UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

MAKING SENSE OF THE SENSELESS – THE MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEMATIC QUESTIONS IN THE NORIKO SHOW

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English
by

Mari Pohjola

Department of Languages
2008

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
KIELTEN LAITOS

Mari Pohjola
Making Sense of the Senseless – The Management of Problematic Questions in
the Noriko Show

Pro Gradu –tutkielma

Englannin kieli
Lokakuu 2008   101 sivua

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää kuinka haastattelija rakentaa kysymyk-
sistään tahallisesti ongelmallisia ja kuinka haastateltavat reagoivat näihin
ongelmallisiin kysymyksiin Noriko Show – nimisessä keskusteluohjelmassa.
Materiaali koostuu neljästä Noriko Shown haastattelusta.

  Koska Noriko Show on piilokameratyyppinen haastatteluohjelma,
liittyvät siihen läheisesti talk shown, haastattelun ja huumorin käsitteet. Noriko
Show noudattaakin haastattelulle tyypillistä kysymys-vastaus – kaavaa ja
ilmentää puoli-institutionaalista vuorovaikutusta. Ohjelman tahallisesti ongel-
mallisen ja toisten kustannuksella pilailevan luonteen vuoksi siihen liittyvät
myös kohteliaisuuden ja nolostumisen teoreettiset ja vuorovaikutukselliset
näkökulmat. Norikon kysymykset ovatkin kasvoja uhkaavia ja aiheuttavat
nolostumista. Vieraiden strategiat puolestaan ilmentävät ja vastustavat
nolostumista ja ovat kasvoja suojelevia. Keskustelunanalyysin menetelmiä on
käytetty tutkimuksessa analyysin keinoina. Näistä teorioista ja keskustelun-
analyysin menetelmistä koostuu tutkimuksen viitekehys.

  Norikon tavat muodostaa tahallisesti ongelmallisia kysymyksiä
jakautuvat neljään strategiaan; tahallinen väärin ääntäminen, seksuaalisuuteen
liittyvien sanoja käyttö, ongelmallinen lauserakenne ja sisällöllisesti irralliset
kysymykset. Vieraiden keinot selviytyä näistä ongelmallisista kysymyksistä
puolestaan jakautuvat kolmeen kategoriaan; ongelmallisten kysymysten
huomiotta jättäminen, selvennyskysymysten ja uudelleenmuotoilujen
esittäminen sekä hämmennyksen ja ärsyyntymisen näyttäminen.

Asiasanat: broadcast media. talk show. broadcast interview. humor. politeness.
embarrasment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Human interaction and communication have always been appealing subjects for me. I think there is something fascinating in how complex the system of constructing and receiving meanings in even normal everyday conversations is and how much of this system goes unnoticed most of the time. However, I believe there is also a more general need for research on this field. First of all, since human interaction is the basis for nearly everything that happens in our society and since without it the whole society would stop running I think it is important to know as much as you can about this fundamental driving force of today's society. Secondly, since interaction and communication is rarely totally conflict-free, it is important to understand what happens and how people react when problems occur in conversation. Moreover, since broadcast media is such an important part of our daily lives these days, it is becoming also important to understand interaction in such mediated settings.

In the present thesis I am studying how an interviewer can cause problematic situations to happen by constructing deliberately problematic questions as well as how interviewees manage these problematic questions in a talk show environment. More precisely, I am studying the interviewer's ways of constructing her questions and the interviewees' ways of managing the questions in the TV talk show the Noriko Show. The idea behind the Noriko Show is that a famous Finnish actress Outi Mäenpää is pretending to be a Japanese interviewer called Noriko Saru, who interviews Finnish celebrities in her talk show by asking strange question in deliberately bad English. My data consists of four fifteen-minute-long interviews that have been transcribed for further analysis. As method of analysis I use qualitative microanalysis and base my findings on detailed description of the recorded data.

In my research I use research on broadcast media, humor, politeness and embarrassment as my main sources of theory and background. As the data for this research are television talk show interviews, the concepts of broadcast talk, broadcast interview and talk show are dealt with in detail in chapter two. As the idea behind the Noriko Show is somewhat humorous and humor plays an important part in the interaction between the participants, the functions and types as well as processing humor are presented in chapter three. Politeness and embarrassment are categorized here under a conjoint heading "Maintaining self-image in conversation" in chapter four. This is due to the fact that I have considered them in a way "two sides of one coin": politeness research offering a theoretical perspective and studies on embarrassment providing insights into interactional features. In the Noriko Show these two concepts help analyze both Noriko's questions and the interviewees' reactions. Noriko's questions are meant to be confusing and thus are not characteristic of an interview, this is what sometimes makes them face-threatening. The questions also often cause embarrassment in the guests. The field of conversation analysis (CA) is also applied in the analysis of detailed organization of the question-answer sequences.

Although there has been a lot of research in the area of broadcast media from various different aspects, I have so far not come across much research on guests' reactions on problematic question turns in TV talk shows. In this sense the study I have carried out contributes in a new way to previous research in this field. As so much of today's everyday conversation is dependent on television and with all the new formats being developed it is becoming increasingly important to understand interaction in institutional settings in more detail. For example, with the different reality formats and candid camera shows that are highly popular nowadays, understanding the guests' reactions to problematic and unexpected situations in the interaction becomes increasingly relevant.

The present study also contributes in a new way to the field of research on politeness. Much of the research on politeness in the past has been done in informal settings and in ordinary conversation as well as in the context of political talk. The present study, concentrating on an institutional setting and on an entertaining context, thus brings a new aspect also to the study of politeness. In the field of humor research in turn most studies have concentrated on assessing the interpretation rather than the creation of humor. However, the present study, while analyzing the interviewees' reactions and interpretations to humoristic questions, also focuses on examining how the humor is constructed in the interview by the interviewer.

2. BROADCAST MEDIA

2.1 Broadcast Talk

Broadcast media could be defined as encompassing the mediums of radio and television. Broadcast media, and especially television, affects our daily lives in many ways. It has been claimed that people negotiate their identities through talking about program contents and that they may actually reject other people who make different interpretations. The effects of television have been found to depend on the form of television talk, in other words, how the programs are talked about after viewing. It is not accurately known how much conversation is actually triggered by television but what is clear is that it is a major source of information and that it sets the agenda for people's concerns and is the number one past time activity for many people. Broadcast media is considered to be both a public service that should be regulated for the public good and a medium of entertainment. (Livingstone 1994: 6, 37.)

Conversation analysis is often closely tied to the field of broadcast talk, especially in the area of linguistics. Hutchby (2006) has stated that talk is a principle means for accomplishing social actions and that it happens in interactional contexts to which it is highly sensitive. Also, talk and interaction are orderly, including recognizable patterns and structures that are organized sequentially. (Hutchby 2006: 24.) These general characteristics of talk also apply to the field of broadcast talk.

According to Ian Hutchby (2006), the concept of broadcast talk is based on the idea that talk is always situated somewhere, it never occurs in a total vacuum. Hutchby claims that these kinds of situational contexts can range from

conversations between friends to institutional contexts such as TV studios, thus broadening conversation analysis' sense of the immediate sequential context. According to CA institutional interaction is characterized by speech exchange systems through which people orient themselves in interactional situations. Hutchby states that media talk should be seen as a non-conversational or institutional form of talk. Conversation analysis enables the study of broadcast talk by offering tools with which it is possible to draw out its unique features and understand the important role of the participants of the interaction in maintaining the characteristic forms of radio and television broadcasting talk. In short, broadcast talk could be defined through three characteristics: it is closely related to the structures and patterns of ordinary talk, it should still be seen as an institutional form of discourse and besides the participants, it is primarily meant to be heard by an audience. (Hutchby 2006: 24-26.)

According to Cornelia Ilie (2001) discourse in institutional settings, such as broadcast media, is more than just the ongoing dialogue occurring in a certain institutional setting. The participants of the discourse have institutional identities, roles and tasks which they orient to in the conversation through different details of their language use. The institutional roles and identities of the participants are procedurally relevant for their talk. (Ilie 2001:213, see also Drew & Heritage 1992.)

Even informal or conversational patterns may appear in institutional discourse (Ilie 2001:214). Institutional discourse is diverse, it includes a range of different forms of speech some of which are less institutionalized than others. For example a talk show can be regarded as a less institutionalized form of speech than a news interview because it is less constrained by institutional role-distribution and more prone to spontaneous interventions. (Ilie 2001:218-219.)

To sum up, broadcast media affects our lives on daily basis and thus its importance in contemporary society is undeniable. Huchby (2006) has claimed that broadcast talk is always situated somewhere. Ilie (2001) in turn has made a claim that participants' institutional roles and identities are also relevant for their talk. Institutional discourse can be described as diverse and conversation analysis often enables the study of broadcast talk (Ilie 2001:218-219. Hutchby 2006: 24-26).

2.2 Broadcast Interview

From my topic's point of view the most relevant types of broadcast talk are the two often overlapping genres of broadcast interview and talk show (see chapter 2.3). An interview often refers a program that is built around a questions-answer pattern. (Nuolijärvi 2000: 80-88.) It could also be claimed that an interview is a questions-driven form of interaction. Like in speeches, in interviews people convey information and express opinions. In interviews, these are to a large extent done as responses to questioning. Questioning is what handles most of the main institutional and interactional tasks in interviews. The task of interviewers is, first and most centrally, to elicit information from the interviewees for the benefit of the viewers and listeners. (Heritage & Roth 1995:1.)

The broadcast interview has developed into important means of journalistic inquiry during the past years. For example political TV-interviews not only have an important role in the political process but they, as other forms of TV-interviews, also provide a consistent framework for studying questions and answers. Consequently, as the importance of the broadcast interview has grown

in media it is not surprising that it has also been the focus of many researchers in recent years. Especially in the context of political broadcast interviews, but also in other forms of interviews, the interviewer's tendency to aim at challenging, interesting and often controversial discourse has increased. This has somewhat changed the character of broadcast interview. (Harris 1991:77-78.)

Much of the research on broadcast interviews' questions and answers has been done in the framework of Conversation Analysis (Harris 1991:78). According to Robin Wooffitt (2005: 13, 18) in conversation analysis (CA), language is examined in a social context and it is seen as a social action which is systematically organized. From Conversation Analysis' point of view the question-answer pattern can be seen as an adjacency pair. An adjacency pair means a sequentially ordered set of actions in conversation where the first action creates an expectation for a second action which should be connected to the type of the first action. For example, possible second parts for the first action 'question' could be an expected answer or an unexpected answer. Hence the meaning of an utterance is partly defined by its place in some sequence of actions not only by its content and form. (Piirainen-Marsh 2004, Ten Have 1999:14, 113-114.) As stated earlier, an interview often consists of a systematic question-answer pattern. Thus it is important to take a closer look at what constitutes a question and what an answer.

A common-sense perception of an interview is that the interviewer asks questions and the interviewee provides answers to these. Consequently, the simplest way of defining a question is to define it in a pragmatic sense as a request to provide information. However, it is important to include in this definition not just interrogatives but also other semantic and syntactic types of utterances directed by the interviewer at eliciting information. (Harris 1991:80.) Also Heritage and Roth (1995) have included in their study of questions and

questioning a range of interactional objects that do not at first sight appear as being questioning. These objects' interactional relevance in the context of a news interview is inseparable from questioning because they accomplish activities convergent with questioning and are treated as questions by both the interviewer and the interviewee. These activities can include for example third-party attributed statements, nonattributed statements and time and speaker management. (Heritage & Roth 1995:24.)

Heritage and Roth (1995) have studied questions and questioning in the context of broadcast news interview. The purpose of their study is to explicate questioning as an activity that constitutes the news interview as a social action by exploring the nature and extent of interviewer questioning. (Heritage & Roth 1995:2.) The results of their research are a demonstration of a "significant convergence between a normative organization for action and the array of conduct in the empirical world prescribed by that organization" in the context of a news interview (Heritage & Roth 1995:52).

To conclude, conversation analysis has offered the framework of study for much of the research on broadcast interviews (Harris 1991:78). An interview program's, such as the Noriko Show, basic structure is built around a question-answer pattern where the interviewer asks the questions and the interviewee provides answers to these (Nuolijärvi 2000: 80-88, Harris 1991:80). It could even be claimed that an interview is an entirely question driven form of interaction (Heritage & Roth 1995:1). The task of interviewers has been defined as eliciting information from the interviewees for the benefit of the over hearers (Heritage & Roth 1995:1). Also the format of the Noriko Show is highly question driven and while the purpose of Noriko's questions is mainly to cause problematic situations they are also meant to elicit information from the interviewees.

2.3 Talk Show

The importance of talk shows in contemporary culture is undeniable. Today talk shows have become everyday political instruments as well as advice-givers, entertainers, barometers of public opinion etc. The term talk show itself seems to link two communicative paradigms. A talk-show combines the premodern oral tradition of interpersonal conversation and the modern mass-mediated spectacle. (Munson 1993: 3-6) A talk show as a type of a program is quite difficult to define because of this variable nature. However, it could be claimed that a talk show has more of an entertaining value and is not so strict in pattern; in a talk show the pattern has more to do with the dynamics of the conversation itself. (Nuolijärvi 2000: 80-88.) When it comes to the different kinds of formats of the talk show genre, one can say that there are almost as many of those as there are talk shows airing locally, nationally and internationally every week. The talk show genre can be regarded to encompass formats such as news talk, call-in and interview shows and different combinations of these as well as various service or advice programs etc. What ever the format may be, the talk show genre promotes itself as user-friendly and easily accessible even though the media frame in which it operates is highly complex.

The programs in the talk show genre can also be distinguished according to how the general public appears on them. Five different categories have been found that range from an audible public providing laughter and applause to a protagonist public that actively participates in conversing and debating. One of these categories presents people as real people that are being made into an object of ridicule as in the Candid Camera show. (Livingstone 1994: 37-38.) The data of the present study seems to fit best into this particular category because of the candid camera –like nature of the Noriko Show. However, the objects of

ridicule in the Noriko Show are not members of the general public in that they are all public figures in Finland.

Cornelia Ilie (2001) has studied American talk shows such as the Oprah Winfrey show and the Geraldo Riw'ra show, and has tried to capture the distinguishing features of the talk show as a mixed type of discourse. The study has aimed at providing a pragmatic framework of analysis of talk shows and has established systematic parallels between its characteristics and related discourse types. Although a number of researchers have tackled this topic in their studies, no systematic account has yet been found between the discursive and linguistic features that separate talk shows from other types of institutional discourse. This is most probably due to two facts; that the characteristic features of a talk show are not easily defined in strictly linguistic terms and that there are various types of talk shows. (Ilie 2001:210, 249.)

There is more than one discourse type that can be used in describing talk shows due to the variety of patterns of communicative and social behavior it displays. First of all, a talk show can be regarded as a type of entertainment program, meant to be funny and easy-going, because of its introductory and closing parts. Secondly, because of the recurring goal-oriented question-response sequences, providing information about current matters and encouraging the exchange of opinions, a talk show could be just as easily considered to belong to the categories of news interview or debate program. Because of this mixture of information and entertainment, talk shows are often subcategorized as infotainment. Thirdly, talk shows have also been said to have similarities with such discourse types as doctor-patient dialogue, therapeutic dialogue and class-room dialogue. Finally, talk shows could also fit in the frame of conversation because of the time devoted to casual and spontaneous dialogue. However,

although talk shows share similarities with all these forms of discourse they cannot be said to fully belong to any one them. (Ilie 2001:210-211, 217.)

According to this division the Noriko Show would best fit into the category of an entertainment program, although it could also be seen to include some features from a news interview, since the interviewer also asks some relevant questions from the guests. As Ilie (2001:217) has pointed out, talk shows do not necessarily aim exclusively at being entertainment oriented, but they do often intend to be funny and trigger laughter. However, many of the hilarious or embarrassing moments that are often the source of laughter in talk shows are not usually pre-scheduled or planned but tend to occur spontaneously. In many talk show formats, however, these humorous and emotional moments are expected by the viewers. On top of this entertaining side, talk shows also tend to provide information either directly (e.g. advertising a product or event) or indirectly (e.g. through interviewing technique). (Ilie 2001:217.)

The role distribution in talk shows is less institutionalized than, for example, in news interviews or doctor-patient dialogue. In talk shows, although the host generally has most power over question-asking and the general flow of the conversation, the guests also have the right to ask questions and make nonelicited comments. Thus, the pre-established asymmetrical power relations are challenged. As a result of all this, the relations between the host, the guests and the audience remain somewhat unconstructed and hence can involve unpredictable or even provocative forms of interaction. (Ilie 2001:210.)

Cornelia Ilie (2001) has suggested that talk shows could be classified as semi-institutional discourse. Ilie has concluded this on the basis of the facts that talk shows exhibit several similarities with casual conversation but also similar rules and constraints as institutional discourse. Thus, it could be said that talk shows

integrate non-institutional and institutional forms of discourse into a hybrid that could be called semi-institutional. Ilie (2001:218) defines talk show as "a socio-cultural practice marked by a particular participant configuration and well-established conventions as well as by spontaneous interventions and unpredictable outcomes". A dialogue in a talk show may acquire a more institutional or a more conversational character depending on many factors such as contextual interaction between discursive and linguistic factors. (Ilie 2001:218-219.)

To summarize the essence of talk shows, it could be said that they have quite a lot of entertaining value and they are not very strict in pattern (Nuolijärvi 2000: 80). For example, the role distribution in talk shows is described as less institutionalized than, for example, in news interviews (Ilie 2001:210). This is also the case with the Noriko Show; its main purpose is to entertain and its pattern also includes some fluctuation with the guest sometimes taking the lead. The talk show genre can be divided in many ways. According to one such division, the talk show genre can be seen as encompassing formats such as news talk and interview shows (Munson 1993: 7-9). With this division in mind, the Noriko Show could be defined as an interview show. According to another division the programs in the talk show genre can be sorted on the basis of how the general public appears in them, e.g. candid camera shows (Livingstone 1994: 37-38). The Noriko Show also clearly includes some features of candid camera shows. Talk shows can also be described according to the discourse type as well as communicative and social behavior they display (Ilie 2001:210-211). A common feature for all talk show types is that they could all be described as representing a semi-institutional form of discourse (Ilie 2001:218-219). The word semi-institutional also describes the Noriko Show quite accurately because on the one hand the show does take place in institutional settings and follows the

question-answer pattern. On the other hand, however, the show is clearly more entertaining than informative and sometimes even almost improvised.

3 HUMOR IN INTERACTION

3.1 Functions & Types of Humor

Humor serves a variety of functions in interpersonal communication. Among others, humor has been associated with entertainment (Graham 1992:161). Since the data of the present study consists of humoristic talk show interviews whose sole purpose is to entertain, it is important to examine what kind of background theories and research about humor in conversation can offer for this research.

There can be found over 100 theories of humor which have typically been divided into three different groups: superiority theories, incongruity theories and relief or arousal theories. Incongruity theories contend that humor originates from the discovery of an incongruity, whereas relief or arousal theories claim that laughter is a release of repressed or unused energy. According to superiority theories, humor develops form one person's desire to feel superior to others. Most research that has dealt with humor from the superiority perspective has examined disparagement, in other words, humor that elevates a person above the target of humor. (Graham 1992:162.) In a way the humor in the data of the present study falls into the category of superiority theories since the target of the humor (the interviewee) is the only one who does not know he/she is the target of a practical joke. Consequently, the humor in the Noriko Show elevates all other participants of the situation above the interviewee.

Most research attempting to define humor has assessed the interpretation rather than the creation of humor (Graham 1992:162). However, the present study, while analyzing the interviewees' reactions and interpretations to humoristic

questions, also focuses on examining how the humor is constructed in the interview by the interviewer. According to Graham et al. (1992) most research on individual differences in humor, in turn, has concentrated on certain dimensions of humor rather than on a generalized construction of humor. However, there has been some work that makes an exception on this. Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991, as quoted by Graham 1992:162) examined individual predispositions to enact humorous messages and they found that those that had high numbers in humor orientation also had at their disposal a wider range of humorous behaviors. Martin and Lefcourt (1984, as quoted by Graham 1992:162-163) in turn have developed an instrument that concentrates on humor's trait-situational perspective. This Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SGRQ) produces a self-report of sense of humor through requiring the respondents to indicate their reaction to a number of different situations. It is clear that the use of humor can either be approached from a trait or situational perspective. (Graham 1992:162-163.) For the present study the situational approach seems more appropriate.

According to Graham, Papa and Brooks (1992), individuals use communication to achieve goals and satisfy needs. Humor can be claimed to serve a strategic function to accomplish these through the fact that the use of humor helps to achieve an individual's interactive goals. Information about how humor functions in conversation has been offered by some anthropologists. For example, it has been claimed that humor can function as a mechanism of social control and as a tension-reducing device, especially in the form of joking-relationships. (Graham 1992:163-164.) In the present study humor has a somewhat different function; humor, in the form of strange questions, is what causes the tension in the interviews of the Noriko Show. Conversational humor and joking can also be seen as linking closely to embarrassment (see chapter 4.2) in that they can cause embarrassing situations for the participants of interaction

(Sandlund 2004:185). Moreover, the embarrassing situations of the interviewees create entertainment for the audiences.

Neal R. Norrick (2003) writes about a discourse based theory of humor by Giora et al. This theory is primarily oriented towards (nonconventional) irony and it assumes that a well-formed conversation/discourse typically conforms to three requirements: (1) the "relevance requirement", that all messages are relevant (2) the "graded informativeness condition", that each message is gradually more informative than the previous one and (3) finally explicitly marks if any deviation from these requirements happens. Various different types of conversational joking can be distinguished according to humor mechanisms, internal structure and integration into discourse such as irony, jokes and punning. Although some differences can be seen between these types, in conversation they often fade into each other and cannot thus be totally separated. Nevertheless, they all violate the requirements of a well-formed discourse to some extent, some more than others. (Norrick 2003:1333–1359.)

In the Noriko Show the discourse clearly does not fully follow the requirements of a well-formed discourse in that especially the interviewer's messages constantly violate the relevance requirement because they often introduce topics that seem irrelevant to the conversation. However, the graded informativeness condition is fulfilled to some extent in the Noriko Show since the interviewer often rephrases her questions until the guests understand them, as the next example illustrates.

Example (Oskari)
1 N: ooh ooh okay hh is there animal elephant because in a a is a ida ida was
2   elephant
3 O: ouph oouu. (laughter) im sorry i don't understand ida
4 N: the the ida is an elephant there is a ele-elepahant. maybe there was was any
animal
5 O: where

6 N: ida the theatre ida
7 O: oh you mean opera ida

Here the actor Oskari Katajisto and Noriko have been talking about Katajisto's work and where he is acting, when Noriko suddenly asks something related to an elephant on lines 1 and 2. Noriko continues to rephrase her question twice, on lines 4 and 6, until Katajisto understands it. The relevance of Noriko's question can also be questioned because it seems to bring an irrelevant topic (animals/elephant) to the conversation that has thus far been concerned with acting, theatre etc.

Since the humor in The Noriko Show is often constructed through the use of surprising words and pronunciations, let us now consider punning in more detail. Neal Norrick (2003:1337) claims that puns are more disruptive and less expected in conversation than for example irony or jokes with punch lines. Puns do not usually force replacement of the literal meaning but rather create parallel interpretations. Puns force the listener to come up with another interpretation besides the literal one by violating both the relevance requirement and the graded informativeness condition. This highly disruptive character of puns is what makes them different compared to all other forms of conversational humor. (Norrick 2003:1337-1340.) Puns are often related to marginal or less salient senses of words and may often include sexual or religious connotations. In an interactional sense puns are often viewed as skewed responses to ongoing talk with meanings tied to the preceding utterances as well as to contextually inappropriate senses. As a type of word play punning may have two different functions in a conversation; it may function either to amuse or to verbally attack someone. (Norrick 2003:1347.) In the Noriko Show the function of puns is mainly to amuse but some interviewees also seem to experience them as being threatening.

The functions and types of humor in the Noriko Show are quite difficult to define. Of the over 100 theories of humor that can be found, superiority theories (Graham 1992:162) could perhaps be chosen to best represent the humor of the Noriko Show since everyone else knows the true nature of the show except the guest. Humor has been seen as a means of achieving one's interactive goals and especially as a tension-reducing device (Graham 1992:163-164). However, the humor in the Noriko Show is definitely not tension-reducing but rather the complete opposite. In fact, the humor in the Noriko Show could perhaps be best described as closely related to some candid camera or reality-TV formats where people are ridiculed. Punning (Norrick 2003) is used quite a lot in the Noriko Show by the interviewer and is thus an important source of humor. What is common for most types of humor is that they all violate the requirements of a well-formed discourse to some extent, some more than others. (Norrick 2003:1333–1359.)

3.2 Interpreting & Processing Humor

In the Noriko Show the guests have to constantly interpret the conversation and the meanings of Noriko's messages because they are often confusing and do not seem to match the context. In other words, they violate the relevance requirement. In the process of interpreting discourse people rely on the requirements of a well-formed discourse. According to Norrick (2003) the first phase of discourse interpretation is guided by the graded salience principle. This principle means that we tend to access salient meanings first due to conventionality, frequency, familiarity etc. It takes more time for less salient meanings to get activated and they may only reach sufficient levels of activation if the most salient meaning does not match the context. In the second phase of

interpreting discourse called the contextual integration phase the activated meanings get either retained, suppressed (due to irrelevance or disruptiveness) or faded. (Norrick 2003:1336-1337.)

Norrick (2003) also presents in his article two models for processing humor, the single-stage and the multi-stage models. According to Norrick, in single-stage models the recipient of a humorous speech act produces a coherent interpretation of a discourse while at the same time analyzing the context. These models maintain that recipients have "a fundamental ability to conceptualize situations as being ironic". In other words, recipients do not have to derive a second-order meaning from a first-order meaning to understand irony and metaphor. However, single-stage models have been criticized as needing additional mechanisms to explain humor appreciation. It has been claimed that humor theories should include some recognition of incongruity based on two opposed meanings for a single stretch of discourse. (Norrick 2003:1348-1349.)

In the multi-stage model of processing humor the recipient first processes the literal meaning of an utterance and then checks if this meaning fits the context the conversation is taking place in. If the meaning fits, the recipient takes this as reflecting the speakers intentions if it does not fit, the recipient is forced to work out some implicatures that might correspond to what the speaker intended. The incongruity derives in the multi-stage process from the discrepancy between the two opposed interpretations of the discourse; one that is apparently relevant and another that was initially unexpected. This dualism between two different interpretations serves well the purpose of humor theories requiring two opposed meanings. (Norrick 2003:1350.)

To conclude, discourse is often interpreted in two phases. In the first phase people access salient meanings and in the second phase the meanings get

retained, suppressed or faded. (Norrick 2003:1336-1337.) In the Noriko Show the guests have to constantly interpret the interviewer's turns and questions because often her utterances carry more than one meaning. Two models have been presented for processing humor; the single-stage model and the multi-stage model. As humor theories should include some recognition of incongruity based on two opposed meanings for a single stretch of discourse, the multi-stage model seems more extensive. (Norrick 2003:1348-1350.) The interviewees in the Noriko Show can also be seen as using the multi-stage model in interpreting the interviewer's utterances as they strive for understanding her "puns" (see chapter 3.1).

4 MAINTAINING SELF-IMAGE IN INTERACTION

4.1 Politeness

As Noriko's questions in the Noriko Show are meant to be confusing and embarrassing, and thus are not characteristic for a normal interview, they can also be seen as face threatening towards the guests of the show. To be more accurate, the questions in the Noriko Show are threatening towards the guests' positive face, in other words the public self and the concern about one's image and other's acceptance, and they also pose a threat to their intersubjectivity because they violate the common understanding of the interview.

The politeness theory is concerned with the concept of face. Goffman has defined the concept of face as a positive social value that people define to themselves within socially accepted boundaries (Goffman 1972:5). Politeness is an important research topic especially in the fields of linguistics and intercultural communication. The research on politeness started with Austin's theory on speech acts in 1962 and with Grice's thoughts on cooperativeness principal and maxims in 1967 (Tanner 2005:475).

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) universal politeness theory the concept of face has a positive and a negative side. Politeness is also divided into positive and negative types. Brown and Levinson's concept of face as a public self-image is based on Goffman's definition of face as well as on the vulgar concept of face of the English language which includes the notion retaining and losing one's face. (Brown & Levinson 1987:61.) Positive face encompasses the public self and the concern about one's image and other's acceptance whereas negative face means the inner self and the need to be autonomous. The level of

politeness in a sent or received message is affected by three factors; power distance between the sender and the receiver, social distance and the intrusiveness of the face threatening act. (Brown & Levinson 1987:13-15.) The level of politeness expected in the Noriko Show could be taken as being rather high because it takes place in an institutional setting of a TV-interview.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) face threatening acts are common even in everyday interaction. The knowledge of a community member's self-image and the social need to perceive face are universal and irrelevant of for example culture. In general people tend to avoid face threatening situations. The speaker can minimize a face threatening act by proportioning three different needs; the need to communicate about the content of the face threatening act, the need to be efficient and the need to support the listener's face. (Brown & Levinson 1987:24, 61, 62, 68.)

Brown and Levinson (1987) have categorized different ways of threatening someone's face from both the message sender's and receiver's points of view. The message sender is often also referred to as the speaker and the message receiver as the listener. Altogether there are four perspectives to politeness; the perspectives of the speaker and listener and those of positive and negative. Positive face represents the need to be accepted, appreciated and admired. Negative face in turn represents avoiding threatening one's freedom. (Brown & Levinson 1987:62-64, 66-68.)

Politeness strategies can be divided into on record and off record politeness. On record politeness can be described as direct and it includes the previously mentioned positive and negative politeness. Positive politeness is directed towards the listener's positive self-image whereas negative politeness is based on evasion. Negative politeness can appear as formality and respect. (Brown &

Levinson 1987:69-70.) Off record politeness is based on avoiding direct orders and it is situationally bound. Ways of using off record politeness are for example irony, metaphors, rhetorical questions and understatements. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 17, 20, 69-71.) On record politeness is less polite than off record politeness, which is based on the ability to deduce. The use of politeness strategies depends on the nature of the relationship between the speaker and the listener as well as on the type of the message. (Brown & Levinson 1987:2, 20.) It has also been stated that politeness strategies are employed to avoid embarrassment (see chapter 4.2) for participants in social interaction (Sandlund 2004:71).

Arja Piirainen-Marsh has studied politeness in the context of linguistics. Piirainen-Marsh (2005) has studied for example how interviewers create controversy by using adversarial questioning techniques and how interviewees manage these face threatening questions. In some interview formats, like political broadcast interviews, this kind of an adversarial questioning technique can even be seen as part of the normative behavior. Piirainen-Marsh has questioned whether politeness/impoliteness is useful in describing and analyzing this kind of discourse since the adversarial questions can be seen as expected. (Piirainen-Marsh 2005:194.) However, in the Noriko Show the interviewer's questioning strategy is clearly controversy seeking and adversarial, although in a very different way than in political interviews, and not in anyway expected by the interviewees. Thus politeness theory can be applied to this data. Noriko's questions, although problematic, are perhaps not adversarial in the same sense as in political interviews, which can be seen from the next example.

> Example (Oskari)
> **1 N: okay you like man or woman**
> 2 (1.54)

3 O: what is this
4 N: is man or wo/man in act/ing bet/ter actor
5 O: hh/   hh/   what is this/ come on
6 N: better actor
7 (3.3)
8 N: when better man or woman
9 O: man or woman
10 N: better actor in finland
11 O: man or woman

Noriko's question on line 1 is clearly meant to cause confusion, which it also does in this example. Thus, Noriko's questions could be seen to some extent adversarial but they are not meant so much to cause controversy as embarrassment and confusion. This problematic questioning is somewhat expected by the viewers of the program. Perhaps this kind of questioning strategy could be seen as normative in interview programs combining reality-tv and candid camera –like formats. According to Piirainen-Marsh (2005) the interviewees have different strategies for dealing with the face-threatening questions. For example, the interviewees can oppose the question or even challenge it. This means for example refusing to offer the requested response or passing the question. (Piirainen-Marsh 2005:201.)

Sandra Harris (2001) has studied concepts of politeness and impoliteness against a set of member expectations in the Prime Minister's Question Time in the British Parliament. Harris has defined the House of Commons as a "community of practice" rather than merely a particular type of discourse. This has to do with so called "legitimate peripheral participation", in other words, how new members of the House move towards full participation in the sociocultural practices of the community through a process of situated learning. The main findings of Harris's research relate to the fact that certain expectations along with established rules govern the linguistic behaviour in the House of Commons. The expectations of the British MP'S are informed by informal and established interactional conventions and these expectations enable the

Members of the House to interpret intentional face-threatening acts in a way that they do not cause conflicts in the communication but are considered as important parts of an adversarial and confrontational political process. Harris also found that it was difficult to assign absolute politeness value in certain speech acts and that overall it was not meaningful to make a distinction between negative and positive face as linguistic acts. This type of adversarial political discourse made it difficult to even find a set of some politeness universals. (Harris 2001:469-470.)

To sum up, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory includes the notion of face. The concept of face has been defined as meaning the positive social value that people define to themselves within socially accepted boundaries (Goffman 1972:5). Face also has a positive and a negative side as does politeness as a whole, thus there are altogether four perspectives to politeness. The acts that threaten face are common in everyday interaction. Politeness strategies are used in coping with face-threatening situations. The strategies can be divided into on record and off record politeness. (Brown & Levinson 1987:61-70.) Politeness strategies are often used to avoid embarrassment (see chapter 4.2) in interaction (Sandlund 2004:71). In the Noriko Show politeness and face pertain to the interviewer's questions. Because of their confusing/surprising and humorous nature they create embarrassment in the interviewees and thus pose a threat to their face.

4.2 Embarrassment

As the idea of the Noriko Show is to deliberately play a joke on the celebrity guests of the show and thus embarrassment and emotions can also be included

in this study as background for the guests' reactions. Embarrassment could be seen as linking to the situations where the guests do not understand the interviewer's questions, in other words, the interviewees' management of the problematic questions.

According to Sandlund (2004:5) emotions are an integral part of social interaction. As social interaction stretches from everyday talk to institutional forms of talk, such as a talk show interview, also emotions are relevant parts of all of these forms of talk. Institutional interaction can be defined as institutional in the sense that the participants display an orientation to some institution or to some aspect of a membership to one. (Sandlund 2004:57.)

Emotions in social interaction can take on different forms and functions. Sandlund (2004) has talked about emotions as social control in her doctoral dissertation. For example Goffman (1967) has described embarrassment as the primary social emotion because he concluded that the avoidance of embarrassment guides social behavior and is a clear indicator of what is considered inappropriate in a society. Goffman has defined embarrassment as moments in face-to-face interaction when an individual becomes flustered and is not able to comfortably participate in the conversation. He has also treated embarrassment as the outcome of contradictions and conflicts between self-presentation and perception of others in interaction. (Goffman 1967, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:70-71, 89.) The ideas of Goffman have laid the ground for Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (see chapter 4.1) which sees politeness as a way to avoid embarrassment (Brown & Levinson 1987, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:71).

According to Sandlund (2004:74) emotions can also be seen as cultural prescriptions that appear in interaction in the context of social institutions. It has

been claimed that social institutions have their own emotional codes, rules and norms for emotions and for how/which emotions are to be appropriately displayed within the institutional setting. Fineman (2000, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:74) in turn has argued that emotions are negotiative and change according to interpersonal and structural influences and also that particular institutions favor the production of certain emotions. Here again it can be argued that the Noriko Show and other programs similar to it, e.g. candid camera –like programs, favor the production of embarrassment and fluster.

Embarrassment has been said to involve some degree of self-evaluation or self-reflection in relation to perceived social standards (Sandlund 2004:163). Lewis (1993, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:163) has proposed two types of embarrassment; embarrassment as self-consciousness, which means being subjected to unwanted public attention, and embarrassment as mild shame, meaning a less intense form of shame caused by negative self-evaluation.

In studying emotions, such as embarrassment, in interaction some conceptual tools will be necessary. Sandlund (2004) has used in her study of emotions six different categories of conceptualizing emotions. First of all are physiological cues, such as facial redness, which are largely communicated involuntarily. Secondly, facial expressions as well as gestures and gaze have been observed in Sandlund's emotion research. Thirdly, there are vocal and verbal cues that might reveal one's emotions. Finally, action cues, such as hanging up the phone abruptly after an argument, are also counted as emotion markers. (Sandlund 2004:79-85.)

Embarrassment does not occur without a reason. It is integrated and developed in the sequential organization of actions in face-to-face-interaction (Sandlund 2004:160). Embarrassment arises, peaks and dissolves not just within the

individual experiencing embarrassment but also in relation to actions produced by co-participant in interaction. Nevertheless, people tend to avoid both causing and experiencing embarrassment making moments of open embarrassment in interaction rare. (Heath 1988, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:164.)

Embarrassment can be elicited by a production of an unexpected and structurally dispreferred response in relation to previous talk and turns. These kinds of responses trigger embarrassment because they are not anticipated in the particular context of the interaction. (Sandlund 2004:177.) This is what could be seen as eliciting embarrassment in the Noriko Show as well; Noriko's turns are often unexpected with their confusing structure and content thus causing embarrassment in the guests. This can be seen in the next example.

Example (Tahiti)
1N: hm but in tahiti is warm and you can
2 eat pineapple.. you like pineapple
3T: yes
4(1.87)
5N: so how many pineapple you can eat. a day
6T: i-i ää i havent eaten many pineapples a day. ää i can eat different kind of fruits
7(1.67)
8N: but its free.. its free
9T: its free what
10N: in tahiti. free to eat pineapple

Make-up artist Tahiti Charpentier and Noriko have been talking about Charpentier's first name and what it means when Noriko suddenly asks Charpentier about eating pineapples on lines 1 and 2. Besides being somewhat unexpected, some of the questions are also poorly structured which makes them difficult for Charpentier to understand them, as can be seem for example from the repair initiator on line nine. This in turn could be anticipated as eliciting embarrassment in Tahiti Charpentier.

Embarrassment can also be associated with repair in interaction. In conversation analysis' terms, repair could be described as an umbrella term for ways in which people handle problems in speaking, listening and understanding. (Sorjonen 1995: 111.) The term also refers to the ways in which participants of a conversation revise and correct their own and others' speech (Ten Have 1999: 116). Repair is necessary for the understanding between the participants of a conversation. (Sorjonen 1995: 112) For repair to happen it has to be initiated by someone. Repair can be initiated by the speaker him-self (self-initiation) or by the listener (other-initiation). Similarly, the repair itself can be performed by the speaker concerning his/her own utterance (self-repair) or some other participant's utterance (other-repair). (Piirainen-Marsh 2004.) However, there can be said to exist a preference as to who should do the repair. The most preferred situation is where the producer of the problematic turn, the repairable, also initiates and performs the repair. (Sorjonen 1995: 113.)

In Sandlund's research (2004), both self-initiated and other-initiated repair occasioned embarrassment displays. The cases of self-initiated repair displayed embarrassment as immediately following the occurrence of repair initiation. In other-initiated repair in turn, embarrassment was displayed when the occasioning of the repair initiation had been recognized by the trouble turn speaker. To sum up, in all cases embarrassment was always displayed after the trouble turn speaker realized the gaffe. (Sandlund 2004:214-215.)

Embarrassment can be resisted in a number of ways, one of which is the so called embarrassment-resistant laughter. It is generally known that besides humor, laughter is often associated with talk about trouble and embarrassment. More particularly, embarrassment-resistant laughter can be, for example, related to the topic at hand. In such a case the laughter serves to avoid direct embarrassment and to signal a distancing from the problematic topic at hand.

These kinds of problematic topics can relate to, for example, sexuality, which is often considered a taboo in many cultures. (Sandlund 2004:185-186.) Another way of resisting embarrassment is topicalization. Topicalization means pre-empting embarrassment by playing along with it, in other words, by using it as resource for humor and joking. (Sandlund 2004:199.)

To conclude, embarrassment has been defined as moments in interaction when an individual becomes flustered (Goffman 1967, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:70-71). Embarrassment could also be seen as part of cultural prescriptions that appear in interaction in social institutions (Sandlund 2004:74). Some institutions could even be seen as favoring the production of certain emotions (Fineman 2000 as quoted by Sandlund 2004:74), for example, the Noriko Show and other programs similar to it could be seen as favoring the production of embarrassment. The eliciting of embarrassment often happens through the production of an unexpected and structurally dispreferred utterance (Sandlund 2004:177). This is the case also in the Noriko Show where the interviewer produces constantly unexpected and poorly structured questions and utterances that seem disconnected to prior talk and topic. The interviewer also often uses sexuality-related words and topics to create embarrassment and humorous situations. Embarrassment can also be resisted. This can be done in a number of ways, for example, through embarrassment-resistant laughter which is often triggered by a problematic topic such as sexuality (Sandlund 2004:185-186). Another way of resisting embarrassment is topicalization (Sandlund 2004:199) which is used by some guests of the Noriko Show quite frequently.

5 THE PRESENT STUDY

5.1 Orientation of the Study

The purpose of my study is to analyze and describe how the interviewer constructs her questions in the way that they become problematic as well as how the guests react to these questions and thus manage the problematic situations in the television talk show Noriko Show.

More specifically, I will analyze in my study the way in which Noriko constructs her questions, how she makes them feasible for misunderstanding and interpretation and how she leads the guests to understand them in a certain way thus posing a threat to the guests' face as well as eliciting embarrassment in them. I will also analyze how the guests manage these problematic questions and what are their ways of dealing with them. All this is what makes the talk show humoristic and entertaining.

In my opinion The Noriko Show is an excellent context in which to carry out the research because the idea behind the show is that a famous Finnish actress Outi Mäenpää, who won a Venla award in 2004 for her role, is pretending to be a Japanese interviewer called Noriko Saru who invites Finnish celebrities to her show and interviews them asking strange questions in purposely bad English. The guests think they are being interviewed for an actual Japanese NTV-channel's TV talk show as a part of the channel's series of interviews called "The Map of Europe" and try to act accordingly, meaning that they try to be as correct and polite as possible even though Noriko's questions sound sometimes even slightly insulting.

5.2 Data

The Noriko Show, written by Jens Helin and Mikko Kivinen, is based on a Danish format called "Ushi Heiku". The show aired in Finland during the year 2004 for two seasons and altogether 20 episodes. Each episode is about 30 minutes long and consists usually of two interviews, each about 15 minutes, with two different people. The interviews in my data are all from the first season. My data consists of four interviews that amount altogether to 60 minutes of recorded data. The interviewees in my data are Ilkka Kanerva, Oskari Katajisto, Tahiti Charpentier and Paula Koivuniemi.

The Noriko Show is a humoristic interview program that also shares similar features with reality-TV and candid camera programs. There are also some particularly characteristic features to the interviews. First of all, one very important feature of the interviews is that their sole purpose is to entertain; the information the interviewer obtains from the guests is not so relevant but the whole idea of the show is to make people laugh. Secondly, the interviews follow the common question-answer pattern of normal interviews; the interviewer is the one who in a way leads the conversation. Thirdly, the interviews are carried out in a language that is neither the interviewer's nor the guest's mother tongue hence making the situation foreign language interaction. Fourthly, the interviewees in the show are not "normal" people but celebrities. Finally, one particularly interesting characteristic of the interviews is that from the part of the interviewer the whole situation is fake in the way that Outi Mäenpää is in a role; she is acting Noriko Saru and the purpose of her role is to confuse the guests until the end of the interview when she finally reveals her real identity. This gives the program a sort of a candid camera –like appearance which in turn adds to the unique nature of the whole program.

These particular characteristics of the Noriko Show make it an interesting context in which to carry out this study. The nature of the show provides an interesting setting for studying questions and answers as well as how people manage problematic situations in interviews and how these situations are created. The candid camera –like appearance of the show also provides a fruitful context in which to study aspect of politeness, embarrassment and humor.

5.3 Methods of Analysis

The interviews have been transcribed using commonly accepted transcription conventions that are based on conversation analysis (see Appendix). As methods of analysis I use the procedure of detailed analysis and description of recorded data, also referred to as qualitative microanalysis. I base my analysis on the transcriptions as well as on the audio-visual versions of the interviews. I apply conversation analysis in my own research by taking one of its basic assumptions of talk's orderly and sequential nature as my underlying idea for the study and then use some of CA's concepts and terms to sort and explain my findings.

I started the process of analysis by watching the episodes of the Noriko Show and by making preliminary notes of them. I then proceeded by choosing four of the interviews for closer analysis. The interviews were chosen on the basis of them being somewhat different from each other and representing different ways of reacting to the problematic and potentially embarrassing situations. I then transcribed the interviews in order to be able to analyze them more closely. From these transcriptions I marked all the problematic question turns from

Noriko and the guests' reactions to these. These form the basis of my analysis and I have chosen some examples to illustrate my findings in the text.

I have divided my findings under the general headings of how Noriko makes her questions problematic (see chapter 6) and how the guests react to the problematic questions (see chapter 7). The word 'problematic' that I use to describe Noriko's questions refers in this study to the confusing nature of the questions. The word 'problematic' includes the notion that the questions are constructed deliberately to cause confusion and problems of understanding. The general headings of chapters six and seven in turn I have divided into four and three subheadings respectively. I use examples from the transcriptions to illustrate my findings. The examples have been numbered from 1 to 23 in chapter 6 and from 1 to 35 in chapter 7. The examples also include the name of the interviewee.

I have categorized Noriko's questions under the headings of deliberately mispronouncing words, words related to sexuality or other delicate matters, complicated sentence structure and topically disconnected questions on the basis of the features which make the turns problematic. The guests' reactions in turn I have categorized under the headings of ignoring the problematic questions, asking follow-up and clarifying questions and offering formulations and losing track and displaying confusion. I have categorized the examples from the data into these categories according to which category describes the example the best. Some examples could have been categorized under more than one heading. In these cases I have categorized the example according to which category describes it best in terms of making the situation problematic. For example, whether it has more effect on making the situation problematic that the word is mispronounced or that the word has sexual connotations.

6 TURNING SENSIBLE QUESTIONS INTO SENSELESS – HOW NORIKO MAKES HER QUESTIONS PROBLEMATIC

6.1 Deliberately Mispronouncing Words

One of the ways in which Noriko tries to create humorous and confusing situations in the Noriko Show is by deliberately mispronouncing some English words. She aims at causing problems of understanding for the guests by pronouncing words unclearly so that it is difficult or impossible to recognize the word altogether or by changing the pronunciation of the word so that it becomes a totally different word. Sometimes in these cases Noriko changes the word to a similar sounding one that carries some sexual connotation, these kinds of questions will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter (6.2).

Unclear pronunciation. One feature of Noriko's deliberately bad English is pronouncing words unclearly. The next example shows how Noriko forms a problematic question by pronouncing a word unclearly (line 4).

> Example 1 (Oskari)
> 1 O: well im acting also in a theatre and im acting on a television and im acting on a
> 2 radio and im acting on aa movies and yes im /doing everything
> 3 N: ooh/   ooh okay hh is there
> **4 animal elephant because in a a is a ida ida was elephant**
> **5 O: ouph oouu. (laughter) im sorry i don't understand ida**
> 6 N: the the ida is an elephant there is a ele-elepahant. maybe there was was any animal
> 7 O: where
> 8 N: ida the theatre ida

As this example clearly shows, the unclear pronunciation of the word 'ida' (on line 4) as well as the reference to an elephant cause confusion in the interviewee Oskari Katajisto, which can be seen for example from Katajisto's hesitation and laughter on line five. The turn itself explicitly states non-understanding. In fact, in this situation the real meaning of the word 'ida' remains somewhat blurry but

it can be interpreted to have something to do with theatre or opera. The question can be described as a yes/no-question, that can be answered simply by using the word 'yes' or 'no'. Also, the question has two clauses; the main clause that includes the question itself and a subordinate clause that appears to explain the question but in fact does not. The problematic pronunciation in the subordinate clause deteriorates its explanative power and makes it nonsensical. Consequently, in this example also the sentence structure (see chapter 6.3) is quite disorganized but the unclear pronunciation of the word 'ida' still seems to be what causes the confusion thus demonstrating how effective mispronouncing words is in creating problematic questions.

The next example represents a similar kind of situation as the previous one. In this example Noriko produces several different unclear pronunciations of a pair of words thus causing confusion.

> Example 2 (Oskari)
> 1 O: /then you hh excuse m/e
> **2 N: how bull/   how bul/**
> **3 O: hobul**
> **4 N: how people**
> **5 O: how people what. im s/orry**
> **6 N: how/ feel bul how feel bul**
> 7 O: how how do you feel bul

This excerpt from the data has started by Noriko asking form Oskari Katajisto whether he has ever acted animals and Katajisto has been explaining that when he was a child he has acted different animals such as bulls. Noriko continues from this with the intention of asking how it felt like acting a bull on line 2. She does this by producing only the question word 'how' and the noun 'bull' which in itself is already problematic. However, she pronounces the words 'how bull' so unclearly that it causes Katajisto to lose track for a while because he does not understand the question at all, as shown on lines 3 and 5. In fact, Noriko produces different versions of the words 'how bull' some of which sound more

like a nonword 'hobul' (line 2) and some like 'how people' (line 4). This seems to add to Katajisto's confusion until Noriko adds to her question the words 'do you feel' (on line 6) and thus helps Katajisto to finally understand the question. It is worth noticing here that the pronunciations Noriko produces of the words 'how bull' are so confusing and unclear that Katajisto does not understand them even though he has just himself used the word 'bull'.

Yet another example can be given to illustrate Noriko's way of making her questions problematic by mispronouncing words. In this example Noriko pronounces the name 'Tina Turner' in such a way that it is not understandable for the interviewee Paula Koivuniemi (lines 1 and 2).

Example 3 (Paula)
1 N: aah okay so:/you- mm so you like xxxxx (Tina Turner)
2 P: hh/   excuse me
3 N: you like xxxxx (Tina Turner)
4 P: xxxxx sorry i dont get
5 N: ää tina turner
6 P: tina turner ye:s yes very great

In this example Noriko's pronunciation of the name 'Tina Turner' is so unrecognizable that is has been impossible to even produce an accurate transcription of it. It is clear that this problematic and mispronounced question elicits confusion from the interviewee's behalf. This example could be considered an extreme case of mispronunciation in the Noriko Show because the pronunciation is completely unrecognizable and does not bare any idiomatic resemblance to the actual word.

Changing pronunciation. Besides pronouncing words unclearly Noriko also makes her questions problematic by changing the pronunciation so that the word changes to another one. The next two examples illustrate this kind of situations.

Example 4 (Ilkka)
1 N: so you have seen santa claude?
2 I: of course. /i i'm not finn if i have not seen the santa claus in my life hh he was ss he
3 N: what is he/
4 I: was so important person in in in the heart of the little child

Example 5 (Tahiti)
1 N: you meet santa claude
2 (1.63)
3 T: have i met santa claus
4 N: santa clouds
5 T: eeääh yes ive met santa claus (laughter)

In these examples from the interviews with Ilkka Kanerva and Tahiti Charpentier Noriko pronounces the word 'claus' from Santa Claus in the way that it becomes another word 'claude' in Kanerva's interview (example 4, line 1) and 'clouds' in Charpentier's interview (example 5, line 4). Although this mispronunciation can be seen to make the questions somewhat problematic it does not seem to cause confusion in Kanerva's interview. However, in the interview with Tahiti Charpentier the mispronunciation does seem to cause some hesitation on Charpentier's behalf because there is quite a long pause in the conversation after Noriko's problematic question and Charpentier also produces a clarification request on line 3. In these examples Noriko's questions take the form of statements or declarative clauses but they are still treated as questions.

The next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi further illustrates Noriko's strategy of changing the pronunciation of some words.

Example 6 (Paula)
1 N: how is finnish love very patient
2 P: hh (laughter) hh i don't know wha
3 N: mm
4 P: you mean you mean passion
5 N: pas/sion yes
6 P: yu-oo ye/s passion of course artists have passion persons eh (laughter)

Noriko and Paula Koivuniemi have been talking about Koivuniemi's love life and her boyfriend and Noriko continues by asking about Finnish love. What Noriko does in this question on line 1 is that she alters the pronunciation of the word 'passion' so that it begins to sound more like the word 'patient'. This clearly creates confusion in Koivuniemi which can be seen on line 2. In this example, in contrast to the previous ones, Noriko's question is indeed in the most typical form of a question as a request to provide information.

To summarize, one way in which Noriko turns sensible utterances into senseless and makes her questions problematic in the Noriko Show is by mispronouncing English words. The mispronunciation may be the main cause for confusion or be used with other features (e.g. problematic syntax) which make the turn problematic. Noriko often pronounces words so unclearly that it is difficult or even impossible for the guests to understand what she is asking. Sometimes Noriko also changes the pronunciation of a word in such a way that it turns into another word altogether thus creating room for misunderstanding.

6.2 Words & Utterances Related to Sexuality

Another way in which Noriko makes her questions problematic for her guests is using words that are related to sexuality or other delicate matters. Often she uses these sexuality related words in situations where she has altered the pronunciation of a "normal" word (such as election) in such a way that it sounds like a sexuality related word (such as erection). Noriko also sometimes constructs entire questions by making them ambiguous so that they can be understood in a sexual sense as well as in a normal sense when examined in the context they appear in.

Sexuality related words. Noriko uses sexuality related words to create problematic questions by altering the pronunciation of a word so that it turns into a similar sounding word that has sexual connotations. As the next example from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva shows, this can be done simply by changing one letter of the word (line 3).

> Example 7 (Ilkka)
> 1 I: we had öö parliamentary elections just half a year ago and. and and and just now we
> 2   are getting. getting forward all the way
> **3 N: how. okay. how.. when do you have erection**
> 4 I: it was last. m-march. one and a ää it's half a year ago
> 5 N: okay. is there /e-
> 6 I: so/ that the parliament is brand new but it has started its work very
> 7 actively
> 8 (1.60)
> **9 N: and prime minister erection?**
> 10 I: prime minister is ää from the center party called ää matti vanhanen

In this example Noriko takes the word 'election' from Ilkka Kanerva's speech and turns it into a similar sounding 'erection' on line 3. This is a word that carries clear sexual connotations and thus can be regarded as making the question highly problematic and provocative. Noriko uses the word a second time on line 9 to ask about the prime minister and thus tries to create confusion. What is interesting in this example is that even though Noriko's questions are highly problematic or even provocative they do not seem to cause much hesitation or confusion in Ilkka Kanerva. Kanerva's reactions to these questions will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 7.1.

The next two examples from the interviews with Tahiti Charpentier and Paula Koivuniemi further illustrate how Noriko uses sexuality related words to make her questions problematic. These are also good examples of how Noriko alters the pronunciation of words to turn them into similar sounding sexuality related ones. In example 7 Noriko has asked Tahiti Charpentier whether she is a model and Charpentier has replied that she is not (lines 1-3).

Example 8 (Tahiti)
1 N: hh wha-a mm. hh you you have very nice tith. Im-you-m maybe but no model
2   /bu-you very nice tith
3 T: no/
4 (2.28)
5 N: whi:te. you tith whi:te
6 (2.09)
7 T: teeth
8 N: ye:s. its very white beautiful
9 T: thank you

In this example from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier Noriko pronounces the vowel in the word 'teeth' too short so that she makes it sound more like the word 'tit' which is clearly sexual (lines 1-2). This clearly works in creating confusion in the interviewee because Charpentier reacts with quite a long silence on lines 4 and 6. Charpentier's turn on line 3 is a response to Noriko's assertion on line 1 and thus does not respond to the compliment about her teeth. It is not until Noriko adds the word 'white' on line 5 to her utterance that Charpentier understand what she means. In the next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi Noriko uses a sexuality related word in a similar kind of way.

Example 9 (Paula)
1 P hh i hhh would be a teacher /yea
2 N: aahhh/ why teach what teach
3 P: like-a öö for the kids
4 N: you like tits
5 P: yea immm the i do but i i like children very much and i would like to be a teacher
6 when i was young /that was my
7 N: maybe a mu/sic teacher
8 P: so- maybe maybe yea. yea

In example 8 from Paula Koivuniemi's interview Noriko has asked Paula what she would do if she was not a singer. After Koivuniemi has replied that she would be a teacher "for the kids" on line 3 Noriko continues by asking "you like tits" where she appears to pronounce the word 'kids' deliberately poorly and produce instead the word 'tits' (line 4). This word again can be regarded as

carrying sexual connotations and thus making the question problematic. However, unlike in the previous example here the problematic questions do not seem to cause much confusion in the interviewee.

Utterances related to sexuality. Besides sexuality related words, Noriko also uses entire utterances related to sexuality to make her questions problematic. These utterances often include expressions or figures of speech that can be understood both in sexual and nonsexual senses. This is the case in the next two examples.

> Example 10 (Oskari)
> **1 N: o:kay. so maybe personal question**
> 2 O: mm
> **3 N: okay you like man or woman**
> 4 (1.54)
> **5 O: what is this**
> **6 N: is man or wo/man in act/ing bet/ter actor**
> **7 O: hh/   hh/   what is this/ come on**
> **8 N: better actor**
> 9 (3.3)
> 10 N: when better man or woman
> 11 O: man or woman
> **12 N: better actor in finland**

In this example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto Noriko has asked Katajisto for a permission to ask him a personal question on line 1. Noriko asks Katajisto whether he likes men or women (line 3). This can be considered as an extremely personal and thus problematic question and it clearly causes confusion or even anger in the interviewee as can be seen on lines 5 and 7. The question can be understood as an inquiry about Katajisto's sexual orientation, which is how Katajisto appears to understand it judging by his aggravated reaction. In this sense the question touches upon an issue that is often considered even a taboo and thus elicits high degrees of aggravation from the interviewee. However, as is revealed in Noriko's next turns on lines 6, 8 and 12 she behaves as if she had meant the question as an inquiry about who Katajisto thought were better actors, men or women.

The next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi illustrates a similar kind of situation. However, in this example the question (line 1) is not nearly as provocative and personal as in the previous one.

Example 11 (Paula)
1 N: is is is possible for woman be on top
2 (2.76)
3 N: is possible for woman be on top /also in work
4 P: yea/   yea nowadays yea its changing and im
5 very happy for that becau/se
6 N: yo/
7 P: because usually men just over in higher. working places and bosses like. chief and
8 nowadays women too lot

Noriko asks Paula Koivuniemi whether it is possible for a woman to be on top. This question could also be seen to have sexual connotations in the sense that the question could be taken to refer to sexuality and having sex and thus regarded as problematic. The question does seem to create some hesitation in Koivuniemi because she does not answer the first question at all (line 2). When Noriko adds to her question the notion of work on line 3, the conversation returns back on track. This example, although problematic, does not create such a conflict sensitive situation as the previous example and the question could thus be considered less provocative and threatening.

The next example illustrates a slightly different question that plays with sexuality related matters. The previous two examples have illustrated questions that have had two senses: the sexual one and the pretended "normal" one. The next example, however, demonstrates a situation where the sexuality related question is not intended to ask anything else than it seems to be asking.

Example 12 (Oskari)
1 N: *japanese* mm mm hh okay aa i have couple pictures one act fin woman one man
2 you know this actor you kno ou whi/ch
3 O: yea/ outi mäenpää
4 N: is she a porno

5 (1.40)
6 O: excuse me
7 N: is she porno
8 (1.76)
9 N: no. she is. is she naughty
10 (1.11)
11 O: she naughty no shes very good actor

In this example Noriko shows Katajisto a picture of Outi Mäenpää (Noriko) and asks if Katajisto recognizes her (line 1). She then continues by enquiring whether Outi Mäenpää is some sort of an erotic actress. In this example Noriko's surprising and provocative question "is she porno" on line 4 is meant to ask exactly what seems to be asking and is thus slightly different from the previous examples. The question also manages to cause clear confusion in the interviewee Oskari Katajisto as can be concluded from his reactions on lines 5, 6, 8 and 10. Again Noriko constructs a question that deals with a subject related to sexuality and considered at least to some extent a taboo.

In sum, these examples show that another way in which Noriko makes her questions problematic is by using words and utterances related to sexuality. She creates these utterances by altering the pronunciation of a word so that it becomes a similar sounding sexuality related word and by using whole sentences that include taboos and sexuality related expressions.

6.3 Problematic Sentence Structure

A third and the most common way in which Noriko creates problematic questions is by using problematic sentence structure. Noriko often creates questions that violate the grammatical rules of the English language and are thus difficult to understand. Noriko often constructs her questions in the way that they sound more like stretches of disconnected words than full syntactic

units. She appears to do this by constructing questions with messy sentence structure, using repetition in her questions and by adding the question "yes or no" to the end of a long and complicated question.

Messy structure. Many of Norikos' problematic questions have been constructed in a disorganized way which makes them difficult to understand. The next two examples from Paula Koivuniemi's interview illustrate well the unusual sentence structure Noriko often uses.

Example 13 (Paula)
1 N: good contact so if not you who you are
2 (1.46)
3 P hh i hhh would be a teacher /yea
4 N: aahhh/ why teach what teach
5 P: like-a öö for the kids

Example 14 (Paula)
1 N: okay. so is it in show bisness is typical in finland when you sing pe-man come
2 say ooh ooh
3 P: yoo-o that happens
4 N: what you say

Before example 13 Noriko and Paula Koivuniemi have been talking about giving autographs and interacting with the fans. Noriko asks Koivuniemi "if not you who you are" on line 1 which is clearly quite problematic in structure and form having irregular word order and thus problematic and difficult to understand. The question does not really convey well its purpose of asking what Koivuniemi would do if she were not a singer. This question emerges as problematic because Paula Koivuniemi first reacts to it with a silence and then hesitantly gives her answer. Example 14 illustrates further the messy structure that Noriko uses in her questions. In this example the question about show business on lines 1-2 is quite poorly structured containing elements of both declarative and interrogative clauses as well as a subordinate clause which does

not make sense. However, in this case the question does not seem to cause the confusion it was perhaps meant to cause.

Besides using complicated/unusual sentence structure to make her question problematic Noriko also sometimes adds some kind of a word play into her questions to make them more difficult to understand. The next two examples from the interviews with Ilkka Kanerva and Tahiti Charpentier illustrate these kinds of situations.

Example 15 (Ilkka)
1 N: *japanese* uh so you ski cross finland
2 I: yes we do. yes and and i like to do it in the winter time but. but i must say that i
3 have to say that in in southern part of finland. we don't have so good winter öö
4 circumstances to do it so. normally you have to take a little bit north in in finland
5 and especially **lapland** is fantastic area to practicise skiing
6 N: so if how long time take if you ski from. from finland. whole cross finland. how
7 long time take
8 I: i don't know the finland is ää is more that one thousand kilometers /from the
9 N: because /you
10 say cross country
11 I: northest point to the southern point of of finland

In this example Noriko and Ilkka Kanerva have previously talked about cross country skiing and Noriko has taken this term and here uses it as basis for constructing a problematic question. On line 1 Noriko asks Ilkka "so you ski cross finland" which can be taken to mean skiing across Finland. Noriko pretends here to have misunderstood Ilkka's talk about cross country skiing. However, even though the question can be described as a problematic one Kanerva does not seem too confused about it. Noriko tries a second time to create confusion by asking Kanerva how long it takes to ski across Finlad on lines 6-7 but this question fails to create confusion as well.

The next excerpt from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier is another example of a sort of a word play in a problematic question.

Example 16 (Tahiti)
1 N: hmh okay a a is better make make in evening or in morning
2 (2.11)
3 T: öö what do you mean
4 N: is better make up in evening or in morning. better make up in evening or in
5 morning
6 T: ä it depends when you need the make up

Before this example Noriko and Tahiti Charpentier have been talking about make up and in this example Noriko continues from the same topic by asking Tahiti "is better make make in evening or in morning" on line 1. In this question Noriko has mixed up the verb make up and the noun make up. The first 'make' of the question could be taken to refer to making up and the second 'make' to make up. However, the question does not convey this meaning very well but instead causes some confusion in the interviewee.

Repetition. Noriko also often uses repetition in making her questions problematic through complicated sentence structure. She appears to often repeat a stretch of few words in her question or even repeat the whole question. The next three examples illustrate this feature of Noriko's problematic questions.

Example 17 (Oskari)
1 N: so aah you have fire men at the theatre. you have fire man in theatre you fire man
2 fire man
3 O: fire man oh do i: swallow the fire and burst the fire
4 N: yes
5 O: yes i do

In this example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto Noriko asks Katajisto whether they have fire men in the theatre on lines 1-2. Noriko constructs her question deliberately complicated by first producing somewhat understandable question "you have fire men at the theatre" and then continuing repeating and shortening it until there is only left the words "fire man". However, regardless of this repetitive nature of the question the interviewee seems to pick up on it easily and answers it without problems.

The next example is also from the interview with Oskari Katajisto. In this example also Noriko uses repetition and messy sentence structure to make her question problematic.

Example 18 (Oskari)
1 N: oh okay so you play one play or any other play in theatre one you play this play
2 O: yes im doing ooh sometimes i have three shows
3 N: oohh

In this example Noriko repeats the word 'play' in order to make the question seem confusing on line 1. This question seems to roughly follow the same pattern as the previous one. Here also Noriko first produces an understandable question "so you play one play or any other play in theatre" and then continues to mix it up by repeating the word 'play' and changing the word order.

The next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi includes perhaps a slightly longer and more complicated question. In this question, on lines 1-2, Noriko also uses repetition.

Example 19 (Paula)
1 N: hi hhm wha-wha he say when you alone in restaurant is no good maybe. what he
2 say when alone boyfriend what he say when alone restaurant
3 P: when me i am alon/e i don't go m i don't go to restaurants i just go to sing there
4 N: mm/
5 P: wo/rk there
6 N: to sing/ then alone sing alone
7 P: with my band yes

Before this example Noriko and Paula Koivuniemi have been talking about Koivuniemi's boyfriend. Noriko intends to ask Koivuniemi what her boyfriend says if she goes to a restaurant alone and produces a long and slightly complicated question where she repeats the words "what he say" and "when alone" (line 1). This question also somewhat follows the same pattern as the previous examples but in this case Noriko seems to produce different versions

of the question instead of shortening it. The word order of the question is also quite interesting because it is not interrogative. However, despite the complicated nature of the question it does not seem to manage to cause confusion in the interviewee.

Yes or no. Another way in which Noriko adds confusion to her questions with messy sentence structure is by adding to the question "yes or no" to the end of a series of declarative statements. The next two examples from the interviews with Oskari Katajisto and Tahiti Charpentier illustrate this feature.

Example 20 (Oskari)
1 N: okay ah understand hhh ä when sometime on stage and sometime on back stage
2 when all thing go wrong maybe angry start fight is same with you yes or no
3 O: ää phh it was a long question i-i dont know if i understand it wright ää mm if
4 something goes wrong on a stage? and do i get angry?
5 N: or back stage
6 O: or back stage well yes actors they are pretty you know full of full of power

Before this stretch of conversation Noriko and Oskari Katajisto have been talking about Katajisto's career in the theatre. In this example Noriko produces a long question on lines 1-2 that is complicated in structure, consisting of several subordinate clauses. Moreover, Noriko adds to the end of the question the interrogative "yes or no". This is clearly a problematic question because it is difficult to understand what is actually asked by it. One can also see from Katajisto's reaction on lines 3-4 that the question has managed to cause confusion in him.

The next example from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier further illustrates this feature of Noriko's questions. Noriko and Tahiti Charpentier have been talking about Charpentier's profession as a make-up artist as well as matters related to doing make up.

Example 21 (Tahiti)
1 N: h-hmmm maybe: maybe not understan-so. is okay if some time when very much
2 make up and not easy people like or not yes or no
3 (2.83)
4 T: ää say again
5 N: hh a when woma-woman. in finla:nd. much make up or not
6 T: oh do they ää make up a /lot. themselves
7 N: yea/   yes
8 T: no finnish woman are very natural

In this example Noriko asks a long and rather complicated question in the form of a declarative clause about doing make up (lines 1-2). As in the previous example Noriko marks the utterance as a question by adding the interrogative "yes or no". The question clearly causes confusion in the interviewee because Charpentier first reacts to it with quite a long silence.

As a conclusion it could be said that a third strategy that Noriko uses in making her questions problematic is by using complicated sentence structure. Noriko appears to make her questions complicated by using messy sentence structure, like illogical word order, and repetition of some words. She also sometimes uses declarative utterances by adding the question "yes or no" to the end of a long and complicated declarative clause to make it more problematic.

6.4 Topically Disconnected Questions

Yet another strategy Noriko uses to make her questions problematic is asking basically understandable and ordinary questions but which are not connected to the current topic. Some of Noriko's questions are quite standard in form but include topics that are disconnected in the context of a television interview.

Normal but unexpected. The next two examples from the interviews with Ilkka Kanerva and Tahiti Charpentier illustrate how Noriko constructs questions that appear normal but are topically disconnected.

Example 22 (Ilkka)
1 N: okay thank you very much. so you maybe have a picture for me?
2 I: a pic?ture for you
3 N: yea because. you /have
4 I: what do/ you mean by that
5 N: i beca- i have a picture for you because you- my picture. so you always remember
6 noriko saru
7 I: ohh that's nice (laughter)

This example has been taken from the very end of Ilkka Kanerva's interview. In the Noriko Show Noriko always ends the interview by asking if the guest has a picture for her and then shows a picture of Outi Mäenpää, which leads to the guest understanding the true nature of the show. Here, on lines 1-2, Noriko asks Ilkka Kanerva for a picture and Kanerva clearly seems quite puzzled by this. Noriko's question is problematic not because it is difficult to understand but because of its content and its use at this particular point in conversation; it is not typical for a television interview that the interviewer asks the interviewee for a picture.

The next example from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier further illustrates the normal but surprising questions Noriko uses in her interviews. In this

example Noriko asks multiple questions that are quite normal in form but have an unusual topic.

Example 23 (Tahiti)
1 N: hm but in tahiti is warm and you can eat pineapple.. you like pineapple
2 T: yes
3 (1.87)
4 N: so how many pineapple you can eat. a day
5 T: i-i ää i havent eaten many pineapples a day. ää i can eat different kind of fruits
6 (1.67)
7 N: but its free.. its free
8 T: its free what
9 N: in tahiti. free to eat pineapple
10 T: OOH you mean the fruits

This example has been taken from the beginning of Charpentier's interview and before this particular stretch of discourse Noriko and Charpentier have been talking about Charpentier's first name and what it means. Noriko asks Charpentier two questions about eating pineapples on lines 1 and 4. These questions are understandable in form and are not problematic in that sense. However, the topic of the questions, eating pineapples, is perhaps slightly surprising and unusual in this particular context. Charpentier also seems puzzled by these questions, as can be seen from her reactions on lines 5 and 8. It appears that the interviewer's strategy is to exploit the connection between the interviewee's name and the island of Tahiti as an exotic place with tropical fruit. This teasing that Noriko pursues towards Charpentier because of her name could also be seen as face-threatening towards Charpentier's positive face.

The fourth and final strategy Noriko uses in making her questions problematic is introducing unexpected topics into the conversation. Noriko sometimes asks questions that are problematic mainly because they include topics that are not expected in the context of a television interview. These questions are usually quite normal in form and structure and thus, it seems that their problematic nature derives rather from their content.

7 MAKING SENSE OF THE SENSELESS – HOW THE GUESTS REACT TO THE PROBLEMATIC QUESTIONS

7.1 Disattending the Problematic Features of the Questions

One of the ways in which the guests in the Noriko Show react to Noriko's problematic questions is by in a way disattending them altogether. In other words, the guests answer to the questions as if they were totally normal ones and do not give any indication of hesitation or confusion even though the question might be severely confusing, misleading or even almost insulting. Judging by the guests' reactions in these cases the interview could be considered totally orderly. In these cases the guests often leave deliberately unnoticed the elements in the questions that make them problematic. Such elements include words that could be considered inappropriate or insulting (see chapter 6.2). The guests also seem to disattend questions that include poorly pronounced words (see chapter 6.1) or confusing sentence structure (see chapter 6.3) or are just topically disconnected (see chapter 6.4).

Inappropriate words. The next example from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva is a good example of how the guests sometimes seem to disattend to problematic elements in Noriko's questions. This example has been taken from the very beginning of the interview.

> Example 1 (Ilkka)
> 1 I: we had öö parliamentary elections just half a year ago and. and and and just now we
> 2 are getting. getting forward all the way
> **3 N: how. okay. how.. when do you have erection**
> **4 I: it was last. m-march. one and a ää it's half a year ago**
> 5 N: okay. is there /e-
> 6 I: so/ that the parliament is brand new but it has started its work very
> 7 actively
> 8 (1.60)
> 9 N: and prime minister erection?

10 I: prime minister is ää from the center party called ää matti vanhanen

In this example Noriko and Ilkka Kanerva have been talking about politics and parliamentary elections. Noriko takes the word 'election' and turns it into the word 'erection' thus creating a problematic question on line 3 (see chapter 6.2 example 7). However, although this question can be regarded problematic and even inappropriate with its sexuality related content, it does not appear to create any confusion in Ilkka Kanerva. Instead Kanerva answers the question as if it was a well-formed one (line 4). Apart from some hesitation on lines 4 and 10, Kanerva does not show any cues of confusion. It could be that Kanerva understands the use of the word 'erection' as an unintended mispronunciation of the word 'election' and thus interprets what he hears in the way that it makes sense in the given context and then answers accordingly

The next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi further illustrates this type of reaction to the problematic and inappropriate questions. The example is very similar to the previous one and includes a sexuality related word.

Example 2 (Paula)
1 N: good contact so if not you who you are
2 (1.46)
3 P hh i hhh would be a teacher /yea
4 N: aahhh/ why teach what teach
5 P: like-a öö for the kids
6 N: you like tits
7 P: yea immm the i do but i i like children very much and i would like to be a teacher
8 when i was young /that was my
9 N: maybe a mu/sic teacher
10 P: so- maybe maybe yea. yea

In this example Noriko asks Paula Koivuniemi what she would do if she was not a singer and Koivuniemi answers that she would be a children's teacher. Noriko takes from Koivuniemi's answer on line 5 the word 'kids' and turns it into the word 'tits' (see chapter 6.2 example 7). This makes the question

problematic and though it does not seem to cause too much confusion in Paula Koivuniemi, some hesitation on line 7 can be noticed. Koivuniemi appears to understand the word as 'kids' probably due to the fact that the word has just appeared in the conversation. It is also worth noticing that Koivuniemi changes the word from 'kids' to 'children' on line 7 perhaps to provide subtle other-repair to Noriko.

The next example from Oskari Katajisto's interview offers a slightly different example of ignoring inappropriate questions in the Noriko Show. Before this stretch of conversation, Noriko and Katajisto have been talking about animals Katajisto has played.

Example 3 (Oskari)
1 O: four legs then my legs are behind and my friends legs were you know front and he
2 was also the head and i was the tail and the back of the bull so /hh i felt like a back of
3 N: you like/
4 O: the bull /sohh (laughter)
5 N: you li- you like/ better back or front
6 O: (laughter) hh well i haven't really thought about that. maybe the back was for me
7   i/-i   really loved to play /the back of the bull
8 N: why/   o:kay/

In this example Noriko asks Katajisto which he prefers playing the back or the front of a bull. However, as the question is constructed in the form of "you like better back or front" (line 5) it can be seen as having dual meaning. The question could also be understood as referring to Katajisto's sex life. According to Oskari Katajisto's reaction on line 6 this is also how he first understands the question because he bursts into laughter. The laughter could also be regarded as embarrassment resistant as well as a sign of topicalization. However, Katajisto also appears to understand what Noriko presumably means by this question and proceed to giving an answer. Although Katajisto does not acknowledge or notify Noriko of the inappropriateness of the question and thus somewhat ignores it, he does answer with a hint of sarcasm and amusement in his tone.

Poorly pronounced words. The interviewees in the Noriko Show also appear to sometimes understand problematic questions that include poorly pronounced words (see chapter 6.1). The next two examples from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva illustrate this type of reactions.

> Example 4. (Ilkka)
> **1 N: so you have seen santa claude?**
> **2 I: of course. /i i'm not finn if i have not seen the santa claus in my life hh he was ss**
> 3 N: what is he/
> 4 I: was so important person in in in the heart of the little child
> 5 N: what what he say to you. maybe
> 6 I: oh every every christmas the santa claus's first question. is that have you been very
> 7 kind and polite
>
>
> Example 5 (Ilkka)
> **1 N: okay so you very proud santa claude**
> 2 I: it's ää important element in the finnish brand

In these examples Noriko has changed the pronunciation of the term 'Santa Claus' (see chapter 6.1 examples 4 and 5) and has thus made her questions problematic. However, Ilkka Kanerva does not seem to get puzzled by this but appears to disattend the problematic features of the questions and answers to them as if they were well-formed. For example in the example 4 on line 2 Kanerva offers a very steady answer without any hesitation or pause "of course" which shows that he has understood the question in the way that it makes sense despite the problematic pronunciation. Kanerva also uses the correct pronunciation of the term 'Santa Claus' in his utterances thus exhibiting a type of other-repair.

Confusing sentences. The interviewees in the Noriko Show also seem to be able to disattend confusing sentence structure in problematic questions (see chapter 6.3). The next example from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva is a good example of this kind of a situation.

Example 6 (Ilkka)
1 N: *japanese* **uh so you ski cross finland**
2 I: yes we do. yes and and i like to do it in the winter time but. but i must say that i
3 have to say that in in southern part of finland. we don't have so good winter öö
4 circumstances to do it so. normally you have to take a little bit north in in finland
5 and especially lapland is fantastic area to practicise skiing
6 N: so if how long time take if you ski from. from finland. whole cross finland. how
7 long time take
8 I: i don't know the finland is ää is more that one thousand kilometers /from the
9 N: because /you
10 say cross country
11 I: northest point to the southern point of of finland /and you you
12 N: so you ski/
13 I: no no no no you can't do it in in practice
14 N: why not
15 I: why not. more than one thousand kilometers it's a little bit too long. distance

Before this stretch of conversation Noriko and Ilkka Kanerva have been talking about cross country skiing. In this example Noriko has taken the term 'cross country skiing' and has turned the words around creating the problematic question "ski cross finland" on line 1 (see chapter 6.3 example 15). Ilkka Kanerva appears to ignore this problematic feature of the question entirely and goes on answering as if the question was well-formed on line 2. Again Kanerva offers a very steady and fast answer "yes we do" on line two without any hesitation. He also continues his answer and thus creates quite a lengthy turn. Noriko tries on line 6 to confuse Kanerva with the subject of skiing across Finland another time and even goes on explaining her question by saying "because you say cross country". However, Kanerva is still not puzzled by this but continues with his steady and unhesitant answers insisting on his own interpretation which is consistent with the earlier use of the term.

Another example could be taken from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi to illustrate how the guests of the Noriko show sometimes react to the problematic questions by ignoring the problematic elements in them. In this example also as in the previous ones Noriko's problematic question includes a confusing sentence structure.

62

Example 7 (Paula)
1 N: aah so is typical finnish woman work
2 P: hh yea yea yea nowadays /yes. even when i was a kid im now fifty six year /old h
3 N: ooh/   hm/
4 P: but even when i was young and my mother was working at that time already or my
5 mother was book keeper /and my father was a musician /hh so even that days but it
6 N: ooh/   aah/
7 P: wasn-. hh öö its nowadays its more. more mf- fe- women are working nowadays

In this example Noriko asks Paula Koivuniemi a question that has slightly confusing sentence structure on line 1. However, despite the confusing nature of the question Koivuniemi appears to understand it without problems because on line 2 she answers the question without pausing. Koivuniemi does not initiate any other repair to clarify the messiness of the question's structure or in any other way pay attention to the problematic nature of the question but ignores it and answers as she sees fit. The short exhaling 'hh' at the beginning of line 2 indicates that she takes a short moment to understand the question, but the continuation of the utterance 'yea yea yea' indicates that she is quite confident that the interpretation she has made of the question is correct. In fact, Koivuniemi produces quite a lengthy answer to this particular question.

The next example also from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi is yet another example of how the guests of the Noriko Show sometimes appear to ignore problematic features in questions that include confusing sentence structure.

Example 8 (Paula)
1 N: okay. so is it in show bisness is typical in finland when you sing pe-man come
2 say ooh ooh
3 P: yoo-o that happens
4 N: what you say
5 P: i-i try to be kind for them and hh usual they been asking autographs an my
6 pictures autographs usually and hh and-a as i i i talk with them couple words and
7 then i leave an you know but-a but i go to sing in like concerts i won't talk

In this example Noriko again asks Paula Koivuniemi a problematic question that has been constructed deliberately messy in structure on lines 1-2 (see

chapter 6.3 example 14). As in the previous example Koivuniemi again appears to ignore the problematic nature of the question and answers it as if it was well-formed (line 3). The question does not seem to cause any hesitation in Koivuniemi. As can be seen on line 3 she answers very steadily and firmly and does not attend to correct or clarify Noriko's question in any way. Noriko continues by asking Koivuniemi an additional question on line 4 perhaps with the intention to try and cause hesitation in her. However, Koivunniemi does not hesitate in answering this question either.

Topically disconnected. The next example from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva also demonstrates how the guests of the Noriko Show sometimes react to the interviewer's problematic questions by ignoring them. However, in this example the guest first seems to pause for a little while before delivering his answer. This reaction could still be counted as ignoring the problematic nature of the question because the verbal answer does not address it in any way.

> Example 9 (Ilkka)
> 1 N: so maybe. time for a personal question if okay
> 2 I: yes please
> **3 N: okay. öh who. who or how is beautiful woman**
> **4 (2.64)**
> **5 I: hmm looking at you**
> 6 N: oh thank you (*japanese*)
> 7 M: (*japanese*)
> 8 N: (*japanese*)
> 9 (1.13)
> 10 N: so. thank you. mm okay. wha-mm what you want to say to japanese people
> 11 maybe something to the camera

In this example Noriko's question on line 3 is problematic mostly because of its topically disconnected content (see chapter 6.4). Ilkka Kanerva first reacts to this question with quite a long pause and then answers very steadily and confidently and thus ignores the problematic nature of the topic of the question (lines 4-5). What is particularly interesting in this example is that Kanerva's

answer, which is complimentary to Noriko, seems to some extent confuse her because she appears surprised in thanking him and continuing the conversation in Japanese with the other interviewer. After this Noriko also pauses for a while and after that on line eleven appears to search for words for a while before formulating the next question. It seems that Noriko is surprised that Kanerva did not get confused by her topically disconnected question.

As a conclusion it could be said that one way in which the guests of the Noriko Show react to the interviewer's problematic questions is by disattending them. This means that the guests do not seem to address the problematic features of the questions almost in any way but answer them as if they were orderly. Although in some instances there are still signs of trouble with understanding, like delays, the guests display their understanding of the problematic questions by producing appropriate responses. The ignoring of problematic features in questions appears to happen in connection with questions that are inappropriate, poorly pronounced, poorly structured or topically disconnected. In other words, ignoring the problematic features of the questions seems to relate to all the different types of questions Noriko uses in her interviews.

7.2 Requesting Clarification & Offering Formulations

Another way in which the guests of the Noriko Show react to the interviewer's problematic questions is by requesting clarifications as well as offering formulations. Clarifying questions can be considered to mean questions like "Excuse me?" or "What do you mean?", in other words, straight-up questions that indicate that the person has not understood the questions and that initiate repair. Formulations in turn could be defined as the guests providing another,

often corrected, version of the questions thus ensuring that they have understood the question correctly.

Clarification requests. The next example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto illustrates well how the guests of the Noriko Show sometimes initiate repair to clarify Noriko's problematic questions.

> Example 10 (Oskari)
> **1 N: sorry my english not very bad**
> **2 O: excuse me**
> 3 N: sorry my english not very bad
> 4 O: i think its pretty good

These are the very first lines of the interview with Oskari Katajisto. As can be seen on line 1 Noriko starts the interview by apologizing for her bad English but does this in the form of a poorly structured question. Katajisto does not appear to understand the question the first time and thus initiates repair with the question "excuse me" on line 2. After this Noriko repeats the question and Katajisto understands what she means (apologizing for her poor English) by it and answers accordingly.

The next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi further illustrates how the guests react to Noriko's problematic questions by initiating repair. In this particular example Koivuniemi poses two clarifying questions before she understands the question.

> Example 11 (Paula)
> 1 N: aah okay so: /you- mm so you like xxxxx
> **2 P: hh/   excuse me**
> 3 N: you like xxxxx
> **4 P: xxxxx sorry i dont get**
> 5 N: ää tina turner
> 6 P: tina turner ye:s yes very great

In this example Paula Koivuniemi first initiates repair with "excuse me", on line 2, after Noriko has asked her an unclear question. As Noriko repeats her question Koivuniemi tries to form a formulation of it but has to admit that she still does not understand the question, line 4. When Noriko repeats the name of the artist she was asking Koivuniemi about for the third time Koivuniemi finally understands it.

The next example from Tahiti Charpentier's interview illustrates another instance of how clarification requests are used as a reaction to Noriko's problematic questions.

Example 12 (Tahiti)
1 N: oaah a friend aah ooh hh congratulation hmh okay a a is better make make in
2 evening or in morning
3 (2.11)
4 T: öö what do you mean
5 N: is better make up in evening or in morning. better make up in evening or in
6 morning
7 T: ä it depends when you need the make up at öö /you can
8 N: when pa:rty:/
9 T: ää w-you can do a day make up a: night make up evening make up

In this example Tahiti Charpentier first reacts to Noriko's problematic question with a silence perhaps to try and understand the question (line 3). She then asks Noriko to clarify "öö what do you mean" on line 4. After this Noriko reformulates her question, thus helping Charpentier to understand it. Charpentier appears to understand the reformulated question although she still seems slightly confused when she delivers her answer.

In the next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi we can also see the strategy of pausing first before seeking clarification.

Example 13 (Paula)
1 N: mm-m. so ä you have a picture for me

2 (1.70)
3 P: ää for you
4 N: yea you picture remember always
5 (1.98)
6 P: ää you mean excuse me
7 N: maybe you have a picture you picture for me remember you
8 P: yes i have yea in my purse yes i have

In this example Koivuniemi first reacts with a short silence to Noriko's problematic question and then asks a clarifying question "ää for you" on line 3. It appears, however, that Koivuniemi still does not understand the question from Noriko's unclear reformulation on line 4. Koivuniemi pauses again on line 5 before initiating repair "ää you mean excuse me" that actually seems to start with an attempt of a formulation but turns into a repair initiator. After Noriko has revised her question the second time Koivuniemi clearly gets the hang of it and shows this repeatedly in her answer.

The next example from Oskari Katajisto's interview is another example of how the guests initiate repair to make sense of Noriko's problematic questions.

Example 14 (Oskari)
1 N: ooh ooh okay hh is there animal elephant because in a a is a ida ida was elephant
2 O: ouph oouu. (laughter) im sorry i don't understand ida
3 N: the the ida is an elephant there is a ele-elepahant. maybe there was was any animal
4 O: where
5 N: ida the theatre ida
6 O: oh you mean opera ida
7 N: öö elepha:nt there is elepha:nt
8 O: no i don't know anything about elephants
9 N: ooh because we have animal outside theatre xxx maybe you know
10 O: ooh you mean that okay nnno we don't äphh in fi-finnish okay its its something
11 about your gods i think
12 N: god y/-you mean in india
13 O: in in in your in xxxx/ theatre elephants i think there are apes and stuff like
14 that

In this example Oskari Katajisto first reacts to the problematic question, on line 2, by admitting that he did not understand it and then trying to pronounce the word he did not understand 'ida'. When Noriko reformulates the question

Katajisto still seems puzzled because he asks a clarifying question "where" on line 4. After this Katajisto seems to get the hang of the conversation a couple of times, on lines 6 and 10, which can be deducted from the formulation "oh you mean..". The 'oh' in the formulation indicates that Katajisto has now understood something he did not understand before. However, the conversation still appears to go on somewhat inchoate since Noriko is persistent on the topic of elephants and animals. In fact, after line 14 the conversation continues and moves on to different subjects such as playing animals etc. and the subject of 'ida' is left unsolved.

Formulations. The guests of the Noriko Show also react to Noriko's problematic questions by offering formulations for confirmation by the interviewer. The next two examples from the interview with Oskari Katajisto illustrates how the guests sometimes reformulate parts of the questions to ensure that they have understood them correctly.

Example 15 (Oskari)
1 N: you are actor so how you like it
2 O: how do i like acting i like it very much ive been acting since i was a little boy/ so
3 N: aah/
4 5 O: kinda my hobby turned into be /my profession so.
5 N: aah/   aah
6 O: ive been acting since i was a little kid

Example 16 (Oskari)
1 N: aah so good. okay so you act no:w. what is name of whe- or play. when you act
2 now in theatre
3 O: where i act now im acting in helsinki city theat/re and we are doing tennessee
4 N: ooh/
5 O: williams aa the sweeper the youth and im playing the role of chance way/ne whos
6 N: oh/
7 O: a playboy and my front actor which im acting with is kyllikki forsel and im playing
8 her playboy and shes old Hollywood diva

In example 15 Noriko asks Oskari Katajisto a question and at the beginning of his answer Katajisto repeats the question, or rather, reformulates it so that it is

more understandable (line 2). The utterance "how do i like acting" at the beginning of Katajisto's turn on line 2 can be seen as a formulation of Noriko's question "so you are actor how you like it" on line 1. In the example 16 Katajisto does the same thing on line 3 when he repairs Noriko's question by offering the formulation "where i act now" at the beginning of his utterance.

In the next example also from Oskari Katajisto's interview it can be seen more clearly how Katajisto uses formulations to make sure that he has understood the question correctly. In this example the question Noriko poses is also perhaps more problematic than in the previous examples thus requiring more ensuring on Katajisto's behalf.

Example 17 (Oskari)
1 N: okay ah understand hhh ä when sometime on stage and sometime on back stage
2 when all thing go wrong maybe angry start fight is same with you yes or no
3 O: ää phh it was a long question i-i dont know if i understand it wright ää mm if
4 something goes wrong on a stage? and do i get angry?
5 N: or back stage
6 O: or back stage well yes actors they are pretty you know full of full of power and they
7 very /very
8 N: you/ a very strong /man
9 O: yyea well /im not that maybe mentally we burst you
10 know we burst we burst in our feelings very easily you know

In this example Noriko asks Katajisto a very long and problematic question. Katajisto has a hard time understanding it. He even says in his turn on lines 3-4 that the question was very long and he is not sure he understood it. Katajisto also offers two formulations of the question in order to make sure he has indeed understood the question correctly. It is worth noticing that he breaks the formulation into two separate turn units and seeks confirmation for both with a rising intonation. When he gets the confirmation from Noriko that his interpretation of the question is correct he proceeds by giving his answer.

Repetition. In the previous examples the formulations the interviewees have produced are mostly parts of longer utterances and turns and also often only pertain to part of the original question. However, there are also instances where the interviewees appear to repeat Noriko's question and thus execute and initiate repair. The next three examples illustrate this kind of situations.

Example 18 (Oskari)
1 N: okay hh ää what you say if in street woman say ooh you famous man and
2 O: what do i say about that
3 N: what you say or feel
4 (1.42)
5 O: i just say hello and nn wish them have a nice day
6 N: aah
7 O: n-nothing else if they ask autographs i do it
8 N: ah okay

In this example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto the interviewee offers a partial repetition of Noriko's problematic question on line 2. This repetition is in the form of an independent question that somewhat summarizes the content of Noriko's long and problematic question. It appears that Katajisto's repetition functions to initiate repair, as a kind of understanding check. As Noriko confirms Katajisto's repair he pauses shortly and then proceeds to giving his answer (lines 3-5).

In the next example from the interview with Paula Koivuniemi the interviewee uses similar strategy to makes sense of the interviewer's problematic question.

Example 19 (Paula)
1 N: wha-where you sing
2 P: where do i sing
3 N: mm-m
4 P: i sing in we have in finland kind of a dancing places hh like summer times near
5 the the lakes and i i sing in summer times a lot of those dancing places and then
6 restaurants and concerts and hh

In this example Paula Koivuniemi forms a repetition of Noriko's slightly problematic question in the similar way that Katajisto did in the previous example. Koivuniemi reformulates Noriko's question on line 2 in order to make sure she has understood it. As Koivuniemi gets a confirmation "mm-m" on line 3 from Noriko she proceeds to giving her answer. However, in this example the question Noriko has posed is already quite understandable and only slightly problematic so the repetition only adds one word 'do' to it as a sign of other-repair which corrects the syntactic form of the question turn.

The next example, also from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier, illustrates still further the strategy of using repetition to initiate repair as a kind of understanding check. In this example, however, the repetition is perhaps slightly different from the previous examples.

> Example 20 (Tahiti)
> 1 N: hm good. so when you be twenty okay. when you be twenty five year old how you
> 2 party
> **3 (4.12)**
> **4 T: öö ä when i was twenty five years old what**
> 5 N: how yo-when you be twenty five year old when you be twenty five year old how
> 6 you party
> 7 T: well that was almost ten years ago
> 8 N: aaah

In this example Noriko asks Tahiti Charpentier a long and problematic question that Charpentier clearly has a hard time understanding judging by the long silence on line 3 after Noriko's question. After this silence Charpentier forms a repetition of the question to specify its meaning. In this repetition Charpentier appears to repeat the part of the question she has understood ("when i was twenty five years old") and then replaces the part she did not understand with the repair initiator 'what'. After this Noriko reformulates her question and Charpentier is able to give her answer.

Other-repair. The next example from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier illustrates how the guests in the Noriko Show sometimes use explicit repair to make sense of Noriko's problematic questions.

> Example 21 (Tahiti)
> 1 N: good hh you name tahiti is beautiful. is. also. drink. i:sla:nd disco club
> **2 T: hh ä what does it mean**
> 3 N: yes
> 4 T: ä its an island in the pacific
> 5 N: aah so you been there
> 6 T: yes

In this example Noriko has constructed a problematic utterance that is most likely meant as a question although it does not sound like one. However, Tahiti Charpentier appears to understand it as a question because after a little hesitation she offers a repaired version of the question to define its purpose (line 2). This example is interesting because although Noriko does not ask directly "what does Tahiti mean" Charpentier seems to pick this meaning up from Noriko's problematic utterance, perhaps due to the fact that she might have had to answer several questions concerning her name in her life.

Also the next three examples from the interviews with Paula Koivuniemi and Tahiti Charpentier illustrated situations where the interviewees use explicit repair to make sense of Noriko's questions.

> Example 22 (Paula)
> 1 N: how is finnish love very patient
> **2 P: hh (laughter) hh i don't know wha**
> **3 N: mm**
> **4 P: you mean you mean passion**
> 5 N: pas/sion yes
> 6 P: yu-oo ye/s passion of course artists have passion persons eh (laughter)

In this example Noriko constructs a problematic question by altering the pronunciation of the word passion (see chapter 6.1 example 6). Judging by the utterance on line 2 Koivuniemi has some trouble understanding the question.

Since Noriko does not offer more help in understanding the question in her turn on line 3 Koivuniemi has to resort to other-repair to specify the meaning of the question. She does this by offering the repaired version "you mean passion" on line 4 that includes the other-repair of the word 'patient' into the word 'passion' that makes more sense given the context.

The next two examples from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier further illustrate this type of situations where the interviewees use other-repair.

Example 23 (Tahiti)
1 N: you meet santa claude
2 (1.63)
3 T: have i met santa claus
4 N: santa clouds
5 T: eeääh yes ive met santa claus (laughter)

Example 24 (Tahiti)
1 N: okay. bu- you are make up artist. what you make up and when
2 T: öö who do i make up
3 N: yes
4 T: öö yes i do /models. ö öö normal people öö they don-ä singers ö ä äää tv
5 N: aah/
6 T: ä commersials ä

In example 23 Noriko has made her question problematic by deliberately mispronouncing the word 'claus' from Santa Claus (see chapter 6.1 example 5). After a short silence on line 2 Charpentier offers the repaired version of the question "have i met santa claus" which includes other-repair of the word 'claude' into the word 'claus'. In example 24 in turn Noriko has changed the word 'who' into the word 'what' thus making the question problematic. In this example again Charpentier reformulates the question so that she includes the more suitable word 'who' in it as one type of other-repair (line 2). In both of these examples the repaired questions of the guests receive confirmation from Noriko and thus Charpentier is able to answer the questions accordingly.

There are also instances where the interviewees seem to add new meanings to Noriko's problematic questions in their other-repair. It appears that they do this to make the questions easier to understand and answer. The next example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto illustrates this kind of a situation. Before this example Katajisto and Noriko have been talking about acting.

Example 25 (Oskari)
1 N: aah okay where are you best and why
2 O: excuse me
3 N: where are you best and why
4 O: where am i best and why in my acting i don't know oo im a very much as a theatre
5 actor and my main job is acting on a theatre on a stage alive and i like very much to-

In this example Noriko asks Katajisto a problematic question "where are you best and why" on line 1. Katajisto does not understand this and initiates repair with "excuse me" on line 2 which Noriko answers by repeating the question. After this Katajisto produces a repaired version of the question on line 4. Katajisto adds to the question "where am i best and why" the new meaning "in my acting" thus specifying the question and making it easier to answer.

Also the next example from Ilkka Kanerva's interview illustrates a similar kind of a situation where the repairing of a problematic question is continued by adding new meaning to it.

Example 26 (Ilkka)
1 N: okay so: ä ää what is your goal in politic. /you want to be
2 I: oh my personal/ goal
3 N: president /or any
4 I: (laughter)/ ooh nobody knows ä but ä of course öö every people in
5 politics. they they they must be- they have to be quite active and and ä try to promote
6 quite many affairs quite many things in in the in the international level or in in out
7 domestic level or. or in your constituecy- constituency. so that that if you are active
8 maybe some day you can succeed to to to get a better positions

In this example Noriko asks about Kanerva's goal in politics on line 1. Kanerva initiates repair of this with "oh my personal goal" on line 2 thus adding the

meaning 'personal' to the question. What is interesting is that Kanerva's repaired version of the question does not receive any confirmation from Noriko because there is some overlap between the two speakers. Despite of the repair he has made, or perhaps because he did not get confirmation for it, Ilkka Kanerva answers to Noriko's question on quite a general level and not according to Noriko's question or even his own suggestion of a "personal goal". The next example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto is a further illustration of the use of other-repair in making sense of Noriko's questions.

Example 27 (Oskari)
1 N: so aah you have fire men at the theatre. you have fire man in theatre you fire man
2 fire man
3 O: fire man oh do i: swallow the fire and burst the fire
4 N: yes
5 O: yes i do
6 N: you do
7 O: yes

In this example Noriko asks Oskari Katajisto a problematic question by using repetition (see chapter 6.3 example 17). Katajisto reacts to this on line 3 by first repeating a part of the question and then adding new meaning 'swallowing and bursting fire' to it. It is interesting how Katajisto understands the term 'fire man' as meaning swallowing fire. It could be claimed that this is not what would first come to most people's minds when hearing the term 'fire man'. However, this repaired version of the question receives Noriko's confirmation and the conversation continues accordingly.

To conclude, a second strategy that the interviewees use to make sense of the interviewer's problematic questions in the Noriko Show is by initiating repair, offering formulations, repeating the question and using other-repair. While the repair initiators seem to appear mostly in the form of requests for clarification like "excuse me" or "what do you mean" or utterances such as "I don't

understand" the formulations used by the interviewees seem to appear as parts of responding utterances. Repetition of the problematic questions is used as independent turns and is often followed by repair initiators. The interviewees also use more explicit other-repair in making sense of Noriko's question and often pair this strategy with adding new meanings to the original questions.

7.3 Displaying Confusion & Annoyance

A third strategy (if it in fact can be called a strategy) the interviewees of the Noriko Show use in reacting to and managing the interviewer's problematic questions involves public display of confusion and annoyance. This means that it is clearly visible from the guests' reactions that they are not sure what to say next and they show it in their verbal and nonverbal cues. The guests also sometimes quieten completely and do not produce any verbal reaction. There are also instances to be found where the guest expresses clear annoyance and disapproval or even anger towards the question.

Confusion. In some cases the interviewees of the Noriko Show seem to react to the problematic questions with confusion. The next example from the interview with Ilkka Kanerva illustrates this kind of a situation.

Example 28 (Ilkka)
1 N: okay thank you very much. so you maybe have a picture for me?
2 I: a pic?ture for you
3 N: yea because. you /have
4 I: what/ do you mean by that
5 N: i beca- i have a picture for you because you- my picture. so you always remember
6 noriko saru
7 I: ohh that's nice (laughter)

In this example Noriko asks Kanerva a topically disconnected and thus problematic question (see chapter 6.4 example 22) on line 1. Kanerva clearly gets confused about this as can be seen from his turn on line 2; the rising intonation in the word 'picture' suggests that he is surprised about the question and his repair initiator "what do you mean by that" on line 4 displays clear confusion and surprise. What is surprising is that this is the only occasion in this interview when Kanerva displays confusion although there have been situations that have included much more problematic questions than this (see e.g. chapter 6.2 example 7).

The next example from the interview with Oskari Katajisto further illustrates how the interviewee clearly displays confusion after the interviewer's problematic question.

Example 29 (Oskari)
1 N: ooh ah how bull
2 O: /then you hh excuse m/e
3 N: how bull/   how/ bul
4 O: hobul
5 N: how people
6 O: how people what. im s/orry
7 N: how/ feel bul how feel bul
8 O: how how do /you feel b/ul
9 N: abt/   act/ how feel act
10 O: /a bull
11 N: act/ how feel act
12 O: when i was acting bul i was acting the back of the bull /and my friend was acting
13 N: (laughter)/
14 O: the head you know then we have four legs then my legs are behind and my
15 friends legs were you know front and he was also the head and i was the tail and the
16 back of the bull so hh i felt like a back of the bull sohh (laughter)

In this example Noriko asks Katajisto a problematic question by altering the pronunciation (see chapter 6.1 example 2) on line 1. This seems to clearly confuse Katajisto because lines from 2 to 12 include several repair initiators and formulations from Katajisto's behalf and several reformulations of the question from Noriko's behalf. It can be seen from Katajisto's repair initiators like "excuse

me" on line 2 or "im sorry" on line 6 that he is very confused about the situation. The repair initiators here are particular signs of confusion because they are so recurrent and indicate clear nonunderstanding. Also formulations like "how people what" on line 6 reveal his confusion. Katajisto's nonverbal behaviour also signals confusion as he for example leans towards Noriko and squints his eyes as a sign of having to struggle to get a sense of understanding. Lines from 1 to 11 also include a lot of overlap which make the interaction disorderly.

The next example from Tahiti Charpentier's interview illustrates another situation where the interviewee displays confusion on account of the interviewer's problematic question.

Example 30 (Tahiti)
1 N: sorry maybe not good hm but in tahiti is warm and you can eat pineapple.. you
2 like pineapple
3 T: yes
4 (1.87)
5 N: so how many pineapple you can eat. a day
6 T: i-i ää i havent eaten many pineapples a day. ää i can eat different kind of fruits
7 (1.67)
8 N: but its free.. its free
9 T: its free what
10 N: in tahiti. free to eat pineapple
11 T: OOH you mean the fruits
12 N: yes
13 T: not pineapple/ or fruits
14 N: pineapple/ fru free
15 T: yes
16 N: yes its free in tahiti
17 T: yes
18 N: mm
19 T: (laughter)

In this example Noriko asks Tahiti Charpentier a topically disconnected question (see chapter 6.4 example 23) on lines 1-2. This seems to confuse Charpentier because she answers the question with only one word on line 3 after which follows a short silence in the conversation. It appears that Noriko is

expecting a longer answer from Charpentier but when she does not get it she asks the question again on line 5. Charpentier appears confused again as can be seen from her turn on line 6; at the beginning of the turn she hesitates and there is also a short pause in the middle of the turn as well as some hesitation again after that. There is also another short pause on line 7 in the conversation after this and a repair initiator of the form repetition followed by the word 'what' on line 9 offered by Charpentier. It is clear from these vocal and verbal cues as well as from the short answers Charpentier continues giving still after understanding the question (line 11) that Charpentier still remains confused about the question even after the situation has passed, this can be deducted from the embarrassment resistant laughter Charpentier exhibits on line 19. It appears that Charpentier does not know what to say anymore and thus laughs. In this example Noriko's question is threatening towards Charpentier's face and thus she exhibits embarrassment through the signals of confusion.

In the next example also from the interview with Tahiti Charpentier yet another instance of confusion can be seen. Before this example Noriko has asked Charpentier if she is a model and Charpentier has answered that in fact she is not.

Example 31 (Tahiti)
1 N: hh wha-a mm. hh you you have very nice tith. im-you-m maybe but no model
2   /bu-you very nice tith
3 T: no/
4 (2.28)
5 N: whi:te. you tith whi:te
6 (2.09)
7 T: teeth
8 N: ye:s. its very white beautiful
9 T: thank you
10 (2.11)
11 N: you brush many time day
12 T: ää in the morning and in the evening

The question in this example is problematic because Noriko has pronounced the word 'teeth' so that it sounds more like the word 'tit' (see chapter 6.2 example 8) on line 1. It can be seem from Tahiti Charpentier's reactions in this example that she is very confused by this question. First on line 4 Charpentier does not respond at all to Noriko's question about her 'tith'. When Noriko asks the question again on line 5 it takes Charpentier quite a long pause before she gets the hang of the conversation and offers the word 'teeth' as a repair initiator of the word 'tith'. Charpentier also displays confusion through nonverbal signs such as gaze and squinting her eyes during the pauses on lines 4 and 6. Still after this Charpentier displays confusion in the form of very short responses, as in the previous example. Charpentier's confusion in this example could be taken as a sign of embarrassment caused by the face-threatening unexpected question.

Silence. Similarly to the previous example sometimes the interviewees' reaction to the problematic question is just silence. This means that the interviewee does not say anything until the interviewer has reformulated or asked the question again. This is the case in the next two examples from the interview with Paula Koivunimi.

Example 32 (Paula)
1 N: bu no like it
2 (1.32)
3 N: /y-you no like it
4 P: xx/   nääh i don't go ive tried couple times karaoke but. but. aa i let to i
5 let other people do that and then i sing. my own songs

Example 33 (Paula)
1 N: is is is possible for woman be on top
2 (2.76)
3 N: is possible for woman be on top /also in work
4 P: yea/   yea nowadays yea its changing and
5 im very happy for that becau/se
6 N: yo/
7 P: because usually men just over in higher. working places and bosses like. chief and
8 nowadays women too lot

In both of these examples Paula Kovuniemi's first reaction to the problematic questions is silence. In the example 32 Noriko and Koivuniemi have been talking about singing karaoke. When Noriko asks Koivuniemi whether she likes it on line 1 she first just stays quiet as can be seen on line 2. When Noriko reformulates her question on line 3 Koivunimi finally answers it. In example 33 Noriko asks Koivuniemi a sexuality related question (see chapter 6.2 example 11) on line 1. This clearly confuses Koivuniemi to some extent because she first reacts to the question with a silence on line 2. As Noriko reformulates her question and adds to it the meaning 'at work' on line 3 Koivuniemi seems to get back on track in the conversation and is able to produce an answer.

Annoyance. There are also a couple of instances in the data where the interviewee becomes clearly annoyed by Noriko's problematic questions. These instances can both be found from the interview with Oskari Katajisto.

Example 34 (Oskari)
1 N: o:kay. so maybe personal question
2 O: mm
3 N: okay you like man or woman
4 (1.54)
5 O: what is this
6 N: is man or wo/man in act/ing bet/ter actor
7 O: hh/   hh/   what is this come on
8 N: better actor
9 (3.3)
10 N: when better man or woman
11 O: man or woman
12 N: better actor in finland
13 O: man or woman
14 N: yea
15 O: i think they are pretty equal

In this example Noriko asks Katajisto a highly problematic and intrusive question (see chapter 6.2 example 10) on line 3. Katajisto's reaction to the question makes it very clear that he is very annoyed by the question and regards it as insulting. As Noriko poses the question Katajisto first pauses for a short

while and then asks in a very annoyed tone "what is this" on line 5. Noriko intents to reformulate the question on line 6 so that it sounds less insulting but Katajisto still remains annoyed and asks again "what is this come on" on line 7. Also Katajisto's nonverbal behaviour shows annoyance on lines 5 and 7 as he pulls his chin back and moves his head from side to side. Also the two repetitions as requests for confirmation on lines 11 and 13 are worth noticing as signs of annoyance. Due to the overlap on lines 6 and 7 it is possible that Katajisto does not hear the reference to acting and thus remains annoyed. When Noriko reformulates her question a couple of times again Katajisto understands the true meaning of the question and is able to answer it. However, this is an interesting example because first of all, this is the only instance in the data where the annoyance of the interviewee is so clear that it could almost be described as anger. Secondly, after this situation the tone of the interview with Oskari Katajisto changes completely, before this Katajisto was quite relaxed in the interview but after this his whole composition becomes more tense and he displays embarrassment through the lack of facial expressions and gestures as he tries to act normal.

In the next example, also from the interview with Oskari Katajisto, there is a similar kind of a situation where the interviewee's annoyance can be seen. However, in this example the degree of annoyance is perhaps not as high as in the previous example.

Example 35 (Oskari)
1 N: *japanese* **mm mm hh okay aa i have couple pictures one act fin woman one man**
2 you know this actor you kno ou whi/ch
3 O: yea/ outi mäenpää
4 N: is she a porno
5 (1.40)
6 O: excuse me
7 N: is she porno
8 (1.76)
9 N: no. she is. is she naughty
10 (1.11)

11 O: she naughty no shes very good actor

This example is from the very end of the interview where Noriko always shows the guests the picture of Outi Mäenpää (i.e. herself) to reveal the hoax. In this example Noriko shows the picture and asks Katajisto whether he knows the person in the picture (lines 1-2), when Katajisto answers that he does Noriko proceeds to asking "is she porno" (lines 2-4). This clearly seems to annoy Katajisto because he first pauses shortly and then asks "excuse me" on line 6 in quite an annoyed tone. As Noriko reformulates her question a couple of times Katajisto stays quiet until the end of the example when he finally fully answers the question. This final turn in the example displays again clearly Katajisto's annoyance in his tone and facial expressions.

To sum up, the third way in which the interviewees of the Noriko Show seem to react to the interviewer's problematic questions is by displaying confusion and annoyance. Sometimes the interviewees seem to get very confused by the problematic questions and in some cases their only reaction appears to be silence. What is interesting is that there can be found at least two instances in the data where the interviewee actually becomes annoyed or even angry by the problematic questions.

8 FINDING THE SENSE IN THIS SENSELESSNESS

8.1 Main Findings

As the detailed analysis of the data has showed there are three ways in which Noriko makes her questions problematic and additional four ways in which the guests react to these questions. These strategies represent the main strategies of forming and reacting to the questions and cover nearly all of the question-answer sequences.

First of all, Noriko often mispronounces words to make her questions problematic. She pronounces words unclearly and thus makes understanding them difficult. She also sometimes changes the pronunciation of a word in such a way that it turns into another word altogether. Another very interesting strategy Noriko uses in turning the sensible into senseless is the use of sexuality related words and utterances. The way in which she incorporates these elements into her questions is by altering the pronunciation of some words so that they become similar sounding sexuality related words and by constructing whole utterances that include taboos and sexuality related expressions. The third strategy Noriko uses in constructing her problematic questions is using complicated sentence structure. The way in which she makes the structure of her questions complicated is by using messy sentence structure as well as by using repetition and declarative utterance "yes or no". The fourth and final strategy Noriko uses in turning what is sensible into senseless is introducing unexpected topics into the conversation and thus breaking interview norms. Noriko tends to ask questions that are problematic mainly because they include topics that are not expected in the context of a television interview.

Secondly, the guests also use various strategies to make sense of Noriko's senseless questions. One of these strategies is ignoring the problematic elements in questions. Disattending the problematic nature of questions relates to all the different types of questions Noriko uses in her interviews and means that the guests do not address the problematic nature of the questions in any way but answer them as if they were normal. Other strategies the guests use are initiating repair, offering formulations, repeating the question and using other-repair. The repair initiators the guests use take the form of clarification requests such as "excuse me", "what do you mean" or "I don't understand". The formulations in turn appear as parts of responding utterances and repetition as independent turns followed by repair initiators. The guests also use other-repair and adding new meanings to the original questions. The third and final strategy that the guests use in reacting to Noriko's problematic questions is displaying confusion and annoyance. In some cases the interviewees become very confused and their only reaction to the question is silence. A very interesting fact is that there are a couple of instances in the data where the interviewee becomes clearly annoyed or even angry with the interviewer's questions. Both of these instances take place in Oskari Katajisto's interview.

Finally, in general it could be said that Noriko's strategies in making her questions problematic and difficult to understand are two-fold. On one hand the problematic nature of the questions relates to linguistic features such as pronunciation and grammatical structure. The majority of the questions falls into these two categories, especially into the one of problematic sentence structure. On the other hand Noriko's strategies in constructing her questions problematic also relate to meanings of words as well as to appropriateness. Noriko's use of sexuality related words and utterances that have more than one meaning as well as unexpected topics violate the interviewees' expectancies of what is typical of a television interview. Also the interviewees' reactions to the

problematic questions are very diverse. On one hand the guests do not seem to be bothered by the problematic nature of the questions and they are able to just disattend to them. On the other hand, however, the guests also sometimes become very confused or even angry because of the questions. The interviewees also sometimes take a very active role in untangling the questions and pose a lot of clarification requests as well as offer formulations and repair. Then sometimes the only reaction the guests can produce towards a question is no reaction at all, in other words, silence. This variety in reactions shows that first of all, different people react differently and secondly, that sometimes the reaction depends on the level of problematicness of the question.

8.2 Discussion

Broadcast media. The Noriko Show is a television talk show and thus takes place in the area of broadcast media. According to the findings the show appears to follow the basic structure of an interview in the sense that the interviewer asks the questions and the interviewees answer them. This follows the common sense definition of an interview. What comes to the questions Noriko constructs, they seem to follow different definitions of questions. First of all, they follow the simplest definition of a question as a request to provide information (Harris 1991:80) as in example 6 in chapter 6.1 "How is Finnish love?". However, it appears that many of Noriko's questions do not follow this definition of a question but rather have the appearance of a statement or a declarative clause as in examples 4 and 5 in chapter 6.1 "So you have seen Santa Claude" and "You meet Santa Claude". These utterances are treated as questions by both the interviewer and the interviewees and thus are in line with Harris's (1991:80) definition of other semantic and syntactic types of utterances directed by the interviewer at eliciting information. Also Heritage and Roth (1995:24) have

talked about these interactional objects that do not at first sight appear as being questioning but still accomplish activities convergent with questioning.

Ilie has defined talk shows as semi-institutional form of discourse (Ilie 2001:218-219). The Noriko Show is institutional in the sense that it takes place in institutional settings and follows the general question-answer pattern of an interview. However, what makes it ultimately semi-institutional is the fact that the show has more entertaining than informative value and the main function of the show is to make people laugh. The show introduces topics that are not characteristic of an institutional discourse such as the topic of how many pineapples one can eat per day in example 23 in chapter 6.4. Also, for instance example 7 from chapter 6.2 illustrates the semi-institutional nature of the show because in it Noriko tries to create a humorous situation by using the word "erection" instead of the word "election" thus talking about a topic that is not characteristic of an institutional discourse.

Humor. The idea behind the Noriko Show can be described as humorous and humor plays an important part in the show. On one hand the humor used in the Noriko Show could be described as representing superiority theories. As example 10 from chapter 6.2 shows, sometimes the humor used by the interviewer elevates all other participants above the interviewee because he/she is the only one who does not know the true nature of the show. (Graham 1992:162.) In the example Noriko asks Oskari Katajisto "You like man or woman?" which all the viewers understand as a joke but the interviewee takes it literally and becomes very annoyed. It could be argued that in this example Katajisto is made into a target of ridicule and thus all those participating in the joke are elevated above him.

Neal Norrick (2003:1333-1359) has talked about the requirements of a well-formed discourse such as the relevance requirement and the graded informativeness condition. It becomes clear from careful analysis of the data that the discourse in the Noriko Show does not fully follow the requirements of a well-formed discourse. As can be seen from example 22 in chapter 6.4 Noriko's questions constantly violate the relevance requirement by introducing topics that are disconnected from the conversation, in this case the topic of asking for the interviewee's picture. However, the discourse in the Noriko Show does to some extent fulfill the graded informativeness condition because the interviewer often rephrases her problematic questions until the interviewees understand them. This can be seen for instance in example 1 in chapter 6.1 where Noriko rephrases the question about "ida" several times before Katajisto understands it.

Another way in which humor presents itself in the data is through puns. Norrick (2003) has talked about puns as generating parallel interpretations and forcing the listener to come up with another interpretation besides the literal one. Puns have also been described as playing often with sexual connotations. (Norrick 2003:1337-1347.) The findings of this research are in line with these claims. As can be seen from example 3 in chapter 7.1, when Noriko asks the question "You like better back or front?", Oskari Katajisto has to generate two interpretations of the question to fully understand it. It can be derived from Katajisto's laughter that the first interpretation that comes to his mind is the sexuality related one, however, as the first meaning does not fit the context he quickly has to generate the parallel interpretation as well in order to be able to respond to the question. Thus, Katajisto seems to use the multi-stage model of processing humor as suggested by Norrick (2003:1350). There are several examples of puns revolving around sexual connotations in this data, in fact, all of the examples in chapter 6.2 could be seen as ones because they all include sexuality related words and utterances.

According to Norrick (2003:1337-1347) punning can have two different functions in a conversation; it may function either to amuse or to verbally attack someone. In the Noriko Show the function of puns is mainly to amuse but some interviewees also seem to experience them as being threatening. In example 10 in chapter 6.2 Oskari Katajisto becomes clearly very annoyed or even angry with Noriko's question that includes the sexuality related pun "You like better man or woman?". While it has been claimed that humor can function as a tension-reducing device in conversation (Graham 1992:163-164.) it is clear from the previous example that in the Noriko Show the function of humor is quite the opposite. Example 12 from chapter 6.2 shows that humor in the form of problematic questions is what causes tension in the interview. In this example Noriko's humoristic and problematic question about Outi Mäenpää "Is she porno?" clearly creates tension between her and Oskari Katajisto. As tension-creating device humor in the Noriko Show can also be linked to embarrassment because it causes embarrassing situations for the interviewees.

Politeness. Noriko's questions are meant to be confusing and thus violate the common understanding of an interview; this is what sometimes makes them face-threatening towards the interviewees' positive face (Brown & Levinson 1987:13-15). The questions also often elicit embarrassment in the guests. For instance example 31 in chapter 7.3 shows how a question "You very nice tith" that is not expected in the context of a television interview causes confusion and embarrassment in the interviewee and thus poses a threat to her positive face. The pauses and the short answers show that the interviewee does not feel comfortable in the situation and is embarrassed by the questions.

Piirainen-Marsh (2005:194) has studied how interviewers create controversy by using adversarial questioning techniques and how interviewees manage these situations. As the data of this research shows, Noriko's questions are perhaps

not adversarial in the sense Piirainen-Marsh suggests but they are certainly meant to cause confusion and thus bear a resemblance to Piirainen-Marsh's research. The questions in the Noriko Show are meant to cause embarrassment and humor rather than controversy. Example 10 in chapter 6.2 illustrates this well. The example shows that Noriko's question "You like better man or woman?" is clearly meant to cause confusion and even annoyance but it cannot really be called adversarial.

Piirainen-Marsh (2005) has also suggested different strategies the interviewees use to deal with the interviewer's adversarial and face-threatening questions. These strategies include for example opposing or challenging the question by refusing to offer the requested response or passing the question. (Piirainen-Marsh 2005:201.) These are strategies that the interviewees in the Noriko Show also seem to use. In fact, ignoring the problematic nature of the questions is one of the main strategies the guests use to deal with Noriko's problematic questions as can be seen from the examples in chapter 7.1. In this chapter the guests disattend the problematic nature of the questions and answer them as if they were normal. This could be interpreted as the guests refusing to offer the expected answer which in these cases, taking into account the format of the show, would be confusion or embarrassment. The interviewees in the Noriko Show also sometimes pass the problematic question and do not answer exactly to it as example 26 in chapter 7.2 shows. In this example Noriko asks Ilkka Kanerva what his personal goal is in politics and even though Kanerva himself still specifies the question by asking "Oh my personal goal?" he still answers it on a very general level and does not say a word about his personal goals.

Embarrassment. Embarrassment in the Noriko Show could be seen as linking to the situations where the guests do not understand the interviewer's questions. Noriko's problematic and face-threatening questions create embarrassing

situations for the guests. Fineman (2000, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:74) has argued that particular institutions favor the production of certain emotions. According to this claim it can be argued that the Noriko Show and other programs similar to it favor the production of embarrassment. This is due to the fact that the audience expects it from candid camera –type programs and the embarrassment of others creates humor and entertainment for others. As for instance example 31 from chapter 7.3 shows, even though the situation is confusing and perhaps even embarrassing for the interviewee it is funny and humorous for the audiences. In fact, all of the examples in chapter 7.3 illustrate to some extent these kinds of embarrassing situations typical for candid camera –type programs such as the Noriko Show.

Embarrassment can be elicited in a number of ways. According to Sandlund (2004) embarrassment can be elicited for example by a production of an unexpected and structurally dispreferred response in relation to previous talk and turns. These kinds of responses are not expected in the particular context of the interaction and thus trigger embarrassment. (Sandlund 2004:177.) This is what could be seen as eliciting embarrassment in the Noriko Show as well; Noriko's questions are problematic in structure and content and are not expected in the context of a television interview. For instance example 30 in chapter 7.3 illustrates well this kind of a situation. In the example Noriko asks Tahiti Charpentier a problematic question that clearly confuses her and judging by her hesitation, pauses, short answers and laughter also causes embarrassment in her.

There are different ways in which embarrassment displays itself in the interviewees' responses. As it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, in example 30 in chapter 7.3 the embarrassment of the interviewee is noticeable for example in her hesitation, pauses, and short answers. Sandlund (2004) has used

in her study of emotions six different categories of conceptualizing emotions. One of these categories is vocal and verbal cues such as those in example 30 in chapter 7.3. Also facial expression as well as gestures and gaze are counted as cues of embarrassment. (Sandlund 2004:79-85.) The interviewees in the Noriko Show also display embarrassment through these cues. For instance, in example 31 in chapter 7.3 Tahiti Charpentier displays embarrassment through gaze as she stares at the interviewer during a short pause and squints her eyes. Moreover, after example 34 in chapter 7.3 Oskari Katajisto displays embarrassment through facial expressions and gestures, or rather, with the lack of those. After his annoyance in example 34 he is clearly still somewhat embarrassed as he tries to appear as normal as possible by sitting up straight and hardly displaying any expression on his face or in his tone.

Embarrassment can also be resisted in a number of ways. One of these ways is the embarrassment-resistant laughter which can be, for example, related to the topic at hand. These problematic topics in turn can relate to, for example, sexuality. (Sandlund 2004:185-186.) In example 30 in chapter 7.3 that has been mentioned in the previous paragraphs, Tahiti Charpentier displays embarrassment through laughter. This laughter could be interpreted as embarrassment-resistant because it appears that Charpentier does not know what to say next, and thus laughs to signal distancing from the topic and her willingness to move on in the conversation. In example 3 in chapter 7.1 in turn Oskari Katajisto uses embarrassment-resistant laughter to deal with the problematic question Noriko has asked him. However, in this example Katajisto also uses another strategy to resist embarrassment. Sandlund has described topicalization as means of pre-empting embarrassment by playing along with it and using it as resource for humor and joking (Sandlund 2004:199). This is what Katajisto does to Noriko's problematic question "You like better back or front?" when he answers with laughter "Well I haven't really thought about that maybe

the back was for me". Katajisto plays along with the question and continues with the sexuality related meaning it carries. It can be heard from Katajisto's tone that he is not serious with his answer but that he means it as a joke.

As a conclusion it could be said that there can be found some sense in the senseless discourse of the Noriko Show. First of all, the show follows the general pattern of questions and answers used in interviews and fulfills Cornelia Ilie's (2001:218-219) definition of a semi-institutional discourse. The show's format also favors the production of embarrassment as suggested by Fineman (2000, as quoted by Sandlund 2004:74). The interviewer's questions follow both the simplest definition of questions suggested by Harris (1991:80) and the definition of questions as different utterances and interactional objects suggested by Harris (1991:80) as well as Heritage and Roth (1995:24). The interviewer Noriko's questions function according to humor's superiority theories (Graham 1992:162) and also violate the relevance requirement of a well-formed discourse. However, the questions fulfill to some extent the graded informativeness condition. In making her questions problematic Noriko also uses a lot of puns and in general uses humor as a tension-creating device. (Norrick 2003:1333-1359.) Noriko's questions are meant to cause confusion and thus they are sometimes face-threatening towards the interviewees' positive face (Brown & Levinson 1987:13-15) and elicit embarrassment from them (Sandlund 2004:177). Due to their confusion-causing nature the questions also bear a resemblance to Arja Piirainen-Marsh's (2005:194) research on adversarial questioning techniques. The interviewees in the Noriko Show use different strategies in managing the problematic questions. Some of these strategies are similar to those found by Piirainen-Marsh (2005:201) in her research. The embarrassment displays itself in the interviewees' reactions in different ways such as verbal cues and facial expressions as suggested by Sandlund (2004:79-85). However, the interviewees are also able to resist embarrassment in their reactions through

embarrassment-resistant tools such as laughter and topicalization that have also been introduced by Sandlund (2004:185-199).

8.3 Relevance & Implications of the Study

Overall the research succeeded in doing what it was set out to do; it defined how Noriko constructs her questions problematic and how the guests of the show manage these problematic questions. The research also succeeded in showing the connection between the findings and the theoretical framework. However, one could claim that four interviews with four different people is not a large enough dataset to draw conclusions from. Perhaps more interviews from the Noriko Show could have been included in the data. Also, more theoretical and descriptive tools could have been used in describing the findings. One could also argue that the connection between the findings and the theoretical background is too vague and that perhaps it would have been more fruitful to concentrate on one or two theoretical areas instead of many. Also, in gathering and choosing the data for this research more detailed criteria could have been used in order to get a better representation of the whole show.

The present study has contributed in a new way to different fields of research. The relevance of this study lies in this variety of research areas that it encompasses. On one hand the relevance of this research arises from the context it takes place in and on the other hand from the theoretical background it incorporates. The implications of this study in turn are also many-fold.

The context of this research is new and popular and thus relevant. There is a growing number of programs that pertain to the groups of reality-television and

candid camera –like formats. Also the Noriko Show includes features of both of these formats. As these new formats grow more and more popular and create a new stage of semi-institutional interaction it becomes more important to understand the interaction and discourse that is characteristic of them. This is where the present study displays its contribution. Because of the findings of this research the path to understanding how the interaction and discourse in candid camera –like formats is created and maintained has been opened.

A lot of research has been done in the general area of broadcast media in the past years. However, this research has not so far dealt with guests' reactions to problematic question turns in television talk shows. In this way the present study is relevant and justified in this field of research. The present study brings out new information about how the guests of a television talk show manage problematic questions and unexpected situations and how they react in these situations. Moreover, interviewers' questioning techniques in television talk shows have been researched but not from the same angle as in the present study. This research has revealed new information about how the interviewer creates deliberately problematic questions and uses a problematic questioning technique. Interaction in institutional settings is a popular topic of research and even semi-institutional settings such as talk shows have been researched quite a lot. However, hardly any research has focused on such informal and humoristic form of talk show as this research has. The present study is relevant because it offers new insights into less formal, humoristic semi-institutional interaction.

The research on humor in interaction has mainly focused on assessing the interpretation rather than the creation of humor. In this research, however, the creation of humor in the form of Noriko's problematic and humoristic questions has played an important role. Thus this research offers new and relevant information on how humor is created in a talk show environment through

constructing deliberately confusing and surprising questions. The humor in the present study is based on playing a joke on the guests of the show which is a topic that has not been researched much in the field of humor research.

Another area that the present study touches upon in a new way is embarrassment as one effect of intentionally problematic questioning. This is a highly relevant topic in the area of new reality-television and candid camera - formats because they are based on creating entertainment at the expense of other people. This is one reason that also makes the present study relevant; it offers new directional information about how embarrassment is elicited, displayed and resisted in the context of talk show interview.

The implications of this research are various. The findings of this research can be applied in different fields of research. First of all, the findings can be applied to research on talk shows and other forms of semi-institutional and institutional interaction. The findings will also give useful information for research on questions and answers. Secondly, the findings of this research can also by implied to studying humor in interaction. Especially research on how humor is constructed will benefit from the findings of this research. Thirdly, politeness research can use implications of this study in directing its research to new areas and directions. Finally, the present study offers implications also for research on embarrassment. The new context in which embarrassment has been studied in this research offers implications for future research on the field.

The present study has also given rise to ideas of future research. It would, for example, be interesting to conduct the same research on a bigger scale so that all the interviews of the Noriko Show would be included in the data. This way one could obtain more accurate knowledge of how the guests of the show manage the problematic questions. It could also be very interesting to compare the

results of this research with a research on how ordinary people (not celebrities) react to equivalent problematic questions. This would make it possible to examine whether there are differences between how public figures and normal people manage problematic question turns. Another possible research topic that rises from this study is examining the theoretical areas presented in this study in more detail in an equivalent data. In this particular data it could also be interesting to concentrate the entire research on the final situations of the interviews when the guests find out they have been fooled.

To sum up, the purpose of the present study has been to research how the interviewer constructs deliberately problematic questions and how the guests react to these questions in the television talk show Noriko Show. The relevance on this study lies in the areas of broadcast media, humor, politeness and embarrassment. This research also offers various implications for these fields of study and has given rise to different ideas of future research as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, P. & Heritage, J. (eds.) 1992. *Talk at work: interaction in institutional settings.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press

Goffman, E. 1972. *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour*. London: The Penguin Press.

Graham, E.; Papa, M.; Brooks, G. 1992. Functions of Humor in Conversation: Conceptualization and Measurement. *Western Journal of Communication*, 56, Spring 1992, 161-183.

Harris, S. 1991. Evasive Action: How Politicians Respond to Questions in Political Interviews. In Scannell, P. (ed.) *Broadcast Talk*. London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Harris, S. 2001. Being Politically Impolite: Extending Politeness Theory to Adversarial Political Discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 12, 451-472.

Heritage, J. C. & Roth, A. L. 1995. Grammar and Institution: Questions and Questioning in the Broadcast News Interview. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 28, 1, 1-60.

Hutchby, I. 2006. *Media Talk: Conversation Analysis and the Study of Broadcasting*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Ilie, C. 2001. Semi-Institutional Discourse: The Case of Talk Shows. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33, 2, 209-254.

Livingstone, S & Lunt, P. 1994. *Talk on Television: Audience Participation and Public Debate*. London and New York: Routledge.

Munson, W. 1993. *All Talk: The Talkshow in Media Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Norrick, N. R. 2003. Issues in Conversational Joking. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35, 1333–1359.

Nuolijärvi, P. & Tiittula, L. 2000. *Televisiokeskustelun Näyttämöllä: Televisioinstitutionaalisuus Suomalaisessa ja Saksalaisessa Keskustelukulttuurissa*. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Piirainen-Marsh, A. 2004. Course Materials: *Study of Talk and Interaction*. Spring 2004.

Piirainen-Marsh, A. 2005. Managing Adversarial Questions in Broadcast Interviews. *Journal of politeness research* 1, 193-217.

Sandlund, E. 2004. *Feeling by Doing: The Social Organization of Everyday Emotions in Academic Talk-in-Interaction*. Doctoral dissertation. Karlstad University: Department on English.

Scannell, P (ed.) 1991. *Broadcast Talk*. London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Sorjonen, M-L. 1995. Korjausjäsennys. In Tainio, Liisa (ed.) *Keskustelunanalyysin perusteet*. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Tanner, J. 2005. Uusi näkökulma kohteliaisuuden tutkimiseen. *Virittäjä* 109, 3, 475-480.

Ten Have, P. 1999. *Doing Conversation Analysis: A Practical Guide.* London: SAGE publications.

Wooffitt, R. 2005. *Conversation and Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Transcription conventions

CAPITAL LETTERS	Loud speech
(sec.)	Pause in conversation (in seconds)
.	Pause in speech
/	Overlap in conversation
?	Rising intonation
bold	Emphasized words (also to indicate stretches of speech dealt with in the analysis)
italic	Speech in Japanese
(laughter)	Nonverbal action
-	Hesitation, self-correction, unfinished words
xxxx	Unclear speech
:	Long syllable
N	Noriko Saru
M	A Japanese "producer"
T	Tahiti Charpentier
O	Oskari Katajisto
I	Ilkka Kanerva
P	Paula Koivuniemi