

**Opening up terrorism talk: The sequential and categorical production of discursive power within the call openings of a talk radio broadcast**

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**Title:** Opening up terrorism talk: The sequential and categorical production of discursive power within the call openings of a talk radio broadcast

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# **Opening up terrorism talk: The sequential and categorical production of discursive power within the call openings of a talk radio broadcast**

## **Abstract**

The current research undertakes a combined CA/MCA approach to analyse the unfolding moral business of ‘talk radio’ discourse, and situates this analysis within a critical discourse studies framework. In a case study analysis of a talk radio broadcast on the topic of terrorism, the sequencing and membership categorization work that is accomplished during the call openings of its contributors is examined. Local manifestations of discursive power allied to the ‘host’ role are identified, along with the data-driven distinction of ‘lay’ and ‘elite’ callers. The empowering versus disempowering consequences of sequential turn allocation and identity categorization are explored, leading to some reflections on security versus human rights advocacy within terrorism talk. The contribution of this research to two research enterprises is then outlined. Firstly, we highlight the benefit that a combined CA/MCA approach, which foregrounds powerplay, offers to analysis of talk-in-interaction. Following which, we underline how placing such a micro-level spotlight on the seemingly mundane details of talk in context can offer valuable insights for critical terrorism studies.

## **Keywords**

Conversation analysis, membership categorization analysis, critical discourse analysis, discourse, power, terrorism, semi-institutional discourse, talk radio, radio phone-in.

## Introduction

Public participation broadcast media offers an arena in which everyday people are availed opportunities to express their views and opinions on a public stage. This often involves people engaging in debate with other members of the public, as well as debating with more elite or 'expert' voices. For those interested in talk as social interaction, public participation broadcast media has been recognised as a rich source of data, leading to a substantial body of work within Conversation Analysis (CA) (e.g. Fitzgerald and Housley, 2002; Hamo, 2006; Hutchby, 1992a; 1992b; 1996; 1999; 2001; Ilie, 2001; Simon-Vandenbergen, 2007; Thornborrow, 2001a; 2001b; Thornborrow and Fitzgerald 2002). 'Talk radio' represents one example of public participation broadcast media, attracting CA exploration of, for example, the pursuit of controversy and the production of scepticism (Hutchby, 1992a); interactional management of lay callers' rights to question 'professionals' (Thornborrow, 2001a); the use of interruptions (Hutchby, 1992b); and the ways in which ordinary people construct relevant identities for use in debate (Thornborrow, 2001b).

A body of public participation broadcast media research employs membership categorization analysis (MCA). Originally developed by Harvey Sacks (1995), the status of MCA as a distinct ethnomethodological approach from mainstream CA is hotly debated (see for example Fitzgerald, 2012; Housley and Fitzgerald, 2002; Schegloff, 2007; Stokoe, 2012). The current research does not offer any particular contribution to this debate, but does acknowledge that, historically, CA and MCA have been conceived of as potentially distinguishable enterprises with distinct loci

of primary focus – CA on the structural and MCA on the categorical features of talk-in-interaction. Our analytic approach aligns with previous analyses of broadcast media, which explicitly seek to combine analysis of the more CA focused sequential features of talk with a more MCA categorical focus (e.g. Baker, 1984; Butler and Weatherall, 2006; Day, 1998; Fitzgerald and Housley, 2002; Hester and Eglin, 1997; Goodman and Spear, 2007; Housley, 2002; Housley and Fitzgerald, 2009; Leudar, Marsland and Nekvapil, 2004).

### *Categorization practices*

Subsequent to Sacks's (1995) foundational work on membership categories and 'category bound activities' (p. 248), seminal analysis by Jayyusi (1984) extensively exposed how member categories are formulated, managed and operationalised in interaction, in particular how categorizations operate 'as umbrellas for the ascription of other features and actions' (Jayyusi, 1984: 28). Jayyusi (1984) demonstrated the inexorably moral nature of member categories, contending that member categorizations often render unnecessary the need for actions to be accounted for by reason, as actions instead become attribute-specific: in other words they become 'category bound'. She also emphasised that category activities are both constitutive of categories (category-tied) and constituted by categories (category-generated). Further work in this area also, importantly, expanded the focus on activities to incorporate further category properties, including rights and obligations (e.g. Watson, 1978, 1983) and knowledge (e.g. Sharrock, 1974). Following Hester (1998), such category properties are often now referred to as 'category predicates',

a focus on which is central to the MCA enterprise of illuminating the ways in which categorization practices provide significant and variable resources for interaction.

### *Categories and power*

Recognising membership categories and their predicates as a powerful resource for the local accomplishment of social order (Jayyusi, 1984) attunes MCA to examining the moral basis of talk and places the examination of talk as a morally grounded practice at its heart (c.f. Housely and Fitzgerald, 2002). Jayyusi (1984) argues that attribute specification is particularly common when members' category activity is considered to be in some way deviant because the 'underlying asymmetry of perspectives involved is a logical feature of such formulations, and it points clearly and simply to the normatively and morally organized character of categorization work, account, descriptions, predictions and discourse-interactional work in general' (p. 28). Along with rights, obligations and responsibilities, power can be understood as a category predicate, or as the upshot of other underlying category predicates. In common with other predicates, power is not only differentially predicated by membership categories, it is also realised by them.

Whilst it is usual within the traditions of CA to focus the analysis solely upon the data (see Schegloff, 1997) and to avoid situating the analysis within any explicit social, moral or political context where discussions of power often reside, relations of power nevertheless feature tacitly in a great deal of CA analysis of institutional discourse (Hutchby, 2006). Hutchby (2006: 34) argues that:

By showing how participants display an orientation to institutional settings by engaging in certain activities and refraining from others, and illustrating how activities such as questioning are used to constrain the options of a co-participant, CA can also be used to demonstrate how power can be a feature of those activities. What is implied by these studies is that oriented-to activity patterns, such as differences in questioning and answering moves, may themselves be intrinsic to the play of power in institutional interactions.

Given that talk radio routinely presents a site where 'ordinary people' and 'elites' interact, the connections referred to by Hutchby (2006) between structure and power appear highly relevant for CA/MCA research in this setting. When examining the interactional work of members engaged in this kind of broadcast talk, utilising the conventions of CA and MCA, we suggest that it is possible to observe the live management of power as it plays out via sequential and categorical work. In particular, it is possible to examine relations of power in the interactions between lay and elite voices, and also in the interactions between varying elites.

We would further argue that the capacity to examine relations of power using the close focus of CA/MCA can make an important contribution to areas of research traditionally explored by more macro-analytic discursive approaches. Specifically, we suggest that there is space to engage the particular analytic strengths of CA/MCA within a Critical Discourse Studies (van Dijk, 2009) framework. Here, we align with the call by van Dijk (2009) to refer to the broad field of critical discursive work as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) rather than Critical Discourse Analysis

(CDA), on the basis that CDA is neither theory nor method, rather it is an approach to research. Hence, the term Critical Discourse Analysis, is potentially misleading. Theoretical and methodological tensions between the traditions of, traditionally termed, CDA and CA are well documented (see Schegloff 1997 for an overview of the CA position). In large part, these tensions relate to how the issues of context and power are conceptualised and accounted for in research. Although mindful of what are often viewed as impregnable conceptual and theoretical differences between CDA and CA, we suggest that such differences might be put to one side when one engages CA (and we would add, MCA) as a *method* for doing critical discursive work.

Not only does van Dijk (2009: 62) assert that 'CDS is not a method, but rather a critical perspective, position or attitude' but Schegloff (1997: 184) argues that, if 'those whose central impulse is critical' wish to address 'discursive events in their import for participants [...] then critical analysis and formal analysis are not competitors or alternatives. One presupposes the other, serious critical discourse analysis presupposes serious formal analysis and is addressed to its product'. Precisely what constitutes 'serious formal analysis' seems to lie at the heart of the disagreement between advocates of these differing approaches, and whilst we recognise the value of such methodological debates, in order to concentrate on the practical purposes of the current study, we put these largely to one side with a view that CA/MCA can be engaged within a broader CDS framework and that the particular analytic strengths of CA/MCA can produce research findings with the capacity to make a meaningful contribution to areas of critical research.

## Aims

Through analysis of talk radio data, the current research examines the differential distribution of interactional power as it plays out sequentially, via membership categories and their related category predicates. In particular, it aims to inspect some of the ways in which the semi-institutional (Ilie, 2001) procedures and normative membership categories commonly found in talk radio discourse contribute to the distribution of power in the interaction. By drawing data from a single case analysis in which the topic for debate is 'terrorism talk', the current research is able to carefully explore what the consequences of such structural and categorical activities might be for the particular topical trajectory of the talk. Single case analysis is a well established means of engaging in detailed empirical investigation and is an accepted approach within MCA work (Housley, 2002). We would further suggest that this approach is particularly appropriate, given that the aim of this research is to link traditional CA/MCA analysis of category and structure to concerns directly related to the topical context of the talk. Just as single case analysis will enable our locally occasioned findings to contribute to cumulative knowledge regarding the more far-reaching norms of conversational structure (Housley, 2002), focusing on a single case, with all the contextual richness which that allows, will enable this study to also explore how, in these specific data, particularised notions of terrorism are constructed.

Whilst there is a great deal that might be examined with respect to the localised 'terrorism talk' upon which our data centres, in the current paper, we focus solely on call opening sequences. Our approach mirrors that taken by Thornborrow (2001b),

who highlighted that these opening moments are crucial for callers to establish their position. We echo this view of call opening sequences. Furthermore, given that call opening sequences are rarely explicitly topic-oriented, they might be easily overlooked as sites of relevance for discursive power production. In focusing our analysis here, we examine how some of the more banal, mundane routines of broadcast talk can operate as sites in which unequal power relations are regularly and un-problematically (re)produced. Moreover, through this analysis we hope to show that normative routines of sequence and structure are consequential for the terrorism talk that can and cannot be done by members. Within the discussion we will then draw out some of the implications regarding the membership category power differentials in relation to the topic of terrorism talk and argue that this kind of approach can make a useful contribution to the ongoing research aims embodied by 'critical terrorism studies' (see Jackson, Breen Smyth and Gunning, 2009).

### *Context and data*

The data for this study are taken from a two hour talk radio programme entitled 'What more can we do to stop the terrorists?'. This show was broadcast on BBC Radio 5 live, a British national radio station specialising in broadcasting live news and current affairs programmes, live phone-in shows and live sports commentary. This programme was scheduled in a weekday morning slot traditionally devoted to interactive live debate with members of the public. The show is generally focused upon a pre-selected, often contentious, current affairs topic or dominant news story. The phone-in selected for analysis aired on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2007, directly following two attempted terrorist attacks in London and Glasgow on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday

30<sup>th</sup> June. The show featured talk from members of the public, talk from callers with some level of topic-related ‘expertise’ of professional standing, and the show host.

## Analysis

### *Host ‘omni-relevance’*

Before examining call opening sequences in this data, a wider focus on the role of the ‘host’ is required. This is provided by the following extracts:

#### Extract 1

- 1 M.B. Good mo:rning it's nine o'clock. This is Matthew Bannister with
- 2       you o:n 5 live und in ↑this hour what ↑more can we do to stop the
- 3       terrorists (0.5)

#### Extract 2

- 1 M.B. The free phone number to call is 0500 909:693 (.) >you can ↑text
- 2       us< on 85058 (0.5) o:r you can e-mail Banniste::r at bbc.co.u↑k

Extracts 1 and 2 demonstrate some of the structural and contextual norms enacted by the occupier of the ‘host’ category, as have been identified in previous research (e.g. Hutchby, 1996; Thornborrow, 2001a). Extract 1 is an example of topic-setting for the phone-in, whilst Extract 2 exemplifies the host’s provision of routes for callers to access and engage in the programme.

Fitzgerald and Housley (2002: 583), argue that the categories ‘host’ and ‘caller’ represent a primary layer of categorization in the talk radio context, which they label

'programme-relevant categories'. In their account of this category layer, Fitzgerald and Housley (2002), engage with Sacks's (1995) notion of omni-relevance. Sacks (1995) initially proposed that certain membership devices can be understood as omni-relevant to an ongoing interaction. Such a device is not required to be contextually or sequentially related to the preceding occurrence in the interaction, but 'when it is used, it's the controlling device' (Sacks, 1995, vol 1: 314). Fitzgerald and Housley (2002) demonstrate that the omni-relevant category 'host' makes a significant contribution both to the ongoing sequential interaction and to the organisational/institutional structure underlying the sequencing of interaction. In a similar vein, Thornborrow (2001a: 122) refers to the host as the 'talk manager' and argues that some 'quite complex interactional work goes on' prior to the caller taking charge of the air. Fitzgerald and Housley (2002) also note an asymmetry with respect to the occupation of the host versus caller roles: one member occupies the role of host throughout the programme, yet a succession of members occupy the category of caller.

A difficulty with the concept of omni-relevance might be that the backgrounded nature of its affordances mean that it is often invisible. However, Extract 3 below provides an explicit example of the omni-relevance of the 'host' device being actively engaged in interaction.

### Extract 3

- 1 M.B. and Nick in Letchworth (0.2) "anyone could be a terrorist so
- 2 waddawe do check everyone doing anything anywhere? .hh let's just
- 3 get on with our own lives" (0.2) 0500 909693 is the free phone

- 4 number to call (0.2) Bannister at bbc.co.uk is the e-mail address and
- 5 ↑85058 .hh (0.2) is the number if you text us

Here, omni-relevance permits interjection in the middle of the programme to provide information which is not sequentially or contextually relevant to the preceding talk.

Hence, in Extract 3, the act of interrupting contextualised topical talk of 'terrorism' with phone numbers and an e-mail address is an accepted norm when enacted by the host and does not require any additional explanatory or justificatory work to support it.

Given the focus toward power relations in the current study, the ways in which omni-relevance is utilised as a means of control is of central interest, hence, the omni-relevant 'host' category is of particular concern.

### *'Lay' caller introductions*

The following extracts provide typical examples of the standard means by which members of the public are introduced to the programme.

#### Extract 4

- 1 M.B. let's bring in Fahima (0.5) who's called us from East London
- 2 (0.5) hallo Fahima
- 3 (0.5)
- 4 Fa. hi there
- 5 (0.2)

6 M.B: good morning what did you want to say

Extract 5

- 1 M.B. let's bring in Ashfaq who's called us from Leeds
- 2 er good morning Ashfaq
- 3 (0.2)
- 4 As. A very good morning to you Matthew=
- 5 M.B. =what did you want to say=

Extract 6

- 1 M.B. .hhh ah Ray is on the line from Norwich (0.5) ↑good morning Ray
- 2 (0.8)
- 3 Ra. Hallo Matthew good morning to ↑you

According to Fitzgerald and Housley (2002: 586), it is within such call openings that the host sequentially and contextually manages a progression from the relatively anonymous programme-relevant layer of categorization, to a more detailed layer of categorization, which they label a 'call-relevant identity'. At this level, the host provides a collection of particulars for the individual caller, which distinguishes them from others who might share the relatively anonymous programme relevant category of 'caller'.

Many of the host-led call opening sequences in the current data follow a standard structural and contextual pattern, in keeping with the findings of previous analyses (e.g. Thornborrow, 2001a; 2001b). As exemplified in Extracts 4, 5 and 6, this sequence, whereby the host shares the caller's first name and geographic locale with the listeners, is never deviated from throughout the broadcast when introducing ordinary people to the air. We identify this as a 'name-plus-location' sequence (one of two 'name-plus' provisions, as will be seen in the following section).

Whilst the level of information may initially appear to be minimal, the name-plus-location information provided by the host is potentially consequential for the ongoing interaction. Schegloff's (1972) analysis of location formulations and personal names emphasised the 'recognizability' of their construction, referring to the way that they are designed so that listeners can 'perform operations ... categorize ... bring knowledge to bear [and] ... detect which of ... [their] attributes ...[are] relevant in context etc.' (p. 91). Schegloff also notes that personal names may contain, as a matter of course, indications of 'sex, ethnicity and social class' (p. 91). Meanwhile, he highlights that members' use and interpretation of location formulations engages three levels of analysis: first, a 'location analysis' (p. 83), including what he calls 'common sense geography' (p. 85) and a tendency towards 'selecting formulations that are members of the same collection' (p. 102); second, a 'membership analysis' (p. 88), involving recipient design for what listeners can be expected to recognise; and third, a 'topic analysis' (p. 96), involving an orientation to the particular topical context in which the term is used.

Drawing on these observations in relation to name-plus-location introductions in the

current data, we suggest the following. On an institutional level, the routine format of such formulations in talk radio (c.f. Thornborrow, 2001b) centres upon the provision of personal names and location formulations that are hearable as coming from the same collection (of first names on the one hand and of British towns and cities on the other), whilst also orienting to recipient design for an audience who are expected to recognise certain nominal and geographical references (c.f. Drew, 1978). However, Schegloff's (1972) analysis also allows for a more localised, context-specific level to such formulations. The observation that people are generally in the business of reading categorizations, inferences and relevances from name and location referents, means that, for any given topic under discussion within a radio broadcast, such referents are inspectable for the purpose of carrying out these sorts of 'operations' (Schegloff, 1972: 91).

In their original discussion of the sequential and categorical development of identity, Fitzgerald and Housley (2002) state that 'call-relevant identity' is a term used 'to suggest that there is a layer of identity membership that is not topic oriented' (p. 586), whilst their 'topic-relevant' category layer (p. 596) captures a level of categorization in which identity work is centrally topic-related. However, Schegloff's (1972) observations challenge such a straightforward distinction, revealing that even the relatively innocuous details provided in the development of call-relevant identity are inspectable as topic-relevant and may result in the promotion of asymmetrical opportunities, rights and obligations for speakers.

Additional insights into these issues can be drawn from the work of Jayyusi (1984). In particular, that: members conventionally orient towards positive category

ascriptions for themselves, whilst working to obscure any grounds for negative category ascriptions; and some categories are expectably disclosable in a given context, whereas others are not. Moreover, some categories, including political and religious affiliations, are 'revelatory matters [and simultaneously] matters for concealment' (p. 69).

Whilst it may not be consequential for all talk radio topics, the 'name plus location' convention for lay callers within talk radio broadcasts needs to be recognised as potentially taking the disclosure of ethnic and religious membership categories out of the hands of speakers, with important implications for callers' ongoing contributions and their development of call-relevant identities.

In the context of the 'terrorism talk' in the current analysis, the caller introductions, "Fahima" from "East London", "Ashfaq" from "Leeds" and "Ray" from "Norwich", are hearable as indicative of varying ethnic membership categories. More specifically, in the given topical context, "Ashfaq" from "Leeds" and "Fahima" from East London are hearable as Muslim category members whilst "Ray" from "Norwich" is hearable as a white British category member. Jayyusi (1984) makes plain that, whilst analysts are trained not to take anything as a 'given', 'for members of a culture, there are indeed "givens"' (p. 59) and what is of interest is how members utilise such givens 'as a resource' (p. 59). Within the context of contemporary dominant terrorism discourses in the UK, where Muslims are increasingly conceptualised as the new 'suspect community' (Pantazis & Pemberton, 2009), and young British Muslim's report that they are routinely 'categorized as the feared, the dangerous "other"' (Mythen & Walklate, 2009: 749), such ethnicity revelations are clearly

morally loaded and present potentially serious problems for the interactions members wish to engage in.

### *'Elite' caller introductions*

In contrast to the introduction of ordinary people, an alternative form of 'name-plus' provision is employed by the host when introducing a second group of callers, who are thereby distinguished from ordinary people. The following extracts provide a standard example of this alternative 'name-plus' provision.

#### Extract 7

- 1 M.B. I want to bring in< Patrick Mercer who's a former (0.2) .hh shadow
- 2 security spokesman for the Conservative party (0.2) er good morning
- 3 Mr Mercer

#### Extract 8

- 1 M.B. .hh ah I-let's talk to er Osama Sai:d who's the spokesperson for the:
- 2 (0.2) Muslim association of Britain in:: Scotland er-ah-g-good
- 3 morning Mr Said

Here we witness the standard way in which the host introduces a distinguishable membership category via the use of a different form of 'name-plus' provision. This name-plus provision comprises of both forename and surname, in addition to which is the inclusion of some indication of professional standing or expertise. In Extract 7 the relevant expertise of Patrick Mercer is connected to his former role as a security spokesperson for the Conservative party, whilst in Extract 8, Osama Said's relevant

expertise relates to his role as a spokesperson for the Muslim Association of Britain. It remains perfectly possible that Patrick Mercer is also a religious spokesperson, and that Osama Said is also a security expert, however these and any number of other possible elite credentials remain unknown. Hence, call-relevant identity centres upon the elite credentials that are explicitly provided. As in Thornborrow's (2001b) data, these credentials involve a variety of public identities, including memberships, roles and occupations. The range of potential elite credentials that are employable by hosts would, we suggest, represent an extremely interesting focus for future analyses of the radio phone-in genre, though beyond the scope of the current analysis<sup>j</sup>.

Fitzgerald and Housley (2002: 586) refer to call-relevant identity as 'producing a specific identity for this particular caller for their time on air'. The differing 'name-plus' introductions identified above lead us to make an analytic distinction between two primary types of call-relevant identity in our data, which we will label 'lay' and 'elite' callers. These discrete caller categories map on to distinctions reported in other work from TV and radio public participation media. For example, Thornborrow's (2001b) analysis of radio and television data identified the establishment of lay and expert identities during host-led introductions. Similarly, Hamo (2006) reported a distinction between famous, semi-famous and anonymous callers in his television talk show data, whilst Simon-Vandenbergen's (2007) analysis of the Kilroy television talk show identified differences between expert and lay guest introductions.

In examining category-incumbency, Jayyusi (1984: 64) distinguishes between varying ‘communities of categorizers’, which operate within a given culture, and highlights that, for certain categories, category-incumbency can only be bestowed by members of a specific community who make a judgement regarding the potential member’s requisite skill or knowledge. Such categories can be contrasted with others whereby the community of categorizers is, in principle, fully inclusive and any member can undertake categorization work (Jayyusi, 1984). In our data, the inferential work of the host, reflected in the differential introductions for ‘lay’ and ‘elite’ callers, implies that members of the latter have been adjudged by some select community of categorizers as expert in relation to their particular introductory credentials. The omni-relevance of the host category is such that the host is able to make these credentials explicit for the local purposes of the broadcast. Hence, the members introduced in Extracts 7 and 8 are hearable as experts in matters considered to be of relevance to the broadcast. The structural and contextual power of host-led introductions facilitates the hearing of this differentiation between ‘elites’ and ‘lay’ callers. The ‘elites’ are implicitly constructed as having varied, but similarly elevated, member-incumbency, which distinguishes them from ‘lay’ callers. This point links back to Sacks’s account of omni-relevance. Sacks (1995: 313-314) stated that, an “omni-relevant device” is one that is relevant to a setting via the fact that there are some activities that are known to get done in that setting’ and furthermore ‘it is the business of say, some single person located via the “omni-relevant device” to do that [business], and the business of others located via that device, to let it get done’. On this occasion, the business of the host involves assigning differential rights to callers that are implicative of particular ‘elite’ status, and it is the business of the callers (and the audience) to let that get done. In

relation to Jayyusi (1984: 65) then, making these ‘elite’ member distinctions acts to vest these callers with the ‘locus of obligations and rights’ that are indelibly tied up with elite-member incumbency.

### *Sequence, identity and power*

Having identified that lay and elite callers are differentially categorized at the outset via the host-led introduction, a more in-depth analysis of some of the structural and contextual features of introductions can reveal still more. Specifically, it can provide insight regarding the ways in which the distribution and uptake of discursive power occurs in these data. As we will see, power hinges upon the interplay between structural features (question/answer etc.) and membership categorizations made salient in these caller introductions. The following examples reflect how this plays out in practice.

### Extract 9

- 1 M.B. ↑alright Mark thanks very much I-I take the point that you're making
- 2 from Birmingham (0.2) >I want to bring in< Patrick Mercer who's a
- 3 former (0.2) .hh shadow security spokesman for the Conservative
- 4 party (0.2) er good morning Mr Mercer
- 5 (0.2)
- 6 P.M. hallo Matthew good morning=
- 7 M.B. =th-what do you think about the point that Mark makes that in
- 8 Northern Ireland negotia↑tions seems to have (0.2) stopped (0.2)
- 9 terrorism .hh (0.2) ahh w-w-could we ever: negotiate with the people

10 behind the a-attempted attacks in London un the attack in Glas↑gow

11 (0.2)

12P.M. well I-I-I speak with many tours on Northern Ireland behind me as a

13 serving soldier where I worked in both (0.2) .hh strategy an

14 principally intelligence matters .hh (0.2) und (0.2) there is of ↑course

15 ↓room for negotiation (0.2) but to ne↑gotiate (0.5) you have got to

16 understand your enemy and have an enemy that is willing to

17 negotiate with you:: (0.5) .hh an I'm afraid that this new form of

18 Islamist (.) fundamentalist (0.2) style of terrorism (0.2) does not

19 se:em to be amenable to that

20 (0.2)

### Extract 10

1 M.B. Patrick ↑stay with us I want to bring in Shami Chakrabarti of Liberty

2 (0.2) uh:: to get ↓her reaction to what you have to say fi-fi-first of all

3 er Shami uhm good morning to you

4 (.)

5 S.C. and to you Matthew=

6 M.B. =uhm P-Patrick Mercer suggests that he would liked to have seen

7 more armed police (.) more dog patrols on the underground th-this

8 morning on the critical state of alert we are at (0.2) d'you think that

9 would be a↑good scheme

10 (0.2)

11S.C. .hh well I mean Patrick Patrick has an operational (0.2) uhm

12 experience which-wh-which I don't but I (.) I am grateful to him

Two interrelated features are of particular interest to us here. Firstly, the structural order in which these callers are invited to participate in the talk and the implications this has for utilising category membership, and secondly, the local conditions under which the opportunities to contribute are availed by the host.

In Extracts 9 and 10 we can see that both of these elite callers are directed by the host to respond to an argument developed by the preceding caller. In his detailed analysis of talk radio, Hutchby (1996) builds on initial work by Sacks (1995) and observes that the 'going first' and 'going second' structure of argumentation is a routine convention that can be understood as a form of 'Action-Opposition sequence' (p. 42). Following the conventions of host introduction, the caller who is positioned as 'going first' must set out their view of the given issue, whilst the caller who gets to 'go second' can counter that view. Hutchby (1996: 42) explicitly states that this puts 'disputants who get to go second ... in a more powerful position than those who go first'.

As the caller in Extract 9 begins his turn (line 12) he benefits from the power asymmetry that comes from 'going second'. The argument, already set up by the prior caller, and reformulated by the host, is available for challenge. Yet, in addition to this structurally derived power advantage, the caller has a further power differential that results from his 'elite' membership category incumbency. In Extract 9, the "former ... security spokesman" (line 3) is asked to respond to an argument that has been advanced by lay caller 'Mark' (line 1). Here the lay and elite membership categories of the callers can be understood to operate as what Jayyusi

(1984: 122) referred to as an ‘asymmetric category set’, whereby an asymmetry operates between category incumbents with respect to rights and duties and/or skills and knowledge. This, Jayyusi notes, plays out in particular within disputes between incumbents of asymmetrically positioned categories, so as to differentially favour the more empowered category incumbent. Thus, in Extract 9, resulting from his elite status within the asymmetric category set of ‘elite’ caller and ‘lay’ caller, any challenge to, or support for, the lay caller’s position that is offered by the elite caller is bolstered.

Moreover, the specific, introductory elite credentials of the elite caller, as “former ... security spokesman”, are directly relevant to the local particulars of the argument made by the lay caller – glossed by the host as asserting that “in Northern Ireland negotiations seems to have (0.2) stopped (0.2) terrorism” (lines 7-8). The fit between the elite’s stated expertise and the timing at which he is introduced is such that he is able to immediately introduce a ‘topic-relevant identity’ (Fitzgerald and Housley, 2002: 596) or ‘relevant participatory status’ (Thornborrow, 2001b: 470) into his talk. Fitzgerald and Housley (2002) proposed that ‘topic-relevant’ category work involves callers invoking topic-relevant aspects of their experience in connection with the opinion being expressed and laying claim to some form of personal relatedness to the topic under discussion. This is clearly demonstrated in Extract 9 (lines 12-14) when Patrick Mercer sets up a relationship between his lived experience and the topic at hand, as a means of evidencing his argument. The structural efficiency and contextual ease with which this elite caller can engage in such identity work suggests that his scheduled placement within the broadcast is

organised to facilitate him in addressing the aspect of terrorism talk that is most pertinent to his expertise.

In contrast to Extract 9, the elite caller in Extract 10 (Shami Chakrabarti) is introduced to the air directly following the turn of another elite caller (Patrick Mercer from Extract 9) and asked to respond to the talk of that prior elite caller. Thus, whilst Shami Chakrabarti may have the opportunity to 'go second' and challenge the argument put forward by the prior caller, she does not benefit from the power advantage that comes with being an elite engaged in a dispute with a lay caller in an asymmetrical category set. In this way, Shami Chakrabarti is denied the lay-elite power differential that has been afforded to Patrick Mercer. The contrast between the two examples does not stop there, however. With respect to the host-specified expertise of these callers, Extract 10 requires Shami Chakrabarti, whose introduction foregrounds her role as the director of 'Liberty' (the UK National council for Civil Liberties), to respond to an argument by the 'former security spokesperson' Patrick Mercer, in which he draws upon his "many tours on Northern Ireland" to argue that "this new form of Islamist (.) fundamentalist (0.2) style of terrorism (0.2) does not seem to be amenable to [negotiation]". Thus, whilst Patrick Mercer is called as a securities expert to comment on a securities topic (advanced by a lay caller), Shami Chakrabarti is called, as a civil liberties expert, to comment on a topic which has been developed and framed by a securities expert. Consequently, it is not possible for Shami Chakrabarti to utilise her particular elite credentials to engage in the sort of topic-relevant identity work that Fitzgerald and Housley (2002) highlight, without first engaging in some other work to re-focus the topical trajectory of the talk. Thus, to the extent that Patrick Mercer's introduction is scheduled within

the broadcast to empower his expertise, Shami Chakrabarti's scheduled introduction dis-empowers hers.

A further example of the subtle power play engaged within elite caller introductions is provided in the following extract.

#### Extract 11

- 1 M.B. .hh ah I-let's talk to er Osama Sai:d who's the spokesperson for the:
- 2 (0.2) Muslim association of Britain in:: Scotland er-ah-g-good
- 3 morning Mr Said
- 4 (0.5)
- 5 O.S. >°g'mornin°<
- 6 (0.2)
- 7 M.B. .hh (0.2) er thanks for joining us err c-co↑uld you ah just i-clear u:p a
- 8 point which (0.2) er was made by one of our (0.5) callers ↓earlie:r .hh
- 9 umm-er-i-who said that er a-all Muslims in this country want Britain
- 10 to become a Muslim state.

The above extract strikingly highlights that the routine conventions of host-controlled introductions are anything but mundane. Indeed, the host-managed caller introductions avail the host an uninterrupted opportunity to construct, not only a call-relevant identity for the caller, but also to make germane particular topic-relevant categories (Fitzgerald and Housley, 2002). In Extract 11, we witness how, via the routines of sequence and structure, the host-led introduction presents significant implications for this elite caller, where the introduction entails that he engage with a topic-relevant identity foisted upon him. In Extract 11, the host initiates the

conversation stating “I-let’s talk to er Osama Sai:d who’s the spokesperson for the: (0.2) Muslim association of Britain in:: Scotland” (lines 1-2). Multiple devices and categories are brought into play here: the caller is ascribed ‘elite’ credentials as the Scottish spokesperson for the Muslim association of Britain and, simultaneously, ‘ethnic’ credentials as ‘Muslim’. Following the initial introduction, the host requests that the caller “just clear up a point made by a previous caller” and, in doing so, positions the caller via the membership affiliations made explicit in the introduction.

The point under scrutiny concerns a previous caller’s argument which is reformulated by the host as the belief that “all Muslims in this country want Britain to become a Muslim state” (line 9-10). In requiring the caller to deal with such an ideological positioning of “all Muslims”, the host treats the caller’s call-relevant identity as implicitly topic relevant. Having established the caller as a person with multiple layers of membership rights and obligations born from membership of the categories ‘Muslim’ and ‘elite’, the caller is firstly positioned as somebody who can speak on this issue as a result of being a Muslim with lived experience and knowledge, and secondly as someone who should speak as a result of the normative moral obligations tied to being an ‘expert’. Thus, category membership is again displayed as inherently moral. In this way, the call-relevant identity displayed in Extract 11 blurs into topic-relevant category membership, which is then treated as an accountable aspect of caller identity. The local assignment of topic-relevant category membership, via the sequential conventions of host-led introductions, carefully manages how the caller can initially engage in the conversation. It defines what the host treats as topic-relevant membership, narrowing the scope of actions available to the caller and more or less requiring him to either: address that topic

from the entailed membership categories; work to challenge the construction of the given categories; or, refute membership of those categories before engaging in other topic-relevant category membership displays.

The omni-relevant affordances of the host category underpin the conventional norms of interactively positioning the caller in this way. They vest the host with a greater degree of structural control than any guest, irrespective of elite credentials. There are occasions in this data where callers skilfully manoeuvre beyond the endeavours of the host to delimit their contribution, and steer the conversation toward other topics (see Extract 10, lines 11-12 for such an example), however as Extract 11 demonstrates, this is much more difficult when the host-led request to respond to a topic rhetorically and actively merges call-relevant identity with topic-relevant category membership.

## Conclusions

The current analysis serves as strong support for the utility of combining elements of CA's sequential analytic project with MCA's categorical project, as advocated by Fitzgerald and Housley (2002). By utilising a combination CA/MCA approach, the above analysis was able to examine some of the moral work being accomplished within this talk-in-interaction. The analysis highlighted that it was patently the sequential positioning *combined with* categorical work which underpinned the routinely embedded moral entailments and moral accomplishments that occur throughout this data. Such a combined analytic approach presents a real opportunity for accomplishing the aims of both CA and MCA. From an MCA perspective, introducing sequential features, such as the timing of turns, as part of

the category analysis, highlights that categories are an integral, reflexive part of talk-in-interaction and that divorcing the analysis of category membership from such local deployment is liable to lead to a severely impoverished account. Meanwhile, from a CA stance, bringing in the analysis of category membership features, such as the identity construction of interlocutors, as part of the sequential analysis, highlights that the local organisation of the talk-in-interaction is steeped in membership work.

As an aside, we have also highlighted instances in the current data whereby Fitzgerald and Housley's (2002) identity layers operate somewhat differently than they originally proposed (e.g. where 'call-relevant identities' blur into 'topic-relevant categories'). It remains for future work to explore the utility of applying definitive distinctions between layers of categorical membership. In the current research, the layered categorization approach has provided an invaluable resource for a combined CA/MCA approach, but one that is not without its limitations.

What the current study hopes, in particular, to contribute to existing work in this field is an understanding of some of the ways in which discursive power is locally produced and organised through category and sequence work. The semi-institutional aspects of talk radio come across strongly in our analysis, particularly in the playing out of the host's role. But also, as in previous work, the conversational elements within this context underline the negotiated nature of discursive power distribution. In this data, the host is not challenged - his role is upheld by the contributions of all parties. Caller voices are heard and an atmosphere of open debate predominates, yet, despite this veneer, certain moral messages are

differentially advocated. The local sequential enactment of talk within this semi-institutional context affords differential discursive power to speakers. The analysis identified three distinguishable primary identities: host, elite caller and lay caller. As was demonstrated, differing levels of discursive power was availed and engaged across these three categories. However, perhaps most interestingly, the analysis highlighted that elite category membership did not automatically provide all elites with equal access to discursive power. Instead, access to power was locally and differentially mediated via the host. We suggest that the analysis reflects a power hierarchy at play in which, whilst all 'elites' are hierarchically positioned above lay callers, 'elites' are not automatically accorded equal power.

In consideration of the elite power differentials identified in this analysis, we cannot help but be drawn to the Orwellian maxim: '*All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others*'. Moreover, discussion of discursive power differentials leads us on to the topical context of our analysis: 'terrorism talk'. At this juncture we wish to situate our findings in the context of 'critical terrorism studies' (Jackson et al, 2009). As indicated, the current analysis can be understood to reflect a locally enacted hierarchy of access to power amongst those engaged in this terrorism talk. Upon examining that hierarchy, we witness a greater emphasis given to those actors whose arguments promote the importance of national security and military defence whilst, conversely, discourses from actors who advocate human rights and civil liberties are downplayed. In the current data, we see how this is achieved within a debate between two elite callers, where the 'security versus liberty' dialectic is prominent. The emergence of such a dialectic within the talk-in-interaction of interlocutors, in which 'security' is elevated and 'human rights' are downgraded,

mirrors the 'security versus liberty' dialectic revealed in many areas of contemporary and critical terrorism studies (e.g. Altheide, 2006; Edwards, 2004; Jackson, 2005; Spence, 2005; Tsoukala, 2006, 2008).

We consider the current work to be only a tentative step in the direction of engaging CA/MCA analysis within a CDS framework. In relation to what this approach can contribute specifically to critical terrorism studies, the decision to focus solely on call openings meant that there was a great deal in our data we do not report here. Much of this might have allowed a more expansive focus on terrorism discourse itself. However, by focussing on the mundane, often overlooked features of call openings we have endeavoured to demonstrate that, even in these seemingly banal corners of terrorism talk, power looms large. The ways in which ethnic and religious membership categories are 'revealed' at the outset, and the immediate power differentials between lay and elite callers that are set up during the call openings, all operate to differentially furnish members with rights, responsibilities, obligations and expectancies. These category predicates are then used by and used against callers throughout their terrorism talk.

Thus, we suggest that this kind of analytic approach offers an important contribution to the ongoing ambitions of critical terrorism studies. Specifically, it facilitates analysis of terrorism discourse at a micro level, in which it is possible to point to the active *doing* of power and to examine the way that unequal power relations are developed at a structural/categorical level so mundane as to be easily overlooked. This kind of detailed analysis is very much aligned with the CDA commitment to text immanent critique (Wodak, 2001) and related concerns to examine detailed

structures and interactional aspects of discursive communication (van Dijk, 2001).

Being able to explicitly identify the origins of discursive power construction in the routines of terrorism talk permits such constructions to be challenged.

Emancipatory aims have always been central to the CDA/CDS agenda (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). Within the field of critical terrorism studies, McDonald (2009: 114) argues that engagement in text immanent critique begins to give voice to oppressed or silenced voices and, in doing this, research might 'inform possibilities for the resolution of conflicts that give rise to or are characterised by "terrorism"'. In orienting to these concerns, our analysis strongly supports Hutchby's (2006) arguments about the efficacy of CA's incisive approach for unpacking and examining issues of discursive power, which, as Hutchby notes, is generally only tacitly evident in CA research. Overall, we propose that this kind of analysis furthers the aims of critical terrorism studies by demonstrating that it is not only what is said (or how much is said) that empowers security discourses and de-legitimises concerns to protect human rights and civil liberties. It is also a matter of the mundane conversational means through which members are availed or denied opportunities to contribute, and how members are, or are not, empowered to construct an argument within the normative constraints of a given (semi-) institutional context.

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