The 'Fingerprint' of Vox Pop Interviews

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Abstract

The present study is framed within the methodological basis of Conversation Analysis (CA), and it is focused on institutional talk. By means of comparing and contrasting the vox pop interview with other institutional interactions, the paper exposes the institutional and interactional features of the vox pop interview with the purpose of defining the 'fingerprint' of this kind of interaction. For the aim of this paper, twenty vox pop interviews were taken from the Mexican news broadcast called *El Notifiero*, available online. A total of ten vox pop interviews were selected to be analysed and transcribed using the transcription conventions of CA. The analysis of the data revealed three possible ways in which the interviewer (IR) may react to the answer of the respondent (RT); these are: nodding, making an assessment, and reformulating. It also showed that the IR may shape the interaction in order to elicit talk from the RT, and that the IR could, in some cases, build an argument just like a lawyer would in a courtroom.

Keywords: Conversation Analysis, institutional talk, vox pop interview.

Conversation Analysis and Institutional Talk

Let us start by placing Conversation Analysis (CA henceforth) studies in the wide scope of the Social Sciences research so as to provide a top-down notion of where institutional talk analysis is situated.

It might be argued that the Social Sciences can be regarded as a complex set of 'matryoshka dolls'[1] that contains a vast variety of sciences on which research is carried out in order to describe and explain aspects related to humans in interaction or as individuals. The complexity of this 'matryoshka doll' relies on the interdisciplinary characteristic of its sciences; for instance, we may encounter CA not only inside the 'Linguistic doll' but it could also be inside the 'Sociology doll'. Similarly, research on CA shares its contents with Pragmatics and/or Sociolinguistics; however, their aim and object of study are particularly defined in each of these fields. With regard to CA, and following this matryoskative analogy, we may consider talk-in-interaction as its main object of study, which involves both 'ordinary conversation' and 'institutional talk'; the latter placed inside the former; and the relationship between the two of them could "be understood as that between a 'master institution' and its more restricted local variant" (Heritage, 1998: 2). Therefore, the institutional talk analysis will depart from the restrictive differences maintained with 'ordinary conversation' but it will remain permanently similar in the principles of context construction and ordered actions.[2]

The 'restricted local variant' of ordinary conversation (i.e. institutional talk) is the type of talk-in-interaction present when people carry out their daily working activities pursuing a specific task in professional settings; for instance, interactions that occur in courtrooms, doctor consultations,

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[1] This is a Russian ornament that consists of a set of decreasing sizes dolls which are located one inside another. It is important to mention that this analogy does not imply any kind of hierarchy of size or importance among disciplines, but the interrelationship among them.

[2] In contrast to the Sociological and Sociolinguistic notion of context in which "social forces" are imposed to the speakers, in CA the context is constructed by the participants. The participants are considered to be "knowledge social agents who actively display for one another…their orientation to the relevance of context" (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998: 147); in other words, in CA the "context is treated as a project and product of the participants' own actions and therefore as inherently locally produced and transformable at any moment" (Heritage and Greatbatch, 1991: 94-95). The ordered actions principle of CA departs from Sacks' pioneering research on CA; he argues that "…whatever humans do can be examined to discover some way they do it…That is, we may alternatively take it that there is order at all points" (Sacks, 1984: 22), therefore, a fundamental feature of CA methodological basis is that "talk-in-interaction is systematically organized and deeply ordered" (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1999: 23).

classrooms, news interviews, etc. As Drew and Heritage (1992b: 22) remark, institutional talk involves: (a) an orientation towards a specific goal, task or identity at least by one of the participants; (b) constraints on the participants' contribution to the talk and (c) specific inferential frameworks and procedures for each institutional context.

Let us now use news interviews as an example which contains these three characteristics of institutional talk. Firstly, news interviews are a restrictive variant of ordinary conversations because "pre-allocated turns" (Atkinson and Drew, 1979: 37) are assigned to the participants, in this case the interviewer (IR henceforth) and the interviewee (IE hereafter), according to their respective institutional roles. One of the interesting and analysable parts of this event is that different actions can be performed within the frame or form of a question or an answer during the interaction between the IR and the IE. With regard to the task of news interviews, we may argue that since this type of institutional talk is designed for an audience, the participants have the task of constructing information through questioning and answering so that the audience can build an opinion or a thought about the participants and/or interview topic(s). Secondly, in relation to the constraints of the participants' contributions to the talk, we may mention that the formality[3] of news interviews relies not only on the restrictive turn-taking system but also on the limitations that the IR and the IE have while interacting. In other words, the IR's and IE's contributions are meant to be questions or answers respectively; however, as mentioned before, institutional talk is governed by the principle of context construction which means that in the analysis of news interviews one can find that such limitations are 'violated' and that the interaction may move, for example, from the formal context of news interviews to a confrontational context. Finally, their specific inferential frameworks and procedures are related to two things, on the one hand they have to do with the restrictive character of institutional talk and the participants' roles; and on the other, they are linked to what Levinson (1992: 97) calls "activity-specific rules of inference".[4] For example, in order to

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[3] In Atkinson's (1982) paper on 'formality', news interviews are categorised as a 'formal' interaction; and it is argued as well that formality is identified by its differences with ordinary conversation.
[4] These activity-specific rules constrain two things: "what will count as an allowable contribution" to the talk and "what kind of inferences will be made from what is said" (Levinson, 1992: 97).

show neutrality during news interviews and therefore be perceived as 'professional', the IR might withhold expressing sympathy or agreement with the IE's ideas or claims.

So far, a brief description of institutional talk has been provided; it has also been mentioned where institutional talk is situated within CA along with where the departure point of institutional talk analysis is located; and the general characteristics of institutional talk in terms of news interview have been presented. Now having this general notion of institutional talk let us move to the main objective of this paper which is focused on one type of interview: vox pop interviews (VPIs hereafter). In the following pages we first analyse the features that make vox pop interviews institutional talk, then we examine the characteristics and the features that they share with other types of institutional talk. The data analysed here is taken from VPIs carried out by the journalist Caridad Cienfuegos whose VPIs are presented in a Mexican news broadcast called *El Notifiero*.[5]

In order to start dealing with this matter it is important to stress two factors about the institutional talk analysis approach. Firstly, it has to be taken into account that the participants overwhelmingly use the turn-taking system to show and perform the "institutional character" (Drew and Heritage, 1992: 26) of a given institutional talk. This is precisely how the dissimilarities between ordinary conversation and institutional talk arise. Secondly, these divergences are linked to both the restrictions of the actions that can be made during a conversation and to the development and negotiation of the actions which are not restricted in a given institutional interaction. Both factors may result in the variation of the characteristics of the different institutional interactions as argued by Heritage and Greatbatch (1991: 95-96):

"The ensemble of these variations from conversational practice may contribute to a unique 'fingerprint' for each institutional form of interaction – the 'fingerprint' being comprised of a set of interactional practices differentiating each form both from other institutional forms and from the

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[5] This TV programme can be described as a satire on news programmes. Here the presenter is dressed as a clown and he comments on the most relevant news of the week. As part of the programme, there are several vox pops in regard to political and social matters. Caridad Cienfuegos is one of the interviewers responsible for the VPIs.

baseline of mundane conversational interaction itself". In the following section it is proposed a view of what may be called the 'fingerprint' of VPIs.

The 'Fingerprint' of Vox Pop Interviews

Vox pop interviews take place in public spaces and, one may say, are a sort of compilation of 'brief interviews' because the time spent with each individual (interviewee) lasts between eighty and ninety seconds. They consist of a journalist asking randomly selected people the same question(s) so that the variety of responses build an idea about the different opinions within the population in regard to a specific topic (Hüllen, n.d.). They do not embody a formal opinion poll that may be taken as a representation of the general view of an entire population; they are rather perceived as a reflection of the range of people's beliefs and judgments about the topic. These types of 'brief interviews' are used in radio and/or TV programmes where they may be broadcast alone or as part of a report, news interview or any media element.

From the definition of VPIs, we notice that they are a task-oriented talk-in-interaction in the sense that, similarly to the standardised survey interview[6], the interaction between the IR and the respondent (RT henceforth) is intended to collect people's opinions with regard to a matter of popular interest, but in this case they are compiled to be presented to the audience of a TV or radio programme. VPIs could be considered to be goal-oriented interactions because the IR's principal task is to elicit talk from the RTs and in this way obtain their view about a topic. Similar to news interviews the accomplishment of VPIs is accompanied by restrictions present in the interaction,

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[6] This is a data collection instrument used in social science research; it is designed "for gathering data with which to measure the intentions, actions, and attitudes of large numbers of people, usually representative samples of the populations being studied" (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 2000: 1). We will be referring to the standardised survey interview which is presented as type of institutional talk in the book *Interaction and the Standardized Survey Interview* by Houtkoop-Steenstra (2000), her book's main arguments are that "detailed conversation analytic study of actual survey interaction may provide insights for the improvement of questionnaire design in general" and that CA "may also be used as a diagnostic instrument for specific questionnaires" (p.14).

such as the fact that the issues treated are pre-established and stipulated by the IRs, and the turn-taking system is overwhelmingly constrained by a question and answer format. From the data analysed in this study, it is noticed that the organisation of the interaction within VPIs could be described in terms of CA as follows.

Adjacency Pair

An adjacency pair is an ordered sequence of actions/utterances that are recognised in a talk-in-interaction (Sacks, 1992); they have an order because although both actions come together, one precedes the other. That is, a specific first part of the pair has a specific second part; for example, an accusation may be followed by an acceptance or a denial. Echoing Schegloff and Sacks' words, we describe how adjacency pairs work in VPIs as: "given the recognizable production of a first pair part, [a question,]… its speaker [the IR] should stop and next speaker [the RT] should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type the first is recognisably a member of" (1973: 296). It could be argued that VPIs are constructed only by question-answer adjacency pairs; however, as Heritage (1984: 257) remarks a "third turn option" may accompany an adjacency pair. Houtkoop-Steenstra (2000: 24) explains that a question-answer adjacency pair is an "action structure built of sequence positions". She represents it like this:

> Turn 1 position: Speaker 1: question
>
> Turn 2 position: Speaker 2: answer
>
> Turn 3 position: Speaker 1: receipt of response

In the data of VPIs used, three different forms in which Speaker 1 (the IR) receives the response of Speaker 2 (the RT) were found: the IR does it using assessment tokens, reformulating the RTs' answer, and nodding. In the following section it is first analysed and illustrated with samples the different receipt actions, then it is exemplified how the third turn can be used to elicit the RTs' talk.

Receipt Actions

 Nodding

As it has been mentioned, the main objective of an IR doing VPIs is to elicit the RT's opinions, or in other words, the RT's talk; in order to achieve this purpose the IR should facilitate and encourage the RT's freedom and comfort to talk. One way to do so is by nodding. In Schegloff's paper, it is argued that the action of nodding at someone while s/he is talking does not only indicate that the recipient of the talk is understanding, paying attention and showing interest, but also his/her nods are regarded as the action of "passing the opportunity to do a full turn at talk" (1982: 88). In our data it is found that the IR overwhelmingly nods while she listens to the RT's responses. This is shown in extract (1). (Transcription symbols and translation conventions are explained in the Appendices A and B respectively)

(1)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos y las manifestaciones*[7] (3:15)]

1   IR: ¿qué opina ust<u>ed</u> de las manifestaciones?

2   what opine (PRES) you (SG DIST) of the demonstration? [IND]

3   **What do you think about demonstrations?**

4   RT: .hh (3) mira (8) eh° (9) eeh no tengo inconveniente con las manifestaciones

5   .hh look (PRES) eh eeh no have (PRES) problem with the demonstrations [IND]

6   **.hh (3) look (8) eh° (9) eeh I don't have any problem with demonstrations**

7   →   (.3)

8   IR:→   ((nodding + - spd))

9   RT: simplemente: el derecho ah (.) ah (.) a la libertad de nosotros también <u>no</u>? dep_

10   simply the right ah ah to the liberty of us too

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[7] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=_-Hrpk6TIoU

11		just that ah (.) ah (.) we also have the right to freedom don't we?
11	→	(.5)
12	IR:→	((nodding + - spd))
13	RT:	<u>va</u>ya (.) obstruyen tráfico
14		go (PRES) [EXCL] block (PRES) the traffic [IND]
15		**you know (.) they block the traffic**
16		(.)
17	IR:→	((nodding + - spd))
18	RT:	obstruye:n (.3) gente
19		block (PRES) people [IND]
20		**they block people**
21	→	(.3)
22	IR:→	((nodding + - spd))
23	RT	obstruyen pasos
24		block (PRES) roads [IND]
25		**they block roads**
26	→	(.5)
27	IR:→	((nodding + - spd))
28	RT:	yy yo: creo que no se vale
29		and I: think (PRES) [VERB IND] that no worth (PRES REFLEX) [EXP]
30		**and I think it's not fair**
31	IR:→	((nodding + - spd))

Here, a pattern can be identified in the talk: every time the RT completes a statement, which could be considered as a transitional relevance place (TRP hereafter)[8] and which is also followed by a pause, the IR's nodding is present; the nods are characterised by the increase and then decrease of speed ('+ - spd') that can be regarded as hints. So, these actions suggest that when the IR nods the RT perceives attention, understanding and interest and this encourages him to expand his opinion; the pauses the RT makes could be considered as the very moment when the IR gives hints to the RT so that he could expand his talk.

Assessment

Similar to the Standardised Survey interviews, in VPIs the IR should not judge or evaluate the RT's answers; instead, the IR should be displayed as a mere collector of information or, in this case, opinions. Furthermore, one may think that if the IR assesses the given answers, the RTs may feel reluctant to express their thoughts and continue participating in the interview. However, in the data was found that something rather different happens.

In extract (2) the vox pop is about a statue of the former Mexican president (Vicente Fox) which was pulled down by some protestants on the very same day of its inauguration; so the question is 'of whom would you like to build a statue?'

(2)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos y la estatua de Fox*[9] (2:13)]

1   RT: a ti:

2   of you:

3   **of you:**

4   IR:→   <u>hay</u>: qu<u>é</u> lindo papi (.) ia quien nunca_=eso se merece un beso

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[8] TRP is the moment when a turn in a conversation is reached so "there is the possibility for legitimate transition between speakers" (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998: 48).
[9] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=9Q4msrjv7Oo

5   oh [EXCL] what cute dady (.) and of whom=that deserve (PRESS) a kiss [IND]

6   oh how cute honey (.) and of whom never_=you deserve a kiss for this

5 → (IR kisses RT)

In abstract (3) the vox pop is about AIDS, the IR asks the RT the following question: 'if your husband were coming back from a long trip would you ask him to wear a condom?'

(3) [*Caridad Cienfuegos en Jalisco*[10] (3:28)]

1 RT: ah por supuesto=porque quién sabe con quiénn tanto se habrá enredado

2   por allá mientras mi ausencia ¿no?

3   ah of course because who know (PRES) with whom so much involve [VERB IND]

4   there while my absence ¿no?

5   oh of course=because who knows how many people he could have fooled around with

6   (1) ((pause from the editing))

7   bueno que (.) mejor lo usamos ¿no? (.) porque quién sabe qué yo haya

8   hecho ¿no? (5) hahh ¿n(hh)o?

9   well that (.) better it we use (PRES) no? (.) because who know (PRES) [IND]

10   what I have (AUX) [SUBJ] do (PERF) no? (.5) hahh n(hh)?

11   well (.) we better use it don't you think? (.) because who knows

12   what I could have done right? (.5) hahh right hhh?

13 IR:→ [eso] (.) también hhh ((she nods vigorously))

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[10] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=qzX7UjCshlg

14   [that [EXCL] (.) as well hhh

15   **[that's right (.) as well ((she nods vigorously))**

16   RT: [hahh…

As can bee seen in abstracts (2) and (3), lines 4 and 13 respectively, the IR assesses the RT's answer but she does it in two different ways. In (3) the IR evaluates the answer as correct and also agrees with the response by nodding; in (2) the answer is even responded with a kiss by the IR. As we said before, context construction is a principle in CA, and here there is an example of how the talk-in-interaction moves from a VPI's context to an ordinary conversational one. In order to understand these actions it is important to mention that the woman in charge of these particular VPIs is a character, and thus the VPIs can be considered to be 'informal', what is more the show itself where they are broadcast involves humour and satirical content. So, it could be said that the talk-in-interaction has a quasi-conversational character where the IR not only asks questions but also performs actions that resemble ordinary conversation: she manifests agreement in (3) and completes the second pair of a compliment adjacency pair in (2).

Formulation

Finally, the third way in which the receipt of an answer is manifested in the vox pops analysed here is formulation which is defined by Garfinkel and Sacks (1970: 350) as follows:

 "A member may treat some part of the conversation as an occasion to describe that conversation, to explain it or characterize it, or explicate, or translate, or summarize, or furnish the gist for it or take note from its accordance with rules, or remark on its departure from rules…"

In the example below we notice that formulation is constructed by both, the IR and the RT, but elicited only by the former.

(4)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos y el ejercicio*[11] (2:20)]

1   RT: pues eso es poco porque normalmente la barra pesa ciento ochenta kilos

2   EXCL that is less because normally the block weight (PRES) hundred eighty kilo [IND]

3   **well that actually isn't much because normally the block weighs a**

4   **hundred and eighty kilos**

5   (.5)

6   IR:→   y lo cargas <u>to</u>dos los días?

7   and it carry (PRES) all the days? [IND]

8   **and you carry it every day?**

9   (.)

10   RT: todos los días

11   all the days

12   **every day**

13   IR: ciento ochenta <u>ki</u>los

14   hundred eighty <u>ki</u>los

15   **a hundred and eighty <u>ki</u>los**

16   RT: ciento ochenta kilos (.) por barra

17   hundred eighty kilos (.) per block

18   **a hundred and eighty kilos (.) per block**

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[11] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=HxI9sODboJw

In line 6 the IR starts the formulation of the statement produced in line 1 and the RT continues it in line 16. It could be argued that since the aim of the IR is to elicit the RT's talk, she starts the formulation with questions so that the RT continues talking.

Eliciting talk

Here, we discuss the actions that the IR performs in order to elicit the RTs' talk. In the data analysed, Caridad Cienfuegos elicits the IRs' talk in two different ways: by introducing another question immediately after the RTs finish their answers and by pointing the microphone at the RTs.

(5)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos y Teotihuacán*[12] (1.51)]

1   IR: Señora (.) ¿cómo está uste:=usted viene aquí por moda o por

2   convicción?

3   madam (.) how be (PRES) you (SG DIST) you (SG DIST) come (PRESS) for fashion

4   or for conviction [IND]

5   **madam (.) how are you=do you come here out of fashion or out of**

6   **conviction**

7   RT: no: (.) por convicción = ((she nods))

8   no: (.) for conviction

9   **out of (.) conviction**

10   IR:→   =¿por qué?

11   =for what

12   **=why?**

In extract (5) we can notice that the IR does not only introduce the following question immediately after the RT has finished her answer, but also while the RT is talking, she nods as if to keep eliciting the RT's talk.

(6)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos del Notifiero*[13] (2:34)]

1   IR: ¿cuáles son las cosas que te hacen ser feliz?

2   which be (PRES) the things that do (PRES REFLEX) happy

3   **what are the things that make you happy?**

4   ((IR points the microphone at the RT))

5   RT: puesamiesencialmentelamúsica:(3)lamúsicaymiprofesión(.)mitrabajo

6   well for me mainly the music (.3) the music and my profession (.) my job

7   **wellformeit'smainlythemusic(3)themusicandmyprofession(.)myjob**

8   →   (1)

9   que(.)este:elarbitrajequeesesteunadelascosasquemásmegustan

10   that (.) er: the refereeing that be (PRES) er one of the thing that more like (PRES REFLEX)[IND]

12   **that(.)errefereeingthatisoneofthethingsthatIlikethemost**

13   IR: ((IR places the microphone at the RT)) ¿te va a hacer feliz cuando

14   saques una tarjeta o infeliz?

15   ((IR places the microphone at the RT)) go [PRESS REFLEX] be (PRES) [IND]

16   happy when take out (PRES) [SUBJ] a card or unhappy?

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[13] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=jtXRZhFm5Jc

17   **((IR places the microphone at the RT)) is it going to**

18   **make you happy or unhappy when you take out a card?**

In extract (6) the IR asks the question, line 1, then in line 5 the RT gives his answer but as he does, he pauses briefly, then in line 8 the RT stops talking and there is a one-second silence[14] which could be considered to be a TRP; however, the IR does not take the turn. We may infer that the reason why the IR does not talk is because she wants to continue eliciting the RT's talk. Evidence to support this claim is the fact that she keeps the microphone leaning towards the RT. In other words, the TRP is physically present.

So far it has been shown how VPIs are carried out; it has been analysed and exemplified the different ways in which the IR receives the RT's answers, and how the IR shapes the talk-in-interaction in order to elicit the RT's talk. All these characteristics constitute the fingerprint of vox pop interaction, they make vox pops a unique institutional talk but at the same time they cause them to be similar to other institutional interactions. In the final part of this work we comment on the similarities that exist between VPIs and other institutional talk.

Sharing Characteristics with Other 'Fingerprints'

Vox pop interviews, as presented in this paper, are closely related to standardised surveys and news interviews, in the sense that the three institutional talks are constrained by similar factors such as pre-allocated turns (e.g. question-answer format), IR and RT/IE institutional roles, and a pre-established agenda; however, the focus has not been yet on the fact that vox pops are interactions that are designed for an audience; they represent how one may judge or think of a specific matter. Taking this into consideration, vox pops can be compared with courtroom interaction. Let us demonstrate this claim in the following extracts.

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[14] "When a speaker has completed his turn and the recipient does not take a response turn, causing a silence to occur, the speaker may analyze the silence as a cue to continue talking" (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 1999: 38).

(7)   [In Levinson (1992: 83)]

1   you aim that evening then was to go to the discotheque

2   Yes.

3   Presumably you had dressed up for that, had you?

4   Yes.

5   and you were wearing make-up?

6   Yes.

7   Eye-shadow?

8   yes.

9   Lipstick?

10   No I was not wearing lipstick.

11   You weren't wearing lipstick?

12   No.

13   Just eye-shadow, eye make up?

14   Yes.

15   And powder presumably?

16   Foundation cream, yes.

17   You had had bronchitis had you no?

18   Yes.

19   You have mentioned in the course of your evidence about wearing a coat?

20   Yes

21   It was not really a coat at all, was it?

22   Well, it is sort of a coat-dress and I bought it with trousers, as a trouser suit.

23   That is down there isn't it, the red one?

24   Yes.

25   If we call that a dress, if we call that a dress you had no coat on t all had you?

26   No.

27   And this is January. It was quite a cold night?

28   Yes it was cold actually.

Extract (7) is the cross-examination of a rape victim by the defendant's lawyer, according to Levinson (1992: 84) the aim of this question-answer interaction is to build up an argument for the jury. The argument would be as follows: "the victim was dressed to go dancing, she was heavily made up… and despite the fact that she had been ill, she was wearing no coat on the cold winter night. The implicit conclusion is that the girl was seeking sexual adventures". Now, let us observe the VPI that follows.

(8)   [*Caridad Cienfuegos y el ejercicio*[15] (2:40)]

1   IR: ¿cuánto pesa cada garrafón?

2   how weight (PRES) each water bottle [IND]

3   **how much does each water bottle weigh?**

4   RT: un promedio de veinte (.) litros (.) más o menos (.) es lo que pesa

5   an average of twenty (.) litres (.) more or less (.) be (PRES) it what weight [IND]

6   **an average of twenty (.) litres (.) more or less (.) that is its weight**

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[15] Available at http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=HxI9sODboJw

7 IR: ¿y tú cargas estos garrafones hasta la casa de la gente?

8   and you (SG IF) this water bottles until house of the people?

9   **and you carry all these water bottles to people's houses?**

10 RT: sí

11   yes

12   **yes**

13 IR: ¿qué es lo más que te ha tocado subir de escaleras de alto?

14   what be (PRES) more that have (AUX) turn up the stairs high [IND]

15   **what is the most storeys you have climbed in order to deliver a**

16   **water bottle?**

17 RT: lo más (.) diez pisos

18   the most (.) ten storeys

19   **the most (.) has been ten storeys**

20 IR: ¿cargando esto?

21   carry (PRES) this? [IND]

22   **carrying this?**

23 RT: Si

24   yes

25   **yes**

26 IR: ¿y cuántos garrafones más o menos al día tú-tú: vas llevando?

27   and how water bottles more or less every day you-you go (PRES) take (PRES)[SUBJ]

28   **and how many water bottles in average do you carry every day?**

29   RT: un promedio de entre cincuenta (.) cuarenta cincuenta (.) más o menos.

30   one average of between fifty (.) forty fifty (.) more or less

31   **around fifty (.) forty fifty (.) more or less**

Extract (8) is taken from a vox pop which is part of a report to discuss a newspaper article which claimed that in Mexico City people do not exercise; the aim of the vox pop is to build up the opposite idea. The argument of this specific extract for example would be like this: every day this man has to carry and deliver about fifty water bottles of twenty litres each, and sometimes he has to deliver the heavy bottles to houses which are on the tenth storey. The implicit conclusion would be that this man does exercise every day at work so he does not need to go to the gym. Comparing these extracts we notice that both institutional talks aim to construct an argument and present it to an audience in one case the jury and in the other the TV programme audience.

Conclusion

This paper has exposed that VPIs fulfil the necessary characteristics to be called institutional talk; in the data analysed, the principal characteristics that make vox pop interviews a restrictive variant of ordinary conversation were found, these are: pre-allocated turns, display of participants roles, and constraints in interaction. Furthermore, two goal-oriented actions performed by the IR were identified: to elicit the RTs' talk and to build an argument.

The different types of institutional talk have their own characteristics but at the same time they all share some features; this fact allude to the matryoskative analogy presented at the beginning of this paper. In the sense that similar to news interviews, standardised survey interviews and courtroom interaction, VPIs are contained in the matryoshka doll of institutional talk. Moreover, VPIs reflect some of the features of the other institutional talks, and it is precisely this mixture of features which constitutes the 'fingerprint' of vox pop interviews.

Appendix A

Transcription Symbols

(1)   The number in parentheses indicates a pause in seconds.

(.2)   The number in parentheses indicates a pause in tenths of a second.

(.)   The dot in parentheses indicates a micro pause.

[ ]   Square brackets indicate the point at which overlapping starts and ends respectively.

=   The equals sign indicates latching between utterances.

.hh   It indicates inbreath.

hh, hahh   Both indicate laughter, 'hh' is a slight laugh and 'hahh' is considerable laugh.

wo(hh)rd   'hs' between words indicate laughter infiltrated in the speech.

wor-   It indicates that a words is cut off.

<u>wo</u>rd   underline fragments of a word indicate louder sounds.

¿word?   The two questions marks indicate that the talk is produced with questioning intonation at the beginning and end of the utterance (only in Spanish).

word?   In English, one question mark indicates question intonation.

[*Caridad Cienfuegos* (3:34)] Extract headings refer to the transcript source, in all the extracts, except extract (7), the numbers in parenthesis indicate the minutes:seconds where the part referred can be found in the video.

Appendix B

The data used in this paper is in Mexican Spanish; therefore, the transcriptions are structure as follows: the first line(s) is (are) the utterance in Spanish, the second line(s) is (are) the literal translation, and the third line(s) is (are) the English equivalent which is in **bold**.

Translation abbreviation

EXCL   exclamation (e.g., **pues** eso es poco porque…/well, that isn't that much because…)

EXP   expression (e.g., **no se vale**…/it's not fair…

IND   indicative (e.g., qué **opina usted** de…/ what do you think about…)

PRES   Present simple tense (e.g., no **tengo** inconveniente…/I don't have any problem…)

REFLEX   Reflexive (verbs) (e.g. ¿…qué **te hace** ser feliz?/ what makes you happy?)

SG DIST   Singular distance (second person plural pronoun 'usted'

to establish a distant or formal relationship between the speakers)

SG IF   Singular informal (second singular pronoun 'tú' to

establish a close or informal relationship between the speakers)

SUBJ   Subjunctive (e.g. ….cuando **saques** una tarjeta…/…when you take out a card…)

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