Approaches to Digital

Discourse Analysis 3

Conference Abstracts

University of South Florida

St. Petersburg campus

University Student Center 2nd floor

200 6th Ave S, St. Petersburg, FL

33701, USA

Welcome to ADDA 3

Thank you! We appreciate your participation in the first ADDA conference held in the USA. We are looking forward to an exciting program representing a variety of disciplines, perspectives, and traditions; as well as many meaningful conversations that will offer and interactions offering many opportunities for multidisciplinary and critical reflection. We also would like to recognize the work of presenters, reviewers, plenary speakers, our scientific committee, and the students who have volunteered their time and effort to make this conference possible.

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We are also grateful to the following organizations for their generous support of ADDA 3

USF Linguistics and Applied Language Studies (LALS)

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Plenary Speakers

Anna De Fina, Georgetown University
"Birth and circulation of chronotopes on social media: the case of balcony performances during the Covid-19 crisis in Italy"
Friday, May 13, 5:45pm

Maite Taboada, Simon Fraser University
"All about comments: A multifaceted approach to digital discourse analysis"
Saturday, May 14, 6pm

Elaine Chun, University of South Carolina
"Social Media Actions as Antiracist Strategies: Spatiotemporal Representations of Racism"
Sunday, May 15, 12:45pm

Check in and registration: Friday May 13, 8am to 9am, USF Student Center, 2nd Floor Foyer

<u>Opening reception: Friday May 13, 7pm to 8:30pm, USF Student Center 2nd Floor Foyer</u>

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

Friday, May 13, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 1, Ballroom 3

<u>PANEL</u>: **Approaches to Extremism and Polarisation in Discourse, Part 1/2 (Hidalgo)**

Panel Overview: Radicalisation can be understood as a result of diverse socio-psychological factors. It is on the Internet (a frame preserving anonymity and encouraging immediacy) where this takes place more successfully. That is one of the reasons why Jihadist groups have tapped into the power of social media as a very effective locus of propaganda. Their discourse is imbued with persuasive pathos, managing to set in motion a process of *mediated disorder* (Aggarwal 2019), meant to eventually convince vulnerable individuals of the need to resort to violence. This panel proposal originates in a collective attempt to conduct a multimodal and data-driven analysis of Jihadist propaganda in the context of extremist radicalisation. This endeavour is the driving force behind several European-funded research projects[1] involving experts in Corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis, Artificial Intelligence, Political Science and Psychiatry. The papers comprising this panel will offer an overview of some of the key findings obtained thus far in relation to (i) Jihadists' use of evaluative strategies and metaphors in their on-line magazines; (ii) their particular construal of womanhood in this type of texts; (iii) the semi-automated multimodal analysis of their videos; and (iv) the creation and testing of semi-supervised machine learning algorithms to detect extremist content on Twittter through deep relations.

[1] FFI2016-79748-R, A-HUM-250-UGR18, P18-FR-5020

Title: **Muslims in jihadist magazines: A corpus-based analysis**

Author: Pascual Pérez-Paredes, University of Murcia, Spain

Abstract: The jihadisphere is a vehicle for extreme propaganda, radicalization processes, and recruitment methods jihadist organizations tend to resort to (Brown, 20215; Malešević 2017). Using social identity and symbolic convergence theories, Matusitz, Madrazo & Udani (2019) have shown that these magazines are adaptive and dynamic tools used to promote terrorist activities. Corpus assisted discourse analysis (Baker, Gabrielatos & McEnery 2013) has extensively researched the portrayal of minorities such as refugees or migrants (Pérez-Paredes, Aguado & Sánchez 2017). Baker, Gabrielatos & McEnery (2013) have used corpus-assisted methods to understand the representation of Islam and Muslims in the British press; the automatic extraction of lexical items and semantic profiling has offered a taxonomy of other-representation across a decade of the British press. Thanks to image content analysis, MacDonanld & Lorenzo-Dus (2021) have found that images of non-leader jihadis are used to visually construct the identity of so-called "good Muslims". This

construction is characterized by three traits, each corresponding to a different news value: (1) Fulfilled (personalization), (2) active (consonance) and (3) respected (prominence). Our paper combines some of the most recent contributions to corpus linguistics such as colligational profiling (Brookes & McEnery 2020) and ideological profiling of violence (Baker & Vessey 2018; Baker, Vessey & McEnery 2021) in order to understand how Muslims are represented in a corpus of around 200,000 words of jihadist magazines such as *Azan* or *Dabiq* published in the last decade. Special attention is paid to the representation strategies of good Muslims found in texts categorized as extreme or moderate (Brookes & McEnery 2020). Our findings suggest that representation strategies are driven by recruitment and indoctrination purposes.

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Macdonald, S. & N. Lorenzo-Dus. 2021. "Visual jihad: Constructing the 'Good Muslim' in online jihadist magazines". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 44(5): 363-386,
Pérez-Paredes, P., Aguado. P. & P. Sánchez. 2017. "Immigrants in UK legislation and Administration informative texts: A corpus-driven study (2007-2011)". *Discourse & Society* 28(1):81-103.

Title: **"A school of patience, faithfulness, and steadfastness": Ideal womanhood in the propaganda magazines of IS**

Author: Carmen Aguilera-Carnerero**,** Universidad de Granada, Spain

Abstract: Since the proclamation of the Caliphate in 2014, an unprecedented number of women have fled to Syria to join the Islamic State (IS). This fact, a matter of national security for many countries, has led scholars to study the ways of women into radicalisation (Van Knopp 2017). It has also spotlighted the organisation's two major official propaganda magazines, *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*, since both publications are considered potential recruitment tools (Cohen & Kaati 2018; Winter 2015, 2017). In her study on the depiction of women in IS propaganda, Ingram (2016) distinguishes five archetypes, namely, contributors, mothers/sisters/wives, defenders/fighters, corruptors,

and victims. Using the legitimation models proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) and Reyes (2011), this paper analyses the sections addressed to women in the aforementioned magazines to find out: (a) the roles of women within IS as depicted by the two official male-oriented propaganda channels and (b) the legitimation strategies used by the organisation to justify their claims. The analysis suggests the sections addressed to women focus on indoctrination instead of being recruitment tools but also unveils how the life code for women within IS, as depicted in the texts, is exceptionally well structured and organised, leaving no room for the slightest dissident behaviour. Eventually, IS, via their propaganda magazines, shape the ideal type of woman any Muslim female joining the armed group should aspire to become.

References
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Title: **"I am proud to be a traitor": A critical discourse analysis of pathos in online jihadist propaganda magazines**

Authors: Miguel-Ángel Benítez-Castro University of Zaragoza, Spain & Encarnación Hidalgo-Tenorio, University of Granada, Spain

Abstract: Neojihadism taps successfully into the Internet's influence to disseminate its oppression narrative of Muslims vs. non-believers (Al Raffie 2012). Emotional persuasion is crucial in this process of radicalisation, spurring disaffected citizens to sympathise with and justify violence, and eventually become Islamic terrorists (McCauley & Moskalenko 2014). Whilst this type of radicalisation has received attention from psychoanalysis (Kobrin 2010), Jihadist discourse is in need of more exhaustive examination. By detecting recruiters' key persuasive strategies, we may understand what can move people to violent action. In this paper, we employ SFL Appraisal Theory (Martin and White 2005; Bednarek 2008; Benítez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio 2019), to undertake a detailed analysis of the interplay between EMOTION and OPINION in a

pair of exemplars from two on-line Jihadist magazines: Taliban *Azan* and Al-Qaeda's *Inspire*. As Aggarwal (2019: 8) argues, the exhaustive analysis of single exemplars of radicalising discourse may suffice to cast light on the persuasive strategies at work in these texts. That is precisely what we set out to do in this paper. Our approach involves the delicate and fine-grained manual annotation of texts through O'Donnell's (2019) UAM CorpusTool, based upon a user-generated Appraisal scheme incorporating the refinements proposed in Benitez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio (2019) and Hidalgo-Tenorio & Benitez-Castro (2021). The quantitative and qualitative results obtained reveal two distinct persuasive strategies: One revolving around a markedly negative pathos of victimhood and deep distress caused by past and present injustice; and the other conveying pride and extolling the many virtues behind the Jihadi path. Despite the observed differences, both persuasive profiles would prove helpful to recruiters' attempts to lure discontented, angst-ridden Western individuals into their cause; these need to be brought face to face with the extreme suffering of the Ummah, convinced of the righteous moral grounds and justification of their 'holy war', and introduced to heroes they can admire.

References
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Friday, May 13, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 2, Ballroom 1

Title: **The case of the M-word and its variants in Venezuelan Spanish: A Twitter-based analysis**

Author: Blanca Romero Pino, Arizona State University, USA

Abstract: This study presents the results of a two-fold analysis of the use of the word 'Marico' and its feminine and plural variants on the social media platform Twitter. First, findings from a quantitative analysis of the use of this term by Twitter users from different Spanish-speaking countries is presented, placing emphasis on Venezuelan users. Second, in order to determine perceptions regarding the meanings and uses of the words under study, findings from an online questionnaire which was distributed among Spanish speakers are presented. The analysis of the Twitter data shows that the meanings of these expressions varies according to the word's position within the sentence (vocative, interjection, pragmatic marker, object of preposition, copula complement, and direct object, among others). The results of the online survey show that Venezuelan participants recognize the different meanings and uses of the word 'marico' and its variants. It was found that, when used among friends, acquaintances, and members of the Venezuelan diaspora, these expressions seem to fulfil a need for affiliation (Bravo, 1999) within the intended community of practice. However, these terms can be perceived as face-threatening acts (FTAs) when used outside the sanctioned communities of practice or when the addressee understands these terms as offensive and vulgar.

Title: **Multimodality and Transnational Identities of Chinese Overseas Students on WeChat and Instagram**

Author: Yuxuan Mu, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: The term superdiversity describes the current global mobility of migrants as well as transnational flows of information that are supported by social networking sites (SNSs). Superdiverse contexts also allow students pursuing their degree at overseas institutions to move freely between host countries and the motherland. Against the background of superdiversity, internet users on SNSs use language and other semiotic resources to make meaning. On SNSs, individuals employ diverse modes to craft their messages. Thus, the current study draws on theories of social semiotics and multimodality to study how Chinese overseas students construct their transnational identities on WeChat and Instagram (Kress, 2010), which were the most popular apps used by the study's participants. Signs and modes are socially constructed (Kress, 2010), and students' particular ways of arranging various modes reflected their ideologies about themselves and identities inhabiting or ascribed by society (Blommaert, 2005). The study adopted a discourse-centered online ethnographic approach to collecting data (Androutsopoulos, 2008), from five Chinese overseas

students in the UK via convenience sampling. System observations of the focal participants' SNS posts were carried out for five weeks and two rounds of semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain an emic perspective of multimodal design in their posts. A small stories approach (Georgakopoulou, 2016) was adopted to study the overseas student identities from their mundane updates. The findings suggested that the participants make full use of affordances across two SNSs (e.g., hashtags and links) and that they engage in diverse and creative ways of expressing themselves, such as translingual practices and the use of irony. Through their digital literacy practices, they project their transnational identities as learners at top universities, hard-working students with professional knowledge, who align with western aesthetics and lifestyle, but who also maintain emotional connection to Chinese culture. By analyzing their digital identity constructions, the present study provides insights on the ways that overseas students adopt aspects of both host and homeland cultures and construct a third space online.

Friday, May 13, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 2, Ballroom 1

Title: ***#Twospirit*. Sociolinguistic construction of identity on TikTok**

Author: Francesca Marino, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: Due to the spread of social media, the digital practice of tagging has become increasingly embedded in everyday life (Barton, 2015). As observed by Zappavigna (2011), hashtags (#) function primarily as topic-markers, allowing users to categorize their posts and to make discourse searchable by other users. Through the use of hashtags, users of social media also align and connect with others, transmit and co-construe sets of values, and build communities (Zappavigna, 2018). Among the multiple functions associated with the practice of tagging, hashtags are also employed by social media users as a resource for self-positioning as individuals construe, perform, and negotiate their identities in virtual spaces. This case study explores how Native American individuals who identify as *two-spirit* linguistically index their identities on the popular video-sharing platform TikTok, by posting videos marked by the hashtag *#TwoSpirit*. The term *two-spirit* interconnects ethnic and cultural identities with gendered, sexual, and spiritual identities (Wilson, 1996). Thirty *#TwoSpirit* audiovisual texts were retrieved from the TikTok platform in February 2022. This sample of videos was selected based on two criteria: (a) the videos displayed two-spirit individuals' self-narratives; (b) the use of English as medium of communication. Due to the nature of the data, an ethnographically-informed (Blommaaert, 2013) Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020) approach is used examine the multimodal texts under scrutiny in this study. The findings illustrate the multiple and multilayered strategies through which users convey their identities as *two-spirit* people*.*

Friday, May 13, 11:00-12:30

SESSION 3, Ballroom 3

<u>PANEL</u>**: Approaches to Extremism and Polarisation in Discourse, Part 2/2 (Hidalgo)**

Title: **"Persuasion and hyperbole on the path to Jihad": A discourse analysis of religious metaphor in online extremist propaganda**

Author: Katie J. Patterson, University of Granada, Spain

Abstract: The social identity of religious and politically homogenous Jihadist groups like Al Qaeda, the Taliban or Islamic State is driven by an ability to communicate ideology on a global platform. Their ideological discourse (or propaganda) depends largely on persuasive techniques as one of its pivotal instruments for radicalisation and recruitment and dissemination of information "to convince the audience of the veracity of the doctrine presented through it" (Adam 2017: 5). Metaphorical language allows individuals to associate experiential and social knowledge of the real world and society, with the system of beliefs and values that their ideology encompasses (Fairclough 1992). This paper examines the cognitive, pragmatic, and discursive aspects of religious metaphors and their function as a persuasive device in propagandist material. Current findings suggest that religious-inspired propaganda often makes use of rich conceptual metaphors to convey distinctive ideological perspectives (Prentice, Rayson and Taylor 2012). For instance, religious discourse often draws on the well-known 'journey' conceptual metaphor, with the imageschemata of a path, leading towards a better life, reward in an afterlife, moral choice, hope, and a closeness to God (Jäkel 2002). The metaphor instils a sense of the 'righteous' choice, often juxtaposed with language such as 'straying' down 'crooked' or 'devious' paths (Jäkel 2003). The research approach in this study will combine corpus-assisted methods and critical discourse analysis to investigate the use of persuasion tactics through religious metaphor. The data for this study are taken from a collection of Jihadist online magazines. The corpus has been compared against the Qur'an in order to ascertain whether certain metaphors (either conceptual or linguistic) can be traced back to religious writing. The results show how language appears to be used discursively by Jihadist groups to express a distinctive Islamic doctrine and ideology but which is heavily influenced by conceptual metaphors found in the Qu'ran. The findings presented here focus on the journey metaphor, the role of the messenger, and the presence of nature inspired metaphors. It is argued that metaphor and hyperbole play a crucial role in persuasion and rhetoric tactics employed in the magazines.

References
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Prentice, S., Rayson, P. & P. J. Taylor. 2012. "The language of Islamic extremism: Towards an automated identification of beliefs, motivations and justifications". *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 17(2): 259-286.

Title: **Extracting relevant expressions to help characterise user profiles in Social Networking Sites**

Authors: Manuel Francisco & Juan Luis Castro, University of Granada, Spain

Abstract: Social Networking Sites (SNS) have proved to be a very attractive analysis avenue for different population groups based on their interests, ideology, function, etc. Given that the information flow is huge, this usually requires the implementation of automatic techniques. In this paper, we propose a human-in-the-loop approach that uses deep relations to perform a weak-supervision of user profiles in order to apply feature extraction techniques to help linguists with the formal analysis of those profiles. In particular, the extraction of distinguishing expressions with certain precision and recall may be of assistance to characterise population clusters. This procedure involves several phases: (1) Manual annotation of the most relevant tweets, (2) expansion of properties through deep relations, (3) validation of a sample of automatic labels, and (4) application of techniques to help extract knowledge. After implementing a proof-of-concept using Twitter, results were outstandingly good, with more than 90% accuracy in the automatic labelling process. The proposed methodology may be interesting in fields like realtime analysis and response to events (e.g., political debates), and it may be useful in continuous monitoring and tracking of certain profiles (e.g., those breaking the terms and conditions of SNS).

References
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Taylor, C. 2013. Searching for similarity using corpus-assisted discourse studies. *Corpora*, *8*(1), 81-113. https://doi.org/10.3366/cor.2013.0035

Title: **Populism and the 2020 American presidential election: An analysis of emotion on Twitter**

Author: Ana Albalat Mascarell, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain

Abstract: Taking Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio's (2019) refined model of the Martin and White's (2005) AFFECT taxonomy as the analytical framework, this study aims at exploring the role played by emotion in the construction of populist discourse on digital platforms. Particularly, it seeks to examine and compare emotion-driven discourse patterns and strategies employed by Joe Biden and Donald Trump on Twitter before the 2020 American presidential election. In the methodology set for the analysis, the discourse patterns and strategies used by these politicians were identified and compared with *Nutcracker*, an online tool specifically designed to detect and analyze populist rhetoric on this social media platform. The results suggest that both Biden and Trump relied on emotion to promote opposing electoral agendas on the left and the right of the political spectrum. Our findings also illustrate some of the *politics of fear* (see Wodak, 2015) resources used by Trump to defend 'the people's' interests against immigration and against the elites. All in all, it can be concluded that emotion-driven discourse assisted both Biden and Trump in establishing a more inclusive identity during the presidential campaign, aligning these presidential candidates with the needs and expectations of an increasingly disappointed and furious audience.

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Friday, May 13, 11:00-12:30

SESSION 4, Ballroom 1

Title: **Analyzing digital discourse across platforms**

Authors: Stephan Diemer & Marie Louise Brunner,Trier University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Abstract: In this talk, we present our arguments for using a cross-platform analysis of digital discourse, and we provide examples and advice for scholars who intend to perform CPA. We argue that a comprehensive analysis of digital discourse is needed in order to fully understand issues such as discourse and language patterns, style and identity, multimodality, or interactions in professional contexts. CPA provides clear

advantages for the study of digital discourse by taking the various affordances of the different platforms into account; it also creates a more comprehensive and differentiated picture of digital discourse, and it contributes to establishing differences between media. Based on our own research experience in social media cross-platform analysis, we will also give practical advice for designing digital discourse studies across platforms. To do this, we will discuss existing cross-platform approaches and their advantages and issues. We will then illustrate the implementation of CPA in our own social media studies and give guidelines and tips for setting up and performing cross-platform analyses.

Title: **Reflective Approaches to Analyzing Digital Discourse**

Author: Riki Thompson, University of Washington Tacoma, USA

Abstract: As the landscape of interpersonal communication continues to shift along with the technological change, researchers must contend with new challenges and remain open to opportunities for analyzing digital discourse. Traditional research methods suggest that researchers design a plan and implement methods in a linear fashion without deviation or changes to procedures for fear of compromising validity of results. With the convergence between online and offline lives and the speed at which digital technology changes, traditional methods need rethinking. Jones and colleagues (2015) have pointed to the inadequacy of traditional research methods for digital discourse studies, calling for methods that move beyond the analog and allow us to understand the complexity of digital discourse practices. To understand digital culture and situated communicative practices, some discourse scholars argue for digital ethnography approaches that are inherently flexible and adaptive to issues that may arise from the field (Androutsopoulos, 2011; Hine, 2015; Varis, 2016). When we allow ourselves to remain curious, be flexible, and make changes along the way, we can be responsive to the shifting landscape of technologies and participant's needs. Through an examination of online dating research, I show how a reflective research approach and dialogic action interviews can enrich digital discourse studies, be responsive to serendipitous moments, and provide avenues to give back to the community. Specifically, I demonstrate how digital discourse researchers can develop more effective tools for recruiting, interviewing, collecting and analyzing digital discourse data by looking for common ground between disciplinary approaches.

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Digital ethnography. The Routledge handbook of language and digital communication. Routledge.

Title: **The Raciolinguistics of *Whitesplain,* metapragmatics, and morality in social media**

Author: Judith Bridges, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: We present a paper on the discursive construction of morality in online interactions about race. In our study, we analyze the sociolinguistic and metapragmatic commentary of the neologism *whitesplain* by social media users on Twitter, Reddit, and Tumblr, three platforms with distinctive user demographics. *Whitesplain*, a lexical blend of *white* and *explain*, typically refers to when a White person explains the experience of racially-marked persons, an explanation which is usually to a person of color and/or in a manner that Rymes (2019) calls "conversationally tone deaf." As race is embedded in the term, its usage provokes discussions about language, race and racism and highlights complex ways that language shapes and is shaped by morality.

Our qualitative analysis of an interaction from each platform shows how, by exploiting and exploring semantic and pragmatic meanings of *whitesplain*, social media users negotiate and make sense of the communicative dynamics between speakers of varying races, experiences, and viewpoints. As users debate the relevance, utility, and legitimacy of the word, their discourses illuminate moral disputes about language, its intersection with race, and the authority to speak on topics that are situated at the nexus of privilege, power, and inequality. Our findings show that in terms of users' perspectives of *whitesplain* and the linguistic action it describes, there is variability across the three platforms which reflects the user demographics of those sites, e.g., "'Whitesplain' is my new favorite word" or "The term 'whitesplain' is inherently racist itself." Finally, our study adds to research informed by "citizen sociolinguistics" (Rymes & Leone, 2014) – i.e., the analysis of sociolinguistic commentary from everyday language users. We suggest that when users deploy the term *whitesplain* to debate the moral relationship of language and race, they are doing "citizen pragmatics."

Rymes, B. (2019, Aug. 8). Tone deaf [Blog]. Retrieved from: https://citizensociolinguistics.com/2019/08/08/tone-deaf/
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Friday, May 13, 2:00-3:30

SESSION 5, Ballroom 3

<u>**PANEL**</u>**: A License to Hate: Anti-Asian Prejudice in Digital Communication, Part 1/1** (Knoblock & Demata)

Panel Overview: Racism and anti-Asian sentiments have been reported to increase significantly after the start of the pandemic and to be directly linked to it (Lee 2020; Vachuska 2020). Verbal and physical attacks on Asian Americans have been related to racism and xenophobia deeply entrenched in the US society, and to the "*us vs. them*" worldview relegating Asian Americans to the bottom of the social hierarchy (Gover, Harper & Langton, 2020). Such feelings have been at least partly caused or exacerbated by the inflammatory rhetoric by the US politicians (Wu, 2020), and there has been evidence of ex-president Trump's tweets causing an uptick in anti-Asian verbal aggression on Twitter (Ziems et al., 2020). This panel continues and expands the research into the racially motivated anti-Asian hate speech and verbal aggression (not limited to the US context), amplified during the Coronavirus pandemic, and it examines the role of the digital medium in shaping and disseminating them. The presentations in the panel address discursive representations of anti-Asian sentiment, denialism and legitimation strategies, the spread of hateful messages through networks, and discursive constructing of otherness. Utilizing a variety of methods and approaches, they concentrate on the issues of inequality, prejudice, and discrimination.

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Title: **From Coronavirus to Kung Flu: Expressions of Sinophobia in the US CMC**

Author: Natalia Knoblock, Saginaw Valley State University, USA

Abstract: Computer-mediated communication (CMC) continues growing in popularity, and it plays an increasingly important role both as a debate platform (Wodak & Wright, 2006) and as the primary carrier of misinformation/ disinformation in the "post-truth" society (Howard et al., 2017). CMC and social media are a great source of information for communication researchers because it provides access to (mostly) spontaneous, (mostly) unscripted discourse where anonymity often removes social taboos against views violating such norms as politeness, fairness, and rejection of prejudice. The presentation focuses on the evaluation of China and the Chinese in the discourse of Trump's supporters. The role of US ex-president in encouraging xenophobia in general, and anti-Chinese sentiments in particular, is well-known and documented (Rubin & Wilson, 2021). The way his discourse influenced his followers has been studied less, but it deserves scholarly attention. The material for analysis comes from a corpus of CMC prompted by Trump's remarks during a televised briefing about household disinfectants and ultraviolet light as cures for Covid-19. The Ultraviolet Bleach corpus of over 2.3 million words (collected in May 2020) consists of message board comments discussing Trump's suggestions and defending them from criticism. The project utilizes corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) methodology. CADS combines the rigor of computational analysis with the richness of subsequent qualitative inspection (Baker et al. 2008), and it builds on the critical discourse analysis tradition, which sees discourse as both an embodiment of social practices and an instrument to uncover hidden beliefs and ideologies (van Dijk 1998). With the help of corpus-management software Sketch Engine, we identify 111 cases when the virus causing COVID-19 was called Wuhan virus (37 times), China virus (37), Chinese virus (18), Wuhan flu (8), Kung Flu (7), Chinese flu (3), and China flu (1). The presentation will discuss patterns observed in concordance lines with these phrases and analyze collocations used with them. It will detail the expression of anti-Chinese prejudice articulated by the communicators in relation to COVID-19 pandemic.

Title: **"It Appeared because of the Stupid Chinese. They Destroyed Everything we Had. ;(" Affective and Judgemental Evaluation of the Chinese in Macedonian Internet Forum Discussions on COVID-19**

Authors: Fevzudina Saračević & Angela Eftimovska, AUE-FON, Skopje, North Macedonia

Abstract: Internet forum discussions, as a type of digital discourse, allow internet users to debate largely anonymously on almost any topic and to thereby share information, opinions and attitudes. Some discussions, such as those arguing over alternative explanations on the COVID-19 pandemic, have become particularly active and popular since 2020. A number of posts in these discussion threads comment on the Chinese people, depicting them not only as 'culpable' of creating and/or spreading the

Coronavirus, but also as 'disgusting' and 'stupid' people in general. For the purpose of this research a lengthy discussion (more than 60,000 posts) set on the largest Macedonian forum femina.mk is submitted to qualitative discourse-semantic analysis. Particularly those posts which contain an evaluation of the Chinese are manually extracted and sorted in a spreadsheet. The posts are preserved in their original language, form and script. They are analysed using a descriptive framework of evaluative language, the Appraisal Framework (AF) (Martin and White, 2005), with focus on attitudinal evaluation. Of particular interest is the following question: what type of *affect*, i.e. emotional stance, and what type of *judgement*, i.e. evaluation of human behaviour, do discussants express towards the Chinese in their posts contributed to threads on the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on findings from previous attempts to analyse this type of discourse in Macedonian employing the AF (Saračević, 2021), it is expected that the expression of evaluative stance will be highly influenced by the features of the internet forum as a medium, the features of the discussion itself as well as the general socio-cultural context. Initial results show that the Chinese are often portrayed as evoking negative emotions, such as *disgust*, *hate*, and *misery*. Additionally, they are negatively judged regarding their *normality*, *capacity*, and *veracity*. This negative attitude seems to be triggered by content discussants consume on the internet, such as videos depicting Chinese 'wet markets', and less often from personal encounters with Chinese people. However, repeated explicit negative evaluations seem to be discouraged on the forum, and some posts therefore contain only an implication of prejudice and/or hate speech.

Title: **The Chinese Ate the Bat: COVID-19 Racist Discourse in the Egyptian Social Media**

Author: Nihad Fottouh, l'Universite Francaise d'Egypte, Egypte; Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3, France

Abstract: In the racist rhetoric of many politicians, most prominent of whom was former U.S. President Donald Trump, Covid-19 was labelled "the Chinese Virus" (Rogers, 2020). The Egyptian public appeared to connect the outbreak in the city of Wuhan in China to the nutritional habits of the Chinese people, giving rise to the popular belief that consumption of bats unleashed the virus on the world. Consequently, a number of comedians and mime artists started appearing on social media to ridicule the dietary habits of the Chinese. The derisive content was linked to the assumption that the Chinese would eat any creature, such as insects and reptiles, endangering the entire planet.

When Covid-19 broke out in Egypt in March of 2020, tensions rose between the Egyptian public and individuals with "Asian" facial features. These tensions were expressed through sporadic incidents that showcased the rising xenophobia in the Egyptian streets. One video that went viral showed an Uber driver forcibly removing a Chinese passenger on a Cairo highway on suspicion of carrying the virus (Ahmed,

2020). In the video, a voice is heard jokingly shouting "The first coronavirus case in Egypt!", after which the same voice tells the driver "May God support you, Hajji! Throw him out!". Despite the arrest of the driver on March 10, 2020, more anti-Asian incidents continued to spike. While shopping at the mall, another Asian individual was yelled at "Corona!", a repeated accusation to anyone bearing Asian features. According to the Embassy of Japan in Cairo, store clerks have been hesitant to serve Japanese customers, and "Corona" has also become a new slur with which to abuse Japanese people on the street (The Japan Times, 2020).

This paper examines and analyzes 10 of the most popular Facebook xenophobic comic strips and memes that trended after the outbreak of Covid-19 in Egypt, from March to July 2020. The paper situates its analysis within the framework of Edward Said's theory of "The Other" and "Otherness".   It extends its scope to the examination of attitudes toward the Chinese-manufactured vaccine through a short questionnaire, examining people's reactions and concerns about it.

Friday, May 13, 2:00-3:30

SESSION 6, Ballroom 1

Title: **The Male Bumbler Epidemic: Gender and membership categorization in rejections of #MeToo-related public apologies**

Authors: Peter Wikström & Erica Sandlund, Karlstad University, Sweden

Abstract: This paper presents work in progress from an ethnomethodological (Hester & Eglin, 1997) and digital discourse analytic (Blitvich & Bou-Franch, 2019) project on the reception of public apologies – or *non-apologies* – in the wake of #MeToo. Public statements made by men accused of sexual harassment or other transgressions were broadly received critically by audiences in both traditional and social media, often rejected as non-apologies in metalinguistic assessments. Our project consists of case studies of such failed apologies and the strategies or members' methods through which participants in public discourse accomplish their critical assessments of such remedial efforts. In this paper, we home in on one specific aspect, namely how gender categories are recruited and constructed as a resource for accomplishing apology rejection. This includes considering how rejecters categorize the apologizers, (alleged) transgressors and survivors of sexual harassment or abuse, and themselves, as well as how they provide assessments both of and by means of gendered or gendering categories. In this way, we wish to shed light from an ethnomethodologically-informed discourse analytic perspective on how discourse participants articulate the rejection of #MeToo-related public apologies as a moral and political project of online activism, as a form of (feminist) critical participation in the new mediated publics. In addition, this approach sheds light on gendered metalinguistic norms more generally, and gendered norms of apology practices specifica

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Title: **Twitter as a site for mourning and protesting: the discursive construction of place**

Author: Patricial Bou-Franch, University of Valencia, Spain

Abstract: This presentation addresses notions of place in connection with technology. Following Jaworski & Thurlow's (2010) understanding of place as a social construction linked to personal experience and emotions, we aim to explore the discursive construction of digital space in relation to social actions and the online entextualization of physical space on Twitter. The study draws from an *ad hoc* corpus of tweets (n = 186.581 words) posted in reaction to the death of football player Diego Armando Maradona on November 25 of 2020. The data are examined from a corpus-assisted discourse studies approach (Partington, 2004). The quantitative analysis involves the use of corpus linguistics tools (Baker, 2010) to identify relevant discourse patterns while the qualitative reading involves a thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun 2006) of concordance lines to identify their sociopragmatic functions. Preliminary results reveal that Twitter is constructed both as a digital space for a 'collective obituary' (Fowler 2007), and as a site of resistance and activism (Themistocleus 2021). Additionally, a range of (local) physical places were differently entextualized, thus hybridizing space in relation to net localities (De Souza e Silva 2013).

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Title: **Polarized digital discourses on climate change and housing**

Author: Eveliina Salmela, University of Vaasa, Finland

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to explore the emergence of polarization in the digital discourses concerning people's mundane housing in the context of climate change. *Group polarization* online refers to the tendency of discussants to prefer arguments that reinforce their own views and to ignore opposing arguments (e.g. Edwards 2013). Climate change is characterized by polarized views. For example, climate change denialism in online discussions has been a pervasive topic in environmental communication research (e.g. Bloomfield & Tillery 2019). Denialist discourses construct an opposing pole to the dominant discourses expressing concerns for the consequences of climate change (e.g Horta et al. 2017).
Our data covers 500 discussion board messages (written in 2018–2021) from a male dominated open online forum and 500 blog posts and comments from female dominated lifestyle blogosphere (10 blogs). The method is digital discourse analysis (Herring 2004). We discovered discourses of *guilt* and *innocence*, which highlight the polarizing perspectives of different platforms. For example, feeling guilty in the blogs is connected with participant's own actions of not doing enough (self-centered), while putting guilt on someone else, like "inventors" of climate change (other-centered) seems to be common on the discussion board. The discussions of mundane issues may thus reveal contrasting views appearing in the societal-level atmosphere concerning climate change.

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Friday, May 13, 4:00-5:30

SESSION 7, Ballroom 3

Title: **How to get Published in *Discourse, Context & Media***

Author: Caroline Tagg

Discourse, Context & Media is an international journal dedicated to exploring the full range of contemporary discourse work into mediated forms of communication in context. The editorial team receive many more manuscripts than they can publish, and the majority receive 'desk rejects'; that is, they are rejected by the editors for being out of scope or lacking scholarly impact. In this session, Editor-in-Chief Dr Caroline Tagg (The Open University, UK) will discuss how to 'get a foot in the door', including best practice advice for writing a paper and making sure that DC&M is the right journal for your work. There will also be a chance to ask your own questions about getting published.

Title: **Getting published in the Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict - Amsterdam, John Benjamins**

Author: Pilar Garcés-Conejos Blitvich

In this presentation, I will first discuss the main goals of JLAC and the rationale behind its launching in 2013. I will emphasize the close connection between JLAC's main thematic foci and conflictual online interactions. Then, the editors and the editorial board will be introduced. I will describe their role and involvement in the review and publication process, the importance/challenge of finding adequate reviewers, what we are looking for in a paper, and the type of papers we publish. General information about JLAC's impact and current standing in the field will also be presented. Importantly, details will be shared about how moving to an online-first format has changed JLAC's dynamics and the time-lapse between submission, acceptance, and publication. Details on how to submit a proposal for a special issue and information on how to prepare a solid special issue proposal will also be provided. Lastly, I would like to conclude my presentation by encouraging young, talented scholars to publish their work in JLAC.

Friday, May 13, 4:00-5:30

SESSION 8, Ballroom 1

Title: **From transgressive to seductive: The construction of the online persona of a Spanish social media beauty influencer**

Authors: Enrique Rodriguez & Susan Herring, Indiana University, USA

Abstract: Very little is known about how social media beauty influencers construct their online identity. Internet influencers of this type, given their focus on beauty and a polished physical appearance, need to perform meticulous self-presentation strategies to appear desirable to their followers. Previous studies of YouTube beauty-focused influencers reveal that their digital self-construction involves brand development and the use of symbols to cultivate parasocial relationships with their viewers (Chen, 2016). However, no research has explored how these strategies evolve and recalibrate over time as popularity increases. This talk reports on a longitudinal case study of the first gay male beauty influencer in Spain, Oto Vans, who went from being a minor Internet celebrity to attaining mainstream recognition in recent years. Data for the study come from three Instagram Live videos that were recorded 14 months apart, in January 2019, March 2020, and May 2021.The videos capture split-modality interaction in which Oto Vans livestreamed himself talking about his daily lives and activities to an audience of followers who engaged via text chat. The focus of this analysis is the performed persona of the streamer. Qualitative discourse analysis was conducted on the speech in the videos and the streamer's body gestures and nonverbal cues. Our findings reveal that Oto Vans perfects and readapts his online self-presentation over time. In the early videos, he displayed a transgressive, dismissive persona, exemplified by his use of on-record insults and abrupt, sneering gestures while self-streaming. As his popularity increased, he manifested more positive politeness behaviors, along with polished, seductive nonverbal cues. His makeup, clothing style (i.e., pajamas), and activity while self-streaming (i.e., eating) become symbols of his internet brand as well as resources for interacting with his audience. These findings shed light on how increases in popularity can affect the self-presentation strategies of social media influencers.

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Title: **"HIGH QUALITY AND CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE FOODS:" A critical analysis of food security information systems**

Author: Richard Hallett, Northeastern Illinois University, USA

Abstract: Beginning with Garzone's (2017:218) notion that "the identity value of food becomes salient in contexts where a certain system or tradition comes into contact with other systems," this presentation incorporates Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1992, 1999, *inter alia*), Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Royce & Bowcher 2007, O'Halloran et al. 2011, *inter alia*), and a Cultural Approaches to Discourse (Shi-xu 2005, 2009, 2016, *inter alia*) framework, in an examination of the cultural competence of information systems related to the issues of food security in the Hispanic communities of Chicago. Specifically, this presentation analyzes websites and apps for the following food-related services: Greater Chicago Food Depository [Banco de Alimentos de Chicago], Pilsen Food Pantry [Despensa de Comida Pilsen], Misfits Market, Too Good to Go, and Top Box Foods.

The food distribution websites equate food with dignity and hope (1), as well as culture (2):

(1) "The Food Depository is part of a united community effort working to bring food, dignity and hope to our Cook County neighbors. We act as the hub for a network of more than 700 food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other programs" (https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/about/, accessed 11/9/2021).

(2) The mission of the Pilsen Food Pantry is, in part, "to address health and social outcomes through the direct distribution of high quality and culturally-appropriate foods" (https://www.figueroawufamilyfoundation.com/pilsen-food-pantry, accessed 11/9/2021).

However, these websites neither explain how food provides dignity nor do they offer examples of what constitutes "culturally-appropriate foods" apart from stating that "culturally-sensitive perishable (fruit, vegetables, eggs, cheese, meat, chicken, fish, etc [sic]), [and] non-perishable foods (grains, beans, peanut butter, canned items)" are available. Moreover, the language of these websites and apps, with the exception of the Greater Chicago Food Depository, is largely English. This presentation thus calls into question the cultural competence of these food security information systems.

Title: **Ideals and reality: Digital facilitation on paper and in practice**

Author: Elina Salomaa & Esa Lehtinen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Abstract: In order to engage their employees from different levels in collaboration, contemporary organizations rely on facilitators that manage collaborative processes. Previously, collaboration was often facilitated with the help of different kinds of material

artefacts, such as post-it notes (Nielsen, 2012), whereas today various digital devices promise to enhance collaboration. In our presentation, we will approach this issue through examining a digital platform from the point of view of professional stocks of interactional knowledge (SIK) (Peräkylä & Vehviläinen, 2003), that is, normative models for how interaction should be conducted. We will compare such models regarding digital facilitation with the technological means for realizing them, and the actual use of those means in organizational workshops.

Our data consist of both the promoting material by the digital platform in their website and material collected from face-to-face meetings including video-recordings from meetings as well as screenshots from the platform. Our paper focuses on the chat function of the platform, which enables active participation and conversation. The research questions are as follows:
1) How does the digital platform construct stocks of interactional knowledge, and how does it offer the means to realize the given SIK?
2) How are the given SIK realized in the actual use of the chat function by the organizations?
Relying on the concept of affordances from a conversation-analytic perspective, we will show that the platform offers an abstract SIK and technical instructions to achieve it. However, the relationship between ideals and concrete interactional practices is not explicitly addressed. Although the digital platform is promoted as enhancing real-time dialogue between participants, it is used by facilitators in various ways, not only for interaction but also for documenting the outcomes of workshop discussions. Thus, our study suggests that affordances of digital technologies are embedded in organizational processes, supporting the accomplishment of varying interactional and organizational goals related to those processes.

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Saturday, May 14, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 9, Ballroom 3

PANEL: Tinder talk: Communicative practices in online dating, Part 1/2 (Gibson, Roca-Cuberes, Stommel)

Panel Overview**:** Dating Apps have fundamentally changed the communicative practices of dating. One of the most popular global applications for online dating is Tinder, which has more than 57 million users around the world. This panel brings together studies of textual interaction among Tinder users, analysing in detail the interactional features of these encounters. Drawing particularly on Conversation

Analysis and Discursive Psychology, the panel explores a diverse but interrelated set of issues such as the ways that users use location information to generate topics and to organise meetings; the production of meeting invitations; the negotiation of gender norms; and the relationship between education and forms of talk. The analysis pays attention to the distinctive textual features of these chats, including the role of profile information in structuring conversations, and the use of particular communicative practices such as emoji. Together, these papers provide an important advancement on existing studies of face-to-face dating (Korobov 2011; Stokoe 2010; Turowetz & Hollander 2012), and a critical contribution to the small but growing body of work on online dating (Kavroulaki 2021; Licoppe 2020; Mortensen 2017), showing how modern technologies are radically altering the ways that people manage dating.

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Title: Social differentiation in Tinder chat conversations

Author: Christian Licoppe, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, France

Abstract: In this study we compare two different samples of Tinder users:
• The first sample is made of 20 men and women between 18-35 living in Paris, with a higher education (which is the case of most empirical studies on mobile dating), and a highly urban lifestyle.
• The second sample is made of twenty men and women between 18 and 45 with no or little higher education living mostly outside Paris, in smaller towns.
Based on interviews, and some actual conversations that these users have agreed to let us use, we show how different the 'Tinder conversations' are across our two samples. By Tinder conversations, we mean those chat exchanges which occur after the match, and may or may not lead towards an actual encounter. Such 'conversational', written exchanges have the particularity that they involve strangers who know nothing or very little about one another, and who try to achieve enough fit or intimacy to warrant an

encounter. In our first sample, such 'Tinder conversations' appear to flout the norms of oral conversation, such as Grice's maxims of quantity and relevance. Many answers appear to be quite elaborate, thus broadening the surface of the topical talk they achieve to allow recipients more opportunities to pick topical threads, and for elaborate topical flow to develop. They also develop the practice of producing complex contributions, made of multiple messages, combining response(s) to prior messages and questions projecting further responses, thus appearing to maximize the projection of an answer, so as to make ghosting or exit less likely.

In our second sample, users appear either to try to stop the chat conversation and to move towards other platforms or media, or to develop 'conversations' which seem to orient much more closely towards Grice's maxims for quantity and relevance. Exchanges are mostly made of exchange single messages, which appear as a succession of questions and answers which are kept short. They feel more oriented towards exchanges of discrete informations than towards the development of complex topics and narratives in writing. This shows that chatting practices in mobile dating appear highly differentiated socially.

Title: **Formulating location and distance in post-match Tinder chats**

Authors: Lynn de Rijk, Radboud University, The Netherlands & Wyke Stommel, Radboud University, The Netherlands

Abstract: Although Tinder is one of the biggest dating apps in the world, the chat function is still scarcely researched (but see Licoppe, 2020; Licoppe, 2021; de Rijk & Stommel, forthcoming). Tinder users create a profile (photos and short description) and are then presented with profiles of other users within a certain radius of the current location. They choose whether they want to get in touch with someone. When a match is established by swiping left (no) or right (yes), the users can start chatting. This chat bridges a match and a possible offline encounter and is thus a crucial phase of the dating trajectory. In this presentation, we focus on how Tinder users orient to the distance information available in their match's profile in the chats (cf. Licoppe, 2010) and (other) location-related information. The data consist of 97 post-match Tinder chats from 10 Dutch Tinder users and are analyzed using conversation analysis (Sidnell & Stivers, 2013) for digital environments (Giles et al., 2015), focusing specifically on locational analysis (Schegloff, 1972). We found that participants recurrently ask about the other's placement (living/working/present location) and/or formulate distance (proximity or not). Overall, in selecting a formulation, they exhibit sensitivity to the respective locations of the participants, to who they know they are to one another and to the activity of getting to know each other (cf. Schegloff, 1972). Based on the technology which displays current physical distance between the interactants, participants notice distance in their chats. Such noticings may orient to an impediment for further contact or allude to an encounter by making proximity explicit. Also, participants enquire each other's location and/or formulate their own location, while displaying sensitivity to the delicateness of such formulations. Location formulation lays the ground for the (im)possibility of an encounter and bringing it up in the chat thus serves as, or can be treated as a flirting move. Hence, both distance and location formulations are central to

the virtual dating context of Tinder and can be exploited for gauging the prospects of an encounter in the real world.

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Title: **Introducing the prospect of offline meetings in Tinder chats**

Elisabeth Muth Andersen, University of Southern Denmark

Abstract: While some use Tinder for entertainment, most people use the online dating app to seek offline relationships, either in terms of hook ups or in terms of more committed relationships (Kallis, 2020; Licoppe, 2020). In the pursuit of this, users may bring up the possibility of meeting offline. This paper investigates the strategies used to pursue this project in Tinder chats. Data for the analysis includes examples from Danish, Spanish, French and Dutch Tinder users.

There are many ways this can be done, but analyses show that invitations are viewed as a delicate matter. Two ways are outlined: 1) a user early on indicates his/her interest in a meeting in a humoristic and potentially non-serious way, often using hints from the recipient's profile information and 2) involves a stepwise process where the concept, idea or prospect of a future offline meeting is introduced and often built as occasioned by previous chat between the two. In both cases recipients often treat the 'pre'-invitations as non-committing and/or pretense and they may be followed by a more direct attempt at doing an invitation, depending on how the recipient responds to the first invitation initiation.

The paper outlines the interactional and linguistic patterns of doing invitations in Tinder

chats and discusses the functions these extended sequences have, e.g. how participants may use them to present and negotiate their views on a first meeting without committing to one and how they may seek to avoid direct rejections as is a well-known strategy in other contexts (Terasaki, 2004).

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Saturday, May 14, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 10, Ballroom 1

Title: **"Sexismus nothing else." Twitter discussions about sexism and politics in the case of Chancellor candidate Annalena Baerbock**

Author: Ramona Kreis, University of Bremen, Germany

Abstract: Drawing on previous research on gender and political discourse, especially in the context of political campaigns (e.g., Masullo Chen, Pain, & Zhang, 2018; McGregor & Mourão, 2016), this study analyzes how Twitter users reproduce as well as contest sexist discourses of female political leaders, in particular in the portrayal of German politician, Annalena Baerbock of the Green Party. Baerbock ran for Chancellor during the September 2021 election of the German parliament. Data collection took place between the day her candidacy was announced (April 19, 2021) and the day of the election (September 26, 2021) and comprised tweets that include the candidate's name as well as relevant key words (e.g., leadership, competent, mother, experience, sexism). The findings of a critical digital discourse analysis indicate the reproduction of stereotypical gendered representations of and gender bias towards female politicians on Twitter. Baerbock is targeted not only because of her membership in the Green Party, and thus the users' potential disagreement with left-wing positions. Negative evaluations of her qualification and leadership skills also include references to her gender and her role as a mother. In reaction to negative gendered representations of Baerbock, Twitter users also condemn the reproduction of sexist and patriarchal ideologies by calling out sexist tweets, by revealing strategies and themes employed to reproduce the negative portrayal of female politicians, by providing explanations of sexism, and by using humor to parody the content of sexist tweets. The study thus contributes to a better understanding of how gender roles in politics are constructed and contested in digital discourse.

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Title: **"Q Who?": Digital Discourse Practices and Subliminal Ideologies
in *QAnon* Forum Posts**

Authors: Hanson Egerland & Addie China, University of North Carolina Wilmington,
USA

Abstract: Since the initial 4chan posting in October 2017, QAnon's cryptic messages
have spawned a fanatical near-religious level of fervor, especially after having been
signal-boosted by elected representatives as prominent as the President. Aside from
their cultural impact, the posts (referred to as "Q drops") are incredible pieces of digital
discourse, combining multimodality, levels of indexicality, and a niche repertoire in
which one must first become competent in order to understand the overall discourse,
with a dangerous ideology that seemingly is able to spread to almost any type of
person. Q drops have spawned a massive boom of online discourse via normal social
media sites (Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook especially), alternative news broadcasts
(OANN, Newsmax, etc.), and significantly on YouTube due to the site's reinforcing
algorithm that spirals users deeper and deeper "down the rabbit hole."
In this project, we employ a critical multimodal discourse analysis to critically interrogate
the linguistic features of the individual Q drops in order to study the type of discursive
features that allow for the proliferation of this burgeoning ideological identification.
Drawing on Gee's (2014) applied discourse analysis, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001)
multimodal discourse analysis, and principles from Fuchs (2021), we analyze the
linguistic, discursive, and semiotic strategies of 100 randomly sampled Q drops. We
then interpret these posts through a critical theoretical lens (Fuchs, 2018), in order to
establish a baseline of properties unique to Q drops and those held in common with
other wide-spreading conspiracy theories. We argue that several features, such as
layout, hyperlinking, rhetorical questions, pronoun and deictic use, and indexicality and
interdiscursivity, characterize the ideologies of QAnon. In this systematic analysis of the
largest volume of Q drops thus far, we connect these strategies to those of authoritarian
capitalism and culturally hegemonic discourses.

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contemporary communication.* London: Arnold.

Title: **The GIF that Keeps on Giving: Functions of GIFs in Personal Text Messages**

Author: Ashley Dainas, Indiana University, USA

Abstract: While GIFs have been called "graphicons" and have been hypothesized to
perform similar functions as emoticons, emoji, and stickers (Herring & Dainas, 2017),
there has been little analysis of the functions of GIFs in computer-mediated discourse
(CMD). This is especially true of private one-on-one CMD between people who know
each other well, as opposed to public (one-to-many) conversations. This research

examines what and how many functions GIFs are understood to serve by participants in conversational dyads, and whether or not they agree with each other on these functions. Twenty dyads shared four GIF-containing conversations from their text message history, and then each respondent privately filled out a survey about how they interpreted the GIFs in context. This included questions about whether or not each GIF fulfilled 14 different possible functions derived from the literature (e.g., Herring & Dainas, 2017): action, reaction, mention, riffing, tone modification, softening, strengthening, narrative sequence, joking, quoting, acknowledging the mood or topic, maintaining the conversation, confirming message receipt, or doing something else. Respondents were then asked to select the top two functions they felt the GIF performed in the context of the conversation. The results show that participants judged GIFs to be multifunctional; 78% of GIFs served four to nine functions. Riffing, or humorously elaborating on earlier parts of the discussion, was chosen most often as the top function a GIF performed, followed by an emotional reaction to previous content. Agreement on presence of functions ranged between 50-76%. Agreement between pairs on the top-ranking functions was relatively low, however. These findings are considered in relation to factors such as relationship intimacy and ambiguity. The presentation will conclude with comparisons between the pragmatic functions of GIFs and emoji, as well as the implications of low agreement on top GIF functions.

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Saturday, May 14 9:00-10:30

SESSION 11, Coral Room

Title: **Negotiation of Leadership and Power Relationships in Digital Collaborative Talks among Multilingual Graduate Students**

Author: Iuliia Rychova, University of Mississippi, USA

Abstract: Being able to interact with peers effectively and running the discussion collaboratively have become crucial components of graduate students' professional development. Students become effective leaders and co-workers through multiple dimensions, including meaningful conversations and interactions with peers (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Kodama & Dugan, 2013) and participating in student organizations (Garcia et al, 2017; Kodama & Dugan, 2013). The present study has continued that focus by exploring how multilingual graduate students negotiate leadership and power relationships in collaborative talks during a Zoom meeting. While previous studies examine the difference in power relation in the interaction between native speakers and non-native speakers, particularly established in a formal, classroom setting (e.g.,

Bloome et al, 2005; Morita, 2004; Seloni, 2012, Zhao, 2015), this research investigates how multilingual student leaders negotiate leadership in a student-led professional organization communicating remotely via Zoom.

This case study is based on ethnographically-informed discourse analysis. The participants are five (one male and four female) non-native English Ph.D. students at a Department of Modern Languages at a large U.S. university, who are also members of a departmental student-run professional organization. One of their online meetings, where they discuss an upcoming student working-paper event, was video-recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed for the purpose of this study. The findings revealed how multilingual graduate students use various discourse processes (pausing, overlapping, interruption, emphasis, etc.) to exercise their personal agency to effectively participate in digital social interaction within an online professional context.

Title: **Identity construction by autistic social media users: A digital discourse analysis perspective**

Authors: Nelya Koteyko & Martine Van Driel, Queen Mary University of London, UK

Abstract: The Internet has facilitated the emergence of autistic culture and gave rise to the neurodiversity movement which, in turn, has brought about new ethical and theoretical debates within autism research and practice. In this presentation we consider how digital discourse analysis can have a proactive engagement with these debates by focusing on the methodological advantages and pitfalls of analysing identity construction by adult autistic users of Twitter and Facebook. Through empirical analysis of online content and interviews with 35 participants, we consider the question of how practices driven by social media affordances —notably tagging, directed replies, and sharing multimodal content—might reveal identities and interactional processes that are largely invisible in clinical, speech-based research on autism. Using corpus-based tools of keywords and concordances we show the predominance of self-advocate vocabulary in user posts and a positive reframing of autism as neurological difference as part of collective identity (Bagatell, 2007). A combination of interviews and online observation (of how multi-semiotic resources are used in both profiles and posts) through a digital ethnography framework allows us to document multiple and changing alignments with different professional and social groups. Overall, our findings offer a complex picture of autistic adults and their use of social media to communicate and interact with others. Such a picture expands appreciation for agency and communicative competencies of autistic people shown in discourse-based studies in face-to-face settings (e.g. Sterponi and de Kirby, 2015; Maciejewska 2020), while bringing attention to both facilitative and limiting role of the socio-technical environment.
Bagatell, N (2007) Orchestrating voices: Autism, identity and the power of discourse. Disability & Society 22(4): 413–426.
Maciejewska E (2020) Autistic resources from a discourse-analytic perspective. Qualitative Psychology 7(3): 348-366.
Sterponi, L., and de Kirby, K. (2016). A multidimensional reappraisal of language in autism: insights from a discourse analytic study. J. Autism Dev. Disord. 46, 394–405.

Title: **Modal commitment in online citizen science discussion forums**

Author: Ben Clarke, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Abstract: Here, we consider users' expressions of modal commitment (weak-median-strong) across their time on Zooniverse's discussion forums. Two primary trends relative to users' expressions of modal commitment in their posts are revealed by our data analysis, the first of which required a longitudinal explanation. This first pattern was of participants who, in their earlier time-periods on the forum, used a greater proportional frequency of weak forms of modal commitment (e.g. *This is possibly some of the best handwriting I've seen in this project*) which decreased as their time on the forums increased, with these same users therefore also initially deploying proportionally few strong forms of modal commitment which increased as they spend more time on the forum (e.g. *69 eyes must be some sort of plant*). A little more frequent than this was a second trend in which users adopted weaker forms of modal commitment when they perceived their contribution to be part of a dialogic communication (e.g. B: *I wonder if serpents tongue is actually a plant* – A: *I think this may be referring to Adderstongue fern*) and stronger modal forms when they believed their post was of a monologing type (e.g. *I can't see how the coffings will hold the filling*).

In interpreting our work to date, we have no way of being sure if the patterns we observed are true of Zooniverse or citizen science as a whole or if they characterize the kind of humanities-oriented project that we had analysed. We wonder if posters on the natural science Zooniverse projects behave differently in terms of modal commitment, akin to differences which have been discussed in the literature regarding the role of language in the construction and development of knowledge in the disciplines of the natural sciences as compared to those of the social sciences and humanities.

Saturday, May 14 11:00-12:30

SESSION 12, Ballroom 3

Panel, Part 2/2

Title: **Membership categorization analysis of post-match Tinder chat conversations**

Author: Carles Roca-Cuberes, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain

Abstract: From the moment a match occurs on Tinder until the first date (if there is one), users who have decided to 'like' each other need to manage a sometimes considerable amount of communication. The main purpose of such communication for the matches is to get acquainted and decide on the suitability of their counterparts as potential dates. In

this study, we explore post-match Tinder chat conversations to investigate the process whereby Tinder users get to know each other and (eventually) negotiate a date.

The methodology used in this study is the one developed by the ethnomethodological approach of MCA. MCA is a kind of formal analysis that investigates the procedures used by members to give meaning to other people and their activities. In line with ethnomethodology, the practical use of commonsense knowledge by members when they categorize one another is examined. Categorizing is in itself a form of description that comprises a mundane methodical practice whereby members render their ordinary activities observable and accountable. Data for the analysis includes examples from Danish, Spanish, French and Dutch Tinder users.

Through the invocation of membership categories, members have at their disposal a mundane apparatus that enables them to conventionally identify other people. Tinder users obviously also rely on this routine practice to establish (for practical purposes) the social make-up of their matches. However, the invocation of membership categories in post-match Tinder chat conversations allows users to accomplish certain tasks: getting acquainted and, depending on that, determining the suitability of their matches as potential dates. Expected results would show that the categories that older adults typically invoke in the process of getting to know their matches are a part of 'membership categorization devices' such as 'occupation', 'relationship status', and 'hobbies'. Young adults, on the other hand, tend to employ categories that belong to the membership categorization devices 'hobbies' and 'occupation'.

Title: **Where to start? Initiating post-match Tinder chat conversations**

Authors: Lynn de Rijk & Wyke Stommel, Radboud University, The Netherlands

Abstract: Although Tinder is one of the biggest dating apps in the world, a core feature of the platform is still scarcely researched: the chat function (but see Licoppe, 2020; Licoppe, 2021; de Rijk & Stommel, forthcoming). Tinder profiles consist of 1-9 photos and short descriptions (bio's), based on which users decide if they want to get in touch. When both parties show interest (a match), either user can start a chat conversation, which forms the bridge between a match and a possible offline encounter.

In this presentation we analyze how Tinder users initiate interaction with their matches. The data consist of post-match chats of 10 Dutch Tinder users. Our analysis is based on Conversation Analysis (Sidnell & Stivers, 2013), specifically digital CA (Giles et al., 2015). First, initiating interaction is often done by launching a first topic immediately rather than by other possibly relevant actions such as greeting, identifying or initial inquiries (cf. Schegloff, 1986). This first topic tends to be based on information found in the other's profile and is thus recipient-designed. Second, chats are opened with actions that make a response relevant (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), such as compliments/questions regarding the profile or playful proposals alluding to a future encounter. Such first pair parts elicit a response from the other party, reducing the risk that the first post is ignored. Third, users orient to originality as a means to stand out, evidenced by meta-utterances about their conversation starters. Fourth, users orient to perceived commonalities in their first post(s). This reflects that Tinder users generally look for people with whom they have things in common (Neyt et al., 2020), but it is also

a means to stand out in case of rather unique similarities. So, Tinder openings are strongly tied to the specific digital environment (profiles, the abundance of dating candidates) *and* to the goal of the interaction: flirting and/or getting to
know one another. Making a response relevant is the key to initiating a potentially 'effective' chat, as this gets the conversational ball rolling. Doing so in an original fashion makes the user stand out from "the crowd".

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Title: **Emoji use in Tinder: the ordinary ambiguities of aubergines and flowers**

Author: Will Gibson, UCL, Institute of Education, UK

Abstract: Emoji have become an important communicative tool in mediated interaction and in Tinder they are one of the few resources beyond just text that users can readily draw on in their interactions with other users. This paper anlyses the communicative uses of emoji and their relation to the interactional work that is being undertaken by participants such as starting conversations, sharing information, finding out information and setting up dates.
Existing research has pointed to the role of emoji as laughter tokens and to signal hedging and irony (Skovholt et al. 2014; Sampietro 2016; Sampietro 2019; Herring & Dainas 2017; Yus 2014; Gibson et al. 2018). This study finds that emoji are used for other 'keying' work, such as making cultural references to songs, films, and places. Similarly, emoji can be shown to perform gestural actions, both through generic emoji and through 'personalised' emoji that have implicit resemblance to the person who uses

them. Finally, we can see how individual users adopt particular habits of emoji use which, when viewed across different conversational contexts, become readable as performing specific actions such as giving compliments. However, as users do not normally have extended conversations in Tinder, these meanings may not be apparent to other users. Indeed, my analysis shows that emoji are commonly if not normally ambiguous and that their 'purpose' is rarely made accountable. As such, while emoji are commonly used, there remains an analytic problem for users and researchers as to how to make sense of their ambiguity.

Gibson, W., Huang, P. & Yu, Q., 2018. Emoji and communicative action: The semiotics, sequence and gestural actions of 'face covering hand.' Discourse, Context and Media, 26, p.91–99. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2018.05.005.
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Saturday, May 14 11:00-12:30

SESSION 13, Ballroom 1

Title: **Mobile conversations in context: a new perspective on digital discourse**

Author: Caroline Tagg, Open University, UK

Abstract: Much interactional digital discourse analysis rests on the understanding that digitally mediated interactions are comparable to embodied face-to-face conversations. Although analysis is increasingly moving away from comparisons with spoken interaction and emphasizing the value in exploring digital conversations in their own right (Paulus and Wise 2019), the research literature highlights the potential fruitfulness of an approach such as the microanalysis of online data (MOOD, Giles et al 2015) which treats digital exchanges as akin to spoken conversations whilst pinpointing important differences which shape how people now participate in social interaction (Bou-Franch et al 2012; König 2019). One key condition of digital discourse is that it unfolds between interlocutors embedded in distinct physical contexts and often simultaneously engaged in other offline and online activities. Digital discourse analysts are now grappling with how people understand and navigate this emerging and complex communicative environment and the new methodologies it entails, drawing on

ethnography (Dovchin et al 2018) and microanalysis of situated mobile phone use (Oloff 2019).

This talk discusses the findings of a research project, Mobile conversations in context (MoCo), which focuses on communication mediated by WhatsApp and other mobile messaging apps. It combines the interactional analysis of mobile messages with interviews and time-use diaries to explore how mobile conversations shape, and are shaped by, the offline activities and encounters in which interlocutors are engaged. Participants were recruited through an online survey, aged 18 and over, and use mobile messaging apps as part of busy working and domestic lives. The findings point to the importance of attention in shaping the rhythm and nature of mobile conversations, including instances of device attending, when people move from other activities to check their phone and contribute to multiple mobile conversations. In highlighting the parallel importance of showing attentiveness when responding to mobile messages, the data also points to the way in which mobile messaging use is structured by people's negotiation of their interpersonal relationships, both online and offline. Overall, the study offers a new perspective on digital discourse which reveals how people integrate mobile conversations into the course of their everyday lives and social relationships.

Title: **#duetme: Constructing Conversational Coherence in TikTok Videos**

Authors: Susan Herring & Ashley Dainas, Indiana University, USA

Abstract: TikTok is a popular mobile app featuring short-form videos. Although TikTok videos are asynchronous and typically monologic, TikTok users strive to create the illusion of synchronous conversational interaction. One feature that supports these efforts is the *duet*, which allows a TikTok user to create a response video (RV) in which they record themselves in a split screen alongside an original video (OV). We examine the strategies used by RVs to construct the illusion of real-time interaction in duets, asking: How coherent are the constructed conversations, especially when the OV did not intend such interaction? To what extent do they adhere to the 'no gap, no overlap' ideal of traditional spoken conversation (Sacks et al., 1974)?
We sampled 100 English-language TikTok videos by searching on hashtags related to the term 'duets' on the TikTok app in fall 2021. All videos include at least two consecutive turns of verbal interaction (in any modality) between RV and OV. The videos were analyzed using computer-mediated discourse analysis methods for interaction management (Herring, 2013), focusing on topical coherence, turn-taking, addressivity, and (degree of) scriptedness.
Preliminary findings reveal that RVs orient to spoken conversational norms in dueting, and their responses to OV are topically relevant. The coherence of these constructed "conversations" depends in large part on OV's intention to duet (e.g., whether OV leaves gaps between their turns). Timing is crucial in identifying and inserting turns in potential transition relevance places (Sacks et al., 1974). Overlaps occur often, although they are sometimes strategically managed to give the impression of a high involvement style (Tannen, 1984). Coherence is further disrupted by mismatches in addressivity, as

evidenced by inconsistent pronoun use. Overall, however, despite the challenges of the asynchronous medium, TikTok dueters reify traditional conversational norms while simultaneously co-constructing novel modes of interaction.

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Title: **How cosmetic apps recontextualize aesthetic labour: A multimodal critical discourse analysis**

Authors: Lame Maatla Kenalemang-Palm & Göran Eriksson, Örebro University, Sweden

Abstract: As pointed out by various feminist scholars, in recent years, women's appearances, particularly of the face, have been under constant surveillance in the media (Elias et al., 2017; Gill, 2019, 2021). Simultaneously, women are also increasingly asked to monitor the self, giving rise to the quantified self (Lupton, 2016). This is seen, for instance, in the rapid development of self-tracking and self-modifying beauty apps by several cosmetic companies, what we refer to as "cosmetic apps." These apps are designed to analyse, rate, evaluate and monitor women's faces, and from these results the apps then recommend products that supposedly help women to "fix" skin-related problems. Drawing on a critical feminist approach and using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), the aim of this article is to examine how the cosmetic apps recontextualize aesthetic labour (Gill 2021). Based on the preliminary results, we argue that the apps provide individually tailored advice that heightens women's self-awareness and requires them to reflect on how well (or badly) they appear, and to take responsibility for their problems. The apps put a strong pressure on women to engage in aesthetic labour and to consume the "right" products so as to appear as the best versions of themselves. Although the advice are individually tailored, they nevertheless sustain established normative beauty ideals.

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Saturday, May 14 11:00-12:30

SESSION 14, Coral Room

Title: **#StopAsianHate: Minority Group Advocacy and the Making of Stop Anti-Asian Hate Discourse on Twitter**

Author: Minh Nghia Nguyen, University of Massachusetts Boston

Abstract: Twitter is increasingly recognized as a forum for activist movements. Hashtagged tweets have social functions to form ambient affiliation, invent political discourse, raise awareness, and strengthen power and solidarity (Zappavigna, 2011). Past research has explored Twitter campaigns related to feminism (Chen et al., 2018), misogynistic violence (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015), and racial justice (Richardson & Ragland, 2018). This paper examines the #StopAsianHate campaign against anti-Asian hate crimes in the United States, particularly the 2021 Atlanta Spa Shootings that killed six Asian women. Using R and Twitter API, I collected 75,000 tweets containing #StopAsianHate from March 16th to 22nd. Then, based on the numbers of likes and retweets, I selected 700 tweets for content analysis and critical discourse analysis through three conceptual lenses: Appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005), ambient affiliation (Zappavigna, 2011), and Asian Critical Race Theory (Museus & Iftikar, 2018). The findings suggest that users projected minority group advocacy and formed ambient affiliation by invoking affect, provoking judgment of social esteem, casting social sanctioning, pronouncing stance through interpolation and storytelling. By the end, I discuss how microblogging challenged the discourse of Asianization and contributed to reconstructing history.

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Title: **Generational Positionality and Digital Discourse: An Exploration of Pre- and In-service Teachers' Self-identification in the Time of Obligatory Technology**

Author: Asiye Demir, University of South Carolina

Abstract: Generational attributions, which are analogously defined digital natives and immigrants (Prensky, 2001), and digital discursive practices have been contentious topics in the literature. Although the early tension around these topics seemed to be eased recently (Simit et al., 2020), there is still an age-related dichotomy among education practitioners. Given that moral panic (Thompson, 2005), which stems from digital use and media, yielded this stereotypical mindset (Baton & Maton, 2010), this conundrum is subject to be inflated by intense digital use due to the recent pandemic. More importantly, the literature lacks in knowledge about self-identification of teachers regarding participating digital discourse. Although the literature has disregarded teachers' self-identification, the change related to teachers' self-conceptualization before technology will shape digital discourse in practice. Furthermore, while multimodal side of digital identities have been vastly examined (e.g., Poole, 2016; 2017), an identity definition stemming from one's own manifestation has been less visited. Therefore, this study aimed to examine pre- and in-service teachers' self-definitions about their digital identity related to their generational attributions within digital discourse. This study employed explanatory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). First, digital characteristic (Thompson, 2013) survey was adopted and administered on 111 pre- in-service teachers during the pandemic. Based on the survey results, 3 pre- and 3 in-service teachers were purposefully selected for a follow-up interview to delve into their digital identities. The results of this study suggested that pre-service teachers tend to explain their digital discursive activity beginning with material trajectory and parental intervention. In-service teachers are more inclined to define their digital identity stemming from their cumulative experiences. This study offers insights to teachers regarding how their own positionality and digital discursive practice are related to each other.

Title: **Gender representation in sports: A qualitative critical discourse analysis of YouTube comment for the 2020 CrossFit Games**

Author: Judith Sophie Marie Hanke, University of Bremen, Germany

Abstract: The linguistic discipline of discourse analysis provides interesting insights with regard to the interplay between language use and social structures which can be observed in various occasions. The study I conducted for my bachelor thesis addresses the topic of gender representation in the specific discourse of sports. The thesis focuses on the objective of language use with regard to gender stereotypes in the live commentary for the 2020 CrossFit Games. Carrying out a critical discourse analysis, the live commentary during the competition is analysed with a particular focus on the leading female athlete Tia Toomey and the leading male athlete Mat Fraser. Three main hypotheses based on previous research in other sports are taken into consideration:
(1) *Regarding the amount of the overall representation, male athletes are granted more*

attention than female athletes. (2) *Male athletes are compared to fictional characters while female athletes are mostly compared to male athletes within the competition.* (3) *Male athletes are rather described concerning their physical abilities while female athletes are mostly described concerning their looks and overall appearance.* In short, all three hypotheses cannot be verified with the help of this study. Instead, it can be concluded that this particular gender discourse promotes a rather gender-equal representation of each individual athlete. Female athletes are not objectified nor solely reduced to their looks, age and appearance as was stated in previous research. But rather their physical abilities and performances are acknowledged in the same way it is reported for male athletes. In order to further extend these findings to the digital domain, I will test the above-mentioned hypotheses with a data set of comments from the audience collected on the online video platform YouTube. The live events were broadcasted on YouTube since no audience was allowed on the venue because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, I expect the comment section on YouTube to deliver further insight in how the above-mentioned representation of the athletes by the commentators is received and how the audience reacts in terms of specific gender stereotypes.

Saturday, May 14 2:00-3:30

SESSION 15, Ballroom 3

Title: **"Date me date me date me": AI Chatbot Interactions as a Resource for the Online Construction of Hegemonic Masculine Identity**

Author: Jungyoon Koh, Georgetown University, USA

Abstract: This study examines how interactions with a "female" AI chatbot are drawn as a resource for the construction of hegemonic masculine identity in the context of the South Korean web. Specifically, I focus on a Korean online community called the "AI Luda Lee Gallery," where users of Luda Lee, an open-domain AI chatbot, gather to talk and joke about the interactions they've had with her. Luda, who is designed to have the persona of a friendly 20-year-old female college student, is sexualized or objectified in the posts uploaded to the gallery; many, if not most, of the posts show users uploading screenshots of their interactions with Luda to discuss tactics to get her to "date" them or to boast about the sexually explicit dialogue they were able to elicit from her. This kind of sexual harassment of Luda, along with a score of other issues, to her eventually being taken down from the web, making it a short-lived service lasting from December 22nd, 2020 to January 12th, 2021 (Kim, 2021).
In this study, I analyze some of the posts and comments that contributed to the online sexual harassment of Luda, drawing on Kiesling's (2011) discussion of alignment and desire in the discursive construction of gender. I examine alignment in users' interactions with Luda and with other members of the gallery as reflective of their desire to have and be recognized as having qualities of hegemonic masculinity, specifically the

quality of dominance over women and other men. My analysis of the data demonstrates how Luda, as a friendly female chatbot that is easily and equally accessible to all members of the gallery, becomes an ideally malleable resource to draw on in their construction of masculine identity. This study contributes to discussions of masculinity and misogyny in online discourse (García-Gómez, 2020; Kim, 2018; Krendel, 2020), as well as to ethical considerations in AI as relate to the female gendering and sexual harassment of bots (Borau et al., 2020; Curry & Reiser, 2018).

Title: **Virtual Gesture in Video-Mediated Writing Consultations: The Case of Text Selection**

Author: Kelly Frantz, Teachers College Columbia, USA

Abstract: As advancements in communication technologies offer new ways of interacting in virtual spaces, researchers have begun to explore how the features of these spaces are consequential for the organization of interaction (e.g., Heath & Luff, 1992; Licoppe, 2017; Licoppe & Morel, 2012; Luff et al., 2003; Olbertz-Siitonen, 2015). This study examines interactions from five video-mediated writing consultations where participants utilize a collaborative text editor (Google Docs) while discussing a piece of writing. Through conversation analysis, this study explores the interactional role of a particular virtual action: text selection. Text selection occurs when participants temporarily highlight a portion of the text in the shared document. Audio and video recordings of the participants, alongside screen recordings of the shared document, were transcribed to include all verbal and nonverbal behavior, including any interactions within the shared text (e.g., typing). 196 total cases of text selection were identified, and the cases were further divided into and analyzed in two types: selections done by speakers and selections done by recipients. An analysis of speakers' text selection practices reveals how participants adapt spatial deictic gestures to a virtual space. They use text selection to do virtual pointing, which disambiguates or highlights a referent in the text. The analysis of recipients' text selection practices shows how recipients demonstrate responsiveness to their co-participants' talk and shared attention to the intended referent. In sum, the practice of text selection allows co-participants to establish and demonstrate shared attention while discussing the focal text. The analysis reveals that participants communicate using multiple semiotic resources and delicately coordinate their talk with virtual gestures to achieve intersubjectivity and maintain progressivity. The findings contribute to the small but growing body of conversation analytic research on the nature of interaction in computer-mediated spaces.

Title: **Swiping left for more details: The construction of newsworthiness in the Instagram carousel posts of news organizations**

Author: Dominika Kovacova, Masaryk University, Czechia

Abstract: While Instagram with its image-centred interface is generally understood to be instrumental in the growth of influencer marketing, its role in the sharing and distribution of news also deserves scrutiny. This is confirmed by recent studies which not only show that the use of Instagram for news consumption has increased significantly in all age groups but also predict that Instagram is on track to overtake Twitter as a news source (Newman et al., 2020). Responding to these trends, news organizations experiment with different types of posts available on Instagram in an effort to distribute news in an engaging way and to attract new audiences. To examine how news is disseminated via Instagram, this paper focuses on a specific type of Instagram posts – Instagram carousels – which allows news organizations to provide a more detailed elaboration of the news. By definition, Instagram carousel posts are sequences of up to ten photos and/or videos that can be viewed by swiping left and are generally accompanied by a caption. Using a dataset of 30 Instagram carousels shared by BBC News, the study adopts a multimodal discourse analytic approach to examine what semiotic resources (and in what sequence) are exploited to construct the newsworthiness (Bednarek & Caple, 2017) of the given news items. The preliminary findings of the analysis show that newsworthiness is constructed in both the visual and the verbal mode; however, the role of the employed visual and linguistic resources in constructing newsworthiness seems to vary with respect to specific news values.

References:
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Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Schulz, A., Andı, S., & Nielsen, R. K. (2020). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2020.* Reuters
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Saturday, May 14 2:00-3:30

SESSION 16, Ballroom 1

Title: **First!: Qualia of firstness/earliness in the comment sections of celebrity social media posts**

Author: Mary-Caitlyn Valentinsson, Appalachian State University, USA

Abstract: When major celebrities, public figures, and popular influencers post new content to Instagram, Twitter, TikTok or other social media platforms, users who

encounter their post early in its social life rush to comment "first" or "early", sometimes with an accompanying screenshot that shows how many likes, comments, or retweets a post had at the time they encountered it. This experience--and display of-- "firstness" and "earliness" is important especially for fans of celebrities. Digital spaces such as social media offer an increased sense of social proximity to such figures, but at the same time fans do not expect much reciprocity in these interactions due to the sheer volume of interactions that these posts receive (Valentinsson 2018). Discursive strategies that assert one's "firstness" or "earliness" in a comment space thus becomes a way of enacting social proximity to celebrities and expressing pleasure in this positioning. This paper explores these semiotic displays of "firstness" or "earliness" in fan responses to popular celebrity social media posts through the lens of qualia (Harkness and Chumley 2013; Harkness 2015). In linguistic anthropology, the term "qualia" refers to indexes that point to particular "feelings of "doing" (Harkness 2015), or "sensations of qualities...endowed with cultural value" (Chumley and Harkness 20113, 4). Using techniques from discourse-centered online ethnography, I examine a corpus of first/early comments from the comment sections of posts by a variety of North American celebrities and influencers across a range of social media platforms. In this data, I show how the sensation or quality of commenting "first" or "early" allows fans to display their connectedness and social proximity to popular figures. In a broader sense, this paper highlights the ways in which engagement with digital discourse can construct both embodied sensations and broader social positionings.

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Harkness, Nicholas. 2015. The Pragmatics of Qualia in Practice". Annual Review of Anthropology 44: 573-589.
Valentinsson, Mary-Caitlyn 2018. Stance and the construction of authentic celebrity persona. Language in Society 47(5): 715-740.

Title: **User creativity and preference in computer-mediated multimodal discourse: Customized stickers in WeChat conversations**

Authors: Jing Ge-Stadnyk, UC Berkeley, USA & Susan Herring, Indiana University, USA

Abstract: Multimodal text is shaped by the contexts of situation and culture-bound choices made by its constructors, as well as the options available in each particular semiotic system (Royce, 2007). This is illustrated well by the complexity and particularities of stickers on Chinese social media. Chinese stickers differ from western stickers, in part because users can create their own customized stickers easily. We ask: How and why are customized stickers and standard stickers used in Chinese WeChat conversations? What semiotic resources are exploited in each, and what pragmatic functions do they serve?

We analyzed 1063 stickers collected from 400 screenshots of WeChat conversations produced by 40 young native Chinese speakers (F=20; M=20). Using qualitative and quantitative multimodal computer-mediated discourse analysis, we identified standard and customized stickers, then coded and compared their modalities and functions.We focus on stickers consisting of both an image and overlaid text (n=544) and examine the interplay between these two semiotic modalities.

Multimodal customized sticker use dominates our WeChat conversations. Text usually conveys the main proposition, whereas images primarily illustrate the text, add humour, and represent mass media and internet celebrities. Moreover, customized stickers more than standard stickers add humor, both through text and image, and more often include a popular media figure as the ostensible source of the proposition. These findings suggest that users create and deploy customized stickers for humorous effect, and to express more explicit and complex propositions than are available in standard stickers. This supports and extends the findings of previous research in which users self-reported choosing stickers over emoji in order to express explicit meanings (Konrad et al., 2020). We conclude by discussing the norms and affordances of Chinese social media platforms that promote user creativity.

Konrad, A., Herring, S. C., & Choi, D. (2020). Sticker and emoji use in Facebook Messenger: Implications for graphicon change. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 25(3), 217-235.

Royce, T. D. (2007). Multimodal communicative competence in second language contexts. In T. D. Royce & W. Bowcher (Eds.), *New directions in the analysis of multimodal discourse* (pp. 361-390). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Title: *When I was a kid in the eighties*...: Narrative stancetaking and collective remembering in r/BuyItForLife

Authors: Dacota Liska, Camilla Vásquez & Max Chamberlain, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: In this paper, we address several patterns of affective stancetaking (Kiesling et al, 2018; Matley, 2020) and narrative practices (Van De Mieroop, 2020) in an online community ostensibly dedicated to consumer product recommendations, r/BuyItForLife (BIFL). BIFL is a subreddit for online discussions about durable, long-lasting, quotidian products. From a corpus composed of "Top 100" posts and comments from r/BIFL (N=900,000+ words), the adverbial clause *when I was a kid* was the most frequently occurring five-word phrase in the corpus and it appeared consistently in narratives. Our analysis centers on 63 *when I was a kid* narratives (and related comments), which discuss users' experiences with products ranging from toys to household appliances. While *when I was a kid* narratives share an orientation to the remote past and describe the user's relationship with the featured product, we identified three distinct story types: (a) narrative fragments, brief accounts told to illustrate the product's longevity; (b) more

canonical narratives, which often incorporate a surprising, or humorous, ending; (c) and, to a lesser extent, more serious stories – in some cases, told to memorialize a family member associated with the product. As BIFL users produce and respond to these narratives, they engage in collective remembering, evoking nostalgia about not only the specific product/s under discussion but about prior, sociohistorically specific moments in time. These narratives are met with different affective responses: from alignment expressed through the sharing of second stories, or through reactions of empathy – to disalignment, in posts that critique the use of BIFL for engaging in these nostalgic practices. Studies of social media have highlighted the predominance of recent, temporally-proximal, "breaking news" narrative activities in digital contexts (Dayter, 2015; Georgakopoulou,2021; Page, 2021). However, our findings suggest that some internet users may seek out digital spaces where the sharing of personal narratives about the remote past emerges as a community norm.

Saturday, May 14 2:00-3:30

SESSION 17, Coral Room

Title: **Queer Tok: A Multimodal Analysis of LGBTQ+ Discourse on Tik Tok**

Authors: Madisyn Mitchell & Judith Bridges, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: As digitally-mediated communication becomes increasingly ubiquitous and quotidian, social media users' practices evolve with enhanced platform affordances offering new methods for creative self-expression and interconnectivity. The latest champion among social media platforms is undoubtedly the video sharing app, TikTok. Combined with endless streams of trending videos for watching, the lure of TikTok is powered by user-friendly tools that facilitate the creation of highly multimodal and dialogic videos. With TikTok's affordances, properties of digital discourse like language modality and intertextuality (Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2015) are amplified, especially by the sounds function, a new mode that interlinks content in the same manner as hashtags. We present various (inter)discursive functions of sounds from meaning-making elements to navigational tools that interlink members of communities. We consider TikTok's modal ensemble which fuses sounds and additional modes, e.g., images, animated text, and side-by-side framing with other videos. Focusing specifically on the LGBTQ+ discourse community, we examine how TikTok's affordances foster space for queer individuals to explore and discuss their self-identification. Differentiating sounds from other, traditional auditory modes like speech or background music, the foundation of our analytical framework is thus constructed on what we have dubbed "audial" modes. Four "audial" categories were identified: instrumental, verbal music, original sound, and ventriloquized speech. Presenting four videos with different sound-layering choices and additional modes like text and gaze, our multimodal analysis discusses how these elements contribute to shaping discourses on queer-related issues e.g., the scope of terms like queer, lesbian, bisexual, and how sounds interlink content

with the queer community. We argue that the intertextual capacity of TikTok modes can help explain how clusters of specific subgroups or "cultural archipelagos" (Ghaziani, 2019) of the LGBTQ community emerge, resulting in TikTok as a safe haven for queer discourse that transcends the straight-versus-gay dichotomy and represents shifts towards inclusivity of more complex and fluid ideas of gender and sexuality.

Herring, S., & Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Computer-mediated discourse 2.0. In Tannen, Hamilton, Schiffrin (Eds.), The handbook of discourse analysis, (pp.127-151). Wiley.

Ghaziani, A. (2019). Cultural Archipelagos: New Directions in the Study of Sexuality. City & Community, 18(1), 4-22.

Title: **Identity and Queer Narratives in Coming Out Videos on TikTok**

Author: Sean Farrell, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: The video sharing platform TikTok has seen an enormous increase in engagement over the past two years, including a steadily growing base of over 800 million users, and yet few sustained studies of discourse on TikTok have been conducted. The present research fills this gap by examining identity construction strategies used by queer youth in coming out videos on TikTok. As a speech act, coming out both discloses and constructs identity (Lovelock, 2019), and coming out online is a specific genre that situates the speaker within broader discourses of hetero- and homo-normativity (Jones, 2020). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) assert five principles for understanding identity construction, and this study examines how well these principles bear out on TikTok. The researcher used a convenience sampling method based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to collect 50 videos for analysis. Videos were transcribed based on a method developed by Shrodes (2020) and then analyzed for generic features and themes relating to identity. A move-step sequence for coming out on TikTok is offered, along with a discussion of how the platform offer users multiple (and multimodal) ways to signal identity. Analysis based on the Bucholtz and Hall (2005) framework offers a deeper understanding of how identity is mediated by the semiotic resources employed by users, and how these in turn impact the "success" or "failure" of the coming out. Queer identity on TikTok is ultimately bound up in a variety of existing micro- and macro-discourses. Suggestions are made for future research on this topic.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2004). Theorizing Identity in Language and Sexuality Research. *Language in Society, 33*(4), 469–515.
Jones, L. (2020). 'The fact they knew before I did upset me most': Essentialism and normativity in lesbian and gay youths' coming out stories. *Sexualities, 23*(4), 497–515. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460719830343
Lovelock, M. (2019). 'My coming out story': Lesbian, gay and bisexual youth identities on YouTube. *International Journal of Cultural Studies, 22*(1), 70-85. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877917720237

Shrodes, A. (2020). Humor as Political Possibility: Critical Media Literacy in LGBTQ+ Participatory Cultures. *Reading Research Quarterly*. https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.328

Title: **Amogus: Meme virality, internet geeks and insider humour**

Author: Jan Chovanec, Masaryk University, Czechia

Abstract: The presentation addresses how young internet and social media users use creative online memes to construct their identity as a group of insiders, demonstrating complex intertextual knowledge. At the time of covid lockdowns during autumn 2020, a relatively simple computer game 'Us' gained popularity among teenagers worldwide. When the name of the game, Among Us, became corrupted into 'Amogus', it started to be used a catchphrase referencing a visual meme showing various representations of one of the game's characters. The catchphrase, as well as the meme itself, went viral and brought about a wave of creative practices across various social media.
The presentation maps the development of the 'Amogus' phenomenon, tracing some of the creative memes and humorous representations alluding to online users' shared knowledge of the game. While online users are often very creative using a surprisingly limited set of semiotic means, the content that they produce and share can be quite complex and depend on advanced inferential strategies (cf. Vásquez and Aslan 2021). What may, to an outsider, appear as a relatively simple or even meaningless representation, will contain significant intertextual and semiotic content accessible only to those in the know.
Following Yus (2018), who suggests that meme communication is closely related to users' self-identity, the paper shows how such multi-layered humour constitutes an identity practice. I argue that such a practice is simultaneously identity-forming and identity-confirming of the individual's status of an insider, i.e. someone who is aware of the current trends in the online world. I suggest that catchphrases and memes that become popular and/or spread virally across the media can result in the development of an entire 'memetic ecology' that becomes part of the knowledge of the online community.

References:
Vasquez, C., & Aslan, E. (2021). "Cats be outside, how about meow": multimodal humor and creativity in an internet meme. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 171, 101-117.
Yus, F. (2018). Identity-related issues in meme communication. *Internet Pragmatics*, 1(1), 113-133.

Saturday, May 14 4:00-5:30

SESSION 18, Ballroom 3

Title: **Leaner or expert? Identity co-construction and English learning vlogs on *Douyin***

Author: Yaqian Jiang, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: The fast-evolving digital technologies have created numerous opportunities for online informal language teaching/learning. What emerges with this trend is a continued narrowing divide between novices and experts (Selwyn, 2015). The production of knowledge is no longer confined to institutions such as university and college. Facilitated by digital technologies, many people tend to claim varying degrees of authority in the knowledge and text they transmit to meet their social, personal, and affective needs (Kress, 2010). As such, the identity construction in relation to knowledge production demands more scholarly attention from both a social and pedagogical perspective. To address this question, this paper explores the self-representation of one Tibetan microcelebrity (@*Jiadecang self-learning English*) on *Douyin* (the Chinese version of *TikTok*) who produces short English learning vlogs featuring himself practicing spoken English to attract followers. Data of the present study consist of four of Jiadecang's recent videos which focus on English language learning and the related 300 comments on these videos. Taking a social semiotic approach to multimodal discourse (Kress, 2010), this study investigates how Jiadecang harnesses various linguistic and other semiotic resources (e.g., image, sound, layout, color, gesture, emojis) afforded by the platform to engage in public identity construction both in his videos and in his interactions with viewers. The analysis has revealed that while Jiadecang self-identifies as an English learner and uses his learner identity to align with viewers, at the same time he implicitly communicates his expertise in English and his success in language learning by performing daily English conversation dialogues, drawing a contrast between his Tibetan ethnicity and his ability to speak fluent English, and inviting his audience to compliment him on his English proficiency. By displaying an image of both learner and expert, Jiadecang attracts followers interested in learning English and at the same time, is protected from potential critiques by others about his "imperfect" English. The findings add to a growing body of research on digital self-branding, authority, and expertise in online knowledge production. Furthermore, this study provides language educators with insights about the effective integration of modal resources and technologies into their teaching.

Title: **A tale of two genres: Narrative analysis of digital stories told by youth**

Author: Gordon West, University of Wisconsin Madison, USA

Abstract: Transnational communication on digital platforms is situated within and takes place across different and complex digital and local ecologies, which hold together and are constituted by dynamic relationships of material objects and people (van Lier, 2004).

This study asks how the materiality of ecologies shaped the narratives that are told between three groups of youth, aged 10-12, based in China, Uganda, and the United States participating in an educational project called Global StoryBridges. Each group of approximately 10 youth worked with a facilitator to produce and share video narratives on a secure website and then interacted with each other via a chat feature. To more deeply analyze how material affordances were enacted through the narratives told, I apply materialist (Barad, 2003) and ecological (van Lier, 2004) lenses to a narrative analysis (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012) of the videos uploaded by the groups and their chat interactions over a three year period. These dual lenses help to focus on the material affordances in local offline and digital spaces and how they were utilized. I first show how material affordances in local ecologies shaped narrative structures by highlighting patterns that emerge from the corpus of 24 videos. Two distinct genres of narratives emerged from the video corpus, "tour" videos and "cultural activities" videos. Initially, disparities in the material resources available locally to the different groups seemed to lead to a divide in which genre a site specialized in producing. However, interactional data and additional data from interviews with facilitators show that the materiality of digital ecologies (different at each site) also influenced which types of narratives were told. Youth were influenced by not only their interactions with other groups, but also by the affordances (e.g., retrievability, archivability) of the project website. Interactions between the youth show that the different genres had implications for how the groups sought to position themselves and how they were positioned by other groups based on their narratives. This study shows how a materialist ecological framework can inform narrative analysis that examines diversity and inequities in the material ecological factors that impact narrative construction in digital communications.

Title: **Sweden Democrats representation of immigrants on Social media: A critical Multimodal Analysis**

Author: Ahmed El Gody, Örebro University, Sweden

Abstract: The use of social media in order to disseminate political communicational strategies has increased in Sweden. Previous studies have showed that social media can benefit right-wing political parties and other ideologically marginalised parties. The Sweden Democrats (SD) have since long preferred social media over main stream media. This paper presents a multimodal critical discourse analysis of a sample from a larger corpus of multimodal posts and video material about immigrants from the social media pages of right-wing populist part Sweden Democrats (SD). Drawing on Van Leeuwen's and David Machin's framework for the representation of social actors, this paper investigate how multimodal resources contribute to shaping immigration discourse and to its bias, highlighting exclusionary ideologies through the decontextualisation of social practices.The result of this study show that SD are using the five communication strategies similar to that used by nativist propaganda to emphasise the view of immigrants as a threat to Swedish society. The othering of immigrants as non-natives is enacted through biased representation based on covert racist stereotypes. At the same time, visual anti-immigration rhetoric allows the leaders

to "build their people" and self-promote their role as gate-keepers of the nation-state, and the public is urged to vote for them in order to restore security.

Saturday, May 14 4:00-5:30

SESSION 19, Ballroom 1

Title: *Karen*: **Stigmatized social identity and face-threat in the on/offline nexus**

Author: Pilar Garcés-Conejos Blitvich

Abstract: This presentation reports on research on the interconnections between face-threat and identity construction in the on/offline nexus (Blommaert, 2019) by focusing on a stigmatized social identity (Goffman, 1963), a local ethnographically specific, cultural position (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) attributed to some (mostly) American women stereotypically middle-aged and white who are positioned by others as *Karens*. Thus, *Karen* is attributed as an identity category to a woman "thought to be acting inappropriately, rudely or in an entitled manner" (Greenspan, 2020). Often, this inappropriate behavior is linked to perceived displays of racism against minorities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, anti-masker *Karens* also gained notoriety. This relates to other well-known facets of the *Karen* identity kit (Gee, 2014), such as terrorizing services workers and refusing to abide by rules and regulations. To further our understanding of the *Karen* identity, a multimodal analysis (Norris, 2019) of a sizeable corpus, 256 videos of individuals whose actions and the way they were perceived led them to be positioned as *Karens* was carried out. Its goal was to scrutinize general social demographics and locations related to this social identity and, importantly, what actions and patterns of language and other semiotic modes were perceived as impolite i.e., face-threatening, and thus deemed *Karen*-like. Results of the multimodal analysis crucially connected the *Karen* identity to the normativity of the public places where it emerges and the *genred* interactions associated with them (Blommaert, 2013). However, it is argued, the *Karen* identity cannot be entirely understood without further reference to the online/offline nexus of post-digital societies.

Title: **Language and gender in the Canadian Chief Medical Officers' tweets during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Author: Rachelle Vessey, Carleton University, Canada

Abstract: Since January 2020, Canadian Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) have rapidly evolved into public figures, tasked with highly mediated and unprecedented forms of mass communication. There is also a gendered dimension to this role: of Canada's 17 national, provincial/ territorial and local CMOs (including the major cities of Toronto, Vancouver and Ottawa), 10 are women and 7 use Twitter to communicate with the Canadian public, as opposed to 7 male CMOs, of whom only 3 have Twitter accounts.

Such a trend raises questions about the gendered dimension of public-facing health discourse in Canada.

This project adopts the theoretical lens of language ideology to explore language and gender dimensions of Canadian CMO health discourse on Twitter by analysing tweets from the accounts of all CMOs in Canada in English and French. 21,389 tweets (930,0883 words) from 10 Twitter accounts over an 18-month time period (January 2020-June 2021) are analyzed using a corpus-assisted discourse analytic approach, with a view of understanding if male and female Canadian CMOs communicate in similar ways on Twitter. Data are subject to five phases of analysis: (1) data mapping; (2) frequency-based analysis; (3) statistical ("keyword") comparisons across different Twitter accounts based on language and gender (where possible); (4) collocation analysis of top-ranked frequent and statistically significant words; and (5) discourse analysis of top 10 "favourited" tweets from each CMO.

Results suggest that male and female CMOs have not communicated to the same extent, nor have they used the same (range of) languages. Also, there are differences with regard to expressions of authority and compassion: female CMOs mitigate their commands using a range of devices (e.g. hashtags, symbols) and employ first person plurals to align with their public health team as well as the general public. While a paucity of male data raises some methodological challenges, it also suggests a potential disengagement from the public-facing communicative role adopted by a majority of female CMOs. These findings suggest that language and gender ideologies may underpin specific and disproportionate communication work accorded to and undertaken by women.

Title: **Using research dissemination YouTube videos in the EMI classroom: A multimodal analysis of engage strategies and genre definition in the digital era**

Authors: Carolina Girón-García & Edgar Bernad-Mechó, Universitat Jaume I, Spain

Abstract: Science dissemination has received ample interest by researchers in the last decade (Scotto di Carlo, 2014). With the rapid evolution from printed to digital information modes, science dissemination has been seen to cross educational boundaries and be integrated in Higher Education, and, particularly, on YouTube videos (Welbourne & Grant, 2016). Moreover, one of the main traits of science dissemination is its power of engagement (Meissner et al., 2020). Most of these analyses, however, are conducted only from a purely linguistic perspective, disregarding the complex multimodal reality of communication in the digital age (Kress, 2010). Bearing this background in mind, we set out to explore how YouTube science dissemination videos are used in Higher Education with a particular focus on the multimodal use of engagement strategies. In order to fulfill this aim, and after exploring the Virtual Classroom (i.e. Moodle Platform) of an English for Medicine course taught at Universitat Jaume I, Spain, we selected a research dissemination video that was used as an online

listening comprehension task. After a first exploration of the clip, a number of rich points were identified (Valeiras-Jurado, 2019), i.e. short fragments that are particularly engaging and/or persuasive. These fragments were then further analyzed using Multimodal Analysis – Video (O'Halloran et al., 2012), a multi-layer annotation tool that allows for fine-grained multimodal analyses. Two main types of modes were analyzed: embodied and filmic (Burn, 2014). In line with previous research on YouTube videos (Muñoz Morcillo et al., 2016), results show the recurrent use of engaging strategies throughout the selected clips. Among these, we can highlight the relevance of filmic modes and their contribution to creating a dynamic clip following other popular science videos. These results will prove useful in expanding our understanding of how this multimodal analysis has contributed to defining this digital genre.

Sunday, May 15, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 20, Ballroom 3

PANEL: The hidden forces shaping digital discourse: Analysis and activism, Part 1/2 (Tagg /DC&M)

Panel Overview: At a time when the role of digital discourse in shaping real-world events has never seemed so crucial, this panel showcases the breadth and diversity of the international journal *Discourse, Context & Media* with a critical focus on the 'hidden forces' shaping digital discourse. Studies of digital discourse have moved away from an earlier tendency towards 'technological determinism' to a greater understanding of the ways in which individuals and communities draw differently on the affordances of new technologies in order to address local communicative needs. From this perspective, our panel of authors, guest editors and editorial board members explore how people's agentive digital practices are shaped by site architectures and the wider political and economic contexts in which digital interactions take place. How can these hidden forces – which include digital and material inequalities, neoliberal ideologies, gender bias, unfathomable algorithms, and the commercial imperatives and corporate interests that shape interface design – be taken into account in discourse analysis of online interactions? In what ways do users accommodate, resist and counteract these hidden forces? How can users be equipped to navigate them? And what are the implications for

our understanding of the potential for digital discourse in shaping contemporary real-world events?

Title: "I'd blush if I could": Addressing gender bias in Artificial Intelligence voice assistants

Author: Maria Grazia Sindoni, University of Messina, Italy

Abstract: "I'd blush if I could" was the standard response given by Apple's Siri when addressed as a "bitch" by a user. Even though this response was replaced by a more neutral reply in 2019, one UNESCO report (2019) warned that the artificial vocal assistant's submissiveness to gender abuse continues to be coded into the most widely used Artificial Intelligence (AI) products.

Vocal assistants have been mainstreamed as exclusively female, or female by default, both in name and voice, such as Amazon's Alexa, Apple's Siri, and Microsoft's Cortana. Even though AI technologies have acquired more refined human-like communicative skills, gender biases are pervasive, as they project an image of a subservient, servile and obliging young female onto digital assistants (UNESCO 2019).

Adopting a critical multimodal approach (Machin 2016), I will first document the companies' hidden discourse practices that justify the gendering of voice assistance on the grounds of customers' satisfaction at being provided a moderately witty assistant.

As a case study, I will present a dataset of Alexa's 2018-2021 "Easter eggs", i.e. humorous or unexpected replies to specific questions, to illustrate Amazon's projected feminine *persona* that feeds the fantasies of Western male customers imbued with popular and/or geek culture. Other non-verbal strategies of stereotyped femininization will be illustrated, including flirtatious prosodic patterning and voice qualities (van Leeuwen 1999).

Rather than yielding to an apparently inescapable technological determinism of voice-recognition systems, the concluding remarks will point to research that looks at the other side of anthropomorphising technologies, such as empathic design (Rieser 2020) and movements for responsible and inclusive AI (Smith and Rustagi 2021).

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Title: **Discourse, context and media in digital surveillance**

Author: Rodney H. Jones, University of Reading, UK

Abstract: Recently the widespread practices of internet companies gathering large amounts of data about their users' behaviour online has received increasing attention from journalists, politicians, and lawmakers, and in some places, such as the EU, this has resulted in the promulgation of strict laws governing data collection. Such laws, however, have proven inadequate in the face of increasingly inventive methods of data extraction by companies and a user base which is often more concerned with convenience than with privacy.

Most of the scholarship to date on the issue of digital surveillance has been carried out in the fields of computer science, sociology and law, where the focus has been on the technological mechanisms that make surveillance possible, the larger social or political contexts in which digital surveillance occurs, or legal issues such as consent. What is missing is an understanding of how digital surveillance unfolds through people's moment-by-moment communicative practices online.

This paper argues that discourse analysis provides the tools to address this gap. In it I will discuss the relevance of the three concepts of *discourse*, *context* and *media* to understanding how internet companies compel people to reveal information about themselves and the consequences of surveillance for the ways people read, write and interact online. The concept of discourse focuses our attention on the textual basis of digital surveillance, the ways interfaces are designed to channel users into certain kinds of actions that make them more 'legible'. The concept of context helps us to understand how the architectures of platforms create possibilities for internet companies and for users to contextualize interactions in ways that make themselves and others either more or less visible. And the concept of mediation highlights how different combinations of technologies create 'information environments' with different affordances and constraints when it comes to privacy.

Examples of how these concepts can be applied to various online contexts are provided, and suggestions are given as to how a linguistic/discursive approach to digital surveillance can inform education in digital literacies.

Title: **Dominant ideologies and the affinity spectrum**

Author: Rachelle Vessey, Carleton University, Canada

Abstract: Hashtags are user-generated labels, which index and create topics of interest with which users can affiliate. The notion of 'affinity space' (Gee, 2005) provides researchers an analytical lens through which to conceptualize how Twitter users' 'ambient affiliation' (Zappavigna, 2011) hinges on evolving topics of interest in digital spaces. However, the notion has its limitations with repercussions for our understanding of participation and activism. In this paper, I present case studies that highlight dominant language ideologies underpinning hashtag use.

Drawing on the notion of 'dual indexicality' (Hill, 1995b), I argue that hashtags directly index the 'referential' meanings of words (or phrases) they contain, while at the same time also indirectly indexing stereotypes and/or the 'linguistic culture' (Schiffman, 2006) associated with the language used. Thus, when users are exposed only to material indexed by the hashtag, this may result in 'filter bubbles' (Pariser, 2011) that exclude other linguistic cultures, thereby (re)producing dominant ideologies associated with language(s). As a result, the dual indexicality of hashtags can alter the diversity of language ideologies associated with affinity spaces, with potential repercussions for evaluations of the topic under discussion.

To address this, I propose the notion of 'affinity spectrum' (Feltmate, 2021), which is intended to capture the dual indexicality and/or evaluatively-charged nature of affiliation within affinity space. I argue that the notion of *spectrum* can allow researchers to better understand how affiliation is indexed by a range of different hashtags, each with potentially different evaluative stances and linguistic origins regarding the topic of interest. I highlight that a focus on the 'affinity spectrum' presents theoretical and methodological opportunities for researchers. Moreover, I argue that participation – and activism – online is contingent on awareness of and access to dominant ideologies that lead to the creation of hashtags that shape digital spaces.

Sunday, May 15, 9:00-10:30

SESSION 21, Ballroom 1

Title: **Moving back to normal? A comparative multimodal discourse analysis of EMI lecturer's discourse across different learning environments**

Author: Mariangela Picciuolo, University of Bologna, Italy

Abstract: Experiencing online teaching has proved to be beneficial to teachers returning to the face-to-face classroom (Lowes, 2010). The current research was carried out to

investigate the effects of teaching online on the classroom practices of lecturers teaching in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) degree programmes, returning to the in-person classroom after Covid.

This exploratory study was conducted on 3 Engineering lecturers teaching at an Italian university from 2018 to 2021. Nine lectures given in three different environments – face-to-face, online and blended – of approximately two hours each were selected through convenience sampling for each lecturer. Video-lecture recordings of online and blended classrooms were transcribed following a social semiotics approach to multimodality (see Jewitt, Bezemer, & O'Halloran, 2016). Collected data were analysed using a mixed method approach involving both quantitative and qualitative research. The main analytic focus is on the discourse strategies used by the lecturers in four areas – class participation, independent learning, questioning techniques, and metacognition – which have been shown to be more likely to affect classroom practice when moving from online to face-to-face teaching.

The findings indicated that experiencing online teaching positively affects EMI lecturers. After having struggled to adapt to the online environment, EMI lecturers have transferred a range of strategies to the face-to-face classroom including additional ways to communicate with students in their EMI blended classrooms, which also include collaborative communication technologies, resulting in more dialogically oriented classes (Higgs, 2020).

EMI teaching practitioners would benefit from the findings of this study since findings illustrate how digitally mediated communication may facilitate teacher-student communication and finally impact the pattern of students' engagement over time.

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Title: **An offensive language taxonomy and a web corpus discourse analysis for automatic offensive language identification**

Authors: Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (University of Applied Sciences in Konin, Poland), Chaya Liebeskind, (Jerusalem College of Technology, Israel), Marcin Trojszczak (University of Bialystok & University of Applied Sciences in Konin, Poland), Slavko Žitnik (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia), Anna Baczkowska (University of Gdansk, Poland) & Giedre Valuntaite Oleškevičiene (Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius, Lithuania)

Abstract: Offensive discourse refers to the presence of explicit or implicit verbal attacks towards individuals/group, extensively analyzed in linguistics (e.g., Culpeper 2005, Haugh&Sinkeviciute 2019) and in NLP (e.g., offensEval,Zampieri et al. 2019), HASOC (Mandl et al. 2019). The focus is definitional revision and enrichment of offensive language annotation typology (AUTHORS 1, AUTHORS 2) identified in 25 publicly available English offensive language datasets. Account is also made of semantic differences between particular concepts of the categories OFFENCE/OFFENSIVE in English via an analysis of collocations and synonyms in 38B web-corpus (https://www.sketchengine.eu/ententen-english-corpus/). An extended offensive language ontology in terms of 17 categories, structured into 4 hierarchical levels (AUTHORS 2) shows to represent the encoding of the offensive language schema, trained in terms of non-contextual word embeddings – i.e., Word2Vec and Fast Text, and juxtaposed to the data acquired by a pairwise training and testing analysis for existing categories in the HateBERT model (30 batches, 3 epochs). The second part focuses on the discourse verification of the adequacy of the proposed 4-level offensive data taxonomy in discourse analysis of 10 English social media samples. Offensive category levels (types of offence target, etc.), aspects (offensive language property clusters) and expressiveness (explicit – implicit, figurative language) types are identified, using the semantic annotation INCEpTION tool https://github.com/inception-project/inception. Results support the proposed ontology of explicit offense and indicate types of more refined offensive implicitness criteria to provide more variance among figurative and indirect uses. They will be verified in automatic retrieval and identification of gravity of offensive discourse to serve in social media monitoring tasks.

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Title: **Search Engine Usage as a Mode of CMD: The Role of Variation**

Author: Phillip Terwege, Universität Duisburg-Essen, German

Abstract: While online communication has been investigated for some time (Herring/Stein/Virtanen 2013, to name just one seminal volume), search engines have

until now only received the attention of computational linguists (e.g., Barr et al. 2008; Clark et al. 2010). Outside of computational linguistics, search engine usage has been treated marginally and is rather perceived as a technical problem (Crystal 2012). This paper postulates that search engine usage is a process of communication (human-to-software), and thus classifies as a CMD mode: a "specific communication type[...] within a medium" (Murray 1988: 353) that refers "not just to CMC systems, but also to the social and cultural practices that have arisen around [its] use" (Herring 2007: 3). It will be shown that users' search queries hold variation, a key feature of communication. An empirical study will be presented on the search engine data of over 100 users. The analysis shows, for instance, variation in word count, use of interrogative words, punctuation and capitalization. Variation is thus presented as a characteristic of search engine usage, arguing for its inclusion as a CMD mode.

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Sunday, May 15, 11:00-12:30

SESSION 22, Ballroom 3

PANEL: The hidden forces shaping digital discourse: Analysis and activism, Part 2/2, (Tagg/DC&M)

Title: **The hidden forces shaping the digital discourse of quality assurance and teaching**

Author: Per Ledin, Södertörn University, Sweden

It is now common for public institutions, such as schools and universities, to be administrated and managed through digital systems. These systems rely on an information infrastructure where work practices are coded and classified in a one size fits all-fashion and where quality and outputs always must rise. Such locked-down positions, infused with power, are communicated and circulated in for example lists, bullet points, tables, diagrams and flow charts, where the coordination of very different things is an important semiotic principle, as is construing abstract causal relations between entities. Actual work process, identities and priorities are abstracted and fragmented and threated as things, including intangible assets such as empathy and emotions, and the professional judgment of teachers risks to be undermined.

In my paper I will mostly use examples from the marketized Swedish school, ranging from preschools to universities, but also point out that this kind of public management is globally spread, for example through the world-wide use of 'strategy maps' by universities, based on the so-called balanced scorecard (a sort of diagram developed for the private sector in order to increase profits). As for the Swedish school market, where there is no limit as to how much profit a school company can make, it is of note that American (and other) risk capitalists often are involved in the companies that own and make profits on the digital systems. The systems are – not least visually – infused with a discourse of positivism, where people are smiling, interacting and doing things better and where children continuously are developing. Also, the systems provoke incredible levels of performativity, as the teachers must use the codifications enforced by the system to document and report that their instruction and every child are constantly improving. The Swedish preschool is a striking example of this. It was until recently based on free play and outdoor pedagogy as core activities, and in international evaluations it came out among the best in the world. With a new curriculum adopted, goals and targets from it became the basis for the codification circulated in digital systems, where everything that for example a 2 years old child does must be reported and documented as meeting a certain target.

Title: **Discourse analysis and the political economy of digital communication**

Author: Ana Deumert, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Abstract: When teaching media sociolinguistics, I always start by reminding my students – most of them equipped with smartphones and laptops – that global digital access is far from universal and that only about half of the global population has access to the internet. This figure not only impacts on digital practices, such as the creation-circulation of memes and videos, it also impacts on digital multilingualism, and accounts for the fact that most of the roughly 7000 languages of the world do not have a digital presence. In South Africa – one of the main economies in Africa – around 30 percent of the population do not have access to the internet. In the global north average figures

would be around 5% (in, for example, Sweden), and in some of the so-called 'least developed countries' the percentage of those who are not connected can be as high a 90% (in for example, Chad; ITU 2021).

While digital inequalities create real material barriers, digital media also hold a promise for a more multilingual future, allowing for the digitization of archives, the development of teaching materials in minoritized languages and the subversive use of a dominant technology for non-hegemonic aims (Meighan 2021). Calls to 'decolonize the internet' have been made in recent years, and activists have noted that even though access in the south is limited, most internet users reside in the global south (around 75%). Critics have noted the colonial-capitalist architecture of digital media (perhaps most evident in the 'racism' of many artificial intelligence algorithms) and the colonial-capitalist conditions of digital production (both hardware and software, Fuchs 2015; see also whoseknowledge.org). In this paper I will consider what it could mean for digital discourse analysts to integrate persistent material inequalities, colonial-capitalist exploitation and calls for digital decolonization more fully into their empirical and theoretical work.

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Title: **Social activism and the self as moral project**

Author: Gwen Bouvier, Shanghai International Studies University, China

Abstract: In this paper I look at data from Twitter where there were cases of 'cancelling' of a number of people who had been caught on camera making some kind of racist or xenophobic outbursts. Tweets called for users to work together to contact employers so that they should lose their jobs and generally experiencing shaming and be socially outcast. A closer look at the tweets reveals what can be seen as broader insights into campaigning and activism on social media. First, I look at some of the observations made by researchers on how communication tends to take place on social media platforms such as Twitter. We then look at some of the tweets in this context. In sum, there is a powerful sense of 'we' who are challenging racism. Yet there is huge incoherence and complete lack of definition as to what this actually means. All forms of racism and xenophobia become collapsed into each other and classified together, often

in relation to a number of named extreme regimes. Importantly, in this process it is not only racist behaviour that is criticised, but the entire moral character of those who made the outburst. In contrast, those tweeting represent themselves as moral at all levels. In the conclusion, we think about the need to link our social media analysis to wider social and political changes and issues. I suggest that these tweets may on the one hand be about people's disgust about racism. But on the other, they show how neoliberal identities (where the individual is seen as an entrepreneurial self, but in a way that is highly moralised) have become part of our framework for understanding wider behaviours. Racism is not so much about historical and social forces. Behaviour is not to be related to the nature of present social formations, but is about the individual, about choice, attitudes and also style.

Sunday, May 15, 11:00-12:30

SESSION 23, Ballroom 1

Title: **Monolingual vs Bilingual Ideologies on Twitter: 2020 Basque Autonomous Community General Election**

Author: Gorka Basterretxea Santis, Gerogetown University, USA

Abstract: Basque nationalism and confronting linguistic ideologies are not a recent phenomenon in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) (Muro, 2013), and in fact, language use is, and has always been, strongly linked to national ideologies in this territory. This study analyzes language ideology creation in the BAC through Twitter. For this purpose, Twitter discussion during the two (one in Basque and the other in Spanish) 2020 BAC Parliament election debates organized by the Basque public television (EITB) are examined. Taking Vessey's (2021) study on a similar matter in Canada into consideration, van Leeuwen's (1996) framework is employed to analyze the tweets created during those debates. Following Herring (2004), the tweets were collected by theme and phenomenon: by using the hashtags for each debate (#debateaETB and #eldebateETB), a total of 40 tweets are included (the only ones that referred to languages or linguistic phenomena using the official hashtags). This research suggests that the linguistic attitudes that were expressed during the two debates differ depending on the language of the debate: during the debate in Basque the majority of the analyzed tweets were written in Basque and more monolingual tweets were presented in favor of supporting Basque in front of Spanish (e.g., by highlighting politicians' apparent bad way of speaking Basque and their lack of interest on this language), while in the debate in Spanish the majority of tweets examined were

written in Spanish and the lack of balanced bilingualism was highlighted.

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Title: **Uses of English in Italian contexts: dominant language ideologies and counterdiscourses on YouTube**

Author: Antonella Gazzardi, University of South Florida, USA

Abstract: In 2015, to "sensitize" Italians to a hybrid Italian-English language supposedly being born, because of non-established English words abundantly turning up in non-specialized Italian contexts, communication expert Annamaria Testa denounced this as the "rising tide of Italenglish" on a TED Talk stage, calling it a "short-circuit between two languages" and "contamination" that happens out of Italians' "conformism." She urged her audience to defend both the Italian language and Italian heritage itself from such "provincial, unjustified mixtures of Italian and English" while presenting her online campaign "Say it in Italian." Later uploaded to YouTube, her TED Talk has received a steady flow of comments since, both on the phenomenon and on her own claims.
In this paper, I discuss what types of "linguistic transgressions" (i.e. uncalled-for uses of English in otherwise Italian contexts) Testa and public figures like her complain about. I also explore YouTube users' responses to these complaints, investigating both dominant language ideologies and counterdiscourses, while considering how users establish their authority on language matters. Preliminary results point to the prevalence of national language and monolingualism ideologies, as individuals argue, for example, that using a different code denotes lack of love for one's language and culture, and blame of the media for this unwelcome encroachment of English into Italian contexts. However, these dominant discourses are simultaneously challenged by some YouTube users, who construct counterdiscourses by drawing on sociolinguistic facts about language globalization and language change. This study adds to a growing literature on the circulation of language ideologies in digital spaces (e.g., Cutler, 2019; Marello, 2020; Vessey, 2021).

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Title: **Multimodal Tourism Narratives in the Instagram Era**

Author: Elena Mattei, University of Verona, Italy

Abstract: Contemporary discourse practices are perpetrated mainly and firstly on the Web and Social Media, making digital narratives subject to changes according to renewed social needs and specific technological affordances. This paper provides an overview of digital tourism discourse, by focusing on the multimodal communication of three popular English-speaking tourist boards on Instagram and their official websites. A Digital Humanities research method complemented by a theoretical approach based on Systemic Functional Linguistics and the Visual Grammar supported a corpus-based analysis of promotional text-image relations on these media. The objectives include the understanding of how visual and linguistic lexicogrammatical resources convey positive attitudes towards the destination and persuade prospective customers to concretely experience that destination. In particular, this presentation will introduce newly designed methodological tools for the manual annotation and statistical measurement of visual strategies which, when accompanied by a comparative table for linguistic analysis and a qualitative investigation, may contribute to the definition of a new genre of tourism discourse. The study will shed light on the ways in which an image-centric genre is constructed to represent a manipulated version of reality, which assigns to prospective tourists the role of passive Sensers of both natural Phenomena and highly positive linguistic evaluations, while allegedly placing them in a position of control over the tourist experience.

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