Disagreement in Greek news interviews

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Abstract

This paper applies the conversation analytic approach to a particular type of institutional interaction, the television news interview. It examines fragments from panel interviews which involve two or more interviewees holding opposing positions about certain issues. The aim of the paper is to show the ways in which the sequential analysis proposed by conversation analysts, in combination with the notions of face and politeness, can account for the organization of disagreement between the interviewees as well as to examine the extent to which disagreement in Greek news interviews is both contextually and culturally favoured.

Key words: conversation analysis, disagreement, face, Greek culture, involvement, interruption, news interview, opposition format, politeness, repetition, topic, turn-taking

1. Introduction

This paper applies the conversation analytic approach to a particular type of institutional interaction: the news interview.1 The news interview is that form of broadcast talk that has mostly attracted the attention of conversation analysts (Heritage 1985, Heritage and Greatbatch 1991, Heritage and Roth 1995, Clayman 1988, Clayman and Whalen 1988/9, Schegloff 1988/9). Conversation ana-

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1 By the term news interview I refer to those exchanges in which journalists look for responses to questions relevant to current political and social issues. Such exchanges are included in evening or morning news shows, which include interviews as part of the presentation of news items, as well as in news discussion and analysis shows in which the interviews occupy the entire time of the show (cf. Scott 1996 and Lewis 1984).
lysts have focused “on the locally produced orderliness of these encounters” (Greatbatch 1998: 164) by explicating “the routine, institutionalized speaking practices” associated with this particular form of broadcast talk (: 163) and describing “the social dynamics of the news interview, particularly how the news is an interactional achievement between interviewer and interviewee” (Buttny 1993: 145). This paper, however, deals with the interaction between the interviewees themselves and examines the ways they organize their disagreement with each other in the context of panel interviews.

2. Panel interviews

As Greatbatch has pointed out, “the occupational culture of broadcast journalists is one which stresses the values of immediacy, controversy, liveliness, and entertainment” (1992: 271). In order to pursue these objectives during one-to-one news-interviews, an interviewer (IR) often subjects an interviewee (IE) to investigative and often hostile cross-questioning. However, this combative questioning is vulnerable to charges of bias. A journalist’s questions may embody assumptions that are hostile to a guest’s stated positions. This poses a problem for journalists: on the one hand, they must remain neutral as a journalist should always refrain from expressing his/her opinion on an issue; on the other hand, their programmes should not be boring and should attract the viewers’ attention. These competing pressures can be reconciled with the use of panel interviews which involve two or more guests who hold opposing views. In Greatbatch’s words (: 272), the panel interview becomes “a means of provoking debate between IEs” and is, therefore, “a source of lively and combative interaction” which guards journalists against accusations of bias.

These properties of panel interviews are obviously the main reason this type of interviews is widely used during pre-election periods with the participants, who are politicians from opposing parties, routinely arguing with each other about current issues.

Before looking at the way disagreements are organized in news interviews, we should briefly consider the ways disagreement is produced in everyday conversational interaction. This is because conversation analytic studies of institutional interaction adopt a comparative approach in the sense that they treat mundane conversation as a yardstick against which other forms of interaction can be distinguished.

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2 Conversation analysts have analyzed a range of practices that allow journalists to sustain a neutralistic posture by displaying a kind of formal neutrality and avoiding overtly expressing an opinion when they address interviewees. For instances of these practices in Greek news interviews see Poulis (1999).
3. Disagreement in ordinary conversation

Conversation analysts describe the structural features of disagreeing turns in terms of preference organization. Preference organization "entails the distinction of two formats of action" (Silverman 1997: 145). Certain actions are dispreferred, in the sense that they are problematic in one way or another, and are performed in such a way that their problematic status is revealed. A disagreement following an assessment is such a dispreferred action. On the other hand, an agreement following an assessment is a preferred action and is performed in a way that exhibits its unproblematic status.

Conversation analysts have shown that preference structures play an important role in the maintenance of social solidarity. In this vein, a number of researchers (e.g. Heritage 1984, Taylor and Cameron 1987, Makri-Tsilipakou 1991, Silverman 1997) have pointed out that the notion of preference is closely related to Goffman’s notion of interactional face, defined by Brown and Levinson (1987: 61) as the public self-image every human being wants to claim for him/herself that consists of two related aspects: negative face, that is, a person’s need to have freedom of action and be free from imposition of any kind, and positive face, that is, a person’s need to be appreciated and approved by other people.

Thus, it has been stated (Heritage 1984: 268) that preferred actions are affiliative actions which protect the conversationalists’ face and are, hence, supportive of social solidarity. On the other hand, dispreferred actions are face-threatening actions that undermine the conversationalists’ face and their relationships with each other. Consequently, preferred actions have been found to be "characteristically performed straightforwardly and without delay" (: 267) while dispreferred actions are usually delayed, qualified and accounted for.

Pomerantz (1984: 65) has shown that when a speaker wants to disagree with another speaker’s assessment, s/he may delay the disagreement component within a turn or over a series of turns. Devices that accomplish delay between turns include pausing before the delivery of a disagreement, and displacing the disagreement over a number of turns through the use of repair initiators or insertion sequences (Levinson 1983: 334). Delays within turns include pauses as well as pre-disagreement prefices. Such prefices can be hesitation markers, agreement tokens and accounts, that is, carefully formulated explanations for the reason the preferred agreement is not produced. All these devices are reluctance markers which, according to Pomerantz (: 77), indicate that a disagreement is about to be produced and give the co-conversationalists the chance to modify their previous-

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3 For examples of these features in Greek, see Makri-Tsilipakou (1991: chapter 3).
ly asserted position so that the forthcoming disagreement will not be produced in the end. Thus, Pomerantz shows that, in order to avoid conflict, speakers tend to either forestall or mitigate disagreements through the use of preference features. If, however, disagreements are actualized, they are managed in ways which operate to temper the actualization of disagreement in the interests of its subsequent resolution: in other words, disagreement sequences are "routinely exited through a process in which speakers deescalate their disputes by moderating their positions" (Greatbatch 1992: 277).

Pomerantz's study is based on ordinary conversations among friends. She does not specify the context in which these conversations occur. However, Kotthoff (1993: 195) argues that while unspecific friendly conversations are oriented towards consensus and agreement, there are some contexts in which disagreement is preferred. She states that as soon as arguments begin, ordinary preference structure is reversed. If we want to interpret this reversal in terms of the notion of face, we can argue that in the context of an argument, participants are expected to defend their positions; to quote Kotthoff, "concessions seem to be the dispreferred acts, because they threaten the need for a positive image" (p. 209, emphasis in the original) and, in other words, concessions may imply that the speakers are not really able to defend their positions: this can be detrimental to one's positive face.

4. Disagreement in news interviews

Let us now look at the ways disagreements are handled in the news-interview context. To begin with, we must stress that news interviews differ from everyday conversations in terms of turn-taking organization. In mundane conversation, the turn-taking system operates on a local, turn-by-turn basis: the allocation of turns is an issue that is neither fixed nor specified in advance but, rather, is locally managed by speakers themselves (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1978). On the other hand, as Greatbatch (1988: 404) has pointed out, the news-interview turn-taking system "preallocates particular types of turns to speakers with specific institutional identities". In other words, this turn-taking system specifies that IRs should confine themselves to asking questions and IEs should confine themselves to responding to the IRs' questions. An IE who wants to disagree with another IE's views has two options: s/he may either comply with the constraints placed by this distinctive turn-taking system or depart from these special turn-taking procedures.

4.1 Complying with the news-interview turn-taking system

When IEs choose to comply with the turn-taking procedures, we have the following format: the journalist asks the first IE a question; the first IE answers the
question; then the journalist addresses the second IE and invites him/her to either agree or disagree with the statement previously made by the first IE.

These disagreement sequences between IEs differ markedly from disagreements between speakers in everyday conversation in two respects. First, disagreements between IEs are not produced in adjacent turns at talk: rather, they are “properly elicited by and addressed to a third party, the IR” (Greatbatch 1992: 277). Second, the disagreements that are produced are not systematically delayed or mitigated by the occurrence of the preference features that are found in ordinary conversation (pauses, hesitation markers and so on). Greatbatch attributes the absence of these features to the fact that their role in the mitigation and forestalling of disagreement are “largely bypassed” in this context. Since disagreements are produced as answers to an IR’s questions and are addressed to him/her, they are “automatically mitigated, in that mediated disagreements are intrinsically weaker than unmediated ones” (op. cit., emphasis in the original). Moreover, since the disagreeing parties do not address one another, “the preference features cannot properly be produced or treated as ‘forestalling’ devices” (op. cit.).

However, news-interview programmes that contain only such mediated disagreements tend to be very rare. Anyone watching news interviews on Greek TV channels will have realized that IEs routinely depart from the standard question-response structure of the news interview in order to disagree with their co-IEs.

4.2 Departing from the turn-taking procedures: Unsolicited disagreements

As Greatbatch has shown, the structure of turn taking in news interviews provides for four positions in which IEs can depart from the standard question-answer format of the news interview in order to disagree with their co-IEs.

The IE can disagree with a co-IE:

i) after responding to an IR’s question by means of a post-answer topical shift

ii) before responding to an IR’s question by means of a pre-answer topical shift

iii) by self-selecting after the co-IE has stopped talking

iv) by self-selecting while the co-IE is still speaking.

Both post-answer and pre-answer topical shifts (Greatbatch 1986) allow the IE to disagree with a co-IE and at the same time abide by the news-interview turn-taking rules. In both cases (i) and (ii), the IE addresses the IR and consequently the disagreement that is produced is relatively weak because it is mediated. However, if the IE self-selects, s/he “subverts both the standard turn-type and turn-order format of the news interview” (Greatbatch 1992: 283). Self-se-
lection is a turn-type violation because the IE departs from the role of responding to IR questions as well as a turn-order violation because after the completion of a question-answer sequence, the news-interview turn-taking system effectively restricts the right to speak to IRs. Obviously the strongest disagreements are produced in position (iv). In the following sections, I will focus on instances of (iv), that is, disagreement sequences in which IEs routinely interrupt other IEs in order to dismiss their claims, to respond to challenges, to counter accusations with reciprocal accusations and so on. This type of disagreement seems to be the most interesting one, as it is the most frequent, at least in the Greek data, and, certainly, the strongest of all four types.

4.3 A preference for disagreement

Greatbatch points out that in the context of these unsolicited or “violatively” produced disagreements, preference features such as delays and pauses that Pomerantz has reported are largely redundant: in ordinary conversation, these features are associated with the mitigation of conflict whereas in the news-interview context unsolicited disagreements are connected with the escalation of conflict. However, instead of talking about the redundancy of preference features, I believe that it would be better at this point to adopt Kotthoff’s more comprehensive approach and argue that in the news-interview context, disagreement becomes a preferred action. As Kotthoff (1993: 195) states, the preference structure described by Pomerantz is found in unspecified ordinary conversations in which there is an orientation towards consensus. In specified contexts, though, the preference structure may change.4

In the case of news interviews we have such a specified institutional context, in which participants must defend their positions as effectively as they can. Thus, when an argument has been established, the interaction is performed with an orientation towards disagreement rather than consensus. There are a number of reasons disagreement is preferred in this context. First, it has been pointed out that “politics is a domain that necessarily entails conflict and opposition” (Tannen 1998: 240). Politicians are expected both to defend their parties’, as

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4 Kotthoff observes that in argumentative contexts the change in the preference structure is manifested gradually. In the first turns of disagreement sequences, we often find turn shapes that indicate a preference for agreement. Aggravation is gradually signalled by a reduction of delay devices and reluctance markers. Such markers, though, can still be found throughout the argumentative sequences. Kotthoff treats them as “mere discourse lubricants” (1993: 202) but one could argue that their presence shows that the consensus expectations are only temporarily suspended and that there is still a general orientation towards agreement.
well as their own, positions and to counter the claims of their opponents.\textsuperscript{5} Moreover, when politicians take part in a broadcast interview, they know that they are being viewed by their voters, who must not be disappointed, as well as by prospective voters, who must be convinced that the politician has the ability to win in a competition. Thus, as Jucker has stated, positive face is vitally important in the news-interview context because for many politicians it can be a matter of political, or even financial, survival “that their positive face is sustained or enhanced throughout the interview” (1986: 71).

The suspension of consensus expectations, however, is not specified only by the institutional context. As Kotthoff argues, the preference for disagreement “seems to a certain degree, to be culturally specific” (1993: 196, emphasis in the original). The Greek culture seems to be one of those cultures that favour a preference for disagreement. It is a culture that allows for more directness, intimacy, emotionality and aggressiveness in comparison to other cultures (Sifianou 1992: 116, Faubion 1993: 180, Tannen 1998: 92). As Sifianou (: 42) has shown, it places a higher value on the positive aspect of face and emphasizes involvement and in-group relations. Within the Greek context, it is appropriate to openly express feelings and emotions whereas being reserved is not an approved behaviour. Tannen and Kakava also argue that disagreement seems to be “not as disagreeable to native speakers of Modern Greek — male or female — as it is to Americans” (1992: 24-25) and that taking oppositional stances may be a means of creating involvement. In a positive politeness culture, disagreement can probably be openly expressed since in such a context the in-group bonds are not at stake.\textsuperscript{6}

Kotthoff also argues that disagreement is preferred as a gender-specific argumentative style. Makri-Tsilipakou (1991, 1994) examines in detail disagreement patterns of men and women in everyday conversation and shows that men are more disagreement-prone and that, in comparison to women, they tend to use more disaffiliative interruptions, in other words, the kind of interruptions that are omnipresent in Greek news interviews. It is well known that the majority of politicians are men. The male Greek politician has to display all those fea-

\textsuperscript{5}The claim that disagreement is a preferred action in this case is also strengthened by the fact that in the news-interview context, the adjacency pair assessment-disagreement can often be identical to the adjacency pair accusation-deny. In other words, it can be argued that a first pair part which is identified as an assessment receives a disagreement as a preferred second since the same first pair part can often be interpreted as an accusation which receives a denial as a preferred second (cf. Levinson 1983: 336).

\textsuperscript{6}Cf. the discussion in Makri-Tsilipakou (1991: 162-164).
tures of the Greek masculine identity, whether urban or rural: being energetic, competitive, willing to fight, proud of one’s own achievements, often egoistic. As Faubion (1993: 220) remarks, masculinity is enacted upon a stage of agonistic spectacle: “The masculine is a principle of eneryia, ‘energy’; it is a principle of domination” and the masculine will “remains sovereign: a will to impress, to acquire, to reign”.

However, there are women politicians, too. They form a minority but they are as assertive and willing to fight as their male colleagues are. In the fragments that are analyzed in this paper, only one woman, Dora Bakoghiani, appears and her case shows us how women politicians face the dilemma of being damned if they behave like men, and damned if they don’t (cf. Lakoff 1975: 6). Aggressiveness is not what the Greek society has traditionally expected women to display. Nevertheless, women politicians would be criticized for being gentle or weak and, hence, unsuitable for positions of power and responsibility. Therefore, women politicians also “behave in as efficient, tough and decisive a manner as possible while at the same time making no concessions whatsoever in maintaining the external trappings of femininity” (Atkinson 1984: 116). In other words, they, too, disagree with their male colleagues during news interviews but at the same time project an “external image of unambiguously recognizable femininity” (op. cit.) by means of their “uncompromisingly feminine” external appearance or by smiling at their opponents while attacking them.

To sum up, disagreement is a preferred action in the Greek news-interview context as it is specified both by this specific institutional context and the Greek culture. In the following section, I will examine some of the strategies IEs use when they disagree with each other.

5. Disagreement strategies

As is shown in the fragments analyzed below, Greek IEs employ a number of disagreement strategies during news interviews. The fragments were recorded from television news interviews that were aired in the run-up to the Greek Parliament Elections in March and April 2000 as well as in the run-up to the European Parliament Elections in June 1999.7

5.1 Interruption and repetition

As was mentioned above, disaffiliative interruptions (Makri-Tsilipakou 1991,

7 See the appendix for transcript conventions.
1994) are ubiquitous in news interviews. The reason IEs want to disagree with other IEs who are in the process of answering a question posed by the journalist before they have completed their answer should be obvious: IEs’ responses to journalists’ questions are normally quite long and, thus, IEs can easily move from one point to another. So, as soon as their co-IEs have identified an arguable action, they interrupt them. If they wait until the current speaker finishes his/her response, the arguable action may lose its local contextual relevance and the co-IE’s response may be untimely and, therefore, less effective.

Moreover, one should refer to the asymmetry between first and second positions in arguments. Sacks (1992: 344) observed that those who go first in an argument are in a weaker position than those who get to go second because the latter can argue with the former’s position simply by taking it apart. The IEs who answer a journalist’s question go first, that is, they must set their opinion on the line; on the other hand, their co-IEs who interrupt them are able to argue merely by challenging the opponent to expand on or account for his/her claims (Hutchby 1996: 48).

In the first Fragment, Pasok MP (Ε)vangelos (V)enizelos (Ευάγγελος Βενιζέλος) has been talking to the journalist about a law according to which all public contracts should be approved by a special committee so that bribery could be avoided (turn 1). EV is going first while New Democracy MP (Ν)ora (B)akoghianni (Ντόρα Μπακογιάννη) is going second and countering his claim: she argues that the law has not been observed.

Fragment 1 (EV-DB: 3/4/00: 1/20B000/1:15)

1   EB:  (…) .ihhh Με το νόμιμο στοτ, λοιπόν και με πρωτοβουλία που τίθεται απ’ το Υπουργείο Ανάπτυξης .ihhh κάθε σύμβαση κρατικών προμηθειών (.) ύψους όντων πεντακοσίων εκατομμυρίων .ihhh και κάθε σύμβαση δημοσίου έργου .ihhh όντων του ενός δις: (.) και αυτές είναι μικρές συμβάσεις που .ihhh προς υπογραφή: πρέπει να εγκριθείς (.) από πλευράς: (.) νομιμότητας απ’ το ελεγκτικό συνέδριο. .ihhh Επίσης πρέπει να ολοκληρωθεί η Νέα Δημοκρατία εξαιτίας αποκριθεί [Και δεν τιμήθηκε.

2   NM:   ➔

3   ()

4   EB:   ➔

5   ()

6   NM:   ➔

7   EB:   ➔

8   NM:   Όταν σας φέραμε τα δημάρχους της Σύρου σας =

9   EB:   ➔

10  NM:   =.h [ενεργεία εύχατε πει στη θα [( τα στελεχώς =
We notice that DB interrupts EV (turn 2) when the latter seems to be moving on to a next point in his argument (actually, when he is about to criticize DB’s party for their attitude towards the introduction of this law).

Also notice how both participants repeat their words in order to defend their views. This kind of self-repetition is very common in disagreement sequences. The most obvious reason a speaker repeats his/her words is that s/he wants to emphasize, or highlight, their meaning (Κακουδη-Φεραντός 1998: 108). In addition, this kind of repetition is “due to noise” (: 180) and is used when the speaker has not succeeded in getting the hearer’s response s/he was aiming at. ‘Noise’ can refer to either actual noise that impedes communication or to any other reason the hearer does not react in the expected way. We must bear in mind that, in the case of news interviews, the IEs address their repeated words not only to the co-IE they disagree with, but also to the overhearing audience. Thus, in this context, an IE repeats his/her words because s/he wants to make sure that they will be heard by the viewers.

Repetition is a kind of internal evaluation, a term introduced by Labov (1972). According to Svennevig (1999: 53), internal evaluation “consists in dramatizing events and refraining from explicitly evaluating them”. In other words, a speaker does not state explicitly that s/he thinks what s/he says is important (an external evaluation). Rather, the fact that s/he repeats his/her orig-
inal words leads hearers to draw the conclusion that what is repeated is favoured by the speaker. Internal evaluation is more persuasive than external evaluation because it is more involving (Tannen 1989: 138). Involvement in this context refers to both the speaker's involvement with what is being talked about and the speakers' active participation and engagement in the conversation (11). For example, an argument (in the sense of "putting a case for some position", not of "arguing with someone", cf. Hutchby 1996: 20) is an instance of external evaluation and it is a less powerful means of persuading the hearer in comparison to the repetition of the same words in a number of consecutive turns. In the case of an external evaluation what matters is the information content and the meaning is explicitly stated. On the other hand, in the case of an internal evaluation — in which repeated words function as substitutes for new arguments — what matters is the interactional potential of the repetition as a persuasion strategy, and meaning is dramatized (Svennevig 1999: 138). Thus, evaluation becomes a matter of showing rather than telling.

Finally, notice EV's use of πλήρως, 'completely', a focusing word (Kotthoff 1993) or an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz 1986) which corroborates his claim. Such words signal aggravated dissent and are very common in disagreement sequences.

Both repetition and extreme case formulations are also used in the following Fragment (2), which comes from the same interview as Fragment 1. Now it is EV's turn to interrupt DB.

Fragment 2 (EV-DB: 3/4/00: 2/21A0002/2:11)

1  NM:  (...) Διότι λαμαμι πάρα πολύ. hhh αλλά η πραγματικότητα είναι ότι σήμερα η φορολογία αυξάνει, hhh η πραγματικότητα είναι ότι [αν έχετε τέρματα εβδομηντενέα]

2  EB:  [Η φορολογία των μισθωτών;]

3  (.)

4  NM:  Επιτρέψτε μου κυρίεις Βενιζέλο

5  EB:  [Μα για όνομα του Θεού.]

6  NM:  Εάν- (.) κατά διαδοχία τριάντα τα εκατό [αυξήθηκε η μέση=

7  EB:  [Δεν είναι ακριβείς] [Δεν είναι ακριβείς]

8  NM:  =φορολογία κατά τη διάρκεια της χιλιουρήσεως σας .hhh=

9  EB:  [Δεν είναι ακριβείς] [Δεν είναι ακριβείς]

10 NM:  =εβδομηντενέα χιλιάδες επιχειρήσεις

11 EB:  [Αυξήθηκαν τα διαθέσιμα εισοδήματα.]

12 NM:  Εβδομηντενέα χιλιάδες επιχειρήσεις] έκλει[σαν κλπ-

13 EB:  [Μήν το πείτε είναι είναι είναι γενικόστατο] [Μήν το πείτε. (.) Πόσες άνοιξαν;]
DB argues that the government has raised taxes and that seventy-nine thousand enterprises have closed down (turn 1). EV interjectively challenges her claim about the taxes (turn 2). DB complains about this interruption (turn 3) and EV insists that taxes have not been raised. DB attempts to substantiate her claim (turns 6, 8, 10) but EV insists that what she says is inaccurate (turns 7, 9; notice that he repeats the phrase δεν είναι ακριβές, ‘this is not true’, four times) and attempts to shift to a different topical line by referring to the available in-
come (turn 11) (on manipulation of topic see section 5.3 below). DB does not give in and insists that seventy nine thousand enterprises have closed down (turn 12). EV complains that what she says is false. He counters her by asking how many enterprises were opened up (turn 13). DB claims that only nineteen thousand enterprises were opened up (turn 15) and, once more, EV insists that this is not true. We can see that DB repeats the number of the enterprises that were opened (turns 19, 21) while EV repeats that these data are false (turns 16, 18, 20) and accuses DB’s party of distorting the truth. We may finally notice that EV is repeating and at the same time upgrading what he has just said. First, he uses the negative sentence δεν είναι ακριβής, ‘this is not true’, (turns 7, 9) which he replaces with the affirmative phrase είναι ψευδεστάτα, ‘this is totally false’, (turn 13) which includes the superlative of ‘false’. Then, he uses the word ψέμα, ‘lie’ (turn 16), which he turns into απόλυτο ψεύδος, ‘absolute lie’, (turn 20), a much stronger phrase since it includes the puristic/katharevousa equivalent of the demotic form ψέμα, ‘lie’. This phrase is, in turn, transformed into παραποιείτε την αλήθεια, ‘you distort the truth’. Thus, the significance of his argument is not merely stated but is, rather, dramatized.

5.2 Questioning each other’s competence

Another strategy that IEs often use is illustrated in Fragment 3: (T)hanasis (P)afilis (Θανάσης Παφλής), a cadre of the Greek Communist Party, is talking to the journalist about the Helsinki Agreement concerning Turkey’s accession to the European Union. TP criticizes the actions of Minister of Foreign Affairs (G)hiorghos (P)apandhreou (Γιώργος Παπανδρέου), who is also present, and argues that Greece has accepted some of Turkey’s demands (turn 1). GP interrupts him in order to challenge his view (turn 2).

Fragment 3 (GP-TP: 27/3/00//18B120///0:25)

1 ΘΠ: Απ’ αυτά λοιπόν (), που η Τουρκία σήμερα, () βάζει σεν θέματα στο τραπέζι, η δεν υπάρχει καμία υποχώρηση, στο αντίθετο υπάρχει αποδοχή; (), η δεν στο πλευρά της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και στο την πλευρά της ευρωπαϊκής ένωσης των διεθνήσεων της Τουρκίας.. Η [Αφα ρι μα ποια (]

2 ΓΠ: → [Δεν ξέρω ποια τα βλέπει αυτά ο πύρικος Παφλής]

3 ΘΠ: [της Ελλάδας]

4 ΓΠ: → = να τα λέει αυτά [αλλά δεν ξέρω ποια τα βλέπει]

5 ΘΠ: [Κύριε Παπανδρέου μην σας ενοχλεί τόσο πολύ]

6 ΓΠ: [Οχι] [(Ναι ναι) Δεν είναι δεοντολογικά κύριε Παφλή]
The two men confront each other with reciprocal accusations about each other’s lack of knowledge on the issue. As Goodwin has noted, opposition “can thus call into question not only what has been said but also the general competence of someone who would produce such talk” (1990: 149). The two men engage in a battle for the floor: GP also accuses the Communist party representative of unethical behaviour (turn 6); TP invites him to read the text of the agreement (turns 11, 13) and GP stresses that he knows the text very well since he, himself, was responsible for the negotiations (turn 14).
5.3 Manipulation of the topic

A very interesting way of opposing a current speaker is through manipulation of the topic. In the following Fragment (4), for example, the IE (Dora Bakoghiani) speaks out of turn and attempts to influence the topical development of her co-IE’s talk. The IR has asked Pasok MP (T) hodhoros (P) angalos (Θόδωρος Πάνγκαλος) why Greek citizens do not seem to manifest a great interest in the 1999 European Parliament Elections as they used to in the past.

Fragment 4 (NX/PT: 11-6-99: 1//1.32//4C013)

1 ΘΠ: Φωνάζαμε οργισμένοι και ιδρομένοι συνθήματα, (;) ε πήγε μπροστά η χώρα. (;) Πήγε σιγά σιγά μπροστά; (;) μενόθηκαν οι κοινωνικές διαφορές και οι αντιθέσεις ανέβηκαν το μορφωτικό επίπεδο δεν υπάρχουν διαφορές (;) δεν υπήρχε όποιος πολύς (;) χωρίσατος ε.; διχασμός; (;) βενιζελικόν: αντιβενιζελικόν: εθνικοφρονείς κοινομυστές (;) hhh ε (;) και o κόσμος ε:;;

2 NM: → [Ευρωπαίοι(;) αντιευρωπαίοι=]
3 ΘΠ: [Ευρωπαίοι αντι==]
4 NM: → =Ε; ή; και Νάτο]
5 ΘΠ: =Ευρωπαίοι και τα λουτά; όλα αυτά (;) όλα αυτά ε;.. (;) αυτό είναι το π; ε:; η προσπαθητική σας αφηνά όλο το θυμάστε δεκαετή κρόνια μας θυμίζεις ότι βάλατε στην]
6 NM: [(Απ) μπορώ να την έχεις[;]
7 ΘΠ: [Βάλατε την Ελλάδα στην Ευρώπη εσείς τη βάλατε αλλά εσείς τη διαχειριστήριαme.
8 (;)
9 ΘΠ: [Τι να κάνουμε; Αυτά είναι]  
10 NM: [Ε ναι αλλά πολύ ξεκάθαρος διατριής αυτό είναι το πρόβλημα

1 TP: We would be in a rage, sweating all over and chanting slogans (;) E ((interj)) the country has progressed (;) It has gradually progressed (;) social differences and conflicts have weakened and the educational standard has been raised there are no discriminations (;) there is no separation uh:: division as there used to be in the past (;) pro-Venizelos Greeks versus con-Venizelos Greeks, nationalists versus communists hhh uh; (;) and people uh::;

2 DB: → [People in favour of the European Union and [people against it=
3 TP: [People in favour of=  
4 DB: → =Ε Ε C and ΝΑΤΟ]
5 TP: =the European Union and people against it] uh:: all these uh- (;) this is the an- this is your original virtue, you mention it all the time for eighteen years you've been remin[ding us that you contributed]
TP claims that the conflicts between the parties' followers have died down: no quarrels, no fanaticism. He claims that the country has progressed and standards have been raised (turn 5). The Greeks are no more divided into rightists and communists. At this point, DB interrupts him to add that Greeks are no more divided into supporters of the European Union and opponents of it (turn 6). She obviously wants to shift to a different topical line and point out that, despite TP's earlier claim that he has made great efforts to develop the Greek citizens' awareness of European institutions, it was Pasok that had strongly objected to Greece's accession to the European Economic Community which was effected by her party. So DB wants to shift to a topical line that demeanes the opponent. In the following turns, the two IEs argue as to whether Pasok has effectively conducted the economy of Greece and the money the European Union has offered. As Kotthoff (1993: 201) points out, in the context of a disagreement, it is strategically advantageous to impose one's topic. Notice that, once again, the IE who interrupts is in the advantageous second position of the argument. DB has thus managed to establish a disagreement sequence.

5.4 Opposition formats

In the following Fragments, I would like to concentrate on what Kotthoff (1993: 201-2) has called opposition formats, i.e. specific forms of disagreements which connect locally to the preceding contribution. IEs express disagreement emphatically by strategically repeating the syntactic format or parts of the prior speaker's utterance or even the intonation pattern—a case of other-repetition as opposed to self-repetitions examined in section 5.1. Thus, this strategy consists in an IE incorporating in his/her turn a co-IE's preceding formulation and giving it a reverse interpretation.

In Fragment 5, Pasok MP (M)ichalis (R)epas (Μιχάλης Ρέπας), in the presence of New Democracy MP (P)rokopis (P)avlopoulos (Προκόπης Παυλόπουλος), has been telling journalist (N)asos (A)thanasiou (Νάσος Αθανασίου) that his party is certain that the Greeks will vote for Pasok, while New Democracy can complain about the fact that the majority of the Greek people have already refused to vote for it several times.
(…) We trust the Greek people’s judgement. hhh I will not be wrong in saying that: [New Democracy may rightfully ( ) complain about=
I see
the fact that for many years the Greek people have refused to vote for it.
( )
Uhh: uh I [will—
The only ( ) the only complaint that Democracy has Mr
Repar. hhh is that for so many—
Democracy has [no complaints if democracy does=
[For so many
=have any complaints these relate to New Democracy [.hhh
[For so many
=be[cause New Democracy’s attitude often shows that it does=
The only complaint—
=not honour; democracy and democratic institutions.
The only complaint New Democracy has is that you have been governing for so many years and with the exception of a gloss that you call modernization. hhh you haven’t understood that in democracy itself the rules of the game are different.
Notice how PP incorporates in his opposing turn (turn 6) the words παγάσονο, ‘complaint’ and δημοκρατία, ‘democracy’. He obviously wants to talk about New Democracy’s complaint but he mistakenly omits the word Νέα, ‘New’. MR exploits this slip of the tongue and argues (turns 7, 9, 11, 13) that democracy (i.e. the regime) may complain about New Democracy’s attitude (he implicitly refers to the party’s attitude towards extreme right-wing cadres). After a number of unsuccessful attempts (turns 8, 10, 12), PP manages to take the floor and express New Democracy’s complaint about the way Pasok governs the country (turn 14).

Thus, we see that each speaker co-opts the opponent’s expression and uses it to his/her ends. In these sequences of competition, as Kotthoff remarks, there is “strong formal cooperation” (: 201) between IEs on the construction of the turns and the sequence these turns comprise.

This strategy is also used in the following Fragment (6), which comes from the same interview. PP is now criticizing Pasok Government for the way it handled the Helsinki Agreement.

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Fragment 6 (MR-PP: 21/3/00//15D112/1:07)

1. ΠΠ: (...) Όσον αφορά για το αξιοζήλευτο επίπεδο της χώρας, hh to ότι είμαστε τελευταίοι και ουρανοί στην ευρωπαϊκή ένωση, hh και προσπαθούμε να μπούμε στην Ουέλ: με ονομασία, σύγκληση, hh και κάτω από απαράδεχτες συμβόλες όπως το ναι του Ελεύθερου, hh που=

2. MP: [Τι ( )

3. ΠΠ: =το πληρώσαμε για να μπουμέτιν Ουέλ: hh επειδή υπό πλήρωσις όρους


5. ΠΠ: [Αυτό: είναι το επίπεδο] [Αυτό=

6. MP: =Το λεγόμαιν Ελεύθερος=

7. ΠΠ: [Ο κύριος]

8. ΠΠ: \rightarrow =Ο κύριος Πάγκαλος οστς έχει[p) για την εξωτερική πολιτική οστς]

9. MP: \rightarrow [Ο κύριος Μάνος το επικρότησε] ως απόλυτα θετική εξέλιξη το Ελεύθερος "(κύριε Παύλος"

10. ΠΠ: \rightarrow [Ο κύριος όπως ο κύριος Πάγκαλος οστς έχει[p) για τον καθό της εξωτερικής πολιτικής οστς ( )

11. MP: \rightarrow [Ο όποιος είπε o κύριος Πάγκαλος ότι και αυτό: είναι πάντα [πολύ=

12. ΠΠ: =θετική εξέλιξη ( ...)

13. MP: [Μπα;
As for the country's enviable standard, the fact that we are the poorest country in the European Union and we have been trying to join the EMU by means of a token convergence and under unacceptable conditions as such as the 'yes' of the Helsinki Agreement which =

What ( )

=we had to concede in order to enter the EMU because we wouldn't join it under different circumstances this is the stan

Which Mister Manos praised as an absolutely positive development I must note.

This is the standard

=The so-called Helsinki =

Mister

Mister Pangalos has spoken to you about your foreign affairs policy

Mister Manos has praised Helsinki as an absolutely positive development (Mister Pavlopoulos)

Mister Pangalos has told you what he thinks of your foreign affairs policy and he is the one responsible for your foreign affairs policy

Mr Pangalos is the one who said this too is an extremely =

Is that so?

Positive development (...)

MR interrupts PP to remind him of the fact that Stephanos Manos—a former New Democracy cadre who still supported New Democracy during the 2000 pre-election period—has praised the Government for the Helsinki Agreement (turns 4, 6). PP counters this claim by reminding MR that Theodoros Pangalos, a Pasok MP, has also criticized Pasok for the way it handled the agreement (turns 7, 8). We can notice that each man repeats his argument twice to strengthen his claim (turns 9, 10, 11). Thus, the pattern Mr X said is successively incorporated by each IE in a series of turns and helps create an effective disagreement sequence. (Throughout the fragment one should also notice the use of the focusing words απόλυτα θετική, ‘absolutely positive’, πάρα πολύ θετική εξέλιξη, ‘extremely positive development’).

To sum up, the use of opposition formats indicates that IEs seem to listen strategically when an argumentative episode is established. The IEs maintain antagonistic positions “by building up their own positions and at the same time each is undermining the other’s position” (Kotthoff 1993: 202).

5.5 Orienting to positive politeness

It is often the case that Greek IEs mitigate their disagreements by orienting to a positive politeness feature. It is not uncommon for politicians who produce a
disagreement with a co-IE to stress that they think highly of him/her but they do not agree with the positions his/her party adopts. This seems to be a strategy that has a double function. On the one hand, IEs use it as an agreement preface (Pomerantz 1984: 72) in order to mitigate to some extent their disagreement with their co-IE. On the other hand, they have a chance to indicate their strong disapproval of the point the co-IE raises—a point they carefully attribute to somebody else, thus treating the co-IE as the animator of the position and not the principal (that is, the person a viewpoint belongs to) or the author (that is, the person who originates the viewpoint) of it (Goffman 1981). This is illustrated in the following Fragment (7).

Fragment 7 (NX/PT: 11/6/99: 1/1.32/4C013)

1 ΘΠ: Δημιουργείετε εντυπώσεις κυρία Μπακογιάννη αυτά είναι

2 ΝΜ: [Διαβάστε τα κύριε Πάγκαλε είναι πολύ ενδιαφέροντα.

3 ΘΠ: → [Είναι αντάξια του κυρίου

Κοραμμανή και του κυρίου Σπυροπούλου είναι κατόπτερα από το
δικό σας θέμα και τη δική σας ( ) Μα να να=

4 ΝΜ: [Με πωλάνε αλλά σας παρακαλώ διαβάστε τα]

5 ΘΠ: =διαβάσου ( ...)

6 ΝΜ: Δείξετε κύριε Πάγκαλε [δείξετε την αναλογία που ξοδεύετε κατ'έτος=

7 ΘΠ: =Στην ουσία =Στην ουσία

8 ΘΠ: =Στην ουσία

9 ΝΜ: [Αυτό δείχνει όταν υποψίεια.

10 ΘΠ: Στην ουσία

11 ΘΠ: Αυτά θα τα κρίνουν οι δικαιούς θα τα κρίνει η βουλή ( ) θα

12 ΝΜ: [Όχι, εσείς να τα κρίνετε εγώ θεωρώ ότι είσαι εξαιρετικά καλόπιστος

και θα δείτε τη διαφορά

1 ΤΡ: You create impressions Mrs Bakoghiani these are

2 DB: → [Read them Mr Pangalos they are very interesting

3 ΤΡ: [They are worthy of Mr

Karamanlis and Mr Spiliopoulos they are not worthy of your
charact and your ( ) But what should I=

4 DB: [You do honor me but please read them]

5 ΤΡ: =read ( ...)

6 DB: It shows Mr Pangalos it shows the analogy of what you spent per year =
7 TP: [In fact] [In fact]
8 TP: = In fact
9 DB: [This one shows the ministries
10 TP: [In fact
11 TP: These will be judged by the judges by the Parliament (.) we
[will find
12 DB: -> [No you judge them I think that you are exceptionally well-intentioned and
you will see the difference

(D)ora (B)akoghian (Ντόρα Μπακογιάννη) insists that (T)hodhoros (P)angalos (Θόδωρος Πάγκαλος) must read a document she has brought concerning the money each party has spent on advertisements during the run-up to the European Elections. During that pre-election period, DB and other members of New Democracy repeatedly accused Pasok government of spending too much money on the pre-election campaign. Notice that TP emphasizes that he does not consider this practice worthy of DB’s character (turn 3). A little later DB returns the compliment (turn 12). Thus, even if the sequential positioning and design of turns indicate an upgraded disagreement, this strategy enables speakers to mitigate the conflict with the interlocutor and make a more favourable impression on the audience. At the same time, they can still express a serious disapproval of the opposing party’s stance.

It has to be stressed that although orienting to the co-IE’s positive face can be used to mitigate the conflict, it cannot prevent a bitter argument breaking out. This is illustrated in Fragment 8. Earlier in the interview, Pasok MP (K)imon (Κ)oulouris (Κϊμων Κουλούρης) has told IR Nasos Athanasiou that news programmes should not only show the minority of Greek people who face problems but also the majority of optimistic young people, promising athletes, Olympic winners and so on. Subsequently, Dhikki MP (G)hianis (Δ)himaras (Γϊμαρης Δημηράς), formerly a journalist, states that KK is an old friend of his (turns 1, 3) and he will address him using the singular form of address; KK agrees on that and states that he loves GD (turns 2, 4). Then, GD goes on to accuse Pasok government of actually forgetting all Olympic winners of the past (turn 5).
ΓΔ: Θα ζητήσω συνάψη από τους χωρίς και τις χωρίς που μοι παρακαλούντο γιατί μιλάω στον Κίμανα στον ενικό αριθμό, (;) γνωρίζω μετά ομος γύρω=

ΚΚ: [Γιατί,

ΓΔ: =στα εικοσάντα [χρόνια

ΚΚ: → [Κι εγώ στον ενικό: θα σου μιλάω δεν υπάρχει θέμα σ' αγαπάω και σε τιμώ δεν υπάρχει πρόβλημα σ' αυτό:

...

ΓΔ: (...) .hhh Αυτή: είναι η τιμή που πρέπει να δώσει η πολιτεία στα νέα παιδί .hhh Και όχι έχουμε τρεις ολυμπιακές .hh Ξέρεις ποιος είναι ο Πέτρος ο Γαλακτόπουλος; (;) Ο πρώτος Ολυμπιακός που τον ήξερε εσύ και ήρθε στο γκολάφιο σου .hhh ένα λεπτό Ω:ΧΙ (;) [Τώρα

ΚΚ: [Μπόρε] [Μπόρε] [(] τώρα

πια) θα μιλήσω (]

ΓΔ: [Όχι τώρα θα πω εγώ :hh δεν είσαι πλειοψηφία] εδώ. (;) Πλειοψηφία είσαι στην εποχή αν και είσαι μειοψηφία στην ελληνική κοινωνία θα μ' ακουστές εμένα. (;) Πέτρος Γαλακτόπουλος τι σημαίνει (;) Σημαίνει

ΚΚ: ο διάλογος; κύριε Αθανάσιο;

(1.0)

ΓΔ: Μιλάει στον : στον άνθρωπο που επικαλεί αθλητισμό στην ποπόδα μας

hhh και που ( ) χίλιες φορές .hh χίλιες φορές,

ΓΔ: Ναι:: σγά heh heh heh heh heh

( )

ΓΔ: Αυς- αςτο αυτό "τώρα αντε"

ΚΚ: Οικτάρεις αυτό που εσύ[;

ΓΔ: [Α- αφυστο

ΚΚ: [Εσύ: προσωπικά (;) μου–

[μου– ΕΣΥ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΙΚΑ;ΚΑ;

ΓΔ: [ΑΣΤΟ ΑΥΤΟ [ΕΦΤΙΑΞΕΣ [(

ΚΚ: [Έχεις γράψει επαναλήψεις =

ΓΔ: =Θα σου πω[;

ΚΚ: [ΚΟΜΜΑ:ΤΙΑ .hh για αυτή την έποχή του έγκοντα ενα

σγάδοντα πέντε; =

ΓΔ: [Θα σου πω

ΚΚ: [Ενα λεπτό =

ΚΚ: [Το οο [τραμπλο

ΚΚ: [Ε:KA λεπτό;

ΚΚ: Τόσο ΤΥ:ΦΛΩΣΗ .hh Πια αν υπάρχει αθλητισμός .hh [γεννημένος

ΓΔ: [Σκεύος

ΚΚ: [γεννημένος (;) ναι (;) εμπαθεία ε– βγάζεις}
GD: I will apologize to the gentlemen and the ladies who are watching us for addressing Kimon using the singular form of address, (.) but we've known each other for about

KK: [Why?

GD: =twenty-five [years

KK: → [I will also be using the singular there is no question I love you and I honour you there is no problem in this

GD: (....) hhhh This is the honour the state must bestow on young people hhh And not just saying that we have three Olympic winners hhh Do you know who Petros Ghalatopoulos is? (.) The first Olympic winner whom you met and who came to [your office [, hhh just a minute NO: (.) [Now= [May I [May I

KK: now [I will talk (]

GD: [No now I will talk hhh you are not the majority] here (.) You are the majority in the parliament although you are the minority in the Greek society you will listen to me. (.) What does Petros Ghalaktopoulos mean? (.) It means

KK: [Is this the way the dialogue will proceed mister Athanasiou?

GD: (1.0)

KK: He is talking to-- the man who created sports in our country hhh and who ( ) a thousand times hhh a thousand times,

GD: [Yes really? hch hch hch hch hch hch

KK: ()

GD: Come-- come off it "now ande((interjection))"

KK: You deplore what you:

GD: [C- co[me off

KK: [You: yourself (.) to me--

GD: [COME OFF IT [YOU CREATED [(]

GD: =I will [tell you

KK: [ARTICLES: hhh about that period of eighty-one to eighty-five?=

GD: [I will tell you

GD: =Just a minute.=

KK: =Such [blindness

GD: [JUST a minute
KK attempts to respond to GD’s criticism (turn 6) but the latter does not allow him to go on by stressing that they both have equal rights to this discussion (turn 7). He also claims that KK does not represent the majority of the Greek people any more. KK complains to the journalist about the interruption (turn 8). He then claims to have been the first to promote sports in Greece (turn 10). GD ironically undermines this claim (notice his disaffiliative laughter (turn 11) and KK’s silence after the laughter (turn 12)). GD goes on to openly challenge KK’s claims (turn 13, 15, 17, 19). KK reminds him of the fact that he used to present in his articles KK’s achievements (turns 14, 16, 18, 20). GD repeatedly attempts to obtain the floor (turns 21, 22, 24) but KK now angrily blames GD for being blinded by his party’s ideology and, therefore, refusing to recognize PASOK’s achievements as he used to in the past (turns 23, 25).

Thus, although both IEs have stressed their affinity to each other, the argument they get into is a heated one. What is more, they do not try to exit their dispute; on the contrary, they upgrade and escalate it. This kind of heated argument, however, is probably not well-received by the public who may regard such exchanges with skepticism since both participants’ initial compliments can retrospectively be seen as hypocritical.

6. Discussion

In this paper, I have examined some of the disagreement strategies that are frequently employed by Greek IEs during television news interviews. Instead of arguing, as Greatbatch does, that in the case of unsolicited disagreement between IEs preference features are redundant elements, I have chosen to adopt Kotthoff’s proposal that disagreement becomes a preferred action in argumentative contexts. This proposal succeeds in accounting for the structure of disagreement sequences by taking into consideration contextual and cultural factors. The news-interview context is one of those contexts in which disagreement is favoured by the speakers as a practice that can actually bolster their public image. IEs are given the chance to show that they are assertive, combative and able to defend their positions — qualities that seem to be favoured by both the Greek culture and the highly confrontational na-
tute of politics. Thus, IEs rarely, if ever, attempt to exit disagreement sequences; instead, they escalate the conflict and go on disputing across a series of turns.

As the analysis of fragments from Greek news interviews has shown, IEs who interrupt their co-IEs to produce disagreements, routinely use repetition to emphasize their points: they can either repeat their own words to dramatically strengthen their claims or repeat part of the co-IE’s utterance (or the format of that utterance) to create an effective opposition format. IEs have also been found to oppose each other by undermining each other’s competence on the issues discussed as well as by shifting to topics that are in some way problematic for the co-IE. Finally, they can bolster their image by showing that they care about the co-IE’s positive face: this strategy allows them to mitigate their disagreement with the co-IE and at the same time strengthen their claim by completely rejecting a view they have attributed to somebody non-present.

If Scannell (1991: 7) is right in pointing out that the study of broadcast talk can reveal much about “the communicative character or ethos of broadcasting as an institution, about the quality of public life today as mediated through broadcasting and, more generally, about the structures of identity, performance and social interaction in today’s society”, it is worth considering what the analysis of disagreement sequences in the news-interview context can suggest.

In the rare cases in which IEs comply with the news-interview turn-taking system and produce mediated disagreements in the form of answers to IRs’ questions, we get instances of expository prose which is less common in face-to-face conversation and resembles written, message-focused communication. However, as Tannen sarcastically points out, “contemporary radio and television broadcasts, including the news, seem to be getting more involvement-focused and less message-focused” (1985: 129-30). What matters in news programmes seems to be a dramatized expression of feeling. IEs usually strive to show that they are right and their opponent is wrong not by *making* arguments about the issues discussed but, rather, by *having* arguments with their opponents (cf. Hutchby 1992: 20). Most of the strategies presented in the previous section relate to high involvement which is “exciting, creates interaction, but is often aggressive” (Lakoff 1990: 50, cited in Svennevig 1999: 51).

Moreover, within the Greek culture, taking oppositional stances can be interpreted as a means of creating involvement (cf. Tannen and Kakava 1992: 31). Tannen and Kakava point out that this is the case when the opposition is ritual rather than literal. In a sense, unsolicited disagreements in the news-interview setting are rituals which everybody seems to be waiting for and which, after all, seem
to be favoured by TV channels as events that will guarantee good ratings. As is often reported in the press (Σανδροπόλος 2000, Σνούτη 2000), guests in panel interviews are not chosen accidentally. Their success in previous television disputes is always a prerequisite for their being invited to a news-interview show. Guests are paired with one another, after the journalists or the executive producers have been convinced that each pair will guarantee a lively and entertaining duel.

Sometimes, however, the guests in news interviews go to extremes: during news interviews that were broadcast in the run-up to the Greek Parliament elections in March 2000, Pasok MP Evangelos Yannopoulos called Communist Party Candidate Liana Kanelli πατοβολή (a ‘slut’, literally a ‘floor cloth’), while New Democracy MP Evangelos Meimarakis told his co-IE Evangelos Venizelos that he is a pachyderm. These are certainly extreme cases which may be popular with the masses but seem to be less appealing to the “thinking” audience; however, they indicate that disagreements in news interviews can be aggravated and highly confrontational.8

To sum up, the analysis of disagreement sequences in the news-interview context illustrates some of the prevalent values that are cherished in the Greek context: a preference for disagreement in argumentative contexts, a highly oppositional political climate, a focus on involvement in discourse. The extent to which features of everyday interaction are reflected in this formal context may also be indicative of a tendency Fairclough (1995: 9) refers to as “conversation-alization of public discourse”, a trend that, among other things, makes public discourse more accessible to the public.

All in all, these considerations hopefully shed further light on the significance of panel interviews and the reasons they are preferred both by broadcasters—as an effective means of generating entertaining broadcasting—and by politicians—as a means of improving their own image and at the same time belittling their opponents—, not to mention the general public who simply relish such programmes.

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8 Still, even in such extreme cases, the exchanges seem to be shaped by an orientation to positive politeness: in the case of the Venizelos-Meimarakis confrontation and towards the end of the interview which was broadcast on the eve of the two men’s nameday, both men wished each other “happy nameday”, thus indicating that their political opposition does not affect their noble feelings and at the same time attempting to restore their image which may have been tarnished by the confrontation.
References


Tannen, Deborah (1985). “Relative focus on involvement in oral and written discourse”. In


Appendix: Transcription conventions
[based on Ten Have (1998), Schegloff (1998), Atkinson and Heritage (1984)]

[ ] A single left bracket indicates the onset of overlapping talk.
] A single right bracket indicates the end of overlapping talk.
_ = (1) If two lines connected by equal signs are by the same speaker, then there was a single, continuous utterance with no break or pause, which was broken to accommodate the placement of overlapping talk. (2) If two lines connected by equal signs are by different speakers, then the second was latched to the first.

(0.5) Numbers in parentheses indicate silence, represented in tenths of a second.

(.) A dot in parentheses indicates untimed silence.

word Underlining indicates some form of stress or emphasis by increased loudness.

::: Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately preceding sound

. A period indicates a falling, or final, intonation contour, not necessarily the end of a sentence.

; In the Greek data, a semicolon (Greek question mark) indicates rising intonation, not necessarily a question.

In the English translations of the data, a question mark indicates rising intonation, not necessarily a question.

, A comma indicates “continuing” intonation, not necessarily a clause boundary.
The absence of an utterance-final marker indicates some sort of "indeterminate" contour

Upper case indicates especially loud sounds relative to surrounding talk
Utterances or utterance parts bracketed by degree signs are relatively quieter than surrounding talk.
was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk.

A dot-prefixed row of /hs/ indicates an inbreath.

A parenthesized /h/, or a row of /hs/, within a word indicates breathiness, as in laughter.

Laughter

Empty parentheses indicate the transcriber's inability to hear what was said. The length of the parenthesized space indicates the length of the untranscribed talk. In the speaker designation column, the empty parentheses indicate inability to identify a speaker.

Parenthesized words are especially dubious hearings or speaker identifications.

Double parentheses contain transcriber's descriptions/comments.
Parenthesized horizontal ellipses indicate that an utterance is being reported only in part, with additional speech coming before or after the reported fragment, depending on the location of the ellipses.

Vertical ellipses indicate that intervening turns at talking or lines of turns have been omitted from the fragment.

Arrows in the margin point to the lines of transcript relevant to a point made in the text.