What are Opinions? Integrating Theory and Methods for Automatically Analyzing Opinionated Communication (OPINION)



**WG1: THEORY**

**GLOSSARY**

**(DELIVERABLE D1.1)**

**March 31, 2024**

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the goals of the WG1 (THEORY) of this COST Action was an extensive literature review of existing theory and research on opinions and their textual/discursive expression that would allow us to develop a glossary of key definitions and terms (D1.1). We aim in offering an interdisciplinary, still coherent, overview of key terms and definitions to scholars who have been conducting studies on opinion or are planning to start doing that.

The recent, first version of the ***Glossary*** is an outcome of collaborative work of more than 30 scholars from 13 countries and regions. For the previous 18 months, participants of the WG1 have been working in four subgroups, arranged around four areas of study, namely: (1) linguistics, (2) political communication & cultural studies, (3) public opinion, and (4) communication & media studies. Based on the ***Literature Review***, we recognized terms and concepts employed in studies on opinionated communication across disciplines. Each entry consists of a definition and emphasizes main features of a phenomenon/concept and its theoretical background. A definition is followed by a few references one can use for further reading.

This is, however, the “work-in-progress”. While some of the entries require further elaboration (see entries marked in grey in the text), the others need to be re-considered due to their multi-dimensional nature [see entries marked with numbers next to a category’s name, e.g. *Bias (1), Bias (2)*]. Specifically, in the next stage of the work, we plan to provide a cross-review for each entry, as well as to recognize terms defined differently by scholars representing different disciplines. With this exercise we will be able to carefully select entries, remove some of them, and – if necessary – complete a recent version of the ***Glossary*** with additional entries. The ***Glossary*** will be then edited to make it coherent and a user-friendly text. The ***Glossary*** will be available online for a broad research community, including scholars who have been conducting studies on opinionated communication, those we are planning such projects, as well students.

Both the ***Literature Review*** and the ***Glossary*** will serve us as a starting point for developing a joint manifesto on conceptual criteria and dimensions of textually expressed opinions and resulting research agenda (D1.2).

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**Addressee**

Ledia Kazazi

An addressee is any immediate recipient or intended receiver of a communicative act within the framework of speech act theory and pragmatics. The addressee plays a crucial role in the communication process since language users tailor their linguistic expressions and adjust their communicative strategies based on the perceived characteristics, expectations, and knowledge of the addressee. Fillmore addresses the notion of the addressee in his Frame Semantic Theory which states that the interpretation of linguistic expressions relies heavily on the activation of specific cognitive frames within the minds of both speaker and addressee. According to Fillmore, speakers encode their utterances with information relevant to the addressee’s frame, facilitating a successful communicative act by aligning the linguistic input with the addressee’s cognitive structures. Levinson extended this perspective by incorporating insights from Gricean pragmatics by emphasising the importance of social context and interpersonal dynamics in shaping communicative exchanges. According to Levinson, speakers engage strategically to manage the social relationship with the addressee by employing politeness strategies, indirect speech acts, and conversational implicature to negotiate face-threatening acts and maintain harmony.

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**Affect**

Artur Lipiński

Affect is a category employed by various subdisciplines of social sciences. In the Appraisal Theory, it is used to refer to emotions as part of the evaluative process. Although linguistically affect can be realized by many lexical and grammatical expressions, the appraisal theory groups emotions into three major sets linked to un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction. The first one covers emotions related to "affairs of the heart", the second emotions related to social well-being and the third one associated with the pursuit of specific goals. Moreover, all the types of affects range from positive to negative polar opposites. The un/happiness variable manifests itself through the references to sadness, hate, happiness and love; the in/security variable through anxiety, fear, confidence and trust; the dis/satisfaction variable through ennui, displeasure, curiosity, respect (Martin & White 2005, 45-52).

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**Affective Foundation of Opinion**

Marc Jungblut, Asta Zelenkauskaite

Opinions can be grounded in various foundations, including affects, defined as the general, underlying emotional state at a particular moment. Opinions based on affects are assumed to have an impact on information processing by impacting the depths of cognitive processing, acceptance or rejection of expressed arguments and information recall. Moreover, studies also suggest that affective content can create behavioral responses: Political communication research, for instance, demonstrates that affective statements can stimulate the expression of political opinions and can thus trigger virality on social networking sites.

Affective opinionated statements have been used in empirical research from two perspectives. Building on the potential impact of affective communication, (1) experimental research has focused on how affective statements influence cognitive and behavioral responses. One salient example here is the extensive research on the effects of fear appeals, for instance in the context of health communication. In this, affective statements are constructed as stimulus material and used as independent variables in various research designs.

Against the backdrop of potential effects of affective statements, (2) content analytical research investigates how affective different forms of communication are. In this, scholars, for instance, compare the affective quality of opinionated statements by populist and non-populist politicians or across different media outlets. As a result, this strain of research understands affective communication as the dependent variable in their research design and measures it either through means of manual content analysis or automatically oftentimes through what has been labeled sentiment analysis.

A specific concern of public opinion research is the potentially growing affective polarization between societal groups of different political ideology. This refers to a growing dislike or distrust towards potential political opponents serving as a basis for opinion formation and information processing.

Similarly, affective publics has become a useful framework to define the state of publics where social media mediates public display of emotive reactions to a given phenomenon (Papacharissi, 2014). Through such an effective process, audiences not only connect but also disrupt and mediate everyday politics.

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### **Affordances/ Affordance Theory**

Alena Macková, Martina Novotna

Affordances refer to the perceived or actual functionalities and possibilities that a technology or platform offers to its users. The concept of affordances is rooted in Gibsonian ecological psychology (Gibson,1977), emphasizing the relationship between an organism and its environment. Affordances in his theory refer to the possibilities for action that the environment offers to an individual. The term „technological affordances“ was later coined by Ian Hutchby (2001) as a reaction against social constructivism to describe the materially based constraints on what could be done with technological artifacts. Scholars often apply affordance theory to understand how features and design of certain technologies shape communication dynamics and users' activities, and how users perceive and interact with technologies. Communication researchers adopt relational approach on affordances acknowledging that while the material characteristics of technology shape user interactions, they do not solely dictate the range of possibilities available to users. Affordances thus empower users with a sense of agency, allowing them to perform specific actions. For instance, the "like" button on social media platforms allows users to express approval or agreement with the content. Affordance theory thus examines users' perceptions of what they can do with a particular technology. In the case of social media, it could include the perceived possibilities for communication, self-presentation, sharing information, or connecting with others. The affordance theory has faced criticism for potential technological determinism and has undergone refinement to incorporate contextual factors, user agency, and the dynamic nature of technology use. However the conceptualisation of “affordances” and its application significantly differ across studies. Additionally, the theory plays a crucial role in design, where designers use affordances to predict user interactions with a product or platform.

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**Agenda-setting**

Valmora Gogo

Agenda setting theory is addressed to what McCombs and Shaw determined in 1972 that it is the mass media that sets the agenda of electoral campaigns, shaping the political reality, influencing their readers not only on a specific issue presented by the media but also on the level of importance because of the amount of information in a news story and its position. This theory places the mass media in the main role of selecting news and media content, and it is precisely the mass media that prioritize those contents that people should follow.

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### **Algorithmisation**

Aleksandra Krstic

Algorithmization refers to designing and defining a series of steps or instructions to solve a problem or perform a task. It is most often associated with the performance of breaking down a problem into smaller, more manageable parts and creating a set of procedures that a computer or a human can follow in order to achieve a specific goal. In computer science and programming, algorithms are sets of rules used to solve problems or perform computations. In social media, algorithms are used to sort endless content, determine how content is filtered, ranked, selected, matched to audiences with similar preferences and recommended to users. The algorithmization process is often seen to bring order in different data cultures by reducing their complexity. In academic scholarship, therefore, algorithms are seen as “the metaphor of modern culture”, especially in the context of information abundance, noise and overload, where various information selection strategies, such as filtering on social media, work to direct feeds, control preferences and drive social media experiences. There are many forms of algorithmization, such as the Big Data model, data visualization model and others that work effectively for the purpose of data gathering and advertising. In comparison to other social media platforms, authors highlight TikTok as the most algorithm-centered one, because it has been particularly known for its explicit and unprecedented use of the “for you” algorithm, which determines the users’ exposure to content. Algorithms drive users through overabundance of posts and endless content online, have control over what users see and get, connect them with others who like similar things and recommend further exploration of data based on users’ behaviour.

References

**Ambivalence**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

The [state](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/state) of having two [opposing](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/oppose) [feelings](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/feeling) at the same [time](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/time), or being [uncertain](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/uncertain) about how one feels (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ambivalence)

**Anonymity**

Gal Harpaz

Anonymity typically refers to the condition of being anonymous or the intentional withholding of identity information in communication. It refers to the deliberate act of concealing or omitting personal identifiers, such as the speaker's or writer's name, in linguistic expressions. Anonymity plays a significant role in shaping communication dynamics and discourse, impacting the perceived authority, power relations, and social implications within language use. There exit implications of **anonymity of opinions**, particularly in online communication, which has significant implications for individuals, discourse, and societal dynamics. While it can offer a protective shield for free expression, it also introduces challenges related to credibility, accountability, and the potential for abuse.

1. Enhanced Freedom of Expression: Anonymity can empower individuals to express opinions freely without fear of personal repercussions (Citron & Franks, 2014). This can lead to the sharing of diverse perspectives and dissenting views, fostering a robust marketplace of ideas.

2. Reduced Accountability and Responsibility: The lack of personal identification may lead to a decline in accountability (Suler, 2004). Individuals may feel less restrained in spreading misinformation or engaging in harmful behavior, as they perceive a diminished risk of facing consequences for their opinions or actions.

3. Impact on Online Discourse and Civility: Anonymity can contribute to a decline in civility in online discussions, as individuals may engage in more aggressive or hostile behavior when shielded by anonymity (Pennycook & Randm 2018). This can affect the overall quality of discourse and hinder constructive dialogue.

4. Potential for Trolling and Harassment: Anonymity provides a breeding ground for online trolling and harassment, as individuals may exploit the lack of identification to engage in harmful activities without fear of personal repercussions (Buckels et al, 2014).

5. Challenges to Establishing Trust: It introduces challenges in establishing trust within online communities or platforms (Metzger et al, 2003). Users may question the reliability and authenticity of opinions when the identity of the speaker is concealed.

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**Appraisal**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A formal assessment, typically in an interview, of the performance of an employee over a particular period. Such assessment is typically associated with emotions, both with the assessment holder and the Theme of appraisal (if human), which are triggered as reactions to the evaluations. ***See Appraisal Theory***

References

**Appraisal theory**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Appraisal theory is the theory in [psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology) that [emotions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotions) are extracted from our evaluations (appraisals or estimates) of events that cause specific reactions in different people. Essentially, our appraisal of a situation causes an emotional, or affective, response that is going to be based on that appraisal (Scherer, K. R., & Shorr, A., & Johnstone, T. (Ed.). (2001). Appraisal processes in emotion: theory, methods, research. Canary, NC: Oxford University Press.).

References

**Arena**

Christian Baden

The arena describes the configuration of visibility and access regimes that govern participation in the public debate. People may “enter the arena” to publicly express their opinions and interact with other speakers; or they may participate as spectators who engage the unfolding debate without presenting their own views. Since the metaphor was originally conceived, digital communication platforms have massively expanded the range of speakers who can access the arena, while facilitating participants’ switching of roles, and creating new intermediate forms of participation (e.g., indicating support for/boosting the visibility of others’ opinions; posting public shout-outs without engagement with other contributions).

Different media environments raise different hurdles for entering to the arena, which may be more or less exclusive, and involve additional gatekeepers and selection criteria: While anyone can post on Twitter, not every letter to the editor is printed, and few are invited to sit on talk shows; some arenas are only accessible to speakers presenting relevant credentials (e.g., expertise, public office), or pre-define differentiated speaker roles (e.g., anchors, stakeholders, opposition members). In addition, arenas govern participation by imposing discursive norms that participants are expected to respect (e.g., civility norms, argumentative norms). Arenas may be thematically open, permitting participants to insert and redefine issues, or restricted, marking unrelated contributions as off-topic. Arenas also differ in their capacity to carry multiple discussions at once (scope) and accommodate numerous voices and contributions (scale).

Regarding their accessibility to spectators, some arenas are capable of actively rendering issues salient to audiences, while others require some amount of audience activity to achieve exposure. In addition, arenas differ in their management of visibility of speakers’ contributions, ranging from more egalitarian spaces (e.g., townhall meetings; visibility allocated based on user engagement), to hierarchically pre-structured ones (e.g., visibility for purchase, privileged speaker roles).

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**Argument**

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Argument is a reason or set of reasons given in support of an idea, action or theory. Arguments are prototypically based on logical reasoning. In formal logic, the reasons offered within the argument are referred to as *premises*, and the proposition that the premises are offered for is called the *conclusion.*

Example:

[1] Tom is happy only if he is playing guitar.

[2] Tom is not playing guitar.

———————————————————————

**∴** [3] Tom is not happy.

Pragmatic definitions of arguments appeal to the function of arguments. Different accounts of the purposes of arguments serve to generate different pragmatic definitions of arguments. Pragmatic definition appeals to the use of arguments as tools of rational persuasion (for definitions of argument that make such an appeal, see Johnson 2000, Walton 1996, Hitchcock 2007).See Aristotle’s persuasive appeals.

Arguments are commonly classified as deductive or inductive (for example, Copi, I. and C. Cohen 2005, Sinnott-Armstrong and Fogelin 2010). A *deductive argument* is an argument that an arguer puts forward as valid. An *inductive argument* is an argument that an arguer puts forward as *inductively strong*. In an inductive argument, the premises are intended only to be so strong that, if they were true, then it would be *unlikely*, although possible, that the conclusion is false.

References

**Attitude**

Gal Harpaz, Elena Negrea-Busuioc, Anna Bączkowska

Allport (1935) defined attitude as a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, and exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related. In subsequent decades, the attitude concept has been narrowed down and was largely reduced to its evaluative component. Eagly and Chaiken (1993), defined attitudes as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor. Vaughan & Hogg (2005) defined attitude as the organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events, or symbols. Nowadays, attitude is defined as a relatively enduring and general evaluation of an object, person, group, issue, or concept on a dimension ranging from negative to positive. Attitudes provide summary evaluations of target objects and are often assumed to be derived from specific beliefs, emotions, and past behaviors associated with those objects (APA, 2018).

According to the Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2003), attitude (or emotion) is concerned with our feelings, judgements and evaluation of aspects of the world we live in. *Attitude* can be further divided into *affect*, *judgment* and *appreciation*. *Affect* refers to emotional responses, *judgment* to evaluations of behaviors and *appreciation* to the quality of processes and products (the aesthetics). Attitude is a subtype of evaluative language that conveys a positive or negative assessment of people, events, situations, actions, etc. Attitudes can be conveyed explicitly or implicitly. Sometimes, utterances can be classified as attitudinal if they invite readers to position themselves positively or negatively towards what is predicated.

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**Authentic and Inauthentic Opinions**

Asta Zelenkauskaite

There are at least two ways to consider authenticity. Authenticity and inauthenticity of opinions first stem from a broad definition of the concept: it can relate to authentic or (in)authentic intentions, sources, or messages, or content in general. With the rise of computational tools that automate dissemination of information online, not all opinions in an online public sphere are produced in an authentic way.

Another way of thinking of (in)authenticity by media scholars stems from the perceptual framework, i.e., how we perceive the world through the media. Thus, mediated authenticity suggests that media presents people or things in a specific light, in which they can be perceived as more or less authentic.

However, both perspectives entail that authenticity can be constructed and in some cases orchestrated to achieve communicative goals of the message sender.

Inauthentic public opinions can be written with the help of the automated tools and or are produced by groups of actors with the underlying agendas, e.g. to influence the discussion. In the scholarship *coordinated inauthentic behaviors.* Such behaviors can be mediated and amplified by synthetic agents such as online bots and further proliferated by algorithms that typically mediate online spaces.

Some scholars attribute inauthentic expression of opinions online as astroturfing. While scholars in various fields work on how to detect inauthentic coordinated behaviors it poses challenges to authentic public opinions.

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**Belief**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Belief is the feeling of certitude that someone or something exists or is true or trustworthy.

Conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon especially when based on examination of evidence. Belief can be connected with *credence* i.e., intellectual assent without implying anything about grounds for assent. Belief can be justified (then constitutes *knowledge*, typically based on *evidence*, requiring *truth* and *justification*) or can be unjustified (Ali & Fumerton 2022).

There are four theories of belief: the  *intellectualist theory* that belief is a cognitive act related to evidence that the thing believed is probably true, *the dispositional theory* that we recognize our own beliefs by observing how we react to things, *the feeling theory* that belief is a particular feeling that comes to us and is a signal to us that we believe or think to be true the thing under consideration, and *eliminativism theories* that belief does not exist, but is an illusion of our language and culture.

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Leister, J., 14-30, *Four Theories of Belief* DOI: [10.2174/9781681082639116010005](https://doi.org/10.2174/9781681082639116010005))

**Bias**

Gal Harpaz, Franziska Marquart

Bias is a disproportionate weight in favor of or against an idea or thing, usually in a way that is [closed-minded](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-mindedness), [prejudicial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prejudice), or unfair. Biases can be innate or learned. People may develop biases for or against an individual, a group, or a belief (Steinbock, 1978). Bias consists of attitudes, behaviors, and actions that are prejudiced in favor of or against one person or group compared to another (NIH, 2023). For example, *Confirmation bias* is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's prior [beliefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belief) or values (Nickerson, 1998). Another example is [The *narrative fallacy*](https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/career-map/sell-side/capital-markets/narrative-fallacy/) *defined by* Menashe & Shamash (2008) *the Narrative Fallacy* as an erroneous heuristic, through which fact finders, attempting to use narratives to make sense of insufficient information, mistakenly choose the wrong narrative and so end up distorting the evidence presented.

A skewed perspective, thinking tendency, or a belief on an issue, situation, entity, topic, or person that deviates from reality and affects information processing, perception, and interpretation in a certain direction. When attached to a specific belief, new incoming information will be processed and interpreted in a biased way and conforming with the underlying opinion (e.g., motivated reasoning, political partisan biases, confirmation, and disconfirmation biases). These biases can result in misperceptions of reality and affect decision making. Psychological biases are often equated with cognitive heuristics in the sense that they provide (necessary) shortcuts in information processing due to the brain’s limited capacity. These shortcuts can be meaningful especially under time- or cognitive pressure, but may also lead to wrong conclusions. Biased individuals do not necessarily intend to deceive others but may provide what they perceive as an honest albeit distorted or tendential view of reality.

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**Cognition/Cognitive Linguistics**

Ledia Kazazi, Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Cognition refers to conscious mental action or process of acquiring [knowledge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge) and [understanding](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Understanding) through thought, experience, and the senses.(Von Eckardt (1996)).

Cognitive processes use existing knowledge and discover new knowledge. Cognitive linguistics is a school of linguistics and cognitive science which emerged from the early 1980s onwards. Places central importance on the role of meaning, conceptual processes and embodied experience in the study of language and the mind and the way in which they intersect. Cognitive linguistics is an enterprise or an approach to the study of language and the mind rather than a single articulated theoretical framework. It is informed by two overarching principles or commitments: the generalisation commitment and the cognitive commitment. The two best developed sub-branches of cognitive linguistics are cognitive semantics and cognitive approaches to grammar. While cognitive linguistics began to emerge in the 1980s as a broadly grounded intellectual movement, it traces its roots to work that was taking place in the 1970s, particularly in the United States, which was reacting to formal linguistics. Early pioneers in the 1970s who were instrumental in formulating this new approach include Gilles Fauconnier, Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker and Leonard Talmy.

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**Cognitive Dissonance**

Ledia Kazazi, Gal Harpaz

Cognitive dissonance theory developed in the late 1950s by US psychologist Leon Festinger refers to the psychological discomfort that arises from holding conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours simultaneously. It claims that people tend to avoid information and situations that are likely to increase dissonance. According to Festinger pairs of cognitions (elements of knowledge) can be relevant or irrelevant to one another. If two cognitions are relevant to one another, they are either consonant or dissonant. Two cognitions are consonant if one follows from the other, and they are dissonant if the obverse (opposite) of one cognition follows from the other. To alleviate cognitive dissonance, individuals may engage in various cognitive and behavioural strategies, such as rationalisation, denial, or attitude change. Two cognitions are consonant if one follows from the other, and they are dissonant if the obverse (opposite) of one cognition follows from the other.

Festinger proposed strategies for dealing with a situation in which cognitive dissonance arises. First, when experiencing dissonance, and a feeling of psychological discomfort arises, the person will be motivated to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance. For example, this underlying tension could motivate an individual to make an attitude change that would produce consistency between thoughts and behaviours.

Second, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance for him.

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**Cognitive Linguistics**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Cognitive linguistices is an interdisciplinary branch of [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), combining knowledge and research from [cognitive science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_science), [cognitive psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_psychology), [neuropsychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuropsychology) and linguistics. It assumes processes of *emobodiment* which involve the interaction of our body, thoughts, and actions and the representation of *linguistic meaning* as conventional conceptualisations expressed in language. Metaphor is considered a mapping from a mental domain to another one,

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**Collectivisation**

Carlos Cuhna

From a Linguistics perspective, collectivization refers to the process where languages and/or dialects fuse into a standardized form. This phenomenon usually occurs for socio-political reasons, such as part of nation-building efforts or language planning initiatives. The procedure may involve standardization via a promotion of a certain linguistic/dialect variety through language policy that can result in language shift and a loss of linguistic diversity.

Note: The term collectivization also has a different applied meaning frequently used by many as the process of organizing individuals or resources into a collective or cooperative system. Russian collectivization of its agricultural system under Stalin is often used as an example.

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**Communication**

Gal Harpaz

Communication serves as the conduit through which opinions are expressed, shared, and refined. It encompasses verbal and non-verbal exchanges, including written, spoken, and visual forms, facilitating the dissemination of information and the construction of meaning. As individuals engage in various forms of communication, they encounter diverse perspectives, leading to the formation and evolution of their opinions. Additionally, communication acts as a mechanism for the negotiation and validation of opinions within social contexts, influencing the consensus-building process.

Scholars such as Habermas (1984) emphasize the role of communicative action in the public sphere, underscoring its significance in shaping collective opinions. Furthermore, the influence of media communication on public opinions has been extensively explored by theorists like Lippmann (1922) and McCombs and Shaw (1972), highlighting the profound impact of mass communication on shaping public perceptions. In conclusion, the intricate relationship between communication and opinions underscores the pivotal role of communicative processes in shaping individual beliefs and societal attitudes.

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**Componential Analysis**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Componential analysis (CA), also known as ‘lexical decomposition’, is any attempt to formalize and standardize procedures for the analysis of word meanings. Componential analysis is an approach that describes word meanings as a combination of elementary meaning components called semantic features or [semantic components](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/semantic-component). The set of basic features is supposed to be finite. These basic features (also termed ‘semantic primitives’ or ‘atomic predicates’) are primitive in the sense that they are the undefined building blocks of lexical-semantic definitions.

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### **Comprehensibility**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

As an evaluative parameter, comprehensibility refers to the extent to which speakers/ writers assess aspects of the world (entities, situations, events, etc.) or propositions of which they speak/ write as within or outside the grasp of human understanding (Bednarek, 2006). As with expectedness, evaluations of events, actions, entities, etc. are situated on a scale from (more or less) comprehensible to incomprehensible. Comprehensibility encompasses the concepts of vagueness (more difficult to understand) and explicitness (more easy to understand).

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**Computational Linguistics**

Chaya Liebeskind, Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Computational linguistics is a multidisciplinary field tat integrates concepts from linguistics and computer science to create computational models and algorithms for comprehending, manipulating, and generating human language. Natural language processing encompasses the utilisation of computational techniques to examine, represent, and imitate different facets of language, such as syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse. Computational linguistics is essential for enhancing our comprehension of language and developing useful applications related to human-computer interaction, language translation, information retrieval, and other domains. Professionals in this field frequently work together with specialists in linguistics, computer science, cognitive science, and related fields to tackle the intricate difficulties linked to the understanding and processing of natural language by machines.

Computational linguistics not only facilitates the development of practical applications but also improves our comprehension of language by tackling the numerous challenges and complexities inherent in the field of natural language processing. The difficulties encompass resolving ambiguity, managing linguistic variations and dialects, ensuring interpretation is context-sensitive, and incorporating domain-specific expertise into language processing systems. In addition, computational linguistics undergoes constant development to accommodate the ever-changing characteristics of language. This is achieved by integrating knowledge from cognitive science, corpus linguistics, and machine learning into language processing algorithms to improve their efficacy and flexibility. In light of the increasing need for intelligent language technologies, computational linguistics continues to be a leading area of study and advancement, influencing the development of artificial intelligence and enabling more intricate dialogues between humans and machines.

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**Confirmation Bias**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

The tendency to interpret new evidence as confirmation of one's existing beliefs or opinions.

References

**Conjecture**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

An opinion or conclusion formed on the basis of incomplete information.

References

**Constructivist Theory see Social constructivism**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

References

**Context**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Context refers to the circumstances, background, or environment in which something exists or occurs. It provides additional information and helps to understand the meaning, relevance, or interpretation of a particular situation, event, or statement. The analysis of context forms part of most Critical Discourse Analysis and Pragmatic approaches. Van Dijk makes a distinction between *local contexts* which are ‘properties of the immediate interactional situation in which a communicative event takes place’ and *global contexts* which are ‘defined by the social, political, cultural and historical structures in which a communicative event takes place’. Wodak identifies four levels of context that are used in the Discourse-Historical approach: 1. the immediate, language or text internal co-text; 2. the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses; 3. the extralinguistic social/sociological variables and institutional frames of a specific “context of situation” (middle-range theories); 4. the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to (grand theories).

In Pragmatics, the *context* of an utterance is often thought of as everything that is available to be brought to bear on the utterance’s interpretation, except the form and content of the phrase or sentence uttered (and any conventional meaning attached to gestures used). The context must also include facts about the speaker’s and hearer’s beliefs, opinions, habits etc. This can be seen clearly in the recovery of implicatures, although it applies elsewhere too.

Referring to Sperber and Wilson’s relevance-theoretic approach to pragmatics, "context" refers to the cognitive environment in which communication takes place. It encompasses the shared knowledge, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations between the speaker and the hearer that are relevant to interpreting the meaning of an utterance.

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**Contextual Embedding/Transformers**

Chaya Liebeskind, Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Contextual embeddings, as opposed to context-free embeddings, consider the positioning of a word within a specific sentence or document. Transformers, a type of deep learning model, emerged as powerful tools in the creation of contextual embeddings. By employing the attention mechanism, transformers enable the model to assess the significance of distinct terms within a given sequence, thereby capturing complex contextual information. The ability to comprehend context allows transformers, including BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) (Devlin et al., 2018) and GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) , to generate representations of words that are more comprehensive and subtle, taking into account their diverse meanings in various contexts. For example, the same sentence: "The king smiled proudly." A transformer would examine not only the co-occurrence of words, but also their order and relationships within the sentence. It could be inferred that "smiled proudly" modifies "king," implying a positive, triumphant smile, putting "king" in a different vector location than when used in a different context, such as "The king ruled with an iron fist." Transformers have made substantial strides in the field of natural language processing (NLP) by enabling models to comprehend intricate linguistic connections and interdependencies. As a result, they have proven to be exceptionally efficient in a vast array of applications, including question answering and text summarization.

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**Controversy**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A topic or opinion that elicits strong disagreement or opposing views.

References

**Cooperative Principle**

Ardita Dylgjeri

In social science generally, and linguistics specifically, the term “cooperative principle” describes how people achieve effective conversational communication in common social situations - that is, how listeners and speakers act cooperatively and mutually accept one another to be understood in a particular way. This means that speakers should say things that are relevant to the topic of conversation, that are informative and not redundant, that are true and not misleading, and that are clear and easy to understand. Listeners, in turn, should try to understand what the speaker is saying and to respond in a way that is relevant and informative.

In linguistics and communication theory, “cooperative principle” is used to describe the idea that speakers and listeners in a conversation cooperate to make their communication effective. It has been used to explain a wide range of phenomena, including the use of politeness strategies, the interpretation of indirect speech acts, and the development of conversational norms. The philosopher of language [Paul Grice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Grice) introduced the concept of “cooperative principle” in his [pragmatic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics) theory. The principle is based on the assumption that participants in a conversation cooperate with each other and usually attempt to be truthful, informative, relevant, and clear in order to facilitate successful communication. The cooperative principle is supported by four Conversational Maxims developed by Grice to explain how people conduct conversations. The Maxim of Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner, are not etiquette guidelines (see Politeness theory) but can be best thought of as expectations that people have about how conversations will normally be carried out. The maxims can be flouted for various reasons. Speakers might secretly violate them to mislead, opt out of them or be faced with a clash of maxims.

Mey, introducing an inclusive term 'Communicative Principle' that basically comprises both the Cooperative Principle and the Principle of Relevance, argues that the maxims cannot be universally applied as different cultures may have different principles about how cooperation should be achieved.

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**Cotext**

Erika Lombart

The term 'cotext' is not listed in the *Oxford Dictionary*, but its meaning is included in the second definition of 'context' (cf. *context*): (1) 'the situation in which something happens and that helps you to understand it' and (2) 'the words that come just before and after a word, phrase or statement and help you to understand its meaning'. Although there is no consensus on its definition, cotext refers to the linguistic part of the context that plays an essential role in interpreting statements. The field of linguistics known as pragmatics studies the interaction between language and the context in which it is used.

According to Dispy (2011), there are two types of cotext. The strict cotext consists of the other elements of the proposition and is used to resolve syntactic ambiguities. Collocations, which refer to the frequent use of two or more words together, are studied within this field. The interphrasal cotext comprises the other utterances produced in the conversation and plays a crucial role in interpreting intentions (Col, 1977). Understanding intentions is the cornerstone of interpreting any utterance, as Grice (1989) points out.References

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## **Critical Discourse Analysis**

Anna Bączkowska

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an already well-established transdisciplinary, heterogenous, discourse-analytical approach to discourse which views language in terms of social practice. It combines research conducted in linguistics, social sciences and political and media sciences. The goal of CDA is to seek, raise awareness and de/legitimise social issues of discrimination, patterns of dominance, power imbalance or ideology with the view to improve social injustice by analysing language used in opinionated, persuasive and manipulative texts, primarily in the media. Media discourse, on the one hand, reflects the social structures, political situations and institutions and, on the other, invokes changes in this sphere. The language thus reflects social reality, but at the same time, it moulds it and can impose patterns of power and dominance. While uncovering social issues, CDA is not confined to language, as it also explores semiotic symbols and multimodal resources (visual and auditory elements). There are several CDA schools, which rely on distinct theoretical frameworks and resort to various methodologies. Within the main approaches, there are also: Discourse-Historical Approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2001), socio-cognitive (van Dijk 2008), cognitive science (Chilton, 2004) or the dialectical-relational approach (Fairclough 1989), van Leeuwen (1996). Van Leeuwen (1996) proposed a schema of various the so-called social actors, which situate subjects in the social-political-economic reality and label them according to the role they play in society, e.g., genericisation, functionalisation, nomination, predication (the last two are also elaborated by Reisigl and Wodak, 2001), etc.

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**Culture**

Erika Lombart

The Oxford Dictionary defines 'Culture' as the customs, beliefs, art, way of life, and social organization of a particular country or group. This definition is similar to that of Edward Tylor, one of the founding fathers of anthropology, who defined culture as follows: Culture or Civilization, in its broad ethnographic sense, is the comprehensive whole that encompasses knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society (Tylor, 1958: 1).

In linguistics, the concept of culture is mainly studied in sociolinguistics, a branch of linguistics created by Labov in the 1960s-1970s, which is defined as 'the study of how language is affected by differences in social class, region, sex, etc.' (Oxford Dictionary). This subfield of linguistics examines the impact of social class, ethnicity, gender, and age on language use.

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**Data/Dataset**

Chaya Liebeskind

Data encompasses individual pieces of information, such as factual details and numerical values, which are gathered, analysed, and interpreted to convey meaning or comprehension. It can be expressed in different formats, such as numbers, text, images, sounds, symbols, or any other measurable or descriptive value.

A dataset is a systematically compiled set of associated data that is generally acquired for a particular intent, such as research, machine learning model training, or analysis. By organising data elements in a predetermined format, such as matrices, tables, or records, dataset facilitates identification, interpretation, and investigation of patterns and connections with greater efficiency. Datasets frequently comprise supplementary information, known as metadata, which furnishes contextual details regarding the sources of the data, methods of collection, definitions of variables, and limitations on usage.

Datasets are crucial in multiple domains, since they form the basis for empirical investigations, algorithmic advancements, and decision-making procedures. They exist in various forms and quantities, ranging from modest, carefully selected collections to extensive reservoirs of information obtained from multiple sources. Aside from conventional organized datasets that conform to a predetermined schema, unstructured datasets including text documents, pictures, and multimedia files are becoming more widespread. The presence of extensive datasets, commonly known as "big data," offers both advantages and difficulties, as academics and professionals strive to derive significant observations while confronting concerns regarding data accuracy, privacy, and scalability. Furthermore, the continuous progress in data collection technologies, including sensors, IoT devices, and web scraping techniques, consistently broaden the range and complexity of accessible information, fostering innovation and influencing the field of data-driven decision-making.

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**Debate**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A formal discussion on a particular topic, where opposing arguments are presented.

References

### **Digital Media**

Alena Macková, Martina Novotna

Digital media refers to electronic devices and communication technologies that allow to consume, create, and share information and various types of content. Digital media are characterized by digital transfer of information by technology. Digital information fundamentally differs from analogue information due to its discontinuous nature, which is based on two distinct states and is represented through binary code consisting of only two symbols, 0 and 1 (Feldman, 2003). We have a variety of examples of digital media such as social media (including social network sites and instant messaging apps), websites, blogs, podcasts and video content. The impact of digital media on social behaviour, political engagement, media consumption, and cultural practices has been extensively researched in the field of social science, aiming to comprehend the intricate relationship between technology, society, and culture, as well as the consequences of digital media for individuals and society as a whole.

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**Discourse (1)**

Agnieszka Hess

Discourse serves as both an area and a mechanism for the formation of diverse opinions. It is the entirety of messages in social circulation, thus both the area of communication in everyday life, i.e. colloquial discourse (e.g. conversations at the family table, phone conversations of friends), and the area of communication within institutions, i.e. various institutional discourses (e.g. a court hearing, a teacher’s council meeting), the areas of communication specific to certain ‘social worlds’ (e.g. literary evenings, business meetings, conversations of members of the punk subculture), as well as the area of mass media (e.g. daily newspaper or TV talk-show). Discourse encompasses broad areas and thematic fields that make up this overall phenomenon. There are different types of discourse. Public discourse contains all messages available to the public, incl. institutional discourse, discourse of specific “social worlds” or mass media discourse. Media discourse comprises media-mediated discourses (they are characterised by specific traits and communicative behaviour of message senders). Political discourse relates to politicians’ speeches in the framework of the roles they were assigned to within political institutions, and statements made by individuals of the power elite, if related to their political roles and functions. Elite discourse relates to the discourse of authorities in the so-called symbolic sphere (journalists, writers, scholars, civil servants, intellectuals, experts, business representatives and politicians – that are present in the media), to the cultural-normative control of public discourse.

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**Discourse (2)**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Discourse is generally defined as written or spoken communication or debate on a particular topic. As such, it [includes conversations, discussions, and dialogues where ideas are exchanged](https://bing.com/search?q=definition+of+discourse).

As a formal and orderly expression of thought, discourse refers to a connected series of utterances or writings on a particular subject or a conversation or discussion, especially one of a serious or intellectual nature, [that delves into a specific topic](https://bing.com/search?q=definition+of+discourse). [Additionally, it involves organizing knowledge, ideas, or experience based on language and its concrete contexts such as political discourse, media discourse, or environmental discourse](https://bing.com/search?q=definition+of+discourse).

In Discourse Analysis, Brown and Yule refer to discourse as any form of ‘language in use’ or naturally occurring language. Stubbs conceives discourse as ‘language above the sentence or above the clause’ and makes a distinction between discourse, which is interactive, and text, which is a non-interactive monologue. Some scholars have conceived of discourse as related to particular topics, such as environmental discourse or colonial discourse (which may occur in many different genres). Foucault defines discourse more ideologically as ‘practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak’. Burr expands on Foucault’s definition as a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events. Sunderland takes Foucault’s meaning a stage further by explicitly identifying and naming specific discourses such as ‘women beware women’ and ‘male sexual drive’.

Potter and Wetherell have shown that people often appear to voice conflicting opinions around a topic, which they argue is due to them accessing a range of competing discourses in their talk. Discourses are therefore contradictory and shifting, and their identification is necessarily interpretative and open to contestation, particularly as it is difficult to ‘step outside’ discourse and view it with complete objectivity.

In Pragmatics ‘Discourse’ can be defined as a series of connected utterances, producing either a written text or a spoken exchange. Although on some conceptions it is more global, and also includes other texts in the same genre as the one being studied, previous conversations etc.

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Disinformation

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Disinformation is deliberately false or misleading information created and spread to deceive or mislead. See **misinformation**

References

**Dissent**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

The expression of opinions or beliefs that are different from those commonly or officially held.

References

**Echo Chamber**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A situation in which information, ideas, or beliefs are reinforced by repetition within a closed system, leading to a lack of diversity in thought.

References

**Emotion**

Erika Lombart

The Oxford English Dictionary defines emotion as "a strong feeling such as love, fear or anger; the part of an individual's character that consists of feelings."

Various academic fields have approached the study of emotions differently. We will focus on philosophy and psychology. Traditionally, philosophers have focused on the subjective experience of emotions. We find that with the work of Aristotle, who states that emotions are all those things by which people change and evolve in their judgments and which are accompanied by pain (pity, fear, terror, etc.) and pleasure (desire, hope). According to Descartes, emotions are naturally good and they dispose the soul to desire the things for which they prepare the body." Psychologists have studied the physiological and behavioural components of emotions. William James defined emotion as the "consciousness by the subject of bodily modifications triggered by the apprehension of certain objects or facts." In other words, crying doesn't stem from sadness but rather generates it. Ekman posits that emotions are subjective experiences, physiologically-driven states and expressive behaviours that result from internal or external stimuli. Ekman's research has demonstrated that humans from all cultures express six fundamental emotions - joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust - in similar ways. Plutchik further developed this theory by identifying four primary emotions (fear, anger, joy and sadness), which then combine with cognitive mechanisms involving memory and reflection to create four secondary emotions. Plutchik's research is summarized by the "Plutchik Wheel of Emotion".



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**Emotional Function of Language**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Emotional function of language, also called expressive function, is the function that allows the speaker to communicate his/her inner realities, expressing feelings, desires, preferences or states of mind.

References

**Emotions in Political Opinions**

Gabriella Szabó

Emotions influence individuals' views on specific policies. For instance, feelings of empathy may lead to support for social welfare policies, while fear or distrust may drive opposition to certain policy proposals. Emotions can shape perceptions of fairness, justice, and morality, influencing policy attitudes. The fearful citizens, for example, perceived greater risks and foresaw a greater need for precautionary actions, while angry citizens saw fewer risks and less need for precautions. Anger leads citizens to call to mind more grievances and blame. Enthusiasm tends to generate greater confidence and support for risky policy options, but fear diminishes confidence and support for innovative policies. Fear also causes citizens to prefer protective and conciliatory policies, while anger causes them to prefer punitive policies. Similarly, anxiety increases, but anger decreases willingness to consider policy compromises. Scholars have also shown that emotions moderate the impact of message frames: anxiety attunes people to their environment, thus enhancing framing effects, while both enthusiasm and anger lessen attention to the environment, thereby tempering framing effects. Similar findings emerge for the effects of sadness and anger on policy judgments: sadness and anger, even when incidental (unrelated to policy or politics), trigger systematic or heuristic processing of information, respectively, which in turn cause divergent judgments about welfare assistance. Another study took a different tack, focusing on the strength of emotional responses rather than on distinctions among emotions, and found that stronger negative emotions were associated with heuristic processing and weaker emotions associated with systematic processing.

Political leaders and entities use emotions strategically in their communication to connect with voters. Emotional appeals can enhance persuasion and mobilization efforts. For example, political speeches, campaign advertisements, and debates frequently incorporate emotional language and storytelling to resonate with the public.

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**Emotion Display Norms**

Gabriella Szabó

Emotion display norms refer to the socially accepted and expected ways in which individuals express and manage their emotions in a given culture or society. These norms dictate how people should outwardly display their feelings, whether it be happiness, sadness, anger, or other emotions, in various social situations. The regulation is usually internalized by the individuals and people act accordingly.

Cultural, societal, and situational factors influence emotion expressions. Different cultures may have distinct expectations regarding the appropriateness and intensity of emotional expressions. For example, some cultures may encourage open displays of emotion, while others may emphasize restraint and a more subdued expression of feelings.

Additionally, emotion display norms can vary depending on the context or setting. What is considered acceptable behavior in a formal situation (i.e. workplaces, streets, public events) might differ significantly from what is acceptable among friends or family members.

Gender and related stereotypes can also influence emotion display norms. Societal expectations regarding how men and women should express emotions may impact how the speakers’ messages are perceived. Females, for example, may face challenges related to stereotypes about displaying emotion, with a fine line between being seen as empathic or authentic and being labeled as overly emotional. Males may be easily labeled weak or unprofessional when manifesting feelings and using emotive phrases. Understanding and adhering to emotion display norms is crucial for effective social interaction and communication, as deviations from these norms may be perceived as inappropriate or disruptive in a given cultural or social context.

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**Emotion Display Norms in Politics**

Gabriella Szabó

In politics, emotion display norms play a significant role in shaping public perceptions, political discourse, and the overall effectiveness of political communication.

Emotion display norms, in politics specifically, can vary across political communities. What is considered an appropriate emotional expression in a progressive political camp may not be viewed the same way in conservative circles. Politicians need to be aware of and navigate these differences to connect with diverse voting groups. There is often a delicate balance between displaying genuine emotions and the perception of authenticity. Politicians usually carefully manage their emotional expressions to connect with voters, but there is a risk of being perceived as insincere if the emotions seem forced or contrived. Politicians often engage in public speaking and debates where emotional expressions can influence the audience’s immediate reactions. Effective communication may involve using emotions strategically to connect with voters, convey passion, and underscore key messages. During crises or challenging situations, emotional display norms become particularly important. Political leaders are often expected to demonstrate sadness, empathy and gratitude, but excessive emotional expression may be perceived as a lack of (self) control. Striking the right balance is crucial in maintaining public trust. Over time, emotional display norms in politics may evolve in response to broader societal changes. Public expectations of authenticity and emotional expression may shift, influencing how politicians communicate with the electorate. Understanding and navigating emotional display norms in politics is a complex task, and politicians often work with communication experts to develop strategies that align with public expectations while conveying their intended messages.

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### **Emotivity**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

Emotivity refers to evaluations of aspects of the world (including propositions) as good (positive) or bad (negative) by speakers/ writers in the language they use. Emotivity is concerned with linguistic expressions of approval (good) or disapproval (bad) of what they talk/ write about (Bendarek, 2006). According to the Appraisal Theory, emotional reactions of speakers/ writers and emotional descriptions can trigger positive/ negative evaluations, i.e. emotivity (Martin & White, 2005).

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**Epistemic Community**

Artur Lipiński

There are two approaches to the understanding of the concept. According to the first one, it might be understood as interpretive community sharing cultural texts, codes, interpretations and belief. In the constructivist perspective they contribute to the construction, reproduction and legitimization of particular interpretation of specific ontological domain or aspect social reality. These operations result in the naturalization of norms, beliefs and ideas shared in the community.

The second approach, developed by the soft constructivist scholars in the International Relations field to emphasize the role of agency in the development and circulation of new ideas in the public sphere which might affect the policy-formation processes, particularly in the context of growing complexity and ensuing uncertainty of the current social and political context. According to P. M. Haas, epistemic communities are networks of experts with the authoritative claim to policy relevant knowledge within their domain of expertise. These groups of professionals share a few characteristics:

1. values or principled beliefs which provide a rationale for social action by the members of the community

2. causal beliefs or professional judgement informing about possible relationship between various policy decisions and their potential outcomes

3. Common notions of validity: Intersubjective, internally defined criteria for validating knowledge.

4. A common policy enterprise: A set of practices associated with a central set of problems.

Epistemic communities are considered as important actors responsible for the development and circulation of causal ideas and normative beliefs among the policy makers and public opinion.

The combination of the first and second line of understanding the concept is well represented in the scholarship on social media as the digital technology opens the space for the construction of communities sharing common interests, learning from and with each other what subsequently affects their practices.

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**Epistemic/Truth**

Marc Jungblut

Opinions can be differentiated based on a variety of qualities, with one aspect being their epistemic quality. The epistemic quality refers to the certainty with which a person believes that a statement about the past, present, or a potential future is true. The epistemic status of opinions thus distinguishes what people belief to be facts from what they see as speculations.

A central point of departure for research on the epistemic quality of opinions is the philosophical tradition of epistemology. This field is concerned with theorizing whether and how individuals can access reality to construct knowledge and beliefs. Scholars working on epistemology can be placed on a continuum between extreme skepticism (e.g., constructivism), which basically assumes that we do not have any access to reality, and everyday realism that is certain about our access to the factual world.

One focus of empirical research on the epistemic quality of statements revolves around their potential impact on recipients. In this context, prospect theory has provided valuable insights into the behavioral consequences of diverse epistemic outlooks on potential loss and gain. It highlights that individuals tend to prefer a certain outcome with a lower expected gain over a risky choice with a higher expected gain.

Research on the epistemic quality of public discourse is focused on what has been termed an 'epistemic crisis' in democratic debate. This is grounded in the observation that the traditional linear knowledge-order process, where journalism served as the primary intermediary between elites and audiences, has changed into a more dynamic process, in which elites can directly engage with the audience. Combined with substantial changes in the political and societal environment, this has led to what is often referred to as a 'post-truth society', where the epistemic status of statements is more contested than ever before.

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**Evaluation**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Evaluation is a judgement about a thing, person, property, event, with reference to amount, number, looks, behaviour, value, morality, etc.

References

## **Evaluative Language**

Anna Bączkowska

Evaluative language expresses the speaker’s personal, evaluative opinions (viewpoint or feelings) on an entity, e.g., some objects, events, behaviour, people, etc. in terms of being good or bad, by ascribing some value to the entity described. There are two more functions of evaluative language: constructing relations between the sender and the receiver and organising discourse (Thompson and Hunston, 2000, p. 6). The former are realised, for example, by means of manipulation, hedging and politeness. The three necessary conditions for evaluative language comprise presence of the object of description in a sentence, value-laden words (emotivity) and subjectivity (Thompson and Hunston, 2000, p. 21-22). Two approaches to evaluative language can be distinguished: attitudinal (encoded by adjectives, morphological affixes, words and phrases) and modality-oriented (grammaticalised, encoding likelihood). According to Bednarek (2008), evaluative language comprises, inter alia, such categories of description as: comprehensibility (*clear*, *complicated*), expectedness (*surprisingly*, *obviously*), emotivity (*anger*, *praise*), importance (*crucial*, *insignificant*), im/possibility (*could*), necessity (*must*), and reliability (*fake*, *genuine*), evidentiality (*proof that*, *he said it was*). Evaluative language is also elaborated by the Appraisal Theory, which was one of the sources from which Bednarek’s evaluative language evolved. The term evaluative language is sometimes used interchangeably with the term stance, which is, however, more often applied to corpus-informed studies revolving around lexico-grammatical structures that encode evaluation. Two most common structures have been identified to signal stance: adverbials and complement clause constructions.

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**Evidence**

Marc Jungblut

Evidence describes one out of a range of potential foundations of an opinion. More specifically, evidence refers to the available facts that indicate whether a belief or statement is valid, true or credible. As such, opinions founded in evidence can be understood as statements about social reality that are backed up by some form of evidential reference. These references can be differentiated in diverse types, including empirical evidence, statistical evidence, anecdotal evidence, and testimonial evidence. As such, sources can be understood as a specific type of evidence (see: **sourcing**)

In general, research on the effects of evidence-based communication suggests that evidence-based statements tend to have stronger persuasive effects compared to evidence-free information since they are perceived as more credible. Moreover, the credibility and persuasiveness of evidence-based opinions also depend on both the characteristics of the associated type of evidence and individual predispositions towards the provided information and the specific type of evidence.

Content analytical research focuses on how different actors in public discourse apply evidence in their communication to convince the public or more specific societal subgroups (i.e. journalists) of their grievances. Scholars have conceptualized the public sphere as a competitive evidence environment in which a variety of societal actors or groups compete over epistemic authority.

Lately, there is a growing concern about the so-called post factual age in which manufactured, false or manipulated forms of evidence are used to back up misinformation. These “alternative facts” are provided to construct an alternative version of reality that can oftentimes hardly be supported by existing conventional evidence.

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### **Evidentiality**

### Artur Lipiński

Evidentiality as epistemological basis for making speech acts should be distinguished from evidentials - markers of evidentiality. The function of evidentials is to provide information about source of evidence and they potentially modify force of the sentence. At the most general level, there are two approaches in the reflection on this category. According to the first one, evidentials express the evidence one has in order to make factual claims (Bednarek, 2006). They might be denoted, for example, by the references to the sources of knowledge, verbs or other phrases expressing the transmission of knowledge (mental-state verbs, verbs of perception etc.). Aikhenvald (2004) distinguished the following semantic dimensions of evidentiality. The visual covers information acquired through seeing. The non-visual or sensory dimension covers information acquired through hearing, and is typically extended to smell and taste, and sometimes also to touch. Inference is based on visible and tangible evidence, or result. Assumption in turn is based on evidence other than visible results: this may include logical reasoning, assumption, or simply general knowledge. Hearsay is used for reported information with no reference to those it was reported by. Finally, the quotative dimension is reserved for reported information with an overt reference to the quoted source.

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### **Expectedness**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

Expectedness (obviousness) refers to how obvious or expected the information is to the hearer/ reader. The parameter of expectedness involves evaluations of some aspects of the world (including propositions) as (more or less) expected or unexpected. Expectedness can be used to evoke both positive and negative evaluations; in fact, linguistic expressions of expectedness can intensify such evaluations (Bednarek, 2006). Expectedness include evaluations of unexpectedness, expectedness, contrast and contrast/ comparison (negation).

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**Explicit/Explicitness**

Erika Lombart

The term "explicit" is defined by The Oxford English Dictionary as "clear and easy to understand, so that you have no doubt what is meant." This definition succinctly conveys the essential meaning of the word, emphasizing the clarity and precision of explicit language.

In academic writing, "explicit" is often employed in a technical sense. Grice (1975) defines the notion of what is said, which refers to information that is explicitly stated in a proposition. This is distinct from what is implied, which involves implicit information that is conveyed through context. Implicitness and explicitness are separate fields of research. Specifically, Carston (1998) posits that explicitness is a semantic matter, while implicitness deals with pragmatics. Sperber and Wilson (1995) build on this opposition and stress that explicitness can vary in degree. The authors argue that the greater role played by the linguistic code in interpreting an utterance results in increased explicitness.

An explicit utterance, such as *"The Earth revolves around the Sun"*, presents all the necessary information to enable understanding. By contrast, the implicit utterance *"It's getting chilly"* requires further contextual clues to be fully understood. This statement is implicit as it does not explicitly state that the speaker wants the listener to close the window for example. He needs to use the context of the conversation to deduce that the speaker is experiencing coldness.

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**Expressive language**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Expressive language refers to the way people show their wants, needs, feelings, convictions, judgments, and beliefs. It can refer to spoken, written, and body language, including facial expressions and sign language. These ways of expression can be used jointly.

References

**Face**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

The concept of ‘face’ was introduced by Erving Goffman and later developed by Brown and Levinson to refer to the positive public image an individual seeks to establish in a given social interaction. In linguistics, it is associated with the concepts of ‘face theory’, ‘politeness theory’, and especially with the approach of pragmatics. Face represents a person’s sense of self-esteem, dignity, and social value, which is a dynamic category. Face can be maintained, threatened, lost, or enhanced in a social interaction through different face-saving strategies. For instance, hedges, indirectness, and tag questions are used to reduce imposition and thus face-threatening behaviour. Face involves two related aspects: positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to the person’s need that their self-image is appreciated and approved of by interlocutors. Negative face refers to the person’s need not to be impeded or imposed by other interactants and the need to maintain their freedom of action.

In interaction, interactants need to cooperate to maintain the face of both the speaker and the hearer. To address this need, the Cooperative Principle was proposed by Paul Grice in his theory of conversation. It was criticised in later theories suggesting that cooperation is not necessary. Instead, it is proposed that coordination, perceived as some rational adjustments to the interlocutors’ needs and goals, is sufficient for successful communication (see also **Face-threatening act)**

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**Face-threatening act**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

Face threatening acts (FTAs) are a focus of politeness theory developed by Brown and Levinson. When speakers communicate with others in a crude or offensive way or impede their personal freedoms, they commit face-threatening acts. A face-threatening act is defined as an act that challenges or damages a person’s face wants.

Face-threatening acts may threaten either the speaker’s or the listener’s face, and either positive or negative face. When speakers admit and apologise for their own shortcomings, they commit face-threatening acts directed at themselves. When speakers criticise, disagree with the hearer, or impose on their freedom, they threaten the hearer’s face.

Acts that threaten the listener’s negative face include such acts as making a request or making a threat. Damage to the speaker’s negative face can be caused in interaction when the speaker is obliged to perform such acts as apologising, confessing a fault, or expressing gratitude. Acts that can harm the listener’s positive face include criticism, disapproval, complaints, accusations, disagreements, taboo topics, interruptions, insults, etc. FTAs threatening the speaker’s positive face include apologies, loss of emotional control, self-criticism, confession, etc.

Such face-work suggests that during social interaction cooperation is needed between interlocutors to maintain the face of both the speaker and of the listener(s).

Face-threatening acts can be verbal (the content of the message, word choices, and linguistic patterns used), paraverbal (the tone, pacing and volume of the speaker’s voice), or non-verbal (facial expressions or body language). See also **Face**.

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**Face-saving act**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

In communication, people are constantly involved in face-work, understood as the speakers’ attempts to have or maintain a certain image of themselves or other participants of the interaction. The aim of engaging in facework is to address potential incidents, or occurrences that pose a potential threat to one’s social image. To avoid harm for one’s face,face-saving acts are performed to mitigate the potential effect on one’s self-image or the hearer’s image. Different individuals, subcultures and societies have different means for face saving.

The repertoire of face-saving resources also depends on the type of face speakers aim to protect. To protect or appeal to someone’s positive face, speakers may resort to such strategies as exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with the hearer), being optimistic, intensifying interest to the hearer (exaggerating facts, telling stories in present tense), using in-group identity markers (e.g. in-group address forms), making offers and promises, complimenting the hearer, agreeing with the hearer’s point of view, or giving gifts.

Typical face-saving strategies used to protect one’s negative face include such negative politeness strategies as hedging and indirectness, using nominalisations, minimising or avoiding imposition on the hearer, apologising, and being pessimistic. See also **Face threatening act.**

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**Fact**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A thing that is known or proved to be true. Also, information used as evidence or as part of a report or news article (*media fact*). In LAW the truth about events as opposed to interpretation <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>

References

**Fake news**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Fake news or information disorder is false or misleading information presented as news. Fake news often has the aim of damaging the reputation of a person, [influenc](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/influence)ing [political](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/political) [views](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/view) or, in some cases, it is used as a [joke](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/joke).

References

**Foundedness**

Marc Jungblut

Opinions can be differentiated on the basis of a variety of qualities which describe how they are embedded or justified by the opinion holders. While there is no existing umbrella term for these qualities, we refer to them as the ‘foundedness’ of an opinion. The foundedness of an opinion describes why people believe something to be true and how certain they are that something is true. Common types of foundedness are the epistemological status of an opinion, the affective status of an opinion, sources that support an opinion or provided evidence in support of an opinion.

The concept of foundedness of opinions is crucial for researching opinion discourses, as it aims to analyze how individuals justify their positions and attempt to persuade others. Research, for instance, is interested in unraveling how communicators use evidence to support their claims.

Similarly, the concept of foundedness of opinions is also of interest in research on the effects of opinionated statements, as it strives to uncover how statements with different types of foundedness vary in their impact. For instance, understanding how information backed up by evidence differs in its impact from information without evidence.

References

**Frames**

Şule Yüksel Özmen

Frames are defined as the sum of sentences and actions that are deemed appropriate to be put together under certain conditions. Frames lead, on the one hand, to the interpretation of processes and objects in a situation on a certain basis, and, on the other hand, to the development of species-specific thoughts and actions towards the perceived elements. This perspective focuses on the function of framing in the individual domain, the interpretation of the world in the cognitive process and the processing of information. Information processing is guided by schema; new information is organized on the basis of prior knowledge and aligned with the individual cognitive template.

Goffman uses the concept of framing to explain human behavior in daily life. Goffman thinks that people need to organize events and life experiences in a meaningful way in order to comprehend the truth. In complex situations, people need to find a valid frame among many frames in order to make the appropriate decision. The frame is made up of collective communicative processes, constituting the social framework and at the same time revealing the meaning of the situation.

"Media Framing Approach" has been developed to explain the process of information production, change, reception and impact. This is a frame of interpretation and structures that facilitate the selection and processing of information in the minds of journalists. It influences journalists' choice of events to cover, and the nature of the events determines the interpretation scheme to be used. Framing is how a phenomenon is conceived as an event, which angle of the event is chosen for information production, in which thematic context it is handled and how its news value is determined. Media framing is the deliberate, conscious or unconscious emphasis on a certain part of reality and the prioritization of certain decisions and evaluations by ignoring certain parts.

Media framing also refers to the subjective processing of media content by the receiver. By framing a topic on a certain basis, the media can activate a certain schema in the receiver (Activation Effect), change it in the direction of the media's framing (Transformation Effect), and create a certain schema (Structuring Effect) or influence the design and ideas of the receiver (Thought Formation Effect).

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**Framing**

Ledia Kazazi

Erving Goffman, in his 1974 book *Frame Analysis*, understood the idea of the frame to mean the culturally determined definitions of reality that allow people to make sense of objects and events.

From a journalistic perspective framing usually refers to the ways in which stories are selected, presented and organised in order to emphasise a certain perspective on events over others. It is a subjective presentation of an event in which some aspects are made more accessible, visible and salient to audiences.

In linguistics, the concept of a frame, as defined by Fillmore, refers to a cognitive structure or mental framework that organises and structures our understanding of the world. Frames provide a set of expectations, associations and interpretative schemas that guide our perception, interpretation, and processing of incoming information. They are activated during language comprehension facilitating the interpretation of linguistic expressions within relevant conceptual domains. Each frame consists of a network of interconnected concepts, roles, and scenarios that are associated with a particular concept or situation. Frames play a crucial role in shaping our understanding of language, enabling us to comprehend ambiguous or unspecified linguistic expressions by drawing on relevant conceptual knowledge.

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### **Framing Theory**

Anna Bączkowska

Frames are cognitive structures that provide guidance in organization and perception of reality (Entman, 1993). This theoretical framework efficiently reduces the cognitive effort to process all incoming news and helps organize information by simplifying its complexity through inclusion/exclusion processes based on relevance and by emphasising select aspects of the news. This allows the audience to make sense of otherwise overwhelming amount of data and imposes salience on select information. By highlighting specific bits of news, attention is drawn to some aspects while others are left unnoticed. As a result, the perception and evaluation of information is implied to the audience. Problem definitions are promoted, causes are suggested, moral evaluation is hinted and solutions are recommended (Entman, 1993).

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**Functionalization**

### Anna Bączkowska

Functionalization is one of the social actors proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) and it involves social actors who are referred to in terms of activities (what they do), e.g., their professional occupation or social role. Typical suffixes which mark functionalisation involve: -er, -ant, -ent, -ian, -ee, -ist (*caregiver*, *interviewee*, *correspondent*, *guardian*, *payee*, *pianist*). Other forms entail, for example, salient details (*blond*, *redhead*), and classifiers (*woman doctor*, *Asian doctor*).

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**Genericization**

Anna Bączkowska

Genericization is one of the social actors proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) and it consist in representing social actors as classes, wherein individuals are presented as “specimens” of the classes. Representing social actors from this perspective is more typical of middle-class-oriented papers for the presentation of “ordinary people”. It may be encoded by singular with in/definite article or plural without article. Moreover, it can be contrasted with specification, wherein social actors are presented as individuals, concrete people, places, things. This perspective is more typical of working-class-oriented newspapers for the presentation of “ordinary people”.

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**Hate Speech (1)**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Hate speech is any form of communication that disparages a person or a group on the basis of some characteristic such as race, colour, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, or other characteristic (such as language, economic or social origin, disability, health status, or sexual orientation), among many others.

Hate speech can take many forms, including spoken, written, or symbolic expressions. It is typically intended to intimidate, dehumanize, injure, harass, debase, degrade, marginalize and victimise the targeted individuals or groups to foment insensitivity and brutality against them. Hate speech definitely contributes to creating a hostile or discriminatory environment.

Brown’s (2017b) mentions, and critically scrutinises, a number of common claims (or “folk platitudes”) about this term. The term “hate speech” is often thought (a) to imply a negative judgement about the speech in question; (b) to pick out speech that is, or is liable to be, legally regulated; (c) that targets particular social groups; and (d) that is liable to harm these groups. Finally, though Brown ultimately rejects this claim, “hate speech” is commonly said (e) to be connected, in some necessary way, to feelings or attitudes of hatred.

Brown`s ordinary language analysis approach to the meaning of the term hate speech demonstrates that in non-technical, everyday language, the term does not have a single meaning but, instead, a family of meanings, each slightly different from another but sharing at least one essential element in common.

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**Hate speech (2)**

Ana Milojevic

Hate speech calls out real or perceived “identity factors” of an individual or a group, including: “religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender,” but also characteristics such as language, economic or social origin, disability, health status, or sexual orientation, among many others.

Hate speech is aimed to injure, dehumanize, harass, intimidate, debase, degrade, and victimize the targeted groups and to foment insensitivity and brutality against them. as such, hate speech is what carries no meaning other than hatred to-wards a particular minority, typically a historically disadvantaged minority”.

Wittgenstein laid the groundwork for ordinary language analysis: he advocated that, in solving philosophical problems, understanding how language is used in context is more important than its abstract meaning. In “What is hate speech? Part 2: Family resemblances”, Brown (2017b) applies ordinary language analysis to describe how the term hate speech is used in non-technical, everyday language. He divides his analysis into four parts: (1) purpose-oriented analysis, (2) folk platitudes analysis, (3) intuitions analysis and (4) everyday use analysis. Brown mentions, and critically scrutinizes, a number of common claims (or “folk platitudes”) about this term. The term “hate speech” is often thought (a) to imply a negative judgment about the speech in question; (b) to pick out speech that is, or is liable to be, legally regulated; (c) that targets particular social groups; and (d) that is liable to harm these groups. Finally, though Brown ultimately rejects this claim, “hate speech” is commonly said (e) to be connected, in some necessary way, to feelings or attitudes of hatred.

Parekh proposed a definition of hate speech based on three essential elements: (1) it singles out an individual or a group based on legally-protected characteristics, (2) it stigmatizes the target group and (3) it marginalizes the target group. Parekh’s definition focused on the discriminatory content hate messages convey, as it stigmatizes, dehumanizes and demonizes the members of the target group with the intent of placing them outside of public life.

Moran defined hate speech as “speech that is intended to promote hatred against traditionally disadvantaged groups” (Moran 1994:1430). Moran’s definition introduced a new element: the perpetrator’s malicious intent to “promote hatred”, and it also broadened the scope of possible target groups because the wrong action is not exclusively directed against racial groups. Ward, for his part, claimed that the legal restraint of hate speech is a means to strengthen the individual’s right to freedom of opinion and expression. He defined hate speech as “any form of expression through which speakers intend to vilify, humiliate, or incite hatred against their targets” (Ward 1997: 765).

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**Hedging**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Hedging is a common linguistic phenomenon present in both written and spoken speech. It is a communicative strategy that results in the weakening of the illocutionary force of the statement that otherwise makes it sound rude, impolite or straightforward.

The term *hedge* was introduced by G. Lakoff, characterizing hedges as words or expressions which are used to “make things fuzzier or less fuzzy” and claiming that they are used to attenuate the meaning of an expression (*sort of, a little bit*), or, on the contrary, to reinforce its certain characteristics *(very, really, extremely)*.

Brown and Levinson analyze the notion of hedges from the point of view of politeness (*Speech Act Hedging),* confirming that hedges are capable of softening and reinforcing an expression. They first introduce the term “face threatening acts” and develop strategies of positive politeness, i.e. strategies that are intended to avoid giving criticism by highlighting friendliness and solidarity.

Wright and Hosman singled out the difference between *intensifiers* and *hedges*. According to them, if hedges are capable of reducing the force of a statement, intensifiers, on the contrary, tend to increase it. This idea contradicts Lakoff’s perception of hedges, but today the notions of hedges and intensifiers are studied separately.

Hübler, studying differences between *hedges* and *understatement,* concludes that *understatement* deals with the propositional content of the sentence, whereas *hedging* focuses on the speaker’s attitude to the situation.

Caffi, analyzing the process of *mitigation* – lessening the intensity or force of something unpleasant or attenuation of unfortunate effects on the hearer and introduces his own division of mitigating mechanisms (*bushes, hedges and shields).*

Since the 1980s linguists (Aijmer, Kay, Fetzer) have been much interested in the properties of individual hedges and begun to explore the use of hedges within different areas and genres such as political talk, scientific discourse, courtroom discourse, medical discourse, etc. Nowadays it is commonly agreed that the use of hedges largely depends on the genre.

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**Identity**

Gal Harpaz

Identity provides a sense of continuity within the self and in interaction with others (*self-sameness*), as well as a frame to differentiate between self and others (*uniqueness*) which allows the individual to function autonomously from others ([Erikson, 1968](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4879949/#b13-ccap25_p0097)). A latest definition by the American Psychological Association (2018) is an individual's sense of self defined by (a) a set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (b) a range of affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles. Tajfel and colleagues (1979) refered to the distinction between personal and social identity, which together make up the complete identity of the individual (Tajfel et. al.,, 1979). Identity involves a sense of continuity, or the feeling that one is the same person today that one was yesterday or last year (despite physical or other changes). Such a sense is derived from one’s body sensations; one’s body image; and the feeling that one’s memories, goals, values, expectations, and beliefs belong to the self (APA, 2018). Personal and social identity plays a role in shaping and expressing opinions.

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**Ideology**

Ledia Kazazi

Ideologies are defined as a ‘system of ideas’ which are socio-cognitively shared among social groups. As such, they organise the group’s identity, actions, values, aims and also the relations to other groups. Ideologies are expressed and reproduced in the social practices of their members and acquired through discourse. Their cognitive function is to provide coherence to the beliefs of a group and thus facilitate their acquisition and use in a variety of contexts and also specify the cultural values (equality, freedom etc) that define the group. Whenever group members motivate or legitimate their actions they do so in terms of ideological discourse. Ideology also works as a basis for the strategic production of content by language users. In the context of discourse, ideology might be considered as a framing device of values influencing how social reality is represented, interpreted, and understood by individuals and groups. Language plays a crucial role in the production and reproduction of ideological structures. Through discourse ideological messages are conveyed, reinforced, and naturalized, shaping people’s perceptions, identities, and social interactions. Ideology operates not only through explicit statements but also through implicit meanings, presuppositions, and discursive strategies embedded within language use.

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**Ideologization**

Carlos Cuhna

From a linguistic perspective, ideologization focuses on the way language is used to endorse or support ideological systems by the dominant power group as well as by those contesting the system. It can also affect individual and group identities by emphasizing linguistic customs. Language Policies and Practices may be launched by officials to push certain languages rather than others. Discourse analysis can show how ideologies can be encoded and diffused via language. Critical Discourse Studies also focus on the way language impacts social inequalities and how ideologization functions in discourse so dominance can be combatted.

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**Implicit (1)**

Anna Bączkowska

Implicit language is non-literal, usually based on presupposition and/or implicature, and is cancellable. By cancellability we mean the option of withdrawing from what the speaker has said without negative consequences. The fact that one can deny what s/he said is particularly important in offensive language, and especially in the case of irony. In order to avoid being judged for criticising and/or ridiculing the receiver in case the latter reacts stronger to the offensive language that expected, the speaker can renounce his/her negative intentions as the way s/he expressed thoughts were not straightforward and left some room for doubt whether the speaker actually meant what s/he said or not. Traditionally, implicitness encompasses figurative language, such as: metaphors, similes, understatements, overstatements, irony. They stem from Grice’s (1989) typology of implicitness that comprises: irony, metaphor, hyperbole and meiosis. Sometimes non-figurative language which however is not fully literal, such as rhetorical questions are also included in implicitness, in particular examples of the Searlian indirect speech act (such as *Can you pass me the salt* wherein a question is in fact a request).

References

**Implicit/Implicitness (2)**

Erika Lombart

*The Oxford Dictionary* provides three definitions of the term 'implicit': (1) 'suggested without being directly expressed', (2) 'forming part of something (although perhaps not directly expressed)', and (3) 'complete and not doubted'. While the first two definitions are similar, the third differs from them.

In linguistics, two types of implicit are distinguished (Grice, 1975). (1) Presuppositions are a type of directly anchored implicature, which is a conventional form of implicature that is triggered by the presence of indicators in a proposition. They are ubiquitous and heterogeneous, as they relate to both relations and references. Presuppositions can be found in syntax and lexicon, as well as in the register of language. For communication to continue, all interlocutors must agree with the presuppositions. (2) Understatements are indirectly anchored implicit statements. They are content that is added to part or all of the utterance, but none of its propositional content shows clues of implicitness. Therefore, they can only be interpreted once the proposition has been stated and put into context. Inference may be possible, but it is not obligatory. This means that the implied meaning does not necessarily have to be accepted as true by everyone. Understatements are indirect speech acts, in which one speech act is performed indirectly through another (Searle, 1975). Certain figures of classical rhetoric, such as irony, and illocutionary tropes, such as the question for the sake of order, are part of implicitness.

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**Implicit Bias**

Gal Harpaz

Implicit bias is a form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally, that nevertheless affects judgments, decisions, and behaviors. Research has shown implicit bias can pose a barrier to recruiting and retaining diverse workers at workforce, to interpersonal relationships, effect discriminatory behavior in education systems, healthcare, police work and more (Hardin & Banaji, 2013 ; Nelson & Zippel, 2021). A significant part of the research dealing with implicit biases concerns ways to avoid these biases. In the case of implicit biases, the matter is even more challenging because people are often not aware that they hold these biases (Onyeador, Hudson & Lewis, 2022).

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**Impoliteness**

Jūratė Ruzaitė,

Opinions can be expressed in polite and impolite ways. The latter are best viewed from the perspective of impoliteness theory. With regard to impoliteness, an important shift occurred in the mid-1990s and later, when, instead of being viewed as a politeness failure, it began to be regarded as a strategic and deliberate use of impolite forms. In this framework, impoliteness is defined as the use of conventionalised impoliteness formulae that are typically employed to cause social disruption instead of promoting social harmony.

Impoliteness includes interactive strategies aimed at attacking face, and those deliberately leading to conflictive communication. Due to its direct relation to conflict, language aggression, and intentionally disruptive behaviour, impoliteness is related to hate speech and can serve as a useful category in hate speech identification.

In theory of impoliteness, the following types of conventional impoliteness formulae are distinguished: insults (personalised negative vocatives, personalised negative assertions, personalised negative references, and personalised third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target)), challenging or unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions, condescensions, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers, threats, and negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes).

The roots of impoliteness theories can be traced back to the theories of politeness. Politeness theorists assumed that impoliteness is a result of a failure to be polite (rather than a consequence of intentional measures) and that politeness is universal (that is unified across cultures and languages). Politeness assumed an ideal interlocutor; thus, culture- and community-specific norms were ignored. As a reaction to this approach to politeness, a group of scholars dealing with impolite verbal behaviour launched a new approach, a discursive analysis of impoliteness, which assumes (1) that impoliteness may be intentional or non-intentional, (2) that it is community-specific and guided by social norms, (3) it is based on internal perspectives of the interlocutors (rather than filtered through the researcher’s/observer’s perspective), i.e., the interlocutors decide themselves, through a “discursive struggle”, what is and what is not impolite in a situated discourse they participate in, and thus (3) impoliteness is negotiable. The internal perspective (dubbed impoliteness1) is equally important as the external, researcher’s perspective (impoliteness2). A series of impoliteness strategies were proposed by Culpeper (1996, 2011), and criticised by Bousfield (2008), which are spanned by two main groups: positive impoliteness and negative impoliteness. Impoliteness is sometimes contrasted with rudeness (Terkourafi 2008: 70) on the grounds that, unlike impoliteness, rudeness assumes that the hear/target recognises the speaker’s face-threatening intention.

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**Incivility (1)**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A distinction made between *incivility* and *impoliteness* (see Impoliteness), is often dubbed as a distinction between ‘deep’ and ‘surface’ civility, with politeness and good manners being the superficial/surface behavioural manifestations (Andresson and Pearson 1999:452), while deep or genuine civility refers to acting with others in mind, or, as Calhoun proposes (2000:253) referring to kindness, respect, tolerance and consideration of feelings of others. As suggested by Sifianou (2019), such an understanding of the distinction is reminiscent of Goffman’s (1967:55) distinction between ceremonial (etiquette) and substantive (morality and ethics) rules of conduct.

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**Oline Incivility**

Tamara Kunić

Online incivility specifically refers to online comments or exchanges that threaten democracy, deny people their personal freedoms, or stereotype certain groups. Definitions of *incivility* from a normative aspect include qualifications such as hate speech, vulgar language, and cursing, offensive speech, while politeness is usually understood as the absence of this type of speech. Contextual definitions emphasize that online discussions are socially conditioned and their decorum and the use of unacceptable speech is observed through the values and norms established in a particular online forum. Incivility can be defined as intentionally designed to attack someone or something and cause anger or resentment through name-calling, negative assessments of character, insulting statements, profanity, or offensive remarks. Politeness can be defined as the absence of personal attacks and harsh speech against other or about the topic under discussion. Some believe that incivility must be observed in the social and cultural context, ethnicity, and education of the participants. When

talking about incivility as features of opinion it can be defined as a communication that conveys unnecessarily disrespectful tone toward discussion, participants or topics. Incivility is intense speech marred by foul language while intolerant language morally disrespects individuals or groups.

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**Individualization**

Carlos Cuhna

The process of creating something different to fit the desires of a specific individual, location, etc.

From a linguistics perspective it may include individual linguistic variation regarding the unique way language is used; language acquisition and individual differences in the way some people attain language skills more easily or faster than others; lexical individualization on the way speakers construct new terms or phrases such as slang or even academic terms to express themselves; pragmatic individualization on contextual adaptation such as the communicative setting; or the impact of the individual on language evolution.

The concept is also used in other disciplines such as business where it focuses on tailoring services or products to specific needs. Socially it involves one’s responsibility for their life.

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**Infographics and data visualization**

Anna Bączkowska

Opinions can be communicated not only verbally, but also graphically. The visual forms of presenting various types of data (usually complex information expressing facts or opinions) in a systematic form is known as infographics. Visualisations of textual or numerical information enhance data interpretation as they present a bird’s eye view of the data at hand, make them more transparent, meaningful and readable. Infographics are operationalized, inter alia, through maps, lists, line graphs, bubble plots, scatter plots, bar charts, pie charts, and time intelligence. They are often interactive, offering an overview of the data together with tools to drill them down, which empower users to explore the data on their own and enhance data comprehensibility. Infographics are based on big data (huge volumes of data counted in tera- and petabytes), are increasingly popular in data journalism, and have a big impact on media industry (Lewis & Westlund, 2015). Infographics are often used in media organisations to visualise user-generated content, which expresses opinion polls or facts, published on social media (Veglus et al., 2022). Popular software tools used to convert complex data into graphic form comprise Tableau, MS Power BI.

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###

**Information Disorder/Disinformation**

Dren Gërguri

It refers to the spread of fabricated or misleading information to shape public opinion and influence people’s viewpoints. Information disorder, particularly in the form of disinformation, refers to the intentional spread of fabricated or misleading information to influence public opinion, shaping perceptions, and ultimately influencing people's viewpoints. This phenomenon has become a significant concern in the digital age, where information spreads rapidly through various online platforms. Disinformation can take various forms, including false articles, manipulated images or videos, misleading narratives, and deceptive social media campaigns. It tends to accomplish particular objectives, such as influencing public opinion, eroding institutional confidence, or even causing strife within society. Information disorder plays a significant role in shaping public opinion by influencing the formation of perspectives and viewpoints. The deliberate dissemination of false or misleading information has the potential to skew public perceptions of events, problems, and people in the digital age, as information is shared quickly through a variety of online platforms. Disinformation operations deliberately aim to sway the beliefs of their target audiences, frequently for ideological, social, economic or political reasons. This information manipulation can distort reality and cause people to establish beliefs based on false premises. It takes a team effort to combat information disorder in opinion formation, including critical thinking techniques, media literacy, and steps to assure the validity and dependability of information sources. The ease of creating or modifying information is increased by digital technology and text-generating models and deepfake are two examples of AI-generated material that might further blur the distinction between truth and false. As the landscape evolves, efforts to address information disorder must also consider the role of AI and explore technological solutions that can enhance the resilience of societies against the manipulative impact of AI-driven disinformation.

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**Insults**

Anna Bączkowska

Insults are words which contain some personal characteristics or behaviour description of the target addressee. For example, they make reference to what the insultee possesses, e.g. beliefs, achievement, bodily features, job, family, etc. They may aim at damaging someone’s reputation by mainly using false statements (calumnies), they may be based on truth by stressing one’s defects (e.g. You’re a cripple) (put downs), they may exploit the inferior status of the target or encode what no one can believe to be true (e.g. name-calling, abusive invectives, etc.: *You son of a bitch*). Insults assert dominance, either intentionally claiming superiority or unintentionally revealing lack of regard. Insults may be offensive by the very fact that the speaker’s intention was to offend the target or it may be sanctioned by their perlocutionary force.

References

**Intention**

Erika Lombart

The Oxford Dictionary defines intention as 'what you intend or plan to do; your aim'. This concept is present in the work of many pioneering pragmatic researchers. Grice's (1975) principle of cooperation states that interlocutors who intend to carry out an exchange must respect the maxims of conversation. These include the maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner. The maxim of quality requires that we state only what we believe to be true. The maxim of quantity requires that we give neither too much nor too little information. The maxim of relation requires that an utterance must be relevant. Finally, the maxim of manner requires that an utterance must be as clear as possible. Intention is also a key aspect of Speech Act theories, as proposed by Searle (1969) and Austin (1962), which view communication as an action performed on the world (see Speech Act). Searle (1976) emphasises that communicative acts have an illocutionary point, that is, a specific intention. For instance, a command aims to prompt the listener to take action, while a description aims to provide a representation of the world. As Nunberg (1978) notes, correctly understanding the speaker's intention is crucial for correct referring and interpretation.

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**Interactivity**

Asta Zelenkauskaite

From the macro perspective, interactivity entails larger theoretical constructs such as power of control where the power is shifted to users to express opinions, especially through online spaces that allow for user-generated content to circulate.

Interactivity has been conceptualized through the web 2.0 paradigm where users were given a possibility to not only passively create and consume content but also to engage with the content and each other.

Interactivity thus, has been through various lenses, typically a mix of the following: it encompasses technological properties that enable interactivity to take place, communication contexts, and user perceptions and experiences. Others proposed similar approaches that include a mixed human and technology approach that has been summarized as the following three traditions of interactivity research: human-to-human interaction, human-to-document interaction, and human-to-system interaction (McMillan, 2002).

Typology approach of interactivity includes elements that pertain to information traffic: transmission, registration, consultation, and conversation (Jensen, 1998).

Conversation approach to interactivity includes the following elements: interactivity is viewed as a property of message exchange, where the ideal circle is completed when two messages are synthesized by a third message (Rafaeli, 1988).

In the mass media contexts, four broad conceptualizations of interactivity with regard to space and time have been proposed (Van Dijk (1997/2001). Spatial dimension is based on the mere availability of interactive applications; as such they allow for reaction. Temporal aspects entail synchronicity where response time becomes a variable that defines the success of interaction where the lag is perceived as creating damaging consequences to communication. The level of control in which communicative actors exercise to choose types of contents and amount of contents to be exchanged is another dimension of interactivity. The last dimension is the highest abstract dimension deals with understanding of contexts in which interaction of content takes place.

All these approaches suggest a multifaceted meaning of interactivity that shapes the way opinions are created and circulated, especially in online contexts, mediated by technological affordances.

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**Interpretation**

Susana Salgado

Interpretation is an explanation of something hinged on analysis and factual evidence. Due to the presence of subjective elements, it could be misunderstood as opinion; however, opinion is different from interpretation, because it is a personal view, perspective, or attitude that does not need to be supported by factual evidence. An opinion could entail some degree of interpretation, but an interpretation does not necessarily contain opinionated views, as it could be an analysis of facts and evidence based on pre-existing frames or schemes.

Although the notion that opinions are subjective claims and interpretations are based on evidence makes sense theoretically, the distinction between interpretation and opinion is not always straightforward in practice, particularly in the absence of references to the underlying facts. Opinions express beliefs and feelings and therefore cannot be deemed false or true; whereas interpretations may be true or false because they result from attempts to explain the why and/or how of facts, events, statements, etc. Opinion and interpretation are thus both evaluations, but they are not synonyms: interpretation is the expression of an understanding of something that is backed by facts and therefore could be subject to verification, contrarily to an opinion which does not enter the realm of verification and is not amenable to proof.

In politics, one could refer to personal views about political actors and issues as opinions, and to the analysis of the proposals and statements of political actors by journalists and other analysts as interpretation. Such political coverage, commonly featured in media outlets, could be linked to a disbelief in value-free facts and interest-free sources, which makes it necessary to explain the context and interpret the relevance and impact of facts, events, and statements. In interpretive journalism, it may take the form of explanations, evaluations, contextualizations, or speculations by the journalist, differing from simple descriptions of facts and events.

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**Intuition**

Gal Harpaz

Intuition, often defined as the rapid and subconscious processing of information, plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' opinions by influencing their immediate reactions and judgments. Researchers like Kahneman (2011) have explored the dual-system model of thinking, where intuition operates alongside a more deliberate and analytical system. Intuitive judgments contribute to the formation of opinions by providing quick assessments of situations, often relying on heuristics and past experiences. However, cognitive biases and heuristics may lead to errors in judgment. Understanding the interplay between intuition and opinions is essential for comprehending how individuals arrive at their beliefs and make decisions in various contexts.

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**Irony (1)**

Erika Lombart

*The Oxford Dictionary* provides two definitions of irony: the first being 'the funny or strange aspect of a situation that is very different from what you expect', and the second being 'the use of words that say the opposite of what you really mean, often as a joke and with a tone of voice that shows this'. Those two types of irony can be called verbal and situational (Elena Filatova, 2012).

Paul Grice's *Relevance Theory* (1975) suggests that irony is based on the violation of one of the maxims of conversation. Specifically, the use of irony violates the maxim of quality, which states that a speaker should only say what they believe to be true. When a speaker makes an ironic statement, they are deliberately violating this maxim in order to convey their true meaning implicitly. Therefore, the comprehension of irony relies on formal or paraverbal clues that indicate to the addressee the presence of an implicit form.

*Indirect speech acts* typically aim to accommodate both positive and negative faces of the interlocutor (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). However, this is not usually the case with irony, which can still have a positive effect. According to Buffon (2002), if the Oxford Dictionary insists on the aspect of the joke, the intention of the irony is often criticism or mockery. The effects of positive irony are not as clear-cut as those of negative irony, as they do not necessarily lead to praise, they are mainly intended to create a sense of complicity (Bres, 2011).

Irony is frequently oversimplified to its standard form: the use of words that mean the opposite of what they seem to say (e.g. “This is the best day of my life” to qualify a day particularly painful). The relationship between what is said and thought in an ironic context is more complex than a simple antinomy (Lombart, 2022). Irony can take various forms, including false ingenuity, which involves assuming a false naive posture to mock the target (Currie, 2008) (“He dared to argue with you, who are so calm and accommodating?” To someone who tends to argue easily), and the irony known as 'turning the world upside down' (Debyser, 1980), which is not based on a semantic reversal but a semiotic one (e.g. “Don’t choke yourself” to someone who's on a diet and has ordered a salad). Therefore, it is not about the statement itself but the situation and conventions. The irony of the world turned upside down is closely related to the absurd.

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**Irony (2)**

Anna Bączkowska

Irony is a figure of speech which is used to intentionally manifest a hostile or derogatory judgement of the addressee. It is based on creating a clash between the intended meaning that is implied (the implicatum) and the meaning of what is actually said (the dictum). This clash is usually realized by resorting to the reverse of the speaker’s intended meaning, which can rely on the use of antonyms meaning, as in *You are a genius* meaning “you are stupid”, antithetical meaning, wherein the whole utterance is contradicted, as in *Thank you very much* or *Wow*, a partial contradiction, as in *You are tipsy* said to somebody who is drunk or absurd false comparisons, as in *And I am the President of the USA*. While in the traditional understanding or irony the meaning reversal relies on untruthful statements, in the neo-Gricean approaches truthful statements are allowed (in verisimilar irony) as long as there is a clash between what the speaker says (a truthful statement) and what the described reality is like (the opposite), as in *I love children who keep their rooms clean* uttered by a mother to her child while inspecting the child’s room (that is in a mess).

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**Issue**

Annie Waldherr

Issues are the subject matters on which opinions are formed. In its broadest sense, issues can be understood as broad themes or topics of concern. They bind together a range of similar events, facts, or concepts to broader categories of meaning and can touch various areas of social life, including politics, economics, culture, etc. In public discourse and political communication, issues are understood as social problems or matters of contention, often playing out as conflicts between different groups. Thus, in a narrower sense, the term issue is used for a topic that is problematized and politicized. The process of issue definition, i.e., identifying a social problem as such, raising awareness for it and acknowledging that it needs attention and action from policymakers is the first important step of political agenda building. In agenda setting studies, issues are the main object of scientific inquiry: Scholars study how salient issues are among the public, e.g., by surveying individuals of what they think is the most important problem facing the country today, or by measuring to what extent respective issues are covered by the mass media. Issues can be contested to different degrees. Generally, valence issues are distinguished from position issues. For valence issues, there is broad consensus on the desired goal, and debate primarily focuses on how to achieve them. Position issues, in contrast, are divisive issues where actors disagree on the goals and take divergent stances.

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**Journalistic Interventionism**

Janet Adikpo

It is the practice of journalists or media organizations actively participating in events or issues they are reporting about, often to influence outcomes or shape public opinion. It is generally characterized by three important aspects, namely: setting the political agenda, influencing public opinion and advocating for social change. In setting the political agenda, journalists aggressively shape political agendas by strategically framing and stressing specific themes in their reporting, thereby emphasizing certain themes over others. Secondly, journalists influence public opinion when they use news frames that are inclined to human interest or conflict to influence public opinion, which by extension significantly affects audiences’ focus and assessment. Thirdly, journalists advocate for social change by actively promoting and strategically highlighting specific salient social issues. In line with journalistic practices, editorial choices like selecting headlines and placement elevate and at the same time reduce the prominence of other stories. They use emotions in storytelling and framing to attract public empathy and shed light on systemic injustices. Sometimes, journalists collaborate with like-minded individuals or organizations to leverage their platforms to achieve widespread impact on narratives that require social awareness and collective transformation. By presenting information in a way that is consistent with their point of view, these journalists influence political discourse and foster change that impacts the political agenda. This is actualized through persistent coverage, which creates a sense of urgency while encouraging public action. This journalistic approach blurs the line between reporting and advocacy, raising concerns about journalistic objectivity and ethical implications for the role of media in society.

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**Judgment (1)**

Gal Harpaz

According to APA dictionary judgement is the capacity to recognize relationships, draw conclusions from evidence, and make critical evaluations of events and people. In the context of psychology and philosophy, judgement is a complex cognitive process involving the evaluation and interpretation of information to form an opinion or decision. Immanuel Kant addresses the concept in his book "Critique of Pure Reason" (1781/1787), where he explores the role of judgment in synthesizing sensory experiences addressing the concept of judgment in the context of understanding and reasoning. Kant defines judgment as a cognitive process integral to the synthesis of sensory experiences, judgment plays a crucial role in organizing and interpreting our perceptions, contributing to the formation of knowledge (Kant, 1781/1787).

Daniel Kahneman has contributed significantly to the understanding of judgment, provides a contemporary perspective on judgment in his book "Thinking, Fast and Slow" (2011). He delves into the dual systems of thinking and the biases that can affect human judgment, highlighting the role of biases and heuristics. He also emphasizes the distinctions between intuitive and deliberate reasoning processes.

The linguistic perspective of judgment involves the analysis of how individuals form opinions and make decisions within the realm of language and communication. One influential work in this area is Noam Chomsky's "Syntactic Structures" (1957), where he explores the mental processes underlying language comprehension and production and the role of judgment in linguistic competence. Chomsky's work suggests that linguistic judgment involves the innate mental structures that enable individuals to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences, contributing to their linguistic competence. Judgment also extends to the assessment of grammaticality and acceptability of linguistic expressions. Levi (1999), provides insights into how linguistic judgment plays a role in language acquisition and proficiency.

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**Judgment (2)**

Anna Bączkowska

The term ‘judgment’ has been well-defined in linguistics by the so-called Appraisal Theory, which rests on the theoretical foundations of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The Appraisal Theory is often used in various disciplines; apart from linguistics, it is also popular among scholars representing media studies, social and political sciences or working on the intersection thereof. In line with the Appraisal Theory, judgment is the act of evaluating a subject with regard to their moral behaviour, i.e., in terms of ethics. Judgment can be positive (admiration) or negative (criticism), and it can assess social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem deals with normality of behaviour (e.g., standard, avant-garde; eccentric, unfashionable), capacity, i.e., a person’s skills and competencies (e.g., strong, clever; stupid, clumsy), and tenacity, i.e., it signals whether a person is dependable and/or well-disposed (e.g., brave, reliable; lazy, cowardly, unreliable). Social sanction encompasses a person’s truthfulness and honesty (veracity) and a person’s, ethical behaviour (propriety). Examples of veracity comprise honest, frank, and credible for positive assessments, and deceitful, dishonest, and fake for negative assessments. On the other hand, propriety involves the following examples: moral, just, considerate, etc. for the positive assessment and cruel, brutal, corrupt, etc. for the negative assessment. Judgment is one of three subcategories of Attitude, which, along with judgment also distinguishes affect (emotional responses) and appreciation (the aesthetics). Attitude in turn is one of the three sub-types of Appraisal. Judgment is a crucial device in expressing opinions, and due to its strong focus on ethical behaviour evaluation, it is vital in the analysis of political discourse.

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**Lexical Embedding**

Chaya Liebeskind

Lexical embedding is the process of representing words or lexical items in a continuous vector space to capture their semantic connections and contextual associations. This representation enables the mapping of words to vectors in a manner that places semantically similar words in closer proximity within the vector space. Lexical embeddings play a crucial role in natural language processing (NLP) and computational linguistics. They assist in tasks like sentiment analysis, machine translation, and information retrieval by enabling computers to comprehend and handle the semantic meaning of words in a certain context.

*Context-Free Embedding*

Context-free embeddings, also known as static word embeddings, are word representations that capture the general relationships between words based on their overall usage in large text corpora. Word2Vec is a widely used technique for creating context-free embeddings. It works by training on a huge collection of text to acquire distributed representations of words. These representations are based on the patterns of word co-occurrence in the corpus. As an illustration, consider the sentence "The king smiled proudly." When the word "king" occurs with other words like "smiled" and "proudly," the Word2Vec context-free model analyses it and deduces that it is associated with ideas of royalty and positive feelings. This data is stored into the "king" vector, which in the embedding space places it with other royal terms and positive adjectives. While Word2Vec and related models produce fixed vectors for every word, they are not sensitive to the subtleties of various contexts and hence fail to capture semantic relationships. Even though context-free embeddings work well for some tasks, they might not be able to fully capture the variety of meanings that a word can have in different contexts.

*Contextual Embedding/Transformers*

Contextual embeddings, as opposed to context-free embeddings, consider the positioning of a word within a specific sentence or document. Transformers, a type of deep learning model, emerged as powerful tools in the creation of contextual embeddings. By employing the attention mechanism, transformers enable the model to assess the significance of distinct terms within a given sequence, thereby capturing complex contextual information. The ability to comprehend context allows transformers, including BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) and GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) , to generate representations of words that are more comprehensive and subtle, taking into account their diverse meanings in various contexts. For example, the same sentence: "The king smiled proudly." A transformer would examine not only the co-occurrence of words, but also their order and relationships within the sentence. It could be inferred that "smiled proudly" modifies "king," implying a positive, triumphant smile, putting "king" in a different vector location than when used in a different context, such as "The king ruled with an iron fist." Transformers have made substantial strides in the field of natural language processing (NLP) by enabling models to comprehend intricate linguistic connections and interdependencies. As a result, they have proven to be exceptionally efficient in a vast array of applications, including question answering and text summarization.

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**Manipulation**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Manipulation refers to the act of influencing or controlling a person or situation through indirect, deceptive, or even abusive tactics. It involves a deliberate attempt to shape someone's thoughts, feelings, or actions to achieve a desired outcome. Manipulation often involves a power imbalance, where one person has more influence or authority over another.

Scholars in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis who have been interested in manipulation in discourse do so with the aim of exposing the deceptive tactics used by dominant groups. Following this approach, manipulation is defined as “a devious way to control the others” and as the ‘illegitimate’ domination of one powerful group over others with the goal of maintaining social inequality. Van Dijk has taken a cognitive turn, analysing manipulation in a triangular theoretical framework (discourse, society, cognition), showing how and why some linguistic properties can be more effective than others in the manipulation of the human mind. A theory of manipulation that would not take a cognitive perspective would indeed miss some important aspects of how the mind is (more or less covertly) manipulated into compliance. Thus, some pragma-cognitivist approaches, which have recently delved into *cognitive p*rocesses involved while interpreting manipulative discourse, have shown how human cognition is tampered with by manipulators.

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**Media Bias**

Madalina Boțan, Nicoleta Corbu

The study of media bias remains a dynamic field characterized by ongoing investigations into its nature, impact, and strategies for mitigation. Scholars from diverse disciplines such as media studies, political science, and communication aim at better explaining the intricate interplay between media bias, public opinion, and civic engagement.

The advent of advanced computational tools has facilitated large-scale studies, enabling researchers to analyze extensive amounts of textual and visual data, revealing nuanced patterns of bias. Investigating the influence of media bias on public opinion and political behavior remains a central focus. Researchers delve into how various forms of bias, whether partisan, cultural, or economic, shape individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and voting behavior. Understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehending the role of media in shaping democratic societies and informing policy decisions.

Studies also scrutinize the role of emerging technologies in either amplifying or mitigating media bias. The proliferation of algorithmic curation and personalized content delivery on digital platforms has led to discussions on filter bubbles and echo chambers, where individuals predominantly encounter information aligning with their pre-existing beliefs. Conversely, researchers explore how technologies like machine learning and natural language processing can be utilized to detect and counteract bias in news reporting.

Addressing media bias goes beyond academic research, with initiatives focusing on media literacy and educational interventions. Scholars investigate the effectiveness of interventions designed to enhance critical media literacy skills, enabling individuals to navigate and discern biased information effectively.

In the realms of policy and regulation, researchers examine also the roles of governmental and self-regulatory measures in mitigating media bias. The complex challenge of balancing journalistic freedom with preventing the dissemination of misleading or intentionally skewed information requires careful consideration of legal, ethical, and technological solutions.

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**Media/Channel**

Dren Gërguri

Media, which includes all communication routes, is the channel by which information is sent from a sender to a recipient. This covers both more recent digital outlets like social media, and websites, as well as traditional media like radio, television, and newspapers. Media channels are essential to communication because of their enormous reach and variety of formats. They are crucial to society because they not only spread information but also have a big impact on public opinion. Public opinion is shaped by media in a significant way, being the main source of information and shaping the way people see the world. Traditional media have the ability to draw attention to certain topics, present them in particular ways, and subtly influence public opinion. The media's influence over the expression of opinions is highlighted by the agenda-setting effect. Additionally, because digital media channels are interactive, allowing users to express their opinions, and influence others. The interaction of digital media with its wide distribution enhances its influence on the development of opinions. However, the ability of media channels to sway public opinion also gives rise to worries about disinformation and polarization, in which people are only exposed to opposing views. By presenting information in a way that supports personal opinions, fostering echo chambers, and limiting exposure to different points of view, they can strengthen preexisting convictions. Hence, for people to critically assess the information or message they receive and create well-informed perspectives, media literacy is crucial.

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**Metaphor**

Ledia Kazazi

Metaphors are considered to be important in communication and cognition because they express, reflect and reinforce different ways of making sense of particular aspects of our lives. (Semino, 2008) They involve the conceptualization of more abstract notions in terms of more concrete ones (Flusberg, 2018; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Pinker, 2007). More specifically, conceptual metaphors are defined as the understanding of one more abstract domain of experience in terms of a more concrete domain of experience. Thus, the metaphor is considered a process and a product simultaneously. The process aspect is related to the cognitive process of understanding a domain and the conceptual pattern that results from such an understanding is recognized as the product aspect (Kovecses, 2017). This process allows for the image of a familiar topic to replace the image of an unfamiliar topic in the auditor’s mind (Lakoff, 1980).

Another distinction embodied in the metaphor is the one between the “source domain” and “target domain”. The source domain is a concrete domain, whereas the target domain is an abstract one. In the case of the LIFE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor, the domain of journey is concrete as opposed to the domain of life. Thus, JOURNEY constitutes the source domain of the metaphor and LIFE the target domain. In general, concrete physical domains typically serve as source domains for more abstract targets, as in the case of LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor (Kovecses, 2017). This reasoning suggests that conceptual metaphors reside not only in language but also in cognition. We frequently use metaphors to speak but also to think about certain aspects of the world. (Kovecses, 2017) They help us think and speak about a problem by simplifying the issue, highlighting certain aspects and deemphasizing others. (Flusberg, 2018)

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**Modality (1)**

Agnieszka Hess

Modality is a property of all communication between people. To communicate with each other, we use a variety of signs consisting of still and moving images, visual and non-visual communication, written and spoken text, sounds, music, etc., that are interconnected by different dependencies. The continual reinterpretation of meaning occurs not only at the level of the relationship between the text and its social context, but also within the vast and complex network of relations among its various internal levels. Modality is inherent in the complex process through which public opinion is shaped and manifested. Modality refers to diverse and multifaceted forms of opinion formation and transmission, encompassing a variety of mediums, including text, image, sound or video, and also various communication channels, including the media. The modality of public opinion is also understood as the diversity and complexity of how society expresses its opinions – including a wide range of activities, i.e. demonstrations, protests, referendums or public opinion studies, and various forms of interactive media use. Contemporary public opinion is shaped by the dynamics of a mediatized culture, which is dominated by multimodal communication. Advanced communication technologies (including tools for generating and transforming images, text and sound) enhance the multimodality of the formation and manifestation of public opinion.

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**Modality (2)**

Artur Lipiński

Modality is a part of the language that allows one to construct a sense of certainty or obligation in what is being said or written. Statham (2021) distinguishes four different stances which can be adopted by opinion creators when expressing modality: probability, frequency, obligation and inclination.

Probability depicts the opinion sender’s belief as to how likely something may occur. It can be expressed by the nine modal auxiliary verbs in English: ‘shall’, ‘should’, ‘can’, ‘could’, ‘will’, ‘would’, ‘may’, ‘must’, ‘might’; or by the quasi-modal auxiliaries ‘ought to’, ‘need to’, ‘has to’ or modal adverbs such as ‘probably’, ‘possibly’, ‘certainly’ or ‘maybe’. Frequency can be expressed through the use of similar modal verbs and adverbs like ‘usually’, ‘sometimes’, ‘always’, ‘never’, ‘seldom’ and ‘rarely’ (Statham, 2021: 61).

Obligation is used to express the extent to which opinion sender believes something has to be done. It is expressed by modal adverbs like ‘definitely’, ‘absolutely’ and ‘possibly’. Inclination is how opinion sender assesses the tendency of an occurrence. Statham provides here the examples of the following words: ‘willingly’, ‘readily’, ‘gladly’ or ‘easily’. Other authors distinguish between epistemic modality denoting the expression of certainty by the speaker and deontic modality connoting the speaker’s commitment to the realization of a specific proposition expressed by utterance.

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**Mode**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

The term *mode* denotes a set of socially and culturally shaped resources for creating meaning. It is a central concept in systemic functional linguistics, social semiotics, and multimodal discourse analysis. Instances of modes encompass written and visual elements on a page, extending to dynamic visuals and audio on a screen, as well as spoken words, gestures, gazes, and postures in embodied interactions. While other communication modes had been previously recognized and studied, the comprehensive investigation of various communicational means contests the previous dominance of spoken and written language in linguistics. This approach offers a new framework for analysing the diverse ways individuals create meaning and how these meanings are interconnected through multiple modes.

Modes are not static or independent; rather, they are fluid and subject to change as products of social processes. Additionally, modes are not universally applicable but are specific to communities where there is a shared knowledge of their semiotic characteristics.

Though the concept has become a central term in research on multimodal communication, it is still debated what constitutes a mode. For instance, some researchers view colour and layout as distinct modes and thus consider writing as multimodal, but this is not unanimously agreed upon. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) distinguish “mode” from “medium”. A mode is understood as a realisation of Hallidayan metafunctions including the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. Media, meanwhile, are conceived as resources that both materialise and produce meaning.

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**Multimodality/ Semiotics**

Ledia Kazazi

According to Kress and van Leeuwen, multimodality is the use of multiple modes of communication, including but not limited to language, image, gesture, sound, and spatial arrangement to construct meaning and convey messages. From their perspective, communication is not solely reliant on linguistic elements but encompasses a diverse range of semiotic resources that interact and combine to shape how meaning is produced and interpreted. Each mode provides its own affordances and constraints, influencing the ways information is represented and understood. The combination of different modes within a communicative act allows for a richer, more nuanced form of expression.

Multimodality extends beyond the mere co-occurrence of different modes; it encompasses the interplay and integration of these modes to create coherent and meaningful communication. Kress and van Leeuwen emphasise the importance of understanding how modes interact within multimodal texts, analysing their relationships, hierarchies, and contributions to overall meaning-making processes. Kress and van Leeuwen also highlight the role of social and cultural factors in shaping multimodal practices. They argue that meanings are not inherent in modes themselves but are socially constructed and negotiated within specific cultural contexts. Therefore, multimodal analysis involves not only the identification of formal properties of different modes but also examining the ideological, institutional, and contextual factors that inform their use and interpretation.

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**Multimodality/ Sociotechnical Analysis**

Dimitra Milioni

Since the use of social media, websites, platforms and mobile phone applications have been ubiquitous for the expression of opinion, various research methods were recently developed to understand how people express opinions on such media, informed by principles of Actor-Network Theory and Science and Technology Studies. Interfaces are essentially multimodal as they comprise semiotic, discursive and technological elements. A sociotechnical approach to expression of opinion on such media is based on the premise that their design is not neutral but contains certain norms that “produce” certain user identities and uses and hence affect the expression of opinion. Two methods that can be used to study interfaces critically are Discursive Interface Analysis (Stanfill, 2015) and the Walkthrough method (Light et al., 2018), which combine the semiotic tradition, discourse analysis and affordance analysis. Discursive Interface Analysis looks at functional affordances (functionalities i.e. what one can do), cognitive affordances (meaning-making of technological features), and sensory affordances (aesthetic aspects of features) (Stanfill, 2015). The Walkthrough method focuses on apps and sheds light on apps’ “intended purpose, embedded cultural meanings and implied ideal users and uses” (Light et al. 2018, p. 881). It is based on the analysis of the environment of expected use (vision, operating model, governance) and the technical walkthrough, which includes user interface arrangements, functions and features, textual content and tone, and symbolic representation. These and other similar methods offer valuable conceptual and methodological tools to understand how people express and form opinions in social media platforms and apps from a critical, interdisciplinary perspective.

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**Networked Audiences**

Alena Macková, Martina Novotna

The emergence of "Networked audiences" is closely linked to the advances made in social networking technologies, resulting in changes in online environments that have blurred the boundaries between relationships and changed conditions for communication. The rapid evolution of digital affordances has fundamentally transformed the context and characteristics of audiences, allowing for a diverse range of activities to be combined both online and offline. With the introduction of social networking sites, audiences have become more scattered and less transparent regarding who will be exposed to content. Online platforms have revolutionized the way in which individuals produce and distribute content, breaking down the traditional one-way communication model between content creators and recipients. This has resulted in a diverse range of opinions being shared among users in a network. According to Jürgen Habermas, this new phenomenon has significant implications for online discourse, including a lack of professional filters that would normally regulate the spread of information in the online public sphere. In terms of Goffman's theory of impression management, in the context of these new blurred network audiences (e.g., including family, friends, and colleagues from work), it can become complicated to control the roles we play as these roles may become unclear.

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**Nomination**

Anna Bączkowska

Nomination is one of the social actors proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) and it deals with representing social actors in terms of their unique identities, e.g., by referring to the marital status of women. This is typically realised by proper nouns: formal (Mr President - honorifics; Dr White - titles; Mr Smith - surname), informal (Betty), but it may be also realised by vocatives, often accompanied by possessive pronouns and/or words of endearment (Hello, my dear husband).

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**Objectivisation**

Carlos Cuhna

From a linguistic and discourse analysis perspective, Objectivisation is the way one may characterize subjective understandings to make them seem objective. Subjective concepts can be framed via language in a manner that makes them look genuine. Language is by nature subjective, given that it reflects the views of the user, although they may try to give it a veneer of objectivity by using strategies such as passive voice, technical language, or impersonal constructions. Discourse analysts especially focus on the use of these linguistic strategies to create a social reality of objectivity when the views are actually subjective.

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**Objectivity**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

The quality of being based on facts and unbiased by personal feelings or interpretations. In philosophy, objectivity is an opinion or methodology that assumes that reality exists outside of the human mind, so that people can separate their own ideas and opinions from the observations they make (knowledge). In the school of logical positivism, Moritz Schlick (1974) defined (scientific) knowledge as propositions which could be verified.

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**Offline/Online**

Agnieszka Hess

The meanings of the terms *on-line* and *offline* refer to the description of devices (operation mode of computers and servers), but also to people (their status, activity) that are either “connected” or “not connected” to communication networks, mainly the internet. A computer is in *online* mode when it is turned on and connected to other devices. For instance, if the network printer is in online mode, the computers connected to this network can use it to print. *Offline,* on the other hand, refers to a state in which the device is not connected to a computer network or the internet, and therefore cannot connect to other devices, download or transfer data over the network. In the *offline* mode the device operates independently, without access to external digital resources. The terms *online* and *offline* are also used in reference to work and communication methods, including expressing opinions by people. Offline work indicates a situation in which the user performs tasks without connecting to the network, for example writing a document in a text editor without access to the internet. For activities carried out *online*, a connection to a communication network and access to digital resources are required. People can communicate, share information and express opinions *online,* i.e. via diverse communication networks, on various platforms and online forums, including social media. Public opinion can be formed *online*, which means that it is formed in a media mediated communication process (online communication tools). Public opinion can be studied using *online* tools, f. ex. through web panels or internet surveys to measure notions, attitudes or experiences of a given group of people. In everyday language, the term *online identity* is becoming increasingly common. It refers to the way individuals are identified and recognized in the digital world. Users of online communication tools either appear online under their real names, or remain anonymous, using pseudonyms or avatars.

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**Opinion**

Carlos Cunha

Opinion is a viewpoint, thought(s), or attitude formed in the mind about a particular issue, but it may not be based on fact or knowledge. Once it is expressed in some manner and shared with others, it has moved beyond mere thinking. These numerous ideas reflect the diversity of human thought and intellectual inquiry. In considering opinions, one should be mindful of potential subjectivity, non-factual nature, variability, and expressiveness.

Various academic disciplines use opinion in their studies including Medical Ethics, Law, Education, Environmental Studies, Literature and Cultural Studies, History, Philosophy, Media and Communication Studies, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, and Political Science.

These are some, although not all, of the areas where opinion is important. Philosophy, for example, tends to offer views on ideals, knowledge, being, logic, and cognizance. Political Science focuses on political structures, beliefs, authority, power, control, fairness, and the state. Sociology emphasizes society, organizations, relationships, inequity, civilization, and identity, among other issues. Psychology examines comportment, awareness, and human advancement. Economics considers models, marketplaces, state involvement, and disparity. History digs into occurrences, actions, and progress over time. Literature and Cultural Studies look at textual representation as well as impact on social attitudes. Media and Communication Studies analyze public discourse and accounts. While law unearths interpretation and application of rulings and decrees.

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**Opinion Speech Event**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Opinion Speech Event assumes the presence of an Author, i.e., opinion holder, who expresses his/her (positive or negative) judgement/evaluation of a Theme to an Addressee. The Addressee may play either the role of an opinion receiver or an opinion Theme (subject), or else function in both the interactional roles. The term *speech event* is neutral as to the communicative medium – it can refer either to spoken or written communication. This type of speech event assumes the presence of both a Theme and an Addressee, as well as a transfer medium, together with a persuasive force presence in the Opinion expression act. Effects of such a Speech Event are either positive or negative, embodied in raising the Human Theme, and the Addressee’s emotionality and raising his/her potential of a particular evaluative judgement. Opinions thus are meant to exert a change: both pragmatically (face maintenance or else face threat or loss) and emotionally via their affective impact polarity (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk et al. 2023).

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**Opinion Expression**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

Opinion expression is a key concept in public opinion research. However, the prevailing approaches to public opinion, as aggregate or as discourse process, hold different views on the importance of opinions to be expressed publicly. Within the survey-based paradigm, opinion expression is primarily a methodological concern: to answer the questions in polls in an adequate manner, individuals must have knowledge of and understand the issue and be able to express an opinion on that issue. Much criticism of survey research targets the underlying assumption that respondents are informed and interested in the survey topic. People often answer survey questions even when they have no relevant opinion to give. Surveys may be contaminated by pseudo-opinions or nonattitudes which are not the expression of ‘real’ opinions, i.e. of stable attitudes, rather they are random, hazardous responses.

Conversely, the deliberative paradigm places great emphasis on opinion expression. According to the public opinion as the product of discursive interaction view, individual opinions do not count as public opinion unless they are publicly expressed. People’s willingness to express their opinion publicly depends on their perception of the public opinion climate; they get an impression of which opinions form the majority and which are socially accepted. Factors that may influence public opinion expression: fear of isolation, perception of public support, differences in power and social status, social knowledge, issue awareness, or habits and opportunities of opinion expression. Social media has enabled an exponential growth of opportunities for people to express their opinion publicly. While promoting easy access and inclusiveness, digital media has also allowed perceived anonymity, perceived discussion benefits, or incivility to influence opinion expression. Social media may be used to express unrepresentative, inauthentic, ambiguous, controversial, and polarizing opinions. Expression-based research has been mainly criticized for lack of demographic representativeness and selective collection of opinion statements.

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# Opinion Holder

Anita Ciunova-Shuleska, Nikolina Palamidovska-Sterjadovska

An opinion holder is an entity that holds an opinion about a specific topic, subject, or situation (opinion object). An opinion holder can be a person, organization, country, or some other specific group of people expressing an opinion. The opinion could be expressed implicitly or explicitly, and when expressed explicitly, opinion holders of the propositional opinions are usually observed as agents of those opinions. Opinion holders are also called opinion sources and they are usually explicitly mentioned in news, articles, or other formal documents, but in user-generated content such as posts, blogs, or reviews, they are the authors whose true identities may be unknown. Regarding how often opinion holders communicate about a specific topic, we can differentiate “inactive” as those who do not seek out or receive advice from others on a specific topic; “followers” as those whom opinion leaders influence; “opinion leaders” who *lead* the formation of attitudes, public knowledge, and opinions and “mediatized opinion leaders”, individuals who considerably use media for communicative exchange and information. In addition, regarding the level of opinion leadership and knowledge about a specific topic, four types of opinion holders are identified: “informed opinion leaders” (both high opinion leadership and knowledge), “uniformed opinion leaders” (average knowledge but high level of opinion leadership), “silent experts” (high knowledge and low opinion leadership) and “other” persons that possess little knowledge and leadership about a specific topic. In this line, it is valuable to mention the term “opinionators” referring to individuals whose profession revolves around creating, disseminating, and interpreting ideas, values, and opinions in society, such as academics, journalists, artists, community activists, etc.

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**Opinion Object**

Anita Ciunova-Shuleska and Nikolina Palamidovska-Sterjadovska

The term “opinion object” refers to the subject or entity about which someone expresses their opinion. Opinions can be expressed on anything, ranging from physical entities to abstract concepts, so an opinion object can be a person, a place, a product, an idea, an event, an organization, a situation, a topic, or any other entity that can be a target of someone's opinion. People often express their opinions about objects through various means, including conversation, writing (such as reviews or blog posts), social media posts, surveys, or ratings. When discussing an opinion, the identification of the opinion object is crucial to provide context and clarity of the opinion itself. For example, if one says, “I love this song”, then the opinion object is the song itself. Similarly, if someone states, “I agree with the new government’s decision”, the opinion object is the specific decision of the government. By recognizing the opinion object, it becomes easier to understand and analyze the expressed opinion, shifting the focus from the opinion itself. The object can have a set of components and a set of attributes, as well as further appropriate subsets. For example, in product reviews, the object is usually the product and/or its specific attributes.

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**Opinion Types**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

‘Opinion’ is a *polysemous* lexical form constituting a *radial category* (see Radial Categories) of concepts, which refer to judgments, assessments, beliefs, emotions, and are based either on conclusions and interpretations of objective facts (knowledge), on linguistic interpretations of factual or non-factual statements, or on personal or communal judgments, or else on preferences and biases, not based on or related to evidence. Opinions can be expressed verbally or multimodally via body language, behaviour; they can be expressed directly (explicit opinions) or via indirect ways (implicit opinions).

Opinion types:

* Negative

an opinion that considers only bad aspects or properties of a person, situation, etc.

* Positive

an opinion that considers only good aspects or properties of a person, situation, etc.

* Biased

an unreasonable or unjustified preference or dislike based on one’s own or (an)other person(s)’ opinion

* Communal

an opinion shared, or used in common by members of a group or community

* Individual/Personal

an opinion expressed by one particular person [rather](https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/rather) than shared by other people

* Informed

a belief, judgment or way of thinking about something based on information

* Indirect

an opinion expressed in a way that is not obvious

* Personal See Individual
* Public

an aggregate of the individual views, attitudes, and beliefs about a particular topic, expressed by a significant proportion of a community. Some scholars treat the aggregate as a synthesis of the views of all or a certain segment of society; others regard it as a collection of many differing or opposing views. ([Public opinion | Definition, Characteristics, Examples, Polls, Types, Importance, & Facts | Britannica](https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-opinion))

 [Traditional definitions of public opinion had stressed the influence of elites and those best informed in society. The advent of scientific survey techniques in the early twentieth century led to a proliferation in the empirical analysis of public opinion. Based on the laws of probability sampling, opinion polls enabled a measurement of public opinion that represented the population. This view of public opinion was espoused by George Gallup who suggested that public opinion was the average opinion that could be measured by summing up the opinions of every individual in society to form an aggregate opinion. Polling enabled public opinion to be measured relatively accurately and continuously, but not without reservations. V. O. Key summed up the difficulty in accurately measuring public opinion when remarking that ‘to speak with precision of public opinion is a task not unlike coming to grips with the Holy Ghost’ (1961). Public opinion is very closely tied to the democratic process since it forms a link between the mass of the people and their leaders. It is seen as a means of informing decision‐makers of the will of the people, especially towards public policy. Sean D. Carey [Public opinion - Oxford Reference](https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100353599)]

* Expert ‘an individual that excels in his/her field’/Professional ‘an individual that is engaged in a particular profession’

Professional opinions are judgments/evaluations formed from data, science, evidence, principles, education, training, and/or relevant experience.

versus

Expert opinions a belief or judgment about something given by an expert on the subject

* Objective

An objective opinion is the one that sets aside one’s personal preferences or feelings about something and instead assesses it based on facts and reality.

* Subjective

A subjective opinion refers to someone’s personal opinions or feelings regarding a particular subject matter. Subjective views or opinions are not based on truth or fact. They are one person’s unique interpretation of an idea and their own thoughts, feelings, and background.

References

**Opinion markers**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Opinion markers are words, phrases or sentences used before voicing an opinion, for example, such as follows:*In my opinion*, *Personally*, *As far as I know, It seems*, *etc.* *Evaluative terms* such as e.g., *great*, *awful*, also in the comparative and superlative degrees (*more adequate*, *the best*, etc.) and *emotive expressions* (*I hate it*, *I love it*, etc.) are other types of *opinion markers.*

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**Partisan Media Bias**

Mădălina Boțan, Nicoleta Corbu

Exposure to politically biased information shapes individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Studies in this field of research explore the potential consequences for political polarization, information processing, and the overall health of democratic discourse. Researchers employ survey experiments, observational studies, and content analyses to discern the causal relationships between partisan media consumption and public opinion formation.

Collectively, the state of the art in partisan media bias research showcases a dynamic field that integrates technological advancements, behavioral insights, and educational strategies to unravel the intricate dynamics between media bias and its societal consequences. Ongoing interdisciplinary efforts contribute to a nuanced and informed understanding of how partisan media bias shapes contemporary information landscapes.

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**Passivization**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

Passivization is a grammatical process in which the syntactic structure of an active sentence is rearranged so that the subject of the active sentence becomes the object of the passive sentence, e.g. when passivized, the active sentence “The cat chased the dog.” is restructured into “The dog was chased by the cat.” or the agentless form “The dog was chased.”. This structure is used to emphasize the recipient of the action (“the dog”) rather than the doer of the action (“the cat”).

Critical discourse analysts have suggested that passivization (along with nominalization) has important ideological functions such as deleting agency (especially omitting the agents of negative actions), de-emphasizing the doer of the action, emphasizing the object or recipient of the action, or expressing detachment. This category is especially important when analysing linguistic presentation of groups and their activities, especially concerning the questions of guilt or innocence. Analysis of syntactic aspects (including active versus passive sentences, among others) is also of special importance when examining negative outgroup descriptions in public space.

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**Perspective**

A particular way of viewing things; a point of view or outlook.

References

**Persuasion**

Gal Harpaz

Scholars have approached the concept of persuasion in diverse ways, providing distinct definitions that shed light on its multifaceted nature. Among these perspectives are characterizations of persuasion as a communication process for eliciting desired responses, a conscious attempt to influence attitudes or behavior through messages, a symbolic activity for internalization, and a successful intentional effort in situations where individuals have some measure of freedom (Andersen, 1971; Bettinghaus & Cody, 1987). Combining these insights, persuasion can be defined as a symbolic process in which communicators aim to convince others to change their attitudes or behavior on a particular issue through the transmission of a message, all within an environment of free choice. Lately, the American Psychological Association (2018) defined it as an active attempt by one person to change another person’s attitudes, beliefs, or emotions associated with some issue, person, concept, or object.

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**Platformativity/Platformization/Platform**

Alena Macková, Martina Novotna

"Platformativity" or "platformization" refers to the process through which digital platforms, particularly online platforms like social media, influence various aspects of social, economic, and cultural activities. This encompasses communication, and information sharing, reflecting the role of platforms in social interactions. "Platform studies" is an interdisciplinary academic field that deals with study of these digital platforms. Scholars from disciplines such as computer science, game studies, communication studies, sociology, economics, media studies, and cultural studies investigate digital platforms' role, impact, and characteristics. It provides a framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of platforms, considering their technical foundations and broader societal implications. This field evolves with technological and societal changes, and examining various digital platforms, including social media. Central to platform studies is investigating user behaviors and interactions, acknowledging the relationship between users and platforms. The approach incorporates critical perspectives to examine issues such as inequality, bias, and the concentration of power within digital platforms. Platform studies contribute valuable insights to policy and regulation discussions, addressing challenges related to distrust, privacy, and misinformation. However, the field also faces criticism for the tendency for technological determinism, limited attention to users and user agency, challenges in adapting to rapid changes in the digital environment, and also limited attention to variations across different contexts.

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**Polarisation**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

Initially, the concept of polarisation was introduced to explain socio-economic inequalities, focusing on the widening gap between specific groups in terms of income distribution and opportunities. Nowadays, polarisation is understood not only in economic terms but has also become associated with the social practice of establishing a strict distinction between two antagonistic groups, the positive “Us” (those who share our opinion, or the in-group) and the negative “Them” (those who express an opposing opinion, or the out-group). These groups develop into incompatible opinion-based groups, where the person’s opinion defines their group membership.

Polarisation is caused by the extreme fragmentation of the Internet into specific interest groups. Internet users tend to interact only with like-minded people and therefore distance themselves from alternative views and uncomfortable debates. Real-life interactions frequently require us to navigate diversity, while the virtual realm may exhibit more uniformity, not necessarily in demographic terms but in terms of shared interests and perspectives. Interest-based communities thus might replace location-based communities.

Strong ideological polarisation leads to selective exposure and fosters the emergence of information bubbles and information ghettos (or “echo chambers”). Internet users look for evidence to support their opinions, which creates a breeding ground for misinformation, rumours and hate speech, due to the lack of opposing arguments. See Hate speech. The homogeneity of opinions in such bubbles is further reinforced by the fact that social networks are developing algorithms that reinforce such isolation. Polarisation corrodes social cohesion and reinforces ideological polarisation, extremist behaviour, radicalisation, and information bias.

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**Political Expression**

Neta Kligler-Vilenchik

Political expression is a relatively young term in political communication research, one that has emerged alongside the rise of social media. Previous terms, like political debate or political dialogue, weren’t well-suited to capture the nature of expression on social media, where sometimes an opinion is stated without anyone responding to it or dialoguing with it, and where even a comment on an expression does not always constitute a form of discussion or dialogue. The definitions of political expression vary in the level of specificity they focus on, with some focusing on expressing a specific opinion on current events or political processes; while others look more generally at behaviors that involve communicating one’s political views, beliefs or identities. Scholars also vary in what they see as political expression including: on social media, these can include posts and videos, but also comments; some also see likes, shares or reactions as potential forms of political expression. An additional distinction involves the individual versus collective aspects of political expression. Some work focuses on political expression as an intrapersonal communication process, occurring between the speaker and themselves. In this view, political expression does not require an interaction between social actors or assumes that others will speak back. Other scholars focus more on the collective dimensions, or on collective political expression, seeing it as a process that is social in nature. In this view, collective political expression involves speaking to an imagined audience and adding one’s voice to an existing conversation, often by making use of shared symbolic resources. Finally, different platforms may shape the dynamics of political expression in different ways, which can be understood as the interaction between platforms’ norms, affordances and contents.

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**Political Preferences**

Mădălina Boțan

The research on political preferences investigates how individuals form, express, and change their political preferences, influencing political behavior and decision-making. The key themes and recent developments in the field are:

Psychological Foundations: Researchers delve into the psychological underpinnings of political preferences, exploring how personality traits, cognitive biases, and emotional responses shape individuals' political inclinations. Understanding these psychological factors contributes to a more comprehensive grasp of the formation of political preferences.

Media Influence: Scholars examine the impact of news consumption, social media exposure, and political advertising on individuals' attitudes and preferences. The rise of algorithmic recommendation systems and filter bubbles has sparked investigations into the potential for media environments to contribute to polarization.

Partisanship and Polarization: Studies on political preferences often focus on partisan identity and the increasing polarization in political landscapes. Researchers explore how individuals align with political parties, the factors influencing party identification, and the consequences of heightened partisan divisions on public discourse and decision-making.

Social Identity and Group Dynamics: Political preferences are often intertwined with social identity and group affiliations. Research investigates how factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status influence political preferences.

Voter Behavior and Decision-Making: Scholars explore the intricacies of voter decision-making, examining how individuals weigh policy positions, candidate attributes, and party affiliations when making electoral choices. Behavioral economics and experimental methods are increasingly employed to study the cognitive processes behind political preference formation.

Global Perspectives: Research on political preferences extends beyond national borders, considering the global dimensions of political behavior. Comparative studies analyze how cultural, institutional, and historical factors contribute to variations in political preferences across different regions and countries.

Public Opinion and Policy Preferences: Researchers investigate how public preferences influence policy outcomes, the role of elite cues in shaping public opinion, and the potential for policy feedback effects on political attitudes.

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**Politicization**

Erika Lombart

The dual definition of politicization, as the act of making something a political issue or the act of making someone or something become more involved in politics, is provided by The Oxford English Dictionary. This notion and its intricacies are the subject of study among numerous authors and academic disciplines in the humanities – including history, politics, and sociology – since the early 20th century. Carl Schmitt, a German political theorist with alleged ties to Nazism, argued that politics concerns the distinction between friend and enemy (Schmitt, 1988). In contrast, Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist theorist, posited that politics is a struggle for hegemony. The ruling class maintains its dominance by gaining the consent of subordinate classes, while politicization refers to the process of challenging this hegemony by these subordinate classes (Gramsci, 2002). Max Weber, a German sociologist, stated that politicization is the recognition that national politics affect individuals and localities as much, if not more, than local politics. According to this paradigm, politicization denotes the process by which individuals gain awareness of the relevance of nationwide politics, also known as "Nationalization of Society" (Cabo and Molina, 2009).

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**Polysemy**

Ledia Kazazi

Polysemy is a phenomenon whereby a linguistic unit exhibits multiple distinct yet related meanings. Traditionally, this term is restricted to the study of word-meaning (lexical semantics), where it is used to describe words like body which has a range of distinct, meanings that are nevertheless related (for example, the human body, a corpse, the trunk of the human body, the main or central part of something). Cognitive linguists claim that polysemy is not restricted to word-meaning but is a fundamental feature of human language. According to this view, the ‘distinct’ areas of language all exhibit polysemy. Cognitive linguists therefore view polysemy as a key to generalisation across a range of ‘distinct’ phenomena and argue that polysemy reveals important fundamental commonalities between lexical, morphological and syntactic organisation. Polysemy has been explored in greatest detail in the branch of cognitive linguistics known as cognitive lexical semantics. Scholars working in this area assume that polysemy is a conceptual rather than a purely linguistic phenomenon. That is, linguistic polysemy patterns reflect, and therefore reveal, systematic differences and patterns in the way linguistic units are organised and structured in the mind.

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**Power**

Gal Harpaz

Power is the capacity to influence others, even when they try to resist it (APA, 2018). Social power derives from several sources: control over rewards ([reward power](https://dictionary.apa.org/reward-power)) and punishments or other force ([coercive power](https://dictionary.apa.org/coercive-power)); a right to require and demand obedience ([legitimate power](https://dictionary.apa.org/legitimate-power)); others’ identification with, attraction to, or respect for the power holder ([referent power](https://dictionary.apa.org/referent-power)); others’ belief that the power holder possesses superior skills and abilities ([expert power](https://dictionary.apa.org/expert-power)); and the power holder’s access to and use of informational resources (APA, 2018). One of the topics that has attracted a great deal of attention in this field is the evolution and diffusion of opinions on a network (Jalili, 2013). People with diverse social power tend to influence opinions and shape them in complex networks in the current era.

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**Predication**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

Predication refers to the relationship between a subject and a predicate in a sentence. The predicate typically includes the verb and any accompanying modifiers, objects, or complements. In Critical Discourse Analysis, the analytical framework suggested by Reisigl & Wodak (2001) considers predicational strategies (alongside nomination, argumentation, and perspectivisation) as linguistic evidence of ideological implications manifested in discourse. Predication is analysed by addressing such questions as How are the social agents in a text described? and What qualities or characteristics are attributed to them?

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**Prejudice (1)**

Lenka Vochocová, Jana Rosenfeldová

Prejudice refers to a preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience. The prejudgment is typically negative and directed towards a particular group or individual based on membership in a specific group, such as race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Earlier prejudice research portrayed prejudice as the result of processes that were assumed to be largely motivated and intentional. As overt forms of prejudice became socially unacceptable, more subtle forms of behavior began to be studied. Researchers recognized that these subtle behaviors may not reflect hidden negative intentions but rather the influence of unintentionally activated processes. Thus, more recent research emphasizes the role of normal cognitive processes and socialization, acknowledging that prejudice often arises from everyday mental shortcuts and social influences rather than solely from malicious intent.

Scholars also argue over the scope of prejudice. Some advocate for a broad definition encompassing any negative judgment based on group membership, regardless of its accuracy or justification. Opposing views disagree with identifying prejudice with any dislike or distrust, pointing to research on prejudice conducted since the mid-20th century, motivated by a desire to understand and mitigate extreme expressions of unjustified group hatred. This debate extends to the relationship between prejudice and ideology. Proponents of the 'ideological symmetry thesis' argue that people at both ends of the ideological spectrum will be similarly intolerant of social groups whose values and beliefs conflict with their own. Opponents of this thesis counter that the goal of prejudice studies has been to explain and seek to reduce intergroup violence. They argue that the evidence suggests that conservatives' prejudice against minority groups is a much more pressing social problem than liberals' prejudice against majority groups, and any serious analysis of prejudice should recognize its real consequences, such as hate crimes and violent forms of discrimination.

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**Prejudice (2)**

Gal Harpaz

Allport, Clark & Pettigrew (1954) defined prejudice as a feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or thing, prior to, or not based on, actual experience. From a social science perspective, the affect or emotion a person feels when thinking about or interacting with members of other groups, although related to stereotypes, is separate from them. Prejudice is an attitude directed toward people because they are members of a specific social group (Brewer, 1999). The American Psychological Association (2023) updated its definition of prejudice as a negative attitude toward another person or group formed in advance of any experience with that person or group. Prejudices can include an affective component (e.g., nervousness, anger, contempt, pity, hatred) and a cognitive component (assumptions and beliefs about groups, including [stereotypes](https://dictionary.apa.org/stereotype)). Prejudicial attitudes tend to be resistant to change because they distort our perception of information about the target group.

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**Private/Public**

Agnieszka Hess

The differentiation between what is private and what is, or becomes, public is one of the fundamental dilemmas when describing the contemporary public sphere and opinion. The term *public* refers to a reality insofar as it is common to the general public and at the same time distinct from the individual’s private place in the world. What is public is visible, open, accessible – as opposed to what is private, hidden and concerns the individual’s personal life and/or a limited group of people that are close to the individual. In the digital age, characterized by the mediatization of almost all areas of human life, the boundaries between what is public and what is private are fading. The areas of an individual’s personal engagement (such as family, friends, individual interests, health, etc.) intertwine with areas of common interest (such as work, local society, social engagement, but also global issues, for instance political affairs). This is among others due to the multidimensional character of contemporary communication tools and the ways in which they are used. A systemic, political science approach to the private/public dichotomy takes into account the distinction between the activities of the state, the authorities or institutions derived from the authorities, and the area of grassroots civic activity (political community vs. civil society). In modern democracies, defining a conceptual framework for public or private affairs is only possible on a high level of generality. The domain of democracies developing in a deliberative spirit, is the right of all citizens to participate in public affairs, whereas political life encompasses all systems of power, understood as the ability to make transformations.

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**Prototype**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Prototype in Cognitive Linguistics is a [concept](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concept) in any given language that has a lexical form corresponding to a person, animal, thing, or event that best represents this concept. For example: when asked to give an example of the concept [*furniture*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Furniture), *a* *chair* is more frequently cited than, say, a [*wardrobe*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wardrobe). Prototype theory has been applied in [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), as part of the mapping from [phonological structure](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonology) to [semantics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantics). The term *prototype*, as defined in psychologist, later on transferred to linguistics, was first proposed in  [Eleanor Rosch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleanor_Rosch)'s study "Natural Categories"

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**Public Opinion**

Christian Baden

Public Opinion describes the content and distribution of opinions toward an issue expressed and shared by members of a public. In a narrower sense, it refers to any stances that are supported by a majority or plurality (relying on an electoral metaphor); in a wider sense, it also includes a latitude of common stances that are recognized as legitimate, and can be expressed in public discourse without fear of being sanctioned. Accordingly, public opinion foregrounds the (actual or perceived) common ground or mainstream of opinions, discounting fringe, rare and contested ones. Public opinion is said to be divided on an issue if no one stance is widely accepted as preferable or legitimate. Public opinion necessarily pertains to issues that are widely recognized as relevant to the public as a whole - most commonly, issues that are negotiated, or demanded to be negotiated, by political institutions. It presupposes the presence of a public discourse enabling and synchronizing public engagement and opinion formation toward these issues.

In social science research, public opinion is studied primarily as the outcome of public communication processes (from socialization to cultural myth making to news and strategic communication), and as an antecedent of various forms of collective and mass behavior (e.g., political participation, consumer choices).

Within the study of public opinion, there are two competing paradigmatic views: One tradition, which has been dominant since the 1970es, understands → public opinion as the statistical distribution of preferences held among members of the public, relying on quantitative survey methods for measurement; the other tradition, which dominated up to the 1950es, but is gradually resurfacing in the wake of agenda setting, framing, and digital media research, understands → public opinion as a discursive process, and relies heavily on text analytic approaches.

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**Public Opinion as a Statistical Distribution**

Christian Baden

Public Opinion as a Statistical Distribution conceives of public opinion as the distribution of evaluative stances regarding a given issue within a given public. This conceptualization follows an electoral metaphor, wherein every member of the public has one opinion, such that the count distribution of all opinions over a set of categories expresses the preferences of the public as a whole. Public opinion is said to support a certain idea if a majority of members of the public do so. Everyone’s opinion counts the same, regardless of the identity of the opinion holder, the intensity or foundedness of the opinion, or other possible differences. Public opinion is typically understood as predictive of individuals’ behavioral choices.

Public Opinion as a Statistical Distribution is closely related to a quantitative methodological perspective wherein opinions are elicited by means of standardized survey questions from a population statistically representative of the considered public. Operationally, this approach presumes that people hold attitudes toward an issue and are capable of mapping their preferences upon a given set of categories or dimensions, which must be defined by the investigator. Using standardized scales, public opinion dynamics can be measured as over-time changes in the distribution of opinions. Public opinion as statistical distribution is most commonly studied as an antecedent and predictor of collective choices and mass behavior, such as electoral votes, health behavior, consumer selection or other life choices. Other applications, which often complement survey methods with experimental designs, seek to explain the distribution of opinions based on personal traits, experiences, and exposure to various forms of information available in public discourse. A key limitation of this conceptualization is that recorded opinions may be more or less deep-rooted and thus differentially relevant for predicting behavior, or shaping others’ views by means of being expressed in public discourse.

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**Public Opinion as a Discursive Process**

Christian Baden

Public Opinion as a Discursive Process conceives of public opinion as an outcome of the public debate about an issue. It circumscribes the range of interpretations and stances toward an issue that prevail in the public debate among members of the public: Positions are inserted into the public debate by any speaker with access to the public arena, where they are endorsed, elaborated, challenged or re-negotiated by other speakers in a dynamic process. Participants continuously renegotiate what issues are of public relevance, how they can be conceptualized, and how they should be evaluated. In the course of this process, some ideas and opinions emerge as widely-agreed upon or recognized as legitimate within an accepted corridor of opinions or opinion climate, while others are demarcated as contested or face delegitimation. Accordingly, public opinion appears as a collaborative social construction that is accessible to researchers and members of the public alike by means of studying the contents of public discourse.

A key challenge in this conceptualization of public opinion concerns the need to determine which contributions to the public debate matter, and how much weight to attribute to them. If earlier scholarship could focus on key institutional arenas (notably, parliamentary discourse, legacy mass media), the growth of digital media has blurred the lines between salient, widely influential sites and voices (“opinion leaders”), and others whose impact upon public opinion is less certain.

Public Opinion as a Discursive Process is typically studied using qualitative discourse- and quantitative content-analytic methods, and increasingly also computational methods. A key limitation especially of computational approaches is their strong sensitivity to uneven content availability and strategic manipulations of the visibility of certain opinions. Also, the approach permits no conclusions about the statistical distribution of opinions, as held opinions are differently likely to be expressed in public.

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**Radial categories**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

A radial category (Lakoff 1987) is such a polysemy network that shows the structure of a category by encoding links between related senses of a word e.g., the lexical form *game* has a number of related senses (e.g., *chess game*, *tennis game*, etc.), each one of which has its own *prototype*, and all create a network of polysemous senses (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 2007).

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**Receiver**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Any person who hears/reads/sees an opinionated text.

References

**Relativism**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

The philosophical position that all points of view are equally valid, often applied to moral and cultural values. It asserts that all assignments of truth values to individual propositional variables are relative to the perspective of an observer or the context in which they are assessed (e.g., local cultural norms, individual standards). The genesis of cultural relativism can be found in linguistics with theses put forward by Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and found in Benjamin Lee Whorf’s *linguistic relativity* theory (1956: 213).

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**Resonance**

Christian Baden

Resonance is commonly used as a conceptual metaphor to describe the process by which verbalized opinions (including related notions such as factual claims, frames, and interpretations) come to be accepted and adopted by other members of a public. Among the available explanations of persuasiveness, resonance distinctly focuses on the adoption of opinions owing to their fit within a context of socialized cultural norms, experiences, and beliefs, foregrounding socio-cognitive, shared heuristics – notably, relevance, plausibility, appropriateness. Resonance is primarily reflected in others’ self-directed, common re-use of the same or similar opinion statements; however, wider usages have also considered lesser responses (e.g., clicking Like), or even no response at all as capable of expressing resonance, so long as it can be inferred that the proposed ideas have been widely adopted. Resonance is used to describe two somewhat distinct meanings: On the one hand, resonance describes the seamless adoption of ideas into people’s existing ways of thinking, emphasizing their so-perceived plausibility and appropriateness. On the other hand, resonance also describes the frequent re-use of ideas primarily that are perceived as plausible and relevant, but raise normative conflicts, raising wide-spread controversial engagement with these ideas (e.g., eliciting large amounts of responses). Critics have pointed out that resonance remains an under-theorized construct, with few underlying mechanisms adequately established, which is therefore too commonly used in a vague, metaphorical sense only.

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**Sarcasm**

Erika Lombart

According to the Oxford Dictionary, sarcasm is defined as "a way of using words that are the opposite of what you mean in order to be unpleasant to somebody or to make fun of them". According to this definition, sarcasm is a particularly unpleasant form of antiphrasis.

The scientific literature helps to distinguish sarcasm from similar forms such as irony. These forms are so regularly confused that they have become - wrongly - synonymous. Although they are both based on an intentional lack of sincerity (Moreall, 2020), the two phenomena do not behave in the same way, either in terms of intention or the relationship between what is said and thought. Firstly, irony can be unintentional and qualify a situation, which is never the case with sarcasm (Haiman, 1998). Secondly, irony is based on an inversion of meaning between what is said and what is thought, whereas sarcasm hyperbolises the negative aspect of the flaw it points out in its target without there being, strictly speaking, any discrepancy between what is said and what is thought (Charaudeau, 2011). Sarcasm is not necessarily based on a trope, unlike irony, but on an amplification of the Faces Threatening Acts. Irony and sarcasm are both an attack on the principles of politeness theorised by Brown and Levinson (1978), according to which communication can only take place properly if each speaker respects the other's "faces". Sarcasm takes different forms, but it always has a perlocutionary intention that runs counter to the relational management of communication, since it always aims to harm the positive side of its target (Lombart 2022). There is therefore no such thing as 'positive' sarcasm, although there are forms of positive irony - albeit rather rare - which do not intend to attack the faces of their target. If the object of the sarcasm is a third party (person, concept, institution, etc.), the speaker is called upon to be an accomplice to this denigration, and we are quite close to the figure of the gossip. If it is the other person who is the object of the sarcasm, it is a real provocation because, unlike irony, they cannot pretend not to have understood what is implied and are obliged to react.

To illustrate the concepts of sarcasm and irony, consider the following examples. The statement 'It's crazy to have an ugly face like yours' can be interpreted as sarcasm, as it attacks the other person's appearance without using a common trope. On the other hand, the statement 'You look really good this morning' made to someone who is ill, can be seen as a form of irony, as it employs an antinomic trope to convey the opposite meaning of the words used. It is evident that the speaker's face is under threat, however, the intensity of the attack is comparatively lower than the previous example.

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**Schema**

Ledia Kazazi

A schema is a cognitive structure or mental representation that organises and categorises our knowledge about the world. Schemas serve as templates that guide our perception, interpretation, and understanding of linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli. Langacker’s cognitive grammar framework emphasises the dynamic and context-sensitive nature of schemas, highlighting their role in shaping our conceptualization of reality. Langacker states that schemas are not fixed entities but are constantly updated and refined through experience and interactions. They encompass a network of interconnected concepts, relationships, and cognitive operations that underlie our linguistic and conceptual abilities. Schemas operate at various levels of abstraction, ranging from basic perceptual schemas that encode sensory-motor experiences to more abstract conceptual schemas that organise higher level concepts and categories.

One key aspect of Langacker’s approach to schemas is their role in linguistic structure and meaning construction. According to Langacker, linguistic expressions evoke and activate specific schemas, allowing speakers and listeners to access relevant conceptual knowledge during communication.

Moreover, Langacker emphasises the embodiment of schemas, highlighting how our sensory-motor experiences, allowing for the integration of perceptual, motor, and affective dimensions into our conceptual representations.

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**Semantics**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Semantics is the branch of linguistics and logic concerned with meaning. It focuses on the study of meaning in language, including the meanings of linguistic forms such as words, phrases, and sentences, as well as how meaning is constructed and understood within various contexts. As the study of meaning in language, semantics is a branch of linguistics that deals with the relationship between linguistic expressions and the things they refer to in the world. Semanticists investigate how words, phrases, and sentences convey meaning, and how this meaning is understood by speakers and listeners.

Saussure defined semantics as the study of the relationship between the signifier and the signified, whereas Morris defined it as the study of the relation of signs to their designata.

Trying to make the difference between Semantics and Pragmatics, Semantics is a broad topic with many layers whose job is to study the basic, [literal](https://www.thoughtco.com/literal-meaning-language-1691250) meanings of words as considered principally as parts of a language system, whereas P[ragmatics](https://www.thoughtco.com/pragmatics-language-1691654) concentrates on the ways in which these basic meanings are used in practice, including such topics as the ways in which different expressions are assigned [referents](https://www.thoughtco.com/referent-grammar-1692033) in different [contexts](https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-context-language-1689920), and the differing ([ironic](https://www.thoughtco.com/verbal-irony-1692581), [metaphorical](https://www.thoughtco.com/metaphor-figure-of-speech-and-thought-1691385),) uses to which language is put. As a result, the scope of semantics is to be restricted to the [literal](https://www.thoughtco.com/literal-meaning-language-1691250) interpretations of [sentences](https://www.thoughtco.com/sentence-grammar-1692087) in a context, ignoring phenomena like [irony](https://www.thoughtco.com/irony-figure-of-speech-1691196), [metaphor](https://www.thoughtco.com/metaphor-figure-of-speech-and-thought-1691385), or [conversational implicature](https://www.thoughtco.com/conversational-implicature-speech-acts-1689922), etc.

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**Sentiment (1)**

Gabriella Szabó

Sentiment a manifested subjective approach to the object of the communication. In sentiment analysis it refers to the positive, negative or neutral tonality of the sentence. Sentiment analysis (or opinion mining) is a natural language processing (NLP) technique of analyzing digital text to determine if the tone of the message is positive, negative, or neutral. The tools can scan the text to automatically determine the source’s attitude towards a topic. The basic tasks of sentiment analysis are polarity detection. It is usually a binary classification task with outputs such as ‘positive’ versus ‘negative’, ‘thumbs up’ versus ‘thumbs down’ or ‘like’ versus ‘dislike’. Since the purpose of sentiment analysis is to determine polarity and categorize opinionated texts as positive or negative, dataset’s class range involved in sentiment analysis is not restricted to just positive or negative; it can be agreed or disagreed, good or bad. It can also be quantified on a 5-point scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree. Sentiment analysis is possible at three levels: sentence level, document level, and aspect level. At the sentence-level or phrase-level sentiment analysis, documents or paragraphs are broken down into sentences, and each sentence’s polarity is identified. At the document level, the sentiment is detected from the entire document or record. The necessity of document-level sentiment analysis is to extract global sentiment from long texts that contain redundant local patterns and lots of noise. The most challenging aspect of document-level sentiment classification is taking into account the link between words and phrases and the full context of semantic information to reflect document composition. It necessitates a deeper understanding of the intricate internal structure of sentiments and dependent words.

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**Sentiment (2)**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

The notion of sentiment is used to describe a positive or negative evaluation or opinion expressed through language (see Sentiment analysis). Sentiment is a matter of subjectivity and applies to sentences that express an opinion (subjective), as opposed to stating a fact (objective). Subjective sentences could be further analyzed as expressing a positive or negative sentiment. Common indicators of sentiment are sentiment words (e.g., *good*, *amazing*, *wonderful* - positive sentiment words, and *bad*, *poor*, *terrible* - negative sentiment words). Phrases and idioms could also be indicators of sentiment and together with sentiment words form a sentiment lexicon.

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## **Sentiment Analysis**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

Sentiment analysis (or opinion mining) is a field of study at the intersection of linguistics and computer science that analyzes social media content. Specifically, sentiment analysis combines linguistic and computational tools to describe the way in which language is used online to evaluate, express opinions, attitudes and emotions (Liu, 2012). Using text classifiers, sentiment analysis assigns either a positive or a negative opinion to a text, and, thus, predicts polarity (Stine, 2019). The goal of the sentiment analysis is to determine: a) the text’s subjectivity (i.e., the text expresses an opinion on a topic), b) the text’s polarity (i.e., negative vs. positive), and c) the intensity of this polarity (Taboada, 2016). Sentiment analysis can go beyond polarity to detect emotions (e.g., anger, sad, happy) and even intentions (e.g., interested vs. not interested). Sentiment analysis is commonly used in market research, PR, brand monitoring, customer feedback, business analysis, politics.

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**Slurs**

Anna Bączkowska

Slurs convey a negative attitude of the speaker towards the target (typically the addressee) or the targets (addressees) seen as a demographic group. The object of attack refers to such demographic aspects as: nationality, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, profession, etc. Slurs differ from slanders as the latter are usually truth-conditional, and from insults as the latter refer to personal features of the target while the former to features typical of a group (e.g., *immigrants, Islamists, Nigga, slut, gays,* etc.). The target is, in other words, characterised through the prisms of the demographic group s/he represents. Alternatively, the whole group is referred to. Some authors (e.g. Horsnby 2001, Croom 2011) treat slurs as subtypes of hate speech.

References

**Social Constructivism/Social Constructionism**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge, which assumes that both human development and knowledge are socially constructed through interaction with others. Social constructivism states that people work together to actively construct both artefacts and various facets of [social reality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_reality)— [concepts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concept), [beliefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belief), [norms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_norm), and [values](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_%28ethics_and_social_sciences%29)— influenced by [social conventions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_%28norm%29) and [structures](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_structure) (Berger and Luckmann 2011).

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**Social Media**

Anna Bączkowska, Martina Novotna, Tamara Kunić

Social mediacan be defined as the use of web-based and mobile technologies to transform communication into interactive dialogue. They can be defined as a group of Internet applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of the so-called Web 2.0, which has created a place for the creation and exchange of user-generated content. In pragmatics, Hoffmann (2017: 6) proposes a very broad typology of social media that comprise, inter alia: online message board, discussion fora, blog, microblogs (such as “X”), SNS, that is social network sites (such as Facebook), media-sharing sites (e.g., YouTube or Instagram) and even instant messaging services (e.g., SMS, MMS, WhatApp and Skype). Social media is a broader term than social networks as they focus more on people and social media on content. Social media have replaced one-way communication, selection and presentation of news with networks of users who personalize and share media content, add comments and make media content visible to a larger number of users.

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**Source of Opinion**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Sources of opinion identification can be manifold - from linguistic verbal signals of various kinds to multimodal resources (gestures, facial expression, eye contact, body posture and movement, etc. and prosodic features). More generally, the sources of opinions as different from evidence-based knowledge can be found in gossip, hearsay, in which no evidence needs to be present, those with uncertain evidence such as beliefs, or else opinions stemming from logical fallacies or conspiracy theories, fake news, together with myths, stereotypes, ideology, etc. (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk et al. 2023:456).

Computational methods view source identification as an information extraction task and tackle the problem using sequence tagging and pattern matching techniques simultaneously with reference to syntactic, semantic, and orthographic lexical features, dependency parse features, and opinion recognition features. In addition, features based on automatically learned extraction patterns are used, performing feature induction on models (Choi et al. 2005).

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**Sourcing**

Marc Jungblut

Sourcing describes one out of a range of potential foundations of an opinion. An opinion based on sourcing reflects a belief about an object, person, or event that is linked to a specific external point of reference (source). These external references can take various forms, ranging from eye-witness accounts to expert statements, documents or databases. Providing sources for an opinion is typically associated with increased validity of connected statements about a part of reality and may, therefore, enhance the persuasiveness of a factual statement. Moreover, different types of sources are oftentimes ascribed different levels of credibility or trustworthiness, which, in turn, also increase the persuasiveness of the connected statement.

Research that focuses on opinion discourses often revolves around the question of what sources are provided to back up seemingly factual statements. Here, journalism research, for instance, is concerned with what sources journalists use to report on on-going events or issues and how journalists transform available source material into news articles. Similarly, scholars have also focused on how opinions in online discourses are backed up by different forms of sources and how the usage of sources with a different credibility shapes the persuasiveness of these statements. A central concern in this is the increasing usage of manufactured or artificially modified source material, for instance, in the form of so-called deep fakes.

Research focused on opinion formation processes often explores how various forms of sources can impact the opinion formation and information processing of individuals. In this context, credibility and trustworthiness have been identified as key determinants influencing opinions based on sourcing.

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**Speech Act/Speech Event**

Ardita Dylgjeri

Speech Acts are Goal-directed actions performed with words in interpersonal communication, defined primarily with reference to the speaker's intentions and the effects on the listener(s). Whereas, a speech event is an occasion on which a speech is made, especially a formal or public one. It can also refer to the act or process of speaking, especially in a formal or public setting. Speech events are typically goal - oriented, interactive and shaped by the social and cultural context in which they occur.

Referring to Austin, Speech acts are utterances which perform various social functions such as requesting, greeting, advising, complaining, warning and so on (see also Speech Act Theory). Austin classified three types of speech act: 1. Locutionary act – the actual utterance and its ostensible meaning; 2. Illocutionary act – the real meaning that the speaker intended; 3. Perlocutionary act – the actual effect of the speech act, whether it was intended by the speaker or not.

Searle classified illocutionary speech acts into the following taxonomy:1. Assertives – acts that commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition; 2. Directives – acts that cause the hearer to do something; 3. Commissives – acts that commit the speaker to do something in the future; 4. Expressives – acts that express the speaker’s feelings towards something; 5. Declarations – acts that change reality (such as baptising, pronouncing someone guilty etc.)

Speech act theory has been influential in a wide range of fields, including linguistics, philosophy, communication studies, and law. It has also been used to develop new approaches to understanding social interaction and human behaviour.

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**Stance**

Elena Negrea-Busuioc

Stance, evaluation and, with the advent of social media, sentiment are concepts describing people’s opinions (judgements) about an issue, which are often interchangeably used in public opinion research. Individual opinions emerge from the interaction between individuals and the world in which they live. Such opinions are judgements (evaluative stances) of issues made by individuals based on their psychological and cognitive predispositions. To form an opinion about an issue implies to have taken a stance on that particular issue. However, unless their opinion is publicly expressed (via language, usually) one cannot have access to the stance that an individual has taken on an issue they have an opinion on. Expressing an evaluative stance means participating in a dialogic process where meanings are collaboratively constructed and negotiated in and through interaction in various contexts.

Linguistic approaches to opinionated communication distinguish between stance and evaluation: stance is a more abstract concept, whereas evaluation is the linguistic realization of stance, the display and manifestation of stance in discursive interaction. From a linguistic perspective, stance is defined as the expression of speaker’s or writer’s opinions and assessments encoded in language they produce. Speakers/ writers may convey assessments of the certainty or doubt (epistemic stance) or personal attitudes, judgements, emotions about the propositions they express (attitudinal stance or affect), or they may even assess the style of the communication (style stance, see Gray & Biber, 2012).

Research on the evaluative function of language has inventoried the linguistic markers of stance and grouped them into parameters of evaluation (e.g., (in)comprehensibility, emotivity, (un)expectedness, (im)possibility, reliability, evidentiality, see Bednarek, 2006) which may be used to examine opinions in a more nuanced way than simply as positive or negative attitudes or feelings about an issue held by an individual at a certain moment and in a particular context.

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**Stereotype (1)**

Gal Harpaz

Stereotypes encompass beliefs and opinions regarding the traits, attributes, and behaviors associated with members of diverse groups (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). This phenomenon is articulated as a collection of cognitive generalizations, such as beliefs and expectations, concerning the qualities and characteristics of individuals within a particular group or social category. Similar to schemas, stereotypes serve to streamline and hasten the process of perception and judgment (Rhodes & Baron 2019). However, it is noteworthy that stereotypes frequently tend to be exaggerated, skewed toward negativity rather than positivity, and resistant to modification, even in the face of encounters with individuals whose qualities defy stereotypical expectations (APA, 2018).

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**Stereotype (2)**

Martina Novotna

Stereotypes are compared to mental shortcuts to make sense of the world. However, these fixed habits of cognition are not set in stone and can be reshaped by new experiences that challenge our preconceived notions. They also do not have to falsify reality, even though it is often the case (Lippman, 1992). An example of a stereotype could be the Western perspective of viewing the world, which is usually applied to events outside the West. This approach has its limitations and can lead to preconceived judgments about a situation, which may not be accurate.

Stereotypes are often adopted during the process of socialization via cultural norms and unwritten expectations. For instance, if a baby is dressed in a colour that is not typically associated with their gender, such as blue for boys or pink for girls, society may react harshly due to these deeply rooted stereotypes. Similarly, a woman in a leadership position may be perceived as too ambitious and career-driven, while a man in the same position would not face the same criticism. These are examples of how deeply ingrained these frameworks can be in our lives. Importantly, stereotypes can affect our perceptions, attitudes, and actions towards others, leading to negative consequences, such as discrimination and prejudice. Moreover, evaluation of certain out-group members might fuell another increase in stereotyping because individuals' use of stereotypes as the basis for estimating the thoughts and feelings of others further extends this stereotypicality to the target (Skorinco & Sinclair, 2013). On the other hand, previous research (Blair, 2002) has shown that the intentions and goals of the perceiver can play a significant role in this regard, including individual characteristics or the intention to foster positive relationships with others, which, in the end, reduce automatic stereotypes.

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**Subjectivity**

The quality of being based on individual opinions or interpretations, rather than on objective facts.

References

**Swear Words**

Anna Bączkowska

Swearing is a linguistic practice that involves the use of social, religious or cultural taboos, i.e., some ‘forbidden’ words. It involves the use of words related to sex or bodily parts and functions, in particular excretory (e.g. piss) and scatological aspects (e.g. shit), parts of the body and genitals (ass, cunt), sexual practices (fuck, wank, having sex); it also makes reference to objects of religious cult (God, Jesus). There are generally three features of bad language: (1) they invoke stigmatised or taboo concepts; (2) they are interpreted non-literally; (3) they convey the speaker’s strong emotions or attitude. However, for other scholars, literal use is inclusive of swear words (e.g. *We fucked, Let’s fuck*). Swearing entails expressing negative feelings, criticism, anger or frustration. A basic list of swearwords was proposed by [Dewaele (2016)](http://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2016.01.009.), and they comprise, inter alia: *damn*, *fart*, *crap*, *hell*, *idiot, bastard*, *goddamn*, *piss, cunt*, *fuck*, *cocksucker, slut*, *fucking hell*, *bitch*, *prick*, *shit*, *bollocks*.

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**Syntax**

Syntax is the part of linguistics that studies the structure and formation of sentences. It explains how words and phrases are arranged to form correct sentences.

References

**Thought**

Serap Durmuş Öztürk

Thoughtisthe act or process of thinking; cogitation. A product of thinking; idea; notion. Opinion is a thought or belief about something or someone. The thought on the other hand, is an idea or opinion produced by thinking, or occurring suddenly in the mind. Questions concerning the nature of thought are as old as history itself. Thinking is a material process that fuels scientific investigation into the nature of thought. Thought is so often based on analogy and metaphor—mind invokes one of these subroutines to understand a new context. Theoretical physicist David Bohm (1994: ix) says that the role of thought and knowledge at every level of human affairs, from our private reflections on personal identity to our collective efforts to fashion a tolerable civilization. Every philosophical current leaves behind a sediment of ‘common sense’; this is the document of its historical effectiveness. Common sense is not rigid and immobile but is continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life.

To begin with, thought is not fresh, direct perception. It is literally that which has been ‘thought’ –the past, carried forward into the present. Thought is also inclusive of feelings, in the form of latent emotional experiences. Not only negative, painful emotions are folded into thought, but pleasurable ones as well. The mind is an evolved computer program and the contents of the messages vary from personal thoughts to public statements. Public opinion can provide useful perspectives on an influential work of political thought. Lippmann wrote that “the ideal of democracy” involved a particular mode of opinion formation: “self-conscious people forming judgments on weight of evidence, and initiating from their own thoughts.”. He thought improving public opinion meant elevating chat from gossip to debate, so that it governed even better as a general political force.

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**Trust**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Firm belief into reliability or truth (*Oxford Dictionaries*)

References

**Truth**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

That which is true or in accordance with fact or reality or a fact or belief that is accepted as true (*Oxford Languages*). In metaphysics and the philosophy of language, truth is the property of sentences, assertions, beliefs, thoughts, or propositions that, in ordinary discourse, are to agree with the facts or to state what is the case. (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/truth-philosophy-and-logic>)

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**Types of Participants in Social Media Audience**

Anna Bączkowska

Due to the nature of computer-mediated communication (CMC), the participants of online interaction are mostly anonymous, and the audience is collective. Since it is undefined, it is sometimes dubbed the imagined audience (Litt, 2012), i.e., a conceptualisation of potential interactants. Ede and Lunsford (1984, p. 156) also distinguish between invoked audience, which is one imagined by the writer of a message, and addressed audience, which comprises the actual readers of the message. A writer of a message is not always the author of the message. If the author does not want to type and post a message themselves, they can relegate it to a writer. Similarly, on the reception end, the addressee is not necessarily the target of a message. The former is the person one talks/writes to, while the latter is the person the message is actually targeted at. The posted message reaches not only the addressee to whom the message is sent (i.e., ratified participants; Goffman 1981) but anyone out there who happens to see the post and decides to read it (i.e., originally unratified participants, but due to the nature of social media which host open access to posted messages, they automatically become ratified participants) or those recipients the producer ratifies him/herself (friends on Facebook, subscribers on YouTube, etc.). Thus, the addressee and the target may but need not coincide. The possible interaction is multi-directional: on the one hand, the message producer initiates interaction with the addressee/target but, on the other hand, unlike in naturally-occurring communication, various members of the audience (ratified, unratified, invoked, addressed) may also interact with each other with or without the inclusion of the original producer and/or addressee/target. The notion of ratified versus unratified addresses, originally proposed by Goffman (1981), in the context of social media is substantially modified, since addresses change their status from overhearers, through unratified participants to ratified participants who are not addresses/targets. Both ratified and unratified participants on social media can freely express their opinion by posting their message or by adding their opinions to existing posts, regardless whether or not they are the addressees/targets of the message.

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**Types of public opinion**

Artur Lipiński

On the basis of the metaanalysis of various definitions of public opinion S. Herbst enlisted a number of types of public opinion: aggregate public opinion, majoritarian public opinion, discursive public opinion, reified public opinion. Aggregate public opinion can be understood as the sum of opinions expressed through polls, surveys, elections, referenda based on assumption that the public is atomized group of individuals holding opinions on plethora of specific issues. Secondly, majoritarian public opinion which are again based on aggregation of voices of the people who are able to express themselves and their voice is widely heard in a society. The discursive public opinion assumes that the opinions are not stable, they evolve in result of the publicly held discursive communication based on exchange of the arguments. Fourthly, reified public opinion which perceives public opinion as a fictional entity constructed by symbolic elites (political, media, academic etc.) and used rhetorically to various political aims, including self-legitimation and de-legitimation of the opponents.

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**Vagueness**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

Opinions can vary in their degrees of specificity, with some being more specific and others less clear or more vague. Vagueness is often used interchangeably and/or is associated with indefiniteness, generality, evasiveness, fuzziness, often leading to miscommunication. Therefore, the term used to have (and still sometimes has) negative connotations. As such, it has been long treated as an unwanted feature of communication, used mainly for manipulative purposes when veiling opinions and deliberately masking the speaker’s intentions. However, since Joanna Channell’s seminal work Vague Language, the term ‘vague language’ has evolved to mean a repertoire of linguistic categories, which have a highly non-specific meaning but can be used as a useful strategy to make communication more effective.

The taxonomies of vague language vary in different works, but the most typical categories include (1) quantifiers, (2) approximators, (3) placeholders, and (4) vague references to categories (also called ‘summarizing lexical items’ or ‘general extenders’). The meaning and functions of vague lexemes depend on the context and discourse type where they are used. By appropriately using vague language in appropriate situations the following functions can be performed: (1) give the right amount of information and deliberately withhold information; (2) use language persuasively; (3) display power; (4) use it as a strategy of politeness and as a means of self-protection; (5) use it as a means to demonstrate informality; and (6) fill in lexical gaps and missing information.

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**View**

Serap Durmuş Öztürk

View isan opinion, belief, or idea, or a way of thinking about something. Early 15c., “formal inspection or survey” (of land); mid-15c., “visual perception,” from Anglo-French vewe “view,” Old French veue “light, brightness; look, appearance; eyesight, vision,” noun use of fem. past participle of veoir “to see,” from Latin videre “to see”. Sense of “manner of regarding something” attested from early 15c. Meaning “sight or prospect of a landscape, etc.” is recorded from c. 1600.

Opinion is a view, judgment, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter. Public opinion is the prevailing view of any matter of general interest or concern in a given community. Political opinions can evolve over time based on changing circumstances, new information, or shifts in societal attitudes. When you are asked to analyze the author’s view, the appropriate point for you to address is the author’s attitude. An author’s attitude, or their tone, tells the reader how the author feels about the subject he or she is writing about. An author's tone can be seen in the figurative language, sentence structure, and diction that they use, as well as in the details, descriptions, reasons, and evidence given.

The term “view” in the context of political opinion can be examined from various perspectives within academic literature. A “view” refers to an individual or collective perspective, belief, or stance on a particular political issue, ideology, or policy. Political views are often shaped by a combination of personal experiences, values, cultural influences, and exposure to information and different perspectives and are covered in a wide range of dimensions, including political views, economic policies, social justice, governance structures and foreign relations.

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**Vulgarism**

Jūratė Ruzaitė

A vulgarism is a word or expression that makes explicit and offensive reference to sex, bodily functions or other taboo subjects. Vulgarity, also referred to as profanity or use of swear/curse words, is considered crude, offensive, or impolite, often contains strong language and is explicit. Thus, vulgarisms are generally not appropriate in formal or polite language. They are often used to express strong emotions, frustration, anger, or emphasis, but they can also be offensive, disrespectful or inappropriate in certain contexts.

Vulgarity may serve as an intensifier to emphasise subjective opinions, as a means to offend or convey hate speech towards others, to describe vulgar activities, or to indicate an informal tone in conversation. As such, vulgar language is frequently included in widely used sentiment and emotion analysis lexicons.

The use of vulgar language is influenced by pragmatic or contextual factors, including the interpersonal relationship between speakers or their social characteristics such as gender, occupation, religiosity, or social status. For instance, some research indicates that males tend to employ profanity more frequently than females. In research on social media, certain vulgar words were identified as indicative of demographic traits, such as political ideology.

The use of vulgarism can be seen as a violation of social norms of politeness and civility. Examples of such language include words like 'fuck', 'stupid', or 'dumb'. In media and communication research, vulgar language is often captured as part of incivility. Vulgar language is often considered highly uncivil easily recognizable as a problematic communication pattern that breaks the norm of the discussion arena. It is worth noting that perception is subjective and can vary depending on the individual (such as level of sensitivity but also among gender, age and education). Personal characteristics and cultural background can influence how someone evaluates a specific type of attack. It is also important to recognize that what may have been acceptable communication pattern in the past may not be acceptable in the present and vice versa. While the acceptability of certain forms of communication may change in political discourse and might also be different in online and offline contexts. It is important to keep in mind that the presence of vulgar and offensive language can elicit negative emotions and impact people's attitudes. The issue of moderating the use of vulgar language online is a delicate matter. This is because certain social classes may use this type of communication, and if we censor their opinions, we may miss out on valuable insights shared online.

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**World/Extralinguistic Knowledge**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

In linguistics world knowledge is the non-linguistic information that helps a reader or listener interpret the [meanings](https://www.thoughtco.com/meaning-semantics-term-1691373) of [words](https://www.thoughtco.com/word-english-language-1692612) and [sentences](https://www.thoughtco.com/sentence-grammar-1692087). (<https://www.thoughtco.com/world-knowledge-language-studies-1692508>)

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**Worldview**

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk

Worldview is a comprehensive perspective through which individuals interpret and understand the world around them. (e.g., Koltko-Rivera 2004), Worldview has been named with different labels through its use in philosophy, psychology, sociology, or culture. It is a particularly polysemous and rich concept. In an attempt to define its multilevel nature Koltko-Rivera (2004) proposes that worldview is “a way of describing the universe and life within it, both in terms of what is and what ought to be. [It is] is a set of beliefs that includes limiting statements and assumptions regarding what exists and what does not (either in actuality, or in principle), what objects or experiences are good or bad, and what objectives, behaviours, and relationships are desirable or undesirable. A worldview defines what can be known or done in the world, and how it can be known or done. In addition to defining what goals can be sought in life, a worldview defines what goals should be pursued. Worldviews include assumptions that may be unproven, and even unprovable, but these assumptions are superordinate, in that they provide the epistemic and ontological foundations for other beliefs within a belief system”.

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