**‘Saving the Guest’ in Korean Talk-Shows: The Host as Cultural Mediator**

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In the context of examining host-guest interactions in Korean celebrity talk shows, we analyze the host’s formulation practice (cf. Heritage 1985) with reference to its sequential imports for expanding on the question-answer sequence in a range of ‘culturally implicative’ ways. Using conversation analysis as the methodology, we analyze a set of practices that the host uses for formulating the upshot of the guest’s answer ostensibly as a matter to be further pursued. The host’s formulation-turn furnishes him/her with a resource for re-presenting the gist or upshot of the guest’s answer in his/her own terms (cf. Heritage & Watson 1980).

The seemingly ‘mundane’ character of the host’s formulation turn as a confirmation-request belies a subtle ‘category-transforming’ operation that undergirds it procedurally (cf. Reynolds 2013). This is manifested in the way the host, as a formulation-speaker, ‘saves’ the guest by scaffolding or replacing the latter’s potentially problematic (e.g., morally deviant) talk or conduct with a ‘safe’ version. For instance, the guest’s self-portrayed ‘volatile’ category-features (e.g., being an aspiring or downtrodden individual) may be tamed into a more ‘stable’ one (e.g., being a supportive family-member or an obedient child of a caring parent). The category-transforming work may proceed in a more ‘exposed’ fashion (cf. Jefferson 1987), as when the guest who has committed *faux pas* incidentally is accorded a negative category-feature (e.g., ‘unrefined’) and reminded of its negative import *vis-à-vis* a ‘better’ (e.g., ‘more refined’) alternative that the host proposes as the formulation-speaker.

The organizational features of the host’s formulation turn embody his/her identity as a cultural mediator who displays orientation towards being supportive of a particular set of values over another (e.g., ‘familial ties’ over ‘individual wish’). Micro-analytically revealed as grounded in culturally-implicative category-work, they are shown to be constitutive of the practice of ‘doing being the talk-show host’ as its omnirelevantly-oriented-to-features.

**Keywords**: formulation, sequence, conversation analysis, category

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