

***Enticing the challengeable: "Under whose authority?"***

Abstract: Membership categorization analysis (MCA) is used to address the challenges “enticed” within this episode. This approach can reveal nuances of the member categories proffered at the courthouse/ Kim Davis' office. By examining the sequential acts tied to member categories within this interaction, we can learn more about the ways proffered categories are taken up or dismissed. This brief examination will address uncontested norms in category-bound (omnirelevant) roles and relationships (e.g. county clerk, citizen), to other categories that may be more locally determined and contestable (category-tied) to those categories that are implied (category-predicated). These category distinctions are useful as we explore the ways those in positions of authority include or exclude those deemed outside a “relevant” member category (or the norms for participants in such categories).

Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA), originated from Harvey Sacks, is a method through which analysts seek to discover members' routine practices for accomplishing social and moral order in routine contexts. MCA is particularly equipped for helping analysts get at members' identities-in-context. Recently, Fitzgerald & Housley (2015) have advanced a number of specific categorization devices. What Reynolds (2011) has described as ‘enticing a challengeable’ can be found readily in protest encounters. They are comprised of questions and responses whereby, “participants employ speaker selection and epistemic rights to entice a response from the answerer” (p. 413). Recently summarized as an “adversarial method of enacting a strategic manipulation of social knowledge (often using categories and category ties) as a basis for later challenging an opponent’s normativity” (Reynolds & Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 100), we find several in the current “Kim Davis” episode.

When locating utterances that entice a challengeable, we would expect to find one of the participants challenging the norms related to conversational participants' membership categories. These challenges and the categories are not equivalent. Reynolds & Fitzgerald (2015) offer three different devices: category-bound, category-tied and category-predicated, as a way to distinguish between utterances and the work they are performing within the conversation.

- Category-tied refers to the “link between category and category feature which is treated by participants as not taken for granted and needing to be made explicit” (p. 99).
- Category-bound refers to the “relationship between a category and an activity or attribute...treated by participants as *a priori* and non-contestable (p. 102).

- The category-predicate is “directly implied” (p.100) and need not be made explicit.

Consider three segments in the Kim Davis/Courthouse episode.

1 DAVID: solutely ludicrous (.) don't smile at me

2 KIM: I did not smile (2.0) I'm not being disrespectful to you-

3 WHITE: you absolutely have [disrespected

4 DAVID: [you absolutely have been disrespectful to us, treating us

5 as second class citizens, is what you are doing

6 KIM: [mm no, no, no

7 DAVID: [telling us that we don't deserve the same right rights that you do, that you have

8 KIM: I'm saying that [you do

In line 2, Kim rephrases her action as falling within the norm of being respectful (in contrast to David's assertion that her smile was in fact a sign of “disrespect.”) David proffers the category “second class citizens” (line 5) as the *category-tied* to the norm of being disrespected. The rights, duties and obligations that are warranted for the particular category, citizen, are at issue locally. The category of citizens of the United States, who all have equal rights, is locally established as consisting of two categories, those deserving “the same rights” as others, and those of a lower rank of second class citizen (not receiving respect).

Another segment includes a pre-challenge question and illustrates the *category-bound* norms associated with Kim's employment role as clerk at a government office.

32 WHITE: [under whose authority? (0.5) are you not issuing licen[ses?

33 KIM: [under God's

34 authority

35 OTHER: God's authority

In this segment, White proffer's a pre-challenge question, “under whose authority” (line 32). Kim responds with what she may consider a *bound* or non-contestable category. However, the very fact of

her having to explicitly state what she considers uncontested, illustrates the relationship between the category and the activity is the very point upon which this interaction turns.

A third segment illustrates the *category-predicate* of parents. David's lengthy turn (from lines 75-81) shouted at Kim Davis as she enters and closes the door to her office, implies that those who marry may become parents with children. The office staff are affiliated with the category of parents whose norm is that they should not act in ways that are shameful to their children.

75 DAVID: YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF! EVERYONE IN THIS

76 OFFICE SHOULD be ashamed of themselves. (.) IS THIS WHAT YOU

77 WANT TO REMEMBER? (1.0) IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT TO

78 REMEMBER, THAT YOU STOOD AFTER THIS? (2.0) THAT YOUR

79 CHILDREN WILL HAVE TO LOOK AT YOU AND REALIZE THAT YOU

80 ARE A BIGGOTS, AND THAT YOU DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

81 PEOPLE? is that what you want of, is that what you want?

## References

Fitzgerald, R. & Housley, W. (2015). (Eds.). *Advances in Membership Categorisation Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Reynolds, E. & Fitzgerald, R. (2015). Challenging normativity: Re-appraising category bound, tied and predicated features. In R. Fitzgerald & W. Housley (Eds.). *Advances in Membership Categorisation Analysis*, pp. 99-122. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Reynolds, E. (2011). Enticing a challengeable in arguments: Sequence, epistemics and preference organization. *Pragmatics*, 21 (3), 411-430.