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METALINGUISTIC MEANS FOR EXPRESSING POWER IN DISCOURSE

Abstract: Critical discourse analysis shows that power in discourse can be expressed in various ways, mainly by using linguistic means, such as specific vocabulary or syntactic structures. However, there are metalinguistic elements in conversation that can be used for the same purpose. In this paper we explore the use and functions of silence (gaps and pauses) and interruptions in Hardtalk television interviews in English and Serbian. Both silence and interruption are widely present in Hardtalk interviews though they may not always be obvious. Moreover, they have many functions in expressing power in discourse. For the purpose of this analysis the combined methodology of conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis was applied. Although conversation analysis unlike critical discourse analysis does not normally engage in social analysis, their methodologies can be complementary. The results show that the combination is necessary for proper understanding of metalinguistic means in power discourse.

Key words: critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, silence, interruption, television interview

1. Introduction

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a linguistic discipline the explores power relations in discourse. Norman Fairclough, one of the founders and main proponents of the discipline defines it as

> „discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power." (Fairclough, 1995: 132).

This definition can be applied to power relations in discourse on both macro, society in general, for example: relationship between different social groups, and micro level, between individuals, for example: relationship between two or more speakers in an institutional setting. This research is about the micro level of analysis, namely the spoken institutional discourse between two participants engaged in a confrontational television interview.

CDA shows that power in discourse can be expressed in various ways, mainly by using linguistic means, such as specific vocabulary or syntactic structures. A lot

of research has already been done regarding linguistic means for expressing power. However, there are metalinguistic elements, such as silence or interruptions, that can be used for the same purpose. These elements are mainly analyzed within the field of conversation analysis. Although conversation analysis unlike critical discourse analysis does not normally engage in social analysis, their methodologies can be complementary. The results of the present research show that the combination is necessary for proper understanding of metalinguistic means in power discourse.

The corpus analyzed includes BBC *Hardtalk* television interviews and its Serbian counterpart B92 *Poligraf* interviews. Being institutional, television interviews are normally controlled by the interviewers (IR) – they pick the topic(s) of the interview, they choose and invite guests, they are time managers, they start when they want and end a topic when it suits them. Guests, interviewees – IE, can do little regarding discourse control. Since the institutionality itself provides the IR with power, one would expect to find both linguistic and metalinguistic means in the IR's speech. However, this is not always the case in our corpus, which is of a confrontational nature. Sometimes, the IE takes over the control by way of using either linguistic or metalinguistic elements in their discourse. This power switching may be short-lived, but it brings some balance to the conversation of unequal participants. Moreover, confrontational interviews are of a different nature than the common television interviews. Confrontational interview is a communicative event in the form of a dialogue performed by way of questions and answers, between a media representative, i.e. a professional journalist and an individual connected in some way to current news and events. The topics are about current and pressing issues of public interest. The purpose of the interview is to provide the audience with the necessary information. The confrontation arises from the fact that the participants attempt to achieve different objectives. The interviewer's goal is to obtain as much information as possible about a topic, while the interviewee aims to reveal only the information he/she deems appropriate (Nikolić, 2013: 59□64).

In this paper we explore the uses and functions of interruptions and silence, gaps and pauses, in confrontational television interviews. Leech considers „conversational behavior such as speaking at the wrong time (interrupting) or being silent at the wrong time" (Leech, 1983: 139) as impolite behavior. He calls this kind of discursive behavior *metalinguistic aspects of politeness*. Both interruption and silence are widely present in Hardtalk interviews though they may not always be obvious. Moreover, they have many functions in expressing power and taking over the control over discourse.

2. Interactional control

Power in discourse can be researched on two levels: formal structure control and content control. Metalinguistic means fall into the formal structure control, or to use Fairclough's term □ interactional control. Fairclough organizes textual analysis into four categories as shown in Table 1 below.

Text analysis			
Vocabulary	Grammar	Cohesion	**Text Structure**
Deals mainly with individual words.	Deals with words combined into clauses and sentences.	Deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together.	**Deals with large scale organizational properties.**
• Word meaning • Wording • Metaphor	• Modality • Transitivity and theme	• Connectors and argumentation	**• Interactional control**

Table 1. Fairclough's text analysis (in Locke, 2004: 46)

Since in this research we analyze spoken discourse, namely face-to-face conversation, we are interested in the last category of text analysis: organizational properties of a conversation. According to Fairclough, interactional control is, together with more common linguistic means, a very important element of power in spoken discourse. It is related to text structure and is concerned with turn-taking, selection and change of topics, control of the agenda, how interactions are established and finished, etc.

Turn-taking system in television interviews is very simple and the participants are obliged to follow a predetermined format: question – answer – question – answer etc. IRs have to „restrict themselves to asking questions, while IEs should restrict themselves to answering them" (Heritage and Clayman, 2010: 216).[1] First, the IR asks a question. The IE waits until the IR finishes, and then provides an answer. The IR listens to the IE until he finishes and then asks another question.[2] In an ideal situation, there are neither interruptions nor overlap. In this kind of a turn-taking system the IR has absolute control over the discourse. However, in confrontational interview this turn-taking system is disturbed by interruptions on both sides.

The English corpus analyzed is comprised of 27 interviews for a total of 10 hours of speech. The research shows that in the English corpus the institutionality of the genre gives the power to the IR. In 20 interviews the IR interrupts more often than the IE; in 4 interviews the IE interrupts more often, while only in 3 there is a balance. Out of a total of 2,526 turns 935 are taken after interrupting the other speaker. The IR interrupts and takes the floor in 60.1% of the cases, while the IE does the same in 39.9%. As we can see from the above-mentioned figures, there are many interruptions by both speakers during the discourse, which is a common feature of confrontational interviews. In 36.9% of cases turn-taking occurs after interruptions. Obviously, the IR is far more dominant, as we had assumed due to the institutional character of the interviews.

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[1] See also Clayman and Heritage, 2002.

[2] For a more detailed analysis of the turn-taking system in television news interview see Heritage and Clayman, 2010.

The Serbian corpus consists of 22 interviews slightly longer than their English counterparts lasting a total of 10 hours as well. Here, the situation regarding power relations is somewhat different. In six interviews the IR interrupts more often; in 8 it is the IE who interrupts more frequently, while in eight there is a balance. Out of a total of 2,180 turns 1,230 are taken by interrupting the other speaker. The IR interrupts and takes the floor in 47.6% of the cases, while the IE does the same in 52.4%.

This statistics shows that in the Serbian corpus the institutionality is less prominent than in the English one. The speakers interrupt each other equally often. What is much more striking is that the percentage of overall turn-taking after interruptions is far higher than in the English corpus (36.9% in English vs. 56.4% in Serbian).

3. Interruptions and their functions

The previous statistics shows that interruptions are very common in confrontational interviews where the participants often disagree. The key purpose of interruptions is to take over control over discourse. The functions of interruptions are various. Due to the length limit of this paper, we cannot show all the relevant examples, although they abound in both corpora, but we can list the functions that were found in the research and illustrate them with one example each.

The only case where there is no confrontation is when the participants interrupt each other to agree, and here there is no power in discourse. This is done by both the IR and the IE.

In all other cases there is confrontation and, therefore, power relations can clearly be seen.

3.1. Partial agreement

Confrontation occurs in the cases of partial agreement. This means that one participant interrupts the other to agree with some part of what they say, but continues his turn stating a difference in opinion, contrasting ideas or attitudes or confronting the other speaker. Both the IR and the IE use this technique with no difference between the corpora. To illustrate this, we will look at the following example from the Serbian corpus.

Example 1
IE:I praktično ćemo mi biti okruženi NATO-om sa praktično svih strana, što je, kažem opet, ukoliko bi NATO uzimali kao bezbednosni izazov, rizik ili pretnju, onda se dramatično okolnosti odbrane naše zemlje menjaju.
IR: *Da, ali* šta nam to govori? Da smo mi jedini van cele priče? Da li to [treba... šta smo dobili sa tom neu-…?
IE: [Pa, nismo jedini, ja ću da Vas vratim opet, znači, Švajcarska nije, nije ni Švedska, nije ni [Austrija, nije...
IR:[*Pa, da, ali* znate ne možemo da se poredimo ni sa Švajcarskom, ni sa Švedskom,

ni sa Austrijom, to su jake, bogate zemlje, mi smo zemlja koja je... [3]

<div align="right">(IR: Antonela Riha; IE: Dragan Šutanovac)</div>

The IR uses partial agreement twice in this example. In the first instance, the IR agrees with the IE, but asks for a precise answer to her question which the IE clearly tries to evade. In the second instance, she again agrees, this time with his examples, but confronts him with the fact that our country cannot compare with them. Thus, she neutralizes his argument and retains control in discourse.

3.2. Failure to interrupt

Although partial agreement is usually an effective technique for taking over control in discourse, it is not always successful. Sometimes a speaker fails in his attempt to interrupt. The following example from the English corpus illustrates this:

> Example 2
> IR: You also said in the past that you have claimed in expenses and allowances from Brussels since 1999: „Ooh, you said, it must be pushing 2 million [pounds.“
> IE: [Well, that's a that's a direct misquote and a deliberate misquote…
> IR: Well, „It's a vast sum“, you said in a discussion with Denis MacShane. [„I don't know how much,
> IE: [*But but they yeah…*
> IR: oh Lord, it must be pushing 2 million.“
> IE: *Yes, but…*
> IR: That's a direct quote.
> IE: Yes, but not money that's gone to me. That's the point and that's [where… that's where
> IR: [But we don't know where it's gone, do we?
>
> <div align="right">(IR: Stephen Sakur; IE: Nigel Farage)</div>

The IE tries to interrupt the IR twice, but eventually fails to take the floor. The IR persists in finishing the quote before asking a question. So, when the IE finally takes his turn it is to answer the question. The attempt to interrupt and thus take over control in conversation fails. This can be found in the speech of both the IR and the IE.

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[3] Translation of example 1

IE: And practically we will be surrounded by NATO from practically all sides, which is, I repeat, if we consider NATO as a safety challenge, risk or threat, then the circumstances of the defence of our country change dramatically.

IR: *Yes, but* what does this tell us? That we are the only ones left out? Does this [need... what have we gained with this neu-…?

IE: [Well, we're not the only ones, I'll remind you once more, so, Switzerland isn't, neither is Sweden, nor [Austria, nor....

IR: [*Well, yes, but* you know we cannot compare with either Switzerland, or with Sweden, or Austria. They are strong, wealthy countries, we are a country that is...

3.3. Apparent agreement

Apparent agreement is very common in confrontational interviews. At first, it may look like agreement or partial agreement. A speaker interrupts with discourse markers such as *OK, fine, sure* in English or *da, u redu, dobro* in Serbian, which are here used as a tool for interrupting and turn-taking and not for agreeing or responding affirmatively. Apparent agreement is used by the IRs in order to retain interactional control. The example from the English corpus shows the most common way of using apparent agreement.

> Example 3
> IR: So, let's unpick this financial transaction tax, if we may. {*a part left out*} Explain to me how you think it could, would work.
> IE: The basic idea is that our financial system is under-taxed and under-regulated, and we're suffering on both accounts. The under-regulation contributed to this boom and bust that we've just gone through. Clearly this is a global crisis in part made in an unregulated financial system. So, we need more financial regulation. Second, this is an under-taxed financial system. How do I know that? Because in a year of collapse the Wall Street bankers just pocketed 20 billion dollars in end of the year bonuses. That's rather shocking. There's a lot of cash left on the table of our bailout mo[ney.
> IR: [*Sure, but that's a different point. {continues speaking}*
>
> (IR: Stephen Sakur; IE: Jeffrey Sachs)

It is obvious that the IE does not answer the question, so the IR intervenes with apparent agreement. The discourse marker *sure* is not used to express agreement. The IR uses it to interrupt an irrelevant answer and then insists on getting the proper answer to his question. This strategy has not been found in IEs' speech.

3.4. Confrontation

Confrontation is a common feature in the speech of both the IR and the IE. When a speaker interrupts in order to confront the other participant the consequence is in the majority of cases taking over control in the discourse. The majority of interruptions fall into this category. Example 4 from the Serbian corpus illustrates confrontation on the part of the IR:

> Example 4
> IE: Vlada prepoznaje tu ozbiljan problem i nastojaće da i u rebalansu budžeta i kroz odgovarajuće aranžmane sa bankama učini da se omogući privredi da što lakše preboli problem [likvidnosti.
> IR: [*Ali to ne funkcioniše dobro, gospodine Iliću.* To je problem. Jako malo subvencionisanih kredita je zasad realizovano. Da ne pričamo o kreditima za investicije. Njih gotovo da i nema.[4]

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[4] Translation of example 4
IE: The Government recognizes a serious problem there and will attempt through the   b u d g e t rebalance and by way of various arrangements with banks to make possible for the   economy   to overcome the problem of [liquidity.
IR: [*But that doesn't function well, Mister Ilić.*   That's the problem. Very few subsidized credits have been realized so far. Not to mention investment credits. They practically don't exist.

(IR: Jugoslav Ćosić; IE: Slobodan Ilić)

Example 5 from the English corpus shows confrontation on the part of the IE:

Example 5
IR: And that is a hope, but to come back to the analysts who purport to know most about what's going on and what to look for. The IMF for example have just shaved down their growth prospects for the UK. 2010 – they now say that they'll see growth of just 1% and a tiny bit more and in 2011 they say it may just be 2%. Now the Government not so long ago was predicting over 3 per [cent…
IE: [*Not this Government, not this Government*, but THE Government.

(IR: Stephen Sakur; IE: Richard Lambert)

Little needs to be said about this function of interrupting. In every example of this kind, the participant who interrupts takes control over the discourse.

4. Silence and its functions

Like interruptions, silence is a metalinguistic aspect of discourse. It was mainly analyzed by conversation analysts without any implications regarding power in discourse. In every conversation, speakers make pauses from time to time or they don't start speaking at the moment they get their turn. Those spots in conversation where one speaker stops speaking and another one starts CA calls transition relevance place.

Following their analyses, conversationalists came to the conclusion that turn-taking runs smoothly, with almost 'miraculous' spontaneity and precision. Levinson notices that „gaps between one person speaking and another starting are measurable in just a few micro-seconds" (Levinson, 1983: 296□297). The main proponents of CA, Sachs, Schegloff and Jefferson state that „transitions (from one turn to a next) with no gap and no overlap are common. Together with transitions characterized by slight gap or slight overlap, they make up the vast majority of transitions" (Sacks et al., 1974: 700□701). Conversationalists today take for granted that speakers are capable of reacting within *split-second precision timing,* which was supported by numerous examples (Sachs et al., 1974; Jefferson, 1973, 1986, etc.). This means that silence is very rare and has no significant functions in speech. This might seem particularly true for the confrontational discourse, which is faster and time-limited and on the verge of conflict, so there is no space nor time for being silent. So, when a silence occurs it is all the more noticeable.

Conversationalists distinguish two types of silence in speech:
(1) Intra-turn silence □ pauses which occur within the speech of one speaker, not at a transition relevance place; and
(2) Inter-turn silence □ gaps and lapses which occur at a transition relevance place. CA does not explicitly state the difference between gaps and lapses. Lapses are considered to be 'extended gaps' (Sacks et al., 1974: 715).

We will, therefore, analyze only gaps. Moreover, CA measures precisely how long pauses, gaps and lapses last. For the purpose of this analysis the length of the silence is not relevant, so we will treat gaps and lapses as the same inter-turn silences.

In TV interviews in general, and particularly in confrontational interviews where speakers tend to interrupt one another very often, where overlaps are frequent and often quite long, silences are relatively rare, and, therefore, very obvious and noticeable.

4.1. Pause

This example is taken from the interview with Noam Chomsky. The main topic is his long-lasting criticism of the USA. Towards the end of the interview, the IR asks a very provocative question after making three pauses during his turn:

Example 6
IR: (…) Your work for more than forty years has focused on what you called the terrorism, the criminal acts of the United States. (…) And yet your parents knew America was a safe haven, as a place of opportunity, of security (…) How, how do those two elements of your life fit together?

(IR: Stephen Sakur; IE: Noam Chomsky)

The IR makes a pause before each sentence he utters:
1) before the statement that the IE has long been criticizing the USA;
2) before reminding him that his parents chose the USA for their new home; and
3) before the final question.

The IR here does not express uncertainty but power. The function of this pause □ we can call it 'dramatic pause' □ is complete control achieved by being silent for a while before contrasting two facts. Thus, the IR draws our attention to the question that follows, making us assume that it is going to be of the utmost importance for the interview.

Our next example is from the Serbian corpus and illustrates a pause used by the IE.

Example 7
IE: Ali govori se o mom mandatu. (…) Ustav kaže: poslanik svoj mandat, svoj mandat, ali to je apsolutno moj mandat. (…) A čiji je? (…) Ko je osvojio taj mandat? Tomislav Nikolić.[5]

(IR: Antonela Riha; IE: Tomislav Nikolić)

The function of these pauses is exactly the same as in the previous example from the English corpus, where the pause is used by the IR. Before every statement

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[5] Translation of example 7:
IE: But it is about my mandate. (…) The Constitution sais: an MP's mandate, MP's mandate, so it's absolutely my mandate. (…) Whose is it? (…) Who won that mandate? Tomislav Nikolić.

the IE makes a pause in order to emphasize his words. It also has the objective to draw the audience's attention to what he has to say.

4.2. Gap

In confrontational interviews it is common for the IRs to ask sensitive or provocative questions after which the IEs are left speechless. This is one of the features of the institutionality of interviews. In the following example, we can see that after a long introduction to the question the IE is taken by surprise and does not know how to answer it. He actually admits that after a gap he makes:

Example 8
IR: I'm interested that you mentioned your father. He came from a finance background. I'm just wondering whether the sort of psychological sort of analysis you've put into some of your movies, I'm thinking about your presidential movies, your portrait of Nixon, or of JFK or indeed of W. George W. Bush, where you play around with the backgrounds, their relationships with their families and in particular their fathers. If people did the same thing to you, to Oliver Stone, would your films generally reflex something important about your background and in particular your relationship with your family and your father?
IE: (…) Well, Stephen, that's a tough question you blew. You're asking me to self-psychoanalyze myself.

(IR: Stephen Sakur; IE: Noam Chomsky)

But IRs can prepare their questions beforehand, which is not the case with IEs. Therefore, gaps in IRs' speech are much more noticeable after an IE asks a delicate or unexpected question that leaves the IR speechless, i.e. a gap occurs in the IR's speech. We illustrate this with an example from the Serbian corpus.

Example 9
IR: I sad nešto sasvim sasvim drugačije. Danas u jednim novinama se pojavila vest, a Vi i najavljujete već neko vreme da ćete ojačati stranku, da će akademik Mihajlo Marković preći u Vašu stranku, pa čak i braća Petrović, Mirko i Draško. Da li je to tačno?
IE: Ja to nisam rekao, niti je mislim da to nije rekao niko iz stranke.
IR: (...) Ja nisam rekla da ste Vi rekli, nego prosto to... [6]

(IR: Antonela Riha; IE: Tomislav Nikolić)

After a question about possible new members of the IE's political party, the IE does not provide an answer but denies that anyone from his party, himself included, said anything about the news. Unprepared for such a reaction on the part of the IE, the IR is at a loss for words and makes a gap.

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[6] Translation of example 9:
IR: And now about something completely completely different. Today, in a newspaper a news item appeared, and you have been announcing for a while that you are going to strengthen your party, that the Academic Mihajlo Marković is about to join your party, and even brothers Petrović, Mirko i Draško. Is this true?
IE: I didn't say that, nor did I think no one from my party said that.
IR: (...) I didn't say that you said, it's just that…

From these examples we can see that gaps are always a sign of powerless participants in discourse and are found in the speech of both participants.

4.3. Pause or gap?

Sometimes we cannot be sure whether a silence at the transition relevance place is a gap or a pause. This is the case in both the following examples.

Example 10
IR: So, I just want to summarize this with you that decline in prosperity in the West is not inevitable if the West does (…)?
IE: (…) If it remains open to trade and capital flows with the rest of the world.

(IR: Zeinab Badawi; IE: Stephen King)

In this example, the IR starts a sentence in which she attempts to summarize a part of the interview. Suddenly, she stops talking in the middle of her sentence. There is a silence, which is obviously a pause because she makes it within her turn. But she does not continue her turn and there is silence until the IE realizes that he is expected to finish the sentence. So, the silence that begins as a pause becomes a gap.

The same is true for the example from the Serbian corpus.

Example 11
IR: Dobro, ali Vi ne možete to da dokažete, Vi samo to (…)
IE: (…) Ja sam vam rekao. (...) Ja sam vam rekao. Ni jedan uslov, zvanični, o kojima pričaju i Slavica Đukić Dejanović i Dragan Todorović i Nada Kolundžija, ni jedan od tih uslova nije ispunjen, a odustalo se od rasprave o budžetu.[7]

(IR: Antonela Riha; IE: Tomislav Nikolić)

While the previous types of silence can be found in the speech of both the IRs and the IEs, this strategy has been found only in the speech of the IRs.

5. Conclusion

The research proves that metalinguistic means for expressing power are often present in confrontational discourse and that each of them has its distinctive functions.

Interruptions are shown to be one of the basic features of confrontational interviews. The analysis of the overall formal structure of the interviews shows that a very high percentage of turns are taken after interruptions. There are some differences between the English and the Serbian corpora. In the English corpus, the IR uses interruptions much more often than the IE, while in Serbian both participants use them equally often.

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[7] Translation of example 11:
IR: OK, but you cannot prove that, you just (…)
IE: (...) I told you. (...) I told you . Not one single condition, official, that Slavica Đukić Dejanović and Dragan Todorović and Nada Kolundžija are talking about, was met; none of these conditions was met, yet the discussion on the budget has been cancelled.

Regarding the ratio between the number of interruptions and the overall number of turns in the interviews the analysis shows that it is far higher in Serbian than in English.

Therefore, we can conclude that concerning control of discourse structure the confrontational element is more present in Serbian corpus than in English; in the English corpus the interviewer is far more powerful than the interviewee, while in Serbian this relationship is more balanced.

The functions of interruptions we have come across during the research are the following: (1) agreement, which has no function of power or control; (2) partial agreement used by both IRs and IEs, (3) apparent agreement, used only by IRs and (4) the most frequent □ disagreement or confrontation, used by both IRs and IEs, which all have explicit functions of control and power in discourse. No significant differences were found between the two corpora regarding the functions of interruptions.

Silence can also be used to express power in discourse. This applies to pauses, while gaps show lack of power and control. Both types of silence are found in the speech of both participants in interviews. The border case of the combination of pause and gap is used only by IRs who use this strategy to retain control in discourse.

We can therefore conclude that in both English and Serbian language, the same metalinguistic means are used for expressing power in confrontational interview.

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METALINGVISTIČKA SREDSTVA ZA IZRAŽAVANJE MOĆI U DISKURSU

Rezime

Kritička analiza diskursa ukazuje na činjenicu da se moć u diskursu može iskazati na različite načine, naročito upotrebom lingvističkih sredstava, kao što su vokabular ili sintaksičke strukture. Međutim, u konverzaciji nailazimo i na metalingvističke elemente koji se mogu upotrebiti u iste svrhe. Kombinacijom metoda kritičke analize diskursa i analize konverzacije u ovom radu su istražene upotrebe i funkcije prekidanja i ćutanja (pauze i zastoji) u televizijskim intervjuima iz 'hardtalk' tradicije. Mada konverzacionalisti ne zalaze u domen šire analize društvenih implikacija diskursa što je glavno polje istraživanja kritičke analize diskursa, metode ovih dveju disciplina se mogu kombinovati i biti komplementarne. Rezultati pokazuju da su i ćutanje i prekidanje veoma prisutni elementi u tom tipu intervjua, kao i da imaju različite funkcije izražavanja moći u diskursu. Oni mogu ukazivati na to koji učesnik u komunikaciji u određenom trenutku ima moć, ko je preuzima, kao i ko je u podređenom položaju, bez obzira na činjenicu da institucionalni karakter televizijskog (i bilo kog drugog) intervjua voditelju daje ulogu moćnog učesnika koji ima kontrolu u diskursu. Što se tiče kontrastiranja korpusa na engleskom i srpskom jeziku, značajnije razlike nisu uočene po pitanju ćutanja ni funkcija prekidanja. Jedina bitna razlika ogleda se u učestalosti prekidanja na osnovu čega zaključujemo da je institucionalni karakter ovog tipa diskursa prisutniji u engleskom korpusu nego u srpskom.

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