



Adversarial Challenges and Responses in Greek Political Interviews: A Case Study

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Abstract

Previous research on media discourse in Greek television has indicated that informal conversation features in the conversational practices of hosts in TV (panel) discussion programmes and prime time news discourse either echo the attested conversationalization of the genre (Patrona 2006, 2009) or create an atmosphere of solidarity (Tzanne 2001). This article provides a data-driven analysis of adversarial challenges and responses to them in a different genre - the Greek political news interview. Within this political interview, the journalist tends to challenge the interviewee by: 1) predicting the interviewee's answer and immediately after finishing his question explicitly asking him not to answer along specific lines, 2) explicitly stating that the interviewee either repeats himself when answering or has given an evasive answer, 3) using colloquial language, jokes and layman's words as the outside source (footing), 4) presenting contrasting opinions as a 'matter of personal disagreement.' In turn, the interviewee responds by: 1) issuing direct attacks on the interviewer as a professional, 2) issuing indirect attacks on the interviewer as a person, 3) using questions to answer a question. It is argued that, within the context of this Greek political news interview, co-participants (re)shape the ever-changing confrontational institutional norm of the political news interview, co-constructing a new form of neutralism.

Key words: adversarial challenges, responses, Greek context, neutralism, political news interview, conversation analysis

1. Introduction

Previous research on the political news interview in the Anglo-Saxon context, by means of a detailed examination of the nature of the interviews themselves and of turn-by-turn analysis, has mainly focused on the following two aspects: the requirement for journalists to maintain a neutralistic stance (Clayman 1992; Greatbatch 1998; Clayman and Heritage 2002), which is considered the norm and the expected journalistic behaviour, or the various legitimate ways journalists may employ to challenge the interviewee (Rendle-Short 2007; Heritage 2002; Emmertsen 2007; Clayman 2002). Rendle-Short (2007), within the Australian context, has also discussed ways in which interviewees respond to such challenges, claiming that this is an alternative way to examine whether a journalist's turn has been perceived as conflictual or neutralistic by the interviewee. Leon (2004) has discussed preference and bias in the format of French news interviews and demonstrated the manner in which interviewees answer biased questions to avoid disagreement. Bull (2000,

2008) and Gnisci and Bonaiuto (2003), among others, used theories of equivocation (Bavelas et al 1990; Bull et al 1996) to account for political equivocation in situations presenting a communicative conflict, in Bull's (2008) terms, where face management played a key role. Lastly, in the Greek context, research has been carried out analyzing discussion panel television programmes and prime time news. The focus has been either on the functions of presenter-initiated simultaneous speech (Tzanne 2001), the conversational practices of the hosts of Greek television discussion programmes vis-à-vis experts (Patrona 2006), or the shift in nature of prime time TV news discourse and the role of journalistic discourse in it (Patrona 2009). As the aforementioned researchers have approached their data from different perspectives, Tzanne from a politeness theory perspective, Patrona from a conversation analytic-sociolinguistic perspective, their findings are slightly contradictory though extremely enlightening. For Tzanne (2001), instances of overlapping speech, simultaneous talk on the presenters' part relate to the creation of an atmosphere of solidarity and familiarity in the encounter. Patrona (2006, 2009) on the other hand, regards informal conversation features in the hosts' discourse, indicating overt alignment or opposition with guests, as manifestation of the conversationalization of media discourse, in Fairclough's (1998) terms. Moreover, in the context of prime-time TV news discourse, she notes that journalists, by directly challenging politicians and government spokespersons, explicitly encoding their personal attitudes at the same time, position the latter as defendants in a courtroom hearing and transform the news genre into an interrogation. What both the above researchers have not examined though, is the perception of those practices by the other participant of those interactional discourses. As Rendle-Short (2007) suggests, apart from measuring the level of journalistic adversarialness, and, by implication, its significance, by means of examining question design, another way of assessing it, is to examine the 'second turn', namely the way participants themselves respond to those challenges and whether they regard them as challenges or not. Using the framework of conversation analysis, this article examines the nature of adversarial challenges and the responses to them, in a one on one Greek political news interview, in light of existing research.

2. Background

2.1 Neutralism, Credibility, Legitimacy in Question Design

As Greatbatch (1998) and Clayman and Heritage (2002) claim, news interviewers, as members of the journalistic profession, are expected to adhere to basic standards of professional conduct, the most important one being objectivity. Objectivity though is not as straightforward a concept as it may seem, and journalists may have to keep the balance between promoting ideological equilibrium and neutrality. One way of reconciling diverse and conflicting aspects of objectivity is provided by the structure of the news interview itself and, more specifically, the turn-taking system of the news interview. Clayman and Heritage (2002) highlight various means by which interviewers ensure that objectivity is maintained, the most straightforward one being a shift in the speaker's interactional footing. This is achieved by

attributing the point of view expressed to a third party, that being a group or category of persons, a generic and anonymous collectivity, or it may be evoked without being actually named, by means of using an attributive verb in the passive voice with the agent deleted. Validity and credibility can be enhanced by the range and number of experts believing or endorsing the position expressed. Another form of footing often employed by interviewers is that of presenting themselves as speaking on behalf of the general public. As Clayman and Heritage (2002) and Clayman (2002) suggest, the main benefit for the interviewer when s/he makes references to the general public is not credibility so much as legitimacy. In the case of interviewee's charges of bias and other attacks on their professionalism, journalists defend themselves by appealing to interview discursive practices, their role as questioners, and the 'right of the people to know'.

According to the Greek Journalists' code of Ethics, published on both POESY (Panhellenic Federation of Journalists' Unions) and ESIEA (Journalists' Union of the Athens Daily Newspapers) internet sites, journalists should:

Article 1. f. [...] publish or broadcast opposite opinions, without necessarily expecting an answer (reaction), that would put the journalist in a favourable position to the challenged party. [...] Article 2. b. [...] Only when it is necessary to inform the public, should a journalist tactfully and responsibly, use personal data pertaining to public figures that due to their powerful position are accountable to general public. [...]

Although, the above quoted extracts might seem quite vague with regard to specific journalistic behaviour, especially compared to the Anglo-Saxon one, they do set some parameters within which journalists are able to manoeuvre which are similar to the ones followed in the Anglo-Saxon world. More specifically, journalists are entitled to play the role of the 'devil's advocate' using solid proof, even if this involves releasing personal data, on condition that they do not intimidate the challenged person. Thus, it can be inferred that 'rules' governing journalistic behaviour are somehow universal, and Greek journalists should adhere to the practices described above.

2.2 Adversarial Questioning: Challenging the Interviewee

2.2.1 Hostile Questioning

Negative interrogatives are routinely treated as assertions more than as questions, and perceived by interviewees as stating an opinion, thus being hostile and breaking the interview conventions. Clayman and Heritage (2002), claim that another form of hostile questioning is accusatory questions, questions like, 'Why did you X' or 'How can you X', or 'How could you X.' They claim that the latter form is clearly confrontational as it questions past activities, implying the unanswerability of the question, thus validating it as an accusation. Alternative forms of hostile questions are 'disjunctive' questions which invite interviewees to select among alternatives that are all undesirable, and they cannot endorse. These are cases where an interviewer seeks to show that an interviewee's statements are self-contradictory, incorrect or incompatible with evidence. Rendle-Short (2007) has identified that, within the Australian context, journalists also tend to challenge

interviewees, by challenging the content of the prior talk (by using ‘but’ for example), by interrupting the prior talk, and by initially presenting their challenge as a freestanding assertion, not attributed to a third party.

2.3 Responses to Challenges

Since attributed assertions are often introduced in the spirit of devil’s advocacy, interviewees generally seek to refute them, but as Clayman (1992), Greatbatch (1998) and Clayman and Heritage (2002) point out, they do so in such a way so as not to challenge the interviewer’s naturalistic posture. They do it in three distinctive forms of response: firstly, by citing the same party as responsible for the previously expressed viewpoint; secondly, by simply referring to the disputed viewpoint without attributing it to anyone in particular either by means of using a general word such as ‘premise’, or by using the passive ‘if that is being said’; lastly, interviewees may simply present a contrasting argument without referring to the prior viewpoint in a direct way, but rather indirectly.

2.3.1 Doing ‘Answering’

As Clayman and Heritage (2002) note, one way of answering a question is to take a roundabout trajectory beginning with a unit of talk which does not itself answer the question, but it is part of a larger piece of talk that in its entirety can be seen as answering it. That kind of answer is vulnerable to being heard as evasive, however, and is subject to countermeasures from the interviewee. A more common way of answering is the minimal answer plus elaboration – beginning with a first unit of talk that minimally answers the question, followed by extended clarification-elaboration. Surface features of the remark’s design that indicate the relevance of the answer to the questions include: repetition of a key word or phrase in the answer and incorporating the entire framework of the question into the initial response, the use of back-referencing items, such as anaphoric pronouns (‘that’), linking to the prior turn or context-dependent verbs, or short sentences. Additionally, answers starting with ‘because’ after a wh-question serve that purpose.

2.3.2 Negative and Positive Dimensions of Resistance

Clayman and Heritage (2002) highlight various ways in which interviewees may not answer the question posed but resist it. In the strongest variation, the interviewee declines to provide any kind of information. In a less extreme form of negative resistance, the interviewee provides an answer that is partial or incomplete, when for instance s/he is asked a complex question with multiple components and answers only one part of the question. Another type of incomplete answer is a simple yes/no answer to a yes/no question that normally requires an elaborated answer. In this case the interviewers may perceive a simple answer as indicative of resistance and probe for further elaboration. The positive dimension of resistance:

[...] is manifest to the degree that an interviewee moves beyond the parameters of the question, saying and doing things that were not specifically called for, [...] the most dramatic involv(ing) a substantial change of topic. (Clayman and Heritage 2002: 254)

Alternatively, a response may be within the question's topical parameters but perform an action other than the one specifically requested, or responding in a way that alters the terms of the question even so slightly. Finally, responses that initially address the agenda of the question but subsequently move away, are regarded as affirmatively resistant in the sense that they change the dynamics of the course of the interview and constitute an effort to shift the agenda of the question. They also indicate a kind of power reversal regarding the 'legitimate' roles of the interviewer - interviewee as interviewers lose their role as agenda setters.

2.3.3 Overt/Covert Practices

Clayman and Heritage (2002) note that, once an interviewee has decided to sidestep a question in one way or another, s/he has to decide how to go about it. One way is to overtly resist a question by either displaying deference to the interviewer, by means of actually asking for permission to shift the agenda, or offering a token request for permission to shift the agenda, by using, for instance, minimizing characterizations indicating a minor digression from the framework of the question, and, by implication, a minor divergence from the interviewer's agenda. Finally, interviewees may take steps to explain and justify their efforts to divert the discussion. Overt resistance techniques are blunt denials to answer on grounds of unavailable information, time constraints, or on the basis that it would be inappropriate under the circumstances or as a matter of general policy.

Covert practices on the other hand, are mainly used in the context of positive resistance and/or talk that departs from the agenda of the question. They vary from practices that avoid any explicit acknowledgement of the fact that there is a shift in the agenda to practices that actively conceal the fact. The latter take the form of departures from the agenda by means of either subtle shifts in the verbal tense through which the talk is expressed, or answers beginning with 'because' that via the 'and' preface continuation, give the impression that the and-prefaced continuations are linked to the 'legitimate' because answer, even though they may introduce topic shifts and/or even attacks on the interviewer. Several practices of actually 'answering' a question, can be used subversively to camouflage resistance. Word repeats are exploited in this way, through a semantic shift in the meaning of the repeated word in the given answer. Anaphoric pronouns, by referring not to the immediately preceding question, but to, for instance, a prefatory comment, may also conceal agenda shifts. Alternatively, as Clayman and Heritage (2002) point out, before answering a given question, interviewees may first refer to, characterize, or paraphrase the question at hand, thus modifying the question in a way that both facilitates and conceals an agenda shift. In that way, interviewees adjust the question to fit their purposes that is to give the answer they want. Lastly, interviewees, apart from operating on the question as a whole, might operate on a component of it, either in the form of replacing a loaded word with a neutral one, thus resisting its presupposition, and/or not answering a part of the question.

Rendle-Short (2007) has further identified, within the Australian context that interviewees respond to adversarial challenges in three different ways. Through the content of the talk, by setting up a contrast between the

challenging nature of the interviewer's turn and what they wanted to say. This is achieved by means of the use of the personal pronoun 'I', stressing contrasting words, raised pitch and prefaced turns with the disjunctive 'but'. Or through the use of a first name address term in their response to an adversarial challenge. Alternatively, interviewees overtly orientate towards the adversarial line of questioning on procedural grounds, in the form of a specific comment regarding the interviewee's right to finish his/her response and not be interrupted, or producing no marked response at all.

3. Data and Method

The rationale behind selecting the particular interview was that it was conducted by a leading journalist famous for his adversarial style of interviewing (Yiannis Pretenteris) and the controversial role of the interviewee himself (Theodoros Rousopoulos) at the time of the interview. The interviewee, the former Secretariat General of Communication and Information and Government Spokesperson of the previous Greek Government and a former journalist himself, was forced to resign due to his alleged involvement in a financial scandal involving 'illegal' land transactions between an Orthodox Monastery (Vatopaidi Monastery) and the Greek State. Secondary accusations on the part of the (then) opposition were his large fortune, more specifically his 'collection of houses' during his ministerial term of office, and his wife's active involvement in media broadcasting and publishing. Accusations within his own party were of favouritism to specific newspaper publishers and of misinforming the Prime-Minister regarding current affairs. He resigned on October 23rd 2008 and the interview under analysis – the first after his resignation - was given almost a week later, on November 3rd 2008 to the aforementioned journalist, the host of a current affairs talk show with a focus on political issues, Anatropi (Reversal). This is a weekly show, broadcast on one of the most popular private Greek TV channels, for which both the former-Minister and his wife used to work. Most of the time, the show takes the form of a panel discussion current affairs talk show but occasionally, the show broadcasts one on one interviews with politicians, like the one under analysis. As Lauerbach (2007: 1394) claims, '(the genre of) one on one political interviews is characterised by an argumentative structure where politicians try to defend their standpoints against the interviewers who take the perspective of a critical audience' resulting in a more or less adversarial interview. The interviewer's (henceforth IR), agenda included questions on all the aforementioned issues in the order given. Following previous research on news interview analysis, the data has been analysed using conversation analysis (see Appendix). Challenging questions were considered the ones that had at least one of the characteristics mentioned in the relevant literature, and were regarded as challenging by the interviewee himself (henceforth IE), either by his explicitly saying so or by his resistance to answer.

4. Analysis

4.1 Adversarial Challenges

The majority of the questions asked during the interview were challenging in nature, exhibiting all of the characteristics, usually in combination, identified in the relevant literature. Within this political interview though, four patterns of novel adversarial challenges were identified. More specifically, the interviewer: 1) predicts the interviewee's answer and immediately after finishing his question explicitly asks him not to answer along specific lines, 2) explicitly states that the interviewee either repeats himself when answering or has given an evasive answer, 3) uses colloquial language, jokes and layman's words as the outside source (footing), 4) presents contrasting opinions as a 'matter of personal disagreement.' In the sections to follow, the most representative examples of these novel techniques will be presented and analysed.

4.1.1 Predictions

The interviewer challenges the interviewee by predicting that the latter will answer a question along specific lines, thus changing even so slightly the interview agenda, and explicitly telling him not to answer along those lines.

Extract 1

1. IR.: [...] Why do you believe that this 70% holds you
2. primarily accountable for Vatopaidi?=-
3. IE.: =e:::e, Mr Pretenteris,=
- 4.-> IR.: =and don't tell me it's because of PASOK again, because
5. long before the opposition had asked for a pre-interrogation
6. committee to be formed, those opinion polls were carried out.

This example exhibits an instance of the interviewer's abruptly interjecting-latching within the legitimate speaker's turn, in l.4, although it could be argued this is somehow legitimate as the previous speaker hesitates – indicated by the extended vowel in l.3 – but in the context of political interviews, this is not permissible. To make matters worse, this latching is extremely aggressive, as it is loaded by the use of 'and', 'again' thus strongly and clearly indicating that the interviewee has given an evasive answer before. Wh- questions invite broader answers and that seems to be the case here. The interviewer probably uses a wh-question to invite an admission on the part of the interviewee that the latter had some kind of responsibility for the scandal. The interviewee though, firmly resists that and accuses, initially, the opposition for the negative public opinion, and this time (extract not included) starts by blaming a specific TV channel and then talks, yet again, against the opposition.

4.1.2 Explicit Statements

The journalist uses explicit, bold, unmitigated statement(s) in his effort to refocus the interview on his agenda, explicitly accusing the interviewee of evasiveness, exposing him to the overhearing audience, thus performing a challenging move.

Extract 2

1. IE:[...]There was no connection to the State. On what grounds
2. then there is the charge and the accusation that a journalist
- 3.->cannot (.) [and I wonder Mr Pretenteris,]
- 4.->IR.: [once again though, once again though] you answer
5. another question and I haven't said that. [I said. I said.]

In this extract, after a micropause on the interviewee's part in l.3, there is an instance of overlapping speech where both speakers compete for the floor, which is finally yielded to the interviewer, to issue a direct accusation in l.4. This time his accusation to the interviewee of evading the question and changing the agenda is explicit and strengthened by repetition (once again though), indicating not only that this is a common practice of the interviewee but also that the latter has underestimated him. This is indicated by the use of 'though' after 'once again' to indicate not so much contrast, as annoyance for the repetition of the manoeuvre. A translation of the sentence could be: 'Once again, although I have pointed it out to you, you answer a different question to the one I have asked.' Thus, I believe that the repeated elliptical sentence is stronger in this context than the accusation itself.

4.1.3 Colloquial Language

The interviewer in his prefaced challenging questions uses colloquial language, jokes and layman's words as a means of footing. I argue that this is an alternative way of speaking on behalf of the people technique already identified in relevant research. By means of using colloquial language, jokes or quoting everyday people the journalist claims to speak on behalf of the people thus giving credibility and legitimacy to his adversarial challenges.

Extract 3

- 1.-> IR.: =Ok. Well (o.1) regarding this business (transactions) that have
- 2.-> been taking place for three years now > allow me to call it business
- 3.-> (transactions) because it is as it has turned out, you said it yourself
4. about the exchanges< when did you, find out about all that? (o.1)

In this extract, the interviewer uses the word 'business (transactions)' twice in lines 1&2 (arrowed), in its loan-colloquial form in Greek (μπίζνα/bizna) to

refer to the financial, property exchanges between the Monastery and the Greek state, in a seemingly freestanding assertion. The use of the loan word and not the Greek equivalent (επιχείρηση/epixeirisi), connotes a well organized and carefully planned entrepreneurial operation. This is evident in the journalist's prefaced statement in lines 2&3 (arrowed). Although delayed and probably better termed post-faced, uttered after the use of the loaded word, the prefaced statement is carefully worded by the use of 'allow me to call it X'. This is a polite way of asking permission to use a loaded word, presented as an answer to a self-asked question 'why I am using it' by means of the use of 'because' strengthened by double footing. The use of 'as it turned out' attributes the claim to an impersonal agent, presenting it as a fact, legitimatizing thus the use of the loaded word. The rest of the statement in l. 3 'you said it yourself about the exchanges' partly shifts footing to the interviewee himself by summarizing a previous statement he made. Although the interviewer accurately summarizes the interviewee's previous statement to preface his own, (l.3-4) in this context he regards 'exchanges' as a synonym of 'business' legitimatizing thus his use of the word but not reflecting on what the interviewee has said. Finally it should be noted, that the interviewer utters his prefaced or better post-faced statements, noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk, an indication that he is aware of the interview genre conventions and the fact that he uses them to serve his own purposes – foreground the challenge and background the footing. By doing this, the impression given is that he talks 'in the name of the people' with no attribution at all, while he is legitimately, although in the reverse order, operating according to standard conventions. Thus, by means of using a colloquial word in a statement that ends in a question, the interviewer indirectly challenges the interviewee to acknowledge the fact that the incident was a 'business (transaction)'. The interviewee does not respond to this challenge though, as he answers the 'when' and does not react to the use of the loaded word, a negative form of resistance (extract not included). The use of colloquial language gives legitimacy to the challenging question.

Extract 4

- 1.-> IR.:A second issue which in my opinion, not only mine but
2. -> several others' has caused you I think as a person great
3. -> damage, is the 'Rousopoulos' houses' case, >to put it in this
4. -> way.< e, I saw (.) recently the statement of, of, of Mr
- 5.-> Nasikas, Mr Nasikas if I'm not mistaken is a New Democracy
6. -> unionist, who says that (.) anyway his mother told him, 'oh
7. -> boy, this Theodoros (.) how many houses does he need to
- 8.-> have?' and Mr Nasikas' mother said that, 'what does he need
- 9.-> all those houses for' >was if I'm not mistaken the statement<. And
- 10.-> Ms Nasika, the mother, has said that, because there is the
11. -> impression, and not only an impression, it is also evident from your
12. -> tax statement, the three houses in three years.=

In this extract the interviewer uses the same technique, namely starting with a freestanding assertion, though mitigated in this case, followed by double footing: a statement, in colloquial language, attributed to a laywoman (l. 6-9) and a fact (l.11-12). More specifically, this long, multiple prefaced challenging statement, begins with an explicitly worded freestanding assertion 'in my opinion' (l.1), 'I think' (l.2), quickly followed though by a mitigated statement 'not only mine but several others', ending with the challenge 'has caused you [...] as a person great damage [...] Rousopoulos' houses'. This is followed by a mitigating expression 'to put it in this way' in l. 3-4 (arrowed). The interviewer then in l. 4-10 repeatedly names one of the 'various others' mentioned in l.2 thus legitimatizing his assertion. This long footing is embedded with a mitigation (l.9: 'if I'm not mistaken'), an implicit, mitigated challenge in l. 4-6 ('Mr Nasikas if I'm not mistaken is a New Democracy unionist') specifying the various others as members of the interviewee's party and, more specifically, one of their mothers. By using exactly her own colloquial wording 'oh boy', 'this Theodoros', 'what does he need all those houses for', he not only strengthens his challenging statement but also appeals to the public by using the words of a laywoman, a mother, expressing the feelings of the audience. This is strategically even further strengthened by yet another footing in l. 11-12 where this 'impression' expressed in the laywoman's words is a fact evident from the interviewee's tax statement: three houses in three years – the reworded initial challenge functioning as a yes/no question. The interviewee does not take up the challenge (extract not included) but simply makes a back-challenge response (yes) and responds to the challenge five lines later, after the interviewer has presented his explanation by summarizing a letter the interviewee had sent to a newspaper, and by directly attacking the interviewer. The use of colloquial language gives credibility and legitimacy to the challenging question.

Extract 5

1. IR.: =tell me. All opinion polls, all from September onwards
2. report this Vatopaidi case as 'Waterloo' (disaster) for the
- 3.-> government of New Democracy (.) You know the joke, what is
- 4.-> the common thing between Jesus and (Elder) Efraim? That
- 5.-> the first resurrected Lazarus and the other Papandreou
- 6.->(leader of the opposition). Well, I want you to explain to me,
- 7.-> if a case that, resulted in a such a loss of popularity for the
8. government (o.1) because this specific case caused much damage,=
9. IE.: =indeed. It did.=
- 10.-> IR.: =you consider it as what? A series of unfortunate
- 11.-> incidents and coincidences? (.)

In this extract, the interviewer uses a joke to preface his challenge question posed in l.10-11. More specifically, he begins his prefatory statement with a fact in l.1-3, quotes opinion polls' results, which he then further

strengthens/explains by means of a joke in l.3-5. I would argue that the use of a joke/colloquial language here stands for third party footing and, more specifically, it is used instead of the structure ‘It is claimed that X’ serving thus as anonymous footing. By means of reproducing what the public jokes about, the interviewer voices the public’s opinion about the matter, which in turn allows him to present his statement in l. 6-8 as a fact, to which he openly invites the interviewee to agree or disagree with by the use of ‘if’. The interviewee responds to this move by agreeing, thus further validating the interviewer’s statement. Having built his challenge question on a series of prefatory statements, the interviewer asks his narrow challenge question in l. 10-11, a question that cannot be answered. This question, implicitly, invites the interviewee, to do two things: agree or disagree with it and by doing so, to overtly state his opinion, contradicting himself both as a government representative and as a politician in this interview. This is a hostile form of questioning and the interviewee responds to the challenge by refusing to answer the question: ‘I cannot interpret it till the case is finalized’ (extract not included), for the first and only time in this interview, which is an example of overt resistance.

4.1.4 Personal Disagreement

The journalist presents his adversarial challenges as if they were a matter of personal disagreement, or dispute, between himself and the interviewee and not a matter of an impartial conversation for an ‘overhearing audience’.

Extract 6

- 1.-> IR.: very well. I note down your view, e::e (0.1) I see that we
- 2.-> do not agree on this aspect and we disagree not on the point
3. of whether you did take a loan.=
- 4-> IE.: =if you accuse me of immoral behaviour no,
5. [we disagree.]

In this extract, the ‘personal disagreement’ challenge as exemplified by both interactants, is further magnified. The interviewer explicitly puts his introductory statement in l.1-2 as a matter of personal dispute by means of the vocabulary used (‘I note down’, ‘we do not agree’, ‘we disagree’) phrasing the whole sentence not as a conversation for an ‘overhearing audience’ but as a conversation between two individuals having no institutional role. To this personal aspect of the interview, the interviewee latches immediately and responds by explicitly accusing the interviewer by means of a personal pronoun ‘you’ and a conditional sentence in l.4 that summarizes the previous turns, changing the topic from: ‘Where did X take the money from’ to ‘If you accuse me of X we disagree’. Once again, in this extract there is an example of a freestanding statement serving as a challenge with no footing, in Rendle-Short’s (2007) terms. As it is presented as a matter of whether the interviewee has convinced, agrees or disagrees with the interviewer, though it is also reminiscent of the ‘courtroom hearing’ identified by Patrona (2006), or a

personal verbal duel. Once again, the interviewee's response qualifies the interviewer's statement as challenge.

4.2 Responses to Adversarial Challenges

Within the analysed interview, apart from the resistance techniques identified in previous research, or modifications of those, three novel patterns of responses to adversarial challenging were identified. More specifically, the interviewee: 1) issues direct attacks to the interviewer as a professional 2) issues indirect attacks to the interviewer as a person 3) uses questions to answer a question.

4.2.1 Direct Attacks on the Interviewer as a Professional

Although it is not always easy to distinguish the roles of the person and the professional in a journalist, I considered instances of attacks, counterchallenges towards the interviewer as a professional, instances where he was presented by the interviewee, not simply as the principal or author of the propositions made (legitimate roles within the interview genre) but as the principal of specific statements, in Goffman's (1981) terms, holding him accountable for the proposition made, thus of bias. This was marked by the use of his full name and a verb of attribution i.e. 'present', in active voice in polite second person plural.

Extract 7

1. IE: [...] These do you believe after 20 years in journalism both me and
2. my wife, well paid journalists, we couldn't acquire them? =
3. IR.: =but you did acquire them, of course you could acquire
4. them, >the question is not that <, =
- 5.->IE.: =then which exactly is the question, =
6. IR.: =the question is this. =
- 7.->IE.: = that poses the challenge
8. IR.: =[was it politically correct,]
- 9.->IE.: =[evident in your question?]
10. IR.: I will ask the question again. Was it politically correct to
11. acquire them? (0.1)
- 12.-> IE.: so what should I do Mr Pretenteris?
- 13.-> IR.: I don't know I ask you after all these, [if you]

In this extract, the interviewee directly attacks the interviewer in l. 5, 7, 9 by latching, overlapping and explicitly accusing the interviewer of bias, asking a challenging question (which [...] is the question that poses the challenge evident in your question?). This bias is further stressed by the use of 'then' in l.5, indicating, in this case, illogical conclusion, and 'exactly' in the same line indicating inconsistency with the previous turn. The interviewee by asking a

rhetorical question himself, although his role is to answer and not to ask questions, makes the interviewer respond to his question in line 3, by initially agreeing ('but you did acquire them of course you could acquire them') and then trying to modify it, bring it back to his agenda ('the question is not that'). To this exposing move, in terms of indicating the interviewee's effort to change the agenda, the latter responds quickly and aggressively by latching, as mentioned above, answers his own question and attacks the interviewer, thus giving the impression that the interviewer unfairly accused him of wrongdoing. What is also significant to note in this extract, is the use of a direct question in l. 12 as a means of answering the question posed in the previous turn, a move that serves the purpose of agenda shifting that will be discussed in detail below. All the aforementioned means of covert resistance, identified by Clayman and Heritage (2002), together with the interviewee's direct and explicit attack on the journalist enable him to change the agenda, shift focus, thus evading the challenging question asked. Although in a different context, this technique is similar to the personal attacks on the interviewer and co-interactant, identified by Simon-Vandenberg (2008) in her corpus of extremist right politicians' discourse.

4.2.2 Indirect Attacks on the Interviewer as a Person

As indirect attacks were qualified, the attacks to the interviewer's face that were not explicitly, but rather implicitly, worded as such. As in the examples discussed in previous sections, I would argue that this is a novel covert resistance technique.

Extract 8

1. IR.: [did this create any] problem for you? =
2. IE.: =let's see that. =
- 3.->IR.: =politically [not personally, in your family.]
4. IE.: [this is the crucial question.] Look. That
5. people might have thought of various things, of course Mr
6. Pretenteris, I am not blind not a fool. It is very likely that
- 7.-> some would think that when Yiannis Pretenteris appears on the
- 8.-> participant window next to Mara Zacharea, who was the
- 9.-> anchorwoman of MEGA prime-time news, they may have
- 10.->agreed beforehand that Pretenteris would talk against a
- 11.->Minister instead of Zacharea (0.1) I think that this would
- 12.->certainly be thought of by a [suspicious mind]
13. IR.: [a little bit difficult.]

The interviewee, after giving a vague preface in l. 4-6, in l. 7-12 answers the interviewer's challenge in l.3, by means of a long indirect attack that shifts the

topic. The initial topic was: ‘The political problems caused by the resignation of the minister’s wife’ and it was changed to: ‘News broadcasting is not a clear business and you are involved in it as much as my wife, so you have no right to ask this question.’ This was achieved by means of direct juxtaposition of the interviewer’s name and role (Yiannis Pretenteris appears on the participant window’ l. 7-8) and the minister’s wife name and role (“Mara Zacharea who was the anchorwoman of MEGA prime-time news”, 1.8-9), prepositions of proximity (‘next to’ in 1.8), and the explicit use of the verb, stressed by the interviewee himself (‘agreed beforehand’), indicating prearranged news broadcasting. By completely changing the agenda and topic, a covert resistance technique, the interviewee not only attacks the interviewer as a person, accusing him of dirty journalistic practices, but also indicates the inappropriateness and unanswerability of the question asked by his blunt, I would argue, refusal to answer and an overt resistance technique. More than that, I would go as far as to argue that this change of topic serves as an indirect threat to the journalist, daring him not to ask a similarly challenging question again. In this extract, there is a combination of already identified resistance techniques, such as stressing of the contrasting word (Renle-Short 2007), covert and overt resistance, (Clayman and Heritage 2002) accompanied by an indirect threat, similar to the indirect attacks politicians used towards their conversational interactants in Simon-Vandenberg’s (2008) corpus, in a different context though.

4.2.3 Questions instead of Answers

In this last section, another resistance technique will be presented, the use of questions to avoid answering a challenging question and to change the agenda.

Extract 10

1. IR.: =no, not at all. Not at all. I want you though to answer this.
2. [do you think it was politically correct?]
- 3.->IE.: [Mr Pretenteris, let me ask you another question.] Have
- 4.->you seen many tax statements as detailed as mine?=-

What is significant in this extract is the fact that the interviewee explicitly asks permission to change the topic by means of asking a question in 1.4. More specifically, by addressing the interviewer using his full name (‘Mr Pretenteris’), by using a polite form to ask for permission (‘let me’) and by explicitly indicating his intention (‘ask you another question’) he overtly changes the topic, thus bluntly refusing to answer the previous question, within the boundaries of the interview genre, using a new technique though. In the context of this highly adversarial political interview, I would argue that in this example, a novel resistance technique is used by the interviewee not only to avoid answering a question and change the topic, but also to exert conversational violence, in Luginbuhl’s (2007) terms, towards the interviewee, a practice more commonly met in political debates discourse and not in one on one interviews.

5. Discussion

The above analysis has shown novel ways in which both the interviewer and the interviewee, within the Greek context, have operated in the context of an adversarial one on one political interview; the former while challenging the interviewee and the latter when responding to those challenges.

Novel adversarial challenging techniques employed in this case study, in addition to the ones identified by Clayman and Heritage (2002), Clayman (2002) and Rendle-Short (2007) in their respective corpuses, included challenging the interviewee by a latched or overlapping statement, predicting the latter's line of answering a challenging question and explicitly asking him not to answer along those lines. This, I would argue, constitutes a 'double challenging' move on the part of the interviewer. Firstly, it stands as a challenge on its own since it exposes to the 'overhearing audience' previous attempts on the part of the interviewee to give an evasive answer to the initial question posed, thus qualifying as a challenge and not simply as an attempt on the part of the interviewer to refocus on the topic. Although these may be legitimate in context, triggered by the interviewee's use of general words to answer and/or the interviewer's own use of vocabulary to legitimize his move, they are still adversarial in nature. Secondly, the fact that they come after a difficult or impossible question to be answered, qualifies them as 'a challenge built upon another challenge' intended to put more pressure on the interviewee to address the interviewer's agenda and not depart from it.

Secondly, explicit, usually latched, statements on the part of the interviewer accusing the interviewee of subtle changes in the agenda were used as a means of challenging the latter. I would argue that these are even more aggressive adversarial challenges than the previous ones due to their explicitness. The interviewer, although taking the appropriate measures to present them as legitimate in context, by means of the vocabulary used, exposes the interviewee's evasiveness to the overhearing audience, thus aggressively forcing him to follow the interviewer's agenda.

The next challenging move identified in the case study is less aggressive than the aforementioned due to the interviewer's use of footing within the prefaced challenging questions. The first involves the interviewer using colloquial language, jokes and layman's (or better laywoman's) words as footing in his prefaced challenges. This, I argue, is an alternative source of footing to the ones identified by Clayman and Heritage (2002) in their corpus, verging between third party reference and speaking on behalf of the general public. This is because by using colloquial language, jokes and quoting what ordinary people believe about an issue, the interviewer presents himself as being 'one of the public', thus giving legitimacy to his question-challenge. Furthermore, although the third party citation is not a body of experts, it does give credibility and validity to the claim, since a joke is shared by many, thus reflecting a general attitude, and a simple woman's words portray a common feeling about an issue, being endorsed by many.

The last novel challenging technique may be considered a modification of the challenging technique identified by Rendle-Short (2007), namely that interviewers presented their challenge as initially a freestanding assertion without third party attribution. I would argue though, that it is a novel

challenging technique due to the explicit framework it is worded in. More specifically, in the data under analysis, the interviewer, by means of both the verbs of attribution and the bi-polar personal pronouns ('I consider –you say') used, frequently presents challenging statements as a matter of personal disagreement between himself and the interviewee and not as an interview taking place for the 'ears of an overhearing audience' where he just voices their questions and/or concerns. This resembles the 'courtroom hearing' media discourse style, already identified by Patrona (2006) and I would also argue that it also constitutes an alternative means of footing, with the interviewer taking literally the role of the 'devil's advocate', speaking on behalf of the people, and the interviewee being the accused.

The examination of the second turns shows that the interviewee responded to the aforementioned challenging moves in a similar fashion, by counterchallenging, thus acknowledging their challenging nature. The interviewee, in the data under analysis, apart from responding to adversarial challenges in the ways identified by Clayman and Heritage (2002) and Rendle-Short (2007) in their respective corpuses, used three novel responses to the challenges posed, the majority of them alternative means of covert resistance. The first technique was that, when challenged by the interviewer in the 'personal disagreement framework', the interviewee's response was to directly attack the interviewer as a professional by means of the verbs of attribution and bi-polar personal pronouns ('you present it' - 'I tell you') used, thus disqualifying the challenge by explicitly accusing the interviewer of bias-unattributed assertion. Alternatively, by means of using a mixture of direct and indirect attacks on the interviewer, the interviewee explicitly accused the interviewer of bias, inherent in the latter's challenging question. Or by means of an explicit question/counterchallenge serving as a direct attack on the interviewer, the interviewee disqualified the challenge by proving it unjustifiable, thus not worthy of answering.

The second technique was to use indirect attacks on the interviewer as a means of disqualifying-minimizing the former's challenges, legitimising his changing the topic, as a response to a freestanding assertion, as a response to a prediction and as a response to a difficult-unanswerable question, in Clayman and Heritage's (2002) terms.

Thirdly, a variation of the 'refusal to comply with the question-answer format by answering prematurely' resistance technique identified by Clayman and Heritage in their corpus and the use of an address term plus contrasting what the interviewer has said with what the interviewee wants to say, as a response to a challenge, identified by Rendle-Short in her corpus, was identified in the data under analysis, namely 'questions instead of answers.'

In the case study, the interviewee interrupts by overlapping before the interviewer has finished his question, but instead of answering, he poses a question himself. Apart from the apparent role reversal, and change of topic, I would argue that this technique also indicates that the question asked in the previous turn was inappropriate, as the journalist had no right-appropriate knowledge to ask it, thus qualifying it as not worthy of an answer.

6. Conclusion

Despite the limited data in the present research, several conclusions can be drawn regarding both the changing nature of the political news interview, within the Greek context, and the respective changing nature of adversarial challenges and the responses to them. It seems that, in light of the confrontational nature of the modern political news interview, Greek journalists and politicians become even more adversarial in their discourses, verging at times on conversational violence, in their attempt either to legitimise their questions for the sake of the overhearing audience or to find more subtle ways to evade answering difficult or unanswerable questions. In this context they expose each other to the overhearing audience, by (mis)using the popular feeling when they either employ everyday talk or when they incorporate hidden agenda items in their discourses. What is of importance though, is that this is co-constructed, indicating the emergence of a new form of neutrality; both parties get equally aggressive and challenging, thus maintaining a form of balance within the new boundaries of the transformed genre. Further research within the Greek context and/or other linguistic and cultural contexts would provide invaluable insights into the changing nature of (televised) political interviews.

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Appendix: Transcription Conventions

adapted from Hutchby and Wooffitt (1999) and Schegloff (2000)

→	arrows in the left margin point to specific parts of an extract discussed in the text
> <	'more than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk
<u>Under</u>	underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis
.	a full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone; it does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence
,	a comma indicates a 'continuing' intonation
?	a question mark indicates rising intonation
(0.5)	the number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second
(.)	a dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second
=	the 'equals' sign indicates 'latching' between utterances, produced either by the same speaker, to accommodate for overlapping speech, or different speakers
[]	square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset and end of a spate of overlapping talk
-	a dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound
:	colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter; the more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.