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Invoking Different Types of Knowledge in Celebrity Interviews¹

Abstract

My aim in this paper is to examine how participants in celebrity television interviews invoke different types of knowledge and move between first-hand and general knowledge. The data that I use come from Finnish television interviews where foreign celebrities are interviewed. In the analysis I describe the resources the participants use in mobilizing different types of knowledge. First I describe how the interviewer's questions invoke first-hand knowledge and then I move on to describe one way of resisting the agenda set in the interviewer's questions – namely that of displaying general knowledge instead of first-hand knowledge in the answer. These practices serve the functions of 1) managing the intimacy-level of the topics, 2) resisting some aspect of the interviewer's question and 3) constructing expertise that is based on general knowledge.

1. Introduction

Celebrity interviews introduce celebrities, or some aspect of them, to the television audience. Celebrity interviews as a genre require careful negotiation of the level of intimacy. Since the goal of the interviews is to reveal personal aspects of the interviewees, a certain level of intimacy has to be achieved. On the other hand, there are topics that the interviewees do not wish to talk about in a television interview. The aim of this article is to examine how the participants can invoke different types of knowledge and move between first-hand and general knowledge in a manner relevant for the activity-at-hand and for the management of topic and knowledge in celebrity interviews.

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My data come from Finnish television interviews where foreign celebrities are interviewed. I present examples where the interviewer's (IR) question invokes first-hand knowledge and the interviewee (IE) resists the agenda set by the question and displays general knowledge in the answer. The focus of this paper is to describe 1) how first-hand knowledge is invoked in the questioning turn and 2) one way of resisting the IR's questions about issues that are too intimate, 'loaded', or in some other way problematic matters – namely that of displaying general knowledge instead of first-hand knowledge in the answer. There are other ways of resisting the interviewer's agenda that include, for example, refusing to answer the question, providing a partial or incomplete answer, and changing the topic (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 250–257). Some of the practices of resisting or shifting the IR agenda are quite overt (for instance explicitly refusing to answer the question) and others, such as the one that I am focusing on here, are more covert. When the IR agenda is shifted covertly, the IEs do not explicitly acknowledge the shift of the agenda (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 269).

Mobilizing different types of knowledge is a salient feature of interaction in television interviews. Different states of knowledge are always present in the questioning activity one way or another. A television interview is a question-driven form of interaction and the situation itself brings with it an asymmetry that is linked to the institutional roles of the participants. The roles of the interviewer (as a questioner) and the interviewee (as an answerer) already in themselves involve an asymmetry of knowledge. Negotiating knowledge, roles and identities are connected with each other. Each relevant role in the interactive event is linked to a relevant state of knowledge that is made available for the other participants through interactive practices.

Knowledge in this study refers not to whatever mental constructions might be lodged inside the participants' minds but to positions that are constructed in interaction. The question that interests me is how knowing and situationally appropriate or relevant ways of knowing are managed interactionally. Recently this topic has been approached by Heritage & Raymond (2005) who studied how knowledge and information are managed in affiliative assessment sequences in everyday talk. In this article the management of knowledge is studied in a different environment, namely question-answer sequences in an institutional context. The practices of managing knowledge and resisting or shifting the IR agenda that I

examine in this paper have not been studied in the context of celebrity interviews before.

Closely linked with the asymmetry of knowledge is the asymmetry of participation rights that is also connected with the participants' institutional roles. However, it should be remembered that the division of roles is naturally not this straightforward in the actual interactive event. The participants may not adhere to their institutional roles throughout the interview. Instead, they may orient to some other roles as more relevant ones at any particular moment.

2. Background

I approach my data from a conversation analytic perspective. I examine the interviews as interactive events constructed through social practices. The interviewers and interviewees recognize a set of social conventions that are associated with interviews. These social conventions constitute the interviews as an organized social institution (Clayman & Heritage 2002: 6). Practices used in constructing knowledge cannot be studied in isolation from the interactional context, i.e. the turns and sequences in which the practices occur. Thus a method that acknowledges the "in-progress" character of interactive practices, in other words participants analyzing turns as they unfold, is needed. Conversation analysis provides a method for capturing the array of features of interaction that are relevant for the participants and for the analyst.

Conversation analysis has proved to be a useful approach in examining the practices that sustain the interview. Television interviews have been studied from a conversation analytic perspective by Clayman (1988, 1992); Greatbatch (1988); Heritage (1985); Heritage & Greatbatch (1991); Clayman & Heritage (2002) among others. Finnish television interviews have been studied by, for example, Nuolijärvi & Tiittula (2000); Berg (2001, 2003) and Kajanne (2001a, 2001b).

Many conversation analytic studies on television interviews have focused on news interviews. Other types of interviews have received less attention among researchers conducting conversation analytical studies (however, see, e.g., Hutchby 2001b on talk shows and Clayman & Heritage 2002b on press conferences). There are many different genres of interviewing in addition to the news interview, e.g., the press conference, the talk show interview, the sports interview etc. The different interview genres share certain similar properties, for instance, all interviews are

primarily organized through questions and answers and there are also similarities in the interviewer and interviewee conduct in producing talk for an overhearing audience. Moreover, similar IR techniques are used in the opening and closing phases of the interview. In the opening phase the IR produces a monologue addressed explicitly to the audience. This monologue typically includes an introduction of the guest and a statement about the topic of the program (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 59–60). In closings, the IRs typically initiate the closing, usually by thanking the IEs for their participation (Clayman & Heritage 2002: 74).

However, there are also differences in the nature of questioning in different interview genres. In political interviews the questioning is often aggressive, attempting to corner the IE or to provoke debate (see, e.g. Nuolijärvi & Tiittula 2000: 83, Heritage 1985, 2002). The politicians' answers in turn are shaped by the questioning style and also by the institutional norms of politics. In news interviews it is central for the IRs to retain a neutralistic stance towards the IEs' statements and opinions (Clayman & Heritage 2002: 120). In talk show interviews the function of the questions is to get the guests to talk about themselves and the questioning is often done in a way that enables the host to express their own views and share their own experiences with the guests and the television audience (Nuolijärvi & Tiittula 2000: 85–88). Typically in talk shows an audience is present in the studio, which also influences the shape the interaction takes. The purpose of a celebrity interview is different from other interview genres and that can be seen in the way the interview is organized. The practices I analyze in this paper in part organize the interview so that it meets its purpose of introducing the celebrities to the television audience.

The interviewer's institutional role as the controller of the topic and the agenda has previously been studied by Clayman and Heritage (2002). Previous research on the ways in which the IEs resist IR agenda include studies by Clayman (1993, 2001) and Greatbatch (1986). Clayman and Heritage (2002: 196) describe how agendas are set in questions by setting a specific topical domain as the relevant domain in the response. If the interviewee fails to address the question's topical agenda, the failure is made noticeable and accountable (see also Schegloff 1972). According to Clayman (2001), when interviewees resist the interviewer agenda covertly they minimize the possible negative consequences of being evasive. In the data extracts that are presented here resistance is done in a similar manner, in a way that makes resistance less conspicuous.

3. The data

The data I use come from Finnish television interviews. The IR is Finnish and the IEs come from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The language the participants use in the interviews is English. The data come from a larger collection of data of using English in the Finnish society in the domains of media, education and business life.² Because the participants do not share a common native language, they use English as an international language in the interviews. However, they generally do not seem to orient to the fact that they are using an international language. Instead, they orient to the norms of the interview or ‘do interview talk’ and do similar things with language as native speakers in a similar situation.

The data analysed here come from four different interviews, which are part of a series of interviews called "Yöleno" (“Night Flight”), hosted by Maarit Tastula. The data are transcribed using the notation system summarized in the Appendix. The interviews consist of the participants’ talk that takes place in a television studio (without a studio audience) and video inserts that are placed within the talk. The genre could best be described as celebrity interviews. The general theme has to do with some aspect of the interviewees that they are famous for, their public roles or identities. For example, a film director is invited to talk about his films, a civil rights activist is invited to talk about civil rights etc. Whether the interviewees speak as their private selves, being ‘experts’ of their own life and of things that they personally have experienced, or as ‘experts’ of some specified field (usually a profession, but also a nationality etc.), is something that is jointly negotiated in the interaction. One means of such negotiation is the mobilization of different types of knowledge.

4. Questioning and knowledge

Questioning is an activity that has a central role in constituting the news interview as a social institution (Heritage & Roth 1995: 2). Questions are often complex and multifunctional. Questioning turns can also serve as vehicles for doing other actions besides questioning. Agendas can be set, assumptions and opinions can be expressed and presuppositions can be

² The project *English Voices in Finnish society: the use of English in media, education and professional settings* is based at the University of Jyväskylä and financed by the Academy of Finland (project number 7102075).

made in questioning turns (see Clayman & Heritage 2002). Questions can be used to accuse, challenge etc. (Heritage & Roth 1995). Because questions are multifunctional, they can also be studied from many different perspectives. The perspective I take in this paper to questioning is how different types of knowledge are mobilized in question/answer sequences.

Aspects of the interviewer's and interviewee's institutional or public roles and also their private identities can be invoked in questions (see Clayman & Heritage 2002; Roth 1998). For example, a question can be designed in such a way that the interviewees are treated as members of a nationality, and through that membership as knowing participants in relation to their home country, or as members of a profession and through that membership knowledgeable about matters relevant to their profession. Categorization work is being done in these instances where a question invokes an identity of a member in some group and because of that membership treats the interviewee as a knowing (or unknowing) participant (see Piirainen-Marsh & Koskela 2000). A person belonging to a certain category has entitlement to certain knowledge (cf. Sharrock's (1974) idea of "ownership of knowledge"); for instance, when talking about matters concerning one participant's home country that participant has entitlement to that knowledge.

This paper focuses on instances where the interviewer's question invokes first-hand knowledge and the interviewee displays general knowledge. I attempt to identify the resources that the participants use in mobilizing these two types of knowledge. I suggest that the function of invoking first-hand knowledge has to do with managing the intimacy level of the interview. In these data the genre of the interviews (human interest, personal matters) calls for talk about the private aspects of the interviewees' identities. While the IRs attempt to build positions from which the IEs could answer the questions on the basis of first-hand knowledge, the IEs sometimes resist these positions for their own purposes. Something in the questions is either too intimate or somehow 'loaded'. Instead of offering first-hand knowledge, the IEs' answers are designed in such a way that they invoke general knowledge.

Before moving on to the examples that are the focus of my analysis I will present an example of a case where the interviewer's question that invokes first-hand knowledge is not resisted, but the interviewee produces talk that displays first-hand knowledge in response to the question. This type of question-answer sequence is very typical of celebrity interviews. In

this example it can be seen what happens if the question is not treated as problematic in any way and the IE designs his answer to fit the IR agenda.

(1)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

EK = IE, Emir Kusturica

Video insert

1 MT → so (.) how did you (.) react yourself (.)
 2 when you first uh heard about (.) the war (.)
 3 that the war had be[gun]
 4 EK [it] was very painful it was awful
 5 EK I just couldn't believe that=
 6 MT =you were (.) where (.) at that time.=
 7 EK =u-uh Paris. I was editing the movie and I was (.)
 8 crippled up (.) you
 9 know I was °hh it was (.) the (.) uh really the point
 10 in which (.) my existence was (.) like under the (.)
 11 strongest (.)
 12 uh atomic bomb uh- i- if if (.)
 13 if (.) I will (.) see atomic bomb destroying the- the the
 14 earth °hh I would say (.) even (.)
 15 that it happened to me (.)
 16 °hh my father and mother who were in Hertsegnovy?
 17 and I was (.) openly: (.) like uh dying
 18 because the war started I was °hh twenty-four hours
 19 on the phone, (.) trying to connect to do: (.)
 20 and I'm very proud because when the war- uh-n-
 21 little bit (.) uh th-th- one detail when the war started,
 22 (1.0)
 23 I was calling the general who was (.)
 24 keeping Sarajevo trying to do (.) something (.)
 25 that (.) they do in (x) and other places together now.
 26 to- to do the (.) uh military:
 27 and the police that was (.) mixed in between (.)
 28 muslim serbs and croats.
 29 because I've heard about this formula.
 30 °hh but everything failed (.)
 31 because it was not in the hands of any individual. (.)
 32 it was °hh mostly in the hands of d-
 33 o:f of the dogs of the war.

The IR asks about the IE's past experiences (lines 1–3). The question about past reactions (*how did you (.) react yourself (.) when you first uh heard about (.) the war...*) invokes first-hand knowledge. Reactions can include feelings, emotions, or actions. All of these are something that the person who has experienced the feelings or emotions or taken the actions has first-hand knowledge of. The invoking of first-hand knowledge is further strengthened by the reflexive pronoun *yourself* in the question. After the IE

starts to answer the question (lines 4–5) the IR interrupts the answer and asks another question (*you were (.) where (.) at that time*, line 6) This question is treated as a side-sequence and answered briefly by the IE before moving on to continue the previous answer. In his answer the IE answers from the position that is built for him in the question and tells about his feelings (*crippled up* in line 8, *like dying* in line 17) and also the actions that he took (*I was twenty-four hours on the phone*, lines 18–19 and *I was calling the general*, line 23).

Example (1) shows a typical and unproblematic question-answer sequence in a celebrity interview: the IR asks a question that invokes first-hand knowledge and the IE designs his answer to accommodate the type of knowledge that is attributed to him. In the examples that are the focus of my analysis I will examine question-answer sequences that are somehow problematic and in which the IR agenda is shifted. These sequences, although not very frequent, are still recurrent and an interesting part of constructing a celebrity interview and negotiating the limits of questioning in a celebrity interview.

5. Invoking first-hand knowledge

The IRs can formulate their questioning turns so that specific knowledge positions are built as relevant for the answers. In the following I am going to introduce different practices of invoking first-hand knowledge in the questions: 1) directing topic to matters that the IE has personally experienced or otherwise has first-hand access to and 2) explicitly voicing the ‘personal’ viewpoint that is called for.

5.1 Directing topic to matters to which the IE has first-hand access

There seem to be specific ways to invoke first-hand knowledge in a questioning turn. One of these, and perhaps the most obvious, is to select the topic so that it deals with matters that the interviewee has first-hand access to. This could mean things the IE has personally experienced or witnessed in the past or knowledge that the IEs, because of their membership in a certain category, have entitlement to. In example (2) the host invokes knowledge based on personal experience by her question about the guest’s father (*was your father a patriarch of the family?*, lines 12–13).

(2)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

EK = IE, Emir Kusturica

- 12 MT =°hh but by the way, was your (.) father
 13 a patriarch of the family.
 14 (.)
 15 EK somehow yes.
 16 (.)
 17 MT in which way.
 18 EK °hh >but< you know, patriarchs here are very much (.)
 19 u:h uh like uh uh th- they are-
 20 it's not like (on) the west you know if you are father
 21 in the family:,
 22 MT mm-h
 23 EK you have to deser::ve to be liked (.) to be loved
 24 by your family members ↑here (.) you are very u:h
 25 (.) comfortable with uh you know if you are father.
 26 °hh you want- it- it's understandable that everybody
 27 has to like you even if you don't do all the time
 28 the best things for the family.
 29 which is u:h (.) pattern of: uh of a life here.
 30 so, °hh- my father was a patriarch and uh (.)
 31 somehow he was u:h (.) I would say that (.) u:h uh uh
 32 (.) remembering now, certainly I'm (.) over forty now
 33 and I- °hh when I remember him and everything
 34 that was going on it- it is uh °hh (.) uh uh
 35 already memory: and a memory always has
 36 (.) uh certain em:otion and certain sentiments
 37 involving to this.

The question that invokes first-hand knowledge about the IE's father (lines 12–13) is produced in the form of a “yes/no” question, which projects a certain, limited, answer type including an affirmation or a negation. The IE's answer (line 15) is very short and produced after a pause. Clayman and Heritage (2002: 113) have found that interviewees tend to offer such brief responses when faced with questions that they object to. Delaying the answer with a pause can also be seen as an indicator of disalignment with (some aspect of) the question. In this example we can see different ways in which the interviewee treats the question as somehow inappropriate: first, the answer is delayed, then the IE disaligns with the question and does not provide the answer type (affirmation or negation) that is projected by the question as such but instead answers *somehow yes*, which implies that the question cannot be answered simply by affirming or negating, but requires more. Although the question is treated as somehow inappropriate, the answer still accommodates both sides by including in it the projected

answer type (even if it is not produced in the pure form of either an affirmation or a negation) and thus the risk of threatening the IR's face is reduced.

In many environments a brief answer to a "yes/no" question is appropriate. However, in television interviews, and especially in this television interview genre, a closed question followed by a brief answer does not adhere to the institutional norm. Short answers can make the interaction seem halting and disrupted, which would not support the institutional aim of producing entertaining or informative interaction for the viewers to watch. In general, questions in celebrity interviews elicit talk about the IEs themselves and introduce the IEs to the television audience and "yes/no" questions have the same function. After a micropause (line 16), which would still be an opportunity for the IE to go on with his answer, the interviewer continues with a follow-up question (*in which way*, line 17) that invites the IE to explicate how his father was a patriarch.

In this example the IE does not treat the question (lines 12–13) entirely appropriately in its context (a celebrity interview) because he provides a very brief answer. Thus a follow-up question (line 17) needs to be added. In most cases in my data after the type of question that 12–13 represents, the IE produces an elaborated answer that contains the affirmation or negation followed by additional talk on the topic. Clayman and Heritage (2002: 245) have called this type of answering "minimal answer plus elaboration". In this answer type the orientation to the institutional requirements of the interaction are clearly oriented to. As example (2) shows, if the institutional demands are not met, the IR orients to those demands by adding a follow-up question.

In example (2) the IE does mobilize first-hand knowledge and a "minimal answer plus elaboration"-type of answer later, starting in line 30 (*my father was a patriarch and uh (.) somehow he was u:h (.) I would say that (.) u:h uh uh (.) remembering now,...*) but does this only after displaying general knowledge about the topic (lines 18–29). The IE's answer is designed in a way that enables him to deal with the problematic aspects of the question first, before displaying first-hand knowledge.

In example (3) the participants have been talking about the fact that the IE has suffered from anorexia nervosa as a teenager. The IE has talked about developing anorexia and the feelings that he had at that time (lines 1–4). After this the IR asks a question about the reasons for developing the eating disorder (lines 5–6). The IR smiles while asking the question and the IE answers the question also smilingly. The next question (lines 11–12)

contrasts the mood set by the previous question and returns the talk back to serious mode. This can be seen both in the verbal elements of the question (contrasting the question with the previous talk with *but* and the follow-up *it was actually very serious at some moment*) and the change in the IR's facial expression (she stops smiling at this point). In this turn (lines 11–12), which is then continued further (line 14) the IR invokes first-hand knowledge and the IE starts displaying general knowledge in his answer (line 15 onward).

(3)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

SK = IE, Stephen Kuusisto

- 1 SK I felt very very (.) sa:d about who I was you know
 2 I didn't fit in anywhere I (.) I felt ugly
 3 I felt that I didn't belong in the world you know (.)
 4 and I stopped eating. I became ↑very depressed u:h
 5 MT did you start admiring (.) John Lennon,
 6 [his] skeletal [figure]

 7 SK [yeah] [well] yeah I wanted to look (x)-

 8 SK I wanted to look like all those <rock boys>

 9 who were really skinny. you know (.) that's how

 10 it started.
 → 11 MT but it was actually very serious at some moment (.)
 → 12 so you were um:: brought into hospital
 13 SK °yeah.°
 → 14 MT [it was only] hundred and five po[unds]
 15 SK [u:hm] [u:h] we- we know
 16 SK from psychological studies that the <only way> (.)
 17 you can (0.6) uh (.) avoid (.) self-destructive tendencies (.)
 18 is to: have a belief that life is possible,
 19 that it's worth living, that there's meaning ahead (.)
 20 u:h (.) you know (.) anorexic teenagers
 21 the ones who stop eating (.) in fact believe (.)
 22 that (.) the future will be terrible.
 23 you know (.) anorexia is a disease of (.) psychological
 24 dimensions >right< you don't wanna become an adult.
 25 because you think (.) boy that will be worse (.)
 26 it's bad now it'll be worse at the next age (.)
 27 >you know< I'm getting off the train right here (.)
 28 you know I'm gonna stop (.) right here I'm not going on.
 29 u:hm I think that's what was going on with me,
 30 I really felt £oh my god£ you know I mean
 31 .hh I've been (.) beaten up on the playgrounds
 32 I've been called a martian, (.)
 33 u:h they've (.) you know made me feel (.)

34 u:h you know small and and u:h (.)
 35 treated me to cruelties and uh I don't fit in,
 36 I don't belong,

The IR's question (*but it was actually very serious at some moment (.) so you were um:: brought into hospital [...] it was only hundred and five pounds*) does not have interrogative syntax, but it is a question in the form of a declarative. Declaratives about issues which the IE has particular knowledge about have been called "b-event questions" (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 102, also Pomerantz 1980). They function as questions that require confirmation from the IE. They are often constructed in the "you + progressive/imperfective verb"-format (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 102). In this example one element of the question (*so you were um:: brought into hospital*) is produced in this format.

The question (lines 11–12 and line 14) continues to invoke first-hand knowledge, just like the previous question, but now returning back to serious mode. The question deals with an issue that the IE has first-hand access to because of his personal experience. In the question the IR displays knowledge about things that have happened to the IE, but the IE has stronger rights to this knowledge. The IE orients to the IR's turn, produced in the form of a declarative, as a question. Instead of displaying first-hand knowledge he starts to answer the question by displaying general knowledge.

There are different linguistic and interactional resources the IR can use in invoking first-hand knowledge. Often this is done through directing the topic to matters that deal with the IE's personal history or past conduct or events that the IE has witnessed. When the IR asks such a question, it is often asked using the past tense. This is in line with the topical content of the questions. When asking a question about matters that somebody has experienced or witnessed in the past, the past tense is naturally a logical tense to use, as the following examples will illustrate.

(4)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 EK = IE, Emir Kusturica

→ 12 MT =°hh but by the way, was your (.) father
 13 a patriarch of the family.

(5)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 EK = IE, Stephen Kuusisto

→ 11 MT but it was actually very serious at some moment (.)
 12 so you were um:: brought into hospital
 13 SK °yeah.°
 14 MT [it was only] hundred and five po[unds]
 15 SK [u:hm] [u:h] we- we know

(6)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 HB = IE, Harry Belafonte

→ 1 MT and when did you have your first personal experience
 2 with (.) racism.

While past conduct, past experiences and events that the IE has witnessed form one basis for first-hand knowledge, as has been the case in the previous examples, another basis for first-hand knowledge is subjectivity and people's primary access to their current thoughts, opinions, feelings etc.

5.2 Explicitly voicing the “personal”

Besides directing the topic to personal matters and asking questions about personal history or past experiences, invoking first-hand knowledge can be done by explicitly voicing the “personal” point of view that is sought for. This is done both in questions on topics where the IE's epistemic authority is based on personal experiences in the past and in questions about the IE's current mental processes (i.e. thoughts, opinions) where the ownership of mental processes is the basis of epistemic authority. An environment where this type of action seems to occur is in questions that include a shift in topic. IRs voice the “personal” aspect especially when shifting the topic from a more general level to the same topic matter, but now including a personal perspective. Voicing the “personal” in the question imposes quite strong constraints on the way the question is appropriately answered.

(7)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 HB = IE, Harry Belafonte

1 HB much that is wrong with America today, .hh within
 2 the black community.
 3 °hh can be directly related to the fact that u:h (.)
 4 °hh the elite of that community (.)
 5 has left to go live elsewhere
 6 °hh and those who cannot afford to leave, are trapped.
 7 MT °mm°=
 8 HB =and they have no (.) icons they have no (.) role models
 9 °hh when I was a boy u:h all the (.) great minds (.)
 10 lived right next door.
 11 MT m[m]
 12 HB [now] you- they live (.) very far away.
 → 13 MT and when did you have your first personal experience
 14 with (.) racism.
 15 HB when you live within (.) the segregated society (.)
 16 or in a segregated community
 17 experience with race within the black community
 18 is quite minimum

In example (7) the topic prior to the IR's question in line 13 has dealt with racism in the United States. When the IR asks the question about the IE's personal experiences with racism the topic is shifted from a general to personal level.

In example (8) a video insert precedes the IR's question about the meaning of love (lines 1–3). In the video insert (taken from one of Woody Allen's movies), a monologue about the definition and psychological explanations of love is shown. After the video insert the IR shifts the topic so that it now includes a personal perspective. The background statement (line 1) which precedes the question is still quite general, but as the question emerges, the focus moves more and more to the personal level.

(8)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 WA = IE, Woody Allen

1 MT love is very important in your films.
 → 2 what is the meaning of love (.) for you in your-
 → 3 °hh uh in your movies, and in your (.) own life=
 4 WA =well. It- it's too big a question to ask-
 5 [to answer] so °hh u::h uh uh succinctly at all
 6 MT [°((laughs))°]
 7 WA °hh y-you know but the- the- the human interaction
 8 °hh u:m th- between (.) a man and a woman,
 9 between ((coughs)) a mother and a child,
 10 or °hh brother and sister, brother and brother,

What all of the above questions have in common is that they invoke first-hand knowledge. In example (2) *was your father a patriarch of the family* invokes first-hand knowledge that is gained through living in the family. The IE is expected to talk about the characteristics of his father that are based on his own experiences with him. In example (3) *but it was actually very serious at some moment...* the first-hand knowledge is based on the IE's past experiences. In example (7) the first-hand nature of the knowledge that is invoked is emphasized through including the "personal" or first-hand aspect explicitly in the question (*your...personal experience*). Similarly, in example (8) the IR makes first-hand knowledge relevant through the explicit mention of *your own life* (line 3).

Now that I have examined the IR's questions and seen how first-hand knowledge is invoked by 1) selecting the topic so that it is about things that the IE has personally experienced or has first-hand access to or 2) explicitly voicing the 'personal' aspect, I can take a look at how the IEs handle these questions.

6. Resisting IR agenda: Displaying general knowledge in the answer

Usually in celebrity interviews when first-hand knowledge is invoked in the questioning turns the IEs answer in a way that accommodates the type of knowledge attributed to them. However, they can design their answers in other ways as well. In this section I will analyze instances where the IEs display general knowledge in their answers. In some cases, if the question is treated as somehow problematic (e.g. too intimate, somehow 'loaded' or containing an incorrect presupposition), the IEs can first orient to the problematic aspect of the IR's question and after doing this answer the question on a more general level. In the following I will first show how the IEs can orient to the question (or some part of it) as problematic, then I will analyze how the IEs mobilize a different knowledge type and display general knowledge in their answer.

6.1 Orienting to (some aspect of) the question as problematic

One of the resources the IEs use in resisting the IR agenda is orienting to that aspect of the question which is somehow problematic by using contrasts to mark the difference in knowledge types in questions and

answers. In (9), instead of following the line of the IR's questioning and talking about his personal experiences, the IE offers a general rule about fathers (and patriarchs) in his native country. When he does this, he marks the contrast between the question and the answer he is about to provide by saying *but you know*.

(9)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

EK = IE, Emir Kusturica

- 12 MT =°hh but by the way, was your (.) father
 13 a patriarch of the family.
 14 (.)
 15 EK somehow yes.
 16 (.)
 17 MT in which way.
 → 18 EK °hh >but< you know, patriarchs here are very much (.)
 19 u:h uh like uh uh th- they are-
 20 it's not like (on) the west you know if you are father
 21 in the family:,
 22 MT mm-h

The *but* in line 18 does not mark a contrast with the topical content of the other person's talk. As a matter of fact the utterance that is being contrasted (*in which way*, line 17) does not have a topical content in itself, but rather invites the IE to elaborate on the topic in his answer. So in this example *but* marks a contrast with the activity that is done in the previous utterance, which is asking the IE to specify how his father was a patriarch. The IE does not do this, but singles out the word 'patriarch' as something that needs to be dealt with before answering the question. *But* contrasts with the follow-up question in a manner that enables the IE to continue his own answering turn. The contrast also marks resistance to the invitation to talk about personal experiences and a shift to an alternative teller role.

After the contrastive "but" the IE produces the word *patriarchs* in first position. He resists implications that the term *patriarch* carries and shows that specific cultural knowledge is needed to answer the question in an appropriate way. The IE also makes visible a contrast between the west (where the IR is from) and the IE's home country (line 20). At the same time he displays knowledge about how things are in the "west". Thus he places himself in a position where he has enough knowledge about two different cultures to contrast them. The word *here* ties the talk to a specified body of knowledge – that of things about the IE's culture. The use of spatial adjuncts seems to be one way to contrast the question and the

answer and make relevant the different bodies of knowledge that the participants have.

The contrast between the question and the answer can be voiced explicitly, as is done in example (10). After the IR's question (lines 1–3) the IE does not produce an answer, but first makes a complaint about the question not being reasonable (*it's too big a question to ask*-). He follows this complaint by stating the implications that such a question has in this context (*...to answer so °hh u::h uh uh succinctly at all...*). However, after making the complaint he moves on to answering the question and starts his answer with the contrasting *but* (line 7) and then answers in a way that displays general knowledge.

(10)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

WA = IE, Woody Allen

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| 1 | MT | love is very important in your films. |
| 2 | | what is the meaning of love (.) for you in your- |
| 3 | | °hh uh in your movies, and in your (.) own life= |
| → 4 | WA | =well. It- it's too big a question to ask- |
| → 5 | | [to answer] so °hh u::h uh uh succinctly at all |
| 6 | MT | [°((laughs))°] |
| → 7 | WA | °hh y-you know but the- the- the human interaction |
| 8 | | °hh u:m th- between (.) a man and a woman, |

Contrasts are sometimes used to mark the difference in knowledge types in questions and answers, but this is not always the case. Some of the examples in the following will show that it is possible to start displaying general knowledge in the answer without first explicitly orienting to the question as somehow problematic.

6.2 Displaying general knowledge

The differences of knowledge types in the question and in the answer can be seen in the lexical choices that the participants make. In example (11) the IE shifts away from a proposed participation role of teller of first-hand knowledge and starts to display more general knowledge. Like in the examples above the IE mobilizes a different type of knowledge than is asked for and, from line 5 onwards, does not talk about his personal experiences, but instead shifts to an “expert” role and displays general knowledge. The IE constructs expert knowledge through lexical choices,

using vocabulary from the fields of psychology (*self-destructive tendencies*, line 7) and medicine (*a disease of psychological dimensions*, lines 13–14).

(11)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

SK = IE, Stephen Kuusisto

- 1 MT but it was actually very serious at some moment (.)
 2 so you were um:: brought into hospital
 3 SK °yeah.°
 4 MT [it was only] hundred and five po[unds]
 → 5 SK [u:hm] [u:h]we-we know from
 6 SK psychological studies that the <only way> (.) you can
 7 (0.6) uh (.) avoid (.) self-destructive tendencies (.)
 8 is to: have a belief that life is possible,
 9 that it's worth living, that there's meaning ahead (.)
 10 u:h (.) you know (.) anorexic teenagers
 11 the ones who stop eating (.) in fact believe (.)
 12 that (.) the future will be terrible.
 13 you know (.) anorexia is a disease of (.)psychological
 14 dimensions >right< you don't wanna become an adult.
 15 because you think (.) boy that will be worse (.)
 16 it's bad now it'll be worse at the next age (.)
 17 >you know< I'm getting off the train right here (.)
 18 you know I'm gonna stop (.)right here I'm not going on.
 19 u:hm I think that's what was going on with me,

Instead of telling his personal experiences about being brought into the hospital, the IE displays general knowledge about anorexia. The topical agenda remains the same, but a different type of knowledge is mobilized. The use of generic *we* (*we know from psychological studies...*, lines 6–7) implies that the knowledge the IE has is generalizable expert knowledge. Later on in the answer he does mobilize first-hand knowledge (*I think that's what was going on with me*, line 19), but by constructing his answer as he does, the first-hand knowledge that is displayed later on in his answer is framed by general knowledge. This way he is able to demonstrate expertise that includes, but goes beyond, first-hand knowledge.

In (12) it can be seen how the IR emphasizes the “personal” aspect of the question, and the IE can still choose to answer in a different framework of knowledge. Here the IE shifts away from the role of a teller of first-hand knowledge and adopts the role of a teller of ‘expert’ knowledge. He produces an answer that offers a fact, using general, abstract words (*segregated, society, community*), and is designed to be impersonal (*when you live..., experience...is quite minimum*).

(12)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

HB = IE, Harry Belafonte

- 1 MT and when did you have your first personal experience
 2 with (.) racism.
 → 3 HB when you live within (.) the segregated society (.)
 4 or in a segregated community
 5 experience with race within the black community
 6 is quite minimum.
 7 (.)
 8 HB (xxx) the restaurants are black, the schools are black, (.)
 9 the minute you step outside that society
 10 you will have your first experience with race.

By answering the question from a general point of view the IE shows how the presupposition that is included in the question (that the IE has had personal experiences with racism as a child) is not entirely appropriate. When he answers the question from a more general framework of knowledge the IE manages to correct the presupposition and let the IR and the television audience know that because the races were segregated, experiences with racism were not that common in everyday life, but something that were encountered only when going outside your own community. By subtly shifting to a different knowledge type the IE can answer the question (as he is supposed to do in an interview), not overtly disagree with the question, and still manage to point out what is ‘wrong’ in the question.

In (13) the IE answers in such a way that displays general knowledge. A question about Woody Allen’s personal love life soon after his marriage to his ex-wife’s adopted daughter is a ‘loaded’ question and understandably one that might be resisted.

(13)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

WA = IE, Woody Allen

- 1 MT love is very important in your films.
 → 2 what is the meaning of love (.) for you in your-
 → 3 °hh uh in your movies, and in your (.) own life=
 → 4 WA =well. It- it’s too big a question to ask-
 5 [to answer] so °hh u::h uh uh succinctly at all
 6 MT [°((laughs))°]
 7 WA °hh y-you know but the- the- the human interaction
 8 °hh u:m th- between (.) a man and a woman,
 9 between ((coughs)) a mother and a chi:ld,
 10 or °hh brother and sister, brother and brother,
 11 °hh u:m (.) you know, (.) is is o-one of the ways
 12 that we have and (.) maybe our most effective way

13 °hh of (.) dealing with a very: (.) uh cold (.)
 14 unforgiving (.) uh implacable: universe.
 15 and uh (.) people (.) get a lot of comfort
 16 ((swallows)) from their love relationships
 17 °hh and so (.) uh they have many needs (.)
 18 and it's very complicated but
 19 °hh it- uh >you know< it's very very comforting
 20 and makes life (.) a tiny bit more bearable.

The IE's answer is not based on first-hand knowledge, but consists of generalizations such as *human interaction (.) is one of the ways that we have...*, and *people get a lot of comfort*. These types of generalizations claim knowledge of the "facts" that are stated. This is an example of what in courtrooms would not be acceptable talk from a lay witness, only from an expert witness (see Matoesian 1999). Making abstractions and generalizations requires knowledge that is organized and specialized and it is thus not seen as knowledge that a lay person would have. By displaying general knowledge instead of first-hand knowledge the IE manages to answer a 'loaded' question in a manner that does not seem evasive.

The answer follows the topical agenda set by the IR, but is designed to be very impersonal. This is achieved through the use of generic "man", and "woman" (line 8), and then moving on to categories such as "mother" and "child" (line 9) that make it explicit that the IE is not speaking about personal experiences, but his talk is to be understood on a more general level. The IE continues to use impersonal expressions throughout his answer and uses terms like "people", "we" and "they". Similar use of generic and impersonal expressions is employed in examples (11) and (12).

In the examples that we have looked at the IE displays general knowledge by approaching the topic from a general level of knowledge. Besides lexical choices one way of moving to a more general framework of knowledge is the use of the present tense. In the following examples the use of the present tense is particularly visible, since it differs from the tense used in the IR's questions. The interviewer invokes first-hand knowledge and uses the past tense. In their answers the interviewees do not start telling about their experiences in the past, but instead shift to a more general framework of knowledge and accomplish this partly through the use of the present tense.

(14)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula

EK = IE, Emir Kusturica

12 MT =°hh but by the way, was your (.) father
 13 a patriarch of the family.
 14 (.)
 15 EK somehow yes.
 16 (.)
 17 MT in which way.
 → 18 EK °hh >but< you know, patriarchs here are very much (.)
 19 u:h uh like uh uh th- they are-

(15)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 HB = IE, Harry Belafonte

1 MT and when did you have your first personal experience
 2 with (.) racism.
 → 3 HB when you live within (.) the segregated society (.)
 4 or in a segregated community
 5 experience with race within the black community
 6 is quite minimum

(16)

MT = IR, Maarit Tastula
 SK = IE, Stephen Kuusisto

4 MT [it was only] hundred and five po[unds]
 → 5 SK [u:hm] [u:h] we- we know
 6 SK from psychological studies that the <only way> (.)
 7 you can (0.6) uh (.) avoid (.) self-destructive tendencies (.)
 8 is to: have a belief that life is possible,
 9 that it's worth living, that there's meaning ahead (.)
 10 u:h (.) you know (.) anorexic teenagers
 11 the ones who stop eating (.) in fact believe (.)
 12 that (.) the future will be terrible.

By selecting the present tense in their answers the IEs manage to shift the focus of talk from lived personal experiences to things that are generalizable. The IEs can talk about generalizable things as matters of fact and as something they have "expert" knowledge of. A similar practice of claiming greater certainty of knowledge in a response to a question that solicits the IE's personal view has been identified in American news interviews (see Roth 2002: 372).³

Matoesian (1999: 491) has found that lay witnesses can testify only to facts that they have first-hand knowledge of, while expert witnesses can

³ This shows how participants who are using English as an international language in television interviews employ similar practices to those used by native speakers in television interviews.

give opinions and explanations about facts on a more general level, based on their training, qualifications, skill, experience and knowledge. The link between first-hand knowledge and lay participants is also presented by Hutchby (2001a), who shows how 'lay' participants legitimate their opinions through claiming first-hand knowledge.

7. Conclusion

In the data I have analysed the interviewees can invoke first-hand knowledge through topic-selection or explicit voicing of the 'personal' viewpoint in the question. In their answers there are several resources the interviewees can use to resist the agenda in the IR's questions and to mobilize a more general body of knowledge.

The IEs can explicitly orient to the aspect of the questions that is in their eyes somehow inappropriate. To do this they use contrasts to mark the shift to a different type of knowledge. The contrastive devices used are the contrastive "but", and other lexical elements that contrast with the previous talk (e.g. the spatial adjunct "here"). After showing the problematic aspect of the question they then change the topical content of the talk to a more general level.

The IEs can also start answering the question from a more general framework of knowledge without producing contrasts or explicitly orienting to the previous question as problematic. When displaying general knowledge, the lexical choices that the IEs make in their answer are in line with the more general topic. The IEs can also use a shift to the present tense to mark the mobilization of general knowledge. In some cases the IR has used the past tense, which is the logical tense to use when asking somebody about things that they have experienced, but in his answer the interviewee uses the present tense, which is typically used when describing general facts/state of affairs.

What functions might mobilizing different types of knowledge serve in television interviews? The first of the functions here involves the management of the intimacy-level of the topics. In these types of television programs the invoking of first-hand knowledge might be an attempt by the interviewer to make the interaction seem more intimate and to reveal aspects of the interviewees' private personae to the television viewers. The IEs clearly recognize (and demonstrate their understanding of) the IR's attempt to invoke first-hand knowledge. The use of the contrasting devices is an indication of this. However, in answering the questions the IEs do

something different instead. The interviewees' resistance to take on the role of a teller of first-hand knowledge while mobilizing a different type of knowledge serves to avoid topics that are too intimate, or topics in which some presupposition needs to be dealt with before answering, and to shift the topic away from a personal to a more general level. The resistance is done very subtly. Many elements of the topical agenda set by the interviewer remain the same – only a different type of knowledge is mobilized. This enables the interviewees to manage a shift in the agenda in a way that is not made accountable (e.g. the IR does not repeat the question) and also the IEs manage to avoid seeming evasive to the television viewers.

The second function of this type of action is the construction of 'expert' knowledge. The IEs present themselves as experts of some field, as people who have a specified body of knowledge that is not based only on first-hand knowledge. Mobilizing a more general type of knowledge is a resource to display 'expert' knowledge of a specified field.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

underlined talk	emphasis
CAPITALS	increased volume
°high circles°	decreased volume
ta::lk	prolongation of the preceding sound
tal-	cut-off word
°hhh	inbreath
hh	outbreath
(.)	a micropause of less than 0.4 seconds
(0.8)	a pause, timed in tenths of a second
ta[lk]	
[tal]king	overlapping utterances
talk=	
=talk	latching utterances
(talk)	uncertain transcription
(x)	unintelligible item, probably one word only
(xx)	unintelligible items, approximately of phrase length
(xxx)	unintelligible items, beyond phrase length
,	continuing intonation
.	falling intonation
?	rising intonation

↑	high pitch
>fast<	fast speech
<slow>	slow speech
£	altered tone of voice, e.g. when quoting somebody
ta(h)lk	breathiness, e.g. in laughter

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