

RESPONSE STRATEGIES IN THE TV-INTERVIEWS OF FOUR FINNISH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: PRESENTATION OF A MODEL FOR ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The present paper describes a method of analysis of responses in authentic TV-interviews of four Finnish presidential candidates. Because of the aggressive technique used by the interviewers and due to the public nature of the interviews, the interviewees had to resort to a number of different means of avoiding or rejecting the negative implications of the requests. The analysis proceeds from what is considered the initial point of decision, that of accepting, avoiding, or rejecting the proffer, through similar possibilities in the treatment by the interviewee of the topic, of selecting the target of his response, and of treating the semantic content of the request. The various choices and their effect on the audience are discussed in the light of authentic examples.

1. Introduction

Last January and February, the TV-interviews by Antero Kekkonen and Jyrki Kouluumies of the Finnish presidential candidates aroused even more interest than was due to their political topicality. The reason was that the interviews were carried out in a manner which was described by one journalist as "a disgusting way of digging up matters unpleasant to the interviewees". This view was shared by a great many journalists and newspaper readers, often independently of their party background. Moreover, there also seemed to arise a kind of consensus concerning the impressions created by the candidates. For instance, Harri Holkeri (The Conservative Coalition Party) was, in the opinion of many, direct and convincing, while some com-

mentators found him unreliable, Jan-Magnus Jansson (The Swedish Folk Party), was generally considered lucid, and Kalevi Kivistö (The Finnish People's Democratic Party), positive, calm, and matter-of-fact. Opinions regarding Mauno Koivisto, the present president, are, like those concerning Harri Holkeri, divided: a representative of the Social-Democratic Party, he was considered as "ordinary", "like one of us", and, on the other hand, difficult to understand, uneasy, and unwilling to express himself.

The interviews thus offer a rich material for analysis of spoken discourse. The discourse situation and the interactional roles of the participants are clearly set, and the material makes it possible to compare both different ways of treating the interviewee and different ways of responding to the requests. This observation led to a twin project, with Auli Hakulinen investigating the use of presupposed and implied information in the interviews (Hakulinen, forthcoming), while the present writer concentrates on the development and treatment of topics in terms of strategies of request and response. I shall here present a model for analysis of responses as well as some tentative interpretations of the effects of the choice of strategy on the general impression made by the interviewee. The model combines interactional analysis of responses with analysis of the treatment of the topics. Since each main topic is typically treated in the form of several exchanges consisting of proffers and responses, the final level of analysis consists of the content and the formulation of the exchanges. The model thus differs from, eg., that introduced in Edmondson 1981, which, though it makes implicit use of the contents of the utterances, concentrates on the interactional structure of the exchange.

The aim here has been to create a system of analysis sensitive to the kinds of discourse strategies which might explain the differences observed by the audience, i.e., features such as directness vs. indirectness of response, willingness vs. unwillingness to respond, behaving like "an ordinary chap" vs. behaving like an experienced politician, and fluency of interaction vs. lack of it.

In this paper I shall take up strategies of response, and these in the interviews of the four candidates mentioned above: Harri Holkeri (HH), Jan-Magnus Jansson (JMJ), Kalevi Kivistö (KK), and Mauno Koivisto (MK). I shall not be able to discuss here the strategies used by the interviewers or the actual treatment of implications or presuppositions. For the latter topic, the reader is referred to Auli Hakulinen's work.

2. The model and analyses

In response strategies, i.e., alternatives of response available to the respondent, the choices to be made can be described as taking place on several levels. These levels are illustrated in a skeleton of the model in Table 1.

Table 1. Model for Analysis of Responses

LEVEL	TYPE OF STRATEGY		
	<u>acceptance</u>	<u>non-compliance</u>	<u>rejection</u>
<u>proffer</u>	response to proffer	respondent takes initiative	no response to proffer
<u>topic</u>	topic treatment continued	intervening subtopic	topic treatment discontinued
<u>choice of target</u>	target: request alone	target: request plus prime/load	target: prime/load alone
<u>content of target</u>	direct acceptance	indirect treatment	direct rejection

These levels can only be distinguished when the strategies of non-compliance or rejection are employed: when the strategy of acceptance is used, the levels collapse. This means that if the strategy of acceptance is used through all the levels, there is no distinct acceptance, separately, of the proffer, topic, and the choice and treatment of the target. In these cases, due to the collapsing of the levels, the response seems to take place at the ultimate level only. - We shall now proceed to examine the use of the different strategies on these four levels.

2.1. Treatment of the proffer

In this paper, the term proffer is used to refer to any verbal initiative which requires some kind of a response, for instance, a greeting, an address, or a request for information (for this term, see Edmondson 1981:86-87)¹. The strategies possible on this level, acceptance, non-compliance and rejection, are here restricted by the type of discourse:

¹ Edmondson defines proffer as the first of two elements of exchange. This element is the stimulus for the second, which is a response to the first.

there are no cases in these interviews of either non-compliance or rejection. Obviously, by consenting to appear in a public interview, the interviewee commits himself to any proffer by the interviewer. If the proffer is not palatable, rejection must take place on some other level.¹

2.2. Treatment of the topic

The first actual choice in the present material comes with topic treatment. The term topic is here used to refer to any subtopic which is treated in terms of a proffer. These subtopics naturally relate to larger discourse topics. That the level of the topic is distinct from the level of content of the target (ie., the actual formulation of the topic), is seen in cases where topic treatment is rejected, and, consequently, the interviewee refuses to enter into an actual treatment of the proffered propositions. We shall therefore start discussing this level by first taking those cases where topic treatment is discontinued, ie., where the interviewee uses the strategy of rejection.

There are several ways of signalling REJECTION of the topic. First, the interviewee may directly state unwillingness to discuss the issue proffered:

- (1) - Onko teiltä pois se kannatus (= Koiviston kannatus)?
- Tässä asiassa en halua tehdä vertailuja minun ja Koiviston välillä.
- Does his popularity (= Koivisto's popularity) decrease your support?
- I do not wish to make comparisons between myself and Koivisto in this matter. (AK-JMJ 36)¹

The interviewee may also refer to another, more appropriate source of information, thus indirectly rejecting the topic:

- (2) - Onko ratkaisu että Puola on muuttunut sosialistiseksi maaksi ollut väärä?
- Se on asia, joka puolalaisten tulee itse arvioida.
- Is the solution that Poland has adopted socialism, a mistaken one?
- That is a matter which the Poles must judge for themselves. (AK-KK 63)

¹ This also applies to classroom discourse (see Johnson 1979:39). Another interesting similarity between these interviews and classroom discourse is the nature of the requests, which, typically, are not sincere requests for new information (op.cit. p. 117).

² In the examples, the first initials refer to the interviewer, the second to the interviewee, and the number to the exchange in the interview concerned. Pauses, hesitations, and fillers are omitted. Similarly, ana-colutha have been replaced by formally correct structures.

An indirect rejection may also be formulated as an explicit or implied reference to the impropriety of the request:

- (3) - Paransiko Teille tänään Moskovasta tullut sähke mahdollisuuksianne presidenttipelissä?
- Minusta se olisi koko lailla sopimatonta, että minä ryhtyisin sitä sähkettä tulkitsemaan.
- Did the telegram that you received from Moscow today improve your chances in the president game?
 - I would find it absolutely improper to start interpreting (AK-MK 113)
- (4) - (...) Miksi te ette halua vastata tähän kysymykseen?
- Niin siis minun pitäisi vastata, miksi he tekevät--?
- (...) Why are you unwilling to answer this question?
 - You mean that I should explain why they are--? (AK-MK)¹

Topic treatment is delayed, if the interviewee uses the strategy of NON-COMPLIANCE and makes a request for clarification of the issue at hand (Schegloff's insertion sequence, Schegloff 1972):

- (5) - Presidenttinä te olisitte puolustusvoimien ylipäällikkö. Olisitteko huolestunut?
- Maailmantilanteesta?
- Ei, vaan samasta asiasta mistä Lauri Sutela.
- Eii?
- As President, you would be Commander-in-chief of our military forces. Would you be worried?
 - About the world situation?
 - No, about the same thing that Lauri Sutela is worried about.
 - That is to say? (AK-MK 71)

Similarly, a sequence of metadiscoursal utterances may develop into a minor sub-topic and thus intervene into the treatment of the topic originally proffered:

- (6) - (Olette esittänyt) tulkinnan, joka poikkeaa presidentti Kekkonen Tamminiemi-kirjassa esitetystä. Miksi näin?
- Saanko ottaa kirjan esiin?
- Oikaa hyvä.
- Sivulla 67 on tämä--
- Kuljetteko aina tuo kirja mukana?
- En suinkaan. Minä otin sen, koska aavistin, että tämä kysymys voi tulla esille. Minulla on todella--
- Jos te--anteeksi sen verran vielä, että jos te presidenttinä matkustatte Kreliin neuvottelemaan, niin onko teillä Tamminiemi-kirja takataskussa?

¹ The use of three full stops in brackets indicates that a part of the utterance is here omitted as irrelevant for our purposes. Pauses are marked with --, and unison speaking with square brackets. Longer stretches of speech have been constructed as sentences on the basis of the semantic content and possible pauses.

- Ei, minulla on oma järkeni mukana. Mutta tässä nimittäin käy aivan selvästi ilmi, että (...)
- (You have presented) an interpretation which deviates from that given in President Kekkonen's Tamminiemi-book. Why is that?
- May I take the book out?
- Please do.
- On page 67 we have this--
- Do you always carry that book on you?
- Of course not. I brought it along since I thought that this question might come up. I really have--
- If you--excuse me for a minute, if you, as president, visit the Kremlin on negotiations, will you have the Tamminiemi-book in your back-pocket?
- No, I will have my common sense with me. But it is quite apparent here that (...) (JK-JMJ 63-66)

Notice that here the delay, though originally caused by the interviewee, is then continued by the interviewer. That he is conscious of this being slightly out-of-place, is shown by his apology. Notice also, that there are two target in the last response of JNJ: first, he responds to the immediately preceding request, then takes the initiative of returning to the original proffer. If the interviewee accepts the topic proffered, he faces his next choice, choosing the target for his response. This will be discussed in the next section.

2.3. Choice of the target of response

In the present material, the proffer typically includes a request for information. Exceptionally, we have proffers which function as comments to reinforce the previous request, but, in general, any utterance by the interviewer seems to function as a request, whatever its syntactic form or illocutionary force. The proffer may also contain a prime, ie., an assertion of information which prepares the ground for the request, often for the benefit of the audience.¹ Further, both the request and the prime may be loaded, that is, the request may be a challenge (ie., a request for admission or defense, as in Labov & Fanshel 1977:98), or either the request or the prime, or both, may include implied or presupposed negative information.²

¹ The term here is not used in the same sense as in Edmondson 1981, where it is defined as a pre-proffer move (p. 93).

² In these interviews, due to their aggressive interrogatory tone, and the attempts of the interviewers to expose the weaknesses of the candidates, the context makes most of the proffers loaded. Proffers with no apparent load are used as priming material for a later loaded proffer (see Lautamatti, forthcoming).

In cases where the proffer contains both a request and a prime, or where one or both of these are loaded, the interviewee faces a second choice, that of selecting the target for his response. He may use the strategy of NON-COMPLIANCE and respond both to the request and to the prime or load, as in the following:

- (7) - Kun kaavaillette valintaanne, niin laskette mukaan siis kommunistien äänet?
- Minä en yleensä kaavaile niin paljon kuin ehkä kuvitellaan. Tietenkin joutuu miettimään, millainen tuo tilanne saattaisi olla (...)
- When figuring out your election, do you count along the votes of the Communists?
- I do not generally figure out things to the extent that people may think. Of course, one has to consider that that situation might be like (...) (JK-JMJ 24)

If the prime is heavily loaded, the interviewee may choose it as a target to dispel any misunderstandings it might cause, thus employing the strategy of REJECTING the request:

- (8) - Loukkaako Teitä se, että osa Teidän valitsijamiesehdokkaistanne ei mainitse vaalimainonnassaan Teitä lainkaan?
- No, tämä osa on ainakin minun havaintojeni mukaan hyvin pieni (...)
- Minä kysyin loukkaako se Teitä että (...)
- Does it offend you that some of your elector candidates do not mention your name at all in their adversising?
- Well, the number of these, at least as far as I have observed, is very small (...)
- I asked you whether it offends you that (...) (AK-KK 6)

As above, the interviewer may, in these cases, renew his proffer, and by this renewal imply that the interviewee is avoiding the issue. To prevent this, the interviewee may either signal his intention to respond first to the prime and then to the request, as in (9) below, or he may ACCEPT the request and ignore the load, as in (10):

- (9) - Olette hiukan niinkuin pelotellut kansalaisia Mitterand-ilmiöllä. Mitä tämä mahtaa tarkoittaa?
- Ensinnäkään en ole pelotellut ketään (...)
- You have, as it were, tried to frighten people a little with the Mitterand phenomenon. What does it actually mean?
- In the first place, I have not tried to frighten anybody (...)
(JK-JMJ 42)
- (10) - Onko tämä maata kiertänyt jokseenkin epäaatteellinen show edesauttanut kansalaisia tietämään, millainen vaihtoehto te olette?
- No, minä olen koettanut sitä kertoa.
- Has this rather unideological show that has travelled all over the country, helped the citizens to know what kind an alternative you are?
- Well, I have tried to tell them. (AK-MK 5)

It seems, then, that at this level the use of the strategies of rejection or non-compliance results in a risk of a renewed proffer with the implication of attempted avoidance, while acceptance of the request alone leaves the negative semantics proffered by the interviewer seemingly valid.

2.4. Treatment of the content and formulation of the target of response

In this analysis, the final level where a choice of strategy takes place, is that of content and formulation of the target of response, ie. of the request, prime, or load which the interviewer handles in the response. Here, the alternatives of DIRECT ACCEPTANCE alone ("Yes, it is", etc.), or DIRECT REJECTION alone ("No, it is not", etc.), leave the interviewee the least scope for initiative. Therefore, their use is limited in the present material. Used frequently, direct responses of this kind also create the impression that the interviewee is reluctant to contribute to the discussion. This is due to the character of the interview as an interactional event. The only chance that it leaves for the respondent to take an initiative, is to use the requests as prompts for his own contributions. The interviewee must take advantage of the proffer whenever it is possible by adhering to the topic but formulating the issue at hand to serve his own purposes. This explains why direct responses like the following are fairly infrequent:

(11) - Siis katsotte, että teillä on mahdollisuus koko kansan presidentiksi?

- Niin katson.

- So, in your opinion, you have a chance of becoming President for the whole people?

- Yes, I think so.

(AK-JMJ 8)

More frequently, however, direct acceptance or rejection is followed by information concerning the reason, justification, or background of the acceptance or rejection: plus the information required:

(12) - Voitteko Te länsisuhteistanne kertoa mitään?

- No tietysti, kun ne ovat olleet enemmän esillä, taikka niistä on kerrottu. Olen toki saanut tilaisuuden tavata julkisesti läntisiä johtajia eri maissa, ja niistä on jopa ollut sanomalehdissäkin.

- Can you tell us anything about your relationships with the West?

- Well, yes of course, since they have been more public or they have been written about. I have naturally had the opportunity to meet publicly Western leaders in different countries, and these events have even been in the newspapers.

(JK-HH 96)

(13) - Eli siis Koiviston kannatus johtuu siitä, että hän on vastustanut Kekkosta?

- Ei suinkaan, koska hänellä on laaja puolue takanaan ja hänellä on monenlaiset meriitit. Mutta tuli vähän lisäkannatusta silloin, ehkä ei niin vähänkään.

- In other words, Koivisto's support is due to his opposition to Kekkonen?
- Not at all, since he has a large party behind him and many kinds of merits. But he did get some extra support then, and perhaps not so little either. (AK-JMJ 35)

The above examples illustrate the way in which direct acceptance or rejection can be accompanied by material which is used to justify the response. Though the interviewee is restricted by the formulation of the request, he may, as in (13), use his response, for instance, to correct a mistaken conclusion made by the interviewer, and to support his claim by information he himself has selected. Thus, direct acceptances and rejections which are followed by additional information allow the interviewee a certain initiative, and, at the same time, contribute to the impression of willingness to respond.

More problematic, however, are those requests which contain a load. Acceptance of the formulation of the request means, in these cases, acceptance of the negative information which is part of the request. On the other hand, as was seen in cases where the interviewer has to choose the target of the request, ignoring the request may have negative implications, too.

One way for the interviewee to show NON-COMPLIANCE with the request is to reject the syntactic formulation of the proposition, if it is not acceptable to him. For instance, a disjunctive question implying the existence of two alternatives only, may tie down the interviewee, as in the following:

(14) - Kumpi teistä on tärkeämpää, että tulee porvarillinen presidentti vai että ei tule mustaa hevosta?

- Minusta on tärkeää, että tulee porvarillinen presidentti ja missään tapauksessa ei tule mustaa hevosta.

- Which do you find more important, that we get a conservative President or that there is no black horse?
- I find it important that we get a conservative President and that in no case there is a black horse.

(JK-HH 64)

The interviewee remains here tied by the formulation of the interviewer, and the response becomes evasive. In the following, the interviewee refuses to accept the formulation, thus defeating the implication:

(15) - Kumman käteen (Ehrnrothin vai Sinisalon) tartutte veljen käteen?

- En minä ymmärrä, että tällaista tilannetta voisi syntyä.

- Whose hand (the leader of the ultra-conservatives or that of the Stalinists) would you take as a brother's hand?
- I cannot see that a situation like that could arise.

(AK-MK 56)

A similar situation may arise, if the request contains loaded semantic material. To avoid the problems, discussed above, which arise if the interviewee ignores either the load or the request, he may resort to a strategy which is very frequent in the present material: to the use of INDIRECT TYPES OF RESPONSE. One possibility is to reformulate the proffer so that it corresponds more closely to the interviewee's own point of view:

- (16) - Luuletteko, että tällainen asennoituminen saattaisi pelottaa porvarillisia äänestäjiänne?
- Jos minä annan yksinkertaisia vastauksia mutkikkaisiin kysymyksiin, niin näitä yksinkertaisia vastauksia voidaan esimerkiksi tähän tarkoitukseen käyttää.
 - Do you think that this kind of attitude might frighten your conservative voters?
 - If I give simple answers to complicated questions, these answers could, for instance, be used for this purpose.
- (JK-MK 46)

Another indirect strategy of response is to resort to a change of level of specificity: for instance, to talk about a general principle where the interviewer presents a specific problem:

- (17) - Georg C. Ehrnroth on asettunut teidän kannattajaksenne erittäin kiivaasti.
- Minusta on aina selkeää, että selvittää niillä voimilla, joita itse kerätään.
 - Georg C. Ehrnroth has set himself to support you with great ardour.
 - I am positive that it is best to manage with those resources that we have collected ourselves.
- (AK-MK 57)

Finally, to avoid the problems created by the loaded topic, the interviewee may choose the strategy of relating his response to the proffer in a very loose manner. This will allow him a great deal of freedom in presenting his perspective of the issue:

- (18) - Mutta eikö (...) tuo teidän välittämisenne (...) ole eräänlaista hyssyttelyä, jossa linjan tulevat säätämään ennen muuta muut, ei presidentti?
- Presidentillä minun kuvassani säilyisivät muun muassa eduskunnan hajoitusoikeus (...). Uskoisin, että presidentin ei välttämättä tarvitse johtaa esimerkiksi hallituksen muodostamista niin suvereenisti kuin se on tapahtunut.
 - But is not this willingness of yours to reconcile a kind of hush-hushing where the course of action will be dictated by people other than the President?
 - In my picture, the President would retain the right, among other things, to dissolve Parliament (...). I should think that the President need not necessarily control the formation of the Government as strictly as has been the case.
- (AK-JMJ 53)

- (19) - Teidän henkilökohtainen taustanne on hyvin puoluekeskeinen. Olette tarkastellut suomalaista yhteiskuntaa lähinnä kokoomuksen

puoluetöimiston ikkunasta. Koko kansan presidentille - eikö tämä ole kovin kapea tausta?

- Minä olen saanut olla tehtävissä, jotka ovat vienet minut lähemmäksi suomalaisia ihmisiä käytännössä samanmielisiä ja erimielisiä, kuin monessa muussa tehtävässä saadaan. Olen kulkenut tätä maata, kiertänyt lähes kaikki Suomen kunnat ja tavannut ihmisiä. Luulen saaneeni melkoisen hyvän kuvan siitä, minkälainen tämä maa on.

- Your personal background is very party-centered. You have inspected the Finnish society mostly from the window of the office of the Coalition Party. For the President of whole people, is this not a very narrow background?
- I have the chance of taking tasks which have brought me closer to Finnish people, in practice unanimous and not, than one could in many other jobs. I have gone round this country, visited almost every Finnish commune, and met people. I think I have got rather a good view of what this country is like. (JK-HH 21)

The above examples were cases of indirect rejection of the proffer. In the following, which is a case of indirect acceptance, the response may require a special effort of interpretation, due to its technical formulation. Cases like this may be felt to imply evasion, if the hearer is not familiar with the topic:

- (20) - (...) Onko verotus yksi keino tehdä tätä tasoitusta (parempi- ja huonompiosaisten välillä)?
- Julkisen vallan kautta tapahtuu huomattava määrä tasoittamista. Tietysti käy sillä tavalla, että ne, jotka veroja maksavat, ne huomattavassa osassa myös valtiolta saavat, ja muulta yhteiskunnalta, palveluksia. Mutta nämä tulonsiirrot, jotka muodostavat hyvin huomattavan osan valtiontaloudesta, niitten tarkoituksena on pyrkiä tulojen tasoittamiseen.
 - Is taxation one way of doing this levelling (between well-to-do and less well-to-do)?
 - A great deal of levelling takes place through institutional channels. Of course, what happens is that those who pay taxes also to a large extent receive services of the State, and of society in general. But these transfers of income, which form a bulk of State economy, they are meant to bring about levelling of income. (JK-MK 16)

Interpretation of the relevance of an indirect response thus depends on the information available to the hearer. There are, of course, cases where indirectness actually does serve the purpose of evasion, as in the following:

- (21) - Mutta te pääsisitte siis kolmannelle - anteeksi, toiselle kierrokselle tai --?
- No, joka tapauksessahan asia on niin, että valitsijamiehet ottavat tehtävänsä erittäin vakavasti ja --
 - Sitä ei kai kukaan--
 - --valitsevat käytettävissä olevista vaihtoehdoista omasta mielestensä parhaan ja sitten (...)
 - But you would get as far as the third - sorry, the second round or --?

- Well, in every case, the fact is that the electors will take their task very seriously, and --
 - There is no doubt --
 - --choose the one they consider the best from among those available and then (...)
- (AK-HH 46-47)

Even in cases of this type, a superficial impression of relevance is created by the references in the response to phenomena related to the topic (electors, task, choose, the best). For a hearer familiar with the Finnish system of presidential election, the irrelevance soon becomes apparent.

On the basis of the above analysis, it seems that the strategy of non-compliance by employing various forms of indirect response is of great interest. Indirect responses offer the interviewee a way of tackling highly loaded proffers, and it also gives him an opportunity to make his own contribution to the interaction, relatively unhampered by the negative semantics used by the interviewer. However, indirectness of response has its hazards, too. Indirect acceptance may create the impression of reluctance to comply, or, if the response is structurally complex and lexically technical, of indifference to the problems of comprehension that the audience may have. Also, the use of indirect responses as a way of evading the request, might result in negative implications.

3. Observations on individual strategies of the interviewees

Some observations will be presented here on cases where the use of a certain strategy is particularly frequent or infrequent with an interviewee. Some tentative hypotheses are presented about the possible effects of these on the hearer in the discussion below.

Topic treatment is discontinued almost to the same extent by Holkeri, Kivistö, and Koivisto, while Jansson uses this strategy only once (HH 17, KK 16, MK 20 cases and Jansson 1 case). However, non-compliance in topic treatment, shown as intervening requests and comments, is a strategy which only occurs with any frequency in the Koivisto interview (MK 12 cases, HH and JMJ 3 cases, and KK 0 cases). The interviewee also show some differences in the choice of the target of response. Holkeri responds to the load more frequently than the others, while Koivisto has the lowest number of these responses (HH 8.4 % of all of his responses, KK 7.9 %, JMJ 5 %, and MK 3.9 %).

The strategies of treatment of the content of request or other target also show differences which are of interest here. Thus, Koivisto shows the lowest number of cases of direct acceptance (2.8 % of all of his responses as compared with 5.9 % in the Holkeri interview, and 8.4 % in the interviews

of Jansson and Kivistö). Cases where the content of the target is accepted and amplified by added information are most frequent in the Jansson interview (27.8 % against 22.5 in the interview of Koivisto, 22.1 in that of Holkeri, and 16.7 in that of Kivistö). Cases of indirect acceptance are most frequent in Koivisto's responses (32.4 % against 20.8 % in the interviews of Jansson and Kivistö, and 8.2 in the interview of Holkeri). As to the strategy of rejection, there is a particularly noticeable difference in the number of indirect rejections as used by Holkeri and Jansson (HH 38.4 % and Jansson 9.8 %, KK 15.3 % and MK 22.5 %).

4. Discussion

What has been presented above is a model for analysis of responses in interviews. The model consists of several levels, those of the proffer, the topic, choice of the target of response, and treatment of the target of response. These levels can only be distinguished when the strategies of rejection and non-compliance are being employed, while the use of the strategy of acceptance results in a collapse of the levels. The responses of four Finnish presidential candidates have been analysed in terms of the model to establish how the strategies of acceptance, non-compliance and rejection are used by the interviewees on the different levels. Some interpretations suggest themselves on the basis of the choice of strategies. Thus, since indirect responses are much dependent on the interpretation by the hearer, the relatively high frequency of indirect responses in the interviews of Holkeri and Koivisto may, at least in part, explain the division of opinions about their success as interviewees. On the other hand, the high frequency of direct responses of both types in Jansson's interview may have contributed to the impression of lucidity. Koivisto's reserve may also be seen in the relatively high frequency of cases of intervening requests for clarification or interpretative remarks. As to the treatment of loads, Holkeri takes them up more frequently than the others, while Koivisto shows the least inclination to do so - perhaps another sign of his reluctance to play the game of the interviewers.

However, these interpretations must be approached with many reservations. In the first place, we have no knowledge of any norms against which to compare the resulting figures. The only point of comparison that can be used here is the other interviews, and this naturally rouses the question of whether the treatment received by the candidates in the hands of the interviewers is the same. In fact, examination of the strategies of request indi-

cates clear-cut differences in this respect (Lautamatti, forthcoming). This means that what are here called individual strategies, are partly due to the way the requests are presented, which may leave fewer alternatives for the individual than the model indicates. Of course, this does not invalidate the link between the differences in response strategies and the general effect made by the interviewee; it only means that the effect may be partly due to the treatment of the interviewee.

Secondly, as far as the analysis of those responses is concerned which need background information for the interpretation, the evaluation of the response in terms of lucidity, reliability or comprehensibility rests on the amount of political knowledge of the hearer. Therefore, the more complicated the issues discussed, the more informed the hearer needs to be in order to evaluate the response. This applies most obviously to indirect responses, whether affirmative or negative. Ultimately, the significance of these responses is necessarily related to the political ideology of the hearer and his preconceptions of the interviewee. If we have faith in a candidate and in what he represents, we see in his indirect, even evasive responses a brave attempt to produce some semblance of a response under very difficult conditions, with the interviewers taking every advantage of using challenges, unwelcome information, and negative implications or presuppositions. If, on the other hand, we have a negative attitude towards a candidate, these same strategies may be interpreted as signs of incompetence or downright unreliability. Note that this mainly applies to responses which can be interpreted in several ways, and in the light of the present material, particularly to Holkeri's and Koivisto's indirect responses. In this way, the high frequency of these responses in the interviews of Holkeri and Koivisto may account for the bipolar general expressions created by their interviews.

The model presented here is an attempt to combine interactional analysis of responses with analysis of the development of the topics in terms of the propositional and other content of the utterances. That these are closely related is seen in the fact that distinguishing these levels is only possible when the interviewee refuses to comply with the proffer or rejects in some level altogether. The hypotheses suggested here about the effect of the various alternatives on the hearer would need experimental verification or analysis of further data of the same kind. As such, the present analysis may have application value for adult language teaching, especially ESP courses of the type where alternative responses in a certain speech event are worked out. Discussion of the alternatives available to the speaker, their degree of politeness and their implications, would also give an opportunity to com-

pare cultural differences in the use of response strategies.

As presented here, the model is hardly suited for analysis of other types of discourse such as everyday conversations or even other kinds of interviews. For these purposes it would have to be greatly remodified. These applications would undoubtedly help to establish those features of the model which are due to the particular nature of the interviews analysed here and those which are common to verbal interaction in general.

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