

Identity in interaction: sub-cultural intersubjectivities in popular radio conversation on *Inxeba*

> Dylan Kukard

Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

dylan.kukard@gmail.com (preferred pronouns: he/him)

> Richard van Rensburg

Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

mr.individualist@gmail.com (preferred pronouns: he/him)

ABSTRACT

Queerness¹ undergoes multiple treatments in South African society, oscillating between site of cultural un/acceptability, religious im/morality and of embodied resistance. Conversation of the film *Inxeba* indicates that claiming or talking about the queer position amongst cultural identities becomes a social act, which must be accounted for within interaction. Through adopting an ethnomethodological position, it can be noted that within instances of radio talk, speakers design their utterances to employ identities as actions, which align orientations to norms regarding sexuality. By deploying a conversation analysis to the collected data, the interrelation between queerness and emotive talk is shown through the ways in which speech features, such as pause and emphasis, are employed strategically. In tandem, an analysis of discursive connotation offers a balance between the local situation and broader context of talk in order to show how queer identities are deployed within other discursive formations. Through tethering these styles of analyses, it will appear that the cascading use of social identities within talk of *Inxeba* presents as a particular stock of interactional knowledge regarding queerness (based on the three extracts analysed). By reflecting on how the identity of the researchers may have influenced this analysis, managing the reflexive process should not be seen as a final step but rather an instrumental part of any qualitative analysis of identity.

Keywords: Conversation analysis, queerness, radio, reflexivity, talk, *Inxeba*, research identity.

Introduction

Talk about the controversial film *Inxeba* revolves around the supposed clash, at least interactionally, between social identities. The film deals with homosexuality within the context of the Xhosa male initiation ceremony of *ulwaluko*, and has become a site of both social admiration and contestation around its perceived portrayal of tradition. As such, 'talk' (which we situate as between individual speech act and larger discourse) of the film presents a novel inlet into how queer and other social identities are spoken about and reacted to in the South African context. Tailored inspection of talk about *Inxeba* does not attempt to account for all beliefs, understandings and presentations of queer identity found in this medium, however it may partially aide in the understanding of how identities are used in speech. Following this line of thought, the main research problem addressed is how queer identities are utilised in talk of the film – with a secondary aim of noting which speech features appear, and how are they deployed in radio conversation. Parallel to this runs a reflexive process to track how our own identity as researchers may add bias to both method and analysis. By embracing reflexivity, and the obvious partiality in studying identity, this treatment of conversation on *Inxeba* aims to foster similar processes in qualitative work in the area.

Radio talk: situating discourse in conversation

The data was collected from talk radio shows that dealt with topics around the film *Inxeba*. Radio talk unfolds in real time making it a rich source of naturally occurring interactions (Hutchby 2006:163). This talk provides an important link between media, knowledge and public opinion as there are interactions between people from private, public, lay, and professional fields with the host (Hutchby 2006:4). In order to source radio conversations, which aligned with the identified analytic target, podcasts were canvassed using the Metro FM (beta.sabc.co.za/metrofm/) and Radio 702 (702.co.za) websites, with 'Inxeba', 'Inxeba Talk Show', 'Inxeba Classification' and 'Inxeba Reaction' used as search terms. A pool of five hours of radio broadcasts was originally extracted with 15 final transcripts, produced using Jefferson's (2004) system on Microsoft Word. These potential extracts were then tagged for their length of speech, topic of discussion, speech features such as repetition and intonation, and whether queer identity was produced to assess their viability for final analysis. Together, the researchers settled on the three proceeding extracts for focused analysis as they included both private and public radio stations to allow for the inspection of genre; as well as a high degree of interactivity with either guests or callers to explore the situational effects of talk regarding the film.² Critically, such a selection does not constitute a full cross-section

of the range of views nor claim to encapsulate all talk regarding *Inxeba*, but may provide insight into how identities are deployed in these interactions based on this limited analysis. Much, we contend, can still be gleaned from such a ‘snapshot’.

The primary method of analysing data is conversation analysis (CA), which emphasises a local, or situational context of talk and how conversations unfold turn-by-turn (Heritage 1984; Wilkinson 2000). Despite some arguments against CA (Billig 1999; Firth 1999), the features of talk – that is, how words are said or not said – can reveal more about how the topics of talk are being dealt with in conversation. Schegloff (2006:70) argues that interaction, which he deems the ‘fundamental embodiment of sociality’, supports the macro-structures of society as talk-in-interaction features centrally in these structures. CA is, therefore, a useful method to examine how queer identities are used or referred to in talk as it aims to ‘describe methods persons use in *doing* social life’ (Sacks 1984:21, emphasis added). The use of naturally occurring data for forms of discursive analysis is not uncommon, as the methods through which participants do their social life provides access into the effective function of discourse (Schegloff 1999; Speer 2004). Aligning with Parker’s (1992) understanding of discourse as the system of statements found within and through a text, this allows detailed study of micro-sociological phenomena to potentially illustrate how social identities are constructed as objects of normative power. In this vein, discursive work in the South African context allows for an engagement with the politics of gender, sexuality and their interface sedimented in the mundane practices of everyday life (Burman, Kottler, Levett & Parker 1997). The theoretical tactic of applying a discursive analysis onto speech around *Inxeba* is to provide attention to the productions of certain types of knowledge about queerness and identity and how these local productions are contingent on broader social systems within their reach.

Analysis of self-identity and negotiation

The conversation below, extracted from the private broadcaster 702’s mid-morning show, *The Eusebius McKaiser Show*, contains the titular host (H) engaging with a human rights activist (P) on the re-classification of the film. Eusebius McKaiser is a prominent South African commentator known for his candour and openly progressive politics (McKaiser 2018). Conventionally, private radio is geared towards culminating an active citizenship in which hosts are not treated as moderators of public views but as producers of rational-critical debates within a commercial interest (See Mtimde 2000). Particularly, in speaking on the rating of the film there are instances, such as in line 11 below, where the host’s tone shows an explicit disagreement; to this end,

he poses a rhetorical question in a condescending manner, making his own framing of the subject apparent and central to ensuing talk with listeners.

(1) [702] *The reclassification of Inxeba* (14:11) (Radio 702 2018)

1. H: ((talk about the Appeals Tribunal's justification)) and then the
2. other thi::ng i::s the anal sex! they actually mention it. .hh (0.2)
3. and=I=thought=to=myself? you know what the only thing that's really
4. pornographic here (.) pardon the pun (0.2) .hh i:s that effectively what
5. they're saying (0.2) and I don't kno::w if:: yo- if:: this is a (.) unki::nd
6. reading you are- you're far more generous than me
7. [about these guys' reasoning] (0.4) really what they're saying
8. P: [hm:: huh huh huh huh huh]
9. H: is that (.) homosexual sex per se:: (0.2) is pornographic. (.) That's how I read
10. it .hh why?, why?, does the portrayal or even the implied portrayal of
11. anal sex- .hh I mean how on e:arth does that cause- cause ten[sion?]
12. P: [Hmm] Hmm
13. .hhh Um I think a more generous:: uh::m framing of that statement
14. might be that the association .hh of uh::m same-sex sexual conduct
15. between me::n (0.2) with:: (.) the cultural institution of *ulwaluko*
16. ((the cultural practice of male initiation in amaXhosa culture))
17. (.) and perhaps even .hh uh::m the religious institution of Christianity (.) .hh
18. uh::m is what (.) is reprehensible. I think that is- that is a far more
19. generous and a bit more nuanced reading of .hh (.) uh uh uhm (.) what
20. may be uh::m [being asserted]
21. H: [But then there is- but there is-] then they give credence to my::
22. ungenerous reading because three=four sentences later .hhh
23. they say (.) and this is a verbatim quote it's stuck in my head (0.3)
24. children learn by imitating.
25. P: Mmm mm mm (0.2) .hh no absolu[tely huh huh huh huh]
26. [Heaven forbid if (.) if kids] should be
27. [doing things] that Eusebius might do [privately]
28. P: [Mmm] [Mmm] ((talk continues))

The host displays hesitation in line 2, dragging out the words 'thing is'. This displays an activated delay for what he is about to talk about. As he mentions the topic of what he wants to say next, his tone changes and he emphasises the topic of anal sex. This is followed by an account of producing those two words by saying 'they actually mention it' which underscores the host's disbelief that the Appeals Tribunal mentions anal sex explicitly as one of the justifications for changing the rating of the film (see Film and Publication Board 2018). Both the pre-stalling of the topic, paired with his tonal change and emphasis displays his emotive disbelief and shock towards the Appeals Tribunal's invocation of anal sex as a line of justification.³ The host continues with a pre-sequence in lines 5-7, indicated by the 0.2 second pause here, as a form of a forestalling or delay, in order to pre-empt a negative re-uptake by the participant (Heritage 1984). The use of pause in line 7 is notably attached to the end of the pre-sequence, further adding to the delayed production of his primary topic of talk. The first word after the pause is 'really', which is emphasised (line 7). There is then a micropause before the main topic of the sentence in line 9: 'homosexual sex per se' which is once again emphasised. A 0.2-second pause then follows these words, along with the words 'is pornographic'. The consequent question, highlighted in lines 10-11, demonstrates how the host is emotively orienting to his own talk; a raised intonation on the 'why' can be heard, stated twice for emphasis, followed by a display of his shock and disbelief at this line of justification, which in line 11 also contains three emphasised words as well as a double production of 'cause', to further delay the participant's response.

As a question has just been produced, a response is expected; this common interactional sequence is a typical instance of an adjacency pair (Heritage 1984). The participant begins his turn proper with a hesitant 'um' (line 13) followed by another hesitation, 'uhm', after the word 'generous'. His diction in the form of the auxiliary verb 'might', which is indicative of an alignment which is not as firm as if the word 'would' was used for example, further indicates his hesitation in producing his response to the question in a more generous way. The participant displays his reflexive awareness of the prior talk by explicitly saying he will provide a more 'generous' interpretation (line 13), a word which was produced by the host in line 6. The participant is in fact beginning his turn with an accounting of his interpretation as his response⁴ is disaffiliated with the host's interpretation.

In lines 14-17 the participant explains that it is the perceived association of homosexuality with *ulwaluko* and Christianity, which the Appeals Tribunal does not favour. The production of this response warrants further explication. In line 14, part of the word 'association' is emphasised which indicates that the participant sees this link to be crucial in understanding his reading of the Appeals Tribunal's statement. After this

word there is another dragged out 'uhm' and then an emphasis and dragging of the word 'men' in line 15. This emphasis importantly centres the topic of discussion around a specific gendered identity. All of this indicates hesitation towards what is about to be produced, which supports his reflexive awareness of producing a non-aligned response to the host. To further note, the participant finishes his turn of talk by accounting for his disagreement again, by stating that his interpretation is more 'generous' and 'nuanced', as emphasised in line 18. This accounting is a further example of how interlocutors try to maintain social solidarity within conversation even in the face of disagreements, and provides evidence for the normative accountability of talk (Heritage 1984). The host's response is to reframe the participant's response as providing 'credence' to his own argument, which he frames as 'ungenerous' with an emphasis on the prefix 'un' (line 21). This again displays a reflexive awareness of talk which has been produced prior as a means of intersubjective maintenance, even though dispreferred responses are being produced (Heritage 1984). The host then utilises further comments from the Appeals Tribunal to back up his argument, prefacing it by stating that he recalls the quote about to be produced 'verbatim' (emphasised) as it is 'stuck' (emphasised) in his head (line 22). This small piece of talk serves the function again of displaying an emotive response towards the topic indicating how it has affected him: emotions of shock and disbelief are once again displayed.

With a host of subject positions under scrutiny in this extract, the most potent is the discursive formation of queerness without direct invocation of this identity. Only a tacit reference to this position is granted through the invocation of 'anal sex', which is depicted as 'creating tension' in society. What becomes apparent is that a particular knowledge around homosexuality has been produced by targeting the performance of anal sex as isolated to this group which is seen as an affront to other social positions. A pillar of the re-classification, as cited by the host, is that 'children learn by imitating' – with the inference of this positioning being that homosexuality is a deviant, learnable pattern of behaviour to which uptake in future generations should be prevented (line 23). Notably, in order to premise his initial engagement with the participant, the host highlights his astonishment in line 2 that 'anal sex' has even been mentioned by the Tribunal, indicating that such a blunt sexual reference is taboo and thereafter uses this object of talk to task the guest with producing an account (line 10). The host notes in line 4, and repeats in line 9, that the assumption that homosexual sex acts are pornographic is problematic. The production of queer sexuality within this common stereotype as a-romantic, hyper-sexualised and fetishised is being produced, and normed as socially deviant by the Tribunal (See McLaughlin & Rodriguez 2017).

The escalating talk shows that the host's own defensive strategies indicate that talk of identity draws from the personal and becomes a value-laden discursive activity. In line 11, the host's choice of phrase suggests he does not see a link between the implied portrayal of anal sex and social issues, and his personal astonishment is also noticeable as he stresses and elongates the word 'earth'. Once the participant speaker has replied, the host disagrees with his reading favouring his 'ungenerous' one given that the Tribunal make more claims which support his stance as they state that 'children learn by imitating' (line 21-23). In producing a counter-argument to the claim of children needing protection, the host notes that this phrasing is stuck in his head and presents himself as an exemplar case stating 'heaven forbid' if they were to replicate his own private actions (line 25). As seen in the methods of Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), that is by attending to the systems of representations put forth by the Appeals Tribunal, the host has acknowledged his own subjectivity within the discourses available in the conversation and can position himself vis-à-vis homosexuality. As such, the way in which the host chooses to push against the claims made by the Tribunal, re-specified by his participant speaker, come from his own self-positioning. The host's tone in addressing the commentary, critique of the Appeals Tribunal and disaffiliation with his guest's remarks can all be seen as instances of emotive talk as he appeals to both the argument at hand and the attached personal scrutiny. This instance shows how talk of identity can become both a personal tasked negotiation as well as a value-based activity.

Culture, queerness and their disaffiliation in speech

Similar issues are dealt with in the second extract from the same radio podcast. However, this conversation, between host (H) and caller (C), has the host wanting callers to engage with the film's artistic merits rather than the controversy surrounding the film.

(2) [702] *The reclassification of Inxeba* (37:00) (Radio 702 2018)

((Caller has phoned in to express his opinion on the film))

1. C: It=it=it's very telling, in terms of (.) uh, you know, the fact that we try:
2. so hard, as=as=as, black people to (.) to hide our=our sexuality. (0.2)
3. so, for me, it, it was a big theme around (sexuality) (.) and act[ually]
4. H: And what] did you make (.) uh uh of that ending.

5. (0.3) .hhh I've seen the film now, twice, and .hhh I, the first time
6. I saw it (.) my boyfriend and I were debating it. .hhh
7. Both of us didn't like the ending (.) hhh
8. .hhh I thought it was a bit quick .hhh and the violence at the e:nd
9. and, the=the, cliffing that happened .hhh I was like hawu where does
10. that come from. (.) .hhh there wasn't enough cre::sce:ndo building up to that for
11. me. How did you feel about=it?
12. C: (0.5) .hhh No=but, for me, it actually made sense because (.)
13. it tells the story, it, (0.3) of (.) you know, y- y- (0.4) you actually prepared,
14. to kill someone, to hide our secret (.) you know, our secret is so deep (.)
15. so grea::t that's wh[at
16. H: Mmmm.]
17. C: we can't le:t the whole (.) world (.) knowing abo[ut
18. H: Mmmm.]
19. C: y- you know, I love another man.

In this second extract, the caller in line 1 is trying to express what he finds as 'very telling' in the film, linking events and identity in the film to those experienced in reality. The primary topic of the sentence is produced 'late' – at the end of his sentence – which shows that he orients towards his talk as being of a dispreferred response (Heritage 1984). He also mentions the plural pronoun 'we', aligning his view not as a collective-held view, and continues in line 2 to explain that he is referring to 'black people', specifically subjects who have to hide their sexuality. He further refers to sexuality through a collective 'our', stated twice. Thus, the invocation of a collective experience of queer black people, producing a dispreferred response for the context, also serves to orient the caller to this position and by extension links his opinion to his experience. The host then cuts off the caller – by speaking over him – even though the caller has demonstrated that he is still elaborating his point (line 3). The host does not align directly with the talk the caller has produced but poses a question about the ending of the film in order to change the topic (line 4). He elaborates on his point, explaining that he and his partner did not like the 'quick' ending and the 'violence' at the end of *Inxeba* (lines 5-9). In line with his set context, the host has shifted the conversation away from discussing the social identity of queer black people towards discussing the film based on its artistic merits. He asks the caller what he made of the ending of the film, once again (line 11) inviting an answer.

The caller remains silent for half a second before responding in disagreement with the host. The caller's renegotiation of the talk to revert to discussing the central issue of queerness demonstrates how interactions involving queerness are negotiated between interlocutors. This question-answer sequence displays three important features that demonstrates how the caller views a queer identity central to this talk, rather than focusing on the artistic merits of the film. Firstly, an answer is produced, albeit a disaffiliated response indicated by the preceding pause and the word 'no' (line 12). This is immediately followed by a conditional word 'but' with no space between the disagreeing answer and the beginning of the account of that answer. Secondly, several delays are placed before the actual account of the response. The caller's preface to his account contains several delays in the form of a micropause after 'because' in line 12 (a word prefacing explanation), a 0.3 second pause followed by a further delay ('you know'), more hesitation and cutting short ('y- y-'), as well as 0.4 second pause (line 13) before producing the actual account for not agreeing. These delays are indicative of a dispreferred response produced as the caller shifts his talk back to queerness from artistic merit, and functions to show intersubjectivity as being reflexively managed; his response is produced both accountably and with an awareness of the previous turn of talk regarding artistic preferences (see, for example, Heritage 1984). Thirdly, the account is produced due to the answer being disaffiliative of the host's question, which is framed in such a way as to project an affiliative response due to the accounting of his opinion that the film required more build-up to the end (see, again, Heritage 1984).

Interactionally then, queerness-as-reception is being used to invoke a collective queer experience. The caller's actual account for his response is produced from line 14 onwards. In line 19 the caller displays a delay ('you know'), once again, before mentioning the crux of the talk: homosexual love. The host responds to this talk with back-channel utterances in lines 16 and 18. These utterances embody 'the understanding that extended talk by another is going on by declining to produce a fuller turn in that position' (Schegloff 1982:81). However, as the host attempted to previously shift the topic of talk to the artistic merits of the film, and given that the caller has now reintroduced real-world issues for queer black people, the inability to disaffiliate self-identity becomes a clear preoccupation of the conversation.

As per Parker (1992), discourses become reified in and by other discourses in order to co-create specific meanings about subjects. As seen in the caller's speech, a specific contour has been given to the queer identity within a racial category as he notes that black people try to 'hide our sexuality' (line 2). A critical intersection between social identities manifests in this talk, as neither a racial nor queer subjectivity accurately captures the caller's social reality. The host then asks for the caller's perspective on

the film's ending, which he has personally shown a disliking for, given the inclusion of violence (line 8-11). The caller, however, exemplifies in line 14 that violence in the black experience of queer sexuality is personally ascribed in his social reality, as one would be willing 'to kill someone' to conceal this aspect of their identity. Akin to work by Judge (2017), the caller's placement reproduces a discursive dynamic that violence – whether through the symbolic annihilation of identity or interpersonal perpetuation – enables a particular way of knowing the black queer subject identity.

Critically, the caller produces what Judge (2017) labels 'blackwashing homophobia', as his localised talk renders race as the primary source for the perceived violence/s his subjectivity has faced and could potentially produce. Further, by articulating a queer experience undevout of racial co-configuration it is apparent that, to his understanding, homophobic violence is tethered in these power structures. This personal treatment of black sexuality coincides with the current social landscape. Morrissey (2013:68), for example, indicates that queerness is often treated as 'un-African' and in opposition to traditional culture, a view at times readily sanctioned by adhering communities. The racial discourse is also used, at least in the caller's production, to constrain queer political agency as this sexual position becomes a 'secret ... so deep' that the world he exists in cannot know of his love for another man (line 14-17). The caller demonstrates the discursive dominance of social identities in talk as the interplay between race and sexuality was important enough for the caller to address it *personally* – which fostered talk distanced from the host's intended topic.

Using identity to create, maintain and reconfigure intersubjective space

The third extract was collected from the Metro FM radio show, *Talk with Kgopedi* – targeted towards young urban adults – in which co-writer and producer of the film, Malusi Bengu, is a featured guest (P). As a public radio station, Metro FM aligns to a different organisational culture when compared to 702 and, as per their government mandate, is committed to the fostering of non-sexist, non-racial and democratic processes in South Africa (Mtimde 2000). Consequently, their mandate abuts the conventions found within commercial radio, however targeting an audience which is tasked with setting the agenda amid self-identifying common concerns (Bosch 2010). Open discussion, then, is assumed to be a hallmark of this extract.

(3) [Metro FM] *Talk with Kgopedi* (40:37) (Metro FM 2018)

((A disgruntled caller has phoned in to air his grievances with the film))

1. C: If you are a man, uh (.) a Xho:sa man wena Malusi you=will know these side
2. effects (.) I talk about.
3. P: I like that you keep saying, if I am a Xhosa man=you keep qu:estioning that.
4. .hhh because I am making different decisions to you.
5. .hhh let me tell you (.) o:ver and above being a Xhosa, .hhh what I am al:so.
6. I am al:so a black South African man. (0.2) .hhh I am also an artist in a bla:ck
7. commu:nity. .hh[h
8. C: Oka]y
9. P: I] see what I see (.) daily.
10. I see our society being destroyed. .hhh I see us marginalising people, I see us
11. killing people (.) .hhh for ma:king different sexu:al choices to the collective
12. tribe. .hhh Are you th[en
13. C: ()]
14. P: Liste[n!
15. C: M]m.
16. P: Are you then saying (.) I must take a:ll of that energy (.) that I am seeing,
17. and go back home and sleep?
18. C: (0.4) I-don-these are two different things.
19. C-Cause to my understanding, th-this, o-okay in my understanding (0.2)
20. is that this fil:m is not about (the sir) going to initiation.
21. (0.2) Yes, that one-okay, its fine its about lo:ve stories, mainly two gu:ys that fall
22. in lo:ve, in the-in the end, and all that (bullshit).

The context of extract 3 has the caller (C) proposing to the participant (Malusi Bengu) that the film carries with it 'side effects' (line 1-2) to which he has not attended. In his first line of the dialogue, the caller invokes two subject positions, being that of a 'man' as well as a 'Xhosa man'. The specific invocation of the word 'if' within this turn isolates the caller's remark as casting suspicion on the participant's production of a type of cultural masculinity, as if he had successfully filled his role he should be already aware of the concerns he is raising. This fully realised production of a specific type of Xhosa masculinity, as a strategic device to establish his turn, highlights how participant orientation in talk can be formed within and perpetuate "taken for granted" knowledge

established through discourse. After taking up his turn relevance place (TRP), the participant speaker orients towards the aspersion being cast on his identity through the rhetorical remark that he 'likes' that the caller 'keep[s] questioning' his accomplishment of Xhosa masculinity (line 3). As per Heritage (2012), by re-invoking this specific symbol as productive to the interaction, an intersubjective reality between the participants has been established and this successive pattern of acts demarcates a shared comprehension of the social world. By centring the place of masculinity in their talk, a reciprocity of perspectives between the participants is shown as a shared accomplishment of the social world (see Schegloff 1992).

However, the participant speaker challenges this within his turn, by isolating the 'different decisions' he has made as the root cause for his disruption of the caller's understanding of masculinity (line 4). In doing so, the participant speaker chooses to assert his own position within the intersubjective space by employing a sub-cultural understanding in which Xhosa men can make choices which go against the caller's typified account (Prus 1997). As seen through the stress of the word 'if' in producing his turn, it is clear that the participant has taken on a defensive stance and is attempting to constrain this penalty placed on his identity. In his proceeding utterance, the participant produces objects to orient himself towards being a 'black South African man' as well as an 'artist in a black community'⁵ (line 6-7). The stress placed on these racial symbols in the moment of their production, as well as his invocation that these orientations are situated 'over and above' (Xhosa) masculinity, highlights his own process of accounting to repair the caller's assertion (line 5).

After an intake of breath, which the caller takes as a potential TRP, the participant cuts the caller off and extends his sequence. Within this turn, the participant-speaker ratifies the intersubjective space by invoking his own experiences and connecting these to a shared reality with the caller as seen in the stressors placed on the collective words 'us' and 'our' from line 11. By bringing the caller into this understanding, the participant speaker attempts to quell his dissidence by noting the systemic nature of homophobic violence, and does not cast it solely onto the caller's remarks (see Peräkylä & Vehviläinen 2003). With a discursive leaning, this section of conversation provides insight into the broader treatment of queerness in society as claiming such an identity would lead to the 'marginalising [of] people' and even the 'killing [of] people' (line 10-11). This indictment provides a lever into the discursive individualisation of the queer body in the South African landscape, which is placed antagonistically against the 'collective tribe' (line 11-12). The discursive formation of the queer body as a-cultural, as sitting outside of the realm of traditional African culture, has been transferred into the local context of this speech in order to propagate the producer's defence (see also Luyt 2012).

Trouble-in-talk ensues as the caller tries to interject the participant's extension sequence in line 13, which is immediately dismissed, and the participant-speaker closes his statement with a rhetorical device. The caller takes up his utterance to negotiate his claim by stating that there are 'two different things' under investigation in the film. As such, the producer's tactical use of his own identity has been effective in this instance as the caller now co-accomplishes the production of a parallel intersubjectivity in which culture can be parcelled out from sexual activity. After line 21, the caller re-specifies his own understanding of the film by stating that 'two guys that fall in love' but that such a narrative remains 'bullshit'. It is clear in this turn that homosexuality is marked as abject, however, simultaneously produced as the caller tracks the narrative of the story. This response also shows that the caller's original agreement with the participant speaker may not have been authentic, but done in an attempt to co-accomplish intersubjectivity to provide him access to the conversation. Whether effective or not, it seems that identity is necessary to claim or negotiate at some level in talk around the film.

Reflections on the intersection between method, data, and self-identity

By being a highly concentrated study of three small extracts of speech, there are obvious limitations to the conclusions arrived at in this paper. Further investigation into the production of queerness in speech is warranted to check for consistency while quantitative corpus methods could productively track trends, patterns and frequency of the phenomena of study. Added to this limitation is the problem of subjective interpretation in CA. Even when CA is biased, however, qualitative work has seen a turn towards acknowledging reflexivity as a way to use potential bias as analytic tool, instead of favouring 'objectivity' (Berger 2015). As with Pillow (2003), the reflective process is important to both the method of study and analysis, as the decisions made during research are not coincidental considerations but productive. Therefore, a brief reflection on both the data and the process of its collection is necessary to track how the researchers' own identities were negotiated with the productions of identity in the selected excerpts.

The data collection process described here innately resounds with the positional reflexivity asserted by Macbeth (2001), specifically as the collaboration rested upon our own self-identification(s) as queer and, as such, on a shared research interest. Even when negotiating different analytic frames of reference, the personal salience of this positioning informed all points of the collaboration process, especially in targeting

an analysis focused on queer identity. The endogenous approach of using naturally occurring sources of data allowed social identity to be surfaced without contrived production likely in the interview process, and critically provided an anchor into the culturally bounded residues of queerness not innate in our own methods of *doing* social life (see Speer 2002a).

However, whether dealing with three short texts or a whole corpus, the break between being reflexive positionally and the constitutional reflexivity to which Speer (2002a) speaks is not as simplistic as it appears. As self-identified white liberal-leaning academics, a myopic view of how queerness would be spoken about was created as intersections with other identities were not fully anticipated. The endogenous approach of listening to how interactions are constructed may deny these other identities the analytic and critical attention they deserve – given that they are contingent on the participants' own reflexivity in showing how, when and which identities were employed in talk of *Inxeba* (Heritage 2012). Our positioning as white gay men became even more pronounced during the data collection process as we felt obliged to include cultural and secularised narratives on the film in order to prevent objectifying both queer and ethnic identities. Analysing identities which the researchers cannot claim becomes a tricky process, even as our intention was not to scrutinise these structures but see how they were used in the production of talk on the film. When seemingly universal themes of “queer experience” appeared – such as in extract two where the caller expresses deep fear about his sexuality being exposed – we still have to acknowledge that we stand outside of the historically-situated and informed power dynamics faced by black queer South Africans and cannot fully comprehend this anxiety. To address this, we chose to analyse the conversation in terms of its ethnomethodological function, showing how it operates in a small section of everyday life, instead of attempting to universalise it.

In addition, we also had to deal with an overwhelming stream of radio data (where, at one point, even Radio Jacaranda, a predominantly Afrikaans radio station, appeared as a viable source to our monolingual ears). Engaging with the notion of textual reflexivity, put forth by Macbeth (2001), aided in trimming back the pool of data as the transcription process, although arduous at points, focused attention on the details of the interactions, and allowed us to hone in on how identities were being represented by participating members without writing our own selves into the data. There were moments in the podcasts where jarring micro-aggressions were used, such as speakers uttering labels like '*moffie*' or '*istabane*' which, although directly sanctioning queerness, were not taken up and reacted to by participants. Acting as a mediator between the data and its collection became a difficult task of trying to set our own opinions aside and focusing instead on how the interactants took up these constructions.⁶

As with Speer (2002b), contextual bias is largely unmanaged by social scientific research given the fascination with contrived interviews. Where such an approach might have given specific acknowledgement of the standing of queer identity in relation to the film, using natural data provided more tangible access into how this phenomenon self-accrues in radio media against broader institutions such as religion, homophobic violence, and culture. Using naturalistic data allowed an analysis of how queerness is produced, unprompted and without a pre-requisite organisation, in talk of *Inxeba* instead of using this identity as a 'fixing point'. Further, we side with White (2013), who makes the argument that question-led research should be favoured over method-led research, as the latter limits the possibility of surprising results, while the former can lead to the same kinds of research being produced over and over. Thus the data collection process highlights the essentiality of being reflexive whilst engaging in study and surfaces the relevancy of personal social identity during analysis.

Given that several claims have been made about the ways in which queerness is used within talk radio, there is a need to outline ways in which the methods adopted may have limited the kinds of claims that have been made. The transcripts indicate oral speech features such as pause, dragging of words and emphases which allow for the fine-grain analysis of talk necessary for CA, however this may render the transcripts inaccessible to those unfamiliar with this method (see Bucholtz 2000:1441). Furthermore, in terms of the transcription process itself the transcripts produced are inescapably constructed by us, thus, echoing how transcripts 'always [have] a point of view' (Bucholtz 2000:1441). These interpretative choices can also have political effects. As CA is focused on the local interactional context of talk, it does little to look at more macro-structures and the operations of power within such structures. Hence, as with Wetherell (1998:405), a more eclectic discursive analysis, which also includes an 'investigation of the social and political consequences of discursive patterning', was included. The key tactic of applying a supplementary discourse analysis onto the transcripts was to further endorse everyday talk as systemic, and so capture some insights into the broader macro-context. Such intertextual reflection may underscore how participants orient to and manage social identity in their interactions and offer some insight into dynamics between queerness and culture in the everyday practices of South Africans, specifically through conversations about the film *Inxeba*.

Concluding remarks

Using an inductive approach to analyse how queer identities are utilised in radio talk from a public and a private radio station around the film *Inxeba*, we explored ways in which a CA and discursive analysis are able to show how queerness is used and accounted for within three particular talk radio conversations. Based on the data analysed, queer identity is used and responded to in opposition to macro-power societal structures. In the data analysed, queer identity is spoken about with hesitation and unease from two speakers who align with and against, respectively, support for such an identity. Queer identity is constructed as a particular identity, which required accounting for and justification in everyday talk. Further, the effective function of discourse has been noted with its ability to complicate understandings of black queer identity, through methods, accessible in speech, of interpellation, troubling and formation. Reflexivity has been embraced by the researchers as fundamental to the analytic process in order to make clear possible researcher influences and should therefore be read alongside the analysis of the transcripts. It is recommended that CA and discursive analyses be used in tandem in future research on social identities as the former is able to capture the micro-context as it unfolds turn-by-turn, while the latter is able to insert this local context within broader discursive formations. Future studies may also benefit from discursive analyses of a larger set of the same radio show due to the extent of power relations evident therein.

Notes

1. We opt to use the word 'queer' as referent to sexual identities and associated practices of those who are heterosexually non-conformant, and is not treated as a stable or enduring label.
2. The podcasts used are available to download in full online. See Metro FM 2018; Radio 702 2018.
3. Anal sex is constructed as potentially disruptive by the Appeals Tribunal and invoked as a line of justification for the change in the rating of the film. Although anal sex is not necessarily a queer act, taken together within the context that it was used it has been aligned with a queer identity.
4. It is clear from the recorded exchange that these instances of hesitation are not due to a disfluency or misunderstanding.
5. Another potential explanation for the stress of identity in this instance may have been the producer's desire to market the film whilst able to access a wide radio audience. We would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for highlighting the in/accessibility of the CA technique in this regard.
6. Using a third party to transcribe data may benefit further studies that wish to circumvent potential bias.

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