



Lehrstuhl für Romanische und Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# DOING ETHICS: INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICES AND VERBAL DEVICES

10 - 12 October 2022, RW I, S 58



UNIVERSITÄT  
BAYREUTH

***Doing ethics: Interdisciplinary perspectives on communicative practices and verbal devices***

**Workshop Bayreuth 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

09.00 - 09.15	<b>Rüdiger Seesemann</b> , Dean of the cluster of excellence Africa <i>Multiple Welcome</i>
09.15 - 09.45	<b>Martina Drescher</b> <i>Introduction</i>
09.45 - 10.25	<b>Eva Spies</b> <i>Practicing ethics - making futures</i>
10.25 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 11.40	<b>Jörg Bergmann</b> <i>Morality and the affordances of double duty utterances</i>
11.40 - 12.20	<b>Véronique Traverso</b> <i>The doctor, the refugee and the dark thoughts</i>
12.20 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 14.40	<b>Gerda Haßler</b> <i>Attenuation, modal and evidential markers in moral discourse</i>
14.40 - 15.20	<b>Michael Lambek</b> <i>When 'pardon me' is not an apology</i>
15.20 - 15.50	Coffee break
15.50 - 16.30	<b>Manuel Padilla Cruz</b> <i>On the contribution of interjections to communication and their use, again: Non-propositional effects, morality and communicative injustices</i>
16.30 - 17.10	<b>Christian Plantin</b> <i>Values, emotions, arguments</i>

**Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

09.30 - 10.10	<b>Tim Wharton &amp; Louis de Saussure</b> <i>Slave of the passions: pragmatics, affect and communication</i>
10.10 - 10.50	<b>Joe Spencer-Bennett</b> <i>Metalinguistic stance acts: the importance of everyday judgements of language</i>
10.50 - 11.20	Coffee break
11.20 – 12.00	<b>Bi Tié Benjamain Irié</b> <i>A discursive approach to moral interjections in daily conversations in Nouchi and Ivorian popular French</i>
12.00 - 12.40	<b>Felix Ameka</b> <i>Cultural constraints on interjections as signals of moral evaluation in everyday discourse</i>
12.40 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 14.40	<b>Laura Guadagnano</b> <i>Exploring ‘hein’ and ‘quoi’ as markers of moral stance</i>
14.40- 15.20	<b>Liliane Ngawa Mbaho</b> <i>Achieving moral judgement through interjections and modal particles in the sales of medicines in inter-city buses in Cameroon</i>
15.20 – 15.50	Coffee break

**Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

09.30 - 10.10	<b>Adama Drabo</b> <i>A-DA-MA: When a name changes to express outrage</i>
10.10 - 10.50	<b>Oumarou Boukari</b> <i>A sound as ethical affordance in interactions in sub-Saharan Africa</i>
10.50 - 11.20	Coffee break
11.20 - 12.30	Wrap up
12.30	Lunch

**Felix AMEKA** (University of Leiden, Netherlands)

**Cultural constraints on interjections as signals of moral evaluation in everyday discourse**

Interjections and other routines have affordances as moral evaluators in the sense that by their meaning they either indicate approval of an action, a thought, or a statement in interaction, as good or bad (or neutral). For instance, there are interjections for ‘shaming’ for doing something that people think is bad. Other interjections express surprise as well as disapproval of what someone has done. And yet others signal approval and encourage the target to do more of what they are doing. As such they are a good tool for doing ethics in interaction. However there are socio-cultural constraints on their use. For instance the use of the form huh? which has been suggested as a universal word (Dingemanse et al. 2010) is discouraged in socialization contexts. There are similar constraints on other interjections such as the celebrated “suck teeth”. I will explore the implications of the cultural constraints on the enactment of interjections in discourse for the affordances of interjections as tools for doing ethics in everyday discourse.

**Jörg R. BERGMANN** (University of Bielefeld, Germany)

### **Morality and the affordances of double duty utterances**

For a recipient to recognize and respond to a moral message, it must be expressed by linguistic or other means in the realization of an utterance. At the same time, however, moral utterances are highly dispreferred: they imply shared moral ideas, ascribe responsibility and blame, are selfrighteous and “polemogenic”, i.e., induce dispute and conflict. A structural solution to this problem can be seen in the fact that moral messages are often conveyed in the format of “double duty utterances”.

In my paper, I will look more closely at the format of double - or multi - duty utterances and pursue how moral messages are “packaged” and disguised, and how recipients respond to such embedded morality.

**Oumarou BOUKARI** (Alassane Ouattara University of Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire)

## **A sound as ethical affordance in interactions in sub-Saharan Africa**

In the name of an alleged objectivity, systemic linguistics and some discourse analysts (Van Leeuwen 2008) argue that the study of morality does not belong to linguistics. According to Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2002) and Paveau (2013), this topic seems to embarrass linguists. Yet, all specialists in the study of ordinary ethics agree that the use of language in concrete situations of communication remains fundamentally an implementation and continuous evaluation of human activity or character. In this respect, language, the linguist's object of study, is inseparable from moral practice and communication (Lambek 2015, Keane 2016). Moreover, as Ricoeur (1969) already reminded us, the concepts of good and evil cannot be thought directly. We only discover them through what human language says about them. Morality is therefore a question of form and function or of the meaning that this form acquires in discourse according to different languages.

In this contribution, we focus on a particular sound as a concrete form of actualisation of moral discourse in sub-Saharan Africa. This sound is found in almost all countries of West and Central Africa with more or less similar forms and functions. Its uses are observed in this region both in the practice of local languages and in that of languages inherited from colonisation. Commonly spelt *tchrr* in Côte d'Ivoire, it is phonetically realised everywhere as a muffled, palato-bidental aspirated sound. That said, our study will focus on the use of this unit in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly in interactions in Ordinary Ivorian French. The fact is that in discourse, this sound can be uttered alone or accompanied by another utterance to express a certain disapproval of the speaker. The fact is that in discourse, this sound can be pronounced alone or accompanied by another utterance to express a certain disapproval of the speaker. It is therefore an interjection that can often serve as a moral discourse marker. Consequently, the study is rooted in the theoretical and methodological principles of discourse analysis and is based on authentic data (daily conversations and interviews) collected in Côte d'Ivoire. The aim of the study is to explore the linguistic and discursive properties of this sound and at the same time to contribute to a double discussion. The study is interested on the one hand, with the capacity of the linguist to objectively study moral discourse and on the other, with the question of the distinction between onomatopoeia and interjection (Kleiber 2006).

Keane, Webb. 2016. *Ethical Life: Its Natural and Social Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kerbrat-Orecchioni, Catherine. 2002. *L'énonciation : de la subjectivité dans le langage*. Paris: Armand Colin.

Kleiber, George. 2006. "Sémiotique de l'interjection". *Langages* 161: 10-23.

Lambek, Michael. 2015. *The ethical condition. Essays on action, person & value*. Chicago / London: The University of Chicago Press.

Paveau, Marie-Anne. 2013. *Langage et morale. Une éthique des vertus discursives*. Limoges: Éditions Lambert-Lucas.

Ricoeur, Paul. 1969. *Le conflit des interprétations. Essais d'herméneutique I*. Paris: Seuil.

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

**Adama DRABO** (University of Bayreuth, Germany)

### **A-DA-MA: When a name changes to express outrage**

This paper conceives indignation as a complex moral emotion directed against a person whose guilt is supposed to be beyond doubt. In my talk, I focus on Ivorian French, in which the pragmatic-textual dimension has been understudied in comparison to phonetic-phonetic, lexical, syntactic, and morphological aspects. My aim is above all to explore morality as a phenomenon deeply embedded in interaction and second to discuss the emergence of certain moral expressions in the media. I concentrate on the first name “Adama” and the expression “On peut faire ça?” which may be used simultaneously to express outrage in certain contexts. To achieve this, I opt for a theoretical framework that brings together studies on moral discourse (Bergmann 1998, Spencer-Bennett 2018, Drescher 2020) with variational and pragmatic approaches (Drescher 2014). By basing this research on different media corpora enriched by recordings of speakers in real interaction situations, I intend to contribute to a better understanding of the moral phenomenon. My research is based on various media corpora enriched by recordings of speakers in real interaction situations.

Bergmann, Jörg R.. 1998. “Introduction: Morality in discourse”. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 31. Jg., Nr. 3-4: 279-294.

Drescher, Martina. 2014. “La dimension pragmatique-discursive du français en contact: L'exemple des consultations à la radio camerounaise”. *Journal of Language Contact* 7.1: 62–92.

Drescher, Martina. 2020. “The Moral Taste of Food. A Discourse Analysis of Social Media Discussions about Vegetarianism and Veganism”. In Rüdiger, Sofia & Susanne Mühleisen (éds). *Talking about Food: The Social and the Global in Eating Communities*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 35-56.

Spencer-Bennett, Joe. 2018. *Moral talk: Stance and evaluation in political discourse*. London / New York: Routledge.

**Laura GUADAGNANO** (University of Bayreuth, Germany)

### **Exploring *hein* and *quoi* as markers of moral stance**

In my contribution, I will focus on the use of *hein* and *quoi* to show how they can contribute to the emergence and negotiation of moral communication. Although these linguistic devices have already been studied from various perspectives, their use in relation to *moral communication* has not been considered yet. Previous studies show that in addition to using *hein* as a marker of agreement or confirmation, it is also used to implicitly express the speaker's attitude or state of mind. Moreover, *hein*, like *quoi*, can help maintain the course of the interaction and reassure the speaker that the interlocutor can adequately reconstruct what has been said.

A preliminary analysis suggests that *hein* and *quoi* may, furthermore, refer to moral concerns or emphasize a morally charged stance in specific contexts. Especially in the first case, they can refer to moral concerns that are not explicitly expressed. Thus, *hein* and *quoi* seem to communicate a moral concern that has to be inferred from the ongoing conversation or the broader context.

My analysis is based on data dealing with sexual and reproductive health in Côte d'Ivoire and gathered among Ivorian women, mostly female university students.



**Gerda HÄBLER** (University of Potsdam, Germany)

### **Attenuation, modal and evidential markers in moral discourse**

In shaping moral discourse, it is not unimportant where the speaker or writer takes their arguments from, whether the arguments are verifiable or stem from their convictions. Especially in emotional discourses, it is important to understand such markings of utterances in order to recognise the purpose of those markings and to answer the question what the presuppositions and social conditions necessary for the rhetoric of disentangling are. The term *modality* refers to the ways language can express various relationships to reality or truth. *Evidentiality* is the indication of the nature of evidence for a given statement. Modal and evidential markers can reduce or increase the speaker's responsibility for the content of what is said.

This paper is an presentation of the factors that affect the analysis of attenuation in discourse corpora and journalistic corpora. In other words, a detailed account is given of each of the linguistic, structural, enunciative and situational aspects which can be used to indicate when the speakers of a given communicative act are pursuing strategic mitigating purposes. We start from a pragmatic-rhetorical perspective of attenuation and consider it to be a linguistic strategy of distancing the message in order to get closer to or not to distance oneself too far from the other person and thus to gain acceptance. Attenuation is, therefore, an argumentative activity employed by interlocutors in order to successfully reach the intended goal of their discourse. Attenuation affects discourse in two ways: either by minimising the illocutionary force of speech acts, or by reducing (and defocusing) the role of the participants in the enunciation. Modal and evidential markers are often used to achieve the following effects of attenuation: avoiding liability for what has been said insofar as it may affect one's own image, self-protection by generalising or expressing what has been said as evidence, concern about what others will say, being politically correct when talking about certain subjects, people or institutions. It can also be used by institutions as a way of minimising self-protection. In some cases, recourse to forms of evidential meaning can be the shield for asserting something. Appeal to the judgement of the majority by means of impersonal verb forms and discursive particles that depersonalise the deictic origin of the utterance can help to formulate moral statements without the speaker having to take responsibility for those statements.

**Bi Tié Benjamain IRIE** (University Alassane Ouattara of Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire)

### **A discursive approach to moral interjections in daily conversations in Nouchi and Ivorian popular French**

Nouchi and Ivorian Popular French (IPF) are two languages that constitute a significant part of the Ivorian linguistic identity. These languages play an important vehicular role in Côte d'Ivoire: their speakers can be found in all spheres of Ivorian society. The sociolinguistic interest of these two languages is no longer to be discussed, given the number of research works that have been devoted to them. However, it is the syntactic and lexical aspects that have been addressed in most of these studies. From a discourse point of view, though, Nouchi and IPF have interest. Being hybrid languages because of their syntactic and semantic structure; Nouchi and IPF are suitable for all forms of discursive constructions in use to express one's thoughts, to talk about the world and to manage interpersonal relations. It turns out that the management of one's relations in ordinary conversations is the place of expression of emotions of diverse nature. Thus, coming under the emotional, the expressive markers of interpersonal relations do not always use the traditional linguistic forms whose status is undeniably recognized in the language. In reality, they are linguistically heterogeneous forms located at the periphery of the language (Martinet) such as prosody, onomatopoeia and interjections. In everyday conversations in Nouchi and Ivorian popular French, interjections are legion. They occur at different levels of verbal interaction. We are therefore led to ask ourselves what forms interjections take in interlocution. What type of social function do they fulfil in the course of language exchanges in Côte d'Ivoire, in keeping with the linguistic politeness associated with the management of interpersonal relations? Is it possible to establish a stable typology of its interjective forms in everyday conversations in these two popular Ivorian languages? Beyond making a taxonomy of interjective expressions used in Nouchi and IPF, our objective here is to undertake a sociolinguistic and discursive analysis highlighting the expression of moral and/or ethical value that is attached to their use at times.

**Michael LAMBEK** (University of Toronto, Canada)

**When ‘pardon me’ is not an apology**

I distinguish the ethical weight or force of first person utterance from the thinner or weaker ethical consequentiality of interjection. In the former, the illocutionary aspect is always significant, in the latter the perlocutionary aspect is stronger. The former can often be characterized as manifesting judgment while the latter manifests judgmentalism. Alternatively, the latter may offer judgment where it has been perceived as missing. These might be considered first and second order or the intrinsic and extrinsic ethical force of speaking.

**Carline Liliane NGAWA MBAHO** (Université des Montagnes, Bangangté, Cameroon)

### **Achieving moral judgement through interjections and modal particles in the sales of medicines in intercity buses in Cameroon**

Ethics and morality constitute a basic part of our lives (Vaughn 2019). They thus become also manifest in daily communication (Pesa 2011). Among the techniques used to perform ethics or morality are certain interjections and modal particles. This paper adopts a pragmatic-discursive perspective in order to analyse the moral implications of some interjections and modal particles. The data was collected between 2011 and 2015. It consists of audio recordings of interactions between medicine sellers – so called *doctors* who are mostly traditional healers – and passengers in intercity buses in Cameroon (Ngawa 2018). Moral issues become relevant since potential buyers cast doubt on the quality of the proposed products as well as on the activity as a whole. To overcome this, the vendors try to persuade the potential buyers. Hence, *doctors* and potential buyers project different levels of morality and are both involved in doing ethics. The paper focuses on interjections such as *ékyé/ékié*, *aka*, *ah bon* and *non* used by the interactants to express moral judgement.

Pesa, Biweso I. 2011. *Ethique communicationnelle de la palabre africaine*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Ngawa Mbaho, L. 2018. *La vente de produits de santé dans les cars interurbains au Cameroun : une analyse interactionnelle*. Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Vaughn, L. 2019. *Doing Ethics: Moral Reasoning and Contemporary Issues*. New York: Norton and Company.

**Manuel PADILLA CRUZ** (University of Sevilla, Spain)

**On the contribution of interjections to communication and their use, again:  
Non-propositional effects, morality and communicative injustices**

The use of interjections and what they contribute to communication have constantly intrigued researchers. Some have suggested that interjections behave like *indexicals* pointing to entities in the world. Others have claimed that interjections are conceptual elements. In relevance-theoretic pragmatics, interjections have been treated as procedural elements activating processing instructions which facilitate the construction of some propositional representation of the speaker's psychological state. Yet, the specialisation and stabilisation of some interjections to express specific states might associate those interjections with rather fuzzy or even more specific emotion-related concepts.

The peculiarities of interjections have led researchers to place them halfway between *vocal gestures* and words, and to portray them as involuntary and symptomatic signals. Their production, however, involves a conscious assessment of the communicative situation and a selection from among a set of items. Indeed, their use is affected by cultural conventions, of which language users need to be aware. It is therefore in their interest to use interjections adequately. If such conventions are contravened, the use of interjections may be perceived as strange, and the language user may be thought to have committed a *pragmatic failure*.

This talk will argue that, although interjections can sometimes result in conceptual or propositional representations of the speaker's state, their contribution to communication cannot be limited to such a type of representations. Rather, they can also give rise to a myriad of *non-propositional* effects that comprise sensorimotor reactions like mental imagery, feelings, or mind states (Wilson & Carston 2019; Wharton 2022). Regarding their use, this talk will suggest that strange or unusual use of interjections may sometimes lead hearers to assess speakers' communicative behaviour negatively. Indeed, hearers may inflict a variety of *communicative injustices*: *testimonial injustice* (Fricker 2007), *contributory injustice* (Dotson 2012) or *pragmatic competence injustice* (Padilla Cruz 2018).

Dotson, Kristie. 2012. "A cautionary tale: On limiting epistemic oppression". *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 33: 24-47.

Fricker, Miranda. 2007. *Epistemic Injustice. Power & the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Padilla Cruz, Manuel. 2018. "Pragmatic competence injustice". *Social Epistemology. A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy* 32: 143-163.

Wharton, Tim. 2022. "Relevance: Communication and cognition and...?" *Pragmatics & Cognition* 22: 321-347.

Wilson, Deirdre & Robyn Carston. 2019. "Pragmatics and the Challenge of 'Non-propositional' Effects". *Journal of Pragmatics* 145: 31-38.

**Christian PLANTIN** (University Lyon II, France)

### **Values, emotions, arguments**

**Values** — The issue of values a central topic for the *New rhetoric* of Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958). In the Treatise, we find scattered remarks on a possible specificity of the argumentative treatment of values as emotions. These remarks sometimes appear contradictory and do not suggest any substantial conclusion.

**Emotions** — Emotions are framed according to the “emotional cognitive filters” their experiencers apply to a given situation; Scherer (1984a, 1984b) gives a detailed account of the psychological components and subcomponents of these filters.

It follows that emotions are not linked to a situational stimulus, but to a representation of a situation structured by “rules” (?) involving “world visions” (?) “values” (?), “moral principles” (?).

Emotions are arguable. Empathy / preference for agreement play in favor of the emotional alignment of participants in the same situation. Nonetheless, agreement is only the default situation. Experiencer routinely differ in their emotions and, in the same argumentative impulse, argue to define the situation itself, the feelings it inspires, and the actions it requires.

**Three value loaded disputable emotion episodes**

— Two people, A and B, driving through the village where they live and which they know well. Context: animal contraception is not widespread in the village; the cats reproduce freely, they hunt and are given survival food by the inhabitants. B stops to avoid hitting a young cat, rather dirty and skinny, lying on the road. Silence. A says: *Mon dieu!* [French; “My God”]. Silence.

— Elementary school (Brazil). The teacher (female) asks one of her young pupils (boy) to line up in a circle with the others; the child says to her: “*cala a boca!* [Brazilian Portuguese; “shut your mouth”]”. The teacher is shocked, keeps silent and then engage in a justificatory monologue.

— Welcoming one's parents at aperitif time “*merde! on n'a rien pour maman* [French; “shit!! we have nothing for mum!”]”.

Perelman, Ch. & L. Olbrechts-Tyteca. 1958/1976. *Traité de l'argumentation. La nouvelle rhétorique*. Préface de E. Bréhier. Paris, PUF. 3<sup>e</sup> éd. 1976, Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles.

Plantin, Christian. 2011. *Les bonnes raisons des émotions. Principes et méthodes pour l'étude du discours émotionné*. Berne: Peter Lang.

Scherer, K. R. 1984. Les émotions: Fonctions et composantes. *Cahiers de psychologie cognitive*. 4. 9-39. In B. Rimé, K. Scherer (éds), 1993. 97-133.

Scherer, K. R. 1984. On the Nature and function of emotion: A component process approach. In Scherer, K. R., Ekman P., (eds) 1984. 293-317.

**Joe SPENCER-BENNETT** (University of Birmingham, Great Britain)

### **Metalinguistic stance acts: the importance of everyday judgements of language**

Linguists often complain that ordinary language users confuse language and morality (Pinker 1994, Aitchison 1997). Lay people, it is said, mistakenly see language as something which can be more or less ‘proper’ or ‘correct’. In this paper, I argue that ordinary judgements of language are much more varied and nuanced than they are typically characterised as being. Drawing on work such as Cameron’s (1995) *Verbal Hygiene*, Agha’s (2007) *Language and Social Relations* and Du Bois’ (2007) conception of the ‘stance act’, and on data from an archive of commentary on everyday British life (Mass Observation, [www.massobs.org.uk](http://www.massobs.org.uk)), I sketch a framework for analysing judgements of language which views those judgements as themselves an important form of sociolinguistic practice. This framework treats evaluative statements about language as ‘metalinguistic stance acts’, analysable in terms of their: linguistic articulation (*what* is being evaluated?); temporal relationship (*when?*); social relationship (*who?*); and normative articulation (*why?*). In doing so, the framework is intended to capture the continuities, and the differences, between diverse forms of metalinguistic stance act; from the frowns, interjections and reformulations of face-to-face conversation to the language policies of nation states. And it is intended to articulate a view of language which sees the evaluative judgements that we all make of language as central to our political and ethical lives, rather than a matter of ‘confusion’.

Agha, A. 2007. *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aitchison, J. 1997. *The Language Web*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cameron, D. 1995. *Verbal Hygiene*. London: Routledge.

Du Bois, J. W. 2007. The stance triangle. In R. Engelbretson (ed.). *Stancetaking in Discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 139-182.

Pinker, S. 1994. *The Language Instinct*. London: Penguin.

**Eva SPIES** (University of Bayreuth, Germany)

### **Practicing ethics – making futures**

The paper introduces the agenda of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence and the Cluster's Research Section "Moralities" in order to present the overall framework of our interdisciplinary work on modalities of "doing ethics". It then explores the notion of "practicing ethics" and its methodological implications.

Conceptualizing moralities as *doing ethics* is based on a praxeological approach which understands ethics as products of social interaction and thus as relational and in flux. We locate ethics, and more concrete, ethical concerns, claims or judgements not in a sphere of expert knowledge about ethical theories or codes of conduct, but understand them rather as emerging in and through ordinary activities and exchanges. In accordance with the Cluster's notion of multiplicity, we study ethics not as given normative entities but as products of relational processes that is, of processes of communicating and practicing ethics.

In complement to the focus on "communicating ethics", the work on "practicing ethics" refers to material practices involving bodies, technology, music or infrastructures. It opts for an ethnographic approach to and thick descriptions of the moral making of life worlds. The paper argues that to access the continual becoming of ethics/worlds, we need a praxeological version of 'thick description', one that focuses on practices and situations as moments of emergence. Rather than studying practices as an illustration of a given general case, the methodological challenge is to study them as giving way to a potential otherwise, to yet unknown worlds.

In the context of my work on proselytizing African Pentecostal churches, it seems that the rather unpredictable becoming of moral lifeworlds, which involves human and non-human agencies, contrasts with the churches' efforts to engineer moral and societal transformations. Can a perspective that focuses on processes of becoming and on practicing ethics do justice to both experiences?



**Véronique TRAVERSO** (ICAR, CNRS Lyon, France)

### **The doctor, the refugee and the dark thoughts**

As part of the asylum procedure, doctors are often required to provide applicants with certificates attesting to the violence they have suffered in their country or during their journey into exile, and its consequences, both physical and psychological. In order to assess these consequences, the doctors work on the basis of a physical examination and an interview. In this presentation, I study a corpus of expert consultations carried out in an association of voluntary doctors. I seek to describe the specificities of the psychological interrogation of applicants, during which, while the doctors try to get them to express depression, insomnia, nightmares or ideas of death, the applicants are torn between clearly stating their suffering (in support of their asylum application) and avoiding the direct expression of extreme feelings (terror, panic, the desire to die, etc.). I will focus on some of the devices used by each of the participants in these highly emotional exchanges to get by with what appear to be moral principles.

**Tim WHARTON** (University of Brighton, Great Britain) and **Louis DE SAUSSURE** (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland)

### **Slave of the passions: pragmatics, affect and communication**

Given that the communication of information about emotional states is ubiquitous, one could be forgiven for assuming that accounts of linguistic communication include well-developed views of how such information is communicated. However, for a range of reasons, scholars working on meaning have tended to persist with the view that the mental processes behind reason and passions exist in separate domains. The emotional dimension to linguistic communication has therefore tended to be overlooked.

In this talk we explore ways in which affect can be accommodated within relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). We suggest that the traditional pragmatic notion of communicative effect needs to be supplemented with the new notion of *affective effect*, effects that involve processes not adequately described by the representation and management of propositional information. We propose that there are two types: *primary affective effects*, which typically act as input to inferential processes and *secondary affective effects*, which are typically the output of inferential processes. Primary affective effects come in two flavours: *anticipatory effects* and *transfer effects*. The second set of effects are communicative, and inextricably linked with the interpretation of expressive meaning (Wharton 2009): here we focus on affective effects that result from *interjections*.

Affective effects are also of considerable interest to areas of scholarship concerned with persuasion and researchers in that area have long been interested in the role of emotions in epistemic attitudes raised by audiences, opinion change or ‘the manufacture of consent’. Orwell (1961) listed a number of rhetorical devices which trigger epistemic attitudes and, ultimately, consent. The vast amount of experimental work on heuristics in cognitive psychology (Petty and Cacioppo 1996), have established not only the existence of ‘cognitive illusions’ - where people entertain false beliefs, or illusory causation - but convincing evolutionary reasons for their existence. (As well as the existence of emotional contagion, a paradigm example of *transfer effects* as described above.) As such we see the notion of affective effect as a central one in the complex interplay between affect, ethics and communication.

- Orwell, G. 1961. “Politics and the English language”. In *Collected Essays*. London: Martin Secker and Warburg.
- Petty, R. & J. Cacioppo. 1996. *Attitudes and Persuasion: Classic and Contemporary Approaches*. New York: Avalon Publishing.
- Sperber D. & D. Wilson. 1986/1995. *Relevance. Communication and Cognition*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Wharton, T. 2009. *Pragmatics and Non-Verbal Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



● S 58 (GW I)