



## Managing Agenda Setting in Pakistani Political Talk-Shows: A Functional Analysis of Interruptions

Vol. IV, No. I (Winter 2019) | Page: 43 – 54 | DOI: 10.31703/grr.2019(IV-I).05

p- ISSN: 2616-955X | e-ISSN: 2663-7030 | ISSN-L: 2616-955X

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### Abstract

*This study aims to investigate the functional performance of interruptions in political news interviews. The selected sample for this study consists of approximately 200 minutes of recordings of political news interviews from the public state owned channel PTV World. The methodological framework for this study comes from Conversation Analysis. The analytical framework for the analysis has been developed from a study of literature pertaining to interruptions. At the initial level of analysis all interruptions are identified for their function (cooperative, disruptive and neutral), finally a qualitative exploration is carried out to see what purpose these serve in the specific format of news interviews. The findings reveal that a significant number of interruptions (80%) are of the disruptive nature. This result implicates that the interruptions by anchor are being used for controlling talk and significantly setting the agenda of the discussion within the political news interview and impacting the political view of the audience*

**Key Words:** Political News Interviews, Conversation Analysis, Interruptions, Cooperative and Disruptive Interruptions, Agenda Setting

### Introduction

When we look at the turbulent history of Pakistan in the past two decades we see that media news has played a substantial role in moulding the outcome of political issues. The popularity of the News Interview format in Pakistan - commonly known as Political Talk-shows - led the interest of the researcher towards this particular genre of media news. In the contemporary mediascape of Pakistan, emergent news that is aired as Breaking News is further over-analyzed in the different popular political talk-shows.

The political news interviews are institutionalized discourse that are goal oriented and the roles of the participants and the discursive resources open to the participants are limited. The researcher aims to explore the aspect of control and power that might be visible in the discourse of the anchor. Thus the conceptual framework of interruptions being; cooperative, disruptive and neutral was taken into consideration while dealing with the interruptions seen in the news interview.

In today's mediated political culture the media interview has become a stage for political performers to negotiate political identities (Ekström, 2001). Voltmer and Brants (2011, p.127) define the mediated political interview as it '... appears like a conversation between two — sometimes more — participants who are engaged in discussing political issues of the day. However, it follows a set of rules and norms that sets it apart from any other form of interpersonal exchange where people talk about political [...] matters'. Hordecki and Piontek (2014), in their study of Polish news media interviews, claim an interview to be a conversation between an interviewer and interviewee. They, however, believe that there are many factors impacting the roles that both the interlocutors perform. Moreover, they highlight 'personality, situation and system' to be the main factors.

Craig (2010) argues that the nature of media news interviews is in essence indeterminate and that the focus of these interviews should not be to create consensus or mutual understanding rather to keep the political debate an open one. While Hasan, Subhani and Osman (2012: p.2) state, 'the purpose of these talk shows is to discuss

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and find out ways of the issues in the current news and headlines being broadcasted on various news channels' and 'the discussion mostly evident is on politics, socio-economic concerns, society dilemmas and other cultural, entertainment promotion and agendas'. Therefore, according to them, mostly in one to one discussion people have developed the satirical way of talking. Experiencing a political satire is routine as there are loop holes in the political regime of Pakistan and all the reason everyone loves to pass sarcastic and insulting remarks (2012: p.2).

Ahmed (2010: p.2) takes a more positive view of these news interviews and assesses that, 'in the present era, it has been seen that Mass Media has put spirit and encouraged people in electing government according to their own choice'. He further states, 'in this way, people can change the wrongful decision of government officials'. Therefore, according to him, 'Mass Media is the source of influencing people to participate in politics and this is the only source of creating awareness in citizens on how to improve and run our political system' (p.2).

## Literature Review

From the theoretical point of view of CA within the institutional setting, the news interview is a form of institutional discourse and as such the anchor person holds an institutional role. Van Dijk (1993), in his analysis of various modes of discourse access, draws a parallelism between social power and discourse access. He proposes that for every group, position or institution a distinct 'discourse access profile' can be mapped out. It follows that any position that entails the management of a discourse participation event such as a News Interview would allow access to control over turn allocation, topic selection, important decisions and management of other consequential dimensions of this institutional talk. This study focuses upon the management aspect of interactional discourse, specifically focusing on interruptions made while participants talk and consequentially controlling the talk.

The rationale for this study is that this analysis brings into consideration the asymmetrical dyad of conversation in the specific genre of Political News Interviews. CA makes distinction between the components of this long speech event to be composed of openings, closings and the two way interactional discussion. The anchor manages the whole interactive discussion of approximately 40 to 50 minutes and as such this interaction also provides opportunities to keep the agenda that was set in the opening on track, or to bring the discussion back to the point set in the openings, or to comment assertively upon topics. As such, this interactional discussion becomes an avenue to check for the manifestations of power in anchors discourse that keep the agenda to the one set in the representation.

For the purpose of interactionally gauging the aspects of power the researcher decided to check the pattern and type of interruptions observed and also to see what function they perform in the Pakistani Political talk-shows. Therefore, the interruptions that were made by the anchor are collected and separated according to type and function and percentages are calculated to identify the pattern. This pattern is then analyzed for its agenda setting aspect in the context of interaction of talk. Interruptions and overlaps are a common feature of everyday conversation where these occur mostly due to the participants wanting to either take the floor to give information or they mistake the TRP position and speak out of turn. However, it is proposed that in the institutional contexts, the anchor would have other reasons to interrupt the participants. This understanding then informs this current study.

Mullany (2004) defines political news interviews as question and answer exchanges between two or more participants, stating that the nature of these question answer sequences is confrontational and adversarial in nature. The interaction in these news interviews is of a formal nature in an institutional environ, and it is produced for an overhearing audience who have no participation in it (Hutchby 1996a; Clayman 2002).

## Theoretical Underpinnings Related to Interruptions

There is no consensus upon the definition and the understandings of interruptions. However, the literature unanimously agrees that interruptions are an interactional aspect. This lack of consensus can also be because each study of interruptions takes a subjective view of what stands as an interruption. For example, Beattie (1982, p.93) is of the opinion that an interruption is a deviation from the turn taking rule, while Wardaugh (2006, p. 302) states that an interruption is an early topic change within a conversation, and Beaumont (2009, 910) simply states that the interruption is a speech performance that happens when a person starts to talk while the other

speaker is still talking and finally giving up his/her floor. Gregori (1999) uses the terms interventions to identify the interruptions as she believes that interruptions can be a biased term.

On a general level, interruptions are considered to be a strategy to express discursive power (Kress & Fowler 1979, p. 34). Goldberg (1990) however mentions in her findings that it is not necessary that all interruptions be viewed as relational to power differential. Many researchers differentiate between positive/ cooperative interruptions and intrusive/ disruptive interruptions (Farley *et al.* 2010, p. 195; Goldberg 1990, p. 890). The intrusive interruptions stem from a disagreement which, according to Clayman (2002), is a transaction in which participants interact at an oppositional level.

### **Types of Interruptions**

The classification provided in the studies conducted by Ferguson, (1977); Shalaby, (2006); and Singes (1999) can be collected and compiled in a list as following

Types of Simultaneous Talk:

1. 'Simple' interruption.
2. Butting-in interruption
3. Silent interruption.
4. Overlaps
5. Parenthetical remarks
6. Conflict talk

The simple interruption is the kind of simultaneous talk in which the interrupter succeeds in snatching the turn, while butting-in interruption is an interruption in which the interrupter does not succeed in snatching the turn. The silent interruption takes place when the first speaker takes a long pause. Shalaby (2006) makes a distinction between types of overlap and identifies an interruption to be a kind of uncooperative overlap, while overlap is the partial sharing of the floor and parenthetical comments are considered to be the cooperative completion or backchannel signals. Conflict talk is when all participants start talking all at the same time trying to assert their own point. All types of interruptions and overlaps whether cooperative or uncooperative are a violation of the turn taking rules; violations according to many researchers are examples of exercising power and domination over the speaker being interrupted. (Shalaby, 2006; Trudgill, 1998, Tannen, 1990; Gregory-Signes, 1999, 2000)

### **Agenda Setting**

Agenda Setting is basically a communications theory developed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), as the ability of the media to highlight an issue to make it seem more important than all the other issues present in the political or social scenario. The media does this by extended emphasis and placement of a news item at such a positioning that it becomes relevant to the public. This idea of extended emphasis or placement has been extended by the researcher to linguistics and in this study to the purpose and function of the interruptions by the anchor. Therefore, for this study the interruptions were qualitatively analyzed to see if in them the anchor emphasized upon a certain topic after interruption or gave an opinion about the news that is being discussed by the participants.

### **Objectives and Methodological Underpinnings**

Most of the CA studies of interruptions focused on gendered use of interruptions to control talk, and they found that women are more polite in their talk and less dominant to their male counterparts in relation to floor domination and interruption (West and Zimmerman, 1983; Tannen, 1990; Shalaby, 2006). Some researchers believe that only gender differences are not enough to decide upon conversational power in gendered discourse (Mullany, 2004). However, many researchers do investigate power related to institutional roles (doctor-patient, employer-employee; TV host-guest) as being a determinant of power shown in shifting of topics and also of claiming the floor via strategies such as interruptions (Beattie, 1981; Signes, 1999; Tolson, 2001). Beattie (1981) also deduced that status is interrelated more with interruptions than gender.

News Interviews (better known in the Pakistani context as political talk-shows) are qualified as semi institutional discourse in the media genre (Shalaby, 2006). They display confrontational discussion and therefore, allow participants to show disagreement, challenges and competition often displayed through interruption. Though the political interviews are constructed encounters, they still provide unscripted interactional talk which can reflect the institutional power dynamics this study wants to focus on. The following are the broad and specific objectives of this study:

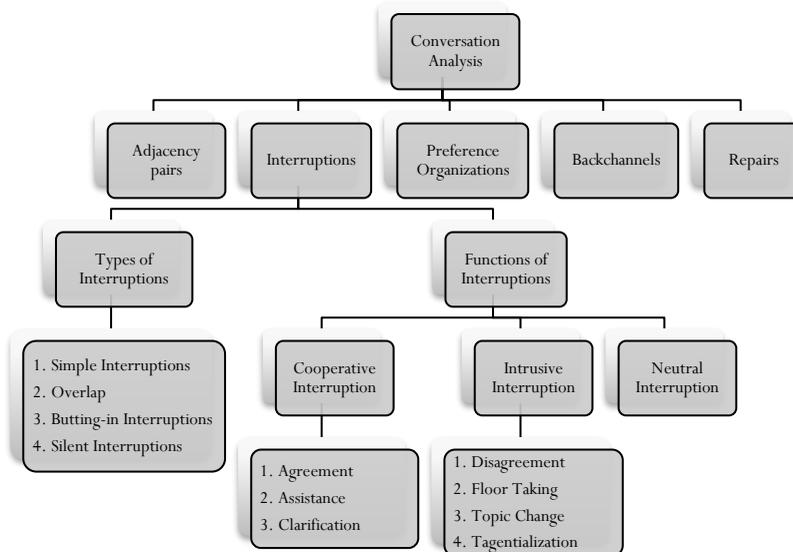
- The overarching objective of the current study is to explore the discursive power manifestations present in the anchor discourse of Pakistani Political News Interviews (Commonly known as political talk-shows in Pakistani society).
- To see how Agenda setting power manifests itself through interruption patterns in Pakistani News Interviews

### Analytical Framework

The political talk shows are large chunks of data that cannot be thematically analyzed in one go. Therefore, the researcher devised a frame work where by boundary elements; Openings, Closings and pseudo-openings and pseudo-closings, informed by the CA tradition could be analyzed in a separate section of analysis for the representational aspect of power in the form of setting the agenda, while the interactional aspect of power was analyzed in the next section of analysis.

After going through all the literature related to previous researches on interruptions, and specifically from the aspect of news interviews, the researcher developed a framework that focused upon the functions that were found in the news interviews and integrated that into the already existing researches to come up with a framework that would work for this study and also answer the question posed.

The categories under which the data for interruptions is analyzed are as follows:



It was checked whether the interruption pattern aided the agenda setting process or not to ascertain if it could be part of the linguistic strategy employed by the anchor to help him in agenda setting at the interactional level.

### Sample for the Study

‘World Tonight’ which is aired on PTV World at prime time was taken and a snapshot of a week was taken. The data consist of approximately four hours of recordings for this current show. The format of the show is an anchor and multiple participants both in-studios and phone-in guests, answering the questions posed by the anchor.

## Results and Discussion

Many studies have linked the use of interruptions to power and dominance, especially in the area of gender; this current study was done to check if interruptions served an agenda setting purpose. Initially, the data was analyzed using a data sheet which was prepared using the different studies that have been carried out to check the types of interruptions being made and the available functions according to literature. The following table is the results of the data sheet of the political talk-shows:

**Table 1.** Interruption Types and Functions in the Pakistani Political Talk-shows

Types Of Interruption	Functions Of Interruption							Total	Percentage	
	Corporative		Disruptive				Neutral			
	AGG	ASS	CIA	DIS	FLO	TOP				TAN
SIM	3	3	16	28	22	32	25	4	133	51
OVE	5	5	8	2	2	6	6	1	35	13.3
BUT	2	1	7	10	4	5	6	5	40	15.2
SIL	4	3	2	1	1	4	1	-	16	6.1
PAR	15	3	1	-	5	-	3	-	27	10.3
CON	-	-	-	7	1	1	1	1	11	4.1
Total	29	15	34	48	35	48	42	11	262	%
Percentage	11	6	13	18.3	13.3	18.3	16	4.1	%	100

Table 1 gives us the frequency of the type of interruptions made by the anchor. The choice of interruption type does reflect control over talk as the anchor uses the non-cooperative form of interruptions. Calculating the total anchor utterance ratio to that of the interruptions ratio; 73% of the times the anchor uses an interruption to take the floor, this percentage is fairly high, therefore, it can be attributed to be a linguistic strategy to control talk and direct it to specific topics.

**Table 2.** Ratio of total Anchor Utterances and Interruptions

Name of program	Total no. of Anchor Utterances	Out of those Interruptions
23 <sup>rd</sup> June WT	70	57
24 <sup>th</sup> June WT	139	81
25 <sup>th</sup> June WT	111	94
26 <sup>th</sup> June WT	40	30
Total	360	262
Percentage %	73%	

In the following analysis of the interruptions, the researcher will actually see if this agenda setting can be observed in the pattern of the different type and function of the interruption made.

### Cooperative Interruptions

The analyzed data revealed a type of interruption done by the anchor where the purpose seems to be fairly cooperative and assistive in nature to the dialogic purpose of the institutional interaction. The role of the anchor during such interruptions is more as a manager/conduit of talk to develop topic and also to manage talk without break down.

### Agreement with Participant

In the literature developed for the Political News Interview, no back channel support is seen or mentioned especially due to the specific format of the interview because it is produced for a ratified audience at home. However, in the data collected for this study a lot of back channel support is provided by the anchors using

agreement terms like “ Okay” “Alright”. If table 1 is consulted we see that the highest ratio of the type of interruption used for cooperative agreement by anchor is that of parenthetical interruptions; that are generally cooperative completions or back channels.

[1] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> .....emerging as a power as a power center so that is what is making the situation worse we say the nation is behind the [armed forces of Pakistan

<A1.1> [ **Right.**

<G1.1> but what kind of support and strength are signaled.....

[2] 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.2> you should put this question to Mr. Qadri or one of his supporters

<A1.1> [ **I mean im not**

<G1.2> [ **I'm certainly I** [should

<A1.1> [ **I'm not per** [haps the representative authority+

<G1.2> [ **but I think you** [might have to answer it now

<A1.1> [ **on answering answering** on behalf of Mr Qadri

This cooperative interruption takes place 11% in the data for the Pakistani Political talk-shows and is more towards the managerial function as it keeps the participants ratified and engaged by the anchor agreeing to them through back channels or short utterances which are parenthetical in nature.

### Assistance of Participant

As such, it is noticed that the anchor provides the participants with words or sometimes details by speaking out of turn. This seems to occur when the participant displays some hesitation, repetition or a slightly longer pause between the words of his utterance, which could also be counted as a silent interruption. At times the function of anchor's interruption was that of neutral interruption as the purpose is to assist and build rapport, and therefore, can be considered cooperative and managerial in nature as the anchor is responsible for the flow of the talk to continue without break down. This type of cooperative interruptions make up 6% of the total interruptions. The examples of such interruptions are:

[3] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> ...out of the out of the [ of the

<A1.1> [ **Escort him out of the plane**

[4] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.3.2> .....and we we I mean I mean Hamid Gul even had a mission central asia and he has already sent his spies to recruit [you know

<A1.3> [ **these uzbeks and tajiks**

<G1.3.2> yeah uzbeks and tajiks yeah so.....

However, on a closer look it is clear that even this cooperative interrupting pattern turns out to help agenda setting by the anchor. The anchor anticipates the word according to his agenda and provides the word; while the participant wants to say something different, so he rejects the provided word and selects a word of his own and continues saying what he wants to.

[5] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> ...that the electoral reforms are [ **baa**

<A1.1> [ **Mandatory**

<G1.2> badly needed

Example 5 shows that the anchor interrupts the participant with a word suggestion *Mandatory* which is certainly more emphatic and intense. The participant rejects it and uses the less strong phrase *badly needed*. Even

if the participants do not reject the anchors suggestion and accept it that also helps the anchor in setting the agenda:

[6] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> ...a point of PTIs throwing its weight [ **along**  
<A1.1> **behind mr qadri**

<G1.1> behind Mr Qadri I don't think he is doing that

[7] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.3.1> ...organizations that are [ **teaching hatred**  
<A1.3> **Jammat-e- Dawwa**

<G1.3.1> Jammat-e-Dawa all of them they have to be made completely dysfunctional

The interruptive suggestions in these examples of the anchor are not adversarial or disruptive as they provide the participant with words or details, yet these words control the discussion by keeping it to a particular agenda.

### Clarification

The final cooperative function in the data is clarification and it is done by the anchor to give certain details to make a comment clearer or to ask for clarification from the speaker.

[8] 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.2> ....four hundred thousand IDPs registered till yesterday I don't know [ **the current**  
<A2.2> **today's figures is about over four**

hundred and fifty thousand

<G1.2.> yeah and.....

The function of the interruption in example 8 is clarification of the correct number. In this manner the anchor makes sure that common ground is maintained between the audience and participants. In the total cooperative interruptions, which amount to a total of 30%, the highest ratio i.e. 13% is for clarification and within this category the type of interruption used the most is the simple interruption. This type of interruption has a cooperative function, however, in Pakistani Political talk-show it is observed to function in a more aggressively adversarial manner.

[9] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.3.3> but nobody was ready no body was ready for nobody was ready for the sudden

<A1.3> [ **operation**  
**were you not geared up for that**

<G1.3.3> see we were not this this was not this came up as a surprise to all of us the operation came up as a quick surprise

[10] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G3.3> .....after the Karachi incidence where the government failed to accept just was like you know the blame game was going on between the provincial government and the federalgovernment [ **but**

<A1.3> **Ma'am but don't you think that in the end they were caught**

These examples reflect that in the Political talk-show scenario even a cooperative functioning interruption can be used for a more adversarial questioning by the anchor. The clarifications that he is asking for in these interruptions directly link up to the agenda set in the openings.

### Disruptive Interruptions

The next category of the interruptions are very intentionally made to take the floor and cut off the utterance of the participants. Disruptive interruptions took place more often than the cooperative interruptions i.e. a ratio of 66:30. This ratio clearly displays that the anchor uses his power during the interaction to control the talk.

### Disruptive Interruptions Made to Disagree with Participant

In the category of disruptive interruptions, 18.3% are made to disagree with a participant's opinion. These interruptions seem to occur when the participant expresses a view to which the anchor does not agree. In general, the literature related to the news interviews suggest that the anchor goes to lengths trying to avoid any breach of his neutrality stance, however, these interruptions occurring 18.3% show that the anchor does not really focus on his role as an impartial manager and intervenes to disagree with the participant.

[11] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G3.3> ...is a clear stance of **Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf**  
<A2.3> **but ma'am that's history that cannot change I mean this is two thousand and**  
*fourteen mid of June*

[12] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> orator and he has a certain charisma about him there is **no doubt in that fact**  
<A1.1.1> **well I don't see that but sir**

These above instances of disagreement also show how it is managed. The first example is more adversarial and the anchor butts-in with *but* and then mitigate it with the honorific *ma'am* to soften his derisive tone. The data for this study is taken from the public channel which is a state owned channel and it is observed quite clearly in the analysis of the openings that the state channel chose topics selectively, not based on the emergent nature of the news; the same pattern is observed with the interruptions.

### Disruptive Interruptions for Taking Floor

The second category under the disruptive interruptions is of interrupting to take the floor. This happens 13.3 % times in the collected data. The function for taking the floor is usually to ask a question. This happens when the anchor believes the participant to deviate from the topic, so to bring the participant back on point the anchor interrupts the participant and asks a directional question

[13] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.2> ... *even people who have been to education through a proper education have come to a stage in Pakistan where they would want to see a messiah coming along and*  
<A1.1> **and resolving everything**  
**But we see this but we see**  
*this phenomenon everywhere is it to do without patience*

The example shows how the anchor interrupts the participant with a purpose of questioning and bringing him towards the agenda he has. He draws the discussion towards the topical progression he suggests. Also the questions starting with *but* are adversarial in nature which challenge what the participant has just said.

### Disruptive Interruption for Topic Change

This type of function is seen occurring 18.3% times in the collected data. This category can clearly be seen as a control aspect, as topical change by the anchor can directly be linked to agenda setting. The following examples illustrate such interruptions:

[14] 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G 4.2> ...I do not see if these political orphans they are creating a serious dent to the national unity against terrorism the nation as I'm seeing is united against terrorism and that was actually the will of the people **Chaudry**  
<A1.4>  
*sahib do you think Imran Khan should have accompanied the prime minister when he was visiting the IDPs*

The anchor of the state channel definitely wants to be on the same page as the government, therefore, in example 14 the anchor changes the topic and brings it back to the opposition party leader whose every move is construed as a wrong move. This topical change is reflective of the agenda being set by the interruption.

### Tangentialization to make a Comment or a Statement

The third category that falls under the disruptive interruptions is the one in which all the instances of the anchor making a comment or statements are collected. This type of disruptive interruption make up 16% of the total. This kind of interruption is made by the anchor to give his opinion about the topic under discussion. It is suggested that the anchor uses this interruptions at two levels; one level is where he assumes the role of a commentator; second, where the anchor wants to control the perspective related to the topic.

[15] 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.1> ....I am of the firm belief that Pakistani nation is one of the most generous nations of the world if you request this nation to come up with

<A1.1>

<G1.1> +the funds **that is the medias**

<A1.1>

[ **That is the medias job sir**  
**job**  
**because the media is not doing its job+**

-----  
 <G1.2> media perhaps has to be a little more sensitive we have to bring the issues of the IDPs a to the fore and and stop sensationalizing about you know events like Mr Qadris arrival [ **a a**

<A1.1>

<G1.2> which are which are issues but not of significance

[ **which are nonissues really**

[16] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G1.3.3>.... like those people who are the civilians at least you could you could isolate them and then you can target the people who are not ready to surrender their weapons so and the internationally [ **funded Taliban's**

<A1.3>

looks great in theory

[ **you think its that easy by the way it**

Example 16 displays how the anchor at times makes a disruptive interruption to contradict the participant and make a comment that gives a totally different perspective to what the participant is saying. This comment suggests that many a times the anchor uses interruptions to tangentialize or to summarize and comment directly upon the topic or perspective of participant. The example below shows how the anchor uses his comment to make a statement.

[17] 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G 2.3> ....this time the army is [ **fighting a war**

<A 2.3>

[ **nobody is talking about that; they are just focusing on Qadri**

The anchor in example 17 makes a clear statement, the interruption itself is disruptive as it halts whatever the participant was about to say and gives an assertive statement which quite adheres to the agenda the anchor has set in the opening segment of the programme i.e. that the political agenda is hindering the national agenda of war against terror and more attention is being given to a political person.

### Neutral Interruption

The final kind of function that emerged from the literature of interruptions was neutral interruption that neither has a disruptive nor cooperative function. It was observed that this type of interruption does not take place often in the context of the Pakistani Political talk-show; it was observed only 4% in the data.

[18] 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G 2.2> yeah but you [

<A 2.2>

anyway last quick comments because I've been told by my producers

[19] 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014 WT

<G 2.3> my point was that the poverty is [ **actually forcing people**

<A 2.2>

<G 2.1>

[ **before we move on to the next subject**  
**no the poverty is not actually and issue**

The above examples are of neutral interruptions by the anchor, however, the second example is of the interruption type conflict where all the speakers start speaking at the same time. As our focus for this study was only on the interruptions made by the anchor, hence it was seen that all the neutral interruptions were made with the function of managing the talk of the political talk-show and was not seen as connected to the aspect of agenda setting as the other types of functions were analyzed as doing.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis displays the pattern of the interactional aspect of interruptions in the agenda setting of the political talk-shows. 85% of the times the interruptions made by the anchor are successful and only 15% of the times the interruption is disallowed by the participant's refusal to give up floor. Out of this 85% only 30% of interruptions are cooperative interruptions made to assist the talk and provide a word or information to the participant most of the time i.e. 80% of the time these interruptions are disruptive and made to comment assertively upon the topic as tangentialization or to take the floor and change the topic. The above analysis also supports and suggests that anchors use interruptions to keep the agenda on point to the topical perspective they have expressed in the openings. The pattern of interruptions in the talk-shows identifies that 80% of the time the anchor steps out of his designated institutional role of manager/conduit and assumes the role of the commentator; he makes interruptions to assert his point of view, or to control the perspective of the talk, or to re-direct the talk towards the agenda set in the representational openings. Thus, it can be said that the pattern of interruptions actually proves the agenda setting done by the anchors in Pakistani Political talk-shows. It also shows that interactive control of talk is used for manipulating the topics and controlling the talk.

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