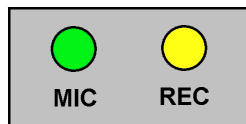


THE INTERVIEW

The apparently vacuous responses of sportsmen and sportswomen when being interviewed have frequently aroused comment. Are the interviewees actually lacking in intellectual prowess or are they deliberating following a formula designed to make it appear that way, and if so, to what purpose? Is it to avoid sounding pretentious? Or to widen their appeal to audiences whose intelligence is not of the highest level?

In the following interview the indicator LEDs in the studio show when the microphones are live (green light) and when the mic outputs are being recorded (amber light). In common with much current electronic technology the recording equipment cannot always be relied on to function correctly.

PERSONNEL
DAVE, retired footballer
TRACY, TV interviewer
DIRECTOR (voiceover)



DIRECTOR: Green and amber, you're good to go, people.

TRACY: Why did United win the game, Dave?

DAVE: They scored three goals, Tracy, but only conceded one. That's the way to win games.

TRACY: Of course.

DAVE: Last time these teams met the score was nil-nil so it was a draw.

TRACY: A goal-less draw.

DAVE: Correct:

TRACY: Why did United score more goals?

THE INTERVIEW

DAVE: Because their attacking players were better.

TRACY: Or the City defenders were worse?

DAVE: You're right, Tracy. Either of those scenarios would lead to more goals.

TRACY: It could even be both, of course?

DAVE: That's a possibility, too.

TRACY: Suppose both the attackers and defenders were poor?

DAVE: You may or may not get goals scored.

TRACY: And if both the attackers and defenders were good?

DAVE: You may or may not get goals scored.

TRACY: Is the competence of the goalkeeper important in a match?

DAVE: Definitely, Tracy. A good goalkeeper will keep shots out of the goal. A poor one will let them in.

TRACY: Of course in their previous game United had a man sent off. That didn't help. They did well to win that one with only ten men.

DAVE: That's right. It's usually better to have eleven men in your team rather than ten. Not always, though. A quality team with ten men might beat a poor team with eleven.

TRACY: Suppose a team had two men red-carded?

DAVE: That would make the problem worse.

TRACY: How about if both teams had a man sent off?

DAVE: It would make things balanced, Tracy. Both teams would then be playing with the same number of players.

TRACY: The referee came in for a bit of stick from some quarters, saying he seemed to favour United. How did you rate his performance, Dave?

DAVE: I thought he did well. I don't think he was biased. It's best when the ref's not biased because then you get a fairer game. If the ref is biased one team will get an unfair advantage.

THE INTERVIEW

TRACY: How about that Bifca free kick in stoppage time? The ball went screaming into the net, didn't it? The goalie had no chance.

DAVE: Yes, you're right. The faster the ball's travelling, the more difficult it is for the goalie to react in time. If it was going slower the goalie might have got a hand to it.

TRACY: Was the spot kick justified, though, Dave? VAR showed that the attacker might have taken a dive.

DAVE: Difficult to tell from the slo-mo. I don't think it's right when players pretend to be fouled. It's a form of cheating if you ask me. It shouldn't be allowed.

TRACY: But overall, VAR is doing its job, would you say?

DAVE: Yes. But it shouldn't be the be-all-and-end-all. It's a 'video assistant referee', after all. That's what the letters stand for.

TRACY: How does Bifca get such a curl on his free kicks, do you think?

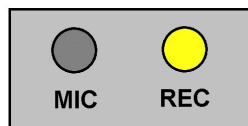
DAVE: If you kick the ball so it spins in the air then it turns in the direction it's spinning. So if you kick it so it's spinning left then it'll bend to the left.

TRACY: And if it spins to the right . . .

DAVE: It'll bend to the right.

TRACY: And the more it's spinning . . .

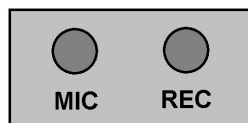
DAVE: The more it'll bend. If you kick it without spin it'll go straight.



TRACY: Though of course a strong wind might change the direction of flight.

DAVE: Correct, Tracy. The wind will affect how the ball moves.

DIRECTOR: Sorry, guys, we've got a drop-out, we'll need to do a reset. You'll get a green when the mic feed's live again.



THE INTERVIEW

TRACY: Okay, Maurice. While we're waiting Dave can brief me on the aerodynamics of curved free kicks.

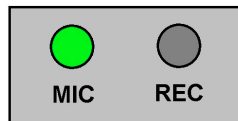
DAVE: It's to do with the boundary layer, Trace. When the ball passes through the air the layer of air closest to the ball - the boundary layer - will tend to stick to it, moving slowly. The adjacent layers will progressively move faster relative to the ball until at some distance from the ball surface the air will be in free flow.

TRACY: And spinning affects these layers, then?

DAVE: Yes. The boundary layer will be speeded up on one side of the ball and slowed down on the other. If the ball is spinning to the left, the boundary layer on the left side will be speeded up and on the right slowed down.

TRACY: How does the speed difference translate into curved flight?

DAVE: In this example the airflow behind the ball is deflected to the right by the speeded up boundary layer. In accordance with Newton's laws of motion the ball therefore experiences a force in the opposite direction - to the left. There are other factors, too, such as where the boundary layer changes from laminar to turbulent flow and the interaction between pressure and kinetic energy in the airflow.



TRACY: I'm getting a bit lost, mate!

DAVE: It's actually a complex situation. As I said, it includes Newton's laws of motion and Bernoulli's principle.

TRACY: Whatever that is!

DAVE: It's all a bit nerdish, isn't it. Okay, you don't know about Bernoulli but they say you're a whizz on music. I can't even sing in tune. You play the violin, don't you?

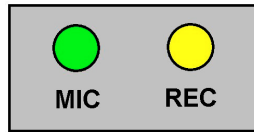
TRACY: Yeah, I can make scraping noises on the fiddle.

DAVE: I was told you play professionally and you've written a symphony.

TRACY: Not a symphony - a couple of sonatas. No big deal. We're not talking Beethoven or Mendelssohn. One of them sneaked into the Proms but it was probably by accident.

THE INTERVIEW

DIRECTOR: Alright, people. We're green again. Can you pick up from where you were? Here comes the amber - you're going in the box.



TRACY: Okay . . . okay . . . here we go Though of course a strong wind might change the direction of flight.

DAVE: Correct, Tracy. The wind will affect how the ball moves.

TRACY: Do you think Giovanni Baggio was pleased his team won?

DAVE: I'd answer 'yes' to that question, speaking from personal experience. If you win the game, you're happy. If you lose, you're sad.

TRACY: Suppose it's a draw?

DAVE: That would depend, Tracy. If you expected to win but only got a draw, you'd be disappointed. If you expected to lose but managed a draw, you'd be happy.

TRACY: Supposed you expected to draw?

DAVE: You'd be happy that you hadn't lost but disappointed that you hadn't won.

TRACY: Brilliant! Now . . . we've heard that you've been drawing cartoons of United players for their programme notes. You've done that for other teams too, haven't you?

DAVE: Yes, that's right.

TRACY: So drawing's a hobby of yours?

DAVE: Yes.

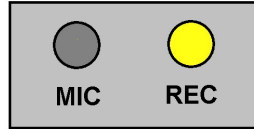
TRACY: And painting too?

DAVE: Yes.

TRACY: Did you have formal training in art?

DAVE: No. But I've always drawn sketches and painted pictures, even when I was a kid.

THE INTERVIEW



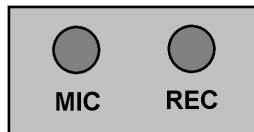
TRACY: There are rumours you once got dropped from the United first team because you drew an insulting cartoon of the manager. Is that true?

DAVE: Yes.

TRACY: What happened?

DAVE: I drew a cartoon of the manager which he didn't like so he dropped me.

DIRECTOR: Sorry guys, another drop-out. Sodding transcriber looks like it's gone tits up. We'll need to hook up a new one. Shouldn't take a mo. The mic feed's off until you get a green, OK?



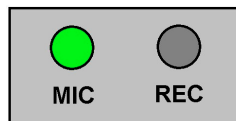
TRACY: I've seen your stuff, Dave. Looks bloody good to me. Amazing you had no training.

DAVE: When I was in my teens it was a toss-up between football and art college.

TRACY: Why did you go for footie?

DAVE: To make more dough, Trace. Art college would have been easier to get into but very few artists make a good living.

TRACY: But you could say the same about football, couldn't you?



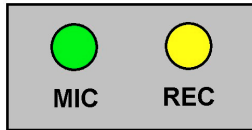
DAVE: I guess. I was lucky to make the grade. I did a lot of work to maximise my skill set. Lots of practice and lots of research too. That's how I know about the aerodynamics of curved ball flight.

TRACY: And you can do art as a hobby.

DAVE: Exactly. I love art although many people would say my tastes are philistine.

THE INTERVIEW

TRACY: What do you mean?



DAVE: I prefer old school. Not so keen on 20th century stuff, apart from Dali and some Picasso. Lichtenstein - okay. Warhol - some of it. Jackson Pollock - ugh!

TRACY (laughing): Who did he play for, Dave?

DAVE: Abstract Untitled!

DIRECTOR: Guys, you know we're recording now, don't you? Do you want to go back a bit?

TRACY: Sorry, boss, didn't see the amber. Give us a beat . . . where were we . . . oh, yes . . . Dave, we've heard rumours you once got dropped from the United first team because you drew an unflattering caricature of the manager. Is that true?

DAVE: Yes.

TRACY: What happened?

DAVE: I drew a cartoon of the manager which he didn't like so he dropped me.

TRACY: Are there other footballers who are interested in art?

DAVE: A few. I've even been known to go round art galleries with one or two of them!

TRACY: What stuff do you like?

DAVE: Mainly older stuff. Not so keen on modern stuff.

TRACY: No abstracts then?

DAVE: No, I like pictures where you can see what the subject's supposed to be.

DIRECTOR: Time to wind up, guys.

TRACY: Well, it's great to have you in the studio, Dave. Thanks for sharing your thoughts with us. You'll come back for the semi-final won't you?

THE INTERVIEW

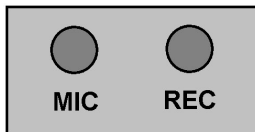
DAVE: It'll be my pleasure, Tracy.

TRACY: Who's going to win the semi?

DAVE: The team that scores the most goals, Tracy.

TRACY: Thanks, Dave. Time for a beer, I think.

DAVE: Pint of bitter will do me, Trace! Your round, isn't it?



DIRECTOR: Amber off, green off. You can unhook yourselves, guys.

TRACY: Spot of lunch, mate?

DAVE: I think so. Let's try that new Vietnamese . . . they do a nice Banh xeo.

TRACY: Washed down with a Gewürztraminer?

DAVE: Yep. Not too chilled though.

TRACY: Yum, yum. Almost as good as McDonalds!

© J Evans 2023

steemrok.com

v11