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**An application of Structuration theory to ethnic minority radio in the UK**

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## **Abstract**

As part of a continuing doctoral research project on ethnic minority radio and audience identity in the UK, this paper presents an initial analysis of some of the station-based case studies examining in particular the neutrality of power. The paper takes a qualitative approach utilising interview, observation and programme analysis. Giddens' theory of Structuration (1984) is employed to address the two main aspects of the paper:

1. An examination of allocative and authoritative resources used by the agent
2. How these resources tie in with power and the ability of structures to extend across time-space

Three primary concepts are used from Structuration theory, those of structure, resources and power in the context of time-space. They help to frame and analyse the subtle interplay between agents involved with the reproduction of ethnic minority radio. This paper focuses specifically on the neutrality of power in the context of the duality of structure. The duality is played out in the dialogue between agents which reproduces the rules and resources of the structure allowing it to extend across time and space.

Through an analysis of agent resource use this paper shows how the agent, through their daily interactions, and what Giddens terms as 'unintended consequences', are able to facilitate change and make a difference. The structures which comprise these rules and resources are shown to exist on the same space-time continuum and allows for a more objective analysis of the stations as relative to each other rather than existing separately. Successful resource use enables the agent to exert power which is seen to be neutral and without pre-determination. Here, the dialectic of control is demonstrated and shows how the use of Structuration can lead to a more illuminating analysis of the environment in which the stations operate and the challenges for ethnic minority radio.

This paper posits a move away from traditional reception studies; instead, it brings radio research into the broader sphere of modernity and into the heart of everyday mediated interaction.

## **Context**

Ethnic minority radio in the UK is part of a growing market for niche, special interest stations at a time of market consolidation and great technological convergence. Though a relatively young market, it has seen a slow development from the mid sixties to the present, moving from local programmes to fully licensed stations. They are defined as those reaching Britain's marginalised communities, licensed as public service, community, commercial, or not licensed at all. This paper comes from a doctoral research project which is examining how the ethnic minority stations continue to exist, the types of services they provide and how they utilise ideas of ethnicity and identity to communicate to their audiences.

The paper presents some of the analysed content from participant stations. The stations were chosen for their ethnic diversity and for their licensing situation. The objective was to obtain stories from across the industry landscape and from as varied background as possible. These interviews took place with a national public service broadcaster, a local commercial station, a London based talk radio station and a community station.

This paper makes use of a qualitative case study approach and the methods of non-participant observation, interview and programme analysis. The observation focused on the two main areas of the station; the back office and the studio with the aim to 'develop a detailed portrait' (Robson, 2000, p. 200) of the interactions going on. The observation categories were selected from Spradley's 'nine dimensions' (op cit, p. 200) which incorporate time, space, agents, activities, events on which data was collected. Semi-structured interviews were developed with questions derived from the doctoral objectives using Giddens' Structuration theory (ST) as a theoretical framework and took place with station staff.

Literature has reflected on the use of Structuration, a meta theory for the operation of society, in cultural studies. Tudor suggests the use of ST as a way of locating 'the texts [radio programmes] and their associated social practices in a framework which conceives of production and reproduction of social activities as a conjoint consequence of both agency

and structure' (Tudor, 1995, p. 103). This moves away from the inherent passivity of effects research or the interpretive agent autonomy found in textual analysis. In this sense then, ST provides a midpoint between these opposite approaches when seeking an understanding of ethnic minority radio. It creates the context in which to establish the knowledgeable agent actions and conventions of daily life. Examination of the agent takes place in stations and other institutions and looks at the practical way agents interact through language, the consciousness agents have in the consumption of radio and the links that it has to the reordering of the self and the reproduction of structure.

This paper presents a small aspect of the analysis using ST; that of resource uses and power. Structuration theory is Anthony Giddens' attempt to utilise the strengths of the oppositional structuralist and interpretive approaches. These strengths create a framework showing how the actions of individuals, or agents, combine to reproduce institutional and cultural structures across time and space. In doing so, ST avoids the micro/macro distinctions associated with the traditional approaches by showing how structure (macro) and agent (micro) are dependent on each other as a duality.

### **Power and the dialectic of control**

The duality of structure is a central concept to ST. It is the inseparable relationship of the interaction of agents who using certain rules and resources reproduce the structure. Through these interactions, the agent negotiates the rules and resources to their best interests. This complex dialogue of negotiation is what Giddens terms the 'dialectic of control' and like the duality of structure, is a two way 'negotiation' of power where the 'less powerful manage resources in such a way as to exert control over the more powerful in established power relationships' (Giddens, 1984, pp. 374). That is, power is not just the domination of 'stronger' agents over others towards a predetermined goal, nor is it a hierarchy of structures. Power 'is a means of getting things done, very definitely enablement as well as constraint' (Giddens, 1984, p. 174) so it is a neutral concept, which gains meaning through the agents' successful use of universal categories of resources.

Agents are not always equal in this dialectic, but a defining point of ST is that through their capability, agent action comes from considered dialogue of negotiation. Those less equal can exert power in the co-ordination of the rules and resources, to endure across time and space. These negotiations also form the rules that govern the persistence of the structure.

Power is not deterministic. Agents create and accumulate power through a skilled use of allocative and authoritative resources. These resources are common to *all* structures. Allocative and authoritative resources form a duality and power comes from how they are utilised to enable the structure to continue to be reproduced. Power is closely aligned with the idea of 'time-space distanciation' (Giddens, 1984, pp, 256). We may take this to be the stretching of social systems e.g. across locale and time. This idea of time-space connects to power in a very distinct way. Giddens writes about time-space and the ability of a structure to endure, from an evolutionary perspective tracing power from the day-to-day lives of hunter gatherers to the complex social system of a walled city. The latter being a physical expression of 'contained power'. The ability to store a physical legacy of memory, a repository of information is a distinctly allocative resource. It is these resources combined with the authority of knowledge which enables the means of the expansion of power.

These balances of authoritative and allocative resources by the agent, which constitute the successful reproduction of the structures of the ethnic minority radio, are explored in this paper. First though, it is worth examining the individual concepts of agent, structures, allocative and authoritative resources.

## **Agency**

Radio listeners, station staff and community members are agents and are treated by Giddens as knowledgeable and capable; this is shown through the recursive use of knowledge during daily interactions. As radio listeners, the messages we listen to, and digest, inform our notions of self and form part of the dialogue with those about us. This paper demonstrates agent knowledge which informs their use of resources as part of the stations. Giddens defines three categories of agent knowledge; this paper is interested in two of them. These

are practical consciousness (what we tacitly know) and discursive consciousness (what we verbalise through interaction).

Station agents in their daily interactions are making use of the social norms and practices (rules and resources) within the station to perform actions and make choices. Practical consciousness is called upon without conscious decision or verbalisation and informs the many tasks and interactions in getting things ‘done’. This knowledge is tacit, embedded within the agent through learned social norms, rules and personal past experiences.

Discursive consciousness is perhaps an easier concept to deal with; it is the mediation of agent action through routine face-to-face agent interaction. Discursive consciousness is the verbalisation of the agent’s own action. This is later revealed in the intentions and negotiations surrounding the planning of a radio programme or the dialogues between agents who represent the station and those of the wider community in negotiating community group airtime. These types of interactions are routine, non-extraordinary and occur in all of the stations across time and space. The nature of discursive consciousness forms the basis of interactions which reproduce the rules and resources which constitute the structure. Structure is the medium or outcome of the conduct of agents. Equally, agents call upon the rules and resources which constitute the structure itself therefore, a duality.

These agent decisions which constitute action are not always conscious or planned. Unintended consequences of both practical and discursive consciousness can provide the power for change within the structure by the ‘doing’ of things differently. We see this played out later by agents using their authoritative resources to the benefit of the structure (station) through the unorthodox method of multiple licence applications.

## **Structures**

Structures are sets of ‘rules and resources’ acknowledged as such by their persistence across time and their prominence in locale (space). In the context of the paper they are the stations, Ofcom, Government, associated bodies or even languages in common use. As we

have seen, structures are bound up with agency and only exist due to the reproduction of the rules and resources by agents.

The rules that form part of the structure are transformational, they are ‘the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them systematic form’ (Giddens, 1984, p, 17). In other words, the station binds together agents in interactions which are continuous and mutually productive. They are the rules and resources framing the production and broadcasting of programmes by broadcasters. They are the frameworks for the generation of funds by the back office staff. They are the unspoken, deeply rooted rules of engagement and the languages of communication with the audience.

Structures are hierarchical, demonstrated by agent ability to organise social practices to extend the structure across time and space. Larger structures possess the ‘most deeply embedded structural properties implicated in the reproduction of societal totalities [called] structural principles. Those practices which have the greatest time-space extension within such totalities can be referred to as *institutions*’ (op cit, p. 17). This is most clearly expressed in considering such large structures as the BBC or Government.

### **Allocative and authoritative resources**

For a structure to function well and harness power depends on the use of two types of resources. Both resource categories are outlined in figure one. At the centre of the objectives of this paper is a discussion on agent use of resources to reproduce the structure. Only through such an examination is it possible to identify the subtle nuances that the agent use of resources plays in the generation of the power which structures have in society.

Allocative resources are those such as the buildings and environment, the means of production, the end goods and the storing of information (programmes in archives, legacies of commodities produced and of community importance); these extend the stations’ occupation of time and space. Power comes by using these resources, ‘generating command over objects, goods or material phenomena’ (Giddens, 1984, p. 33) to harness their

transformative capacity. For instance this may be the quality and use of broadcasting equipment, the station's premises, computer systems and data housing.

Authoritative resources are those to do with the organisation of social interaction between agents that constitute and reproduce the structure. They are the 'types of transformative capacity generating command over person or actors' (op. cit. p, 33). This implies that it is also the ability to co-ordinate numbers of people, members of a society (point two) but also through 'life chances' which are the education, skills and capabilities of agents. This development of expression is the understanding of how to produce radio and communication as a means of enduring knowledge.

Figure One (Giddens, 1984, pp, 258)

**Allocative Resources**

1. Material features of the environment (raw materials, material power sources)
2. Means of material production/reproduction (instruments of production, technology)
3. Produced goods (artefacts created from the interaction between 1 and 2)

**Authoritative Resources**

1. Organisation of social time-space (temporal-spatial constitution of paths and regions)
2. Production/reproduction of the body (organisation and relation of human beings in mutual association)
3. Organisation of life chances (constitution of chances of self-development and self-expression)

Storage of these allocative and authoritative resources (our containers of power) involves 'the retention and control of information or knowledge whereby social relations are perpetuated across time and space' (Giddens, 1984, p. 261). Storage is the medium enabling recall and the ability to disseminate such information.

Agents, as we know, are considered to be knowledgeable and capable, bringing with them the conscious and unconscious life experience and creativity which is utilised through their interactions. It is possible to compare the extensive audio archives and resources of the BBC with smaller resources of a small local station. Though this highlights differentials of



allocative resources between these organisations, both still rely on the authoritative resources of the agent to maximise their impact.

What follows are some of the responses from participants viewed in the context of agent interaction which demonstrate how the balance of these resources and the dialectic of control generate this *neutral power*. By outlining these elements of ST, it is possible to better understand the complexities of operating as an ethnic minority station.

### **Agent and station discussion**

The introduction of the community radio license in 2004 was a positive development for ethnic minority radio stations. These stations are broadcasting to an audience based on a small locale (a transmission area of no more than 5km depending on the wind strength carrying the signal!) These communities of interest in terms of ethnic minority audiences are sometimes socially isolated from wide society, from the mainstream media and often possess less developed English written and oral communication. Prior to this new license tier, the only way to broadcast to these communities was via a commercial licence and though the transmission area is usually larger and so the scope of listenership greater, similar interactions were noted between the community and a programme partner at the London commercial station.

Being a community minded station brings its own set of complicated interactions which determine how operationally successful it is, these are often based around the need for funding. There is a complex balance to be struck in how station staff negotiates between being a community conduit for information by local interest groups, with this the need to raise funds to continue operating and remaining autonomous.

Radio Asian Fever are a small South Asian community station based in the inner city of Leeds broadcasting to a diverse community mainly South Asian, Middle Eastern and African identities. Staff produce programmes which utilise a variety of languages such as Punjabi, Urdu, specialist Kashmiri dialects, English and some Hindi. The station has been

in existence since 1999 in some form, though it wasn't until 2007 that it began broadcasting under community licence.

The station's pressing desire to begin broadcasting community services meant that the complex interactions of political negotiations to attain charitable and public funding had to be delayed. The facilities available to the station's staff are meagre though slowly growing from the one room and mast they could finance at the beginning; 'we got our equipment just to get on the air and [it] was basic but it worked because people couldn't see it, they could hear us that's why we went direct from here, to save on costs... We have got the one transmitter so if this collapses, we don't have a backup but hey, we're on the air' (Karim, 2008). As a result they have been a regular listening appointment for many in the community, particularly women and the older generations.

This is a point of pride for the station's agents who are trying to attain complex goals of what Ofcom terms, 'social gain' the definition of which even Ofcom are still debating. To the station it is about providing a closely knit and knowledgeable service as facilitators. The manager recounts a female listener who 'doesn't have a lot of family and a lot of people that she knows here, she's new and the fact that she's been listening and she's been listening to these people being mentioned, these people talking to each other and these people dedicating songs to each other, they don't even know each other but they act as if they're big brothers and sisters towards each other and she says "it's like I don't have to leave the house to feel that I belong somewhere"' (Sahiba, 2008).

For the manager, 'radio was never about the money, the idea, the dream was the license to be able to run a full time community radio, we thought 'forget them, let's just get on, on the air' and I...went and met all the local businesses and I said "look, we've got no money, we need some money, will you please give a thousand or two thousand or whatever you can?"' (Karim, 2008). Though initial funding in return for advertising was forthcoming, maintaining this business support has been difficult. The pressures of running a small and busy station and the reliance on local business meant that when business priorities change

to only paying ‘their rent, their gas bill or whatever, if they don’t pay us, what happens? We stop their ad. Wow’ (op cit, 2008).

Money as an allocative resource is an anxiety to all the stations to varying degrees but for the community stations, more so. Coupled with the smaller broadcast area the potential to maximise the percentage of what Ofcom allow in their rules as commercial revenue is difficult. ‘The aim is for social gains and outputs but...they’ve shackled us with restrictions and when you put a shackle on somebody, they’re gonna take small steps forward, yes, but eventually they’ll just trip and fall flat’ (Sahiba, 2008). Here we see power exemplified as both an enablement and constraint; where the body that licenses them provides a platform for their operation but within a very narrow definition for their terms of operation. This constraint, along side its open door policy to its community means the station feels less able to charge for the airtime which community groups wish to access. Various visitors were observed, coming into the station to request support for various projects. The manager explained one request, one lady requesting air time, ‘highlighting, you know, mental health really in the Asian community which I’ve said “yeah, you’re more than welcome to come and join us and let’s put like a programme together”. But neither one of them wants to pay anything so...’ (Karim, 2008).

The Somali programme, Somali on Air (SOA), at Spectrum Radio in London is one of the many ‘programme partners’ of Spectrum. These partners pay an airtime ‘lease’ to Spectrum enabling them to broadcast to specific ethnic minority groups across the capital. This variety of provision makes Spectrum the only commercial and multi-ethnic station. SOA who are a recent newcomer to Spectrum, represent a dispersed and recently arrived community, were unable to afford the costs of a community license. They instead took a daily two hour broadcast slot to reach a national Somali community. The managers at SOA have little experience in finding funding and reflect that had they started ‘as a community radio I think we could do a lot of things different, [found] help from the government organisation’ (Omar, 2008).

These money concerns are played off against their significant means of production in available allocative resources and their exuberance for exploring the creativity of their authoritative resources. As part of the station they are able to reach, via DAB, Sky and internet streaming, an international Somali audience. The manager explains they are a young Somali population where ‘they’re not like the other community, like Asian community or other African community, they came this country last 10 years and they’ve been refugee and asylum seekers so they have a lot of difficulties, their own problems’ (op cit, 2008).

The need for Somali language based community support is enormous. Their most popular programmes are the phone-ins which are supported by Somali’s from across the UK. The most successful ones have addressed family and community break down; ‘we have learnt a lot about what’s causing and why it is happening, it’s sometimes cultural crash and language barrier so we had educated people, we bring them here and they talk to the people and tell about how they consult when they have a such problem’ (Socoto, 2008). So they are only too grateful for the support they are given by local Somali agents, those such as ‘a doctor...he was working eight hours today and then he comes to the radio without getting any money or anything, all he wants is just to take part of that show’ (Omar, 2008). The station staff, to begin with at least, have valued the authoritative resources of those such as the doctor in generating funding, a necessary allocative resource. The authoritative resources of the volunteers help to reproduce the structure but without the allocative resources to balance this, station agents are unable to enhance their monetary allocative resources through accessing funding.

What Radio Asian Fever and Somali on Air lack in environmental, monetary and material production resources they make up for in their grassroots knowledge of their listenership and the creativity which they channel into the programmes. These regularly feature topical debates, phone-ins and most prominently on Asian Fever, a live listener participant talent show where, thanks to their internet stream, calls are received from across Europe. Their authoritative resources are such that the managers takes care to ensure that ‘those who are coming in to present are ‘capacity built’, [they possess] the skills and have knowledge and

understanding of wider issues than just the community so that they can open doors for them, bring down barriers, keep them in touch with other views and ideas and portray them positively and I think that is what we're good at doing as a team.' (Sahiba, 2008).

This expression of 'capacity built' illustrates the authoritative resources the station agents possess. The station agents, volunteers, have grown up within the community; they come from the broadcast locale and are already part of the social networks that the station operates in. These factors equip these volunteers with priceless practical consciousness which they unthinkingly utilise to help run the station, empathise with subtle community rules but also enable them to act as facilitators for change. The last being an unintended consequence of agent interaction but something the station managers value in helping to provide a service to the community where change is a hard concept for some to face.

Despite the allocative resources available to them as part of a public service broadcaster, BBC Asian Network, a national British Asian orientated station has grown in fits and starts from a disparate set of programmes on local radio to the three location station it is today. Presenters broadcast mainly in English to a younger British Asian audience; specialised language programmes in Hindi-Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Mirpuri or Punjabi and music programmes are evening events. At their disposal are huge IT systems and organisation wide archives. However without the necessary authoritative skills until a recent organisation change, these resources had been under utilised. The Network came in for extensive criticism in the Government's Gardam Report (DCMS, 2004) which identified problems with programme quality, station staffing and target audience.

Only after extensive restructuring of staff in 2006 which addressed these issues did the creative authoritative resources begin to match the technological allocative resources. Having been heavily criticised in the past for poor production values, the impact of this reorganisation is coming to fruition. The station is beginning to mirror the smaller stations by involving the audience in a much closer interactive relationship. This is reflected in their shifting news values where 'because part of the key to justify why we exist, [we need] to get those stories which nobody would be running about the British Asian experience so we

work on that [alongside] constructing a better system to bring in all those planning prospects into a kind of one centralised grid' (Silverton, 2008).

On describing the archive and programme interface, the music manager was aware of their privilege; 'the systems are a benefit really, staffing structures are a huge benefit. I was at a community station, picking up the phone to listeners in my own programme. The system that we have in place here, the structure certainly does give us an advantage in delivering quality content *but* at the same time it's *required* that we deliver quality British Asian journalism and music content' (Stripple, 2008).

This balance of allocative and authoritative resources means the station is now able to take advantage of the 'containers of power' which are the IT systems so that 'everything we've recorded since 2006 has been archived for future use so we're building up that history, that legacy' (op cit, 2008). This legacy closely relates to the station's ability to stretch across time and space; to endure.

The station focuses on a remit of nurturing home grown British Asian talent and widening the tastes of the listener. Due to their developing authoritative resources, agents are beginning to make incremental changes to the overall rules of the structure. Of all the stations, they are the most socially outward looking, seeking to make greater connections with diverse communities of listeners and a wider British audience. But the rules of operation and the use of agent authority in the organisation have many more layers of interaction to negotiate. Though a British Asian DJ recounts how he was able stamp his own personality on the mainstream sister station's play lists he feels that 'there's no point if you get to that level then closing the door behind you and forgetting [about other British Asian talent]...you've got to be a special kind of wanker to close the door behind you' (DJ, 2008).

His strong opinions reflect an awareness that the immediate structure around him has painstakingly changed in many ways to reflect the diverse authoritative talent and the interactions of the target audience and staff. But he is also aware that incremental change is

slow for the rest of the organisation; 'its fine being in front of the mike but the real decisions are not made, you know, there. The real decisions are made by editors and producers, and there, there is still an issue I think' (op cit, 2008).

Conversations with Colourful reveal the relative importance of maximising their allocative and authoritative resources. It sees its competition, such as the BBC's speech stations, as structures which have been able to extend totally across time-space. Colourful are a new black orientated station aimed at their local London community as well as those who feel disenfranchised with what they see as 'mainstream pitter-patter' (Bonsu, 2008). Having begun broadcasting on Sky a couple of years ago they are in the middle of a transition to DAB.

They face an uphill struggle developing both their allocative and authoritative resources. Speech radio is a rarity in the UK as it is viewed as too costly to produce commercially. Where a music programme can be produced with just a DJ and a producer, speech radio requires at least a presenter, producer and researcher. So it takes a greater amount of money, production resources and agent skill to produce. There is also an additional pressure for Colourful as speech radio isn't typically seen by financiers and advertisers as being of interest to the black community. Making matters more difficult is that this perception of speech music being a white area filters down to potential radio staff. They see black radio presenters as 'people who can spin records and chat, and do little bits of slang and spit lyrics and whatever...if you look at where the black presenters are on mainstream radio, they are not in speech (Bonsu, 2008).

They are therefore aware of how young black media students are often drawn to large structures such as the BBC and who rapidly disappear from the industry after a few knock backs due to a lack of support both within the community and the radio industry. So the station is concentrating initially on attracting this potential talent; 'for us to be able to operate properly and generate the revenues, we need to have the right talent in place, you know, particularly for on line, on air broadcast talent and since the talent is not there we need to invest now in order to grow that talent' (Bonsu, 2008).

Though this is a tough initial place to be for a commercial station, it sees it partly as an advantage for if the ‘talent were there we wouldn’t have to nurture anyone because we’d probably end up doing the same thing as everyone else’ (op cit, 2008). The station’s aspirations are to break new ground and attract a new type of listener, away from the typically defined audiences of ethnic minorities. Recounting how the station staff were interviewing people about the Olympics, the manager asked ‘would Sunrise Radio have interviewed me as a person of African origin but now a Londoner about some of those things, to see the common factors? No, they wouldn’t because everyone is in their own silos. We want to be the first group like ourselves to break beyond that, and that will make us historic and interesting’ (op cit, 2008).

At the moment, they are pleased to be unlike the larger, more established broadcasters. These structures and their legacy across time-space of their rules and resources, mean to the manager, ‘your role is very narrowly defined and the weight of hierarchy on top of your shoulders is sometimes stifling whereas here, OK, as meagre as our resources have been if you have got the hunger it can sometimes provide an adequate substitute’ (op cit, 2008). Only time will tell how successful they are in breaking these barriers and in finding a balance between their allocative and authoritative resources.

It would be easy to write off the community and smaller stations as powerless when measured against the might of these national structures. But to do so would be simplistic and unfairly measures structures against each other which serve clearly different purposes and with a different scope. A traditional analysis of power would miss these subtle agent interactions which at whatever ‘level’ are generating power for the structure to operate well within the target communities. Here the time-space concept becomes of great importance. All the stations exist on the same time-space continuum; they both comprise sets of agents who use the similar categories of allocative and authoritative power.



The smaller stations often lack in allocative and sometimes authoritative resources. Similarly though, the larger stations are sometimes deficient in the agility rapidly to change or to forge intimate listening relationships with their audiences on a local level.

With a greater extension across time and space for structures such as the BBC and Spectrum Radio come greater resources and rules to have to negotiate and reproduce. Power is neutral; all the stations have access to the same categories of allocative and authoritative resources. Power is also relative in the sense that greater power is achieved depending on the position of the structure across time and space with relevance to the station's target audiences which occupy different locales and broadcasting scope. A community station's interests differ greatly from a larger or commercial station but how it uses its resources and the resulting enablement and constraint is a common factor in all of them.

What sets any of the ethnic minority stations apart is not size but the efficiency and creativity with which they use their allocative and authoritative resources. However, as Giddens has identified and as is apparent in the next section, it is the deeply embedded nature of the rules and resources of some structures which make them 'institutions'. The position these institutions occupy in society means they control greater possibilities for enablement and constraint. Such structures are better able to determine the authority they have in their interaction with other agents.

The duality of structure is defined by the interaction of agents who are able to reproduce but also negotiate the rules and resources to their best interests. This complex dialogue of negotiation, as we know, is what Giddens terms the 'dialectic of control'. Like the duality of structure, it is a two way 'negotiation' of power where the 'less powerful manage resources in such a way as to exert control over the more powerful in established power relationships' (Giddens, 1984, pp. 374). The evidence so far shows how this balance or imbalance of resources can constrain or enable the endurance of any structure.

This dialectic can be illustrated by a station's ability to reach the listeners and proving such numbers through the membership of appropriate measurement tools such as RAJAR. Such tools equate this audience to the generation of funding or revenue. The greater occupation of time-space and interaction with other structures can correspond to the stations agents' ability to encourage other sets of rules and resources to favour the structure. RAJAR is owned in part by the major commercials and the BBC who often show less interest in more accurate audience reporting methods as a way of protecting their advertising numbers. For Colourful 'as a commercial station we need those [RAJAR] figures in order to be able to show the world that we have a certain number of people listening to us. Now that's made all the more difficult by the fact that we are a new channel doing speech to a market which traditionally hasn't been recognised at all' (Kusitor, 2008).

The recent devolvement of power by Ofcom to the multiplex operators to allocate services has been the prompting of many frustrating exchanges in this dialectic of control.

Colourful Radio has made use of their authoritative resources to bend the rules in their favour in their quest for a DAB license by openly applying with more than one multiplex owner; a very unorthodox method of negotiation. However the hierarchy in this dialectic is played out by the protectionist powers of some structures to ensure this broadcast resource is kept to certain radio brands. For Colourful, such protectionist behaviour has lengthened this dialectic. Though recently acquiring their DAB license, the process began in 2004 when 'Digital One said very clearly to us, "there is no capacity left on DA, on the national Multiplex". They were protecting it; they basically copied some of their channels and put it on the DAB Multiplex' (Kusitor, 2008). Only when the communications regulator, Ofcom opened up bidding for the second national multiplex did space begin to appear elsewhere.

For the BBC, spectrum allocation has always been less of a problem. Their duty to serve the public interest through license fee funding is a strong allocative resource which has meant they have a greater ability to endure along the time-space continuum. As one Ofcom manager said 'we don't control the destiny of individual stations like Radio One or BBC Radio London or whatever, so that part of the band is officially gifted to the BBC to manage in the way that they want obviously as long as they're complying with the kind of

agreed [broadcast] power levels' (Heasman, 2008). This, however, has meant powerlessness in spectrum allocation for the BBC's ethnic minority services. Here the dialectic of control has been played out between agents *within* the BBC over the allocation of the precious FM band to some stations. The result is that the national station, Asian Network with its position on DAB has had to work doubly hard through a higher degree of audience interaction to gain the smallest foothold in the London market.

## **Conclusion**

This paper, through examining the concepts of allocative and authoritative resources and how the station agents make use of them, shows how power is generated. Structuration theory has been shown to be able to elucidate the complex nature of the ethnic minority radio market in the UK and the, often missed, subtle nuances of agent interaction. This has been shown in identifying the 'capacity built' nature of the agent and the consciousness they bring to reproducing the structure.

This capacity *can* be inherent in every interaction in every structure; it is shown to be successful through the balance of resources. These resources are common to all of the stations and rather than being hierarchical or deterministic, power is a neutral entity and is part of the complex interactions surrounding the enablement and constraint of agent interaction. These common categories of resources mean stations face similar challenges which can be analysed as existing on the same time-space continuum. Doing so creates a framework for a more objective analysis. Their endurance has been shown to be based not necessarily on might and domination but through agents' harnessing of resources and to be able to contain power as a legacy across time and space.

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