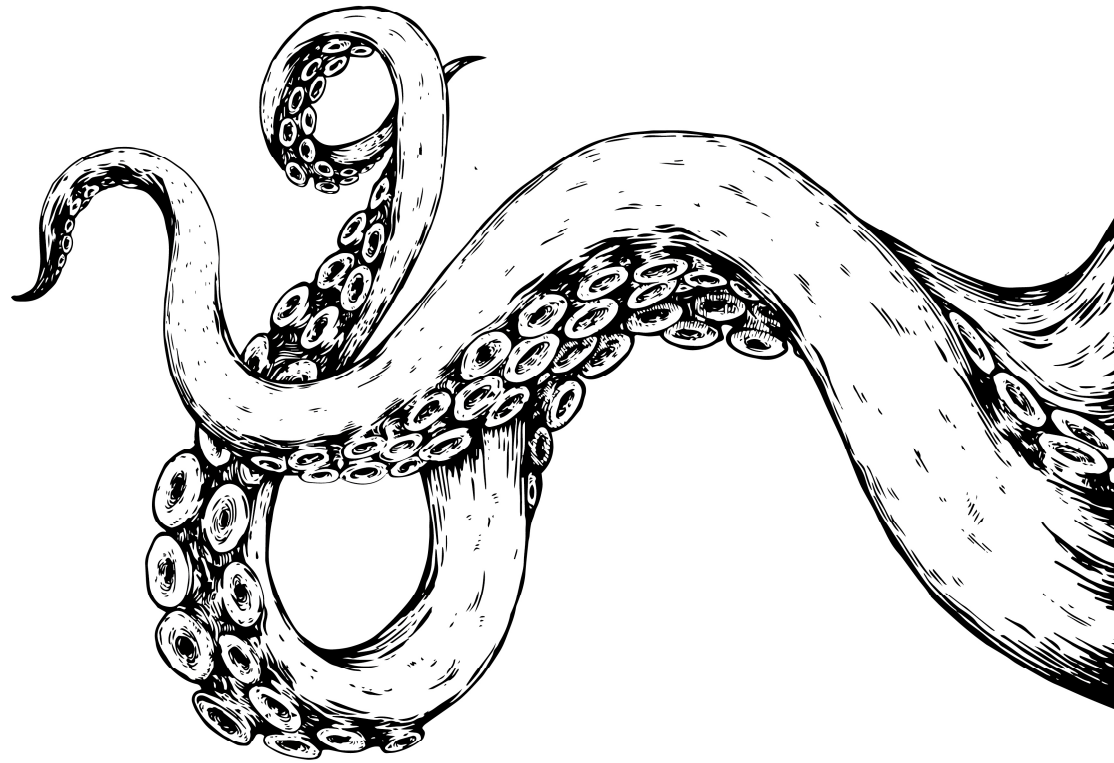


Influence, Manipulation & Seduction

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Persuasive Language

Basel / Online, Nov 20-21, 2020



Book of Abstracts



University
of Basel

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About the Conference

How can we get someone to behave in a way that they initially did not intend? And how can we change what our interlocutor thinks about a certain issue? We use language to ‘convince’, ‘persuade’, ‘cajole’, or ‘coax’ our counterpart into a certain behavior or state of mind. These are activities we engage in constantly, usually even without conscious thought. It is words that have the power to mold and influence opinions, attitudes, and behavior. This persuasive power of language is at the center of this symposium.

Linguists have traditionally examined the workings of persuasive language in institutionalized discourses. As genres inherently characterized by persuasion, it is not surprising then that advertising and politics have enjoyed the limelight of scholarly attention here; investigations of the features of persuasive language in TV, radio, and print advertisements as well as political speeches, interviews, and press conferences abound. Persuasion has also been studied extensively in the fields of rhetoric and critical discourse analysis (CDA). The aim of this symposium is to expand the research of persuasive language to other genres and domains (like advice-giving, dating, or sales encounters) and to engage with language and persuasion from other perspectives which have opened up due to technological advances (computer-mediated communication), social changes (globalized and networked publics), and methodological progress (big data and digital humanities, sophisticated statistical and phonetic tools for data analysis).

The symposium on persuasive language brings linguists together with scholars from the fields of psychology, sociology, and media, information, cultural, and internet studies to examine persuasion from new perspectives. The contributions are grouped into four thematic strands: persuasion online, persuasion in daily life, gender and persuasion, and new approaches to persuasive language.

Conference Organizers

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 #LanguageAndPersuasion

Presentations

All full presentations available as videos via conference website before the conference dates.

Live Program - Overview

All times in CET time zone

20 November (Zoom)	21 November (Zoom)
10:00-10:30 Conference Opening	10:00-11:00 Persuasion Online
10:30-11:30 Gender & Persuasion	13:30-14:30 New Approaches: Forensic Linguistics
13:30-14:30 New Approaches to Persuasion	15:00-15:30 Lightning Talks
15:30-16:30 Persuasion in Daily Life	15:30-15:45 Conference Closing
17:00-18:00 Conference Online Social	

Live Program - Details

November 20 (Friday)

All times in CET time zone

10:00-10:30 Zoom

Sofia Rüdiger & Daria Dayter	Conference Opening
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Session 1 – Gender & Persuasion – Chair: Mark McGlashan

10:30-11:30 Zoom discussion

Veronika Koller & Frazer Heritage (Lancaster University)	Attracting New Members to Online Incel Communities
Alexandra Krendel (Lancaster University)	Creating a Positive Manosphere Identity
Robert Lawson (Birmingham City University)	Radicalisation, Recruitment and Discourses of Masculinity on /R/THE_DONALD
Rachel O'Neill (University of Warwick)	Seduction and the Limits of Consent
Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth) & Daria Dayter (University of Basel)	Persuasive Language and the Discourse of Seduction Gurus

Session 2 – New Approaches to Persuasion – Chair: Tom Van Hout

13:30-14:30 Zoom discussion

Sten Hansson (University of Tartu)	How to Analyse Discursive Persuasion in Blame Games
Kerstin Fischer & Rosalyn Langedijk (University of Southern Denmark)	Persuasive Dialog in Human-Robot Interaction in the Wild
Jan Michalsky (Universität Oldenburg)	Dynamic Prosodic Adaptation as a Cue to Social Distance and Its Role in Persuasion
Oliver Niebuhr (University of Southern Denmark)	Enhancing Persuasiveness through the Assessment and Training of Vowel Resonant Frequencies and Their Acoustically Projected Body Height
Pawel Sickinger (University of Bonn)	Cognitive Pragmatics as a Framework for Persuasive Language Analysis
Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri (Università Roma Tre)	On the Persuasive Effectiveness of Presuppositions: Behavioral and Neurophysiological Evidence

Session 3 – Persuasion in Daily Life – Chair: Stefan Diemer

15:30-16:30 Zoom discussion

Laura Baranzini (Università della Svizzera Italiana), Dorian Ciminio Federica Cominetti, Claudia Coppola, Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri, Giorgia Mannaioli, Viviana Masia (Università di Roma Tre)	Manipulative Effects of Implicit Communication: A Comparative Analysis of French, Italian and German Political Speeches
Sofie Decock (Universiteit Gent)	On the Influence of Alternative Paralinguistic Features in Online Hotel Reviews on Reply Strategies in Hotel Management Responses
Robert Fuchs (University of Hamburg)	The Linguistic Expression of Persuasion across Varieties of English
Bogdana Huma (York St John University)	Persuasion in and as Conversation
Susanne Mühleisen (University of Bayreuth)	Moral Communication as Persuasion: Dear Pastor's Advice in Jamaican Talk Radio

Conference Social

17:00-18:00 Zoom

Everyone is welcome, please sign up during registration	Breakout rooms on Zoom
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We have planned a social event to give all the participants a chance to meet new people and mingle in an informal atmosphere.

The conference social will take place on Zoom in the format of speed dating. You will be randomly assigned to a breakout room with several other participants and given a fun talking prompt (of course, you're free not to use it and chat about whatever you like!). After 5 minutes, breakout rooms will be randomly reassigned. Depending on the number of participants, the social will involve 6-12 rounds and will take 30-60 minutes. You can of course drop out at any time.

November 21 (Saturday)

All times in CET time zone

Session 4 – Persuasion Online – Chair: Rob Lawson

10:00-11:00 Zoom discussion

Stefan Diemer & Marie-Louise Brunner (Trier University of Applied Sciences)	The Multimodal Discourse of Persuasion in Instastories
Rosanna Guadagno (Stanford University)	Information Warfare in the Social Media Age
Christian Hoffmann (University of Augsburg)	Dumb Trump, Sleepy Joe and Crooked Hillary: The Persuasive Role of Negative Evaluation in Election Campaign Tweets
Thomas C. Messerli & Daria Dayter (University of Basel)	The Role of Linguistic Formality in Persuasion
Piia Varis (Tilburg University)	The Language of Conspiracy as Persuasive Political Tool: Climate Change Conspiracy Theories Online
Lu Xiao (Syracuse University)	Fight Disinformation in Social Media: An Online Persuasion Perspective

Session 5 – New Approaches – Forensic Linguistics – Chair: Theresa Neumaier

13:30-14:30 Zoom discussion

Dawn Archer (Manchester Metropolitan University)	Negotiation, Deception and Manipulation: The Linguistic Similarities (and Differences)
Ria Perkins (Aston University)	Power and Influence: Understanding Linguistic Markers of Power in Criminal Persuasive Contexts
Isabel Picornell (Aston University)	Addressee or Overhearer? Language and Setting the Scene for Manipulation and Persuasion
Helena Woodfield (University of Birmingham)	Disinformation in the News Media
David Wright (Nottingham Trent University)	The Many Faces of Persuasion in the Pickup Artist Community

Lightning Talks

15:00-15:30 live on Zoom

Natascha Rohde (Aston University)	“The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys!” Collective Identity Construction in Computer-Mediated Discourse
Ksenija Bogetic (University of Belgrade; Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts)	Discourse of Misogynist Slogans in the Manosphere: Metaphor and Persuasion in a Hate-group’s Online Forum
Dominick Boyle (University of Basel)	Authenticity as a Stancetaking Resource: A Corpus Driven Look at First Order Authenticity in Online Restaurant Reviews
Olga Karamalak (Higher School of Economics)	Fashion Related Hashtags’ Persuasive Power
Maryam Isgandarli (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences) & Azad Mammadov (Azerbaijan University of Languages)	Repetitions in the Political Discourse of President Donald Trump
Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)	The Promotion of “Breastfeeding-as-Nursing” in the UK and the False Dichotomy of Breast vs. Bottle
Elena Borisova (Moscow City University)	Persuasive (Perlocutive) Potential of Modal Particles

15:30-15:45 Zoom

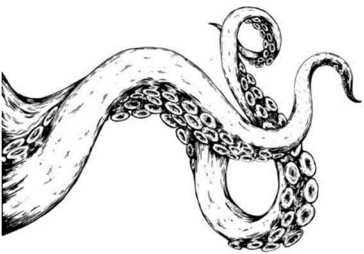
Daria Dayter & Sofia Rüdiger	Conference closing
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Abstracts

Session 1 – Gender & Persuasion – Chair: Mark McGlashan

November 20, 10:30-11:30 Zoom discussion

Veronika Koller & Frazer Heritage (Lancaster University)	Attracting New Members to Online Incel Communities
Alexandra Krendel (Lancaster University)	Creating a Positive Manosphere Identity
Robert Lawson (Birmingham City University)	Radicalisation, Recruitment and Discourses of Masculinity on /R/THE_DONALD
Rachel O’Neill (University of Warwick)	Seduction and the Limits of Consent
Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth) & Daria Dayter (University of Basel)	Persuasive Language and the Discourse of Seduction Gurus



“This sub is the closest thing I have to a friend”: Attracting New Members to Online Incel Communities

Veronika Koller (Lancaster University)

Frazer Heritage (Lancaster University)

In this paper, we address an aspect of the ‘manosphere’, a loose network of online communities that is characterised by extreme misogyny (Ging 2017). More specifically, we look at the online fora created and frequented by incels (‘involuntary celibates’), i.e. mostly heterosexual young men who wish to but do not have sexual or romantic relationships.

Given that incel communities are characterised by negativity, self-loathing and pessimism about the future (Heritage & Koller, under review), we ask why someone would join such an online community. Next to psychological explanations (e.g. Pendry & Salvatore 2015), we are particularly interested in the role of language in making the community attractive to newcomers. Our data consists of a corpus of one million words of posts and comments from the now banned Reddit discussion forum, or sub(-reddit), R/BRAINCELS. We started our analysis by searching for

the words ‘new’, ‘community’ and ‘sub’ to identify men who had recently started to visit the forum and to pinpoint discussions about the in-group. In a second step, we conducted a manual qualitative analysis of the resulting concordance, focusing on evaluation.

Preliminary results suggest that newcomers typically introduce themselves by commenting on a topic thread and that established members rarely engage with such backgrounded introductions. However, posts which reference the community typically engage with newcomers who observe the discussion, positioning the community as something desirable and as potentially helping incels’ mental health via a support system. Nevertheless, an analysis of frequent semantic domains shows that such positive evaluation is overshadowed by members’ debates about the perceived evils of people who disagree with their world view and their own hopeless situation.

When shared with research partners, the findings will be important in preventing teenagers and young men from becoming members of the present and other potentially harmful communities.

References

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Creating a Positive Manosphere Identity: The Role of Interaction and (Im)Politeness

Alexandra Krendel (Lancaster University)

This paper considers how an in-group identity is fostered within the TRP subreddit, a manosphere community-of-practice on the discussion website *Reddit*. The manosphere is a loose network of anti-feminist websites, whose users believe that society is controlled by feminists and that men must take action to resist this. Past research into the manosphere has focussed on how women (the

main out-group) are negatively represented (e.g. Jane 2018). However, an analysis of in-group manosphere interactions from an (im)politeness perspective would address how negative out-group representations and positive in-group interactions together create a positive community experience which could positively influence user retention.

To undertake this, I collected the top 10 most popular posts (and their attached comments) of January 2020 from the TRP subreddit, and analysed how users addressed each other in the comments section, and addressed the authors of original posts in a one-sided fashion. Each comment was coded for conventionalised impoliteness formulae (Culpeper 2011), and for the four aspects of Spencer-Oatey's (2008) rapport management framework: quality face (being positively evaluated), social identity face (having social roles recognised and upheld), equity rights (being treated fairly by others) and association rights (having an appropriate relationship with others for the social distance involved).

Preliminary results showed that in-group posters showed appreciation for each other by addressing each other using kinship terms such as "brother", thanking each other for their posts, honouring prolific posters and forum moderators, and hedging given advice. Conversely, pointed criticisms and condescensions were used to describe out-group female social actors as innately selfish and child-like. These results revealed that rapport management techniques were common in the analysed interactions. This could encourage new users to engage with other members of the community, and to discuss taking offline actions which the in-group approve of.

References

- Culpeper, Jonathan. 2011. *Using Language to Cause Offence*. Cambridge: CUP.
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- Spencer-Oatey, Helen. 2008. *Culturally Speaking: Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory*. 2nd edition. London: Continuum.



Radicalisation, Recruitment and Discourses of Masculinity on /R/THE_DONALD

Robert Lawson (Birmingham City University)

In recent years, growing attention has been directed at examining the broad scope of the alt-right, a major conservative political movement which pits itself against political correctness, feminism, ‘social justice warriors,’ and left-wing liberalism, while promoting the notion that only ‘real men’ are able to protect their country from immigration, terrorism, and cultural dilution, part of long-standing nationalist tradition of equating ideal masculinity with whiteness and the framing of masculinity as something ‘lost’ and that needs to be ‘reclaimed’ (Ferber 2000, Jackson 2002). While this work has advanced our understanding of how ethnicity is involved in processes of radicalisation, Kimmel (2018) argues that scholars have overlooked the role of masculinity, leading to significant under-theorization about the gendered motives which drive extremist recruitment.

To that end, this presentation examines the intersections of masculinity, nationalism, and white supremacy, focusing on data collected from /R/THE_DONALD, a community on the social networking site Reddit. In particular, the presentation draws on corpus linguistics methods and critical discourse analysis to trace how different types of men are presented in this community and what this might tell us about broader discourses of masculinity in the ‘alt-right.’ Providing a preliminary linguistic analysis of three sub-corpora drawn from /R/THE_DONALD (the top 100 search results for the terms *men*, *white men*, and *muslim men*), the presentation discusses collocations, n-grams, and concordance lines to show how men who occupy the ‘other’ are positioned as lacking the essential characteristics of masculinity, as effeminate, amoral, animalistic, or deviant and thus not worthy of being called ‘real’ men, according to the normative standards within the /R/THE_DONALD community. As such, this work contributes to improving our understanding of how young men might be persuaded to engage in extremist political action, offering potentially useful interventions in the realms of deradicalisation and desistance.

References

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- Jackson, David. 2002. *The Fear of Being Seen as White Losers: White Working-Class Masculinities*. Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications.
- Kimmel, Michael. 2018. *Healing from Hate: How Young Men Get Into-and Out Of-Violent Extremism*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.



Seduction and the Limits of Consent

Rachel O'Neill (University of Warwick)

Promising heterosexual men greater choice and control in their intimate lives, the seduction industry elaborates a distinctive system of expertise. Its central organising premise is that interactions between women and men are subject to certain underlying principles that, once understood, can be readily manipulated. Based on ethnographic research encompassing observational fieldwork, interviews, and media analysis, in this paper I discuss the central role of persuasion within seduction theory and practice. I argue that seduction scripts entail not only the manipulation of language but the mobilisation of affect, the intent of which is to produce encounters that are at once highly formulaic and emotionally laden. Particular emphasis is placed on the orchestration of intimacy via choreographed displays of spontaneity and cultivated performances of authenticity, which tap into the unwritten ‘feeling rules’ (Hochschild 1979) of heterosexuality. To this extent, seduction is not a niche practice but instead exemplifies the codification and calcification of romantic conventions more generally in an era of ‘cold intimacy’ (Illouz 2013). Addressing the commonplace question of ‘What’s wrong with seduction?’, I contend that this question is misplaced whenever it is asked in isolation. Instead, any consideration of the ethics of seduction must also deliberate the limits of consent, recognising that contract-based models of relationality allow for and assume the right to coax, cajole, and coerce.

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- Illouz, Eva. 2013. *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity.



Persuasive Language and the Discourse of Seduction Gurus

Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth)

Daria Dayter (University of Basel)

This study looks at the language of self-proclaimed seduction experts, including the ‘pick up artists’ (PUA) – a community that learns and practices speed-seduction for short-term mating. Specifically, we investigate the way that established members of the seduction community with a lot of social capital – so called ‘gurus’ of pick-up – discursively warrant their status as being successful with women and proficient in PUA and seduction techniques.

PUA belong to the less extreme fraction of the ‘manosphere’ and encourage men to use manipulative strategies to select, pursue and sexually conquer women, with the ultimate aim alternating among smaller communities from sex to having a stable relationship even to marriage. The PUA community is highly commercialized, with gurus trying to attract new members and sell them on seminars, bootcamps, and whole programs complete with online and printed material that can cost thousands of pounds. This means that the gurus are invested in establishing authenticity and attractiveness both of their own personal brand and of the pick-up paradigm. More recently, parts of the PUA paradigm have morphed into a more general seduction and lifestyle expert community.

We build on earlier work on the microlinguistic elements that PUA community members employ to construct their game as successful in the “field reports” (an online genre in which members give detailed accounts of their activities; see Dayter & Rüdiger 2016). In the present paper, we conduct a qualitative analysis of four one-hour guru lectures, available on YouTube and transcribed with the assistance of automatic closed captions. We aim to find out (1) if authenticity and success with women emerge as important values in the guru discourse; (2) how are these constructed linguistically.

Our preliminary results indicate that although most previously described objectification strategies can be found in the data (graphic narrative detailing, reported/animated talk), certain strategies are more important than others. Additional discursive strategies can be identified (e.g., brag stories, intensification). We zoom in on the strategy of polyphonic discourse (Schrader-

Kniffke 2014), an evidentiality device that contributes to the construction of the identity of an expert in the struggle over who has the “right knowledge”. Gurus include lavish direct quotations and ‘re-enactment’ of their interactions with women, including role-play like representations of women’s portion of the interaction. Polyphony is a tool that lends veracity to the account, despite the fact that the accuracy of a verbatim quote can hardly be proven. An additional function of polyphony in our data is the representation of stereotypes (e.g., the shy guy, typical woman).

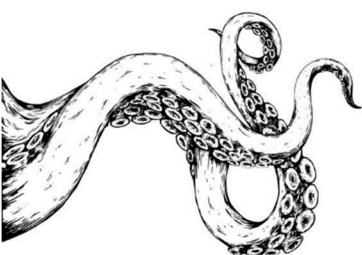
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- Schrader-Kniffke, Martina. 2014. “Subject emergence, self-presentation, and epistemic struggle in French language forums.” In Bedijs, Kristina, Gudrun Held & Christiane Maaß, eds. *Face Work and Social Media*. 375-402. Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Session 2 – New Approaches to Persuasion – Chair: Tom Van Hout

13:30-14:30 Zoom discussion

Sten Hansson (University of Tartu)	How to Analyse Discursive Persuasion in Blame Games
Rosalyn Langedijk & Kerstin Fischer (University of Southern Denmark)	Persuasive Dialog in Human-Robot Interaction in the Wild
Jan Michalsky (Universität Oldenburg)	Dynamic Prosodic Adaptation as a Cue to Social Distance and Its Role in Persuasion
Oliver Niebuhr (University of Southern Denmark)	Enhancing Persuasiveness through the Assessment and Training of Vowel Resonant Frequencies and Their Acoustically Projected Body Height
Pawel Sickinger (University of Bonn)	Cognitive Pragmatics as a Framework for Persuasive Language Analysis
Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri (Università Roma Tre)	On the Persuasive Effectiveness of Presuppositions: Behavioral and Neurophysiological Evidence



How to Analyse Discursive Persuasion in Blame Games

Sten Hansson (University of Tartu)

In my talk, I explain how to identify and interpret various discursive resources and strategies used by participants in blame games – symbolic struggles over blameworthiness or otherwise of various social actors.

Adopting a social constructionist approach, I tease apart four essential elements of blame games as social and linguistic practice: (1) blame makers, (2) blame takers, (3) norms, and (4) events. I discuss how the specific ways in which these elements are ‘put into words’ in social interaction may construct particular understandings of participants’ blameworthiness or blamelessness. I also review certain calculated ways of arguing, legitimising, framing/positioning, and denying that are commonly used in public discourse when attributing or deflecting blame.

I combine analytic tools, concepts and insights from studies of blame avoidance in government (Hood 2011, Hansson 2015, 2018) and previous critical discourse analytic work on blame phenomena and manipulation (Wodak 2006, van Dijk 2006, van Leeuwen, 2008). These tools can be used to interpret text and talk about a wide range of blame issues, scandals, and crises in terms of potential persuasive effects and consequences for power relations.

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- van Dijk, Teun A. 2006. “Discourse and manipulation.” *Discourse & Society* 17(3): 359-383.
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Persuasive Dialog in Human-Robot Interaction in the Wild

Rosalyn Langedijk (University of Southern Denmark)

Kerstin Fischer (University of Southern Denmark)

In this paper, we investigate the persuasiveness of robot utterances in a study in the “wild”, i.e. in a scenario in which the robot serves water to staff, students and members of the general public in a large university cafeteria. In particular, we study the effects of (personalized) social proof (Cialdini 2010), as in “Most people/men/women actually do take something to drink.” These utterances are used after people have initially rejected the robot’s offer.

Our analysis shows that in response to these utterances, people initially repeat their rejection (thus attending to the principle of consistency (Cialdini 2010)), but then they (or people in their company) engage in all kinds of justifications, such as demonstrating their own drinks, or enter into conversation with the robot, and several change their minds and take eventually something to drink. One factor influencing people’s responses is whether they interact with the robot alone or whether they are in company (in our data, only people who were not in company changed their minds).

In general, our study shows that people generally take the robot as an interaction partner seriously and apply similar pragmatic strategies as in human-human interaction. Concerning the persuasiveness of utterances appealing to social proof, they clearly influence people's behavior, even if uttered by a robot.

References

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Bonding, Trust and Persuasion: Dynamic Prosodic Adaptation as a Cue to Social Distance and Its Role in Persuasion

Jan Michalsky (Universität Oldenburg)

Persuasion is not only achieved by charisma, seduction or authority but also through social proximity. We are more easily convinced by people who are close to us and who we trust. Accordingly, an often overlooked part of persuasion is the ability to signal as well as perceive cues to social relationships. There are several indirect cues to social proximity in language, however few reflect social relationships as immediate as entrainment. The phenomenon of entrainment describes two interlocutors becoming more similar in linguistic features during the course of a conversation (Edlund et al. 2009, Levitan 2014). This phenomenon has been found to be linked to cooperation, collaboration, and rapport (Lubold & Pon Barry 2014), perceived trust, competence and likability (Levitan et al. 2012) as well as overall more pleasant (Michalsky, Schoormann & Niebuhr 2018) and intimate conversations (Lee et al. 2010). While we can entrain on many linguistic features, one that has been found not to be prone to conscious manipulation and hence reflects social relationships and empathy more realistically concerns the entrainment of prosody or the voice. However, we found that people not only entrain differently but that people already differ in their physiological, specifically cognitive ability to differentiate prosodic entrainment cues (Niebuhr & Michalsky 2019). We developed an assessment score that captures a person's ability to entrainment prosodically and found that this score correlates both with social skills and social personality traits (Michalsky, Niebuhr & Penke (submitted)) as well as a person's team working performance (Niebuhr & Michalsky 2019). Accordingly, the ability to entrain prosodically crucially affects our success in establishing social bonds as a basis for persuasion. Fortunately, we also found that entrainment can be improved through specific auditive-cognitive training. In this talk we investigate the role of prosodic entrainment in persuasion, its mechanics and functions as well as its assessment and training for diverse purposes ranging from economic to educational.

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The New “Speaker”: Enhancing Persuasiveness through the Assessment and Training of Vowel Resonant Frequencies and Their Acoustically Projected Body Height

Oliver Niebuhr (University of Southern Denmark)

Height and pronunciation are both positively correlated with a speaker’s persuasive impact on listeners. We follow the ideas, opinions, and instructions of taller speakers more easily and readily (Grabo 2017), and the same applies to speakers with a more careful pronunciation (Niebuhr & Gonzalez 2019). Vowels, in particular, are linked to persuasion-related speaker attributes. The better a speaker manages to produce acoustically clear distinctions between front and back vowels

(like [i] and [u]) the more capable and competent s/he is perceived. Analogously, the better a speaker manages to produce acoustically clear distinctions between open and closed vowels (like [a] vs [i] and [u]) the more passionate and committed s/he is perceived (Niebuhr to appear). Furthermore, vowel production and body height are connected in several ways. Taller people with heavier speech organs can have a harder time producing acoustically distinct vowels, all else equal (including tempo). Additionally, taller people have a longer vocal tract and, hence, produce all vowels at lower resonance-frequency levels and with, in absolute terms, smaller resonance-frequency distances. In fact, listeners are able to estimate speaker height only from isolated vowel stimuli, and the estimation is (even) more precise when vowels are heard in combination with consonants (Fitch 1997, Ives et al. 2005).

It is against this background that the “Speaker” software was developed. Complementing the field-tested “Pitcher” software for speech melody, the “Speaker” software analyzes a user’s speech production in terms of the resonance frequencies of key vowels like [a], [i], and [u]. The software determines (a) the size of the user’s acoustic vowel space and (b) the location of this vowel space relative to those of other users in the multidimensional resonant-frequency space. On this basis, the “Speaker” software provides its users with fast and instructive visual feedback on how to become a more persuasive speaker by improving vowel pronunciation such that it makes the user sound clearer and taller than before. The present paper summarizes the research-and-development process of the “Speaker” software and concludes with a first test of its usability and effectiveness.

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Cognitive Pragmatics as a Framework for Persuasive Language Analysis: A Call for (More) Psychological Realism

Pawel Sickinger (University of Bonn)

As a rather unconventional approach to persuasive language, this presentation will first raise the question of how cognitive the field of pragmatics is and ideally should become (cf. Bara 2010, Schmid 2012). A paradigm shift seems necessary, as in mainstream pragmatics all attempts to introduce elements from cognitive psychology are traditionally subsumed under utterance interpretation (i.e. Gricean pragmatics), while speech act research remains largely unburdened by considerations of cognitive mechanisms and processes behind speaker contributions. This is surprising, given that both speaker intentions and expectations of changing the listener’s state of mind are fundamental elements of speech act theory. I will argue that by reimagining both as instances of cognitive processing, we end up with a much more grounded and comprehensive view of how speakers fashion their language production in the service of influencing and – where necessary – persuading the listener.

I will suggest two elements of such a novel take on cognitive pragmatic theory, both concerned with the speaker’s cognitive processing:

1. A proposal as to how speakers generate communicative options based on a reinterpretation of speech acts as mentally represented solutions to communicative tasks, i.e. instances of problem solving (cf. Sickinger 2019).
2. A processing route for evaluating and monitoring imminent production attempts based on mental simulation, adopted from my theory of translation processing (Sickinger 2018).

Both share as a central element the idea that speakers are strategic in their production choices and design contributions so as to maximize their chance of communicative success, subjectively pre-estimated on the basis of past experience and theory of mind assessments of their interlocutor’s

prospective reaction. Finally, I will make some suggestions for research projects that could capitalize on this new type of cognitive pragmatics and could provide empirical support for the theoretical advances proposed.

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On the Persuasive Effectiveness of Presuppositions: Behavioural and Neurophysiological Evidence

Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri (Roma Tre)

PRESUPPOSITION EFFECTIVENESS: BEHAVIOURAL EVIDENCE – Linguistic presuppositions obtain persuasive effects, due to their reducing the receivers’ attention, allowing for doubtful contents to bypass critical evaluation. This has been attributed to the impression, on the part of addressees, that what is presupposed needs less checking because it is already well-known. On one side, the phenomenon has been noticed within the field of linguistic pragmatics (Ducrot 1982, Givón 1982, Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1986, Rigotti 1988, Lombardi Vallauri 1993; 1995, 2009, 2016, 2019, Sbisà 2007, Reboul 2011, Saussure 2013, Lombardi Vallauri & Masia 2014). On the other side, shallower processing of presuppositions has been studied through behavioural

experimental patterns (Loftus 1975, Langford & Holmes 1979, Erickson & Mattson 1981, Irwin et al. 1982, Bredart & Modolo 1988, Birch & Rayner 1997, Sturt et al. 2004, Tiemann et al. 2011, Schwarz & Tiemann 2014, Schwarz 2015). These converge to show that presuppositions reduce the receivers' attentional resources devoted to a given content. It has been proposed (Lombardi Vallauri 2016) that this may be related to more automatic processing (Shiffrin & Schneider 1977, 1984, Schneider & Chein 2003), as compared to the controlled processing of assertions.

NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE – Neuroscientific experiments (mainly EEG measuring of N400/P600 effects or *alpha*, *beta*, *delta* and *theta* band (de)synchronization) have given less univocal results (Burkhardt 2006, 2008, Wang et al. 2011, Masia et al. 2017, La Rocca et al. 2016, Domaneschi et al. 2017). In some cases, presuppositions have been shown to trigger slightly lesser effort as compared to assertive linguistic packaging of the same content, but more often their accommodation was associated to N400 or P600 effects, or to coherence patterns in different frequency bands, to be interpreted as additional effort.

EXPLAINING THE CONTRADICTION – Phenomenically, presuppositions trigger lesser attention, but neurologically they seem to raise additional processing effort. The proposed communication will try to sketch a possible explanation path for this contradiction. It will be suggested that what is measured (through ERPs) when presuppositions are accommodated is *not the effort devoted to critical evaluation*, rather, *the effort for referent retrieval and registry updating tasks*, which – for many reasons – is greater as compared to the processing of the same content when directly asserted. This greater effort can actually drain attentional resources, and may precisely *cause lesser critical attention*, i.e. reduce epistemic vigilance (Sperber et al. 2010), due to the presence of what Christiansen & Chater (2016) have called the “Now-or-Never-Bottleneck”: at the pace of natural language production, processing of each chunk of information must take place immediately and very shortly, in order to pass on to the following chunks. So, we propose that when some linguistic packaging poses higher processing requirements for retrieval and updating, it may leave lesser resources for critical epistemic evaluation. Combined with the impression that what is already well-known needs less checking, this could explain why presupposed contents are more easily smuggled into the addressees' consciences.

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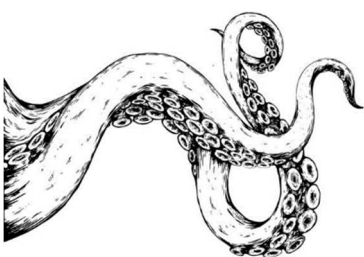
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Session 3 – Persuasion in Daily Life – Chair: Stefan Diemer

November 20, 15:30-16:30 Zoom discussion

Laura Baranzini (Università della Svizzera Italiana), Doriana Cimmino Federica Cominetti, Claudia Coppola, Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri, Giorgia Mannaioli, Viviana Masia (Università di Roma Tre)	Manipulative Effects of Implicit Communication: A Comparative Analysis of French, Italian and German Political Speeches
Sofie Decock (Universiteit Gent)	On the Influence of Alternative Paralinguistic Features in Online Hotel Reviews on Reply Strategies in Hotel Management Responses
Robert Fuchs (University of Hamburg)	The Linguistic Expression of Persuasion across Varieties of English
Bogdana Huma (York St John University)	Persuasion in and as Conversation
Susanne Mühleisen (University of Bayreuth)	Morality and Manipulation: Authoritative Persuasion in the Jamaican “Dear Pastor” Radio Phone-in Show



Manipulative Effects of Implicit Communication: A Comparative Analysis of French, Italian and German Political Speeches

Laura Baranzini (Università della Svizzera Italiana, Osservatorio Linguistico della Svizzera Italiana)

Doriana Cimmino (Università di Salerno)

Federica Cominetti (Università di Roma Tre)

Claudia Coppola (Università di Roma Tre)

Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri (Università di Roma Tre)

Giorgia Mannaioli (Università di Roma Tre)

Viviana Masia (Università di Roma Tre)

Linguistic strategies based on the implicit encoding of information can be effective means of persuasion (Ducrot 1972, Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1986, Rigotti 1988, Sbisà 2007, Lombardi Vallauri 2009, De Saussure 2012, 2013). Due to effort-saving heuristics (Gigerenzer 2008, Maillat-Oswald 2009, Oswald-Maillat-Saussure 2016), when some content is not explicitly conveyed to the addressees, their epistemic vigilance (Sperber et al. 2010) ends up being reduced, as people tend to pay greater attention to what is *said*, rather than what is *not said* (Sbisà 2007). Due to this, implicit contents are less prone to be critically challenged and rejected than asserted ones (Reboul 2011, Lombardi Vallauri 2019).

Therefore, when it comes to questionable or potentially false contents, this strategy can be exploited for potentially manipulative purposes. In bypassing addressees' attention and by encouraging shallow processing of relevant and deceptive contents, implicit encoding can reduce the recognition of fallacies and false information, thus favoring potentially manipulative argumentation (Rocci & Saussure 2016). This applies especially to political communication, which is aimed at persuasion and is mostly unilateral.

We propose a small-scale confrontation of present-day Italian, French, German and Italian political speeches with a view to assessing politicians' use of implicit strategies in their discourses. In the proposed analysis, the categories of implicit communication taken into account are presuppositions, implicatures, topicalizations and vagueness.

Data resulting from the cross-linguistic and cross-political confrontation shall provide insights into: (i) speakers' rhetorical style – e.g. a politician conveying questionable contents notably

through presuppositions, or politician A being vaguer than politician B and, on the whole, how persuasive and tendentious some politicians are as compared to others -; (ii) cross-category trends – e.g. implicature being the most employed underencoding strategy; (iii) cross-linguistic trends and differences. This pilot study will corroborate the results of a monolingual analysis being carried out on Italian political speeches in the IMPAQTS project (*Implicit Manipulation in Politics - Quantitatively Assessing the Tendentiousness of Speeches*, Project code: 2017STJCE9), funded by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research.

The application of our measuring model of the use and impact of linguistic implicitness will advance the research on manipulative discourse from both a theoretical and a practical point of view proving the cross-linguistic validity of our categories and promoting a fair comparison of democratic communicative practices in Europe and beyond.

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A terrible experience!!! vs. A terrible experience: On the Influence of Alternative Paralinguistic Features in Online Hotel Reviews on Reply Strategies in Hotel Management Responses

Sofie Decock (Ghent University)

Alternative paralinguistic features (APF; capitalization, flooding, emoticons/emoji) can be considered commonly used semiotic resources in online hotel reviews (Cenni & Goethals 2017). They are mainly used in this genre to maximize positive or negative feedback and have indeed been found to have a positive effect on the perceived strength of a (positive or negative) evaluation (Meinders 2017). So far, however, little attention has been paid to a detailed description of the use of APF in hotel reviews, and, more importantly, to the influence of APF on the reply strategies used and the way rapport is managed in review responses.

Against this background, this paper presents a study on the use of APF in online hotel reviews and their rapport-related effects on hotel management responses, asking the following questions: 1) which types and frequencies of APF are found in online reviews?; 2) to what extent do the presence and frequency of these features differ according to feedback valence (positive vs. negative); 3) what is the impact of APF in online reviews on hotel responses in terms of rapport management? To address these questions, I collected a Dutch-language corpus of 1479 interactions (reviews + responses) from Booking.com, manually coded types and frequencies of APF in reviews and reply strategies (rapport-enhancing and defensive moves, different types of intensifiers) in responses to reviews, and subjected these data to statistical analysis.

The obtained results are largely in line with the hypotheses, which were formulated based on the Pollyanna principle (Boucher & Osgood 1969) and rapport management theory (Spencer-Oatey 2008). They indicate that the use of APF, especially in the form of exclamation marks, is not uncommon in online reviews, and that they are more often used to intensify positive instead of negative feedback. Moreover, a higher number of intensifying APF was found to go hand in hand with stronger positive intensification in the case of responses to positive feedback, and with more defensive reply strategies in the case of responses to negative feedback. These results contribute to online pragmatics by providing insights into the influence of the use of alternative paralinguistic devices on how online service interactions unfold.

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The Linguistic Expression of Persuasion across Varieties of English

Robert Fuchs (University of Hamburg)

There is a substantial amount of evidence regarding register variation in a number of languages and their varieties that is based on Biber's Multidimensional Model (1988, 1995). This line of research has also been extended to postcolonial varieties of English, with some studies comparing a large number of varieties (Kruger & Van Rooy 2016, Xiao 2009) and others focussing on particular varieties, such as East African English and Australian English (Kruger & Smith 2018, Van Rooy et al. 2010).

Within this framework, one dimension is the overt expression of persuasion, and previous research has demonstrated, for example, that Indian English employs relatively few markers of overt persuasion in formal registers, while Hong Kong English employs comparatively many (factor 4 in Xiao 2009).

However, previous research has focussed exclusively on a quantitative comparison of register dimensions (e.g. more/less overt expression of persuasion), not on qualitative differences in how these register dimensions are expressed in different varieties. Thus, the present study asks how persuasion is linguistically expressed across varieties of English and how such differences can be explained.

In order to answer this question, data on four L1 and six L2 varieties of English drawn from the International Corpus of English (Greenbaum 1991) will be investigated with the Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (Nini 2015). Unlike in previous research, separate analyses will be conducted for all ten varieties in order to reveal potential differences in how persuasion is overtly expressed in these varieties. Preliminary results indicate (1) greater differences between varieties in spoken than in written language and (2) that speakers and writers of L1 varieties use more similar means of overt persuasion than speakers and writers of L2 varieties, suggesting a certain degree of indigenisation (Schneider 2007) of linguistic markers of overt persuasion in these varieties.

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Persuasion in and as Conversation

Bogdana Huma (York St John University)

Within mainstream psychology, persuasion has been conceptualised as the successful change of a person's attitude or behaviour. Thus, the focus of psychological research on persuasion has been the presumed cognitive processes that underlie attitude or behavioural change. Within prominent cognitive models of persuasion, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model, linguistic resources feature mainly as independent factors deployed by the "source" of persuasion (Areni & Sparks 2005). By contrast, little attention has been paid to the role that conversational resources play in the sequential configuration of persuasive activities, as they unfold naturally in and as part of

everyday interactions in domestic and institutional settings (Humă, Stokoe & Sikveland 2019, in press, Pino 2017, Wooffitt 2005). Using conversation analysis and discursive psychology, this paper sets out to illuminate the sequential organisation of persuasive practices. The paper draws on a corpus of 150 authentic business-to-business “cold” sales calls from three British companies that sell and service office equipment. This setting is a “natural laboratory” for persuasion and resistance as salespeople try to set up meetings with prospective customers (prospects) during which they would deliver sales presentations. Examining how salespeople go about to get appointments with reluctant prospects, I identify the “conversational building blocks” of persuasion which involve the mobilisation of turn-taking and sequential resources. Specifically, I show how salespeople exploit the sequential orderliness of conversations to talk prospects into meeting with them by designing their turns to sequentially delete conversational slots in which the latter could have refused to meet with them. These findings support the respecification of persuasion as a collaborative achievement, which is accomplished over several turns at talk produced by both interlocutors. Thus, this paper challenges the extant psychological conceptualisation of persuasion as based on individual cognitive processes.

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Morality and Manipulation: Authoritative Persuasion in the Jamaican “Dear Pastor” Radio Phone-in Show

Susanne Mühleisen (University of Bayreuth)

Radio phone-ins (also known as ‘talkbacks’ or ‘talk radio shows’) – a participatory media format where listeners of a radio programme can call in and discuss a particular topic with the radio host and/or studio guest(s) – have become popular sites of investigating talk-in-interaction in British and other inner circle country contexts (Hutchby 1995, 1996, Thornborrow 2001). In outer circle and postcolonial English contexts, phone-ins are becoming more popular as research materials (e.g. Flamenbaum 2014 on the pragmatics of Ghanaian talk radio, Burger 2015 or Tsarwe 2018 on Southern African participatory radio shows).

Advice in family/relationship matters or medical issues is often part of the talk radio genre (e.g. Thornborrow 2001, Drescher 2012) or other public forums (Locher 2006, Morrow 2006). Advice as part of a complex speech activity in which the speaker typically gives a directive which he or she believes to be beneficial to the hearer requires the advice-giver to convince the advisee of his or her authority as well as of the emotional, practical or moral benefit of the advice. Persuasion therefore is an essential part of a successful advice-giving strategy. Depending on the situation (solicited or unsolicited) and the relationship between hearer and speaker (familiar, hierarchical, expert or user, etc.), this strategy might be more or less successful in this potentially face-threatening speech activity. Furthermore, cultural norms and values as well as expectations of directness/indirectness will differ enormously when it comes to advice-strategies and the persuasion of the advisee to follow the guidance.

This talk looks at a highly popular Jamaican radio phone-in programme, *Dear Pastor* (Power 106 FM) as data source to investigate strategies of authority, moral talk and manipulation of the callers in this advice-giving show. Reverend Aaron Dumas (“the Pastor”) as the host of this programme has established himself as a religious and moral authority in Jamaica not only with this radio show but also with a daily advice column in the Jamaican newspaper *The Star* (Mühleisen forthc.). For the investigation of morality and manipulation in his talk radio show, twenty hours of host-caller discussions on various topics (relationships, family, self-improvement, etc.) will be

used for a qualitative analysis of his strategies of moral assertion and the affirmation of spiritual benefits in his persuasion of the advisees. The specific Jamaican/ Caribbean context of the data will be reflected in an analysis of directness and politeness strategies (cf. Mühleisen & Migge 2005)

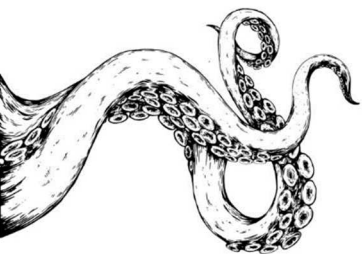
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Session 4 – Persuasion Online – Chair: Rob Lawson

November 21, 10:00-11:00 Zoom discussion

Stefan Diemer & Marie-Louise Brunner (Trier University of Applied Sciences)	The Multimodal Discourse of Persuasion in Instastories
Rosanna Guadagno (Stanford University)	Information Warfare in the Social Media Age
Christian Hoffmann (University of Augsburg)	Dumb Trump, Sleepy Joe and Crooked Hillary: The Persuasive Role of Negative Evaluation in Election Campaign Tweets
Thomas C. Messerli & Daria Dayter (University of Basel)	The Role of Linguistic Formality in Persuasion
Piia Varis (Tilburg University)	The Language of Conspiracy as Persuasive Political Tool: Climate Change Conspiracy Theories Online
Lu Xiao (Syracuse University)	Fight Disinformation in Social Media: An Online Persuasion Perspective



The Multimodal Discourse of Persuasion in Instastories

Stefan Diemer (Trier University of Applied Sciences)

Marie-Louise Brunner (Trier University of Applied Sciences)

The paper examines advertising on Instagram in selected companies with an international customer base. Our aim is to document how companies use Instastories to persuade customers and how stories supplement existing advertising. We follow a discourse analytical corpus-based approach, evaluating both content and multimodality and analyzing which types of persuasion strategies are employed.

Current approaches to social media marketing emphasize adaptability and identity creation (e.g. Kelly 2016), customer-specific marketing (Hassan 2014) and the importance of brand

attitudes (De Veirman et al. 2017). Instastories were introduced in 2016 and have become one of the main marketing methods on Instagram. They have not yet been researched extensively, though studies have commented on their role in customer interaction (Brunner & Diemer 2019) and self-branding/storytelling (Dayter & Mühleisen 2016).

For our study, a corpus of publicly accessible Instagram posts and stories of selected internationally active companies and influencers (e.g. MyMuesli, innocent, l'Occitane, dm, Jamie Oliver) was collected for analysis. The data comprises the initial images and anchor posts, stories, and company bios/timelines.

Results show that Instastories vary considerably in length and format. They are specifically used to engage and persuade customers through storytelling and interaction. Stories allow companies to create a convincing brand, create interest, and increase rapport. Companies frequently link directly to their sales platforms through stories, performing classical acts of persuasion, but they also feature influencers, customers, or related brands, providing entertainment value. The wide range of interactive elements enhances customer engagement, but also yields marketing data. Humor plays a key role, both verbally and visually.

In sum, we present Instastories as a key persuasive means that companies use to increase customer retention and engagement, and to construct a consistent brand. Companies use multimodal and interactive means of persuasion, engaging and enticing customers through a wide variety of strategies.

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Information Warfare in the Social Media Age

Rosanna Guadagno (Stanford University)

Misinformation – false information passed off as factual – is an effective weapon in the information age and has become widely used to influence people’s attitudes and behavior on social media. For instance, the Russian Internet Research Agency’s information warfare campaign supported Donald Trump’s successful candidacy in the 2016 United States presidential election, with some arguing that their efforts were effective facilitating Trump’s electoral college victory (Jamieson, 2018). In this talk, I examine the complex relationship between people’s social media use and their susceptibility to information warfare campaigns intended to sow mis- and disinformation. To accomplish this, the literature on social influence and persuasion via social media will be reviewed, focusing on the role that perceived social norms, cognitive dissonance, obedience to authority, and the viral nature of social media content play on people’s willingness to believe mis- and disinformation attempts. This talk concludes with a discussion of potential strategies that individuals, policy makers, and technology companies could adopt to aid in protecting unsuspecting people from these types of influence operations.



Dumb Trump, Sleepy Joe and Crooked Hillary: The Persuasive Role of Negative Evaluation in Election Campaign Tweets

Christian Hoffmann (University of Augsburg)

Previous research has looked into the ways politicians make use of positive and negative evaluations in live television debates and online tweets during election campaigns (Cabrejas-Peñuelas & Díez-Prados 2014, Hoffmann 2018). To this effect, the consistent use of evaluation

patterns in public media can influence what Kreis (2017:8) calls “negative other-representation”, i.e. the public representation of the political opponent. While research on evaluation (Martin & White 2005, Hunston & Thompson 2000, Bednarek 2006) in online and political discourse is still piecemeal, this paper compares the use of evaluative utterances, i.e. their frequency, dispersion over time, objects and targets of evaluation, in two similar corpora of tweets. One consists of tweets published on the official twitter profiles of the former presidential candidates of the Republican and Democratic party of the United States of America, i.e. Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. The corpus files represent tweets published in the run-up to the last US presidential elections in 2016. For comparison, the second corpus contains a selection of current tweets by the Democratic and Republican candidate(s) for the upcoming 2020 US presidential election, most notably tweets by Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden. The talk will show if and how the use of evaluations by presidential candidates has changed over time (2016 vs 2020). I will also discuss the (potential) implications that a systematic use of twitter evaluations might have for the framing of voters’ political beliefs. Research on evaluation thus seems all the more relevant to uncover the ideological undercurrent, which often remains hidden behind “innocent” political opinions, in an era in which the political agenda is increasingly set and negotiated in and via social media (cf. Conway, Kenski & Wang 2015).

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The Role of Linguistic Formality in Persuasion

Thomas C. Messerli (University of Basel)

Daria Dayter (University of Basel)

The paper presents the study of formal language in persuasive discourse on the R/CHANGEMYVIEW subreddit. We collected a corpus of 100 million messages, split into subcorpora based on the user-awarded marker *delta*, which rewards changing an original poster's view. Assuming that formality/informality is potentially an important factor in the persuasiveness of a message, we examine the two subcorpora with respect to formality markers.

The results indicate no systematic variation along the formality/informality continuum between persuasive and non-persuasive posts on R/CHANGEMYVIEW. The posters use personal pronouns, suasive verbs, emphatics, imperatives, elaborate connectors and WH-questions with similar frequency, and express themselves using vocabulary and syntax of similar complexity. Moreover, keyword lists and n-gram rankings indicate no register difference. A qualitative analysis of concordance lines for *persuade* and *change PRONOUN view* paints a picture of a community that values factual, evidence-based discourse and openness to logical persuasion, with a linguistic norm of relatively formal, sophisticated register.



The Language of Conspiracy as Persuasive Political Tool: Climate Change Conspiracy Theories Online

Piia Varis (Tilburg University)

Conspiracy theories have become a prominent feature in present-day public discourse, in politics as well as popular culture. From migration and vaccination to climate change, conspiratorial discourse plays an important role in the way in which issues of public interest are framed. While a substantial amount of research exists on conspiracy theories in general, including their allure and persuasive power, much less has been said about their nature and circulation online – regardless of the fact that e.g. social media are rife with conspiratorial discourse, and they are important environments for the circulation and visibility of conspiracy theories today. Similarly, scholars of language and discourse have had surprisingly little to say about conspiracy theories, while they have useful contributions to make in explaining their forms and functions, and lure and persuasive power.

This talk focuses on conspiracy theorising online, and the ways in which conspiracy theories are constructed and circulated making use of digital affordances. More specifically, the focus is, through a multimodal discourse analytical approach, on conspiracy theorising regarding climate change and the discursive strategies employed to present climate change as a ‘hoax’, and climate action advocates as part of a conspiracy, to promote specific political agendas. Particular attention will be given to the use of memes in such efforts. The talk addresses the potential persuasive power of such forms of communication, and the relevance of a discourse analytical approach in studying such online forms of influence.



Fight Disinformation in Social Media: An Online Persuasion Perspective

Lu Xiao (Syracuse University)

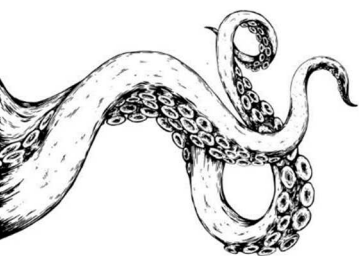
More and more online interactions involve complex processes of persuasion and influence. Researchers are increasingly interested in questions like how users persuade others in the social media environments, and what affects the persuasion processes and outcome. We examine and compare the language use in comments that have more perceived persuasion power than the others

from different online communication situations. Our findings show that comments in different communication contexts have overlapping but different linguistic indicators of their perceived persuasion power. We discuss the similarities and differences among these online communication contexts and how they may contribute to the observed overlaps and differences. For instance, the length of a comment and the use of transitional phrase are strong indicators for a Reddit R/CHANGEMYVIEW comment but not for a comment in Wikipedia ‘Article for Deletion’ (AfD) discussions. Different from R/CHANGEMYVIEW, Wikipedia participants have a collective goal in the process, namely, to maintain or improve the quality of Wikipedia articles, which potentially promotes all participants to engage seriously in the discussion. Wikipedia also has more established norms and policies regarding how to reason in AfD discussions. It is therefore possible that as the cohesiveness of the text and the thoroughness of expressing one’s ideas are expected in AfD discussions, these linguistic features do not differ between persuasive and non-persuasive comments any more.

Session 5 – New Approaches – Forensic Linguistics – Chair: Theresa Neumaier

November 21, 13:30-14:30 Zoom discussion

Dawn Archer (Manchester Metropolitan University)	Negotiation, Deception and Manipulation: The Linguistic Similarities (and Differences)
Ria Perkins (Aston University)	Power and Influence: Understanding Linguistic Markers of Power in Criminal Persuasive Contexts
Isabel Picornell (Aston University)	Addressee or Overhearer? Language and Setting the Scene for Manipulation and Persuasion
Helena Woodfield (University of Birmingham)	Disinformation in the News Media
David Wright (Nottingham Trent University)	The Many Faces of Persuasion in the Pickup Artist Community



Negotiation, Deception and Manipulation: The Linguistic Similarities (and Differences)

Dawn Archer (Manchester Metropolitan University)

As no one linguistic feature is inherently persuasive, manipulative or deceptive (cf., e.g., Noggle 2020, Thaler & Sunstein 2009, Sunstein 2014), this paper adopts a pragmatic approach to explore – as a means of allowing us to compare and contrast – US-based interactions involving, respectively, (1) influence/negotiation, (2) persuasion/manipulation and (3) deception. Pragmatics is regarded to be a particularly useful approach to adopt, in this case, given that *the raison d'être* of this linguistic sub-discipline is to explain ‘meaning in context’ (see, e.g., Archer & Grundy 2011, Archer et al. 2012). The interactions to be analysed involve:

- (1) police crisis negotiators interacting with subjects during barricade incidents (see Archer et al. 2018, Archer 2020a),
- (2) a vulnerable witness interacting with police officers during a murder investigation, and
- (3) a politician interacting with members of the press over an alleged (potentially criminal) incident (see Archer 2020b).

My focus will be the linguistic devices used by the speaker seeking to influence, manipulate or deceive; their communicative objective(s) in so doing; the frequencies with which they use these linguistic devices; whether they (regularly) co-occur with other (non)verbal features of note, and if so which and for what purpose(s). The ultimate aim of this work is to determine the extent to which persuasion, manipulation and deception share the same/similar linguistic characteristics and/or have a distinct linguistic profile that can help us to better distinguish each from the other.

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Power and Influence: Understanding Linguistic Markers of Power in Criminal Persuasive Contexts

Ria Perkins (Aston University)

The link between power, powerful language, and success in persuasion has been clearly established (Holtgraves & Lasky 1999). There is a body of research that has analysed how power is realised and enacted through language (for an early example see Fairclough 1989), as well as how an individual's language will vary with relation to their role within a hierarchy (see for example Conley et al. 1979). These studies have predominantly focused on very specific areas such as boardroom meetings (Baxter 2012) or courtrooms (Conley, O'Barr & Lind 1979, Cotterill 2004), which has limited applicability to forensic investigative contexts.

This paper utilises real life communication data to demonstrate how power is encoded in language, with specific focus on high-stakes and criminal interactions. Analysis and findings are presented from a series of studies that look at features of power-full and power-less language in a

range of datasets (specifically, from the Carter case and the Enron corpus), demonstrating how those features vary and the importance of context in the analysis and application.

This paper is grounded in a forensic linguistic perspective; drawing on real-life casework experience, it discusses potential applications for analysing linguistic features of power, and considers the benefits for law enforcement agencies particularly with relation to understanding persuasive messages linked to terrorism, radicalisation, grooming, or online organised crime groups.

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Addressee or Overhearer? Language and Setting the Scene for Manipulation and Persuasion

Isabel Picornell (Aston University)

Research into persuasion shows that in order to be more effective, speakers will tailor their messages to their audience taking into account addressee characteristics such as prior knowledge and beliefs (Durmus & Esin 2019, Lukin et al. 2017). Consequently, the conceptual distance between an intended addressee and the speaker will strongly influence the way speakers design their communication (Bell 1984) regardless of whether the text is ostensibly addressed to another party or not. This, in turn, is reflected in the language, introducing the potential for forensic audience analysis. Using existing linguistic theories, in particular Bell's (1984) Audience Design, Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, and Sperber and Wilson's (1986) Relevance Theory, we demonstrate how these theories can be incorporated into a linguistic toolkit which can be applied to real forensic situations.

This paper uses actual casework to demonstrate how an understanding of the linguistics of persuasion and audience analysis can be useful in forensic situations. The data consists of an exchange of emails between two individuals, flagged because an investigator felt there was something "odd" about the language. Closer analysis (in the form of audience analysis) revealed that the linguistic design of the communication was inconsistent with the profile of the primary addressee, suggesting a potentially faked context and deceptive persuasion in play. The finding resulted in a change in direction of the investigation and the discovery of a transatlantic fraud in the making.

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Disinformation in the News Media: Can News be Analysed Based on its Communicative Purpose?

Helena Woodfield (University of Birmingham)

News is understood to be a way for individuals to inform themselves of current important events, a way to gain information upon which we form our global outlook and opinions (Gelfert 2018). What if that information is false? Or worse: What if you can't tell if that information is false? Researchers are attempting to tackle fake news from different angles but it's possible we are talking at crossed purposes (Markines et al. 2009, Horne & Adali 2017, Yang et al. 2017). Using the term “fake news” doesn't allow for a distinction between disinformation and misinformation — intentionally vs factually false information respectively (Lewandowsky et al. 2017). Depending on the data, the results will either encompass misinformation and coincidentally include disinformation or only apply to misinformation. The issue being that misinformation occurs without there necessarily being intent — mistakes happen. With fact checked corpora used increasingly as an easy data source, the research has been pigeonholed and we are only able to address the known side of the problem - misinformation (Markines et al. 2009, Horne & Adali 2017, Yang et al. 2017, Tacchini et al. 2017, Conroy et al. 2015).

I present a case study to address the issue of disinformation, exploring whether communicative intent (in terms of deception) can be measured through the assessment of the linguistic choices made by the author. The study analyses a single author, Jayson Blair, from a single news source, the New York Times, producing a consistent linguistic style and news-type. These controls are used to explore whether it is possible to identify a deceptive style within a single author. We analyse his communicative purpose through the application of a register analysis (Biber 1988) and focussed corpus linguistic approach. The results demonstrate where his communicative purpose varies (intent to deceive or tell the truth) his linguistic style also varies. This shows a way forward for the analysis of fake news. Next steps? To apply this to more individuals to see if the results are transferable and subsequently answer more fully the question posed above.

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Blurring the Lines between Advice and Incitement: The Many Faces of Persuasion in the Pickup Artist Community

David Wright (Nottingham Trent University)

In analysing a corpus comprising 26,000 posts and almost 27 million words from a prominent online pickup artist (PUA) discussion forum, this talk aims to bring together all three aspects of this symposium: *influence*, *manipulation* and *seduction*. PUAs are a ‘community of self-designated or aspiring seduction experts’ (Dayter & Rüdiger 2019: 13), for which most of the interaction between members takes place online ‘from individual bloggers, dating coaches and relationship experts, all providing niche services and products on how to seduce women (King 2018: 300).

Following Dayter and Rüdiger (2019), this talk draws a distinction between ‘first-level’ and ‘second-level’ persuasion in the PUA community. The former relates to the PUAs’ use of seduction techniques to persuade women and girls to have sex with them, while the latter relates to members of the PUA community persuading one another of the success of such techniques and encouraging each other to use them. This talk applies a corpus-assisted approach to discourse analysis to shed light on the discursive interaction between these two levels of persuasion. The data show that, not only do ‘experienced’ PUAs explicitly give ‘advice’ to fledgling members of the community, but that detailed accounts of purportedly successful seduction techniques shared on the forum indirectly endorse and advocate certain actions and behaviours in the pursuit of sexual ‘success’ with women. Online forums are places where like-minded people with similar values seek each other out to collectively reinforce their beliefs and rationalise their actions (e.g. Bloch 2016) and are spaces in which PUAs vie for each other’s approval in a quest to achieve the ideologically-constructed hyper-masculine alpha-male status (e.g. Schuurmans & Monaghan 2015). Under such conditions, it is argued that discourses which are ostensibly persuasive in nature can transform into direct or indirect incitement of violence against women and girls.

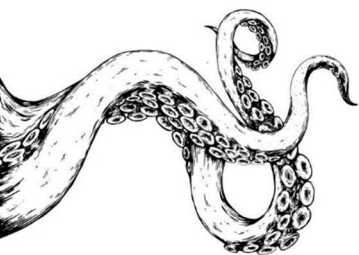
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Lightning Talks

November 21, 15:00-15:30 live on Zoom

Natascha Rohde (Aston University)	“The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys!” Collective Identity Construction in Computer-Mediated Discourse
Ksenija Bogetic (University of Belgrade; Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts)	Discourse of Misogynist Slogans in the Manosphere: Metaphor and Persuasion in a Hate-group’s Online Forum
Dominick Boyle (University of Basel)	Authenticity as a Stancetaking Resource: A Corpus Driven Look at First Order Authenticity in Online Restaurant Reviews
Olga Karamalak (Higher School of Economics)	Fashion Related Hashtags’ Persuasive Power
Maryam Isgandarli (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences) & Azad Mammadov (Azerbaijan University of Languages)	Repetitions in the Political Discourse of President Donald Trump
Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)	The Promotion of “Breastfeeding-as-Nursing” in the UK and the False Dichotomy of Breast vs. Bottle
Elena Borisova (Moscow City University)	Persuasive (Perlocutive) Potential of Modal Particles



**“The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys!”¹:
Collective Identity Construction in Computer-Mediated Discourse**

Natascha Rohde (Aston University)

Incels short for *involuntary celibates*² are a small radical fraction of the Men's Rights Movement (MRM). They communicate mainly online and therefore provides an interesting study background for collective identity construction.

This research project in its early stages aims to provide a first insight into the *incel's* collective identity construction through discourse. The data for the project will be collected from an online forum with the objective to observe how they discursively construct their (collective) identity, how they use language to convey their ideologies in their radicalisation strategies.

The concept of identity has undergone a paradigm shift. While it was formerly seen as static and pre-existing (Tracy 2011), recent approaches have highlighted the dynamic nature of identity and acknowledged the importance of social interaction for constructing and reproducing identity (Tracy 2011). Following the post-structuralist tradition in seeing language as the main tools in identity performance, a linguistic analysis can give insights into collective identity and the underlying discourse processes.

The proposed research combines constructionist frameworks for analysing identity with Queer Theory and Connell's model of hegemonic masculinities (Connell 2005) to form the methodology for this study. A Critical Discourse Analysis framework will be employed to unearth underlying motivations for seeking to be part of this movement and better understand the radicalisation process.

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¹ This quote is part of the last social media post Alek Minassian sent before he killed 10 pedestrians (mainly women) in a hit-and-run spree in Toronto, Canada on the 23rd of April 2018.

² While the term was initially coined by a queer woman from Canada in the 1990s (https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-the-incel-community-and-the-dark-side-of-the-internet/?cmpid=rss&click=sf_globe&__twitter_impression=true), the self-identified incels taking part in the online community life are almost exclusively white, heterosexual cis-men.

Motschenbacher, Heiko & Martin Stegu. 2013. "Queer Linguistic approaches to discourse." *Discourse and Society* 24(5): 519-535.

Tracy, Karen. 2011. "Identity-work in appellate oral argument: Ideological identities within a professional one." In Marra, Meredith & Jo Angouri, eds., *Constructing Identities at Work*, 175-199. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.



Discourse of Misogynist Slogans in the Manosphere: Metaphor and Persuasion in a Hate-Group's Online Forum

Ksenija Bogetic (University of Belgrade; Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts)

This study discusses specific aspects of metaphorical persuasion strategies observed in a subsection of the Manosphere, a network of loosely connected misogynist and anti-feminist online groups. The work draws on a corpus of posts from the group called Men Going Their Own Way, and applies the framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black 2009) and the discursive concept of direct metaphor (Steen 2011, Bogetic 2017). The analysis shows that direct metaphors of the type 'A is (like) B' are a particularly salient resource for discussing target concepts of WOMEN, MEN and RELATIONSHIPS. In this discourse, however, they repeatedly take one specific communicative format: that of short, meta-linguistically framed slogan-like forms (e.g. *repeat after me: women are **poison***), which get taken up and conceptually extended across the discourse, with a dual role of theorising group politics and inculcating new members. The results are discussed with regard to potentially specific functions of direct metaphor in these online communities, arguing for the need for more research on the role of figurative language in the formation of online hate group's associations and collective ideologies.

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Authenticity as a Stancetaking Resource: A Corpus Driven Look at First Order Authenticity in Online Restaurant Reviews

Dominick Boyle (University of Basel)

My talk aims to address some of the lexical and stylistic resources found when writers use authenticity as an evaluative category in online restaurant reviews, and the effects of this on star rating and sentiment. Discourse on food has offered linguists a rich source of data, for example, Jurafsky Chahuneau, Routledge, and Smith (2014) compellingly show how authors use narratives to convey their stance in online restaurant reviews. Making an assertion about authenticity is also a resource which can be used in stancetaking. Indeed, Van Leeuwen (2001) considers authenticity a special aspect of modality, yet little research has been done concerning this type of stance act outside of perceptions of language use.

O'Connor, Carroll, and Kovacs (2017) compiled scored wordlists based on four abstract types of authenticity (*type, craft, moral, and idiosyncratic*). They looked at how discourse correlating to these types of authenticity in reviews can indicate consumers' perception of a restaurant, and found that higher authenticity scores correlate with a higher star rating and willingness to pay, among other factors.

I examine their measure from a linguistically grounded perspective using a sample of US restaurant reviews from the Yelp Dataset Challenge (Yelp Inc 2019). First, I compare their 'authenticity analysis' with more established sentiment analysis techniques based on Warriner, Kuperman and Brysbaert (2013) as well as star rating. Overall, I find that authenticity terms correlate positively with both of these more established metrics, but that the subtypes proposed by O'Connor et. al. are not always correlated my data.

I also investigate how authenticity is explicitly discussed by examining correlates of authenticity terms in subcorpora created by star rating, sentiment, and authenticity score. Reviewers are mostly concerned about authenticity of place and taste: authenticity is most

collocates with demonyms (Mexican, Chinese) and a positive authenticity score appears to correlate with the trigram *the food is*, whereas a negative score correlates with *the food was*. It is my hope that this will encourage a look at authenticity in a new way in data.

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Fashion Related Hashtags' Persuasive Power

Olga Karamalak (National Research University Higher School of Economics)

Influencing power of hashtags cannot be overestimated since they can be used as facilitators of some societal change calling for collective action. Following the influential social identity model of collective action (SIMCA) presented by Van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears (2008), social identity together with collective efficacy beliefs and perceived injustice lead to collective action. This model presents social psychological conditions that foster group-based actions.

The objectives of the talk is to discuss not only social psychological conditions for collective action but also hashtags' linguistic and digital conditions to enhance influence. The cases of online social activism in the fashion domain are studied. The focus is on the rallying function of hashtags (Daer, Hoffman & Goodman, 2014), which help raise awareness to some issues in the fashion

domain and change attitude or behavior of brand managers or common users on Twitter and Instagram.

Under investigation is a hashtag campaign #whomademyclothes, which was an aftermath of the Rana Plaza building's collapse in Bangladesh in 2013. Another example of hashtags' persuasive power is the case of Gucci black balaclava jumper in 2019, which caused a number of posts with such hashtags as #gucciblackface #boycottgucci #blackface #blackbalaclava #blackwithoutapology. These hashtags were inspired by people outraged by the Gucci black balaclava jumper that resembled a black face and, consequently, was considered as a racist act. Several users voiced their criticism of the jumper referring to the Black History Month. It caused Gucci to apologize and remove this item from sale. The qualitative analysis of both case studies suggests that hashtags are ideal for creating and fostering collective action digitally since they are short, easily captured, highly shared, hyperlinked (searchable and visible) and social (link people together). Both top-down (triggered by influencers) and bottom-up (triggered by common social network users) taxonomies of hashtags can originate and maintain digital social movements.

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Repetitions in the Political Discourse of President Donald Trump

Maryam Isgandarli (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences)

Azad Mammadov (Azerbaijan University of Languages)

President Trump's political discourse has drawn considerable interest in recent years from different perspectives (Ahmadian, Azarshahi & Paulhus 2017, Lakoff & Wehling 2016, etc.). Our aim is to study various types of direct lexical repetition used by President Trump for the perspective of their rhetorical function in his speeches during the 2016 election campaign and the Inaugural Ceremony held in January 2017 as well as at UN General Assembly in September 2017 based on qualitative (discourse analysis with the elements of critical discourse analysis) and quantitative (the analysis based on the statistics of the frequency of the usages of the direct repetitions in the data) methods. The data was selected as a result of intensive selective work with relevant material from American National Corpus.

As one of the frequently chosen linguistic devices repetition is the key element at the disposal of the sender in discourses across types and genres for various purposes such as to arouse poetic effect (Pilkington 2000, etc.), to perform rhetorical function such as persuasion (Fahnstock 2011, Cockcroft et al. 2014, etc.) and to construct cohesion (Halliday and Hasan 1976, Karoly 2003, etc.) which we call textual functions of repetition.

Lexical and syntactic repetitions are very effective rhetoric devices in political discourse to persuade and to attract the real or potential audience. Therefore, politicians tend to use repetition quite frequently for certain pragmatic purposes. For example, based on the results of the quantitative analysis we can claim that comparing with the inaugural speeches addressed, first of all, to the national audience, repetition is less common in the speech delivered by President Donald Trump to the international audience, such as the annual speeches at the UN General Assembly. The reason why repetition is so frequent in the inaugural speeches is obvious as any politician's priority is, first of all, local audience and she/he does utmost efforts to deliver her/his message to this audience in the most effective way.

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The Promotion of ‘Breastfeeding-as-Nursing’ in the UK and the False Dichotomy of ‘Breast vs Bottle’

Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)

This ‘lightning talk’ outlines discursive strategies of breastfeeding promotion in the UK that work to marginalise breastmilk expression as an ‘illegitimate’ form of breastfeeding, via a ‘mini’ feminist discourse analysis (Sunderland 2000, 2004) of advice on expressing breastmilk on the NHS website. New mothers are encouraged to feed at the breast exclusively for at least the first six months of a baby’s life, as the “normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development” (*who.int*, 2020). However, ‘nursing’ at the breast is not the only way to feed a baby breastmilk. The ‘expression of maternal milk’ (EMM) involves the removal of breastmilk either manually by hand, or using a mechanical/electrical breast pump. This can be done in combination with feeding at the breast and/or the use of infant formula.

Research examining breastfeeding women's experiences of early infant feeding shows that many women encounter problems that affect breastfeeding duration, such as difficulties establishing an effective 'latch' on the breast and very painful experiences of breastfeeding (e.g. Sloan et al. 2006, Braimoh & Davies 2014). Post-partum depression is also linked to low levels of 'success' in breastfeeding (see Dennis & McQueen 2009). Despite public health organisations' awareness of the difficulties experienced by women who are 'unsuccessful' with breastfeeding, there is little guidance on EMM from services like the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK. As I will show, where written guidance is available, the way this information is presented does little to normalise EMM as a primary method of feeding. The discursive marginalisation of breastmilk expression in public health advice is hugely problematic, however, because it results in a false dichotomy of 'breast vs bottle' feeding. This binary construction can make women who express breastmilk feel as though they have somehow 'failed' at breastfeeding, and may therefore lead to negative mental health outcomes for parents.

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Persuasive (Perlocutive) Potential of Modal Particles

Elena Borisova (Moscow City University)

Languages that are rich in discourse markers, especially in modal particles (Weydt 1983), give the Speaker an opportunity for governing the understanding of the Addressee (Borisova 2013), influencing on framing and involving emotions and presuppositions (Borisova 2011).

The modal particles can influence the comprehension of the message in following ways:

1. Representing the information as evident (Rus. **Zhe, ved'**, *Ty zhe ne budesh vozrazhat'* 'It is evident that you will not disagree')
2. Rejecting possible doubts (Rus. **Da, Nu** *Da my eto uzhe obsuzdali* 'hey, we have it discussed yet!')
3. Unimportance of some information (Rus. **tut, tam** *Ya tut ko-chno ispravil* 'Well, I changed something, don't pay attention'),
4. Presenting information as a fact Rus. **-taki, prosto**, Eng. **In fact, actually** *In fact it is strange*

And some other tactics.

The representations listed above make it impossible or at least difficult to contradict to the Speaker. We can find here presuppositions that cannot be rejected. And the modal particles influence on the emotions of the Addressee, causing irritation or confusion that also strengthen the power of the Speaker.

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