

The social construction of ignorance: A membership categorization analysis (MCA) of the co-creation of identities when elderly visually impaired citizens encounter new technology

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When people orient themselves towards new technology, IT knowledge and skills often become observable phenomena displayed in interaction, and thus the construction of the participants' different discursive identities in situ also becomes relevant. Using video recordings and ethnomethodological conversation analysis (EM/CA) as well as membership categorization analysis (MCA), this paper provides new knowledge on how elderly visually impaired citizens, in interplay with present instructors and non-present adult children, are constructed as ignorant about technological ecologies that include their own accounts and codes. Through multimodal analyses of detailed transcriptions from video recordings of two selected citizens, we show the interactional organization of a participant's collaborative self-construction as ignorant as well as the resisted other-construction of a participant as ignorant. We use the analyses to discuss the social function that these membership categorizations may have.

KEYWORDS: identity; blind and visually impaired elderly; EM/CA; membership categorization analysis; technology