Power Distribution in Discourse: A Lexico-Grammatical Analysis of a Television Interview from HARDtalk

* Tahira Asgher, Assistant Professor

** Asma Kashif Shahzad, Assistant Professor (Corresponding Author)

*** Anum Hanif

Abstract

The research provides an insight into the disparity of power distribution in the discourse of television interview specifically of HARDtalk (a program of BBC news channel concerned with crucial issues related to politics, society, and economy) which includes two participants: the interviewer who is professionally a journalist and interviewee who is a politician. The paper investigates which members of the interview are responsible for controlling the directions of discourse and it examines the difference between casual conversation and television interview communication. Lexico-Grammatical Analysis (LGA) model by Eggins and Slade (1997) was applied for data analysis. Results of the study illustrated that distribution of power in discourse is dichotomous, although unequal, but the great amount of power resided with the interviewer as compared to the interviewee as he has to control the directions of the interview discourse. The findings further revealed that the discourse of television interviews is diverse from the casual discourse.

Keywords: Power Distribution, Television Interview, HARD talk, Lexico-Grammatical Analysis

Introduction

Communication is the process of transferring useful and meaningful information/ knowledge from one person to another about the topic of common interest. Chiavenato (2006) stated that communication is the process used not only to convey information but also the understanding of it from one person to another involving the sender and receiver. According to Barker (2010), the transmission and reception of information is known as communication. Gee and Handford (2012) stated that a single sentence is also regarded as communication as it provides some meaning additional to its structure. It can either be verbal (language: spoken as well as written) or non-verbal. The principle of communication is language. People use language for the expression of their thoughts, ideas, and emotions. When the language is used by people to carry out communication then it is known as discourse. It generally refers to information and knowledge. It exists in two forms: spoken and written. In different contexts, language/ discourse work differently. It is responsible for the creation of power relations in communication. The quotation "Knowledge is Power", by Sir Francis Bacon in 1597, conveys that knowledge plays an effective role in the creation of discursive power.

The power must be distributed unequally in the genres of spoken discourse otherwise the existence of the communicative process should not be possible. The unequal distribution of power among unequal participants is known as "unequal encounter" (Fairclough, 1989). According to Kress (1985), most of the spoken genres of discourse present the concept of difference: difference in ideological views of people, the difference in power and knowledge (formal or informal), etc.

Literature Review

Discourse Analysis

According to Cook (1997), the communicative language of people is known as discourse and the analysis of discourse coherence is known as discourse analysis (DA). This term was coined by Zellig Harris in 1952. According to him, DA refers to the phenomenon of analyzing language above the sentence level. Brown and Yule (1983) stated that DA is comprised of both descriptive and functional approaches to language. In other words, it involves two approaches: Descriptive and Critical. The

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*   Department of English Linguistics, Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.
          Email: tahira.asghar@iub.edu.pk
**   Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Vehari Campus, Pakistan.
          Email: asmashahzad@cuivehari.edu.pk
***   Department of English Linguistics, Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

former studies the structures of language only while the latter aims to study how the structure of language functions in various contexts.

CDA and Power

When the language is used in various contexts for the investigation of how the power, social-political, and economic relations are negotiated and developed, then it is termed as critical discourse analysis (CDA). It is a multidisciplinary phenomenon (Fairclough 2006) which involves various approaches. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) presented four basic principles of CDA which are as follows:

Discourse plays a significant role in the construction of

1. Social and political issues
2. Power relations
3. Social relations
4. Ideological relations

The fundamental aspect of CDA is power. It is something that someone endures rather than being shared (Foucault, 1977). He further suggested that it is a discourse that is responsible for the production of power in a conversation. Weedon (1997) shared the same ideas. It has been stated that CDA is the phenomenon used to analyze how the dominancy of power is produced within the context of social and political one through discourse (Vin Dijk, 2003; Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014).

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Various methods and approaches namely Conversational Analysis (CA), Birmingham model of Discourse Analysis, Cooperative Principles, etc were proposed by linguists to analyze social, political and power relations produced by the language/ discourse used. But these approaches were somehow disdained as they were having some limitations. In contrast to them, Eggins and Slade (1997) approach named "an eclectic approach" was considered quite comprehensible in analyzing the discourse to investigate the relations among people involved in the conversation. Though, it was originally put forward for the investigation of discourse produced in the genre of casual conversation, but later it is assumed that it can also apply to other complex genres of discourse like interviews. It is composed of three models: 1) lexico-grammatical analysis (LGA), semantic analysis, and exchange structure analysis.

The analytical model, LGA, used in this paper has its roots in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It is one of the structural-functional approaches used to illustrate that discourse is comprehensive and organized. Eggins and Slade (1997) presented two beneficial points of SFL:

1. It is a structural approach of language/ discourse for the description of structural patterns of language.
2. It is also that the functional approach of language which explains how language functions in various social contexts to establish the relations.

Based on these points, it can be applied to CDA, computational linguistics, etc. Figure 1 shows the detailed description of the SFL model.
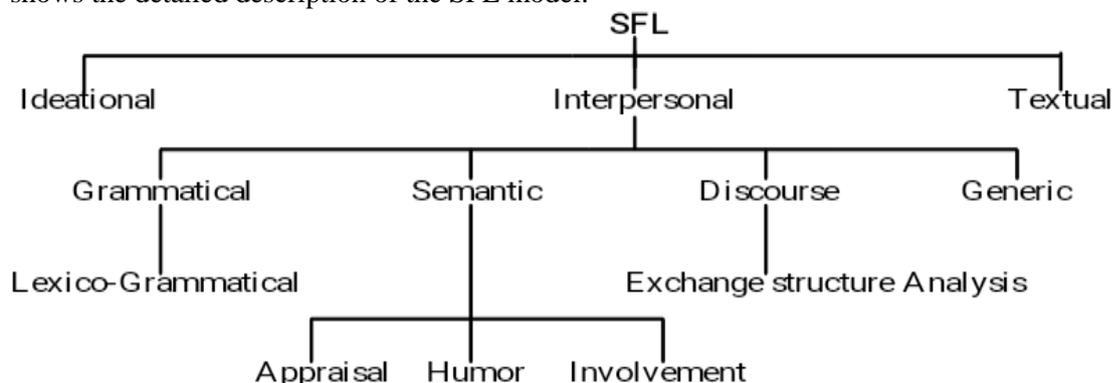

Figure1: Systemic Functional Linguistics Model (Eggins and Slade: 1997)

Characteristics of Television Interview

Ekström (2001) provided an insight into a few features of Television Interview. They are described as follows:

1. In a television interview, it should be assumed that the interviewer and interviewee must be acknowledged of their particular role and they should follow the rules made implicitly.
2. The interviewer plays the role of investigator while the interviewee has the role of respondent.

3. The interviewer takes an initial step for negotiation of interaction by introducing and inviting the interviewee. He/she initiates and concludes the conversation.
4. The interviewer owned the power to decide what should be discussed in the conversation.
5. The interviewee is obliged to answer the questions.
6. If the interviewee denied giving any response to a question, still it is considered as an answer.
7. The interviewer is not allowed to comment or provide his/ her point of view in the interview.

Atkins (2002) conducted a micro-linguistic study of discourse power distribution among the participants of a television interview. He implied "an eclectic approach" designed by Eggins and Slade in 1997. This approach involved three models: lexico-grammatical analysis, semantic analysis, and exchange structure analysis. The findings indicated that there was a great disparity of power distribution among the interviewer (a journalist) and interviewee (an ordinary man) and the power was mostly possessed by the interviewer as compared to the interviewee. Similarly, Atkins (2013) analyzed power distribution in the current affairs television interview.

Kalberg (2005) studied that the discourses of western-liberal communities were not practicing socially in an appropriate way due to which the creation of peaceful social order was not possible. Identifying this problem, scholars and reformers located the alternative discourses of power and deconstructed them to clarify the elements of them.

Aman (2009) aimed to analyze the attainment of political power by the use of discourse in the political context. The discourse selected for the analysis was taken from the "general election manifesto" of a political party named Barisan Nasional 2004. The findings of the study showed that the attainment of political power by any political party can be possible by the use of textual and linguistic features in the discourse produced.

Pitsoe and Letseka (2012) implied Foucault's conception of power and discourse in an instructional classroom of management on the basis that discourse power would play a significant role in controlling the disturbance in the class. The findings revealed that discourse and power are interrelated terms. Teachers found this concept beneficial for teaching the management class.

Robertson (2014) studied the enactment and distribution power in the discourse genre of direct and cross-examinations in Philippine Courtroom. The discourse was analyzed by using the phenomena of speech acts and politeness. The findings of the study showed that asymmetrical/ unequal power distribution among the participants, namely lawyers and witnesses, was responsible for the arousal of social problems.

Azhar, Iqbal, and Shah (2020) researched to investigate the discourse power distribution among the participants involved in the genre of Pakistani talk Show. The phenomenon of turn-taking was implied for the analysis of conversation carried out between a host and three guests. The findings of the study showed that the turns taken by each participant were unequal in number which was the indication of unequal distribution of power not only between the host and guests but also between the guests.

In the present study, the discourse power distribution among the participants of a television interview is analyzed. The main purpose is to introduce ESL learners with those accessible resources through which they can learn structures of Standard English that are responsible for the production of power in the formal spoken discourse context. Television is one of the resources accessible to everyone where a limited number of programs are broadcast involving Standard English.

Research Questions
1. Who controls the discourse directions of *HARDtalk* television interview?
2. Is there any difference between casual conversation and *HARDtalk* television interview?
3. How is discourse power distributed in *HARDtalk* television interviews at the micro-linguistic level?

Methodology
A descriptive approach (qualitative as well as quantitative) was used for the analysis of data collected through semi-structured "Television Interview".

Choice of a Text
The television interview selected for the study was taken from one of the BBC News channel programs namely HARDtalk (a type of current affairs interview program where crucial political and social issues are discussed) that is broadcast once a weekday aligned with five other programs. The interview was recorded in 2018 between two influential participants a journalist named (Zeinab

Badawi) and a politician (Imran Khan). To transcribe the interview, Eggins and Slade's (1997) coding system is used. Each speaker has produced more than 2 hundred clauses in the overall interview. The initial conversation of the interview should be taken into account as it creates the power.

LGA Model

LGA Model

LGA model is a systematic and organized one and works on a clause level. Though, formerly it applies to casual conversation among people but now due to its comprehensibility and systematic nature, it can be applied to other genres of discourse too. It consists of basically a "mood system" which is linked with two subsystems namely polarity and modality.
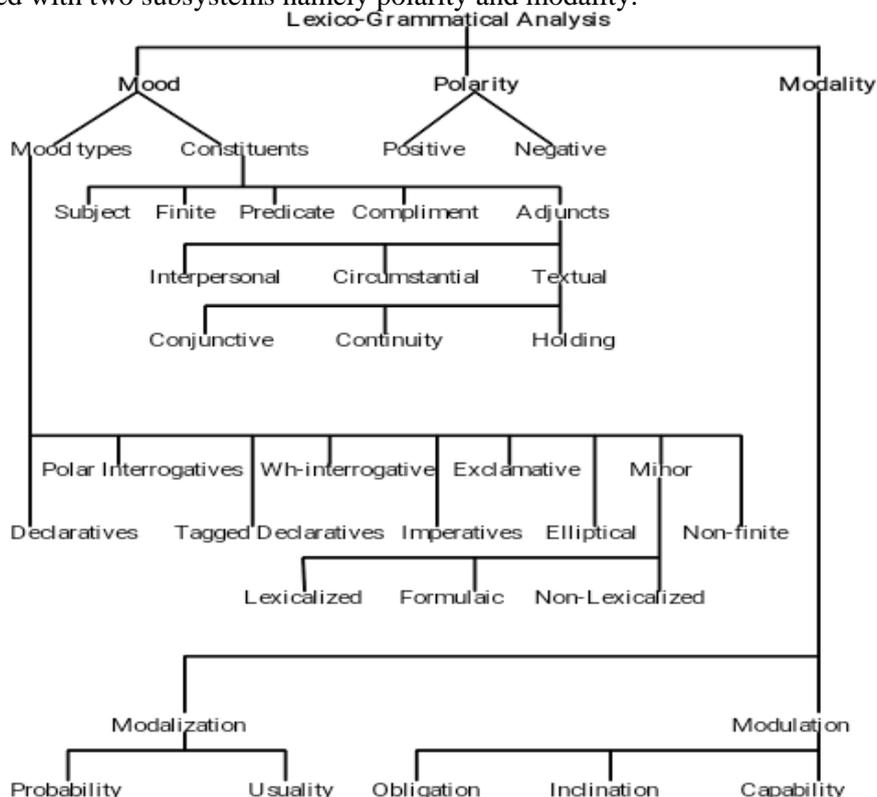

Figure 2: Model of Lexico-Grammatical Analysis (Eggins and Slade: 1997)

Before discussing the mood system of LGA, the transcript television interview was divided into turns and further into clauses. The numbering of each turn and clause was mentioned. At first, the constituents of the mood system (subject, finite, compliment, predicate) were identified and then the mood types of clauses were identified. The coding of the mood system was done with ease but the identification of elliptical and abandoned clauses was somehow difficult. Negations, adjuncts, minor clauses, and modalities were identified carefully.

Findings and Results

Table 1: Summary of Mood System in LGA Model

Mood (Clause Type)	Zeinab Badawi	Imran Khan
Number of clauses	204	307
(Incomplete Clauses)	10 (4.9%)	33 (10.7%)
Declarative		
Full	110 (53.9%)	225 (73.2%)
Elliptical	10 (4.9%)	17 (5.53%)
Polar interrogatives		
Full	23 (11.2%)	02 (0.65%)
Elliptical	02 (0.98%)	-
Tagged Declarative		
Full	01 (0.49%)	-
Elliptical	01 (0.49%)	-
Wh-Interrogatives		
Full	09 (4.41%)	03 (0.97%)

Elliptical	-	03 (0.97%)
Imperatives		
Full	06 (2.94%)	08 (2.60%)
Elliptical	02 (0.98%)	08 (2.60%)
Exclamative	-	01 (0.32%)
Minor	28 (13.7%)	03 (0.97%)
Non-finite clauses	02 (0.98%)	04 (1.30%)
Most frequently used "SUBJECT"	$I = 15$ *You* (refers to *Imran*) = 78 *We* = 03 Singular 3rd person pronoun as subject = 18 Plural 3rd person pronoun as subject= 04 *This* = 05 *That* = 03	$I = 47$ *You* (refers to *Zeinab)* = 26 *We* =17 Singular 3rd person pronoun as subject = 40 Plural 3rd person pronoun as subject = 16 *This* = 10 *That* = 07 *There* = 13
Negation	10	20
Adjuncts		
Circumstantial	50	77
Textual	61	111
Interpersonal	18	23
Modularization		
Probability		
High		
Median	05	04
Low		02
Modulation		
Obligation		
High		02
Median		01
Low		
Inclination		01
Capability		
Positive		
Modulated	06	04
Negative	01	03
Total number of modalities	12	17

Table 1 provides a summary of mood choice analysis in the text of a television interview. The analysis of mood choices is described numerically. Based on the results accumulated in the text, the highest proportion of clauses was uttered by the interviewee (Imran Khan) in contrast to the interviewer (Zeinab Badawi). It doesn't show that dominance resided with the interviewee rather it shows that the interviewee has to provide a greater amount of knowledge as being interrogated by the interviewer. Zeinab generated only 4.9% incomplete clauses in the whole interview while Imran Khan produced 10.7% of it. This indicates that the interviewer was more pre-planned and organized in her utterance rather than the interviewee who was more casual in his speaking. Another reason for uttering a greater number of incomplete clauses by the interviewee was the process of interruption. Imran Khan was interrupted in few places which shows that the interviewer, firstly, has the power of controlling the discourse directions during the interview, and secondly, she wanted the interviewee should remain focused on the focal point of discussion. Interrogatives were highly uttered by the interviewer which is the indication of her status as a journalist and her possession of power to challenge the statements an interviewee made in the past.

The higher degree of producing declarative by interviewee doesn't show that he was in power. Rather it was the sign that he has to provide a greater amount of factual information about his life events which the audience wanted to know. Comparatively, Zeinab produced a greater number of minor clauses than Imran Khan. The reason for producing most of the minor clauses by her was to maintain the continuity of the conversation. Talking about negation, the interviewee used negative sentences more than the other participant of the interview. This suggests that the interviewee refused all the claims or challenges or charges about him by the interviewer as he was clearer about the

statements he made previously. Imran Khan produced imperative clauses greater in number than Zeinab. This shows that he wants to justify himself and clear his position. Producing imperative clauses lesser in number by the interviewer shows that she doesn't want to exert her power directly in a conversation. According to Kress (1985), the person who owned the power never exerts it directly.

The subject used frequently by the interviewee was "I" as he has to share his feelings and experiences he has passed through. Another subject frequently used by him was "you" to create solidarity with the interviewer and the unseen audience. On the other side, Zeinab used the subject "you" in her utterance as she wants the interviewee to remain engaged in the interaction. Another reason for using this subject by Zeinab was to ask for justification from Imran about the claims made about him by his rivals in previous times. The results showed that Imran Khan uttered modalities higher in number as compared to Zeinab Badawi (see Table 1). This shows that he was not definite, certain, and clearer about his position. The types of modalities (modularization and modulation mentioned with turn and clause number) used by interviewer and interviewee in the clauses were given below in Table 2.

Table 2: Modality Choice in LGA Model

Types of Modality	Examples
Modularization	
1. Probability	
High	-
Median	1. We may have been discredited in your eyes. (Turn 06, clause v)
	2. It's probably level with the PML (N). (Turn 09, clause xvi)
	3. You may say things on the campaign trail. (Turn 24, clause vii)
	4. You may that clear Imran Khan. (Turn 40, clause ii)
	5. Perhaps you could be more critical of the armed forces. (Turn 46, clause v)
	6. General Musharraf's army would be different. (Turn 49, clause vi)
	7. General Zia's army would be different. (Turn 49, clause v)
	8. Maybe all of them children. (Turn 66, clause v)
	9. You will hope that people could not afford the lawyers. (Turn 75 clause ii)
	1. This is what might have been a survey at the time. (Turn 07, clause vi)
Low	2. People would not be saying that they will again vote for PTI.
2. Usuality	
Modulation	
1. Obligation	
Positive: unmodulated	-
High: directive	1. It must have fulfilled its promises in manifestos. (Turn 19, clause iv)
Median: advice	2. Zein, you must understand. (Turn 21, clause v)
Low: permission	1. It will tell you. (Turn 67, clause viii)
Negative: unmodulated	-
2. Inclination	-
Positive: unmodulated	1. I will establish the same system in the country of resuming power. (Turn 62, clause v)
High: conviction	-
Median: attitude	-
Low: undertaking	-
Negative: unmodulated	-
3. Capability	
Unmodulated: Positive	-
Modulated: Capability	1. Can he make it to the position of Prime Minister this time around? (Turn 01, clause x)
	2. You can dismiss polls. (Turn 08, clause vi)
	3. You can win a national election. (Turn 08, clause vi)
	4. We are the only party that can build state institutions. (Turn 11, clause viii)
	5. But we can. (Turn 13, clause i)
	6. Can I clear this thing? (Turn 57, clause i)
	7. Bilawal can be excused. (Turn 61, clause ii)

	8. If you could represent them in talks? (Turn 66, clause ix)
	9. Can you talk to them? (Turn 70, clause ii)
	10. Can you do business with them? (Turn 74, clause ii)
Unmodulated: Negative	1. They can never build the same institutions again. (Turn 11, clause xxviii)
	2. (He) can't talks about creating ten million jobs in the province. (Turn 14, clause v)
	3. It doesn't mean that you know I cannot have a passion for people. (Turn 25, clause ix)
	4. I couldn't have joined General Pervez Musharraf's government. (Turn 43, clause ii)

Interpretation of Results

Power Distribution

As stated earlier that power should be distributed unequally among the participants in any type of spoken genre of discourse otherwise there would be no existence of communication. According to Eggins and Slade (1997), there is an existence of a state of flux between solidarity and difference in casual conversation of a television interview. In a television interview, the establishment of solidarity doesn't mean that the participants of the interaction not only try to remain connected with each other but also with the unseen audience as it is one of the significant features of the media. The establishment of difference among the participants of a television interview, based on their status, genre, class, and specific role, plays a significant role in the negotiation and construction of power in discourse. Both the participants (interviewer and interviewee) possess the power in the genre of television interview but a great amount of power resides with the interviewer besides the fact that she was constrained by a few factors. Being a journalistic interviewer, Zeinab Badawi was not allowed to give her own opinions regarding any statement or question, to comment or give feedback on the answers given by the interviewee, and to reprehend any of the action of the interviewee even if it is against the rules and discipline of the interview. Additionally, she must avoid saying anything which can hurt the feelings of an unseen audience as it is the essential part of the interview. Besides all these constraints, the process of interrogation carried out by the interviewer is one of the pieces of evidences which shows that she has the power to decide what should be discussed or which topics should be covered in the entire television interview. Zeinab produced a higher proportion of interrogative clauses which shows that she has the power to challenge the claims/ statement made by him and made about him by other politicians. The least number of productions of elliptical and non-finite clauses by the interviewer shows that her speech was more planned and organized for confrontation of the interviewee. As a whole, two major kinds of power were identified: the power of control and the power of knowledge. Zeinab, as a journalistic interviewer, possessed the overall control of the interview which shows her power of controlling the discourse directions. Taking into account the power of knowledge, Zeinab possesses a great deal of information based on the research done by her about Imran Khan's personal and political life. But still, power of knowledge resided with the interviewee (Imran) as he possesses more factual information about his own personal and political life experiences and has the power to provide his own opinions about the questions asked from him while the interviewer was devoid of giving her own opinion in the interview. If the interview was conducted outside the studio then she would be able to share her thoughts and thus she could possess the power of knowledge.

Control on Discourse Directions

Ekström (2001) suggested that the interviewer owned the power of deciding what topics should be discussed in the genre of a television interview. It means the interviewer controls the discourse directions. Here, it is also evident. An initial step was taken by Zeinab (interviewer) to welcome the interviewee and introduced him to the audience. All the exchanges were initiated by the interviewer indicating that she was having the power to control the discourse directions. She was responsible for the initiation and end of the conversation. Being a semi-structured interview, the highest proportion of wh-interrogative, polar interrogative, and tagged declarative clauses were generated by the interviewer indicating that she has the power of deciding what should be discussed in a television interview regarding the interviewee's life. As stated earlier, incomplete clauses were mostly produced by Imran Khan (interviewee). The reason for producing such a great number of this mood type was that he was mostly interrupted by the interviewer. Unlike casual conversation, the process of

interruption doesn't seem impolite in an interview. Rather, it indicates that the interviewer doesn't want the interviewee to deviate from the central point of discussion as she was more organized than Imran Khan.

Differentiation in Casual Conversation and Television Interview

LGA model was originally designed to analyze the discourse of casual conversation for the investigation of power relations enacted and created through discourse. But it applies to the discursive genre of television interviews too because of the existence of some commonness in both of the terms. For instance, in both genres, the participants establish the relation with each other as well as with the audience to show the relation of solidarity. Both the genres involve the spoken discourse which indicates that power is distributed unequally among the participants otherwise there would be no communication. Besides these, casual conversation is quite different from a television interview. Table 3 presents the differences between casual conversation and television interview given below:

Table 3: Difference between Casual Conversation and Television Interview

Factors	Casual Conversation	Television Interview
Definition	Conversation between participants of equal status	Conversation between the participants of unequal status
Nature	Simple a talk about any topic between participants	HARDtalk is a current affair program where discussion is done on sensitive political and social issues
Number of Participants	The number of participants varies from conversation to conversation.	Two influential participants are involved" 1. Interviewer 2. Interviewee
Status of Participants	It involves the participants of equal status	The interviewer is a journalist while the interviewee is a famous personality but professionally, he/ she is not the part of media
Role of Participants	The role of the participants are identified as the conversation developed	The interviewer plays the role of investigator and initiator while the interviewee plays the role of respondent.
Purpose	Specifically, it doesn't have any purpose.	It must have some specific purpose to draw some conclusions
Structure	It is unstructured by nature	It is a structural one.
Opportunity of questioning	Every individual has an equal opportunity of asking the questions.	As the interviewer plays the role of investigator, so he has the power of asking questions from the interviewee.
Control on discourse directions	It is unidentified until the conversation unfolds.	The interviewer controls the discourse directions as he/ has the power of deciding what should be discussed in conversation.
Application of Politeness Principle	In casual conversation, participants use the politeness principle	The politeness principle is absent in an interview.
Process of interruption	Interruption seems impolite in casual conversation	Interruption plays a significant role as it prevents the interviewee to deviate from the point of focus in conversation.
Expression of opinions	Each participant can express his/ her own opinion during a talk.	Only the interviewee is allowed to express his/ her own opinion while the interviewer is devoid of it.
Audience	The physical appearance of the audience is involved	Unseen audience is involved in it
Language	English dialect is used according to the region.	Standard English is used in the HARDtalk program.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the distribution of power is dichotomously unequal among the participants of a television interview. A great amount of power is possessed by the interviewer as compared to the interviewee. Both the participants, interviewer and interviewee, we're dependent on each other. The interviewee was dependent on the interviewer for the discourse directions while the interviewer

dependent on the interviewee for seeking the information about the questions asked from him as he has to precede the conversation.

It is evident from the study that there is the existence of two types of power: power of control and knowledge. Power of control is possessed by the interviewer while the interviewee has the power of knowledge. Based on knowledge, the interviewee has dominancy over the interviewer as he provided a large amount of factual information about the claims challenged by the interviewer during an interview. His possession of power was just based on the principle of "Knowledge is Power". But in the case of the HARDtalk television interview, the power was something more than knowledge as the power is not something that a person has to share or acquire rather it is something that a person holds. Due to this reason, the power of controlling the discourse direction was more dominant than knowledge. In a television interview, it was the interviewer who has the power to control the discourse directions as he was able and allowed to decide as to what extent the typical topic should be discussed. Almost all the exchanges were initiated by her. Not only this, the interviewer has a sufficient amount of knowledge about the situation and she was more organized in her speech. Hence, a great amount of power resided with the interviewer.

The model used in this paper can be applied to other genres of the discourse for the analysis of enactment and production of power, social and political relations through discourse. This study is beneficial in the sense that it provides a complete description of mood types that can be used for the construction of power in spoken discourse.

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