who says the First Lady is power hungry?

The interviewer introduces her interviewees along with a direct statement about their alignment on the issue under discussion. This leaves the audience no doubt about who the respondents are and what their thoughts are about the subject, before the interview begins. Her initial question, "admirable or inappropriate," sets the stage for the debate.

Interview D is on the subject of the healing power of crystals. Taken from NBC's "Today," the opening of this interview differs from the others in that only one of the interviewees is introduced initially:

There is an introductory report by the interviewer on how some people believe in crystal healing--that stones have properties that can benefit healing and physical well-being.

A: Male interviewer

B: Dr. X, Curator of Gems and Minerals, Natural History Museum, New York.

C: Ms. X, Crystal Therapist

A: Dr. X is with us, Curator of Gems and Minerals at the Natural History Museum. Thank you for being with us. We've heard about subtle harmony, is this all hocus-pocus, or is there any scientific data behind it?

The interviewer thanks Dr. X for coming after introducing him, complete with title and the backing of the reputable Natural History Museum. Contrast this introduction and welcome with his introduction of the second participant, who is not introduced until B has had the opportunity to answer two questions:

A: Joining us also is X. She is a, uh, crystal therapist, right? Did I have that right?

By waiting until further along in the interview to introduce one of the participants, the interviewer confers differing status to the two respondents. In addition,

he appears to be violating one of the rules of politeness: he knows what her vocation is, but asks if he got it right, perhaps in disbelief that there is such a vocation. This segment will be discussed in further detail under the section titled "the interviewer's opinion of the interviewee."

The four interviewers demonstrate differential compliance with the rules for salutation and introduction. Though they all make some attempt at politeness, there is a continuum along which we can place Interview A at the pole of most adherence to the rules, followed successively by B and C, with Interview D somewhere near the opposite pole. Even though all the interviewers introduce and welcome their guests, the way in which they accomplish these tasks varies.

An Analysis of Turn-Taking

In the television interview, transition points are normally indicators for the interviewer to step in to facilitate the flow of talk. At such a point, the interviewer has several choices: 1) topic extension, 2) reformulation/challenge, and 3) topic shift (Jucker 1986: 52). Consider the following excerpt from the transcript, the subject of which is President Reagan's reaction to the Tower Commission Report:

- A: Male interviewer
- B: Editor of the Atlanta Constitution
- C: Editor of the San Diego Union

B: I think I agree with, uh, Gerry (interviewee C) on that point. I don't think the, uh, ap-apology is the question. The question is whether or not he's gonna separate the form from the substance of his Presidency and deal with the substance rather than the form. I don't think its a question of image any more...

A: (Interrupts) Will he be able to get by with form tonight?

B: Uh, I don't think so. I believe, uh, I believe the people are waiting to hear, uh, something of substance tonight and, uh, not merely the form of the Presidency.

The interviewer here is encouraging topic extension by asking his question at a point where the interviewee has indicated his completion of the answer; he has already stated his belief that the President will need to deal with the substance rather than the form of the Presidency. By asking the question, "will he be able to get by with form tonight," the interviewer may have hoped here for further elaboration on the subject.

What ensued, however, was merely a reiteration of what the respondent had already said. Attempting topic extension, thus, does not always result in its achievement. Topic extension seems to occur more frequently toward the beginning of the interview, when the speakers may not yet have a clear idea of what is expected of them. The respondent here may not yet have developed this sense.

Reformulation/challenge may accomplish topic extension; nevertheless, it differs to the extent that the latter is a request for elaboration while the former seeks either to elicit a response which may be contrary to the previous statement made or defend his previous statement with a justification. The following example of reformulation/challenge is taken from Interview C, on the topic of the First Lady:

A: Female interviewer

B: Senior editor of The New Republic

C: Former White House aide

A: Mr. X (Interviewee B), what would you do? Would you cut off the telephones between the East Wing and the West Wing?

B: No, I wouldn't do that. I think the First Lady, because of all the criticism she's gotten recently in just the reporting of her very active role, will naturally recede and become less visible and just give her advice to the President, which is the more traditional role.

A: How much of this harping, though, Mr. X (Interviewee B), might be a little deep-seated, uh, sexism?

C: (laughs)

B: Well, I've heard that from people. One, I don't think I'm harping. Uh, two, I don't think, uh, it has anything to do with, uh, sexism at all. I cover the White House. I write about what Presidents do, uh, and what they don't do. Uh, and I write about what their aides and advisors do and right now we have aides and advisors doing a great deal and the President, uh, not doing quite as much.

The third possibility is topic shift. This is typically under the complete control of the interviewer. When s/he is satisfied that the previous question has been answered by both interviewees, or if there are additional topics to cover, the interviewer then proceeds to a new topic. A topic shift is often, but not always, introduced by words such as "well," "now" or "well now" (Jucker 1986: 52). The following excerpt is a continuation of the previously cited interview:

B:I write about what presidents do, uh, and what they don't do. Uh, and I write about what their aides and advisors do and right now we have aides and advisors doing a great deal and the President, uh, not doing quite as much.

A: Well, the story now is that, that the First Lady is not as involved as all of that. Mr. X (Interviewee C), does she know how involved she is?

C: Well, I don't think she thinks she's all that involved. She has not been involved in policy. She has not been involved in trying to sit in on cabinet meetings or trying to help run the government. She does get involved in personnel, because, uh, she worries about how people serve her husband.

It is the responsibility of the interviewer to manage turns in order to minimize gaps and overlaps. Interruptions frequently occur on the part of the interviewer, but they are particularly noteworthy when done by the respondent. On the rare occasion of an interruption by a respondent, an opening is ordinarily requested, not demanded, and often the initiator will preface talk with an apology for the interruption. Here, again, is an illustration from Interview C. Continuing from the statement above, C completes his response with the following:

C:.... But she's not, uh, uh, I think the perception of involvement is more than the reality of it.

The interview continues with the interviewer's response:

A: Well, well....

C: (Interrupts) May I say one more thing?

A: Quickly.

C: I don't think Nancy's ever gotten anybody fired by herself in her life.

Compare the preceding transcript to the following. The topic is the healing power of crystals:

A: Male interviewer

B: Dr. X, Curator of Gems and Minerals, Natural History Museum, New York

C: Ms. X, Crystal Therapist

B: Uh, well I've actually taken a look at Ms. X's book, and in there she says that the quartz crystal is a tool and ultimately you don't need it. And I think that's the end of the whole idea--that what they're actually talking about is the mind and....

A: (Interrupts) She's talking herself into something?

B: Right. They're using a crystal as an object to focus on to, O.K., try and sort your mind out. Whether its a pine cone or quartz crystal probably doesn't make a difference. It's really, then, really talking about...

A: (Interrupts) I could put a charcoal briquet down here and she'd feel...

B: Right. If you treat it the same way you're gonna get the same results. The point is that crystals are neater than charcoal briquets.

The interviewer considers it his right to interrupt as well as his prerogative to be rude and/or provoke a respondent to be rude to the participant of opposing view. The choice of the term "charcoal briquet" serves as a sharp contrast to "crystal," The latter being something of beauty while the former is something which, aside from its functional qualities, has the connotation of "dirty".

In news interviews the interviewer controls the selection of the next speaker by the use of address terms either initially, somewhere in the middle of a question, or in the tag position. As in other forms of mediated discussion, such as the classroom, for example, address terms are used to let the respondents know who will be the next to speak. The use of address terms before the question is asked will alert the next speaker to pay close attention to what is being asked, for s/he will have to be ready to speak at the precise transition point. When used after the phrasing of a question, the address term signals the next speaker's turn only after both possible respondents have had an opportunity to listen carefully to the question and prepare to respond. In the interview taken from ABC's "Good Morning America," an address term is used at every question point initiated by the interviewer with the exception of one statement near the end of the interview, where it does not signal a transition point but an invitation for clarification by the current speaker. In this interview there is not one point where the interviewees have the opportunity to self-select.

Self-selection through undirected questions is only rarely found in practice in the news interview. The danger of permitting the opportunity for the respondents to self-select is that two parties may find themselves talking at the same time. If this occurs one of the parties will have to stop prematurely, thus repairing the trouble. The interviewer on "Good Morning, America" does not risk having such overlap occur; thus, he carefully controls for the necessity of repair. In the other interviews, however, there is evidence of more open-endedness. For example, in the discussion of President Reagan's reaction to the Tower Commission Report, overlap occurs the one time the interviewer does not use an address term to specifically allocate the turn:

A: We are, um, everyone is calling this speech, um, the, um, the most important speech in Ronald Reagan's Presidency. Does it have make-or-break potential?

B,C: I think (overlapping)...

C: Excuse me, X (Interviewee B). Go ahead...

Because the interviewer did not include an address term to allocate speaker turn, overlap results. Let us now take a closer look at the ABC interview, in which the male interviewer omits an address term in only one place, where it is clear from the context that he is seeking clarification from the present speaker and wishes him to continue with a yes or no answer. The topic is the appointment of a new CIA director:

A: Admiral X?

B: I think you need somebody first of all who's gonna be able to work well with the Congress, secondly who's gonna put covert actions into a better perspective, and thirdly who's gonna be a good manager and will keep the Agency under full control. I name, uh, Brent Scowcroft and Bill Webster as my choices.

A: From the FBI (falling intonation)...

B: Yes.

Turn-taking repair can be troublesome in that it results in an awkwardness that interferes with the smooth progression of the interview. Interviewers who control for turn-taking by the use of specifically addressed questions accomplish the management of turns without having to take time out to manage repair.

The allocation of turns in the news interview is crucial to its ultimate character. It is incumbent upon the interviewer to control for topic extension, reformulation and topic shift. The experienced interviewer knows how to accomplish all three while keeping the respondents comfortable with each. Some interviewers, as we have seen, are more likely to challenge the interviewee to defend his or her position with a further elaboration of a previous answer. Interestingly, it appears that these same interviewers are also more likely to interrupt an interviewee while speaking and to use more questions in a multi-party interview that are not specifically addressed to one of the respondents, leaving the question "up for grabs" for the most aggressive respondent to undertake.

The Interviewer's Opinion of the Interviewee

Interviewers often confront their interviewees with opposing views, thus arguing for the principles of the interviewee's critics or political opponents, even in multi-party interviews, where an opponent may be present. The anchors on "Today" frequently play "devil's advocate" to get a reaction from the respondent, but sometimes they try to truly discredit a participant. Consider the following excerpt from the interview on crystal therapy:

A: (Interrupts) how did you, how did you come by belief in crystals?

C: (Leans forward) Well, it's not so much a belief, it's an actual experience, uh...

A: Like?

C: Um, well, for instance, uh, the first person who introduced me to crystals said, "try this...do this with the stone and see how you feel" (moving arm from lap upward, keeping arm stretched and fist clenched), and I could feel a vibration moving up my body, I mean, something I could feel, and I felt better, you know. So that started me off working with them. Um, a lot of it is just developing the sensitivity so that you can experience it yourself--you'll feel it, have a sense of what's happening.

A: Does the idea of doing that from a rock not seem strange to you?

His interruption with the question "Like?" seems to be an attempt to have her "get to the point." Further along in the interview we see the following:

A: Just one final note (pointing to C). Did you wear all those stones just to be here today, or is this...

C: (Interrupts) Yeah, I've got them all over...

A: (Resumes) normal, I mean you've got them as earrings, necklace, bracelet....

The interviewer violates a rule of politeness here by trying to make the crystal therapist look foolish. The respondent, however, remains calm. She continues good-naturedly to describe the value of wearing the crystals over certain energy centers on the body. The interviewer may have been playing the devil's advocate here, but there also appears to be some real feeling of disdain for this respondent and what she symbolizes. This thesis can be supported by noticing the different ways in which he treats the two respondents. When addressing Dr. X, the learned expert, the interviewer on more than one occasion uses the address term "Dr.", probably with complete awareness of the general reverence by the American public for this title. As discussed previously, the format of this interview shows the conferring of differing status to the two interviewees: Dr. X is

introduced and interviewed from the outset; Ms. X, the crystal therapist, is not introduced until some point further into the segment.

In the interview about the role of the First Lady, the interviewer plays devil's advocate in the following excerpt:

B:But for the last four months, since the Iran scandal broke, she's been extremely involved, uh, setting the President's schedule, deciding when he'd have a press conference and certainly uh, uh, getting Don Regan out of the White House as Chief of Staff.

A: So, so what? (Grins)

B: Well, uh, traditionally First Ladies have given advice, uh, behind uh, the throne....

It seems evident that the interviewer's interjection here is for the purpose of playing devil's advocate. If this were not the case she would appear unduly rude. Her grin is an indication of the mock-rude intention--that it should be taken in good spirit. In using such a device she leads the respondent to continue explaining his objection to the First Lady's overt use of her influence.

Closing Sequences

Just as it is the responsibility of the interviewer to properly initiate the conversation, it is also his/her place to signal closings. The use of some kind of "pre-closing" is one way of getting the respondents to bring an end to their talk within the time constraints of television programming. Segments are allocated specific time limits during which interviewers must carry out proper introductions, complete questions and answers and achieve closure. It is often interesting to watch these programs in order to see just how the interviewer is able to meet the challenge of closing without seeming awkward or rushed. Some interviewers are better at this than others, and some programs seem to achieve consistently smoother closings overall than others.

A properly initiated pre-closing should serve the purpose of alerting the respondents to the time limit of the interview with the hope that they will relinquish their turn as soon as possible to the interviewer, who will then have just enough time to do any or all of several things: 1) reiterate the reason for the interview; 2) repeat the names of the respondents for the purpose of clarifying who they are to those who may have tuned

in late; 3) thank the participants; and 4) receive their thanks for being invited to the program.

In practice, however, the pre-closing does not always allow the interviewer to accomplish all of these things. On the contrary, it often gives an indication for some further ensuing talk. Participants are often left feeling that they need to hurry or to continue speaking ever more rapidly to get in all that they wished to say. An example of this is found in the interview about the Tower Commission Report:

B: That's a different question. I would agree with that. If he says what his advisors want him to say, I think it could, uh, make a major difference.

A: (Interrupts) One, one final...go ahead, I'm sorry.

B: I just think few people expect him to do that.

A: One final note, how are you going to judge this speech--how are you going to judge if it was a success or failure? Are you going to be able to tell as soon as it's done?

C: I think so. If you know Ronald Reagan, if you've watched him for any length of time as we have in California, you will know, really, midway into the speech, whether he has it or not.

B: I agree with that. He usually addresses it head on at the beginning, and I think we'll know long before the speech is over whether or not he has done what is necessary to regain some initiative.

A: X (Editor B) and X (Editor C), the speech goes on at 9 o'clock tonight. You're already up early. It's gonna be a long day for both of you. We'll let you get to it. Thank you very much.

The interviewer's attempt at pre-closing results in further talk. However, if he were truly under time pressure to close the interview, he would not have interrupted and then backed off saying, "go ahead, I'm sorry." Possibly the interviewer realized there was plenty of time for a few closing statements. When he finally did get to a proper pre-closing, he accomplished it without conveying the feeling of time pressure. He managed to insert two final questions after the pre-closing words, "one final note." Despite the fact that no address allocation was employed after the pre-closing segment, each respondent was able to achieve a final statement without overlap occurring. This accomplishment was brought about by the "non-speaker speaks next" turn allocation. The closing question was addressed to both respondents, giving each an opportunity to answer in one final statement each. The first respondent to answer was the current non-speaker, followed by the respondent who last had a turn. The interviewer in this segment brings the interview to a smooth close. He employs initial address terms to reiterate the identity of the

interviewees and is able to thank them for participating while showing empathy for his colleagues.

As discussed earlier in this paper, no such empathy is shown by this interviewer toward the crystal therapist. In this interview the interviewer again uses what appears to be one of his favorite pre-closing devices, that of "one final note." Let us look again at this segment of the transcript:

A: Just one final note (pointing to C). Did you wear all those stones just to be here today, or is this....

C: (Interrupts) Yeah, I've got them all over.

A: (Resumes)normal, I mean you've got them as earrings, necklace, bracelet....

C: Yeah, I normally wear the crystals and a lot of people do because as you wear them in the form of jewelry they are over certain energy centers in your body and they activate those centers.

A: Our energy center is down in operations control and they're telling us to go to a station break. Ms. X, Dr. X, thank you.

The pre-closing here should have been initiated earlier in order to give both parties the opportunity for a closing statement. By denying Dr. X this opportunity, the interviewer is to a certain extent defeating his purpose in denigrating the credibility of the crystal therapist.

Despite his breaking the rule of allowing closing statements, the interviewer is able to accomplish a very smooth transition to closing by employing the very words used by the speaker, i.e., "energy center." Nevertheless, even though this helps him achieve closure, thus conforming to one of the rules, the use of these words also serves to break the rule of treating his respondents without bias. He further denigrates the crystal therapist by demonstrating the superiority of the station's very real "energy center" over the so-called "energy centers" of the body. He assures that no further conversation will ensue by stressing the need to go to a station break; he does, however, give himself enough time to announce the names of the interviewees and thank them for joining him.

The interview on the topic of the First Lady is one which we have previously examined for its use of interruptions. The closing of this interview is not accomplished as easily as the others. One of the problems is the late initiation of a pre-closing. Here, the

pre-closing is attempted by the use of an appositional beginning, i.e. "well." The entire closing section in this interview, from pre-start to terminal statement, is quite short:

C: ...but she's not, uh, uh, I think the perception of involvement is more than the reality of it.

A: Well, well...

C: (Interrupts) May I say one more thing?

A: Quickly.

C: I don't think Nancy's ever gotten anybody fired by herself in her life.

A: (Nods) We'll leave it at that. Twenty-two after the hour, this is "Today" on NBC.

The fact that the terminal statement comes so soon after the attempt at pre-closing indicates that the interviewer waited too long to initiate the closing or to signal to the respondents that the segment's end was imminent. The current speaker politely requests permission to continue speaking, but upon hearing the admonishment "quickly," keeps his addition brief. At this point there is no time left: the control room has apparently signaled that it is time to break. Thus, the interviewer is left with no time to accomplish any of the several tasks which make for a smooth closing. She does not repeat the names of the interviewees, she does not reiterate the reason for the interview, she does not even thank the participants. She merely nods with an accompanying "we'll leave it at that" and proceeds to the signal for a station break: a mentioning of what time it is followed by "this is Today on NBC." By getting in one final statement, the current speaker, C, at least had the opportunity to accomplish some sort of final statement. The non-speaker at that point, B, was never even given the opportunity for rebuttal.

In contrast to this closing segment, ABC's interview on the CIA is an example of the interviewer's adherence to the rules of closing:

A: Let me put both of you in a realm that you don't otherwise sit in. Let me have you choose who the person now is to head the CIA, do they need a white knight to lead it, and who should that be, Mr. X?

C: Uh, I think they need a very good man with impeccable credentials. I heard the name, uh, Brent Scocroft earlier in the program, and he would of course be a superb nominee, there's no question about that. There are military people, ex-military people, there are some political people that would be quite good, with impeccable backgrounds. I think they'll find somebody pretty good.

A: Admiral X?

B: I think you need somebody first of all who's gonna be able to work well with the Congress, secondly who's gonna be a good manager and will keep the Agency under full control. I name, uh, Brent Scocroft and Bill Webster as my choices.

A: From the FBI (falling intonation).

B: Yes

A: Admiral X, Mr. X, thank you ever so much. Very interesting.

B,C: Thank you (simultaneously).

The pre-closing is a question addressed to both respondents, with the indication that both will get a chance to answer. The tag-positioned address term "Mr. X" indicates the order of the turns for final statement. Turn is handed over to Admiral X by the mere address term with interrogative intonation. The falling intonation of the interviewer's statement "from the FBI" is one way of signalling a close. The interviewer repeats the names of the participants, thanks them for being there and comments on the information furnished by them through the statement, "very interesting." The respondents then bring the interview to an ideal end by simultaneously saying "thank you". This interviewer closely follows the rules of closing. The pre-closing signal is subtle but efficient in bringing about a well-managed closing.

Summary and Conclusions

The television morning news interview program has been examined for speech acts and sociolinguistic features particular to this genre. The focus of this paper has been on the extent to which interviewers in multi-party interviews adhere to the rules governing introductions, turn allocation, objectivity toward the interviewees, and closings.

The news interview is subject to constraints of time as well as differing rules for the interviewer and the interviewee. In addition to controlling for introduction, turn allocation and closing, the interviewer's attitude toward a particular respondent or what s/he represents can significantly influence the opportunity the respondent is given to speak, or if given the opportunity to speak, what s/he is able to say. Thus, the interviewer has a considerable amount of control over when each party will speak as well as some control over what s/he will say. It is because of this control that the interviewer exerts over, in many cases, famous and influential people, that the news interview offers the ethnographer especially interesting material for analyzing rules and rule-breaking by participants; in the case of this paper, only the strategies of the interviewer have been examined.

We have seen how some interviewers are more likely to stray from the rules of T.V. interviewing than others; indeed, the interviewer's compliance with the rules or willingness to break them often determines the very style of such a morning news program.

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