

Influence, Manipulation & Seduction 2

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Persuasive Language

Bayreuth / Tampere / Online, Nov 18-19, 2022



Book of Abstracts

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). For this symposium, we particularly welcome contributions which expand the research of persuasive language to other genres and domains (like advice, dating, or conspiracy discourse) and 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, the attention economy), and methodological progress (big data and digital humanities, sophisticated statistical and phonetic tools for data analysis). We are also particularly interested in including contributions from the field of forensic linguistics.

This is the second installment of the *Influence, Manipulation, and Seduction* symposium which had its first successful run in 2020. The event brings linguists together with scholars from other fields concerned with persuasion, such as psychology, sociology, and media, information, cultural, and internet studies to examine persuasive language from new perspectives.

Conference Organizers

Daria Dayter
Tampere University
daria.dayter@tuni.fi
@coocho

Sofia Rüdiger
University of Bayreuth
sofia.ruediger@uni-bayreuth.de
@uhlon_dohlenko

 #LanguageAndPersuasion2

Presentations

All full presentations are made available as videos via the conference platform before the conference dates. The live program includes panel discussions and lightning talks.

Live Program - Overview

All times in CET time zone

18 November (Zoom)	19 November (Zoom)
09:45-10:00 Conference Opening	10:15-11:00 Persuasion & Business Discourse
10:00-11:00 Politics & Public Policy	13:00-14:00 The Dark Side of Persuasion
12:30-13:30 Persuasion, Emotion & Meaning-Making	14:30-15:00 Lightning Talks
14:30-15:30 Communicating COVID-19	15:00-15:15 Conference Closing
16:30-17:30 Persuasion Online	
19:00-20:00 Conference Online Social	

Live Program - Details

November 18 (Friday)

All times in CET time zone

09:45-10:00 Zoom

Sofia Rüdiger & Daria Dayter	Conference Opening
------------------------------	--------------------

Session 1 – Politics & Public Policy – Chair: Tom Van Hout

10:00-11:00 Zoom discussion

Corina Andone (University of Amsterdam)	On the Persuasive Power of Numerical Arguments in Policymaking
Johanna Disdier (Swansea University)	“Don’t say, just show”: The News Value of Impact of the Most Shared Fake and Not Fake News Articles on the US Capitol Riot
Joseph Flanagan (University of Helsinki)	#IStandWithPutin: Ambient Affiliation as a Form of Persuasion
Anna Iegorova (National Transport University, Kyiv)	Seeking for Allies During Wartime: Persuasive Strategies in Speeches of the President of Ukraine
Jukka Tyrkkö (Linnaeus University) Sophie Raineri (Paris Nanterre University) Jenni Räikkönen (Tampere University) Anna Ishchenko (Linnaeus University) Zayna Jamal Halis (Linnaeus University)	Hammering the Message In: Rhetorical Repetition and Persuasion in Political Speeches
Judit Vári (University of Konstanz) Aleksandra Cichocka (University of Kent) Tamara Rathcke (University of Konstanz/University of Kent)	Perceived Persuasiveness and the Modality of Emotion Effects: A Perceptual Study of Brexit Speeches

Session 2 – Persuasion, Emotion & Meaning-Making – Chair: Frazer Heritage

12:30-13:30 Zoom discussion

Leland Masek (Tampere University)	How Persuasion Occurs in Playful Experiences
Michał B. Paradowski (University of Warsaw)	Social Norms Trump Emotions in a Second Language
Stellan Petersson (University of Gothenburg)	Emotive Meaning Change in Swedish
Ahlem Saidi (Lancaster University)	Persuasion/Manipulation in TED Talks: A Triangulated Exploration of the Practice of Meaning-Making
Mattia Thibault (Tampere University)	Persuasive Cities: Mapping Manipulation in Urban Semiotic Systems

Session 3 – Communicating COVID-19 – Chair: Theresa Neumaier

14:30-15:30, Zoom discussion

Marta Cestari (Leiden University) Annemarije Makkinga (Leiden University) Elise Oosterom (Leiden University) Jenny Doetjes (Leiden University) Matthijs Westera (Leiden University)	Questioning COVID: A Multilingual Dataset and Analysis of Questions in COVID-19 Tweets
Jenna Saarni (University of Turku)	Evaluation in Sensational News Headlines During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Finland
Andrea Valente (York University)	Persuasive Language in Public Health Campaigns in Brazil During Covid19
Rachelle Vessey (Carleton University)	Gendered Persuasive Strategies in COVID-19 Public Health Guidance on Twitter: A Canadian Case Study

Session 4 – Persuasion Online – Chair: Morana Lukač

16:30-17:30, Zoom discussion

Daria Dayter (Tampere University) Thomas Messerli (University of Basel)	Pragmatics of Persuasion on R/ChangeMyView
Claire Hardaker (Lancaster University) the Quo VaDis team	Routes to Radicalization: Conflict in Online Vaccination Discussions
Nicolas Ruytenbeek (KU Leuven)	An Experimental Approach to the Perception of Emotions in Twitter Complaints and Compliments
Elisabeth Scherr (Universität Graz)	Shifting Concepts: The Persuasive Potential of Lexical Choices in the Body Positivity Discourse
Cipto Wardoyo (Coventry University)	Telling Stories as Persuasive Advice in Islamic Sermons

Conference Social

19:00-20:00 Zoom

Everyone is welcome	Breakout rooms on Zoom
---------------------	-------------------------------

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 a surprise scavenger hunt. You will be randomly assigned to a breakout room with several other participants and given several prompts to gather specific items from your surroundings, such as your favorite mug, something blue, etc. (of course, you're free not to use the prompts and chat about whatever you like!). After 12 minutes, breakout rooms will be randomly reassigned. Depending on the number of participants, the social will involve 3-4 rounds and take 40-50 minutes. You can of course drop out at any time.

November 19 (Saturday)

All times in CET time zone

Session 5 – Persuasion & Business Discourse – Chair: Erika Darics

10:15-11:00, Zoom discussion

Dominika Beneš Kováčová (Masaryk University)	“The Little Miracle”: The Use of Manipulative Language in the Promotion of CBD Products on Instagram
Marie-Louise Brunner (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier) Stefan Diemer (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier)	Persuasion Strategies on Instagram Business Accounts
Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)	“5 Ways to Give Your Skin a Fresh Workout”: Semiotized and Mediatized “Consumer Masculinity” in UK Branding and Advertising for Men’s Skincare Products
Anouk van der Pas (VU Amsterdam) * please note that this presenter won’t attend the panel discussion session on Nov 19*	Resistance in Charitable “Cold Calls”: A Conversation Analytical Research on Cold Calls

Session 6 – The Dark Side of Persuasion – Chair: Isabel Picornell

13:00-14:00, Zoom discussion

Rosie Marsh-Rossney (Swansea University)	“It Shouldn’t Even Be Wrong”: A Discourse Analysis of Attitudes and Rationalisations in Online Paedophile Communities
Laura Mercé (University of Valencia)	Discursive Manipulation in the Courtroom: The Case of Depp v. Heard
Kate Muir (Bath Spa University) Robert Thomas (University of Bath) Ekaterina Kochmar (University of Bath) Faye Walker (Bath Spa University) Nigel Dewdney (University of Bath) Adam Joinson (University of Bath)	Persuasive Strategies Across Conversational Contexts: Development of a Natural Language Processing Tool to Detect Benign and Malicious Persuasion in Online Dialogue
Keighley Perkins (Swansea University)	“No Matter Where You Are, Never Be Afraid. Patriots Walk Amongst You!”: Examining the Legitimation of In-Group Identities by the Radical Right on Twitter
Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth) Daria Dayter (Tampere University)	Creepy, Confident, or Persistent? Triangulating Practice and Discourse in Pick-up Artist Instructional Videos
Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo (Università di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’)	“No Does Not Mean No”: The Discursive Framing of Female Sexual Rejection as ‘Last Minute Resistance’ in Pick-Up Artist Communities

Lightning Talks

14:30-15:00, live Zoom presentations

Jess Aiston (Lancaster University)	“If the Roles Were Reversed It Would Be a Riot in the Streets”: The Use of the Topos of Justice Within an Online Anti-Feminist Community
Hayat Aoumeur (Mostaganem University)	A Multimodal Approach to Persuasion in Billboard Advertising: The Case of Djezzy, Algeria’s Principal Mobile Network Operator
Ketevan Gigashvili (Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University)	About One Method of Communication Within Tsovatush Minority Speech Community
Antti Kuusimaa (Tampere University)	Trump’s 2015 Presidential Announcement Speech: The Message Through a Critical Discourse Analysis
Mohamed Saki (University of Western Brittany, Brest)	Pathos and Persuasion: A Case Study of Appeals to Emotions in a Collective Action – A Case Study of Digital Reactions to the Overruling by the US Supreme Court of Wade vs Roe
Jayashabari Shankar (University of Utah)	Persuasion in ‘Popular Science’: Evaluating to What Extent Subjectiveness Has a Place in Contemporary Science Writing
Vincent Wai Sum Tse (Monash University/The University of Warwick)	“We ‘Drug’ the Students”: Celebrity Tutors’ Performance of Expertise in the Shadows
Yat Ho Wong (University of Bayreuth)	From Chaos to Governance? Alternative Representations as Resistance in Online Media
Maria Załęska (University of Warsaw)	“Actually the Argument Is Not Convincing”: Folk Theories of (Un)convincingness

15:00-15:15, Zoom

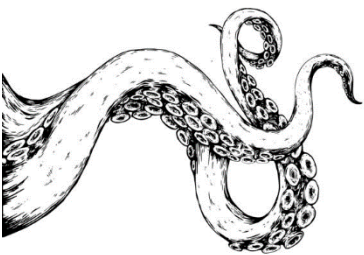
Daria Dayter & Sofia Rüdiger	Conference closing
------------------------------	--------------------

Abstracts

Session 1 – Politics & Public Policy – Chair: Tom Van Hout

10:00-11:00 Zoom discussion

Corina Andone (University of Amsterdam)	On the Persuasive Power of Numerical Arguments in Policymaking
Johanna Disdier (Swansea University)	“Don’t say, just show”: The News Value of Impact of the Most Shared Fake and Not Fake News Articles on the US Capitol Riot
Joseph Flanagan (University of Helsinki)	#IStandWithPutin: Ambient Affiliation as a Form of Persuasion
Anna Iegorova (National Transport University, Kyiv)	Seeking for Allies During Wartime: Persuasive Strategies in Speeches of the President of Ukraine
Jukka Tyrkkö (Linnaeus University) Sophie Raineri (Paris Nanterre University) Jenni Rääkkönen (Tampere University) Anna Ishchenko (Linnaeus University) Zayna Jamal Halis (Linnaeus University)	Hammering the Message In: Rhetorical Repetition and Persuasion in Political Speeches
Judit Vári (University of Konstanz) Aleksandra Cichocka (University of Kent) Tamara Rathcke (University of Konstanz/University of Kent)	Perceived Persuasiveness and the Modality of Emotion Effects: A Perceptual Study of Brexit Speeches



On the Persuasive Power of Numerical Arguments in Policymaking

Corina Andone (University of Amsterdam)

Numerical arguments are serving increasingly as scientific evidence for policy decisions, while attempting to convince the citizens of the acceptability of those decisions (Parkhurst 2017). But numerical arguments are significantly understudied as persuasive reasoning forms, let alone examined for their potential persuasive role and quality within policymaking. The all too rare research on numerical arguments concerns experimental studies testing the persuasiveness of

statistical arguments in comparison to other argument forms, such as narratives and anecdotal arguments (cf. Hoeken 2001; Limon & Kazoleas 2004; Zebregs et al. 2015). These studies do not explain the inferential structure of numerical arguments, ignore whether their persuasiveness is due to their sound or unsound use, and do not place their discussions within the context of policymaking in which they are so commonly employed.

This study will explain first the pertinence and importance of numerical arguments in policymaking, showing how they serve in various stages of the policy cycle, such as agenda-setting, policy research and analysis and policy formulation. Subsequently, the functions of numerical arguments in policymaking are outlined. Apart from the obvious rhetorical function of giving the appearance of objectivity and impartiality, numerical arguments play other functions that serve in ‘winning points’ which is specific to political decision-making: numerical arguments are a strategy of political success and survival, since policymaking is a social enterprise that needs to be made legitimate in the eyes of the citizens. Finally, in examining their quality and manipulative potential, five numerical fallacies are discussed within policymaking: the fallacy of exaggerating numerical values, the fallacy of data underreporting or data minimization, the fallacy of casting doubt with numbers, the fallacy of false numerical interpretation or technical bias and the fallacy of cherry-picking. This research offers a multidisciplinary theoretical and empirical approach based on argumentation studies, communication and public policy studies.

References

- Hoeken, H. 2001. “Anecdotal, statistical, and causal evidence: their perceived and actual persuasiveness.” *Argumentation* 15: 421-437.
- Limon, S.M. & Kazoleas D.C. 2004. “A comparison of exemplar and statistical evidence in reducing counter-arguments and responses to a message.” *Communication Research Reports* 21(3): 291-298.
- Parkhurst, J. 2017. *The Politics of Evidence: From Evidence-Based Policy to the Good Governance of Evidence*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge.
- Zebregs, S., B. van den Putte, P. Neijens & A. de Graaf. 2015. “The differential impact of statistical and narrative evidence on beliefs, attitude, and intention: A meta-analysis.” *Health Communication* 30(3): 282-289.



“Don’t say, just show”: The News Value of Impact of the Most Shared Fake and Not Fake News Articles on the US Capitol Riot

Johanna Disdier (Swansea University)

News media organisations used to have the control over the production and the distribution of news. With social media, it has become increasingly common for news to be forwarded by social media users, who can like, share and comment on it (Wadbring & Ödmark 2016). This aspect of social media news opens a new door into the exploration of news values, which from a linguistic point of view, tell how events are constructed as news by the discourse and for news consumption, rather than why (Bednarek & Caple 2017). Because social media users participate in the online spreading of news in order to gain influence over others and have them form similar beliefs, among other reasons (Hsu et al. 2020; Chadwick & Vaccari 2019), discursive news values can be studied through the perspective of social media users, by analyzing what linguistic factors they value in the communication of news. Taking a corpus assisted discourse analysis on the US capitol riots, this study aims to observe how the news value of Impact is valued in shared news and in shared fake news, and what this news value can tell us about the power of influence when the shared news relies on baseless claims, especially as the riots were triggered by misleading claims about voter fraud during the 2020 election. This study explores the 50 most shared fake news articles and the 50 most shared news articles on the January 2021 US Capitol Riot. Results show that Impact is constructed more in fake news articles, thus the significance of the investigation on the riot is emphasized, whereas other shared news seems to attach less importance to proving anything. Considering that the investigation started in January 2021, the results reflect the challenges of covering breaking news.

References

- Bednarek, M. 2019. “The language and news values of ‘most highly shared’ news.” In: Tim Dwyer & Fiona Martin, eds. *Sharing News Online: Commentary Cultures and Social Media News Ecologies*. Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 157-188.
- Hsu, C., Ajourlou, A., & Jadbabaie, A. 2022. “Persuasion, news sharing, and cascades on social networks.” *SSRN Electronic Journal*. www.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3934010.

Hsu, C., Ajorlou, A., & Jadbabaie, A. 2020 “News sharing, persuasion, and spread of misinformation on social networks.” *SSRN Electronic Journal*. www.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3391585.

Wadbring, I., & Ödmark, S. 2016. “Going viral: News sharing and shared news in social media.” *Observatorio Journal* 10(4): 132-149. www.doi.org/10.15847/obsOBS1042016936.



#IStandWithPutin: Ambient Affiliation as a Form of Persuasion

Joseph Flanagan (University of Helsinki)

On 5 March, Twitter announced that it had banned over 100 accounts that pushed the hashtag #IStandWithPutin for participating in “coordinated inauthentic behavior” and violating Twitter’s “platform manipulation and spam policy” days after the hashtag trended. Commentators have differed widely in their assessment of what the swift removal of the accounts from Twitter said about the state of Russia’s “firehose of falsehood” propaganda model, with some suggesting it has effectively been neutralized (at least in the West) and others warning its effectiveness in those areas where the hashtag received the most engagement remains unknown. Implicit in both assessments is a notion that the danger of such coordinated misinformation campaigns lies in how social media users can be persuaded to establish, change, or strengthen their viewpoints in an expected manner, in this instance, support for Russia’s war in Ukraine.

This paper will adopt a somewhat different approach to the notion of persuasion. Using Martin and White’s (1995) appraisal framework along with network analysis and NLP approaches, I will examine a corpus of tweets from the period when #IStandWithPutin was trending. I will suggest that the persuasive appeal of movements like #IStandWithPutin lies in not so much in the belief in the credibility of Putin’s claims but in the way they create what Michelle Zappavigna describes as “ambient affiliation” amongst those sharing a negative appraisal of the West. I’ll show that users communed primarily around three attitudinal regions: AFFECT (negative appraisal of Nato, Israel, the West), JUDGEMENT (accusations of racism and imperialism and hypocrisy), and APPRECIATION (Putin as champion of non-Western values). I’ll conclude by outlining some of the contradictions inherent in ambient affiliation because it is attitudinal, it is largely immune to logical refutation. For much the same reason, it may not literally convey support of Putin.



Seeking for Allies During Wartime: Persuasive Strategies in Speeches of the President of Ukraine

Anna Iegorova (National Transport University, Kyiv)

This report is an attempt to perform critical discourse analysis of persuasive strategies employed in speeches of the President of Ukraine addressing parliaments of democratic countries worldwide seeking for their military, economic and political support after the military aggression of Russian Federation against Ukraine started in late February 2022.

The corpus of material under research comprises 31 speeches (all speeches addressing foreign parliaments from March till mid-July 2022) retrieved from the official website of the President of Ukraine (<https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/speeches>).

Overall, the analysis is inspired by the ideas developed in seminal works by T. van Dijk on political discourse analysis (1997) and strategical employment of discourse structures in political talk (cf. van Dijk 2006; 2011).

The first part of the analysis will provide a brief description of the speeches on the macro level: their general structure; topic selection and creation of local coherence by means of evidentiality and argumentation.

The second part of the analysis will be centered on two major interaction strategies of positive *WE* self-presentation (including *we = Ukraine*, *we = Ukraine + X country*, *we = democratic countries*, *we = allies*, etc.), and negative *THEY* other-presentation of the aggressor. Both strategies are explored through thorough analysis of: (1) level of precision in descriptions of actors and their actions (explicitness and implicitness, precision and vagueness, level of details); (2) use of lexicon and rhetorical figures (hyperboles, euphemisms, metaphors, etc.); (3) and local syntax (active and passive constructions to emphasize agency and responsibility, word order, etc.).

The results obtained will be additionally interpreted in broader terms of dominant ideology of the democratic world, supported by and strengthened in the speeches under research.

References

- van Dijk, Teun. 1997. "What is political discourse analysis?" *Belgian Journal of Linguistics* 22(1): 11-52.
- van Dijk, Teun. 2006. "Discourse and manipulation." *Discourse and Society* 17(2): 359-383.

van Dijk, Teun. 2011. "Discourse, knowledge, power and politics." In Hart, Christopher, ed. *Critical Discourse Studies in Context and Cognition*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 27-63.



Hammering the Message In: Rhetorical Repetition and Persuasion in Political Speeches

Jukka Tyrkkö (Linnaeus University)

Sophie Raineri (Paris Nanterre University)

Jenni Rääkkönen (Tampere University)

Anna Ishchenko (Linnaeus University)

Zayna Jamal Halis (Linnaeus University)

Repetition is one of the easiest methods of persuasion, because it exploits the so-called *illusory truth effect*: the familiar is perceived as truer. Repeated exposure to select words and phrases can persuade and convince audiences that what they hear is true, even if it is not (e.g., Begg, Fanas & Farinazzi 1992; Moons, Mackie & Garcia-Marques 2009; Nilsson Björkestrand & Grigonyté 2020). Repetition creates rhythm and cohesion in text or speech, and can be used as a method of focusing attention or fostering internal allusions (e.g., Taraseva 2011; Charteris-Black 2018).

Despite the manifest usefulness of repetition in political speech, quantitative corpus-based linguistic studies of the use of repetition are scarce, and this study aims at filling that gap. In our study, we use the *Diachronic Corpus of Political Speeches* to analyse transcripts of political speeches in English from the 1950s to present day. We first use the Pattern Analyser, a new corpus tool (to be made freely available at the conference) to identify all instances of repeated phrases within each speech along with their distributional patterns, and then classify them by type (grammatical or lexical) and by their position in a clause (initial, middle or final). We further analyse the audio or video recordings of c. 140 speeches to examine the extent to which special prosodic contours and gestures are associated with the repetitions (Debras 2021).

According to our results, repetition is common in political speeches: almost 50 per cent of the speeches examined contains at least one 4-word sequence that is repeated three or more times within a short span of 30 words. Furthermore, repetition seems to be employed for a range of different purposes: while in some instances it is the repeated phrase that is highlighted, sometimes the repeated phrase itself is not important, but what it serves as an introduction to.

References

- Begg, Ian Maynard, Ann Anas & Suzanne Farinacci. 1992. "Dissociation of process in belief: Source recollection, statement familiarity, and the illusion of truth." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 121(4): 446–458.
- Charteris-Black, Jonathan. 2018. *Analysing Political Speeches. Rhetoric, Discourse and Metaphor*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Debras, Camille. 2021. "How to prepare the video component of the Diachronic Corpus of Political Speeches for multimodal analysis." *Research in Corpus Linguistics* 9(1): 132-151.
- Diachronic Corpus of Political Speeches*. 2018-. Compiled by Jukka Tyrkkö, Jenni Räikkönen & Sophie Raineri. In development.



Perceived Persuasiveness and the Modality of Emotion Effects: A Perceptual Study of Brexit Speeches

Judit Vári (University of Konstanz)

Aleksandra Cichocka (University of Kent)

Tamara Rathcke (University of Konstanz/University of Kent)

Social psychological studies have presented evidence for a general impact of emotions on attitude change (Petty & Briñol 2015). Linguistic studies explore emotionality and persuasion in language production, for example as emotional discourses in political speeches (Maalej 2012; Altikriti 2016). For example, person deixis (e.g., *we* vs. *I*) is used as persuasive tool to create emotional effects (Flores-Ferrán 2017; Proctor & Su 2011; Steffens & Haslam 2013). Besides language production, language perception also plays a crucial role: studies find that speakers' display of emotions – e.g., tone and content words – impacts on their perception as being charismatic and effective (Bono & Ilies 2006; Lewis 2000). However, little is known whether emotions in language production directly influence individuals' perception of speakers as persuasive. In addition, it remains unclear whether modality (audio vs. written speeches) potentially mediates this emotionality effect, since most studies are unimodal (Maalej 2012; Altikriti 2016; Flores-Ferrán 2017; Proctor & Su 2011; Steffens & Haslam 2013; Bono & Ilies 2006; Lewis 2000).

In this paper, we investigate whether varying degrees of emotionality impact on perceived persuasiveness of political leaders in the UK and whether this is mediated by stimuli modality. British participants (n = 149; 110 female) read or listened to 20 samples of Brexit speeches by

David Cameron, Nicola Sturgeon, Nigel Farage and Theresa May and rated them on perceived persuasiveness – using Likert scales. We investigated emotionality of language production with on the one hand, emotionality of content words. Two dimensions of emotionality were established following social psychological frameworks: 1) emotional valence, and 2) arousal and we quantified these dimensions with ratings from two emotion lexicons (Bradley & Lang 1999; Warriner, Kuperman & Brysbaert 2013). In addition, we established emotionality in form of speakers' use of person deixis (e.g., inclusive pronouns such as *we*). Based on previous literature (Steffens & Haslam 2013; Bono & Ilies 2006), we hypothesized a positive relationship between speakers' emotions in production and their perceived persuasiveness. We also expected a mediating effect of modality. Results show that only emotion dimension 2) arousal influenced perceived persuasiveness without moderation of modality.

References

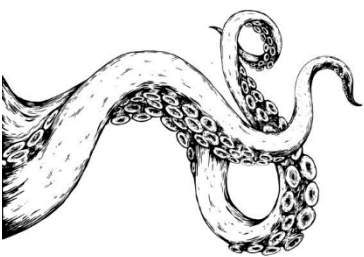
- Altikriti, S. 2016. "Persuasive speech acts in Barack Obama's inaugural speeches (2009, 2013) and the last state of the union address (2016)." *International Journal of Linguistics* 8(2): 47-66.
- Bono, J. E., & Ilies, R. 2006. "Charisma, positive emotions and mood contagion." *The Leadership Quarterly* 17(4): 317-334. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.04.008>
- Bradley, M. M., & Lang, P. J. 1999. *Affective Norms for English Words (ANEW): Stimuli, Instruction Manual and Affective Ratings. Technical Report C-1*. The Center for Research in Psychophysiology, University of Florida.
- Flores-Ferrán, N. 2017. "'I'm very good at and maybe that's why I'm center stage...': Pronominal deixis and Trump." *English Linguistics Research* 6(1): 74.
- Lewis, K. M. 2000. "When leaders display emotion: how followers respond to negative emotional expression of male and female leaders." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 21(2): 221-234. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-1379\(200003\)21:2<221::AID-JOB36>3.0.CO;2-0](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(200003)21:2<221::AID-JOB36>3.0.CO;2-0)
- Maalej, Z. A. 2012. "The 'Jasmine Revolt' has made the 'Arab Spring': A Critical discourse analysis of the last three political speeches of the ousted president of Tunisia." *Discourse & Society* 23(6): 679-700. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926512452973>
- Petty, R. E., & Briñol, P. 2015. "Emotion and persuasion: Cognitive and meta-cognitive processes impact attitudes." *Cognition and Emotion* 29(1): 1-26.

- Proctor, K., & Su, L. I. W. 2011. “The 1st person plural in political discourse: American politicians in interviews and in a debate.” *Journal of Pragmatics* 43(13): 3251-3266. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.06.010>
- Steffens, N. K., & Haslam, S. A. 2013. “Power through ‘us’: Leaders’ use of we-referencing language predicts election victory.” *PloS One* 8(10): e77952. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0077952>
- Warriner, A., Kuperman, V., & Brysbaert, M. 2013. “Norms of valence, arousal, and dominance for 13,915 English lemmas.” *Behavior Research Methods* 45(4): 1191-1207. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-012-0314-x>

Session 2 – Persuasion, Emotion & Meaning-Making – Chair: Frazer Heritage

12:30-13:30, Zoom discussion

Leland Masek (Tampere University)	How Persuasion Occurs in Playful Experiences
Michał B. Paradowski (University of Warsaw)	Social Norms Trump Emotions in a Second Language
Stellan Petersson (University of Gothenburg)	Emotive Meaning Change in Swedish
Ahlem Saidi (Lancaster University)	Persuasion/Manipulation in TED Talks: A Triangulated Exploration of the Practice of Meaning-Making
Mattia Thibault (Tampere University)	Persuasive Cities: Mapping Manipulation in Urban Semiotic Systems



How Persuasion Occurs in Playful Experiences

Leland Masek (Tampere University)

Persuasive communication is commonly considered a pervasive component of human affairs (O’Keefe 2015). Persuasion is also a concept that has been directly associated to how humans experience games and play. Games have been theoretically analyzed for how they rhetorically persuade players through their mechanics (Smith & Just 2009; Bogost 2010). In practical application, several health interventions use playfulness, play or games to “playfully persuade” their participants to engage in healthy behaviors (Chiu et al. 2009; Romero et al. 2010; Rozendaal et al. 2011). This demonstrates a theoretical connection and humanistic value behind understanding how playfulness is connected to persuasion in human life. Despite this promising theoretical connection, comparatively less empirical research has investigated how persuasion is present in playful experiences. This begs the question: Is persuasion a common feature of playful experience and how so? This work addresses this topic by analyzing 82 qualitative semi-structured interviews on playful experiences by participants from 41 countries around the world for how they include persuasion. By analyzing these interviews, forty-eight experiences were identified as including an act or experience of persuasion. This level of representation in the data set implies a close relationship between playful experience and persuasion. Furthermore, it appeared in two different ways: Persuasion to play and Persuasion as play. Persuasion to play demonstrated individuals needing to persuade other players to engage in playful experience and persuade authority figures to permit playfulness. Persuasion as play demonstrated that attempting to persuade was a core playful experience for individuals especially in verbal conversation. Deconstructing these playful experiences provides useful empirical, qualitative data on how individuals perceive playful persuasion as occurring in their life. Furthermore, this work concludes playfulness should be seen as a valuable perspective for understanding how humans behave in ways that they initially do not intend.

References

Bogost, I. 2010. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Chiu, M. C., Chang, S. P., Chang, Y. C., Chu, H. H., Chen, C. C. H., Hsiao, F. H., & Ko, J. C. 2009. "Playful bottle: A mobile social persuasion system to motivate healthy water intake." In: *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Ubiquitous Computing*. 185-194.
- O'Keefe, D. J. 2015. *Persuasion: Theory and Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Romero, N., Sturm, J., Bekker, T., De Valk, L., & Kruitwagen, S. 2010. "Playful persuasion to support older adults' social and physical activities." *Interacting with Computers* 22(6): 485-495.
- Rozendaal, M., Vermeeren, A., Bekker, T., & Ridder, H. D. 2011. "A research framework for playful persuasion based on psychological needs and bodily interaction." In: *International Workshop on Human Behavior Understanding*. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer. 116-123
- Smith, J. H., & Just, S. N. 2009. "Playful persuasion." *Nordicom Review* 30(2): 53-68.



Social Norms Trump Emotions in a Second Language

Michał B. Paradowski (University of Warsaw)

Recent research (Costa et al. 2014; Geipel, Hadjichristidis & Surian 2015, 2016; Cipolletti, McFarlane & Weissglass 2016; Corey et al. 2017; Hayakawa et al. 2017; Ćavar & Tytus 2018; Brouwer 2019; Karataş 2019; Dylman & Champoux-Larsson 2019; Driver 2020) has shown that the same dilemma may elicit different moral judgements depending on the language in which it has been described.

Using a covert 2×2×2 experiment where 61 L1 Polish – L2 English bilinguals – final year MA students majoring in either Applied Linguistics (with English as their first foreign language) or English – were asked to translate (L1↔L2) a passage peppered with swearwords, we show that the picture is much more complex. While the results ostensibly corroborate the so-called 'foreign language effect', with a significant interaction between the source and target words and the direction of translation, $F(1,59) = 7.88$; $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .12$, it was only observed in the case of *ethnophaulisms*, that is expletives directed at social (out)groups (significant interaction between the source and target words, direction of translation, and type of words, $F(1,59) = 59$, $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .16$), but not *generic swearwords*. This indicates that the key factor modulating response strength is not so much the different emotional power associated with the respective languages, but *social and cultural norms*.

Long cultural learning and socialisation make expressions in L1 highly prone to normative influences, whereas using a foreign language exempts the speaker from these (whether our own or socially imposed) norms and limitations. It transpires that switching to a foreign language during decision-making may not only reduce emotionally-driven responses and political correctness biases, but also promote candid deliberative processes (e.g. rational cost-benefit considerations).

The findings imply that switching into the second language may modulate the effectiveness of potential manipulation.



Emotive Meaning Change in Swedish

Stellan Petersson (University of Gothenburg)

In rhetoric, three means of persuasion are distinguished: *ethos* (techniques related to the character of the speaker), *logos* (arguments related to the topic of speech), and *pathos* (appeals to the emotions of the audience) (Wagemans 2022: 586). In this talk, which integrates rhetoric with the philosophy of language and linguistics, a crucial aspect of pathos is discussed, namely *emotive meaning*: feelings and sentiments associated with words.

The talk approaches the realm of the emotive with special reference to recent developments in the Swedish vocabulary. It combines contemporary theories of communication and well-known ideas about grammaticalization (in particular Traugott & Dasher 2002), in a novel approach to the complex phenomenon at hand. The hypothesis is that emotive meaning develops diachronically as a result of two mechanisms: self-determination (Anderson & Lepore 2013) and conversational and conventional implicature (Grice 1975; Williamson 2009). The account is applied to examples described in earlier case studies of emotive meaning in Swedish.

In the talk, we focus on the semantic field of ethnicity. In this field, there are several expressions whose stylistic properties in public language have changed recently, e.g., *lapp* ‘Lapp’, *indian* ‘American indian’, and *eskimå* ‘Eskimo’ (described in Petersson & Sköldberg 2020). The hypothesis explored during the talk is as follows. In a first stage, there is a process of self-determination, in the designated group, with the result that a certain expression, or a group of expressions, are prohibited. Further uses of said expressions generate implicatures that depend on the maxim of manner (cf. Grice 1975). Obscurity of expression ought to be avoided, according to it, and, therefore, obscure language tends to generate conversational implicatures. In particular, the use of prohibited expressions generates implicatures of offence or a mark of out-group identity

(and conversely, adherence to recommended terms generates solidarity implicatures and in-group identity). In a second stage, the offence or out-group identity is associated with the term's lexical meaning: it is a conventional implicature and not a conversational one (cf. Williamson 2009).

References

- Anderson, Luvel & Ernie Lepore. 2013. "What did you call me? Slurs as prohibited words." *Analytic Philosophy* 54(3): 350-363.
- Grice, Herbert Paul. 1975. "Logic and conversation." In: P. Cole & J. Morgan, eds. *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3, Speech Acts*. New York: Academic Press. 41-58.
- Petersson, Stellan & Emma Sköldbeg. 2020. "To discriminate between discrimination and inclusion: A lexicographer's dilemma." In: Zoe Gavriilidou, ed. *Euralex xixi Book of Proceedings Vol. 1*. Alexandroupolis/Greece: EURAC.
- Traugott, E. C. & R.B. Dasher. 2002. *Regularity in Semantic Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wagemans, Jean H. M. 2022. "The philosophy of argument." In: Piotr Stalmaszczyk, ed. *The Cambridge Handbook of the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. chap. 31.
- Williamson, Timothy. 2009. "Reference, inference and the semantics of pejoratives." Oxford: Oxford University Press. 137-159.



Persuasion/Manipulation in TED Talks: A Triangulated Exploration of the Practice of Meaning-Making

Ahlem Saidi (Lancaster University)

In this paper, I explore the architectural features of TED Talk which is my central focus of interest. This text corresponds to "a new genre of presentation [...] in that presenters weave together an engaging narrative complete with a strong visual presence" (Kedrowicz & Taylor 2016: 352). In line with this and drawing on the concept of "triangulation", I make use of a combination of different approaches wherein socio-cognitive, rhetorical, semiotic, and multimodal perspectives allow for a careful examination of the boundary between persuasion and manipulation in TED Talks. I draw chiefly on critical discourse studies (CDS), more specifically, the discourse-historical approach (DHA) (Reisigl & Wodak 2016) in addition to social semiotics (Bezemer & Kress 2015).

In particular, I shed light on humour as one of the processes employed as an instrument of argumentation (Dynel 2011). I offer an explanation of how humour is materialised and how viewers make sense of and react to humorous messages. I suggest that speakers use humorous narrative by means of anecdotes to strengthen the persuasive effect of the content presented. Combined with prosodic, gestural, and rhetorical practices, humour is most effective in arousing emotional responses. I propose that these practices may not be unintentional but rather could be constructed to advance the persuasive interests of TED producers and editors.

References

- Bezemer, J., & Kress, G. 2015. *Multimodality, Learning and Communication: A Social Semiotic Frame*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Dynel, M. 2011. *The Pragmatics of Humour Across Discourse Domains*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Kedrowicz, A. A., & Taylor, J. L. 2016. "Shifting rhetorical norms and electronic eloquence: TED talks as formal presentations." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 30(3): 352-377. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651916636373>
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M., eds. 2016. *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.



Persuasive Cities: Mapping Manipulation in Urban Semiotic Systems

Mattia Thibault (Tampere University)



“Persuasive technologies” is an umbrella term used to refer to the design and development of artifacts or services that aim to modify human behaviour. Their goals can be commercial or humanitarian, but their methods and premises are similar. More recently, such approaches have been proposed at an urban scale, under the label of “persuasive cities” (Stibbe & Larson 2016). In this presentation we argue that cities have always had a persuasive component, and we will try to map different forms in which manipulation takes place in the urban environment.

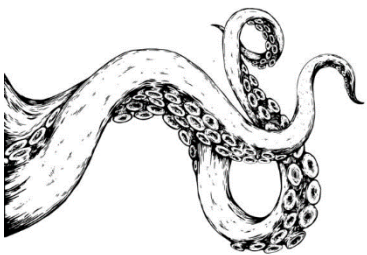
From a semiotic perspective, manipulation can be understood as an attempt to confer certain modalities to a subject (Greimas 1983). In particular, manipulation can *modalise* the subject according to the virtualising modalities of “having-to-do” and “wanting-to-do” (Ibid.). In the case of the urban environment, we can define attempt to modalise subjects toward what they “have-to-do” – or “have-not-to-do” – as a form of *conative manipulation* (borrowing Jakobson’s term). Modalisations of “wanting-to-do” are instead connected to a *seductive manipulation* (and possibly to the *sex appeal of the inorganic* mentioned by Walter Benjamin and Mario Perniola). Finally, conferring modalities on “wanting-not-to-do” is a form of *dissuasive manipulation*.

These modalisations exist transversally throughout the different semiotic systems used in cities. Architecture, for example can be used to dissuade from certain behaviour or to make them impossible altogether (hostile architecture), but also to seduce citizens and direct them towards certain places and behaviours (by entertaining them with urban gamification, luring them with air conditioning, etc.). Similarly street signs, advertisements, window shops all compete in the attempt to influence the behaviour of the city dwellers. In this presentation, hence, we will offer a brief overview of some of these strategies as well as propose a semiotically-rooted systematisation in the attempt to emerge parallelisms and differences from the manipulation strategies of other semiotic systems.

Session 3 – Communicating COVID-19 – Chair: Theresa Neumaier

14:30-15:30, Zoom discussion

Marta Cestari (Leiden University) Annemarije Makkinga (Leiden University) Elise Oosterom (Leiden University) Jenny Doetjes (Leiden University) Matthijs Westera (Leiden University)	Questioning COVID: A Multilingual Dataset and Analysis of Questions in COVID-19 Tweets
Jenna Saarni (University of Turku)	Evaluation in Sensational News Headlines During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Finland
Andrea Valente (York University)	Persuasive Language in Public Health Campaigns in Brazil During Covid19
Rachelle Vessey (Carleton University)	Gendered Persuasive Strategies in COVID-19 Public Health Guidance on Twitter: A Canadian Case Study



Questioning COVID: A Multilingual Dataset and Analysis of Questions in COVID-19 Tweets

Marta Cestari (Leiden University)

Annemarije Makkinga (Leiden University)

Elise Oosterom (Leiden University)

Jenny Doetjes (Leiden University)

Matthijs Westera (Leiden University)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, disinformation about the virus, its symptoms and the vaccine was widespread on social media, with disastrous consequences. Previous work has identified certain linguistic features as rhetorical devices used in lying and disinformation such as negation, references-to-other, conjunctions, levelers, and questions (Hancock, Curry, Goorha & Woodworth 2007; Leugenachtige taal. Honours Twitterchecker 2022). Of these, questions are themselves a broad, versatile and rhetorically potent class (Gnisci & Bonaiuto 2003; Miles 2013), in which the other features may be present to varying degrees. However, there is currently no systematic

research into the kinds of questions used in social media disinformation. We address this knowledge gap by 1. making available a large-scale, multilingual, semi-automatically annotated dataset of questions extracted from tweets, and 2. using it to address two concrete research questions: (i) Are features associated with disinformation, as found in the literature predominantly concerned with declarative sentences (Leugenachtige taal. Honours Twitterchecker 2022), also predictive of disinformative uses of questions? and (ii) Which types of questions, drawing from the theoretical syntax and pragmatics literature, are most used in disinformation on social media? More precisely, we combined tweets from existing COVID-19 tweetsets (Di Giovanni, Pierri, Torres-Lugo & Brambilla 2021; Imran, Qazi & Ofli 2021; Lamsal 2021), from the post-vaccine-approval period Nov 2020-Nov 2021, in English (10M), French (10M), Italian (10M) and Dutch (3M, only until March 2021). From these tweets we extracted a total of 7M questions, which we divided into an information and a disinformation dataset, based on a ‘golden list’ of manually classified common hashtags in COVID-19 debates. To quantify the reliability of our hashtag-based filter, following the methodology of Pierri et al. (2021), we tested every hashtag by manually annotating a subset of tweets to determine whether at least 80% of the tweets using these hashtags fit in the category of ‘information’ or ‘disinformation’. We likewise automated and manually verified the linguistic features and question types. We will present our methodology and preliminary findings.

References

- Di Giovanni, M., Pierri, F., Torres-Lugo, C. & Brambilla, M. 2021. *VaccinEU: COVID-19 Vaccine Conversations on Twitter in French, German and Italian*. <https://github.com/DataSciencePolimi/VaccinEU>.
- Gnisci, A., & Bonaiuto, M. 2003. “Grilling politicians.” *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 22(4): 385-413. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X03258088>.
- Hancock, J., Curry, L., Goorha, S. & Woodworth, M. 2007. “On lying and being lied to: A linguistic analysis of deception in computer-mediated communication.” *Discourse processes* 45(1): 1-23.
- Imran, M., Qazi, U., & Ofli, F. 2021. *TBCOV: Two Billion Multilingual COVID-19 Tweets with Sentiment, Entity, Geo, and Gender Labels*.
- Lamsal, R. 2021. “Design and analysis of a large-scale COVID-19 tweets dataset.” *Applied Intelligence* 51(5): 2790-2804.

Leugenachtige taal. Honours Twitterchecker. 2022. Retrieved 30 June 2022, from <https://honours.twitterchecker.sites.uu.nl/leugenachtige-taal/>

Miles, E. W. 2013. "Developing strategies for asking questions in negotiation." *Negotiation Journal* 29(4): 383-412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nejo.12034>.

Pierri, F., Tocchetti, A., Corti, L., Di Giovanni, M., Pavanetto, S., Brambilla, M., & Ceri, S. 2021. *VaccinItaly: Monitoring Italian Conversations Around Vaccines on Twitter and Facebook*.



Evaluation in Sensational News Headlines During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Finland

Jenna Saarni (University of Turku)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, news articles have been an important source for informing various counter-pandemic measures (Ytre-Arne & Moe 2021). News writers seek to create sensational headlines to persuade and capture the attention of readers (Scacco & Muddiman 2020). In addition, headlines usually offer attitudes and evaluations toward the rest of the story behind the headline (Tabe & Fieze 2018; Bednarek & Caple 2012). Although sensational news headlines have been examined from many aspects (see Kilgo & Sinta 2016 for sensationalism in social media news articles; Blom & Hansen 2015; Scott 2021 for information gap in clickbait headlines and Molek-Kozakowska 2013 for sensationalism in tabloid news), they offer only fragmentary perspectives into their characteristics and functioning. In this presentation, I discuss how attracting readership is constructed through sensational headlines. The aim is to describe different types of evaluative parameters, ranging from evaluating the emotivity and importance of the impacts caused by the pandemic to evaluating the mental states of others (Bednarek 2006, 2010). Altogether, the data consists of 687 headlines from three Finnish news sources, a leading newspaper (*Helsingin Sanomat*), a tabloid newspaper (*Ilta-Sanomat*) and a broadcasting company (*Yleisradio*) from the first days of the state of emergency in March 2020. The analysis adopts a data-driven perspective on the evaluative parameters used in the headlines.

References

Bednarek, M. 2006. *Evaluation in Media Discourse: Analysis of a Newspaper Corpus*. London/New York: Continuum.

Bednarek, M. 2010. "Evaluation in the news: A methodological framework for analysing evaluative language in journalism." *Australian Journal of Communication* 37(2): 15-50.

- Bednarek, M. & Caple, H. 2012. *News Discourse*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Blom, J.N. & Hansen K.R. 2015. "Click bait: Forward-reference as lure in online news headlines." *Journal of Pragmatics* 76: 87-100.
- Kilgo, D.K. & Sinta, V. 2016. "Six things you didn't know about headline writing: Sensationalistic form in viral news content from traditional and digitally native news organizations." *International Symposium on Online Journalism* 6(1): 111-130.
- Molek-Kozakowska, K. 2013. "Towards a pragma-linguistic framework for the study of sensationalism in news headlines." *Discourse and Communication* 7(2): 173-197.
- Scacco, J. & Muddiman, A. 2020. "The curiosity effect: Information seeking in the contemporary news environment." *New Media & Society* 22(3): 429-448.
- Scott, K. 2021. "You won't believe what's in this paper! Clickbait, relevance and the curiosity gap." *Journal of Pragmatics* 175: 53-66.
- Tabe, C.A. & Fieze, N.I. 2018. "A critical discourse analysis of newspaper headlines on the anglophone crisis in Cameroon." *British Journal of English Linguistics* 6(3): 64-83.
- Ytre-Arne, B. & Moe, H. 2021. "Doomscrolling, monitoring and avoiding: News use in COVID-19 pandemic lockdown." *Journalism Studies* 22(13): 1739-1755.



Persuasive Language in Public Health Campaigns in Brazil During Covid19

Andrea Valente (York University)

It is widely recognized that Public Health institutions play a major role in mediated communication among scientific communities, government, and mass population. Public Health personnel are responsible for the distribution and education of medical and health information to various communities and individuals. One common strategy to convey public health messages to a mass audience is through 'campaigns', which usually mobilize various stakeholders from sponsors to social influencers (e.g., 'local celebrities'; social media influencers). The campaigns are usually designed from multimodality perspectives so that verbal and non-verbal languages can work in synergy to fulfil their intentions of social changes.

For example, during the Covid19 global pandemic, various public health campaigns used the mainstream media and social media with a call to prevent the spread of the corona virus. Their urgent goals were to shift people's behaviours by having them wearing face masks and by staying in quarantine, or lockdown; such behavioural changes would require well-designed persuasive

strategies to be effective. Yet, countries in the Global South with a colonial history and memory tend to have a slower adherence to government campaigns since they usually represent top-down initiatives and policies. Due to it, this presentation focuses on a longitudinal case study of public health campaigns in the Brazilian context to identify and evaluate the communicative and persuasive strategies used to address the mass population in relation to the wearing of facial masks to prevent the spread of corona virus for the last two years.

This study analyses multimodal persuasive languages applied in those campaigns which have been delivered and circulated through social media. It considers a mixed method approach to analyse content through critical rhetoric and corpus linguistics in order to validate findings. The methodological framework relies on media ecology, social psychology, and rhetorical-pragmatic studies.

References

- Cali, D. D. 2017. *Mapping Media Ecology: Introduction to the Field*. New York/Bern/Frankfurt/Berlin/Brussels/Vienna/Oxford/Warsaw: Peter Lang.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Cialdini, R. B. 2007. *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. New York: Collins.
- Jowett, G. S., & O'Donnell, V. 2018. *Propaganda & Persuasion*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- McKerrow, R. E. 1991. "Critical rhetoric and propaganda studies." *Annals of the International Communication Association* 14(1): 249-255.
- Sheridan, D. M., & Ridolfo, J. 2012. *The Available Means of Persuasion: Mapping a Theory and Pedagogy of Multimodal Public Rhetoric*. Anderson: Parlor Press LLC.
- Talmy, L. 1988. "Force dynamics in language and cognition." *Cognitive Science* 12(1): 49-100.
- Zhang, L., & Clark, C., eds. 2018. *Affect, Emotion, and Rhetorical Persuasion in Mass Communication*. London/New York: Routledge.



Gendered Persuasive Strategies in COVID-19 Public Health Guidance on Twitter: A Canadian Case Study

Rachelle Vessey (Carleton University)

From the beginning of the pandemic, Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) rapidly evolved into public figures around the world, and part of their role involved providing public health guidance.

Guidance can be interpreted as *recommendations* (i.e., advice for action that remains subject to government or public uptake) or as *directives* (i.e., ‘utterances designed to get someone to do something’, Goodwin 2006). In either case, the CMOs were required to persuade their audience of the veracity and significance of their guidance. This paper argues that the persuasive strategies adopted by Canadian CMOs on Twitter depend on gender, for reasons relating to language and gender ideologies.

In Canada, there are 17 CMOs at national, provincial/territorial, and municipal levels. Over the course of the pandemic, ten of these CMOs were women and seven used Twitter to communicate, as opposed to seven men, of whom only three had Twitter accounts. Adopting the theoretical lens of language ideology, this paper examines the persuasive strategies adopted in the public health guidance issued via Twitter by male and female CMOs. 18 months of Twitter data (January 2020-June 2021) were collected, with a total of 21,389 tweets (930,0883 words) examined using corpus-assisted critical discourse studies and systemic functional linguistics (Baker 2014; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014; Taylor & Marchi 2018).

Results show that different strategies were adopted by male and female CMOs, with male CMOs adopting more direct authoritative approaches and female CMOs expressing greater alignment with their public health team and their (local/provincial/territorial/national) community. While a paucity of male data poses methodological challenges, it also raises questions about the specific and disproportionate communication work accorded to and undertaken by women. The paper concludes by proposing that the female CMOs’ additional communicative work emerges as a result of language and gender ideologies, which lead to a particular persuasive style.

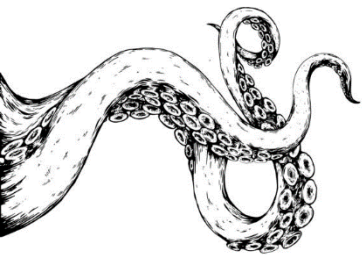
References

- Baker, P. 2014. *Using Corpora to Analyze Gender*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Goodwin, M. H. 2006. “Participation, affect, and trajectory in family directive/ response sequences.” *Text & Talk* 4/5: 513-541.
- Halliday, MAK & Matthiessen, CMIM. 2014. *Halliday’s Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 4th edition. London/New York: Routledge.
- Taylor, C. & Marchi, A., eds. 2018. *Corpus Approaches to Discourse*. London/New York: Routledge.

Session 4 – Persuasion Online – Chair: Morana Lukač

16:30-17:30, Zoom discussion

Daria Dayter (Tampere University) Thomas Messerli (University of Basel)	Pragmatics of Persuasion on R/ChangeMyView
Claire Hardaker (Lancaster University) the Quo VaDis team	Routes to Radicalization: Conflict in Online Vaccination Discussions
Nicolas Ruytenbeek (KU Leuven)	An Experimental Approach to the Perception of Emotions in Twitter Complaints and Compliments
Elisabeth Scherr (Universität Graz)	Shifting Concepts: The Persuasive Potential of Lexical Choices in the Body Positivity Discourse
Cipto Wardoyo (Coventry University)	Telling Stories as Persuasive Advice in Islamic Sermons



Pragmatics of Persuasion on R/ChangeMyView

Daria Dayter (Tampere University)

Thomas Messerli (University of Basel)

Within social media more generally and Reddit more specifically, the subreddit changemyview (CMV) holds a special place: Rather than following trends of outrage culture and polarisation, r/changemyview's original posters invite commenters to change their view and award those that persuade them with an award called 'delta'. Topics of submissions and persuasive comments range from films to gender, from politics to household chores, and usually provoke lively discussion rich both in transactional and relational communication.

For the present study, we draw on examples from our large corpus of CMV posts and comments, structured according to whether a particular comment has been awarded a 'delta' or not (and therefore has been judged successfully persuasive by the original poster). We examine three categories of Reddit posts: original posts; non-delta-awarded comments; and delta-awarded

comments. A sample of 10 posts in each category is manually annotated for pragmatic strategies of persuasion, in accordance with a taxonomy derived from existing literature (cf. Rudolf von Rohr 2018) and adapted to the data in an iterative coding process. The result is a two-tier taxonomy: the first tier describing the type of relational work (non-polite, polite, impolite), and the second describing seven genre-specific discursive moves. A comparison of the results allows us to draw conclusions about diverging language choices by original posters vs. commenters in respect to relational work and the construction of CMV genre. We take a closer look at the move of ‘concession’ that is frequent in original CMV posts across topics.

References

Rudolf von Rohr, M.-T. 2018. *Persuasion in Smoking Cessation Online: An Interpersonal Pragmatics Perspective*. Freiburg: NIHIN.



Routes to Radicalization: Conflict in Online Vaccination Discussions

Claire Hardaker (Lancaster University)

& the *Quo VaDis*¹ team²

In 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) identified the “delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines” as a top ten global health threat. It is therefore crucial to understand how people come to form their views about vaccines, how they may become increasingly entrenched, and how this entrenchment can lead gradually towards radicalization.

One prominent resource for individuals seeking further information on the subject is the internet. This may simply be in the form of reading news articles, considering pre-existing discussions, or through actively asking questions on social media platforms and then weighing up the perceived validity of the replies they receive. This talk presents some of the findings of a corpus-based study of conflict in discussion of vaccinations on the online forum, *Mumsnet*. *Mumsnet* has 1.16bn page views a year, and is regarded as a straight-talking, robust platform for parenting discussions. Its most popular sub-forum, *Am I being unreasonable?* (AIBU) is described as particularly combative,

¹ Funded by the *Economic and Social Research Council*, part of UK Research and Innovation (grant no: ES/V000926/1)

² Elena Semino (PI), Tara Coltman-Patel, William Dance, Derek Gatherer (Lancaster University) and Zsófia Demjén (UCL)

and in this paper, we focus on references to “anti-vaxxers” in AIBU, the use of insults, and the ways that conflict manifests itself in the discussions.

Through the analysis, it becomes clear that there are multiple fronts of conflict in vaccination discussions, and that these both reflect and reinforce an increasing entrenchment of attitudes. In particular, one form of solidarity within the data involves multiple users attacking a perceived common enemy, thus encouraging those users to coalesce into a sympathetic, like-minded sub-community. At the same time, however, precisely this antagonism-based solidarity can alienate those with different perspectives into forming increasingly polarized, and even radicalized oppositional sub-communities.

Overall, this creates a context in which there is little chance of understanding and empathy between those with different views, thus allowing minimal opportunity for participants to successfully inform or persuade others.



An Experimental Approach to the Perception of Emotions in Twitter Complaints and Compliments

Nicolas Ruytenbeek (KU Leuven)

Negative and positive emotions easily spread from one customer to the next, especially on social media. This presentation explores the link between the linguistic features of Twitter messages written by consumers and addressed to a specific company, and the spread of emotions to other consumers via these messages. We address the role of evaluative language on the identification of emotions and psychophysiological responses to Twitter complaints and compliments by the readers of these messages. Three hypotheses are tested in this research. First, in line with recent experimental work in French, we expect the presence of negative evaluative language in complaints to increase perceived dissatisfaction, impoliteness, and offensiveness of the consumer who wrote the review. Second, assuming the negativity bias hypothesis, evaluative language should trigger stronger psychophysiological responses in the readers of complaints compared to compliments. Third, readers’ psychophysiological responses should be stronger for complaints and compliments that include evaluative language. To test these hypotheses, we use a questionnaire to assess how readers assess the dissatisfaction, impoliteness, and offensiveness of the consumer who wrote the review and a reading task during which we record participants’ cardiovascular reactivity to measure the intensity of their emotional responses. We find, first, that perceived customer

dissatisfaction, impoliteness and offensiveness are higher in complaints including evaluative language compared to complaints without evaluative language. Second, regarding measures of cardiovascular reactivity, compliments with evaluative language elicit larger cardiac slowing compared to complaints (with or without evaluative language) and compliments without evaluative language. We discuss these findings and suggest directions for future research on emotional contagion in digital contexts.



Shifting Concepts: The Persuasive Potential of Lexical Choices in the Body Positivity Discourse

Elisabeth Scherr (Universität Graz)

With the advance of industrialisation and technology in the early 19th century – which strongly promoted the collection and statistical analysis of mass data – mean values and the concept of “normality” became central points of reference also in everyday life (cf. Link 2013: 20). Up to the present, “normality” particularly concerns also the human body, characterized by a comparatively narrow range of what is considered being “normal”. By contrast, body acceptance movements explicitly seek to shift this common conception. From a linguistic point of view, its agents constitute a community of practice, they are “groups of people that respond to a mutual situation” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003: 57), first and foremost by showing a similar linguistic behaviour on multiple levels.

My presentation will focus on the argumentation patterns Body Positivity activists use in German blog posts to persuade their recipients of the need to reevaluate the common concept of ‘normal appearances’. A corpus of text material (~ 200,000 token) will be subjected to discourse linguistic methods: Based on quantitative assessments (frequency distributions and keyword analysis), the persuasive potential of nominations (cf. Herrgen 2000; Girth 1993) will be analysed. As will be shown, the choice of words is heavily biased: Issues that touch upon the common concept of normality are verbalized by metaphors of war or suppression and by a strong de-personalisation of opponents (“the war against plurality”, “the power of the media”). Even though such fight-metaphors appear also when arguing for a pluralisation or deconstruction of the concept (“war on diets”), predominant here are positively attributed keywords (“diversity of life”, “humanity first”). Such lexical choices construct a theoretic opposition directing the recipients’ opinion to ultimately abandon the notion of ‘normality’ as a whole.

References

- Eckert, Penelope & Sally McConnell-Ginet. 2003. *Language and Gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Girnth, Heiko. 1993. *Einstellung und Einstellungsbekundung in der politischen Rede*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Herrgen, Joachim. 2000. *Die Sprache der Mainzer Republik (1792/93). Historisch-semantische Untersuchungen zur politischen Kommunikation*. Tübingen.
- Link, Jürgen. 2013. *Versuch über den Normalismus. Wie Normalität produziert wird*. 5th edition. Göttingen.



Telling Stories as Persuasive Advice in Islamic Sermons

Cipto Wardoyo (Coventry University)

Preachers and sermons play a prominent role in advice discourse, explaining what is morally good or evil from God's perspective. Although advice is intended to point out what is best for the listeners (Searle 1975), it can also be seen as a 'face-threatening act' limiting the freedom of those receiving it (Brown & Levinson 1987; Morrow 2006). One way to make advice less direct is to pitch it in a story. A form of teaching using illustrative stories to get across a moral point has been used in many religions. Telling stories as a means of advice-giving differ from more straightforward instructional genres such as commandments, rules and procedures (Rule 2017: 2), telling stories could stimulate and engage the human brain and help the speaker connects with the audience. In my research, I built a corpus of twenty YouTube videos of global Islamic preachers and named it the Islamic Sermons Online (ISO) corpus. I investigated the advice realisation in the ISO corpus, and my research findings show that advice is delivered through imperatives, semi-modals, quoting sacred texts, and telling stories. Telling stories is the most popular advice types in the ISO corpus. Stories from the Quran, the Hadith (Islamic prophetic tradition) and personal experiences regularly appear in the ISO corpus. Stories of Luqman and Ibrahim (Abraham) are very popular in inspiring parents to engage their children. The preachers also tell Biblical prophets from the Quran, such as Yakub (Jacob), Yusuf (Joseph), Luth (Loth), and Nuh (Noah), to motivate the audience to learn and reflect on how to be patient with the problems in the family. Stories of the prophet Muhammad from the Hadith are employed to inspire the audience to play actions to build a strong and happy family and raise children. Stories from a current situation through

preachers’ personal experiences, such as issues in raising female teenagers and the impact of technologies in parenting, are also used to inspire parents to play an active role in raising believing children.

References

Brown, P. & Levinson, S.C. 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morrow, P.R. 2006 “Telling about problems and giving advice in an internet discussion forum: Some discourse features.” *Discourse Studies* 8: 531-548.

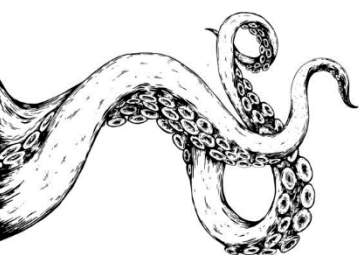
Rule, P.N. 2017. “The pedagogy of Jesus in the parable of the good Samaritan: A diacognitive analysis.” *Hervormde theologiese studies* 73(3): 1-8.

Searle, J.R. 1975. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Session 5 – Persuasion & Business Discourse – Chair: Erika Darics

10:15-11:00, Zoom discussion

Dominika Beneš Kováčová (Masaryk University)	“The Little Miracle”: The Use of Manipulative Language in the Promotion of CBD Products on Instagram
Marie-Louise Brunner (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier) Stefan Diemer (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier)	Persuasion Strategies on Instagram Business Accounts
Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)	“5 Ways to Give Your Skin a Fresh Workout”: Semiotized and Mediatized “Consumer Masculinity” in UK Branding and Advertising for Men’s Skincare Products
Anouk van der Pas (VU Amsterdam) * please note that this presenter won’t attend the panel discussion session on Nov 19*	Resistance in Charitable “Cold Calls”: A Conversation Analytical Research on Cold Calls



“The Little Miracle”: The Use of Manipulative Language in the Promotion of CBD Products on Instagram

Dominika Beneš Kováčová (Masaryk University)

The role of influencers and celebrities in the promotion of products and services on social media is indisputable and has been confirmed in previous research (e.g., Djafarova & Rushworth 2017). To avoid being accused of ‘selling out’, influencers typically integrate the sponsored products into their daily lives (Hou 2018) and promote them in the form of advertorials rather than explicit advertisements (Abidin 2016). While personal experience with a sponsored product is highlighted in such posts, arguably little attention is paid to the credibility of the influencer’s claims under the pretense of their objectivity and authenticity. This becomes increasingly problematic when promoted products fall into the category of nonprescription drugs and dietary supplements since social media users may potentially delay seeking professional help and turn to different alternatives recommended to them by influencers. A particularly noteworthy example of such products is cannabidiol (CBD), which – though often praised for its curative effects – is not legally considered a drug in many countries. Therefore, taking as the object of analysis the self-presentation of a Slovak hip hop musician who openly collaborates with a company manufacturing CBD products, I adopt a multimodal discourse analysis approach to examine the strategies the musician employs in his Instagram posts, Stories and IGTV videos devoted to the promotion of CBD oil essences. The preliminary results of the analysis show that the identified product presentation strategies contain manipulative language, which gives prominence to the positive effects of the products and to the expertise of the manufacturers while withholding relevant information concerning the recommended dosage and research studies used for supporting the musician’s claims. To delineate whether these potentially manipulative strategies are typical of the presentation of CBD products by other influencers, a small-scale dataset of random Instagram posts written in English and containing the hashtag #cbdinfluencer is additionally examined.

References

Abidin, C. 2016. “Visibility labour: Engaging with Influencers’ fashion brands and #OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram.” *Media International Australia* 161(1): 86-100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X16665177>

Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, R. 2017. “Exploring the credibility of online celebrities’ Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of your female users.” *Computers in Human Behavior* 68: 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.11.009>

Hou, M. 2018. *Social Media Celebrity: An Investigation Into the Latest Metamorphosis of Fame*. Ridderprint BV.



Persuasion Strategies on Instagram Business Accounts

Marie-Louise Brunner (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier)

Stefan Diemer (Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld/Hochschule Trier)

This presentation examines branding and advertising strategies on Instagram in selected companies with an international customer base. Our aim is to document existing best practices and to show how companies use various communication strategies to persuade customers of their products and services.

Instagram has not yet been researched extensively, though some studies have investigated it from various perspectives, including research from linguistics (e.g., Dayter & Mühleisen 2016; Brunner & Diemer 2019), business communication (e.g., Hassan 2014; De Veirman et al. 2017), and marketing (e.g., Kelly 2016; Li et al. 2022).

Our study makes use of a corpus of publicly accessible Instagram data of more than 50 internationally active companies and self-marketing influencers which has been compiled between 2017 and 2022. We use a two-step approach as described in Brunner and Diemer (2022), combining multimodal discourse analysis (O’Halloran 2011) with content analysis to identify persuasive strategies that attract customers’ attention, create brand awareness, produce interaction and engagement, and generally convince customers of the brand and product/service value.

Results show that posts and Instastories in our corpus are specifically used to engage and persuade customers through storytelling and interaction, providing a way for companies to create a convincing and consistent brand image, but also to create interest and increase rapport. Companies frequently link directly to their sales platforms through posts and stories, performing classical acts of persuasion, but they also feature influencers, valued customers, or related brands, and provide entertainment value. Humor plays a key role, both verbally and visually. Instastories, in particular, use a wide range of interactive elements to persuade customers.

In sum, we present Instagram as a highly persuasive medium that companies use to increase customer retention and engagement as well as construct a consistent brand. Companies use multimodal and interactive means of persuasion, engaging and enticing customers.



“5 Ways to Give Your Skin a Fresh Workout”: Semiotized and Mediatized “Consumer Masculinity” in UK Branding and Advertising for Men’s Skincare Products

Laura Coffey-Glover (Nottingham Trent University)

Existing research on beauty and skincare advertising shows that advertising texts present ‘problems’ and offer ‘solutions’ in very gendered ways (e.g., Coupland 2007; Harrison 2008, 2012; Ringrow 2016), but there is less work that gives critical attention to products in the male grooming market, and the health implications of commodified gender representations in skincare advertising is also currently under-researched. However, this is an important intellectual endeavour, since constructions of ‘commodified masculinity’ have the potential to impact negatively on men’s body image in the pursuit of unrealistic standards of skincare. This is particularly the case in the context of a neoliberal capitalist culture which places the burden of responsibility on individuals for making the right choices to improve their own physical health and appearance, or what Elias et al. (2017) refer to as “aesthetic entrepreneurship”.

To interrogate how this ‘aesthetic labour’ is semiotized and mediatized, this presentation provides a Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Problem-Solution patterns in the product packaging for the bestselling men’s skincare brands from 2020, alongside advertorials featuring these products from the UK online version of *Men’s Health* magazine, using concepts from social semiotics (van Leeuwen 2006; Ledin & Machin 2020). In doing so, I take ‘consumer masculinity’ as a central model for framing my analysis of these discursive features, which is typified by ‘metrosexual’ sensibilities – appeals to the urban, heterosexual man who unabashedly consumes health and beauty products and services to achieve the ideal healthy body; pursuits that are conventionally associated with women or gay men (Simpson 1994). Metrosexuality is associated with a feminising of masculinity, which has the potential to challenge hegemonic ideals (Hall 2015). However, this paper demonstrates how consuming skincare products is in fact constructed as a power move for men, as taking control over their own health and wellbeing in ways that denies the possibility for changing the heteronormative status quo.

References

- Coupland, J. 2007. "Gendered discourses on the 'problem' of ageing: Consumerised solutions." *Discourse and Communication* 1(1): 37-61.
- Hall, M. 2015. *Metrosexual Masculinities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Harrison, C. 2008. "Real men do wear mascara: Advertising discourse and masculine identity." *Critical Discourse Studies* 5(1): 55-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405900701768638>
- Ringrow, H. 2016. *The Language of Cosmetics Advertising*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Simpson, M. 1994. "Here come the mirror men: Why the future is metrosexual." <http://www.marksimpson.com/here-come-the-mirror-men/>



Resistance in Charitable "Cold Calls": A Conversation Analytical Research on Cold Calls

Anouk van der Pas (VU Amsterdam)

This research aims to explain how donors construct their resistance in cold calls from a charity organization and how the callers deal with this resistance. Cold calls are defined as unsolicited calls from a company to prospective customers (De Stefani 2018; Huma et al. 2019). Until now, most conversation analytical research was focused on conducting sales for profit organizations. Research has shown that cold calls often cause annoyance very early on in the call, causing the call taker to try to end the call as quickly as possible (De Stefani 2018; Huma et al. 2019). Although the cold calls analyzed in this research also have a clear persuasive component, i.e., persuading donors to increase their donation or closing a periodic donation agreement, this research differs fundamentally from previous research, because the context it is conducted in is different. Charitable organizations have a different place in society and are usually looked upon more positively. According to the research of Van Slyke and Brooks (2005: 211), "some people believe that charities are more effective than governments or for-profits at providing human services". Therefore, less resistance in these cold calls is expected.

The analysis reveals that resistance occurs in two distinct interactional configurations: resistance in the absence of a solicitation and resistance triggered by a solicitation. During the conference, the focus will be on the former, since donors can use two practices to come to this type of resistance, i.e., interruptive resistance and anticipatory resistance.

In all practices, donors use accounts that avoid coming across as unwilling to donate. Callers can use different practices to deal with resistance. This research shows that in all cases, callers

actively affiliate with the donors, showing that they already have a relationship to manage. The callers avoid social threatening interaction and try to maintain social solidarity.

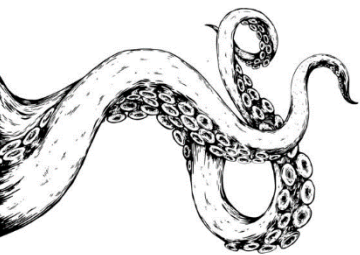
References

- De Stefani, E. 2018. “Institutional invitations to a meeting: Cold calls to bank clients.” *Journal of Pragmatics* 125: 180-199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.06.011>
- Huma, B., Stokoe, E. & Sikveland, R. 2019. “Persuasive conduct: Alignment and resistance in prospecting ‘cold’ calls.” *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 38(1): 33-60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X18783474>
- Van Slyke, D. & Brooks, A. 2005. “Why do people give? New evidence and strategies for nonprofit managers.” *The American Review of Public Administration* 35(3): 199-222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074005275308>

Session 6 – The Dark Side of Persuasion – Chair: Isabel Picornell

13:00-14:00, Zoom discussion

Rosie Marsh-Rossney (Swansea University)	“It Shouldn’t Even Be Wrong”: A Discourse Analysis of Attitudes and Rationalisations in Online Paedophile Communities
Laura Mercé (University of Valencia)	Discursive Manipulation in the Courtroom: The Case of Depp v. Heard
Kate Muir (Bath Spa University) Robert Thomas (University of Bath) Ekaterina Kochmar (University of Bath) Faye Walker (Bath Spa University) Nigel Dewdney (University of Bath) Adam Joinson (University of Bath)	Persuasive Strategies Across Conversational Contexts: Development of a Natural Language Processing Tool to Detect Benign and Malicious Persuasion in Online Dialogue
Keighley Perkins (Swansea University)	“No Matter Where You Are, Never Be Afraid. Patriots Walk Amongst You!”: Examining the Legitimation of In-Group Identities by the Radical Right on Twitter
Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth) Daria Dayter (Tampere University)	Creepy, Confident, or Persistent? Triangulating Practice and Discourse in Pick-up Artist Instructional Videos
Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo (Università di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’)	“No Does Not Mean No”: The Discursive Framing of Female Sexual Rejection as ‘Last Minute Resistance’ in Pick-Up Artist Communities



“It Shouldn’t Even Be Wrong”: A Discourse Analysis of Attitudes and Rationalisations in Online Paedophile Communities

Rosie Marsh-Rossney (Swansea University)

[Content warning: This abstract contains some mentions of child sexual abuse perpetrators and sexual violence]

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a growing issue that has only been exacerbated by the recent boom in online communication. The offenders perpetrating these crimes are also congregating in online spaces to connect with like-minded individuals. Here they are participating in online paedophilia communities where they can support one another, trade Child Sexual Abuse Material, give advice on offending, and promote their beliefs. Existing research (e.g., Woodhams et al. 2021) has demonstrated that members of these communities engage in offence-supportive attitudes to rationalise their offending behaviours, which can in turn enable an escalation of offending behaviour via reducing psychological barriers (Maruna & Mann 2006). Furthermore, studies suggest there may be a disparity between the attitudes disseminated in public pro-paedophilia forums and private conversations between offenders (Holt et al. 2010; Luchjenbroers & Aldridge-Waddon, 2020).

Despite the benefits of analysing these communities, they remain a vastly understudied resource. Although some research exists into online paedophile communities from psychology or criminology perspectives, there have been few forays into this area using a linguistic approach (with the exceptions of Luchjenbroers & Aldridge-Waddon 2011; Chiang 2020; Grant & MacLeod 2020; Marsh-Rossney & Lorenzo-Dus 2022). Thus, this project examines online paedophile communities, using authentic offender-to-offender chatlogs, from a discourse analysis perspective. The dataset, provided by UK-based police forces, comprises of c. 100,000 words of over 1,600 offenders interacting on social media platforms. Supportive and challenging attitudes expressed in the dataset were identified during an initial thematic analysis and examined using the concepts of self- and other-oriented facework, Du Bois’ (2007) stance triangle, and othering. The presence of

propaganda techniques was also detected. Demystifying the identity negotiations and persuasion tactics present in the delivery of these attitudes, through the use of linguistic tools, can expose how community identity construction takes place and offence-supportive beliefs are escalated.

References

- Chiang, E. 2020. “‘Send me some pics’: Performing the offender identity in online undercover child abuse investigations.” *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 0(0): 1-15.
- Du Bois, J. W. 2007. “The stance triangle.” In: Englebretson, R., ed. 2007. *Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 139-182.
- Grant, T., & MacLeod, N. 2020. *Language and Online Identities: The Undercover Policing of Internet Sexual Crime*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 26-57.
- Holt, T. J., Blevins, K. R., & Burkert, N. 2010. “Considering the pedophile subculture online.” *Sexual Abuse* 22(1): 3-24.
- Luchjenbroers, J., & Aldridge-Waddon, M. 2011. “Paedophiles and politeness in email communications: Community of practice needs that define face-threat.” *Journal of Politeness Research* 7(1): 21-42.
- Marsh-Rossney, R., & Lorenzo-Dus, N. 2022. “A discourse analysis of sexual identity construction by offenders in online paedophile communities.” Paper Presented at *EPICS X*. Pablo de Olavide University, Seville (Spain). <<https://eventos.upo.es/68581/section/37514/x-international-symposium-on-intercultural-cognitive-and-social-pragmatics-epics-x-23th-25th-may-20.html>>
- Maruna, S., & Mann, R. E. 2006. “A fundamental attribution error? Rethinking cognitive distortions.” *Legal and Criminological Psychology* 11(2): 155-177.
- Woodhams, J., Kloess, J. A., Jose, B., & Hamilton-Giachritsis, C. E. 2021. “Characteristics and Behaviors of Anonymous Users of Dark Web Platforms Suspected of Child Sexual Offenses.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12: 1-11.



Discursive Manipulation in the Courtroom: The Case of Depp v. Heard

Laura Mercé (University of Valencia)

Discourse constitutes a powerful tool for social manipulation. It is commonly used in court and it usually serves two functions: (1) to benefit the defense or (2) to benefit the accusation (Wagner & Cheng 2011). This paper explores the use of a specific strategy of manipulation in the Depp v. Heard case. More specifically, it focuses on Freyd's (1997) strategy of Deny, Attack and Reverse Victim and Offender (DARVO). Since its coinage, DARVO has been found to be a common strategy in cases of domestic violence (DV) where the objective of the defense is to deflect the perpetrator's blame. Importantly, Harsey and Freyd (2020) have recently shown that DARVO can indeed be deployed effectively to create distrust towards victims. Against this backdrop, this paper addresses the following two research questions: Is DARVO used in the Depp vs. Heard case? And if so, how is it discursively constructed? I hypothesize that Mr. Depp's defense attorney did indeed deploy DARVO as a discursive strategy, thus casting doubt on the victim's credibility and reframing Ms. Heard as the real perpetrator. To this end, I apply the qualitative analysis software NVivo to a corpus made up of >650 hours of the televised trial and use discourse analysis to analyse those instances where lawyers of both parties use language to construct the victim and perpetrator's personae. Three nodes of analysis are utilized for coding purposes. Namely, deny, attack and reverse. The study thus builds on previous forensic linguistic work on televised trials (Cotterill 2001) and the effect of language use in the courtroom (Hildebrand-Edgar & Ehrlich 2017). Its social relevance emerges amidst the virulent anti-feminist backlash to the #MeToo movement that has recently sprung in stardom and celebrity media spaces. Whilst women's accounts of DV are now being systematically questioned, men are being reframed as the real victims of the abuse.

References

- Cheng, L., & Wagner, A. 2011. *Exploring Courtroom Discourse: The Language of Power and Control*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Cotterill, J. 2001. "Domestic discord, rocky relationships: Semantic prosodies in representations of marital violence in the O. J. Simpson trial." *Discourse & Society* 12(3): 291-312. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926501012003002>.

- Freyd, J. 1997. "Violations of power, adaptive blindness and betrayal trauma theory." *Feminism & Psychology* 7(1): 22-32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353597071004>.
- Harsey, S., & Freyd, J. 2020. "Deny, Attack, and Reverse Victim and Offender (DARVO): What is the influence on perceived perpetrator and victim credibility?" *Journal Of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 29(8): 897-916. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2020.1774695>.
- Hildebrand-Edgar, N., & Ehrlich, S. 2017. "'She was quite capable of asserting herself': Powerful speech styles and assessments of credibility in a sexual assault trial." *Language And Law* 4(2): 89-107. <https://ojs.letras.up.pt/index.php/LLLD/article/view/3285>.



Persuasive Strategies Across Conversational Contexts: Development of a Natural Language Processing Tool to Detect Benign and Malicious Persuasion in Online Dialogue

Kate Muir (Bath Spa University)

Robert Thomas (University of Bath)

Ekaterina Kochmar (University of Bath)

Faye Walker (Bath Spa University)

Nigel Dewdney (University of Bath)

Adam Joinson (University of Bath)

In this project, we used move analysis (Swales 1981) to help us understand how persuasion occurs dynamically in dialogue, and developed a natural-language processing tool to support the automation of persuasive dialogue detection within large corpora of text. We conducted a systematic research review of the psychology, linguistics, and computational linguistic literature around how persuasion is achieved in dialogue. In the resultant theoretical model, which we term *Persuasive Strategies across Conversational Contexts*, persuasive dialogue is conceptualized as consisting of *conversational moves* which a persuader will use to achieve their overarching persuasive aim. We identified seven overarching persuasion moves, which were both theory and data driven, and which appeared across multiple conversational contexts: (1) Rapport and liking; (2) Negotiating; (3) Appeals to emotion; (4) Appeals to logic; (5) Appeals to authority; (6) Social proof; and (7) Overt persuasion, manipulation, and pressure. Within each move are nested specific *tactics*, and nested further are linguistic *techniques* which are fine grained methods, often at the utterance level, which the persuader can build to achieve the tactic (and eventually the move) within dialogue. The model was converted into a codebook, which was tested and refined, before

our model was used to conduct a series of studies in which the codebook was marked up across a variety of persuasive dialogues by a team of annotators. We tested whether the model can accurately identify conversations in which attempted persuasion is known to be present, using the Persuasion for Good corpus (Wang et al. 2019), and created a classifier for predicting the probabilities of a given persuasion move being present in any given utterance. We present the initial results of these studies and discuss the implications of using the classifier to identify where both benign and malicious forms of persuasion are taking place in online conversations.



“No Matter Where You Are, Never Be Afraid. Patriots Walk Amongst You!”: Examining the Legitimation of In-Group Identities by the Radical Right on Twitter

Keighley Perkins (Swansea University)

Social media platforms are used by extremist groups to radicalise new members (Gill 2016; Koehler 2014). One strategy employed online to achieve this aim is a strong in-group identity (see, for example, Macdonald & Lorenzo-Dus 2019), which not only appeals to those lacking a sense of self and belonging (Webber & Kruglanski 2017; Barlett & Miller 2012) but also empowers audiences into “further involvement or action” in support of the group by merging personal and group identities into one (Bowman-Grieve 2009: 996).

While previous work has investigated the in-group identities of extremist organisations (see, for example, Nouri, Lorenzo-Dus & Watkin 2021; Lorenzo-Dus & Nouri 2020), little work has been done on how these identities are justified. This study, therefore, draws upon legitimation theory (van Leeuwen 2007, 2008) to examine how in-group identities on radical right Twitter are validated. The data consists of 4,968 tweets, comprising of 81,198 words, across a 10-month period from Generation Identity (GI), the English Defence League (the EDL), and Siege Culture (SC).

Across the data, three identities emerge – the Campaigner, the Hero and the Victim – with the most dominant being the Campaigner (GI: 59.83%, 1,266 references; the EDL: 50.93%, 3,461 references; SC: 80.21%, 543 references). Despite adopting identical identities, each group varied in how this identity was legitimated. While GI and SC primarily used Authority Legitimation (GI: 58.68%, 1,061 references; SC: 73.28%, 447 references), this strategy typically took the form of Role Models for GI (76.87%, 452 references) and Expert Authority for SC (81.72%, 219 references). In contrast, the EDL legitimated their identity through Rationalization (39.28%, 1,640 references), namely through others’ experiences via Experiential Rationalization (79.99%, 1,183

references). These findings suggest that, despite adopting similar identities, extremist groups validate them in different ways, identifying the importance of studying the arguments that underpin these identities.

References

- Barlett, J. & Miller, C. 2012. "The edge of violence: Towards telling the difference between violent and non-violent radicalization." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24(1): 1-21.
- Bowman-Grieve, L. 2009. "Exploring 'stormfront': A virtual community of the Radical Right." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32(11): 989-1007.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100903259951>
- Gill, P. 2016. *Online Behaviours of Convicted Terrorists* [Report]. Vox Pol.
https://www.voxpol.eu/download/vox-pol_publication/Online-Behaviours_FINAL.pdf
- Koehler, D. 2014. "The radical online: Individual radicalization processes and the role of the internet." *Journal for Deradicalization* 1: <http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/8>.
- Lorenzo-Dus, N. & Nouri, L. 2020. "The discourse of the US alt-right online: A case study of the Traditionalist Worker Party blog." *Critical Discourse Studies*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2019.1708763>
- Macdonald, S. & Lorenzo-Dus, N. 2019. "Visual Jihad: Constructing the 'good Muslim' in online Jihadist magazines." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1559508>
- Nouri, L., Lorenzo-Dus, N., & Watkin, A. 2021. "Impacts of Radical Right groups' movements across social media platforms – A case study of changes to Britain First's visual strategy in its removal from Facebook to Gab." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 0(Special Issue Studies in Conflict and Terrorism TASM 2017): 1-27.
- Webber, D. & Kruglanski, A.W. 2017. "Psychological factors in radicalization: A '3N' approach." In: LaFree, G. & Freilich, J.D., eds. *The Handbook of the Criminology of Terrorism*. 1st edition. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. 33-46.



Creepy, Confident, or Persistent? Triangulating Practice and Discourse in Pick-up Artist Instructional Videos

Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth)

Daria Dayter (Tampere University)

In this talk, we investigate the discourse of instructional videos from the pick-up artist (PUA) community (O'Neill 2018; Dayter & Rüdiger 2022). PUAs are men who learn and practice short-term mating oriented speed-seduction based on techniques and scripts as propagated by seduction 'experts'. In doing so, we focus on videos which feature explicit voice-over commentary by the PUA himself plus the comment section of the respective video. This allows for a threefold perspective on PUAs' seduction performance: 1) the 'seductive' speech event itself, 2) the PUA's commentary, which situates the speech event in the PUA instructional paradigm and explains what happened from the speaker's point of view, and 3) the comments by the viewers of the video, which provides an understanding of the uptake of the proposed strategies by the primary (i.e., fellow PUAs, newcomers, and men interested in the community) and secondary (i.e., anyone else watching the video) audience. In a case study analysis, we show that PUAs' discourse, although ostensibly aimed towards seduction, in fact pursues different aims: recruitment of new members, promotion of the ideology, and creation of power imbalance in conversations with women that tilts towards verbal coercion. In the voice-over commentary, the PUA situates the depicted speech event into the 'instructional' pick-up paradigm, which, among others, focusses on framing the interaction as a 'success' regardless of the outcome (cf. Dayter & Rüdiger 2016 on written field reports). The comments left by the audience demonstrate an ambivalent reception, with the assessment of the PUA being questioned. In addition, we address issues of informed consent and research ethics, which come to the fore in dealing with such sensitive material and/or hostile informants (cf. Spilioti & Tagg 2017).

References

- Dayter, Daria & Sofia Rüdiger. 2016. "Reporting from the field: The narrative reconstruction of experience in pick-up artist online communities." *Open Linguistics* 2(1): 337-351.
- Dayter, Daria & Sofia Rüdiger. 2022. *The Language of Pick-Up Artists: Online Discourses of the Seduction Industry*. London/New York: Routledge.
- O'Neill, Rachel. 2018. *Seduction: Men, Masculinity, and Mediated Intimacy*. London: Polity.

Spilioti, Tereza & Caroline Tagg. 2017. *Ethics of Online Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*.
Special Issue *Applied Linguistics Review* 8(2-3).



“No Does Not Mean No”: The Discursive Framing of Female Sexual Rejection as ‘Last Minute Resistance’ in Pick-Up Artist Communities

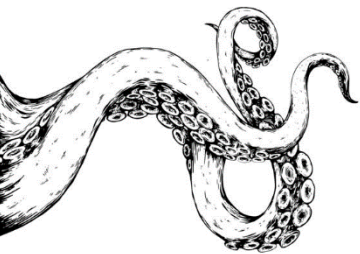
Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo (Università di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’)

This work investigates the discursive representations of female sexual consent and rejection as conceived by some members of Pick-Up Artist communities, which are groups of heterosexual men who aim at mastering the ‘art of seducing women’. Driven by Critical Discourse Studies, the study discusses how PUAs communicate among each other about how to overcome women’s refusal to have sex during a date, referring to it as ‘Last-Minute Resistance’. The first part of the study applies a qualitatively-informed corpus-driven analysis to reveal how verbal or physical rejection are almost never taken at face value, but rather seen as a form of token resistance, a ‘wall’ or an obstacle that has to be ‘overcome’, ‘ploughed through’, and eventually ‘defeated’. The second part of the analysis focusses on the syntactic lexical-semantic interface between agency and the gender of the subjects involved in the corpus, to further show how “the game” of sexual encounters is perceived by men as a representation of male power, syntactically realised through a high percentage of dynamic verbs and sentences in which men are agents who ‘lead’ the game, while women are the metaphorical ‘objects’ of their posts. Far from claiming that PUA are rapists, the work suggests that in environments in which certain misconceptions are circulated, intercepting these phenomena can contribute to halting toxic representations of consent before they cross the line between the online and offline world.

Lightning Talks

14:30-15:00, live Zoom presentations

Jess Aiston (Lancaster University)	“If the Roles Were Reversed It Would Be a Riot in the Streets”: The Use of the Topos of Justice Within an Online Anti-Feminist Community
Hayat Aoumeur (Mostaganem University)	A Multimodal Approach to Persuasion in Billboard Advertising: The Case of Djezzy, Algeria’s Principal Mobile Network Operator
Ketevan Gigashvili (Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University)	About One Method of Communication Within Tsovatush Minority Speech Community
Antti Kuusimaa (Tampere University)	Trump’s 2015 Presidential Announcement Speech: The Message Through a Critical Discourse Analysis
Mohamed Saki (University of Western Britany, Brest)	Pathos and Persuasion: A Case Study of Appeals to Emotions in a Collective Action – A Case Study of Digital Reactions to the Overruling by the US Supreme Court of Wade vs Roe
Jayashabari Shankar (University of Utah)	Persuasion in ‘Popular Science’: Evaluating to What Extent Subjectiveness Has a Place in Contemporary Science Writing
Vincent Wai Sum Tse (Monash University/The University of Warwick)	“We ‘Drug’ the Students”: Celebrity Tutors’ Performance of Expertise in the Shadows
Yat Ho Wong (University of Bayreuth)	From Chaos to Governance? Alternative Representations as Resistance in Online Media
Maria Załęska (University of Warsaw)	“Actually the Argument Is Not Convincing”: Folk Theories of (Un)convincingness



“If the Roles Were Reversed It Would Be a Riot in the Streets”: The Use of the Topos of Justice Within an Online Anti-Feminist Community

Jess Aiston (Lancaster University)

In this lightning talk, I examine how users of an anti-feminist Reddit community argue that men constitute a marginalised group in society as opposed to women. In particular, I focus on the specific argumentation strategy of the *topos of justice*, which is an equality-based conclusion rule that can be paraphrased as “if two persons, actions, or situations are equal, then they should be dealt with in the same way” (Reisigl & Wodak 2001: 78). Through this *topos*, users highlight instances of unequal treatment and perceived gendered double standards such as female criminals receiving less jail time than their male counterparts. Consequently, anti-feminist users can argue that men are oppressed by systems of sexism and ‘misandry’ (i.e., discrimination against men) and undermine feminism as a legitimate movement for gender equality. However, I argue that the usage of this *topos* is problematic, as users tend to produce simplistic comparisons between two highly different situations and falsely suggest that gender is the only differentiating factor between them. Furthermore, arguments rely on a formal or ‘gender blind’ model of equality as opposed to a substantive model, which allows users to argue that any instance of differential treatment between men and women constitutes discrimination.

References

Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. 2001. *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism*. London/New York: Routledge.



A Multimodal Approach to Persuasion in Billboard Advertising: The Case of Djezzy, Algeria’s Principal Mobile Network Operator

Hayat Aoumeur (Mostaganem University)

Within the multiplicity of advertising media, billboard advertising is gaining importance owing to its great exposure and accessibility to all viewers. The multimodal method for the research of billboard ads gives an insight into the integration of textual language, visual images, and design aspects to produce meanings. Billboard ads are also visual storytellers that use graphics, images, and pictures to engage with viewers based on a set of shared sociocultural components. This

research analyses the multimodal nature of billboard advertising by focusing on the relationship between the verbal and visual modes utilised by Djezzy marketers. It also attempts to detect the advertisers' narrative and persuasive strategies. To this end, the present study draws on social semiotics by Kress and Van Leeuwen for its analytical framework, together with Fog et al.'s storytelling elements. The corpus considered for the study includes twenty ads released since 2014, the year the firm began providing 3G services. Preliminary results show that Djezzy marketers use a variety of semiotic resources to turn real-life events into stories that engage people emotionally.



About One Method of Communication Within Tsovatush Minority Speech Community

Ketevan Gigashvili (Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University)

The paper studies one particular sociolinguistic phenomenon, which may be evaluated as a Pro-Language. Like Anti-language, coined by British linguist M. Halliday (1976), it is a method of communication within the minority speech community, but unlike it, Pro-Language does not serve to protest against the dominant society revealed in certain social contexts, but as a means of keeping the peaceful and kind-heartedness relations with it. I examine this quite interesting issue on the example of the Tsovatush-Georgian bilingual environment where Georgian is a predominant language and Tsovatush is threatened by distinction within a few generations. Over the course of centuries of peaceful coexistence with the Georgian-speaking population, the members of the Tsovatush society have created certain lexical units and idiomatic expressions that they use in certain social contexts to exclude Georgian-speaking listeners from their conversations for only the kind purposes. My work examines the relation between Tsovatush language and social structure and the ways, in which the Pro-Language is manifested, discusses some metaphorical modes of expression and shows how pro-language works in the given society. The work analyses bilingual conversations of Tsovatush people containing many examples of code switching from Georgian to Tsovatush. The research, relying on the long-term investigation of the Tsovatush-Georgian bilingual environment, shows that in all cases, Tsovatush is inserted in Georgian conversations as well as separate lexical items and phraseological expressions which intend to maintain friendly attitudes towards Georgian speakers. Thus, the given study proves that the minority language may have one additional communication method, which serves conciliatory purposes opposite to anti-language, which is a means of protest.



Trump's 2015 Presidential Announcement Speech: The Message Through a Critical Discourse Analysis

Antti Kuusimaa (Tampere University)

This lightning talk examines the main linguistic features used by the former President Trump to construct an ingroup/outgroup discourse in his 2015 presidential announcement speech. Specifically, it focuses on a set of linguistic features that are used to polarize the descriptions of these two groups by mitigating both *Our* bad qualities and *Their* good qualities and also attributing the former with positive descriptions and the latter with negative descriptions. These discourse events are identified from the linguistic features which are commonly used throughout the former president's announcement speech: simplicity, repetition, informality and deictics.



Pathos and Persuasion: A Case Study of Appeals to Emotions in a Collective Action – A Case Study of Digital Reactions to the Overruling by the US Supreme Court of *Wade vs Roe*

Mohamed Saki (University of Western Brittany, Brest)

I will analyse in this paper the important role used by pathos and emotional appeals in a collective action. In the aftermath of the overruling of the *Wade vs Roe* by the US Supreme court on June 24, 2022, a huge wave of messages were posted on social media, published by newspapers and broadcast by radios and televisions. My paper is premised on two assumptions: first, of the three appeals of Aristotle's rhetorical triangle, pathos is by the far the most powerful and the most efficient when seeking to have people believe in a certain set of values and behave accordingly. Indeed, language may have people join a collective action, engage in a dissent and protest movement by appealing to emotions since they can easily trigger what K. Burke calls identification. Second, social media as the media of identification par excellence since much of their messages are grounded on emotional appeals whereby a persuader conveys a sense that has the same values as and defends the interests of the targeted audience. My corpus is composed from tweets that reacted to the aforementioned and I will consider a tweet as a techno-discursive affordance that helps mobilise a struggling community. My analysis will investigate how emotional appeals manage to help a group of loosely structured group of people to advocate collective claims, publicise their causes, reframe a political issue. By doing so, I will show how emotional appeals seek to enhance the latitude of acceptance and ego-involvement in the targeted audience and trigger

in them the expected reaction; that is to join the collective movement. As a matter of fact, I will demonstrate that the role of pathos in this case is to move a targeted audience to action, to believe in the fairness and the necessity of a collective struggle and to build a community of shared interests and like-minded people. By focusing on the emotional appeals in my corpus, I will show that pathos is the crux of a persuasion strategy in a collective and agonistic discourse that contests an unfair decision and the string of negative consequences that will follow from it. Besides, I will also show that resorting to pathos does not mean that emotional appeals are irrational or illogical; on the contrary, I will show they are part of a larger rational strategy that aims to “humanise” the debate and to rid it of its supposed purely legal or moral overtone. In fact, I will show that appeals to emotions can be highly persuasive because it appeals to the audience’s moral and ethical senses, seeks to trigger indignation, anger, a sense of injustice and of urgency to act.



Persuasion in ‘Popular Science’: Evaluating to What Extent Subjectiveness Has a Place in Contemporary Science Writing

Jayashabari Shankar (University of Utah)

In *Silent Spring* (published 1962), author Rachel Carson vicariously describes the harmful effects of pesticides, in particular DDT. DDT, the book notes, killed large populations of birds, leading to a spring without chirping and noise – a “silent” spring. The book was widely read, expanding the concept of environmentalism to more of the American population. The style of writing, the way Carson appealed to emotions (particularly fear), and the “casual” diction – all resulted in a persuasive book that changed public perspective on pesticide use. In *Silent Spring*, Carson cleverly drew comparisons between radiation and pesticides, invoking fear in audiences and reminding them of the ever present threat of nuclear war. In Ricoeurian philosophy, stating regular things in “novel” and “creative” ways (he terms this the “power of metaphoricity”) is a powerful technique to control the meaning of what is conveyed. My paper analyzes *Silent Spring* in the broader sense of environmentalism and tries to answer the question of whether “metaphoricity” and rhetoric still has a place in modern day science writing. We see these tools of persuasion – the ways in which writers manipulate language – as evidence that the way one writes affects persuasiveness, even in fields such as science, which are known for objectivity. Further analysis shows that while science itself is objective, we see Ricoeurian philosophy most relevant in science directed to the public – works written by those knowledgeable in science, but for members of the general public, such as

National Geographic or *the Scientific American*. My paper finds that in these works, there is a strong link between the reader and the text's appeal to pathos. The "power of metaphoricity" still holds much weightage today, especially in science writing that specializes in the environment.



“We ‘Drug’ the Students”: Celebrity Tutors’ Performance of Expertise in the Shadows

Vincent Wai Sum Tse (Monash University/The University of Warwick)

In Hong Kong, celebrity tutors teach in shadow education, the fee-paying, supplementary tutoring of academic subjects outside school hours. They become famous in Hong Kong's exam-oriented environment for their supposed ability to help students obtain good grades for university entrance. They also engage in celebrity-like behaviour such as advertising themselves on billboards. They are the epitome of education commercialisation. While there are studies (e.g., Koh 2016; Yung & Yuan 2020) looking at their promotional discourse, the main and arguably most important component of celebrity tutors' work – the make-up and performance of expertise (in their teaching) – has not been analysed. To do so, I adopt the view that expertise is discursively accomplished (Candlin & Candlin 2002; Goodwin 1994). I regard the performance of and claims to expertise as a form of wordsmithery (Thurlow 2018, 2020). More specifically, in this short talk, I reflect on my own experience of working with celebrity tutors and examine how they talk about and regiment their doing of expertise. In an informal conversation with a tutor, I was told that a key discursive strategy in shadow education classrooms is 'drugging' the students: celebrity tutors continuously boast the usefulness of the skills they teach and overtly claim an expert status during their teaching, thereby making the students believe that they are experts. Celebrity tutors' attempt to 'drug' their students is to be seen as intertwined with other discourse types and strategies. For instance, in Yung's (2019) autobiographical narrative inquiry, he mentions that he had to prepare jokes to entertain students and attack schoolteachers for being incompetent. The talk ends with laying out a framework that comprises epistemic discourse analysis (Van Dijk 2013, 2014) and interdiscursivity (Fairclough 1992; Mautner 2010) for a critical discursive analysis of celebrity tutors' discursive expertise.



From Chaos to Governance? Alternative Representations as Resistance in Online Media

Yat Ho Wong (University of Bayreuth)

National Security Law (NSL), a law which was passed by Beijing but came into effect in Hong Kong, has sparked controversy both locally and internationally. This study examines the discursive strategies used in a Hong Kong online English media outlet to represent this controversial social action based on 273 articles with 201,182 word tokens. Despite it is of utmost importance to the journalistic community to make sure that reports are written objectively, according to Fowler, “language and other codes, most importantly language, have a cognitive role: they provide an organized mental representation for our experience” (1991: 3). Media discourse, instead of reflecting the social reality, is carefully produced under the mixed influences of a host of social, economic, political and cultural factors (Shoemaker & Reese 1996: 27). In other words, journalists’ job is to persuade their readers that their version of reality is an accurate and empirical reality.

This is a corpus-assisted discourse study (CADS) which examines the discursive strategies employed in Hong Kong Free Press (HKFP) to represent the NSL. Through analysing and categorising the top 20 strongest collocates of the NSL, the findings show that NSL is represented as a sole Beijing’s decision, a threat to democracy movements in Hong Kong and unprecedented. This study has combined analytical tools from Wodak’s Discourse-Historical Approach (2001) and van Leeuwen’s Social Action Network (2008) that are highly relevant to power in discourse. For example, HKFP frequently agentialises the NSL – it highlights the agentive involvement and forcefulness of Beijing in introducing the NSL by representing it as a decision directly/unilaterally from Beijing/ China/ Central Government. Apart from the representations of the NSL, this study also traces back to the discourse of Chris Patten from 1992 to 1997, the last governor of Hong Kong and reveals how his myth of British Legacy (Flowerdew 2011: 46) is still very prevalent in the articles of HKFP and contributes frames to make sense of the NSL in 2020.

References

- Fowler, Roger. 1991. *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. 1st edition. London: Routledge.
- Flowerdew, John. 2011. *Critical Discourse Analysis in Historiography*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Shoemaker, Pamela & Stephen Reese. 1996. *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on*

Mass Media Content. 2nd edition. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.

van Leeuwen, Theo. 2008. *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.

Wodak, Ruth & Michael Meyer. 2001. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.



“Actually the Argument Is Not Convincing”: Folk Theories of (Un)convincingness

Maria Zaleśka (University of Warsaw)

In research on influence, usually the scholarly attention is focused on the positive perspective, i.e., the criteria one must meet to (potentially) be persuasive. Consideration of the negative perspective – that of the persuadees – reveals folk theories about persuasion: what prevents one from exerting the desired influence?

This study is part of folk linguistics research, interested, among other things, in meta-linguistic and critical comments by non-specialists on the functioning of persuasive language.

The research material is a set of utterances from the English Web 2020 corpus (enTenTen20), available on the Sketch Engine platform, in which the expression “not convincing” appears. Corpus linguistics tools allow us to address three questions:

- 1) Who or what is “not convincing”? Identifying the categories (e.g., people, utterances, actions, etc.) that are given the attribute of being “not convincing” reveals the folk theories of persuasion regarding the *sources* of belief change.
- 2) Why is a given source (e.g., person, utterance, action, etc.) considered “not convincing” within the folk theories of influence? An analysis of the contexts makes it possible to observe that to be “not convincing” sometimes means that the criteria, listed among the attributes of “convincingness,” have not been met. Sometimes, however, it turns out that what makes the difference are seemingly irrelevant criteria which have so far escaped the scholarly attention.
- 3) In what communicative functions is the expression “not convincing” used? An analysis of communication tactics allows us to observe that the expression appears as a meta-argumentative explanation, as an evaluation, as a refutation and as a manipulation; these functions sometimes may overlap.

Summing up, the patterns of use of the expression “not convincing” offer insight into the meta-persuasive sensibilities of language users and into conceptualizations of ways of exerting influence through words.

References

- Goldman, A.I. 1994. “Argumentation and social epistemology.” *The Journal of Philosophy* 91(1): 27-49.
- Govier, T. 1987. *Problems in Argument Analysis and Evaluation*. Dordrecht/Providence: Foris Publications.
- Hinton, M. 2021. *Evaluating the Language of Argument*. Berlin: Springer.
- Kitchener, R. F. 2002. “Folk epistemology: An introduction.” *New ideas in Psychology* 20: 89-105.
- Niedzielski, N. A., Preston, D. R. 2000. *Folk Linguistics*. Berlin/New York: Mouton De Gruyter.

