

UC Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara Previously Published Works

Title

Analyzing categorial phenomena in talk-in-interaction

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1md687jz>

ISBN

9781108936583

Authors

Whitehead, Kevin A.

Raymond, Geoffrey

Stokoe, Elizabeth

Publication Date

2024-12-01

Peer reviewed

Whitehead, K. A., Raymond, G., & Stokoe, E. (2024). Analyzing categorial phenomena in talk-in-interaction. In J. D. Robinson, R. Clift, K. Kendrick, & C. W. Raymond (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Research Methods in Conversation Analysis* (pp. 541-576). Cambridge University Press.

Analyzing Categorical Phenomena in Talk-in-Interaction

Kevin A. Whitehead (University of California, Santa Barbara, and University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg)

Geoffrey Raymond (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughborough University)

Introduction

Social categories have been a founding concern for social scientists across a range of disciplines, and it is therefore not surprising that they were a primary focus of Harvey Sacks' (e.g., 1966, 1972a, 1972b, 1992) early work in pioneering what would become Conversation Analysis (CA). Sacks' approach to categories, however, was fundamentally distinct from those that prevailed in the social sciences at the time, and that continue to dominate to this day. The methodological and substantive distinctiveness of this approach can be illustrated through consideration of Extract 1 below, which shows the opening moments of a call to a holiday company.¹

(1) [Holiday booking]

- 1 R: G'd evenin' Rindley Leisure Hotels, you're speaking to
2 Diane.=↓How c'n I help.
3 C: Uh- good evenin' Diane. .hh I'm trying to- um. (0.3) I'm
4 a lady of a certain age and going online's giving me a
5 headache.
6 R: Mhm he heh, heh,

Conventional social-scientific approaches might use what we see in this interaction as a catalyst for research on such matters as age differences in uptake and uses of such technologies, old(er) people's experiences of using relatively new web-based technologies, and/or possible ways of (re)designing online platforms to make these technologies more user-friendly for old(er) people. That is, such approaches treat categories as *analysts' resources* – deploying them, for example, in selecting people and topics to study, explaining differences between categorically-identified groups, and designing evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes for specific categories of people.

In contrast, the approach developed by Sacks, and other scholars who have built on his work in this area, focuses on how categories can serve as *members' resources* – i.e., how ordinary members of society use and self-administer categories in everyday naturally occurring interactions. In line with this approach, we can observe how the caller describes herself in a category-relevant way, as “a lady of a certain age” (lines 3-5), thereby claiming membership in the category ‘old’ – and how, in doing so, she *uses* this category as a resource in accounting for having called to request assistance rather than “going online” (line 4). Thus, for Sacks – and for

¹ An expanded version of this extract accompanied by an elaborated analysis is provided below as Extract 8. Also see the analysis of this call by Flinkfeldt, Parslow, and Stokoe (2022).

the approach to social categories that emerged from his work – the goal is *to study how people use and self-administer categories, rather than to use categories to study the social world* (also see Zimmerman and Pollner 1970).

In using and building on this approach in our work, we have – both separately and in our collaborations – sought to conduct analyses that attend to both categorial features of talk-in-interaction and to the set of “generic problems” and associated “organizations of practice” (Schegloff 2006a:71) on which many of the foundational advances in conversation analytic research over the past six decades have focused, including those Schegloff (2006a, 2007b) identifies (turn-taking, action formation, sequence organization, repair, overall structural-organization, and word selection), along with the more recently developed area of epistemics (Heritage and Raymond 2005; Raymond and Heritage 2006). We thus describe in this chapter an approach, grounded in conversation analytic methods and findings, to empirically examining how members use and orient to categories, and how these uses and orientations can be demonstrably explicated through analyses of participants’ context-specific uses of generic organizations of interactional practice.

We turn first to a brief introduction to Sacks’ foundational work on membership categorization devices (MCDs). We then present an analysis of a collection of openings of recorded naturally-occurring interactions from ordinary conversational and institutional settings, focusing on participants’ explicit and tacit use and management of the relevance of a range of categories in the initial moments of these interactions. Using this analysis as an exemplar, we address a set of challenges and critiques associated with conversation analytic research on categories – and thus how CA can provide an empirically rigorous means of examining the situated (re)production of categories, from the most mundane and unremarkable to those most strongly associated with distributions of power and privilege.

Membership Categorization Devices

While a comprehensive introduction to Sacks’ work on MCDs is beyond the scope of this chapter (for more extended treatments, see, e.g., Fitzgerald and Housley 2015; Hester and Eglin 1997a; Jayyusi 1984; Lepper 2000; Schegloff 2007c; Silverman 1998; Stokoe 2012b), in what follows we sketch out some of the key contours of this work as a starting point for our specification of a CA approach to social categories. It is important to emphasize from the outset that Sacks developed this work as a set of empirical observations of members’ methods in relation to categories, and the resources they use in deploying them. He thus underscored the importance of analyses of their uses by participants being “in each and every case, a matter to be *decided empirically*” (Sacks 1966:16; emphasis added). However, a wealth of empirical research in the decades since Sacks developed these observations (including the empirical analysis we present in the following section) has consistently reaffirmed participants’ systematic uses of and/or orientations to the features of social categories Sacks described – much as decades of research on turn-taking, sequence organization, and the other generic organizations of interactional practice listed in the previous section have consistently reaffirmed foundational CA research in these areas. As such, while the place of this work in the methodological approach we describe here is not that of a ‘top-down’ theory of categories and categorization that is assumed to be realized invariantly across all possible cases, it does provide of a set of resources that can assist analysts in recognizing what participants are doing or contending with in particular cases. Those who wish to use the methodological approach we describe here are thus well-advised to have a firm grasp of both the core features of MCDs we describe below, and the organizations of

practice (turn-taking, sequence organization, repair, etc.) that are more routinely treated as foundations of conversation analytic scholarship.

Sacks describes MCDs as an apparatus consisting of two parts: Collections of categories and rules of application. Regarding the collections, Sacks (1972b:332) observes that participants systematically treat categories of person as comprising sets that “go together.” For example, the ‘family’ collection includes the categories ‘parent,’ ‘grandparent,’ ‘child,’ ‘cousin,’ etc.; the ‘religion’ collection includes ‘Christian,’ ‘Hindu,’ ‘Jew,’ ‘Muslim,’ etc.; and the ‘occupation’ collection includes ‘dentist,’ ‘janitor,’ ‘lawyer,’ ‘plumber,’ etc. A particularly explicit case of participants’ orientations to a collection of categories of this sort appears in Extract 2, showing part of a sales call in which the sales representative (R) asks a question (lines 4-5) designed to determine whether anyone other than the customer on the line (C) should be included among the parties to the sale (also see Stokoe, Sikveland, and Huma 2017). In the series of turns following this question, the participants collaborate in – and use as an occasion for sharing a joke – displaying recognition of the categories that could ‘go together’ in the collection “family” (line 22).

(2) [Sales call]

1 R: .hhh And your ↓surname please,
2 C: Missus ↓Bowler, =bravo oscar whiskey lima echo ↓romeo,
3 (3.3) ((R typing))
4 R: #That’s great, # =↑is it just yourself? =Or is it mister
5 and missu:s? Or[:,
6 C: [Mister and m[issu:]s,
7 R: [Uhm-]
8 (0.2)
9 R: ↑°Mis°[ter ↓a:n:]
10 C: [And a baby,]
11 (.)
12 R: [↑(AW::/OH:)::] hh HEH HE[H HEH .hhh]=
13 C: [thh HEH] [heh heh]=
14 R: [↑Mis]ter >and missus and a< little one ↓too:.=
15 C: =[Yeah,]
16 R: =hh HEH [heh]
17 C: [yeah:(p),]
18 (.)
19 C: An’ a ↓dog: a[s well, y(h)eah,]
20 R: [OH: AND A D]OG.=OH HH HEH H[EH heh]
21 C: [Yeah:]
22 well.=mhnhhh heh heh (it’s a) busy family,

Moreover, the participants in this case collaborate in treating the collection of categories at hand as ‘complete’: Following the brief silence at line 18 – a point at which the enumeration of the family *could* be complete – C proposes one further member, marking it as a hearably last element of the set through her use of “as well” (line 19), while using a species shift to produce a joke, which is registered as such and appreciated by R’s laughter at line 20.

A crucial observation Sacks (1972a:33) makes about collections of categories is that members of every known population have available to them at least two of what he calls “Pn-adequate” MCDs, referring to collections whose categories could be used to categorize any member of a population (e.g., age and sex). This provides for every member being potentially categorizable by multiple different categories from different MCDs (also see Schegloff

2007c:467-468). Consequently, “correctness” alone does not provide an adequate warrant for the selection of a particular category to categorize any given member of a population (Sacks 1972a:33). While recognizing this as a “research problem,” Sacks is clear that its status as such is grounded in the fact that “members of a society face several significant problems when categorizing each other, [and] that they have systematic methods for handling those problems” (Sacks 1966:13) – and thus that the methodological task in examining them is to describe the empirical features of these members’ methods and the resources they use in deploying them (also see Sacks 1972a).

Sacks (1972a:37) further observes that collections may include pairs of categories – which he calls “‘standardized’ relational pairs” – that serve as loci for reciprocal rights and obligations between members of the respective categories in the pair. For example, in the parent-child pair from the ‘family’ MCD (cf. Extract 2), the parent is normatively treated as having the right to make decisions on behalf of the child and the obligation to act in the child’s best interests, while the child is treated as having the obligation to comply with the parent’s decisions and the right to be cared for and protected.

The individual categories within collections are what Sacks (1992:I:40) calls “inference rich,” serving as “the store house and the filing system for the common-sense knowledge that ordinary people – that means ALL people in their capacity as ordinary people – have about what people are like, how they behave, etc.” (Schegloff 2007c:469). This common-sense knowledge thus includes knowledge about conduct that participants treat as being characteristically associated with members of a category, which Sacks (1972b:335) calls “category-bound activities.”² Sacks (1992:I:336) further notes that this categorial knowledge is “protected against induction,” such that observing individual members of a category who appear to be inconsistent with what is known about the category does not result in the knowledge about the category being modified, but instead such members are seen as “exceptions” or “phonies.”

The two rules of application Sacks describes – rules that he observes participants systematically using or orienting to in relation to MCDs – are the “economy” and “consistency” rules (Sacks 1972b:333). The economy rule holds that a single category term (e.g., ‘man’) can serve as an adequate reference to a person, such that references in which multiple categories are deployed (e.g., ‘rich white man’) can be inspected for what is accomplished by using additional categories. The consistency rule holds that the use of a category from a particular MCD in relation to one person in a setting may provide for the use of other categories from the same MCD in relation to other people in the setting. It thereby provides for the visibility of the use of a category from one collection (e.g., the race category ‘white’) being immediately followed by the use of a category from a different collection (e.g., the class or wealth category ‘poor’) (see Whitehead 2013).

Sacks also proposes as corollaries to these rules the hearer’s and viewer’s maxims, which serve respectively as instructions for hearing and seeing performed actions as tied to the actor’s membership in a category. The hearer’s maxim applies to cases in which an action (e.g., crying) is attributed to a member of a category (e.g., ‘baby’) that could be part of two (or more) distinct MCDs (e.g., ‘stage of life’ and ‘family’). Sacks (1972b:337) proposes that this ambiguity with respect to which collection of categories is being invoked will be resolved by hearing the

² Schegloff (2007c:476) observes that analysts may use the “obviousness” of what is known about categories as “a vehicle for promiscuously introducing into the analysis what the writing needs for the argument-in-progress” without demonstrating that the participants themselves are acting on the basis of this knowledge. We elaborate below on the challenges Schegloff poses in this regard.

category as being (at least) the one to which the activity is category-bound – in this case hearing the category ‘baby’ as being from the ‘stage of life’ collection (to which the action of crying is bound) rather than from the ‘family’ collection.

In contrast, the viewer’s maxim provides instructions for using a visually-available activity as a basis for seeing the category membership of the person producing it (also see Jayyusi 1984:57-59, 74 on “perceptually available categories”). That is, seeing a person engaged in an activity (e.g., crying) that is bound to a particular category (e.g., ‘baby’) provides a warranted basis for seeing the person as a member of that category (i.e., seeing the crying person as a member of the category ‘baby’). As Schegloff (2007c:472-473) notes, the viewer’s maxim involves treating the characterization of an activity as unproblematic to provide leverage for arriving at a characterization of the category of the actor producing it, but participants may, conversely, treat the category of the actor as unproblematic in order to provide for a characterization of the activity.

A resource that participants – and thus analysts – may use in resolving the potential ambiguity of the category of an actor, the nature of an action performed by the actor, or both, is what Sacks (1992:I:312) calls “omni-relevant” MCDs. This refers to collections of categories that are bound to the types of activities that typically get done in particular settings, such that the participants’ membership in a category from the collection is systematically *potentially* relevant at any point for the production and interpretation of actions by participants in the setting (also see Fitzgerald, Housley, and Butler 2009; Whitehead and Baldry 2018). For example, the representative’s question in lines 4-5 of Extract 2 is hearable as working to establish the parties to the sale – rather than, for example, merely showing interest in the customer’s personal life – precisely by virtue of this being an interactional setting in which the participants treat the categories ‘representative’ and ‘customer,’ and thus the ‘sales call’ MCD, as omni-relevant.³ Importantly, Sacks (1992:I:315) notes that other MCDs may *also* be (omni-)relevant at particular moments in such settings (as seen in the emergent relevance of categories from the ‘family’ MCD in Extract 2), and the identification of an omni-relevant device thus does not excuse the analyst from demonstrating precisely when and how any particular device or category (omni-relevant or otherwise) is relevant at some given moment in an interaction. That is, despite what the term may appear to imply, “omni-relevant” does not mean *always* or *necessarily* relevant. Nonetheless, identifying the setting-based omni-relevance (for participants) of a particular MCD can provide a methodological resource for seeing the type of “reflexive co-determination” (Schegloff 2007c:473) of categories and actions at particular moments that Sacks observed (also see Hester and Eglin 1997b; Schegloff 2001:310-312; Watson 1997).

Collecting and Analyzing Categorical Phenomena

As is amply documented in Section 2 of the present volume, working with collections of interactional phenomena is a hallmark of conversation analytic research. When applied to the analysis of categorical phenomena more specifically, the building of collections involves identifying category-related practices, actions, or features of talk and/or other conduct through which participants manage and thereby display their orientations to some interactional

³ This orientation is evident in R’s *sotto voce* repeat in line 9 that confirms his hearing of the parties relevant for his query, which positions him to then pursue a next piece of business. C’s subsequent excursion into listing other members of the family (beginning in overlap with R’s receipt of her possibly complete response in line 10) are thus hearable as joking precisely by virtue of exceeding the categorial relevances established by R’s initial query, and thereby departing from the institutional business of the call.

contingency or contingencies (also see Whitehead 2020). We illustrate this approach here by examining a collection of cases in which such categorial matters become evident during the course of the opening phases of recorded naturally occurring interactions. We thereby demonstrate the analysis of a collection constituted by reference to participants' orientations to categories and a particular organization of interactional practice, namely overall structural organization.⁴ Our analysis of this collection in turn provides empirical illustrations relating to a range of other intersecting methodological principles and practices, including:

- How to make empirically grounded observations, based on the case-by-case details of participants' talk and other conduct, on both explicit and tacit categorial orientations and practices.⁵
- Attending analytically to case-specific features of other organizations of interactional practice (i.e., turn-taking, action formation, sequence organization, repair, word selection, and epistemics) in addition to the primary one (overall structural organization) on which the collection is based.
- Examining distinct and/or intersecting participant orientations to the full potential range of Pn-adequate and setting based omni-relevant, and turn-generated MCDs and categories.
- Examining a range of differently-constructed interactional settings, including conversations between friends and family members, calls to emergency and non-emergency service lines, radio call-in shows, police-civilian encounters, and sales calls.⁶
- Attending to both routine, apparently unproblematic (for the participants) uses of categories, as well as occasions in which categorial misalignment or other forms of category-related interactional troubles arise – while considering how the latter can inform analyses of the former.

In doing so, we provide an empirical foundation that informs our discussion, in the section that follows this one, of methodological challenges and critiques associated with studying social categories using conversation analytic methods and findings.

Alignment with Categories from Omni-Relevant Setting-Based MCDs

We begin by considering a range of both explicit and tacit practices through which participants may work to accomplish, and/or resist, mutual alignment with respect to categories – and associated standardized relational pairs – from MCDs that they thereby treat as omni-relevant

⁴ Previous conversation analytic studies of the openings of interactions (e.g., Fitzgerald and Housley 2002; Harjunpää, Mondada, and Svinhufvud 2018; Pillet-Shore 2018a, 2018b; Schegloff 1968, 1979, 1986; Whalen and Zimmerman 1987; Whitehead and Baldry 2018) have demonstrated that they are highly structured sites at which a range of interactional tasks in relation to the interaction projected to follow are accomplished, including being a recurrent site for the management of contingencies concerning the alignment of the respective category memberships of the participants.

⁵ These include orientations in relation to the speaker's own membership in some category/ies, or that of their recipients, or that of third parties who come to be mentioned but are not directly engaged in the interaction.

⁶ Each of the extracts we examine below could conceivably be the basis for an entire collection in its own right, with resulting analyses focusing more centrally on categorial practices in relation to settings, categories or MCDs, and/or organizations of interactional practice other than those on which we have primarily focused here. Researchers employing the methodological approach we present here could thus build collections on the basis of innumerable combinations of these dimensions, and likely also of others we have not mentioned.

and hence partially constitutive for the settings or types of occasion at hand. Extract 3 shows an instance of a telephone conversation tacitly constituted as being between co-members of the category ‘friend.’

(3) [Call to friend]

1	N:	H'ello:?
2	H:	Hi:,
3	N:	↑HI::.
4	H:	Howaryuhh=
5	N:	=Fi:ne how're you,
6	H:	Oka:y,
7	N:	[↓Goo:d,
8		(0.4)
9	H:	.mkhhh[hhh
10	N:	[What's doin',
11		(.)
12	H:	aAh:, nothi:n:,

While the participants may take their status as friends for granted, their achievement of this status is nevertheless accomplished through the routine features of the call's opening (also see Schegloff 1986), and thus the analytic task is to specify precisely how they do this. As Schegloff (1986) observes, in calls between familiars, participants may recognize each other based only on the small voice samples produced in the opening turns of a call. That both the caller, Hyla, and answerer, Nancy, in this case accomplish this mutual recognition is shown by the reciprocal “recognition greetings” (Drew 2002:486). The particular realization of this pair of greetings specifies more than mere co-membership in a ‘familiar’-‘familiar’ pair of categories: The celebratory tone accomplished through the stretched, emphasized, and unelaborated production of both of these greetings (lines 2-3), as well as the increased volume and pitch of Nancy's return greeting, together display both parties' recognition of who the other is, and who they are to one another (Drew 2002; Schegloff 1972, 1986) – and thus their co-alignment in the ‘friend’-‘friend’ pair of categories.

This orientation to the omni-relevance of the ‘friend’ category for the occasion is then consequential, albeit still tacitly, for how the conversation unfolds following an exchange of “‘howareyou’ sequences” (see Jefferson 1980; Sacks 1975; Schegloff 1986), in the sequential position at which the initiator of the interaction (in this case, Hyla) ordinarily “gets to initiate first topic” or introduce the “reason for the call” (Schegloff 1986:186). After not initially taking up the opportunity to do this during a silence at line 8, and following Nancy's prompting (line 10), Hyla directly declines to introduce a first topic or say why she has called. That is, Hyla effectively proposes that the reason for the call is ‘no reason in particular,’ thus treating it as an ordinary conversation between friends as opposed to an interaction with some more specific ‘task oriented’ character.

The constitution of Extract 3 as an ordinary conversation between friends can be contrasted with the participants' collaborative treatment of a set of institutional categories as omni-relevant for the setting in Extract 4, which shows a routine opening of a call to an emergency service line.⁷

⁷ Also see the analysis of this call by Whalen and Zimmerman (1987).

(4) [Emergency call]

1 CT: Mid-City emergency::,
2 (.)
3 C: U::m yeah. Somebody just vandalized my car,
4 CT: pt=.hhhh What's your address.
5 C: Fifteen oh eight Sunnyside,

As Whalen and Zimmerman (1987) note, the call-taker's explicit identification of the institutional setting (line 1) tacitly establishes his membership in the '911 dispatcher' or 'help-provider' category, with the caller's turn-initial (following slight hesitation) "yeah" (line 3) tacitly aligning her as a member of the category 'help-seeker' category – the other part of this standardized relational pair within the 'emergency call' MCD that participants in this setting systematically treat as omni-relevant. The subsequent description of the complaint about which she is calling (line 3) then serves as a request for assistance (Whalen and Zimmerman 1987), and thus more explicitly constitutes a claim of membership in this category and a basis for the continuing unfolding of the 'main business' of the call that follows.

In Extracts 3 and 4, the mutual alignment with a pair of categories as omni-relevant, and thereby partly constitutive of the setting for the encounter, is accomplished seamlessly, and largely tacitly – but nonetheless still analytically descriptibly. In light of such cases, one might commit the methodological error of proposing that an opening turn that indexes a particular setting or type of call provides for the more or less 'automatic' categorial alignment of the participants as the call proceeds. However, as Extract 5 demonstrates, the moment-by-moment production of these apparently routine co-alignments entails the management of multiple contingencies (Schegloff 1986), and troubles may arise in relation to their accomplishment. In this case,⁸ Linda calls her husband, Jerry, at work. Similarly to the call-taker in Extract 4, Jerry answers the phone by identifying the institutional setting of the call (line 1), thereby orienting to his membership in a 'service provider' category, and inviting the caller's reciprocal alignment as 'service seeker.' As the call's opening unfolds, their respective tacit use of standardized relational pairs from different MCDs – 'husband'/'wife' versus 'service-provider'/'service-seeker' – surfaces in the exposure of Jerry's failure to recognize that he is speaking to his wife.

(5) [Call to spouse at workplace]

1 J: Wichitaw' (bluepri:nt)
2 L: Hey Jerry?
3 (.)
4 L: .h[h
5 J: [Ye:[s.
6 L: [hHi:: .h[h
7 J: [HI:[:.
8 L: [He:y- you don'haftuh bring'ny
9 paper plates I think ah'll jus:t use the plates ah'v
10 go::t,hh
11 J: Who's thi:s.
12 L: ↑Linda.ehh[hhhkhhh
13 J: [↑OH(h):.
14 L: °henh°
15 J: H[i::.
16 L: [Wuhdihyou mean uwho(h)'s [this,
17 J: [heh heh .hh

⁸ Also see analyses of this call by Drew (2002, 2018) and Raymond and Sidnell (2019).

Following Jerry's opening announcement, Linda's recognitional "Hey Jerry?" (line 2) initiates a possible – but ambiguous – shift in the categorial basis of the call, using a form that is neither fully institutional nor intimate (Drew 2002, 2018). On the one hand, her use of a "less stringent recognition test" (Schegloff 1986:128)⁹ appears designed to occasion a shift to the a 'husband'/'wife' pair of categories by inviting Jerry's reciprocal recognition of her.¹⁰ Following Jerry's simple (albeit slightly delayed) confirmation (line 5), Linda initiates the exchange of greetings (line 6) it makes relevant, using a form that provides Jerry a further opportunity (and voice sample) to recognize her. Notably, in using a greeting token alone (as opposed to a compound form including an explicit self-identification, e.g., "Hi, it's Linda"), and producing it with downward intonation, Linda displays an entitlement to recognition by Jerry that is reserved for close intimates. When Jerry responds with a reciprocal greeting that claims such recognition, Linda moves to the business of the call using formulations that index known-in-common domestic arrangements and deontic entitlements (lines 8-10) consistent with their status as wife and husband and the shared biography associated with that relationship.

Across these exchanges, then, Linda's orientation to the relevance of Jerry's status as her husband is evident in how she manages each element of the call's opening. And yet, when Linda announces her reason for calling Jerry, he reveals that he has not recognized her (line 11), and thus that he has managed throughout the opening to sustain an entirely different orientation to who the caller is to him. For example, Jerry apparently treats Linda's use of upwardly intoned other-identification (in line 2) as a practice for projecting a move to business by producing a simple confirmation that retains the 'service-seeker'/'service provider' pair invoked by his initial utterance (also see Schegloff's [1986:139-144] discussion of "caller preemption"). Moreover, in responding to Linda's greeting with a responsive greeting that *claims* recognition (line 7), Jerry treats the exchange as merely instrumental, apparently anticipating he will have sufficient material for recognizing the specific client once she announces her business. In this regard, Jerry's conduct in the call's opening suggests that he anticipates a reason for the call associated with his workplace, rendering Linda's formulation of the call's business, and Linda herself, as entirely unrecognizable to him. Linda's emphatic response (line 12), the confession conveyed by Jerry's prosodically marked "change of state token" (line 13; see Heritage 1984), and his new greeting (line 15), rework the prior opening and establish a context for Linda's admonishing complaint (line 16) topicalizing his failure to recognize her – which treats Jerry as accountable

⁹ A more stringent recognition test, conveyed by a [greeting + address term] produced with downward intonation, makes relevant reciprocal recognition in next turn (Schegloff 1986:127). Crucially, the form Linda uses does not convey tentative recognition; rather it permits a range of possible responses, including the sort of simple confirmation Jerry provides. In this respect, the intonation contour Linda uses to identify Jerry appears sensitive to the countervailing relevances associated with calling her husband on a work line.

¹⁰ Linda's use of this practice to invite recognition exploits an understanding that once members of a pair categorizable as 'husband' and 'wife' recognize one other, that pair of categories will be treated as omni-relevant for the encounter. More generally, if parties are known to one another (and thus not strangers), how they are known to one another (e.g., as friends, family members, work colleagues, etc.) may be treated as establishing an – or the – omni-relevant MCD upon mutual recognition in and as part of the encounter's opening. By contrast, where parties do not know (or recognize) one another, and an institutional MCD has not been used in the call's opening, the parties may have to work out who they are for one another (also cf. Extract 6 below). As such, managing the distinction between MCDs used by persons who are known to one another versus those used for institutional occasions appears to be a central mechanism through which the specializations and reductions that are characteristic of institutional interaction (Drew and Heritage 1992; Heritage and Clayman 2010) come to be introduced and made relevant in such encounters.

for failing his category-based obligation to recognize her. Thus, as Schegloff (1986) observes, both routine cases and those in which trouble arises can and should be analyzed as achievements.

The fatefulness of openings and the troubles parties may encounter in accomplishing alignment with respect to omni-relevant setting-based institutional categories can be further appreciated in Extract 6. Here a police negotiator working to open a suicide crisis negotiation with a person in crisis (PiC) confronts a crucial first challenge for negotiators, which is to get the person in crisis to engage in conversation at all (also see Sikveland, Kevoe-Feldman, and Stokoe 2020; Sikveland and Stokoe 2020). In an expanded series of sequences in the opening of this interaction, the negotiator works to accomplish alignment with the person in crisis vis-à-vis these categories as a precursor to engaging in this main business of the interaction, while simultaneously anticipating – and being met with – resistance on the part of his recipient.

(6) [Crisis negotiation]

1 N: Hi darling. <My n- my name is David.
 2 (0.6)
 3 N: Uh[m]
 4 PiC: [Who] are you,
 5 (0.2)
 6 N: I'm just here to try and help.
 7 (0.7)
 8 PiC: Yeah. Who are you.=You know from where.
 9 (0.3)
 10 N: Oh- I- I'm from the police.
 11 (.)
 12 N: <But my job is to sit here and talk to you and try and help.
 13 (0.4)
 14 N: See what we can do to help ya.
 15 (0.5)
 16 PiC: You ca:n't. I'm dying tonight (here) (so/soon).

The negotiator starts by greeting the person in crisis and addressing her using a term of endearment (“darling” – line 1) typically reserved for intimates.¹¹ He does not wait for a return greeting (which seldom occur; see Sikveland, Kevoe-Feldman, and Stokoe 2020) but immediately produces a next turn constructional unit in which he refers to himself with his first name (line 1) – which in this environment (at the beginning of an interaction, and for a recipient who presumably doesn’t know him) is a recognizable alternative to using a category (e.g., ‘police,’ or ‘negotiator’). Furthermore, in using only his first name, not last name, or the more formal “Mr. Smith,” he both delays the introduction of other potential institutional categories that might occasion resistance from his recipient and works to display affiliation – that is, to do what might be colloquially described as ‘build rapport’ – by proposing that the person in crisis can engage with him as a familiar rather than as a police negotiator. He thereby orients to the setting-based omni-relevance of his membership in the ‘negotiator’ category, while simultaneously treating it as potentially problematic and avoiding explicitly introducing it.

The type of trouble the negotiator is evidently working to preempt becomes clear as the interaction unfolds, as the person in crisis resists aligning with the course of action he is pursuing

¹¹ The negotiator’s use of an address term claiming familiarity appears to be a practice adopted by police officers, emergency medical personnel, and others whose work routinely entails initiating and conducting intimate encounters with strangers, as a way of acknowledging the incongruity between who they are and what they must do.

and its associated categories. Specifically, rather than responding to his greeting and self-identification, the person in crisis initially remains silent (line 2), before (just as the negotiator begins a new utterance in line 3) treating it as problematic by asking, “Who are you” (line 4). In response, the negotiator formulates the ostensible basis for his presence (“I’m just here to try and help” – line 6), departing from the query’s terms, which asks about matters he self-evidently knows and could provide (also see Raymond and Sidnell 2019). The person in crisis then pursues the matter for another round, repeating her query and elaborating its terms: “You know from where” (line 8). After several abandoned turn beginnings (including a cut-off change of state token, “Oh” – line 10), the negotiator acquiesces and identifies himself by naming the institution he represents, which makes available his membership in the occupation category “police officer” without directly self-categorizing in this way. The negotiator thus appears to again avoid, or at least delay, identifying himself as a police officer, thereby treating doing so as potentially risking a misunderstanding by the person in crisis regarding the import of his presence – and his next turn’s contrastive “but” (line 12) further displays his orientation to, and resistance of, the potential inferences that the person in crisis might draw from his membership in this category. Lines 12-16 show the culmination of the trouble in categorial alignment that has been evident throughout the interaction with the person in crisis withholding responses to (lines 13 and 15), and then directly resisting (line 16) the negotiator’s (category-bound) offers of help (lines 12 and 14). Thus, in contrast to Extracts 3 and 4, movement to the proposed main business of the interaction is obstructed by one party’s resistance to aligning with the standardized relational pair proposed as omni-relevant by the other.

Note, however, that none of the foregoing extracts include evidence, at least in these opening phases, that either party is oriented to any category/ies from Pn-adequate MCDs (age, sex, etc.) – that is, the setting-based omni-relevant MCDs on their own provide for the intelligibility of the participants’ conduct. In what follows, we present a series of cases in which, in contrast to these extracts, participants *do* orient to categories from one or more Pn-adequate MCDs. We thereby demonstrate the abovementioned methodological principle of attending to the full potential range of MCDs to which participants might be – either separately or concurrently – oriented.

Intersecting Setting-Based and Pn-Adequate MCDs

In this section we examine cases in which the participants orient to taken-for-granted connections or intersections between categories from different MCDs: On the one hand, categories from the MCDs treated as omni-relevant for the setting, and on the other hand categories from a range of Pn-adequate MCDs. We consider some ways in which participants may orient to, use, or resist these connections in and as they open encounters and begin pursuing their projects. A first case in this regard, shown in Extract 7, showing the opening of a call made by Debbie to accuse her friend Shelly of improperly withdrawing from a trip planned by Debbie and another friend (see lines 4, 6, 10-11, and 15-17).¹²

(7) [Call to friend at workplace]

1 S: Distric’ attorney’s office.
 2 D: Shelley:
 3 S: Debbie;
 4 D: ↑What is tha dea:.1.

¹² Also see analyses of this opening by Raymond (2018) and Raymond and Sidnell (2019).

5 S: Whadayou ↑mean?
 6 D: Yuh not gonna go:,:?
 7 (0.2)
 8 S: Well- hh now: my boss wants me to go: an: uhm finish
 9 this >stupid< trial thing, u[hm
 10 D: [<It's not causeuh:m (0.5)
 11 Mark's no*t going*.
 12 S: No- well that wuz initially and then I'm like no:
 13 I'll just go and then uhm yaknow this- this tow
 14 bandit (.) thing that I have, that were doing,
 ((0:31 omitted))
 15 D: It's jus' like you- yaknow:, if you don't wanna do
 16 summin' with like a gi:rlfriend jus' cause this guy:'s
 17 not goin[g it would piss me o:ff.]
 18 S: [No:, Debbie,] gimme me a ↓brea:k.

In the opening turn of the call (line 1), which Debbie had made to her at her workplace, Shelly produces an institutional identification that displays her orientation to her occupational category as the omni-relevant one for calls she receives on this line (cf. Extracts 4 and 5). Rather than aligning with this institutional category (and thus in contrast to caller in Extract 4, and broadly similarly to Extract 5), Shelly tacitly indexes her and Debbie's co-membership in the 'friend' category by producing an informal and highly prosodically marked recognition test (line 2) – thereby also foreshadowing the accusation she is calling to produce on the basis of this category. Shelly's prosodically-matched response (line 3) then registers a shift from her prior orientation to her occupational category to now aligning with Debbie's orientation to their co-membership in the 'friend' category, while also making light of – and thereby resisting – the accusatory tone of Debbie's prior turn.

In addition to the 'friend'/'friend' pair of categories that is thereby tacitly established as omni-relevant for this interaction, the relevance of the Pn-adequate gender MCD is also evident. This becomes progressively more explicit as Debbie alludes to (lines 10-11), and subsequently makes explicit (see lines 15-18), her accusation's grounding in a claim that Shelley has violated an expectation associated not just with the 'friend' category, but more specifically as a 'girlfriend.' Debbie thus retrospectively reveals that she has, from the outset of the call, been tacitly treating her and Shelly's co-membership in both the setting-based 'friend' and Pn-adequate gender categories as intersecting bases for the course of action she called to pursue.

Extract 8, an expanded version of Extract 1, shows the opening of a call to a holiday company. As noted in our discussion of Extract 1, the caller uses a self-description that explicitly makes relevant her membership in a particular age category to justify having called the company to help with an action she could – and perhaps should – have done on her own.

(8) [Holiday booking]

1 R: G'd evenin' Rindley Leisure Hotels, you're speaking to
 2 Diane.=↓How c'n I help.
 3 C: Uh- good evenin' Diane. .hh I'm trying to- um. (0.3) I'm
 4 a lady of a certain age and going online's giving me a
 5 headache.
 6 R: Mhm he heh, [heh,
 7 C: [h I don't know what I've pressed now.
 8 R: Uh heh heh [heh
 9 C: [(I'm trying) t'do a booking, could you check
 10 the availability for me ((continues))

As in Extracts 3, 4, and 7, in the opening turns the parties tacitly achieve alignment with respect to their membership in categories from a standardized relational pair within what they thereby treat as the omni-relevant MCD for the call (in this case, a ‘customer service’ device): First, the call-taker claims membership in the ‘customer service representative’ category, and proposes the caller’s membership in the ‘customer’ category, through an institutional identification (line 1) and an offer to help (line 2) (see Schegloff 1979:33). Second, the caller’s aligning greeting followed by her projection of an upcoming request with “I’m trying to” (line 3) tacitly confirm her membership in the ‘customer’ category. However, the caller then suspends the progressivity of her request in order to parenthetically insert an age-based account for having made the call in the first place (also see Mazeland 2007; Schegloff 2007b; Whitehead 2020). Specifically, she produces a euphemistic but nonetheless explicitly category-rich self-description (also see Schegloff 2007a) – “I’m a lady of a certain age” (lines 3-5) – to claim membership in the age category ‘old’ in order to account for calling to ask the agent to advance a project that she might otherwise have done for herself using the company’s online platform (Flinkfeldt, Parslow, and Stokoe 2022). That is, by invoking a mismatch between this Pn-adequate category and the relatively recent emergence of a now-standard technology for accomplishing the task she has called to request help completing, the caller treats a category-based less knowledgeable or “[K–]” epistemic status (Heritage 2012b:4) as warranting a more expansive entitlement to help than might be afforded to other members of the omni-relevant ‘customer’ category.

If parties can invoke their membership in Pn-adequate categories to justify conduct in an institutional setting, as in Extract 8, we should not be surprised to find occasions in which they contend with how membership in such categories may be understood as complicating their entitlement to produce conduct that is ordinarily routine for a setting. In Extract 9, a caller to an “open line”¹³ segment of a radio show in South Africa claims membership in age and race categories that contrast with those of the host to frame her contribution to the show.

(9) [Radio call-in show]

1 (1.0) ((previous call dropped))
2 H: pt=.hh I: just lost Mohammed, I ↑keep ↓losing people today,
3 that’s strange. <Hi Ruth? (.hhhh)
4 C: Hello, .h[h
5 H: [Ye[s.
6 C: [(Um:/So::) Eric, (0.2) (a-) as you can hear
7 from my voice, .hh firstly I’m old and secondly I:: have
8 a different color to yours. .h[h
9 H: [Uh huh (h)okay, I wouldn’t
10 have guessed b[ut ja- uhuh .hhh
11 C: [Huh huh .hh huh huh .hh What I want to say
12 is can somebody enlighten me .hh what is meant by .hh “our
13 people” hh .h[h and “my brother (.) and my sister.” .h[h
14 H: [Mm hm. [Yuo-
15 C: Where do I belong. hhh
16 H: .hh[h
17 C: [That’s (what/all) I want to know.

¹³ During these segments, listeners are invited to call and discuss any topic or issue of their choosing. As such, no particular Pn-adequate categories or category-related topics are pre-specified as relevant bases or contexts for callers’ contributions.

As in Extracts 3, 4, 7, and 8, the parties' reciprocal alignment in what they treat as categories from a standardized relational pair within a setting-based omni-relevant MCD (here 'radio call-in show') is managed tacitly, via routine features of the opening for this setting: The host's management of the transition from one call to the next, via his remarks on "losing people today" (lines 1-2) and the greeting he produces (line 2), tacitly re-confirm his membership in the 'host' category, and his recipient's membership in the 'caller' category. Similarly, the caller's greeting (line 4), and her addressing of the host by name (line 6) tacitly confirm her membership in the 'caller' category, while the host's intervening go-ahead "Yes" (line 5), maintains his orientation to membership in this category.

Following this exchange, the caller is positioned to begin the project that prompted her call. However, rather than simply launching it (as the caller in in Extract 4 did), or beginning it and then suspending it (as in Extract 8), she claims membership in the age category 'old' (line 7) and produces a euphemistic but explicitly category-rich self-description (cf. Extract 8) that invites recognition of her membership in a racial category that contrasts with the host's – i.e., "white" (lines 7-8). Through both their positioning and design, and by exceeding the economy rule, the caller treats her claims of membership in these Pn-adequate categories as having a special relevance for – that is, as framing (rather than justifying, as in Extract 8) – what she has called to do. Moreover, in noting that the host would be able to hear that she is a member of these categories (lines 6-7), she implicates him (and, by extension, the overhearing audience) in possibly categorizing her in these terms even without her mentioning them, such that she has (notwithstanding the host's resistance of this implication in lines 9-10) taken this into account in designing her contribution.

The caller then launches her project, formulating it as a query regarding person reference terms (lines 12-13, 15, and 17), which, by virtue of inquiring about their use, she treats as possibly excluding her on the bases of the age and race categories in which she has claimed membership. While this invokes the possible grounds for a complaint, she takes pains to avoid its possible treatment as such. She does this using formulations that invite others to respond (line 12) rather than directly confronting the host; that seek to delimit her turn's action import (lines 15 and 17); and that show her question to be based on personal interest, as shown by the contrastively stressed "I" in line 15 (also see Whitehead and Lerner 2022). The use of such "defensive detailing" (Drew 1998:297) to establish that she is 'merely' asking reveals the caller's orientation to the possibility that subsequent callers may otherwise, by virtue of her age and race, treat her query as implementing an objectionable (i.e., racist) complaint of 'reverse discrimination.' That is, she orients to – and works to forestall, by claiming a [K–] epistemic status – the possibility that she could be heard as hypocritically complaining about just the sort of racist exclusion that was perpetrated against Black South Africans by people of her age and racial categories during the apartheid past.

Lest we deem the caller in Extract 9 to have an overactive imagination, Extract 10 shows that such categorization by others may be happening 'in the background' (i.e., before any category has been invoked) as a basis for both understanding what a speaker is doing and what may thereby be relevant for their recipient to do next. In this case, a person calls her general practice doctors' surgery to make an appointment for a third party, whose membership in any Pn-adequate category initially does not appear to be relevant for the participants, but subsequently surfaces through a category-rich description that reveals the receptionist to have been tacitly mis-categorizing him.

(10) [GP call]

1 R: Good morning surger:y J[a n e] speakin:g,
2 C: # [>Hello.<] #
3 (0.6)
4 C: (Uh/H'llo) >c'n I make< an appoi:ntment for
5 Edward Potter please.
6 (0.4)
7 R: Yea:h is it a r- (.) routi:ne appointment you're
8 requiring,
9 C: U- no he's been up all night wi'a pain in his ear-
10 <well from yesterday he's got a pain in his ear
11 an' it's going down into his ne:ck.
12 (0.2)
13 R: >Okay< (.) uh:m how old is Edward.
14 (1.2)
15 C: He's sixty-one.
16 (0.4)
17 R: (Oh/All) ri(h)hg(h)t.=.hh
18 C: Huh huh H[UH huh huh huh]
19 R: [ah HAH HAH HAH] ah huh-huh huh heh .hh
20 R: UH what's h[i-
21 C: [fYou didn't expect that did you.f=
22 R: =N(h)o I di(h)dn't mhuh huh .hh Wha- huh hah hah
23 what's uh:m (.) .ptk (.) what's the address there
24 plea:se.

Our interest is in what happens between lines 13 and 22. Although no Pn-adequate categories are used to describe the patient in the call's opening, aspects of the caller's conduct may allow for (or even encourage) the receptionist to make assumptions about the standardized relational pair that the caller and patient occupy in relation to one another – namely, that she is a mother calling to make an appointment for her son (also see Kitzinger 2005a). That is, it is consistent with the viewer's maxim that the caller's scheduling of an appointment on a patient's behalf, and reporting symptoms of an ear infection (which are common in infants and young children), converge in enabling the receptionist's presumptive categorization of the patient as the caller's child. Moreover, the receptionist's question about the patient's age (line 13), appears to be designed to elicit information about a child, especially given that in other calls from this corpus, receptionists regularly ask callers for their "date of birth", including those requesting appointments for third parties, as a way of correctly identifying patients in the computerized record systems, checking eligibility, and so on (see, e.g., Sikveland and Stokoe 2017).

However, the 1.2-second silence following the question (line 14) may be evidence of the caller's treatment of the question as inapposite for this patient, and the caller's response, "He's sixty-one" (line 15) then confirms that the patient is in fact an adult rather than a child. Following a further short silence (line 16), the receptionist laughingly registers the unexpected or surprising nature of the caller's answer in line 17 (also see Wilkinson and Kitzinger 2006) – and thus effectively confirms that she had been tacitly categorizing the patient as a child. Then, after producing reciprocal laughter (lines 18-19), the caller makes explicit the receptionist's surprise, proposing, "You didn't expect that did you" (line 21), which the receptionist confirms (line 22).

We thus see in this case that there is category trouble, with the receptionist's substantial mis-categorization of the patient being explicitly exposed, and this case thereby providing a particularly clear example of the ways that routine aspects of a setting or its activities may entail

members' use of appearances to presumptively categorize others 'in the background' before such (potentially relevant) categories ever become observably oriented to in the participants' conduct. Moreover, as in Extract 9, the use of, or resistance to, such presumptive categorization reflects how setting-based omni-relevant categories that are constitutive of an institutional encounter can be tacitly linked to contingently available Pn-adequate categories, making it difficult for persons who are or may be categorized as members of these categories to avoid having to contend with this contingency.

In addition, this case involves the resolution of category trouble, with the participants evidently achieving intersubjectivity even though who the patient is to the caller is never confirmed. While Kitzinger (2005a) demonstrates that participants systematically treat kinship categories as providing a warrant for calling for medical assistance on behalf of another, which provides for the availability to the receptionist of an inference that the patient was the caller's spouse or another member of her family, this is ultimately never explicitly stated. As such, if the receptionist has indeed made such an inference, then she has done so as a further instance of the type of tacit 'background' categorization through which she previously (mis-)categorized the patient.

In Extracts 7-10, persons initiating encounters aligned with the setting-specific standardized relational pairs or omni-relevant categories and sought to manage (potential) linkages to various Pn-adequate categories. Extract 11, showing the opening of a police encounter in an American city, introduces two further sources of variation: First, in this case, the institutional actors (the police officers) initiate contact, if not the encounter itself, with consequences for who is entitled to initiate the encounter's main business or project. Second, one of the persons with whom the officers make contact seeks to preemptively shape how his membership in one or more Pn-adequate categories (primarily his race, but possibly also his age and/or gender) may be understood and used by the arriving officers to associate him with one versus another situation-specific standardized relational pair ('witness'/'officer' versus 'suspect'/'officer'). The encounter was occasioned by a Black civilian (who does not appear in the extract) calling 911 to report a white couple causing a disturbance and using racial epithets. Having been called, arriving officers routinely claim rights to talk first as a basis for beginning to pursue a policeable project (Meehan 1989; Raymond, Junglieb, Zimmerman, and Jones 2022). In this case, however, as soon as the officers enter the store to find a Black male civilian (C1) and a white couple (C2 and C3), the former seeks to establish his status as a witness (and later 'good Samaritan') before the officers ever say a word. The preemptive project he thereby launches evidently reflects his understanding that he will need to overcome officers' presumptions – based on his status as a young Black male – that he is one of the antagonists. That is, he departs from a routine opening of the encounter in an attempt to counter the categorial biases that he thereby treats as bound to the 'police officer' category.

(11) [Police encounter]

((As two officers walk in))

1 C1: >Hey.=Honestly sir.< (.) I have no issues=
2 PO1: =Let's go out[side.
3 C2: [These guys are cool.
4 C1: This guy- I- hon[estly- honestly=
5 C3: [He's cool. He's,
6 C1: =I'm the- I'm [the one that's keeping th[uh peace sir.
7 C2: [those dudes out there, [
8 C3: [He's- he's

9 C1: I'm fine.
 10 PO1: First of all you're coming outside too
 11 C1: Okay. [No(). fine sir
 12 C3: [Hey he's cool though. Please believe me man.

In the opening moments of this encounter, C1's preemptively interjected (as reflected in the rapid pace of talk) announcement disclaims any involvement in the dispute (line 1), and thus claims membership in the setting-specific category 'witness' before the officers' can act on (any presumed) categorial biases that might lead to his categorization as a suspect. When one of the officers tells him to "go outside" (line 2) instead of taking up his claims, he further characterizes his role in trying to resolve the dispute, as a means of establishing how he should be treated. That is, in asserting that he is "the one that's keeping thuh peace" (line 6), and thereby claiming membership in a setting-based 'peacekeeper' category, C1 specifies an alternative basis for his presence at a scene of trouble that the police have been called to resolve – one, moreover, that ostensibly aligns him with their project, rather than acquiescing to their apparent positioning of him as part of those troubles. In these ways, C1 addresses what he orients to as the "deficit of credibility" associated with his "provisional status" as a Black person (and possibly, more specifically, his status as a young Black male) in a "white space" (see Anderson 2015:13-14). C1 thus resists the inferences associated with being categorizable as a member of these Pn-adequate categories that he anticipates his interlocutors will otherwise treat as providing for his membership in the setting-based 'suspect' category.

This case is reminiscent of Extract 6 above, with both involving one party in a fateful encounter working against what they treat as 'default' assumptions associated with their membership in a category, thereby treating them as simultaneously relevant and potentially misleading or incorrect. The different ways in which they manage (the relevance of) their membership in a possibly stigmatized category (C1 seeking to preempt trouble in Extract 11, versus the negotiator delaying discovery in Extract 6) is likely related to the direct visibility and availability of their status as members (as the negotiator in Extract 6 is not wearing a uniform, while the race of C1 in Extract 11 is perceptually available to his recipients). In both cases, these participants find themselves struggling against common-sense knowledge they orient to as being associated with a category of which they could be categorized as a member, which they evidently anticipate their interlocutors may treat as relevant for the encounter by virtue of this.

Using the Appearance of One Category to Display – and Obscure – Membership in Another

Our final case demonstrates a participant's exploitation of the canonical opening sequence of an emergency call – specifically, its composition in terms of reciprocal greetings and "how are yous" – to accomplish a tacit request for help in a situation of apparent personal danger. In this call, which comes from a corpus¹⁴ of emergency ("999") calls to the police about domestic violence, an emergency services call-taker returns a call evidently previously placed by a caller,¹⁵ who now answers the phone. The precise circumstances of the preceding call are unknown, but it appears to have been a 'silent call' – that is, one in which a caller does not speak once connected with the call-taker, resulting in the call-taker needing to determine whether it

¹⁴ Collected by Emma Richardson for a project conducted in collaboration with Elizabeth Stokoe on emergency calls to the police about domestic violence prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁵ In light of this, we refer in what follows to the person who placed the original call as the "caller" and the person who answered it – and is now calling back – as the "call-taker," even though these social positions have technically been reversed by the call-back scenario.

was a “nuisance call” (e.g., misdialed or a ‘prank’) or an “Active Silent” call by a person in need of help but unable to verbally communicate (Kevoe-Feldman and Sutherland 2018:5-6).

(12) [Emergency call]

1 C: He:llo.
 2 (0.4)
 3 CT: Hello I’m calling from Anyshire Police:,
 4 had a nine nine nine [phone call from you,]
 5 C: [Hiya y’all right.]
 6 (0.7)
 7 CT: Ye:ah. D’you need the police?
 8 (0.6)
 9 C: eYe:ah.
 10 CT: You do, okay.
 11 C: [Yeah.]
 12 CT: [Can you] just confirm i- two Doverly Street
 13 (1.0)
 14 C: Yes.
 15 CT: Um hm, oh:kay. Are you not free to speak?
 16 (1.0)
 17 C: No.
 18 CT: No, oh:kay. Have you got children in the house?
 19 (0.9)
 20 C: Yeah.

As shown by Extract 4 above, openings of emergency calls are typically constrained relative to the greetings and how-are-you sequences produced in the openings of conversational interactions, with the reason for the call (the emergency) preempting the how-are-you sequence and greetings being reduced or absent altogether (also see Whalen and Zimmerman 1987). The “hiya y’all right” (line 5) produced by the caller in the opening of the call is thus markedly out-of-place for this type of interaction. By producing this out-of-place utterance in precision-timed overlap¹⁶ with the call-taker’s account for calling back (line 4), and after the call-taker’s institutional identification (line 3), the caller both conveys to the call-taker that she is in danger and conveys to the source of the danger on her side of the line that this is a mundane conversational call rather than one that will result in police being dispatched.

Following a brief silence (line 6), the call-taker displays understanding of the situation (lines 7, 10, and 15), and moves to confirm relevant details that will provide for sending help (lines 12 and 18). This enables the caller to continue sounding to whoever is overhearing her side of the interaction as if she is engaged in a mundane conversation, even while affirming the call-taker’s displayed understanding of her need for help (lines 9, 11, and 17), and confirming her location (line 14) and other relevant details of the situation (line 20). That is, the caller and call-taker collaboratively and simultaneously produce their respective membership in *both* the setting-based standardized relational pairs ‘help-seeker’/‘help-provider’ and ‘friend’/‘friend.’

We can further note (although doing so is admittedly somewhat speculative) that, consistent with our focus on intersections between omni-relevant and Pn-adequate categories in the foregoing cases, the perceptual availability (through voice quality) of the caller’s

¹⁶ The precision timing of the caller’s utterance here is similar to that in a similar case analysed by Albert, Housley, and Stokoe (2019), in which the caller uses an overlapping utterance to convey two actions at once, for two recipients: To the potentially overhearing perpetrator of violence that she “would like to order a pizza for delivery” and to the police dispatcher that she is in danger.

membership in the category ‘woman’ may also have contributed to her accomplishment of membership in the ‘help-seeker’ category in this call. That is, the call-taker may have applied common-sense knowledge of the association between gender and vulnerability to domestic violence as a basis for inferring that the caller was a bona fide help seeker in a threatening situation, while in contrast a hearably male caller producing an utterance like the one at line 5 might have been more vulnerable to being heard as a misdialer or prank caller.

Like Extracts 5 and 11, this call demonstrates a participant’s exploitation of what Schegloff (1986) shows can be appreciated in the achieved character of routine openings in order to accomplish recognizable membership in a category. As Schegloff (1986:112) wrote, “if talk on the telephone may initially appear unworthy of sustained scrutiny, the beginnings of its episodes may intensify this sense of unworthiness.” But it is precisely by virtue of ordinary accomplishment of the apparently mundane, “merely ritual,” “virtually automatic,” or “(pre-)scripted” (Schegloff 1986:112) nature of these exchanges that their routineness can be exploited to achieve actions that are the opposite of mundane.

Addressing Methodological Challenges and Critiques

In this section we use the foregoing analyses as exemplars for the purpose of describing and addressing a range of challenges associated with doing conversation analytic research on social categories, many of which have been levelled as critiques of the analytic principles that guide the approach. While these challenges are interlinked in practice, in the interest of clarity we have divided our discussions of them into distinct sub-sections.

‘Capturability’ of Phenomena Relating to Particular Focal MCDs or Categories

The foundational focus of CA on naturally-occurring data sources has given rise to suggestions by researchers committed to studying specific MCDs – particularly those (typically Pn-adequate) MCDs that have historically been central to much social scientific research (sex/gender, race, class, age, sexuality, etc.) – that researcher-generated data sources such as interviews and focus groups are more reliable sources of target analytic phenomena, since researchers cannot be sure that their focal MCDs of interest will ‘come up’ in any given naturally-occurring interaction (see, e.g., Pomerantz and Mandelbaum 2005; van Dijk 1987). Contrary to such suggestions, we contend that the undoubted importance of these category systems in structuring everyday life in many societies should lead us to expect nothing less than their recurrent relevance in naturally-occurring interactions – and the data we have examined above bear this out in a number of ways (also see, e.g., Heritage and Raymond 2005; Kitzinger 2005a, 2005b; Raymond 2019; Raymond and Heritage 2006; Shrikant 2021; Stokoe 2009, 2010; Whitehead 2012b, 2020; Whitehead and Lerner 2009). That is, our analyses demonstrate how openings serve as a recurrent structural site at which categories from these MCDs come to be oriented-to in light of the contingencies participants are managing and the interactional practices they are deploying in doing so. Moreover, and reciprocally, they show how these categories, and the common-sense knowledge and other features associated with them, serve as a systematically available set of resources participants can use in managing these contingencies and producing particular practices in the service of the projects they are pursuing during these opening moments of interactions.

An alternative approach to addressing the capturability issue is to focus on the analysis of category-related processes and practices that appear to be common across a wide range of MCDs, including but not restricted to those of conventional interest within the social sciences. In this regard, the demonstrable relevance of various sorts of categories throughout the openings we

have examined support the claim that the relevance of participants' membership in some category or categories is a pervasive, and possibly even ubiquitous, phenomenon in talk-in-interaction (also see Watson 1997). As such, and consistent with Sacks' (1984a:22) suggestion that we can examine interactions involving "whomsoever, wheresoever, and we get much the same things," there is potentially much to be learned about the interactional organization of categories as a matter of "generic problems and practice(d) solutions" (Schegloff 2006a:71), independently of the additional 'layers' that may constitute unique features of particular MCDs or categories, on particular occasions, in particular moments in history. Furthermore, as our analyses demonstrate, adequately addressing matters relating to categories from a particular Pn-adequate MCD may require also attending to intersections between these categories and other (including setting-specific and/or other Pn-adequate) categories to which participants may be oriented. As such, focusing exclusively on the particular categories in which the researcher is interested to the exclusion of others to which the participants may be oriented may result in an analysis that primarily reflects the concerns and agendas of the analyst rather than those of the participants (Schegloff 1997) – a possibility related to the challenge we address next.

Empirically Grounding Participants' Orientations to Categories

Sacks' (1966, 1972a) abovementioned crucial observation that any person can be characterized in terms of their membership in categories from multiple Pn-adequate MCDs raises the question of which possible categorial characterization(s) are not just *true*, but *relevantly* so, such that they can be warrantably deployed in analyzing of some piece of interactional conduct of interest (Schegloff 1997). In addressing this conundrum, Schegloff (e.g., 1987, 1991, 1992b, 1997, 2001, 2007c, 2009) in particular has consistently advocated the privileging of participants' orientations and concerns over those of analysts.¹⁷ This serves as a crucial constraint on analysts' use of common-sense categorial knowledge as a *resource for analysis* rather than a *topic of analysis* (Zimmerman and Pollner 1970:81; also see Järviluoma, Moisala, and Vilkkio 2003), or as a *presupposition* of analysis rather than an *outcome* thereof (Schegloff 1997:170). It is thus a practice for avoiding the reproduction of categorial 'facts' under the guise of studying them (also see Hammersley 2001; Jefferson 2004).

As Schegloff notes, however, adopting this principle is associated with two analytic challenges, relating to the types of empirical evidence required in order to adequately ground claims by reference to participants' orientations. The first of these is what Schegloff (1992b:108) calls "the problem of relevance," referring to the need for empirical evidence that a category was *relevant to the participants* at any given moment in an interaction as a way of warranting an analytic claim that invokes that category. The second challenge concerns the establishment of the "procedural consequentiality" (Schegloff 1992b:110) of a category for specific features of conduct during the course of the moment(s) of the interaction on which the analysis is focusing. That is, even if a category can be shown to be relevant to the participants, this does not imply that it is necessarily consequential for, or observably shaping, every possible detail of the participants' talk and other conduct in a given stretch of interaction, and thus there remains a

¹⁷ This principle is, of course, a foundational one for conversation analysis more broadly – reflected, for example, in the specification of CA's central question – "Why that now?" – as one that analysts address by virtue of its pervasive relevance for participants, rather than this question being first and foremost an analysts' concern (Schegloff 1998; Schegloff and Sacks 1973).

need to empirically demonstrate whether or how it matters for any particular detail of interest.¹⁸ Importantly – and as we have done in relation to the majority of our cases above – this can also include bringing ethnographic knowledge to bear on the analysis of the interaction, insofar as its use can be grounded in the participants’ conduct and orientations, rather than being “independently invoked by the analyst on extrinsic ethnographic grounds” (Schegloff 1992:197; also see DeLand 2021; Holt and Floyd 1997; Maynard 2003; Whitehead 2020).¹⁹

The challenges Schegloff lays down thus place a stringent evidentiary burden on analysts, calling for the development not just of apparently compelling (or ‘adequate’) explanations in terms of some category or categories, but of analyses that point to the fine-grained details of participants’ own orientations to their relevance and procedural consequentiality. This is reflected in the foregoing analyses most basically in our use of line numbers to tie analytic claims to specific places in the data extracts, and in more complex and varied ways in our case-by-case explications of precisely how analyzing participants’ selections of actions, their design features, and their placement serve as evidence for their orientations to particular categories, rather than merely asserting their import by fiat.

Critics have suggested that the principles Schegloff advocates in this regard constitute, for example, an “unacceptably narrow” sense of participant orientation (Wetherell 1998:402), focus on “overly myopic technicalities” (Korobov 2001:10), and render “‘translocal’ phenomena” difficult to incorporate analytically (Blommaert 2001:13).²⁰ Contrary to such suggestions, our data (like the data examined in the studies cited in the above section on the capturability issue, among many others) show some ways in which people talk *on the basis* that there is a world outside the current encounter all the time – one populated by categories of people with assumed known-in-common characteristics and ways of acting that provide for the kinds of inferences being made by (or at least made available to) the participants in the interactions we have examined (also see Stokoe 2012b).²¹ However, in making such inferences – while making it evident to their recipients, and thus to overhearing analysts, that and how they are doing so – participants bring elements of this outside world into the interaction, making them part and parcel of how the interaction is constituted by and for each other, rather than being

¹⁸ This approach thus recognizes that the enduring *status* of a given individual as a member of some category does not guarantee that they or other participants will pervasively mobilize the category as a basis for inference and action throughout their interactions. It thereby places the onus on the analyst to demonstrate participants’ observable *stance* toward the category in the moment-by-moment unfolding of an interaction as a warrant for using it in an analytic account of their conduct, in light of the contingencies associated with the activities in which they are engaged (also see Heritage 2012a; Raymond 2016).

¹⁹ The main alternative to privileging of participants’ orientations is what Schegloff (1997:166) calls “explanatory adequacy,” referring to the assertion that “that way is best which most reliably yields ‘findings’ – repeatable, reliable, objective, significant (for some statistically significant) observations about the world.” It thereby privileges the theoretical methodological, etc. agendas or concerns of the analyst over those of the participants who produced the conduct being analyzed (Schegloff 1997). At least one of the risks of this approach is producing or reinforcing stereotypic accounts that render members’ doings in ways that obscure the situated orientations and contingencies that may feature in their conduct (or in the patterns it exemplifies), or that overlook and thus obscure some other category that may be relevant for an outcome, but which has not been considered by the analyst (cf. Galanter 1974; Jefferson 2004). In short, such an approach is more likely to stand in the way of possibly novel discoveries than facilitate them.

²⁰ For further specifications of these and other critiques, see, e.g., Billig (1999a, 1999b); Blommaert (2005); Bucholtz (2003); Cameron (2008); Ehrlich (2002); Enfield (2007); and Whelan (2012). For direct responses to some of these critiques, see Schegloff (1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2009).

²¹ As such, one might argue that the “inference” component of Sacks’ (1992:I:41) “MIR” device is fundamental to the entire membership categorization apparatus he went on to describe.

elements of an ‘external’ context that analysts must introduce to make sense of the interaction (Schegloff 1992a; Whitehead 2020).

Tacit and/or Ambiguous Cases

Further critiques of the CA principle of grounding analyses of categorial phenomena in participants’ orientations center on claims that such an approach cannot account for phenomena such as the invisible workings of power, the unsaid or what is not oriented to (Frith, 1998), the pervasive relevance of gender (Weatherall, 2000), or the fact that very few features of (English) language explicitly index gender (Ochs, 1992). In other words, the principles Schegloff advances are claimed to be unable to deal with things that the analyst ‘knows’ – or assumes – are relevant but that participants do not helpfully make explicit at the ‘interactional surface’ (Edwards 2006).

Such critiques misconstrue the challenges of relevance and procedural consequentiality as amounting to a requirement that analysts should be barred from addressing particular categories or MCDs unless the participants have explicitly mentioned them. In contrast to these misconceptions, Schegloff (2007c:474) contends that the analytic aim should be to describe “practice[s] of talking that arguably” make “some categorization device *possibly* relevant in the scene *whether it is actually articulated or not*” (emphasis in original). While many of the cases we have examined do include explicit mentions of categories and/or other practices that make participants’ orientations to particular categories more or less explicitly available, *all* of our extracts also include instances of practices that display such orientations entirely tacitly, but nonetheless – as we have described in our analyses – plainly observably. Moreover, cases such as Extract 10, in which the receptionist’s initially-tacit ‘background’ age (mis-)categorization of the patient come to be more explicitly exposed, can be used to demonstrate ostensibly ‘invisible’ categorization processes that may be occurring in many more cases without ever explicitly ‘surfacing’ (also see Whitehead 2011, 2020).

Schegloff (2007c:477) also identifies as a “key issue” the following question:

how can analysts show parties’ orientation to the categories they want to claim are in play, without the parties saying things like, ‘as a woman, I...’ (in fact, saying that does not make it so, and should be tracked for what its speaker is doing with it, and what other category is more compellingly in play).

Thus, for Schegloff, not only are explicit mentions of categories *not* a requirement for analytic claims regarding their relevance, they should also be carefully inspected for whether they are actually evidence for a speaker’s orientation to the relevance of some other unmentioned category or MCD. This is illustrated by Extract 11, where C1’s explicit claim of membership in the setting-based ‘peacekeeper’ category is designed to discount the relevance of other Pn-adequate (race and possibly gender and/or age) categories, while in the process revealing his tacit orientation to the potential relevance of these other categories for his recipients (also see Sacks 1992; Whitehead 2020; Whitehead and Lerner 2022).

There is no doubt, however, that producing carefully grounded analyses of the sort Schegloff calls for can be a difficult undertaking, particularly in cases where evidence for the relevance of one or more categories is plausible but nonetheless inconclusive and/or ambiguous²²

²² Note that the types of cases we refer to here are distinct from those that are tacit but nonetheless plainly observable, as addressed in the foregoing discussion: In contrast, we are referring here to cases that fall somewhere below the threshold for plain observability, however this might be assessed in light of the evidence that is available.

– as, for example, in Extracts 10-12 above (also see, e.g., Stokoe 2012a; 2012b; Whitehead 2012a, 2020). As our analyses of these extracts demonstrate, one approach to such cases is to marshal whatever evidence is available in support of claims, while nonetheless registering their defeasible nature, thereby allowing readers to make their own assessments of their plausibility. This also recognizes the potential value of putting such claims ‘on record,’ since doing so may be a catalyst for future efforts, based on different data, to more conclusively document the features of the practices involved.

A further (but not mutually-exclusive) way of dealing with ambiguity is to treat it as a participants’ resource that provides for the *defeasibility* and *provisionality*, and thus in some cases, *deniability* of the possible categorial basis of some piece of conduct (Benwell and Stokoe 2006; Sacks 1992; Stokoe 2012a; Whitehead 2020).²³ As such, it is not the job of analysts to be more definitive about participants’ conduct than they are themselves, including in cases where the possible relevance of a category may be precisely what is at stake for the participants, or where ambiguity is part and parcel of the competent deployment of a practice (Edwards 2006; Speer 2017) – or, indeed, where the possible categorial basis of the conduct may be opaque for analysts, but is evidently completely clear for the participants. The use of collections also offers a potentially crucial resource in dealing with ambiguous or inconclusive cases, allowing for analysis of ambiguous or inconclusive cases alongside unequivocally clear cases, such that the latter can be used to reinforce the necessarily more speculative analyses of the former (Speer 2015; Whitehead 2012a, 2020).

It is also noteworthy that Schegloff (1991:66) explicitly considers potential instances in which

an adequate account for some specifiable features of the interaction cannot be fashioned from the details of the talk and other conduct of the participants as the vehicle by which they display the relevance of social-structural context for the character of the talk, but rather that this must be otherwise invoked by the analyst, who furthermore has developed defensible arguments for doing so.²⁴

Schegloff thus appears to allow for the possibility that an analyst could provide a defensible argument for invoking a category (or other element of social structure) in analyzing an interaction even when evidence for participants’ orientations to its relevance is not available, while contending that this should be done only if an examination of the details of the interaction has failed to produce such evidence.²⁵ In other words, the analyst mobilizing an argument in favor of introducing a category in the absence of evidence of participants’ orientations to its relevance should be a ‘last resort’ rather than a routine practice.

Concluding Remarks

The approach to the analysis of categories in talk-in-interaction we have described in this chapter foregrounds, as a participants’ concern and set of resources, the “mutually constitutive” (Watson

²³ As Schegloff (2006b) notes, this is a generic feature of action rather than one particular to (possible) category-related actions.

²⁴ We would like to thank Gene Lerner for drawing our attention to this passage and its implications.

²⁵ What such arguments might look like is another matter – and Schegloff, perhaps deliberately, does not offer specific examples – but assessments of their merits would surely have to be done on a case-by-case basis rather than being based on generalized or *a priori* ‘rules.’

1997:54; also see Schegloff 2001) relationship between social categories and generic organizations of practice for interaction. That is, this approach focuses both on how generic structures and practices of interaction constitute systematic bases for the emergent relevance and procedural consequentiality of categories; while at the same time showing how categories serve as systematic resources for producing these practices and managing prevailing contingencies in relation to these structural features of interactions. To put it more simply, interaction ‘shapes’ categories, and categories ‘shape’ interaction.

This approach thus offers an empirically rigorous means of examining the situated (re)production of categories – from the most mundane and unremarkable, to those most strongly associated with distributions of power and privilege.²⁶ It provides resources for examining how categories serve as “quiet centres of power and persuasion” (Baker 2000:112), and thus for doing what Baker (2000:112) calls the “excavation” of meaning, power, and structure, including the “history of sedimentation of usage and, therefore, of commonsense and logic” – while at the same time being precise about participants’ concerns and orientations. In doing so, it takes participants’ ‘voices’ seriously in a way that some qualitative work claims to do but does not – for example, by failing to present or analyze what actually happened in an encounter, or how people actually talk; by ‘tidying up’ transcripts – for example, by removing disfluencies and/or ‘correcting errors’ in participants’ talk; or by removing researchers’ questions and other conduct from transcripts, thus obscuring their role in prompting particular types of actions by participants (Potter and Hepburn 2005).

The identification of features of the quotidian reproduction of social categories, and the common-sense knowledge associated with them, has clear implications for efforts to bring about justice-oriented change: As Sacks (1979:14) wrote,

the important problems of social change, I would take it, anyway, would involve laying out such things as the sets of categories, how they’re used, what’s known about any member, etc., and beginning to play with shifts in the rules for application of a category and with shifts in the properties of any category.

Consistent with these observations, Baker (2004:175) writes that “[w]hen speakers ‘do describing’, they assemble a social world in which their categories have a central place ... these are powerful statements about what could be the case, how the social order might be arranged, whether or not it really is,” and that crucial to challenging unjust social arrangements “...is to recognize the force of categorization practices in social and institutional life” (Baker 2000:112). The importance we place on this endeavor and agenda underscores the rationale for adopting the type of exacting methodological standards we have described in this chapter: Precisely because they offer compelling ways to expose just where and how the mechanisms of social injustice quietly and stubbornly reside in the intersections between practices of interaction and the forms of common-sense knowledge participants use in relation to the categories of persons they encounter and talk about.

²⁶ Indeed, there is already a strong tradition of work on “-isms,” – including those arising from race, sexualities, sex/gender, and age (for overviews, see Speer and Stokoe 2011; Whitehead and Stokoe 2015) – which can be traced back to observations Sacks (e.g., 1979, 1984b, 1986, 1992) made in his early work (also see, e.g., Rawls, Whitehead, and Duck 2020; Whitehead 2021). There is also a new global network known as “Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis for Racial Justice” (EMCA4RJ) focused directly on racial and social justice, asking new questions of social categories in interaction and setting an agenda for the next decade of research in this area (see Sciubba, Shrikant, and Williamson 2020).

References

- Albert, Saul, William Housley, and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2019. "In Case of Emergency, Order Pizza: An Urgent Case of Action Formation and Recognition." *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Conversational User Interfaces*:1-2.
- Anderson, Elijah. 2015. "The White Space." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1:10-21.
- Baker, Carolyn. 2000. "Locating Culture in Action: Membership Categorization in Texts and Talk." Pp. 99-113 in *Culture and Text: Discourse and Methodology in Social Research and Cultural Studies*, edited by A. Lee and C. Poynton. London: Routledge.
- . 2004. "Membership Categorization and Interview Accounts." Pp. 162-176 in *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, edited by D. Silverman. London, UK: Sage.
- Benwell, Bethan and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2006. *Discourse and Identity*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Billig, Michael. 1999a. "Conversation Analysis and the Claims of Naivety." *Discourse & Society* 10:572-576.
- . 1999b. "Whose Terms? Whose Ordinarity? Rhetoric and Ideology in Conversation Analysis." *Discourse & Society* 10:543-558.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2001. "Context Is/as Critique." *Critique of Anthropology* 21:13-32.
- . 2005. *Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bucholtz, Mary. 2003. "Theories of Discourse as Theories of Gender: Discourse Analysis in Language and Gender Studies." Pp. 43-68 in *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, edited by J. Holmes and M. Meyerhoff. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Cameron, Deborah. 2008. "Talk from the Top Down." *Language & Communication* 28:143-155.
- DeLand, Michael F. 2021. "Men and Their Moments: Character-Driven Ethnography and Interaction Analysis in a Park Basketball Rule Dispute." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 84:155-176.
- Drew, Paul. 1998. "Complaints About Transgressions and Misconduct." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 31:295-325.
- . 2002. "Out of Context: An Intersection between Domestic Life and the Workplace, as Contexts for (Business) Talk." *Language & Communication* 22:477-494.
- . 2018. "Epistemics in Social Interaction." *Discourse Studies* 20:163-187.
- Drew, Paul and John Heritage. 1992. "Analyzing Talk at Work: An Introduction." Pp. 3-65 in *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*, edited by P. Drew and J. Heritage. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Edwards, Derek. 2006. "Discourse, Cognition and Social Practices: The Rich Surface of Language and Social Interaction." *Discourse Studies* 8:41-49.
- Ehrlich, Susan. 2002. "Legal Institutions, Nonspeaking Reciprocity and Participants' Orientations." *Discourse & Society* 13:731-747.
- Enfield, Nick J. 2007. "Meanings of the Unmarked: How 'Default' Person Reference Does More Than Just Refer." Pp. 97-120 in *Person Reference in Interaction: Linguistic, Cultural, and Social Perspectives*, edited by N. J. Enfield and T. Stivers. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Fitzgerald, Richard and William Housley. 2002. "Identity, Categorization and Sequential Organization: The Sequential and Categorical Flow of Identity in a Radio Phone-In." *Discourse and Society* 13:579-602.
- . 2015. "Advances in Membership Categorisation Analysis." London, UK: Sage.

- Fitzgerald, Richard, William Housley, and Carly W. Butler. 2009. "Omnirelevance and Interactional Context." *Australian Journal of Communication* 36:45-64.
- Flinkfeldt, Marie, Sophie Parslow, and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2022. "How Categorization Impacts the Design of Requests: Asking for Email Addresses in Call-Centre Interactions." *Language in Society* 51:693-716.
- Galanter, Marc. 1974. "Why the Haves Come out Ahead: Speculations on the Limits of Legal Change." *Law & Society Review* 9:95-160.
- Hammersley, Martyn. 2001. "Obvious, All Too Obvious? Methodological Issues in Using Sex/Gender as a Variable in Educational Research." in *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education*, edited by B. Francis and C. Skelton. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Harjunpää, Katariina, Lorenza Mondada, and Kimmo Svinhufvud. 2018. "The Coordinated Entry into Service Encounters in Food Shops: Managing Interactional Space, Availability, and Service During Openings." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 51:271-291.
- Heritage, John. 1984. "A Change of State Token and Aspects of Its Sequential Placement." Pp. 299-345 in *Structures of Social Action*, edited by J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2012a. "The Epistemic Engine: Sequence Organization and Territories of Knowledge." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 45:30-52.
- . 2012b. "Epistemics in Action: Action Formation and Territories of Knowledge." *Research on Language & Social Interaction* 45:1-29.
- Heritage, John and Steven Clayman. 2010. *Talk in Action: Interactions, Identities, and Institutions*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Heritage, John and Geoffrey Raymond. 2005. "The Terms of Agreement: Indexing Epistemic Authority and Subordination in Talk-in-Interaction." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 68:15-38.
- Hester, Stephen and Peter Eglin. 1997a. *Culture in Action: Studies in Membership Categorization Analysis*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- . 1997b. "The Reflexive Constitution of Category, Predicate and Context in Two Settings." Pp. 25-48 in *Culture in Action: Studies in Membership Categorization Analysis*, edited by S. Hester and P. Eglin. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Holt, Elizabeth and Simeon Floyd. 2018. "Ethnography and Culture in Analysis." in *The Cambridge Handbook of Methods in Conversation Analysis*, edited by J. D. Robinson, R. Clift, K. Kendrick, and C. W. Raymond. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Järviluoma, Helmi, Pirkko Moisala, and Anni Vilkkio. 2003. *Gender and Qualitative Methods*. London, UK: Sage.
- Jayyusi, Lena. 1984. *Categorization and the Moral Order*. Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Jefferson, Gail. 1980. "On Troubles-Premonitory Response to Inquiry." *Sociological Inquiry* 50:153-185.
- . 2004. "A Note on Laughter in 'Male-Female' Interaction." *Discourse Studies* 6:117-133.
- Kevoe-Feldman, Heidi and C. Blair Sutherland. 2018. "The 'Four-Second Rule' for Identifying the Active Silent 911 Caller." *Annals of Emergency Dispatch & Response* 6:5-9.
- Kitzinger, Celia. 2005a. "Heteronormativity in Action: Reproducing the Heterosexual Nuclear Family in after-Hours Medical Calls." *Social Problems* 52:477-498.

- . 2005b. “‘Speaking as a Heterosexual’: (How) Does Sexuality Matter for Talk-in-Interaction?” *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 38:221-265.
- Korobov, Neill. 2001. “Reconciling Theory with Method: From Conversation Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to Positioning Analysis.” *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 2.
- Lepper, Georgia. 2000. *Categories in Text and Talk: A Practical Introduction to Categorization Analysis*. London, UK: Sage.
- Maynard, Douglas W. 2003. *Bad News, Good News: Conversational Order in Everyday Talk and Clinical Settings*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Mazeland, Harrie. 2007. “Parenthetical Sequences.” *Journal of Pragmatics* 39:1816-1869.
- Meehan, Albert J. 1989. “Assessing the ‘Police-Worthiness’ of Citizen Complaints to the Police: Accountability and the Negotiation of ‘Facts’.” in *Interactional Order: New Directions in the Study of Social Order*, edited by D. Helm, W. T. Anderson, A. J. Meehan, and A. Rawls. New York, NY: Irvington.
- Pillet-Shore, Danielle. 2018a. “How to Begin.” *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 51:213-231.
- . 2018b. “Opening and Maintaining Face-to-Face Interaction.” *Research on Language & Social Interaction* 51.
- Pomerantz, Anita and Jenny Mandelbaum. 2005. “Conversation Analytic Approaches to the Relevance and Uses of Relationship Categories in Interaction.” Pp. 149-171 in *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction*, edited by K. L. Fitch and R. E. Sanders. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Potter, Jonathan and Alexa Hepburn. 2005. “Qualitative Interviews in Psychology: Problems and Possibilities” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 2:281-307.
- Rawls, Anne Warfield, Kevin A. Whitehead, and Waverly Duck. 2020. “Introduction.” Pp. 4-38 in *Black Lives Matter: Ethnomethodological and Conversation Analytic Studies of Race and Systemic Racism in Everyday Interaction*, edited by A. W. Rawls, K. A. Whitehead, and W. Duck. London, UK: Routledge.
- Raymond, Chase Wesley. 2016. “Linguistic Reference in the Negotiation of Identity and Action: Revisiting the T/V Distinction.” *Language* 92:636-670.
- . 2019. “Category Accounts: Identity and Normativity in Sequences of Action.” *Language in Society* 49:585-606.
- Raymond, Geoffrey. 2018. “Which Epistemics? Whose Conversation Analysis?” *Discourse Studies* 20:57-89.
- Raymond, Geoffrey and John Heritage. 2006. “The Epistemics of Social Relations: Owning Grandchildren.” *Language in Society* 35:677-705.
- Raymond, Geoffrey, Lillian Jungleib, Don Zimmerman, and Nikki Jones. 2022. “Rules and Policeable Matters: Enforcing the Civil Sidewalk Ordinance for ‘Another First Time’.” Pp. 162-187 in *The Ethnomethodology Program: Legacies and Prospects*, edited by J. Heritage and D. W. Maynard. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Raymond, Geoffrey and Jack Sidnell. 2019. “Interaction at the Boundaries of a World Known in Common: Initiating Repair with ‘What Do You Mean?’.” *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 52:177-192.
- Sacks, Harvey. 1966. “The Search for Help: No One to Turn To.” Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

- . 1972a. "An Initial Investigation of the Usability of Conversational Data for Doing Sociology." Pp. 31-74 in *Studies in Social Interaction*, edited by D. N. Sudnow. New York, NY: Free Press.
- . 1972b. "On the Analyzability of Stories by Children." Pp. 325-345 in *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, edited by J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- . 1975. "Everyone Has to Lie." Pp. 57-79 in *Sociocultural Dimensions of Language Use*, edited by M. Sanches and B. G. Blount. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- . 1979. "Hotrodder: A Revolutionary Category." Pp. 7-14 in *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology*, edited by G. Psathas. New York, NY: Irvington.
- . 1984a. "Notes on Methodology." Pp. 21-27 in *Structures of Social Action*, edited by J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1984b. "On Doing 'Being Ordinary'." Pp. 413-429 in *Structures of Social Action*, edited by J. M. Atkinson and J. Heritage. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1986. "Some Considerations of a Story Told in Everyday Conversation." *Poetics* 15:127-138.
- . 1992. *Lectures on Conversation*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1968. "Sequencing in Conversational Openings." *American Anthropologist* 70:1075-1095.
- . 1972. "Notes on a Conversational Practice: Formulating Place." Pp. 75-119 in *Studies in Social Interaction*, edited by D. N. Sudnow. New York, NY: Free Press.
- . 1979. "Identification and Recognition in Telephone Conversation Openings." Pp. 23-78 in *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology*, edited by G. Psathas. New York, NY: Irvington.
- . 1986. "The Routine as Achievement." *Human Studies* 9:111-151.
- . 1987. "Between Micro and Macro: Contexts and Other Connections." Pp. 207-234 in *The Micro-Macro Link*, edited by J. Alexander. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- . 1991. "Reflections on Talk and Social Structure." Pp. 44-70 in *Talk and Social Structure: Studies in Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis*, edited by D. Boden and D. H. Zimmerman. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- . 1992a. "In Another Context." Pp. 191-228 in *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*, edited by A. Duranti and C. Goodwin. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1992b. "On Talk and Its Institutional Occasions." Pp. 101-134 in *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*, edited by P. Drew and J. Heritage. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1997. "Whose Text? Whose Context?" *Discourse & Society* 8:165-187.
- . 1998. "Reply to Wetherell." *Discourse & Society* 9:413-416.
- . 1999a. "Naivete Vs Sophistication or Discipline Vs Self-Indulgence: A Rejoinder to Billig." *Discourse & Society* 10:577-582.
- . 1999b. "'Schegloff's Texts' as 'Billig's Data': A Critical Reply." *Discourse & Society* 10:558-572.
- . 2001. "Accounts of Conduct in Interaction: Interruption, Overlap and Turn-Taking." Pp. 287-321 in *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, edited by J. H. Turner. New York, NY: Springer.
- . 2006a. "Interaction: The Infrastructure for Social Institutions, the Natural Ecological Niche for Language, and the Arena in Which Culture Is Enacted." Pp. 70-95 in *Roots of Human*

- Sociality: Culture, Cognition and Interaction*, edited by N. J. Enfield and S. C. Levinson. New York, NY: Berg.
- . 2006b. "On Possibles." *Discourse Studies* 8:141-157.
- . 2007a. "Categories in Action: Person-Reference and Membership Categorization." *Discourse Studies* 9:433-461.
- . 2007b. *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2007c. "A Tutorial on Membership Categorization." *Journal of Pragmatics* 39:462-482.
- . 2009. "One Perspective on Conversation Analysis: Comparative Perspectives." Pp. 357-406 in *Conversation Analysis: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by J. Sidnell. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. and Harvey Sacks. 1973. "Opening up Closings." *Semiotica* 8:289-327.
- Sciubba, Eleonora, Natasha Shrikant, and Francesca Williamson. 2020. "Guest Blog: Em/Ca for Racial Justice." <https://rolsi.net/2021/06/02/guest-blog-em-ca-for-racial-justice/>.
- Shrikant, Natasha. 2021. "Cultural Difference as a Resource for Arguments in Institutional Interactions." *Communication Monographs* doi:10.1080/03637751.2020.1776351.
- Sikveland, Rein Ove, Heidi Kevoe-Feldman, and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2020. "Overcoming Suicidal Persons' Resistance Using Productive Communicative Challenges During Police Crisis Negotiations." *Applied Linguistics* 41:533-551.
- Sikveland, Rein Ove and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2017. "Enquiry Calls to Gp Surgeries in the United Kingdom: Expressions of Incomplete Service and Dissatisfaction in Closing Sequences." *Discourse Studies* 19:441-459.
- . 2020. "Should Police Negotiators Ask to 'Talk' or 'Speak' to Persons in Crisis? Word Selection and Overcoming Resistance to Dialogue Proposals." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 53:324-340.
- Silverman, David. 1998. *Harvey Sacks: Social Science and Conversation Analysis*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Speer, Susan A. 2015. "Responding to -Isms." *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 34:464-470.
- . 2017. "Flirting: A Designedly Ambiguous Action?" *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 50:128-150.
- Speer, Susan A. and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2011. *Conversation and Gender*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Stokoe, Elizabeth. 2009. "Doing Actions with Identity Categories: Complaints and Denials in Neighbor Disputes." *Text and Talk* 29:75-97.
- . 2010. "'I'm Not Gonna Hit a Lady': Conversation Analysis, Membership Categorization and Men's Denials of Violence Towards Women." *Discourse and Society* 21:59-82.
- . 2012a. "Categorical Systematics." *Discourse Studies* 14:345-354.
- . 2012b. "Moving Forward with Membership Categorization Analysis: Methods for Systematic Analysis." *Discourse Studies* 14:277-303.
- Stokoe, Elizabeth, Rein Ove Sikveland, and Bogdana Huma. 2017. "Entering the Customer's Domestic Domain: Categorical Systematics and the Identification of 'Parties to a Sale'." *Journal of Pragmatics* 118:64-80.
- van Dijk, Teun A. 1987. *Communicating Racism: Ethnic Prejudice in Thought and Talk*. London, UK: Sage.

- Watson, Rod. 1997. "Some General Reflections on 'Categorization' and 'Sequence' in the Analysis of Conversation." Pp. 49-76 in *Culture in Action: Studies in Membership Categorization Analysis*, edited by S. Hester and P. Eglin. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Wetherell, Margaret. 1998. "Positioning and Interpretative Repertoires: Conversation Analysis and Post-Structuralism in Dialogue." *Discourse & Society* 9:387-412.
- Whalen, Marilyn R. and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Sequential and Institutional Contexts in Calls for Help." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 50:172-185.
- Whelan, Pauline. 2012. "Oxymoronic and Sociologically Monstrous? Feminist Conversation Analysis." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 9:279-291.
- Whitehead, Kevin A. 2011. "An Ethnomethodological, Conversation Analytic Approach to Investigating Race in South Africa." *South African Review of Sociology* 42:1-22.
- . 2012a. "Moving Forward by Doing Analysis." *Discourse Studies* 14:337-343.
- . 2012b. "Racial Categories as Resources and Constraints in Everyday Interactions: Implications for Non-Racialism in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35:1248-1265.
- . 2013. "Race-Class Intersections as Interactional Resources in Post-Apartheid South Africa." Pp. 49-63 in *Social Inequality and the Politics of Representation: A Global Landscape*, edited by C. M. Pascale. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- . 2020. "The Problem of Context in the Analysis of Talk-in-Interaction: The Case of Implicit Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 83:294-313.
- . 2021. "On Sacks and the Analysis of Racial Categories-in-Action." Pp. 195-207 in *On Sacks: Methodology, Materials and Inspirations*, edited by R. J. Smith, R. Fitzgerald, and W. Housley. London, UK: Routledge.
- Whitehead, Kevin A. and Kim Baldry. 2018. "Omni-Relevant and Contingent Membership Categories in Research Interview and Focus Group Openings." *Qualitative Research* 18:135-152.
- Whitehead, Kevin A. and Gene H. Lerner. 2009. "When Are Persons 'White'? On Some Practical Asymmetries of Racial Reference in Talk-in-Interaction." *Discourse and Society* 20:613-641.
- . 2022. "When Simple Self-Reference Is Too Simple: Managing the Categorical Relevance of Speaker Self-Presentation." *Language in Society* 51:403-426.
- Whitehead, Kevin A. and Elizabeth Stokoe. 2015. "Producing and Responding to -Isms in Interaction." *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 34:368-373.
- Wilkinson, Sue and Celia Kitzinger. 2006. "Surprise as an Interactional Achievement: Reaction Tokens in Conversation." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 69:150-182.
- Zimmerman, Don H. and Melvin Pollner. 1970. "The Everyday World as a Phenomenon." Pp. 80-103 in *Understanding Everyday Life: Toward the Reconstruction of Sociological Knowledge*, edited by J. Douglas. London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul.