

Sex Death Politics

2019

October 29-31

Taboos in Language - 26th LIPP Symposium

LMU Munich - Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1- Senatssaal (E110)

Kate Burridge - Monash University, Australia

Andrea Pizarro Pedraza - Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium

Hartmut Schröder - European University Viadrina of Frankfurt Oder, Germany

Wolfgang Schulze - University of Munich, Germany

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26th LIPP Symposium

Welcome to the 26th LIPP Symposium “Sex, Death and Politics – Taboos in Language” organized by members of the Class of Language in the Graduate School Language & Literature Munich at LMU Munich.

The symposium takes place from October 29 to October 31, 2019, and will offer a forum to present and discuss original research investigating taboos in language.

Every community has words and expressions they consider taboo, and these include terms denoting humans, objects, processes, conditions or activities deemed unmentionable. Taboo language is used both to avoid the controversial in an effort to be polite and to deliberately evoke it as an insult or joke. The current movement of political correctness deems certain terms for marginalized populations outdated and taboo. Linguistic strategies like euphemism are then employed to create appropriate alternatives. These taboo terms remain in use, often to intentionally cause offense. Entire communicative situations can also be restricted or marked as taboo, requiring the use of specific language varieties, like mother-in-law language. Investigations into the origins of taboos, their linguistic structure, cultural context and effects on a language’s lexicon, structure and evolution continue to fascinate researchers as old taboos are destroyed, new ones arise and the process repeats.

Organizing Committee:

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Program

Tuesday, October 29, 2019

Venue: LMU Munich - Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 - Senatssaal (E110)

16:30-16:45 **Opening remarks**

16:45-17:45 **Keynote** Kate Burridge (Monash University, Melbourne)
Raising gooseflesh – the power of taboo words

17:45-18:15 Linda Gennies (Free University of Berlin)
Political correctness and the genesis of taboos

18:15-18:30 **Break**

18:30-19:00 Shlomit Ritz Finkelstein (Emory University, Atlanta)
Swearing and the brain

19:00-19:30 Robin Vallery (University of Lille)
The sound of taboo: exploring phonopragmatic associations of swear words in English and in French

From 19:30 **Welcome reception**

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Venue: LMU Munich - Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 - Senatssaal (E110)

9:00-9:45 **Registration**

10:00-11:00 **Keynote** Andrea Pizarro Pedraza
(Catholic University of Louvain)
Taboo concepts and where to find them

- 11:00-11:30 Cristiana Lucchetti
(Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)
Gender-related differences in Russian obscene language use
- 11:30-12:00 Merle Willenberg and Janet Russell
(Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg)
Pseudo-Substitution: Strategic Use of Semiotic Resources for Self-censorship on YouTube
- 12:00-13:30 **Lunch break**
- 13:30-14:00 Daniel Edmondson (University of Nottingham)
Taking Language Back: The Impact of Linguistic Reclamation on Taboo Language Processing
- 14:00-14:30 Johanna Nowak-Michalska
(Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan)
The euphemism treadmill in legal language: The case of terms referring to people with disabilities used in Poland and Spain
- 14:30-15:00 Monika Pleyer (University of Koblenz-Landau)
~~*Taboo terms for marginalized groups in children's fantasy fiction*~~
- 15:00-16:00 **Coffee break and poster session**
- 16:00-16:30 Philipp Heidepeter (University of Passau)
Homo ludens and Sexual Innuendo: Creative Motivations of Euphemism Use
- 16:30-17:30 **Keynote** Hartmut Schröder
(Viadrina European University, Frankfurt/Oder)
Tabu oder Verbot?
- From 19:00 **Conference Dinner**

Thursday, October 31, 2019

Venue: LMU Munich - Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 - Senatssaal (E110)

- 9:00-9:30 Nicholas LoVecchio (Sorbonne University, Paris)
Borrowing and the Lexicon of Homosexuality

- 09:30-10:00 I-Ying Lin (National Chengchi University, Taipei)
Swearing Lost its Negative Pragmatics: A Contrastive Analysis of Swear Words between Taiwanese Mandarin and American English

- 10:00-10:30 **Coffee break**

- 10:30-11:30 **Keynote** Wolfgang Schulze
(Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)
Circumnavigating taboos: A functional and formal typology

- 11:30-12:00 Yukari Kurita
(LIPP-Alumna, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)
Das Tabu in der japanischen Gesellschaft

- 12:00-12:30 Svenja Völkel (University of Mainz)
Tongan honorifics: The encoding of mana and tapu

- 12:30-13:00 **Summary and closing remarks**

Poster session

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

15:00-16:00

Venue: LMU Munich - Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 - Senatssaal (E110)

Seyedhamedreza Amini (University of Milan)

The linguistic impact of Arabic culture on Persian culture through religious expressions

~~Olena Byelozorova (Karazin Kharkiv National University)~~

~~Andeutung als Bewältigungsstrategie für verbale Tabus~~

Peter Färberböck (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg)

Nationalsozialismus in digitalen Spielen. Von A wie Adolf Heiler bis Z wie Zensur

Jöran Landschoff und Sven Bloching (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg and Leibniz-Institute for the German Language, Mannheim)

Sprachliche Tabubrüche in der Kunst am aktuellen Beispiel der Rapper Kollegah und Farid Bang

Herbert Rostand Ngouo (University of Maroua)

Analysis of the discourse on sexuality amongst Christian women in Cameroon

Cordula Simon (Graz)

Deconstructivism and Language Shift

Abstracts

Keynotes

'Raising gooseflesh' — the power of taboo words

Kate Burridge
(Monash University, Wellington)

"There is something very terrible in an oath torn from its proper home and suddenly implanted in the wrong social atmosphere. In these circumstances the alien form is endowed by the hearers with mysterious and uncanny meanings; it chills the blood and raises gooseflesh." (Henry Cecil Wyld *A History of Modern Colloquial English* 1920: 387)

All population groups experience things that are frightening, embarrassing, distasteful, or that are for some reason simply difficult to endure. They include the facts of human life to do with 'private' body parts and their functions, sexuality, incest, social status, bigotry, hate, dishonesty, insanity, disease, death, deity, the supernatural — a diverse and changing array of things that go bump in the night, to paraphrase Adams and Newell (1994: 12). Such themes have always inspired taboos and inhibitions, and the impact on languages can be considerable.

This talk begins with a broad account of taboo, its origins, its role in everyday life and the shifting perception of what is and what is not forbidden. The focus then moves to taboo and language development. Whether we are looking at the proscriptions of the early Austronesians (who gave us the word *tabu*) or the social taste constraints of contemporary Western societies, taboo areas of the lexicon perpetuate instability. Existing vocabulary is often abandoned as speakers either borrow words or create new expressions; surviving vocabulary is often remodeled as speakers either give new meaning to old expressions or modify their pronunciation in some way. Thus word tabooing practices act as a kind of linguistic wild card that militates against the operation of what are otherwise fairly regular and predictable processes of change.

Adams, Phillip, and Patrice Newell 1994. *The Penguin Book of Australian Jokes*. Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin.

Wyld, Henry C. 1920/1936. *A History of Modern Colloquial English*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Taboo concepts and where to find them

Andrea Pizarro Pedraza
(Catholic University of Louvain)

Sexuality is one of the most generalized taboos throughout the world. From a linguistic point of view, speaking about sexuality is subject to restrictions about what can be said and how to say it, but these restrictions vary considerably between and within social groups. Gender, age, education, ideology, religiosity, or communicative situation, among others, are factors that are worth considering when studying taboos in discourse, because they are strongly related to certain expressions rather than others. This is so because our social environment and experiences shape the way we conceptualize sexuality, so that speakers with similar social identities show patterns in how they understand and behave towards sexual taboo concepts. In order to study how different social groups express sexual concepts, what aspects of their identities are relevant for that variation and which social meanings are performed through sexual expressions, a careful sociolinguistic analysis is needed.

In this talk, we will discuss how to efficiently collect sexual concepts in spoken and written online discourse, how to analyse the semantic variation of sexual concepts, and we will exemplify our methods with several studies from Peninsular Spanish. We will defend that taboo, often relegated to the periphery of language studies, is extremely revealing for (socio)linguistics, and should therefore be promoted to a central position – a change that is progressively happening in very recent years.

Allan, K. (Ed.) (2018). *The Oxford Handbook of Taboo Words and Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crespo-Fernández, E. (Ed.). (2019). *Taboo in Discourse*. Bern: Peter Lang CH.

Pizarro Pedraza, A. (Ed.) (2018). *Linguistic Taboo Revisited. Novel Insights from Cognitive Perspectives*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.

Tabu oder Verbot?

Hartmut Schröder
(Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder)

Das Wort ‚Tabu‘ ist in der deutschen Sprache weit verbreitet, findet aber auch Verwendung in verschiedenen wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen. Eine einheitliche Definition gibt es nicht. In den verschiedenen Disziplinen (Ethnologie und Religionswissenschaft, Soziologie, Psychologie und Linguistik, aber auch Philosophie und Rechtswissenschaft) wird zwar das gleiche Wort benutzt, aber jeweils in anderer Bedeutung – ganz zu schweigen von der Bedeutung des Wortes in der Umgangssprache sowie der Sprache der Medien. Die Vagheit scheint diesem Wort für seine Verbreitung jedoch eher genutzt als geschadet zu haben.

Als eine gewisse Quintessenz der Versuche den Begriff Tabu zu definieren, lässt sich festhalten, dass Tabus etwas betreffen, was nicht getan, gesagt, gedacht, gefühlt, auch nicht gewusst und berührt werden darf – dennoch aber machbar, sagbar, denkbar, fühlbar und erkennbar sowie berührbar ist; ansonsten brauchte es ja nicht durch ein Tabu geschützt zu werden. Tabus markieren also Grenzen des Handelns, Redens und sogar des Denkens. Sie können als Meidungsgebote bzw. negative Konventionen verstanden werden, die stark affektiv geladen sind, weil sie tief verwurzelte und nicht hinterfragbare Normen und Werte einer Gemeinschaft betreffen. Dabei kann auch die symbolische Berührung untersagt sein, wie z.B. im Nenn- oder Abbildtabu.

Tabus sind aber nicht mit Verbots zu verwechseln. Anders als Verbote sind Tabus sehr kontextsensitiv und beziehen sich bisweilen nur auf bestimmte Gruppen, d.h. ihre Geltung ist von zahlreichen Umständen abhängig, und eine Verletzung ist nicht unbedingt und in jedem Fall mit einer Bestrafung verbunden. Tabus müssen das zu Meidende auch nicht direkt und explizit benennen; sie wirken von innen und können gerade daher sogar wirksamer als direkte Verbote sein.

Etwas vereinfachend kann man sagen, dass ein Tabu etwas ist, das sich von selbst verbietet. Es wird nicht als von außen gesetzt erlebt, sondern als etwas ganz Selbstverständliches, das nicht hinterfragbar ist. Tabus werden also intuitiv erfahren und entziehen sich dem Diskurs.

Ausgehend von einem solchen Verständnis des Tabus wird angenommen, dass jede Gesellschaft durch Tabus reguliert wird: „Es gibt keine Kultur auf der Welt, in der alles erlaubt ist. Und wir wissen seit langem ganz genau, dass der Mensch nicht mit der Freiheit, sondern mit der Grenze und der Scheidelinie des Unübertretbaren beginnt“.

Schröder, Hartmut (2009): Taboos around the Body. In: Lili Hernandez und Sabine Krajewski (Herausgeber): *Crossing Cultural Boundaries: Taboo, Bodies and Identities*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, S. 69-80.

— (2008): Silence and taboo. In: *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*. Edited by Gerd Antos & Eija Ventola. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter. S. 595-619. (zusammen mit Sabine Krajewski)

— Der Tabu-Komplex – Kultursemiotische Überlegungen.

<https://jelinektabu.univie.ac.at/tabu/forschungsfeld-tabu/hartmut-schroeder>

(= TABU: Bruch. Überschreitungen von Künstlerinnen. Interkulturelles Wissenschaftsportal der Forschungsplattform Elfriede Jelinek).

— (2002): *Ritualisierte Tabuverletzungen, Lachkultur und das Karnevaleske*. Frankfurt am Main et al.: Verlag Peter Lang. (zusammen mit M. Rothe).

— (2005): *Körpertabus und Umgehungsstrategien*. Berlin: Weidler Verlag. (zusammen mit M. Rothe).

— (2008): *Stil, Stilbruch, Tabu. Stilerfahrung nach der Rhetorik. Eine Bilanz*. (Semiotik der Kultur - Semiotics of Culture, Band 7). Münster: LIT-Verlag (zusammen mit M. Rothe).

Circumnavigating taboos: A functional and formal typology

Wolfgang Schulze
(Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

Language taboos concern the banning of certain types of communicative acts. A taboo regulates and in fact constrains the relation between a speaker and ‘objects’ in the world (Havers 1946). In principle, both physical and non-physical ‘objects’ can be marked by properties that create a conceptual, sometimes even practical distance between them and the speaker. Whether or not an ‘object’ qualifies for this kind of tabooed relation mainly depends on social factors, supplemented by socio-psychological factors especially in the context of sexuality (also cf. Hartmann 1990). We can refer to the Polynesian term *mana* originally denoting ‘a quality with a supernatural origin and a sacred, impersonal force’, in order to denote this kind of object. Likewise, we can use the Polynesian term *noa* to denote an ‘object’ that lacks *mana*. A taboo is then defined as the controlled and sanctioned relation between *noa* and *mana* from the perspective of *noa*. (cf. Sahlgren 1915, Ode 1927). Two further points have to be taken into account: (a) A *mana*-object can be both the addressee in a communicative act and a *de dictum*, that is an ‘object’ talked about in a speech act. The later point is of special importance with the respect to the origin of many taboo-avoiding linguistic expressions. Finally, a *mana* addressee can indirectly motivate the taboo relation to a *de dictum*. (b) Not only may ‘objects’ (in their broadest sense) be loaded with *mana*, but also activities in the context of such *mana* objects.

In this sense, the term ‘language’ taboo must not be understood as a means to avoid direct communication with or about an ‘object’ or processes related to such an ‘object’. Rather, it is a communicative (and perhaps even conceptual) attitude concerning ways of circumnavigating such tabooed approaches or ways of reflecting respect towards a *mana* object. My talk will be divided into two sections: First, I will elaborate on the understanding of tabooed language as a kind of avoidance strategy, referring mainly to its prototypical and in parts archetypical motives. One of the many functions of ‘language taboo’, namely to serve as a way to indicate respect towards a *mana* object, strongly relates this technique to patterns of social deixis and hence honorification (in its broadest sense). In the

second section, I will propose parameters of a semiotics-based typology of avoidance techniques that includes formal as well as functional and cognitive parameters.

Hartmann, Dietrich 1990. Sprache und Tabu heute. Zur Überprüfung eines ethnologischen Begriffs auf seinen Nutzen für die Ethnographie von Industriegesellschaften. *Osnabrücker Beiträge zur Sprachtheorie* 4: 137-154.

Havers, Wilhelm 1946. *Neuere Literatur zum Sprachtabu*. Wien; R.M. Rohrer.

Meillet, Antoine 1906. *Quelques hypothèses sur des interdictions de vocabulaire dans les langues indo-européennes*. Chartres: Durand.

Odé, Arend Will Mauritz 1927. *Reflexe von 'Tabu' und 'Noa' in den indogermanischen Sprachen*. Amsterdam: Koninklijke akademie van wetenschappen.

Sahlgren, Jöran 1915. Blåkulla och blåkullafärdern. En språklig och mythisk undersökning. In: *Namn och Bygd, Tidskrift för nordisk ortnamnsforskning* 3: 100-161.

Abstracts

Talks

Taking Language Back: The Impact of Linguistic Reclamation on Taboo Language Processing

Daniel Edmondson
(University of Nottingham)

Research in Psycholinguistics has suggested that taboo language is processed more slowly than non-taboo language (Geer & Bellard, 1996; Madan, Shafer, Chan & Singhal, 2017), yet is also better remembered (Jay, Caldwell-Harris & King, 2008). Such research has also suggested that these effects are primarily attributable to the degree of arousal these words prompt, (Kensinger & Corkin, 2003) as well as perceptions of their 'taboونess' (Madan, Shafer, Chan & Singhal, 2017). However, until now this research has not considered whether the linguistic reclamation (e.g. Bianchi, 2014) of certain taboo words by members of marginalised communities affects such reactions to them, and thereby affects the extent to which these effects are exhibited. Using experimental methods (namely a Lexical Decision Task, Free Recall Task and Skin Conductivity Response measurements), my research investigates participant responses to a number of LGBTQ+ slurs, with respect to the ways that linguistic reclamation might affect their processing. At the time of producing this abstract, the research has already begun to identify significant correlations between types of reclamation behaviour and a number of word properties found to be relevant to the cognitive processing of taboo language: familiarity, personal use, negativity, offensiveness, tabooeness and age of acquisition. By the time of conference, I expect to have also explored the ways that participant age, gender identity and sexual identity might have interacted with their judgements of these word properties, as well as the degree to which they have engaged in or with reclamation behaviours. I also expect to have finished analysing the first set of experimental data, and expect to be in the process of conducting my second round of experiments.

Bianchi, C. (2014). 'Slurs and Appropriation: An echoic account', Journal of Pragmatics 66: 35-44. doi: 10.1016/j.pragma.2014.02.009.

Geer, J.H. & Bellard, H.S. (1996). 'Sexual content induced delays in unprimed lexical decisions: Gender and context effects', Archives of Sexual Behaviour 25(4): 379-395. doi: 10.1007/BF02437581.

Kensinger, E. A. & Corkin, S. (2003). 'Memory enhancement for emotional words: Are emotional words more vividly remembered than neutral words?', *Memory & Cognition* 31(8): 1169-1180. doi: 10.3758/BF03195800.

Madan, C.A., Shafer, A.T., Chan, M. & Singhal, A. (2017). 'Shock and awe: Distinct effects of taboo words on lexical decision and free recall', *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 70(4): 793-810. doi: 10.1080/17470218.2016.1167925.

Swearing production and the brain: Lessons from the afflicted

Shlomit Ritz Finkelstein
(Emory University, Atlanta)

Expletives differ from the rest of language. Rather than exchanging information and thoughts, they are speech acts expressing and evoking emotions.^{1,2} The empirical data I will present show that swearing also differs from much of the rest of language neurophysiologically.³

As people produce expletives spontaneously, studying them in the laboratory is challenging.⁴ Therefore, one approach is that of lesion studies. I will present data from individuals with expressive aphasia^{5,6,8} and Tourette syndrome (TS).⁷ The former demonstrate dissociation between the production of propositional speech and the production of expletives. The latter often produce expletives involuntarily, violating cultural norms and taboos, and lose conscious control over their propositional production of speech.⁷

I contextualize my talk within the historical unfolding of neuroscience. Advancing technologies increase our access to neurophysiological data and our dynamic development of theoretical frameworks within which we interpret the data.^{3,5,7,8} The understanding of expressive aphasia and TS as deeply rooted in neurophysiology started in Europe at the second half of the 19th century, replacing a widespread interpretation of such disorders as purely psychological. The relationship between human behavior and neurophysiology is now taken for granted and advancing its understanding with empirical evidence is one of the most promising scientific endeavors of our time.

From an analysis of disorders, I extract answers to when, what, and how we have learned about swearing production, inferring the neurophysiological underpinnings of the production of involuntary expletives. Deficits resulting from aphasia reflect labor distribution between the hemispheres of the brain while the involuntary expletives of TS reveal a network of brain structures involved in both language and emotion. I will then extrapolate from clinical populations to the population at large highlighting the intersection between the substrata of swearing and emotions.^{9,10}

¹ Finkelstein, S. R. 2018. Swearing as emotion acts: Lessons from Tourette syndrome. In: A. P. Pedraza (ed.) *Linguistic Taboo Revisited. Novel Insights from Cognitive Perspectives* Mouton De Gruyter.

² Allan, K. and Burridge K. 2006. *Forbidden Words: Taboo and the Censoring of Language.*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.

³ Finkelstein, S. R. 2018. Swearing and the brain. In: K. Allan (ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Taboo Words and Language*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

⁴ Finkelstein, S. R., Block T. J. and Nygaard L. C. In process. Swear Word Production: The relative contributions of social, cultural and individual factors to the production of swear words

⁵ Broca, P. 1861. Remarks on the Seat of the Faculty of Articulated Language

⁶ Dronkers, N. F., Plaisant O., Iba-Zizen M. T. and Cabanis E. A. 2007. Paul Broca's historic cases: high resolution MR imaging of the brains of Leborgne and Lelong. *Brain*, 130, 1432-41.

⁷ Finkelstein, S. R. 2009. *Adults with Tourette Syndrome*. PhD Dissertation, Emory University.

⁸ Jackson, J. H. 1931/1958. Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson. New York, Basic Books, Inc.

⁹ Alexander, G. E., DeLong M. R. and Strick P. L. 1986. Parallel organization of functionally segregated circuits linking basal ganglia and cortex. *Ann. Rev. Neurosci.*, 357-81.

¹⁰ Panksepp, J. 1998. *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions.*, New York, Oxford University Press. Kindle Edition

Political correctness and the genesis of taboos

Linda Gennies
(Free University of Berlin)

'Traditional' Western taboo words, such as those relating to bodily fluids, diseases or death differ from taboos of politically correct speech in several ways (cf. Allan & Burridge 2006). Bodily taboos, e.g., refer to general properties of human beings while terms that are tabooed for their racist, sexist, ableist etc. connotations usually reference a specific, generally marginalized, group of people. In consequence, PC taboos are often considered offensive only to members of the respective groups, which are subjected to acts of othering, exclusion and marginalization in the uttering of these words. Conversely, traditional taboo words are regarded as face-threatening for all hearers irrespective of their identities because they might imply or create too much intimacy with the speaker.

Another important distinction between traditional and PC taboos that so far has received only little attention concerns the degree to which they are accepted by society. While the former are generally respected, the latter are often regarded as threats to freedom of expression and therefore challenged. In this paper, I want to examine if the difference in acceptance of traditional and PC taboos is a consequence of the difference in length of their formation processes – since the early modern period (cf. Elias 2017 [1939]) and since the late 20th century respectively – or if it is due to their distinctive properties. Adopting a mostly politeness-theoretical (cf. Klotz 1999, Culpeper 2018) and sociolinguistic perspective, I hope to discuss some preliminary findings of a comparative-diachronic analysis of selected taboos in European languages.

Allan, Keith & Kate Burridge. 2006. *Forbidden words: taboo and the censoring of language*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Culpeper, Jonathan. 2018. Taboo language and impoliteness. In Keith Allan (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Taboo Words and Language*, 27–40. Oxford University Press.

Elias, Norbert. 2017 [1939]. *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation: Soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen*. 2 vols. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Klotz, Peter. 1999. Politeness and political correctness: Ideological implications. *Pragmatics* 9(1). 155–161.

Homo ludens and Sexual Innuendo: Creative Motivations of Euphemism Use

Philipp Heidepeter
(University of Passau)

Death means orgasm, dance represents sex, birds depict genitalia: (French) Renaissance songs encode sexuality in various ways that are often classified as euphemistic (cf. i.a. Grieco 2010: 89). The question of this paper shall be the motivation behind euphemism use in this genre and beyond.

Most approaches (cf. Dietl 1996, Casas Gómez 2009, Horak 2010) only include negative motivations, e.g. fear, shame, disgust (cf. Reutner 2009: 29), or reduce the creative potential to manipulative intentions in media or politics (cf. Rada 2001: 65ff.). Even with a theoretically suitable terminology, e.g. Rawson's (1995: 1ff.) differentiation between positive and negative euphemisms, the aspects of humour and entertainment as 'positive' ludic motivations (cf. Allan 2012: 39) are hardly ever mentioned.

Based on a corpus of 55 French Renaissance songs (cf. Dottin 1991) containing a considerable amount of encoded sexual content, I therefore try to clarify this motivation by analysing the use of sexual euphemisms. After explaining the songs' encoding strategies, their most frequent *topoi* and their characteristic use of *double entendre* (cf. van Orden 1995: 6), I will focus on context, motivations and functions of the euphemistic encoding.

I suggest that it is not (only) strict taboo but also the songs' entertainment purpose motivating the use of euphemistic expressions: exceeding the sole avoidance and substitution of taboos, the encoding e.g. of genitalia by vegetation metaphors clearly has a humoristic function. The presentation of sexuality through semantically ambiguous innuendo (e.g. the orgasmic meaning of *mourir* or insect bites representing intercourse) can thus be understood as a social game of encoding and decoding (cf. Prizer 1991: 10). In this broader approach, euphemistic speech can be at least partially motivated by the wish to evoke the semantically sensible field of sexuality in a playfully disguising way.

Allan, Keith (2012): "X-phemism and creativity", in: *Lexis* 7, 5–42.

Casas Gómez, Miguel (2009): "Towards a new approach to the linguistic definition of euphemism", in: *Languages Sciences* 31 (2009), 725–739.

Dietl, Cora (1996): "Euphemismus", in: Ueding, Gert: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, vol. 3. Darmstadt: WBG, 1–9.

Dottin, Georges (1991): *Chansons françaises de la Renaissance*. Paris: Gallimard.

Grieco, Allen J. (2010): "From roosters to cocks: Italian Renaissance fowl and sexuality", in: Matthews-Grieco, Sara F. (ed.): *Erotic cultures of Renaissance Italy*. Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 89–140.

Horak, André (2010): *L'Euphémisme. Entre tradition rhétorique et perspectives nouvelles*. München : Lincom (= Edition Linguistique 80).

Prizer, William F. (1991): "Games of Venus: Secular Vocal Music in the Late Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento", in: *The Journal of Musicology* 9/1, 3–56.

Rada, Roberta (2001): *Tabus und Euphemismen in der deutschen Gegenwartssprache. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Eigenschaften von Euphemismen*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

Rawson, Hugh (1995): *Rawson's dictionary of euphemisms and other doubletalk: being a compilation of linguistic fig leaves and verbal flourishes for artful users of the English language*. New York: Crown.

Reutner, Ursula (2009): *Sprache und Tabu. Interpretationen zu französischen und italienischen Euphemismen*. Tübingen: de Gruyter.

van Orden, Kate (1995): „Sexual Discourse in the Parisian Chanson: A Libidinous Aviary“, in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48/1, 1–41.

Das Tabu in der japanischen Gesellschaft

Yukari Kurita

(LIPP-Alumna, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

Der Begriff *Kinki* ('Tabu') wird bereits in den alten japanischen Schriftstücken *Sakuteiki* (ca. 1120) erwähnt. Es bezieht sich auf das Verbot, Kontakt mit tabuisierten Gegenständen zu haben oder tabuisierte Tätigkeiten auszuüben, die einen schlechten Einfluss haben, weil sie z. B. mit Erkrankung, Geburt, Tod, Nahrungsmitteln, Himmelsrichtungen, bestimmte Tage und der Zeit zu tun haben (*Eycyclopedia Japonica* vol. 4, 1968: 45-6). In Japan wird es daher z. B. vermieden, die Zahlen vier und neun zu verwenden, vor allem im Krankenhaus, da sie als Homonyme für Tod und Schmerzen gelten. Auch die 6 Mondkalendertage und ihre Bedeutungen werden beachtet. Z. B. ist *Taian* ('Glückstag') geeignet für Hochzeiten, *Tomobiki*, wörtlich Freunde mitziehen, wiederum ist ungeeignet für Beerdigungen. Auf Hochzeitsfeiern ist es tabu, die Begriffe schneiden, beenden oder zerbrechen zu äußern. In Japan glaubt man entsprechend dem 'Shintōismus', dem *Kotodama*-Konzept, dass es Schaden bringt, *Kinki* nicht zu berücksichtigen. *Kotodama* wird mit Wortseele übersetzt und drückt aus, dass das Wort lebendig ist und ihm eine mysteriöse Schöpferkraft innewohnt. Dass *Kotodama* existiert, wird in der ersten Gedichtanthologie, *Manyōshū* (ca.629-759), festgestellt.

Mein Vortrag besteht aus drei Abschnitten: Zunächst werde ich die japanischen Sprachabus darstellen und erläutern, welche Umgehungsstrategien genutzt werden, um tabuisierte Gegenstände nicht erwähnen zu müssen. Im zweiten Abschnitt werde ich das Kommunikationsziel und die Verwendungsmoral des Höflichkeitskonzepts in einer charakteristischen Situation erläutern. In dem linguistischen Beitrag, der sich mit der Deixis befasst, wird belegt, dass in der *Muromachimakki*-Periode (1336-1573) fünf Höflichkeitsstufen von japanischen Personalpronomen existierten, deren Verwendung durch die „sozialstufige Kongruenz“ begrenzt wurde (YAMAZAKI 1961: 3). Im dritten Abschnitt werde ich Sprachabus und Euphemismen in der japanischen Gesellschaft vorstellen und erläutern. In diesem Zusammenhang werde ich aufzeigen, dass der Glaube der Japaner tief in ihrer Sprache verankert ist.

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Swearing Lost its Negative Pragmatics: A Contrastive Analysis of Swear Words between Taiwanese Mandarin and American English

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(National Chengchi University, Taipei)

Despite their provocative nature, swear words are potential recourses for the analysis of cultural trends as well as social behaviors (Fägersten 2017 et al). This project combines the richness of swear words and the proven capabilities of contrastive analysis within a three-step corpus-based analysis in order to reveal cultural nuances within Chinese and English in a comparative way. Taiwanese Mandarin and American English are selected as the two varieties of Chinese and English in order to estimate specific cultural connotations. Thereby, rap songs from both of the language varieties are selected as the language database. The paper hypothesized that since Chinese culture values more the harmonious society as well as relationship comparing to American one (Zhang 2004), this culture trend reflects on the application of swear words. Therefore, the paper assumes that the use of swear words in American English has the tendency of neutralization as well as being more accepted, while at the same time swear words are considered highly negative in Chinese. The regularity, the part of speech, the collocates and the illocutionary of the five most frequent used swear words is investigated with the application of software *Antconc* and *Python*. The result confirms the postulations, that the most frequently used American English swear words in the corpus are turning into natural terms. In contrast, the Taiwanese Mandarin corpus shows that the majority of the swear words still hold negative meanings and pragmatics. Yet it is striking that the paper observes in Taiwanese Mandarin, swear words also have the possibility of turning into positive description from an extremely negative term. However, this condition happened in extremely particular situations. The example in the analysis can be concluded to the erroneous use by public figures.

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Borrowing and the Lexicon of Homosexuality

Nicholas LoVecchio
(Sorbonne University, Paris)

The lexicon of homosexuality amply demonstrates the paradoxical nature of taboo, whereby social pressures to avoid speaking about a certain topic are actually an extremely rich source of lexical creation. Beyond the extensive vocabularies each individual language has to describe homosexual people and acts, there exists a historical core vocabulary common to major European languages (English, French, Italian, Spanish and German). Such 'internationalisms' are loanwords, the result of lexical borrowing, a well-known recourse for speakers when faced with a taboo. Borrowing has in fact played an outsized role in the construction of the international homosexual lexicon, reflecting various aspects of how homosexuality has been conceived of over time. Biblical allusions (e.g., *sodomite, against nature*) reveal coded religious censure, while allusions to ancient civilizations (*tribade, pederast, lesbian, sapphist*) or to seemingly far-off ones (*bugger, bardash*) help to distance the concept in time and space. Late nineteenth-century innovations (*inversion, uranism, homosexuality*) offer the sterile, technical allure of scientific words, even if their origin was otherwise. Meanwhile, recent loans from English to other languages (*gay, queer*), without necessarily being perceived as euphemisms, reflect similar social pressures: the current lexicon is perceived as inadequate, and more suitable terms take the place of outmoded ones. The highly internationalized lexicon of homosexuality surely sets it apart from other semantic fields involving taboo, where internal innovations seem to dominate. This presentation will thus explore both the role borrowing has played in the construction of the lexicon of homosexuality and the broader implications of this shared vocabulary across languages.

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Gender-related differences in Russian obscene language use

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The first sociolinguistic studies on Russian *mat* (i.e. profane vocabulary) emerged after the fall of the Soviet Union, concomitantly with the formation of Russian gender studies in the early 1990s (Temkina & Zdravomyslova 2003: 51). Until today, research on gender and taboo in the Russian language has been exiguous. Most scholars claim that the use of *mat* is a male prerogative (Uspenskij 1994: 56, Doleschal & Schmid 2001: 274). In Russian, women are traditionally metaphorized as mothers (Temkina & Zdravomyslova 2003), angels and beauties (Scheller-Boltz 2017: 131) and their use of *mat* is sanctioned in society. Through data from a survey I carried out in May 2019 on 772 probands, I illustrate that *mat* is strongly present in female language use and is a part of the renegotiation process of gender metaphors in Post-Soviet space.

The probands answered an online questionnaire in Russian titled “Russian *mat* in women’s language”. The questionnaire consists of three sections collecting biographical, linguistic and perceptual data. 90% of the respondents are female and 8,3% are male. Further data from corpora of spoken Russian are used to countervail the gender-related data scattering.

Linguistic and perceptual data show that female respondents make use of obscene vocabulary derived from the traditional *mat* roots *xuj-*, *blja-*, *eb-* and *pizd-* almost as frequently as male respondents (82,6% female vs. 82,8% male). Female respondents make innovative use of *mat* vocabulary, e. g. *vazhny kak khuj bumazhnyj* ‘important like a paper dick’, *nashego kota zovut chornyj pidor* ‘we call our cat black asshole’, whereas male respondents tend to quote traditional *mat* vocabulary. Young female respondents tend to associate the usage of *mat* with the rejection of traditional gender metaphors, e.g. ‘society holds that women shouldn’t swear, although everyone is very indulgent to men who swear. Society should take its opinion and go fuck itself with it’.

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The euphemism treadmill in legal language: The case of terms referring to people with disabilities used in Poland and Spain

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Socio-political changes can result in a change of the perception of certain social groups, such as people with disabilities, and increase the sensitivity towards language used in relation to them. In consequence, some words perceived as offensive or stigmatising are rejected in favour of more neutral and inclusive ones. This also applies to terms used in legal language, which should, *a priori*, be objective and neutral and should not use colloquialisms, dialect or jargon expressions. One of the consequences of this is the use of euphemisms in legal acts which usually refer to sex, diseases, death, alcohol and drug addiction or some crimes, such as murder. In the case of the use of euphemisms, both in general and legal language, a certain type of dynamics can be observed: with the passage of time and changing socio-political reality euphemisms cease to serve their purpose, frequently turning into dysphemisms and new, neutral and polite words have to be proposed to refer to a given concept. This phenomenon can be called 'the euphemism treadmill' (Pinker 1994; Allan and Burridge 2006: 99; Burridge 2006: 460) or 'euphemism carousel' (Keyes 2010: 13-15). This also applies to terms referring to people with disabilities. In order to investigate these issues, a number of such terms used in legal acts in Poland and Spain are examined from diachronic and synchronic perspectives. These terms are analysed in the context of changing the model of perception of people with disabilities (medical model vs. social model) (cf. Reid 2017: 43), and the impact which this change has on the terminology referring to people with disabilities used in international settings (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

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Taboo terms for marginalised groups in children's fantasy fiction

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Swearing, i.e. "the strongly emotive use of taboo terms in insults, epithets, and expletives" (Allan & Burridge 2009: 362), can be found in all types of speakers and areas of society (Jay 1992). One area where it tends to be unexpected by layspeakers is that of children's fiction. Here, insults can, e.g., highlight negative attitudes held against certain marginalised persons or groups of persons. Previous research has shown that conventionalised impoliteness formulae (Culpeper 2010) such as personal negative vocatives are likely to cause offence (Culpeper 2011), especially if they are used intentionally to abuse or insult an interlocutor (Allan & Burridge 2009). The use of impoliteness can thus be seen as one way of in-group management (Kleinke & Bös 2015), as by using insults towards interlocutors, these are designated as belonging to an undesirable, and hence marginalised, out-group. Thus, the use of insults is also connected to social power (Bousfield 2008a, b).

To further investigate these connections, this talk presents research into the types and reasons for the use of taboo terms in three contemporary fantasy fiction series for 9-12-year-olds, such as J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*. Children's fiction presents a special case of enquiry: While commonly only certain terms, such as references to a person's intelligence, may be used as insults (Allan & Burridge 2009), both novel terms such as 'Mudman' (*Artemis Fowl*), 'Mudblood' (*Harry Potter*) or words that usually do not carry negative connotations, such as 'orphan' (*A Series of Unfortunate Events*), can be used as taboo terms.

Using an extended classification of conventionalised impoliteness formulae (Pleyer 2019; see Culpeper 2011) I show that speakers use a variety of insults in children's fiction:

- a) intentionally, with the aim of hurting an interlocutor and classifying them as undesirable;
- b) to either express or gain social power over a marginalised interlocutor.

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The Tongan ‘language of respect’: A system of verbal taboo.

Svenja Völkel
(University of Mainz)

Tonga is a chiefly society in Polynesia with a highly stratified order, among others a societal ranking system distinguishing between kingly, chiefly and common status. A person's status is ascribed by birth and determined by lineal descent from the divine line. Thus, people of higher rank are regarded as having more supernatural energy or power (*mana*). As this hierarchical structure is of central cultural importance, it is expressed by various cultural means and linguistic categories, such as the ‘language of respect’. It is a referent honorific system, i.e., it encodes relative status between speaker and referent. More precisely, it consists of three lexical levels (a common language and two limited sets of honorific vocabulary: kingly and chiefly words).

A semantic analysis of the honorific vocabulary reveals that the language of respect has probably developed as a verbal avoidance system in close association with the ritual avoidance system of taboo (*tapu*). Both systems are designed to respect people of higher rank and to avoid direct contact with superior spiritual power (*mana*). For instance, a commoner is not allowed to eat a chief's or the king's leftovers, to sleep in his bed or to touch his head. And on a linguistic level, the language of respect avoids that the speaker gets even in verbal contact with these items/topics by use of more general or metaphoric terms. Thus, the language of respect expresses the spiritual beliefs of *mana* and *tapu* and helps to maintain the social order.

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The sound of taboo: exploring phonopragmatic associations of swear words in English and in French

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Swear words, or taboo words, are words that are socially forbidden because they are considered as extremely impolite or gravely insulting. In English and French, swear words display a peculiar phonological tendency compared to the rest of the lexicon: they tend to contain significantly more often at least one plosive consonant, i.e., /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, or /g/ ($p<0.01$).

This presentation aims to investigate how this tendency can be explained, in particular via an unconscious association in the mind of speakers (Bergen 2016: 52-63), between this form – containing a plosive – and a common feature of taboo words. It explores the hypothesis of sound symbolism, also known as phonosymbolism (Whissell 1999) – the idea that phonemes, i.e., sounds, may have a meaning (Haiman 2018: 118-119). Studies on sound symbolism often focus on phonosemantic correspondences (Bergen 2004; Egbokhare 2001: 92-93; Gutiérrez et al. 2016) but in the case of swear words, the meaning is probably a pragmatic emotional meaning (Finkelstein 2018: 311, 326) – this would be a *phonopragmatic* association.

This presentation also looks at possible explanations in terms of motivation, also known as iconicity or non-arbitrariness (Haiman 2018: 39-59; Reilly et al. 2008: 3-4, 7-9) – the idea that the form of a linguistic sign may be predictable from its meaning. One study on motivation (Yardy 2010: 12-20; 71-78) suggests that the association in swear words may link the pragmatic emotional meaning not just with plosives, but also with other consonants like voiceless fricatives – e.g., /ʃ/ or /s/.

Finally, this work also tries to find circumstantial evidence for the unconscious association via too small-scale studies of fictional swear words: if speakers associate a specific form with swear words, then the same formal tendency should be observable among words created or selected to serve as swear words in English- or French-speaking fiction.

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Pseudo-Substitution: Strategic Use of Semiotic Resources for Self-censorship on YouTube

Merle Willenberg and Janet Russell
(Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg)

Taboos in language are relevant for written communication as well as face-to-face and online interactions: Social network platforms (SNP) like *YouTube* have devised their own rules for the restriction of verbal and visual content. The tool they use is demonetisation: companies who advertise their products on SNPs wish to distance themselves and their products from communicative instances in which taboo language expressions occur, and therefore adverts are withdrawn from videos with controversial content. However, professional content creators on *YouTube* often rely on the income from their videos. In the interest of an 'advertiser-friendly' language variety that excludes certain undesired terms – specifically from spoken language –, they restrict their creative output according to the advertisers' wants. This results in a form of self-censorship. The creators usually self-select the form of substitution or circumvention they wish to use, as the platform's guidelines function as a general language policy only, without explicitly stating which expressions lead to demonetisation.

In the process of content creation, this sometimes results in a form of pseudo-substitution of taboo expressions: to avoid the demonetisation of their content, they use multiple semiotic resources from different modes (visual and auditory/non-verbal, etc.). Either, the signifier of the dispreferred expression is manipulated, obscured, paraphrased and 'replaced' by euphemisms, or pseudo-substituted by switching to another mode of communication, which is available due to the technical means and communicative potential of online videos.

This paper investigates specific instances of pseudo-substitution and avoidance across different semiotic systems in *YouTube* videos with the aim to shed light on the forms and functions of self-censorship on *YouTube*. The focus of the investigation will lie on profanities and the discussion of eating disorders. One question arising from this situation is if these avoidance strategies should be seen in the context of political correctness, self-censorship or institutional censoring.

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Abstracts

Posters

The linguistic impact of Arabic culture on Persian culture through religious expressions

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After the fall of the Sassanid Empire and the Muslim conquest of Iran, Islam, through inculcating religion-based codes of behaviour and a sense of obedience and conformity to such codes, gradually began to affect Iranian culture. As the most functional tool for providing a gradual cultural transformation, language enormously contributed the process of Islamic acculturation in Iran. Accordingly, as the language of the Muslim holy book, the Qur'an, and due to its long-standing influence in Iranian society, Arabic has played a pivotal part to influence myriad dimensions of Persian culture and the Persian language, which is peppered with vast borrowings from the Arabic language. Among these borrowings are two expressions of tremendously high frequency which are deeply rooted in Persian language and culture and have, through historically habitual use, implanted a sacred belief among Iranians from all walks of life who are accustomed and consequently supplicate to them in order to counteract the evil eye and achieve success. In Iranian society, using *Inshallah* ('God willing') and *Mashallah* ('whatever God/Allah wills') as daily routines among Islamic nations is interpreted mostly as automatic reactions to specific situations rather than indicating deep individual religious beliefs. What is evident is that in the course of time, the religious significance of these two phrases has been growing faint and simultaneously, a firm belief in their magical powers has been forming, which points to a developing form of superstition.

The importance of using these two expressions is to the extent that an avoidance of using them in certain circumstances would be interpreted taboo and disgraceful, even by modern people, and can occasionally lead to serious rifts in friendly relations. Despite undergoing a great transformation of consciousness, today's Iranian society has fanatically kept ties with traditional beliefs appealing to the magical powers of these two expressions.

I intend to examine and compare the role of various elements of Persian culture to conserve this religious conviction over hundreds of years in the linguistically and ethnically diverse society of Iran and secondly, by applying the dominant theories of culture from an anthropological perspective, I want to study how the belief in the magical power of these phrases has remained influential and inexorable.

Nationalsozialismus in digitalen Spielen. Von A wie Adolf Heiler bis Z wie Zensur

Peter Färberböck
(Paris-Lodron-Universität Salzburg)

In Deutschland ist die Darstellung des Nationalsozialismus in digitalen Spielen bis heute ein Tabuthema. In Spielen wurden aus rechtlichen Gründen stets Euphemismen wie „Regime“ statt „Reich“ und „Lager“ statt „Konzentrationslager“ verwendet. Trotzdem ist der Zweite Weltkrieg einer der populärsten Schauplätze in digitalen Spielen.

Hier gibt es durchaus problematische, verharmlosende Beispiele, in welchen der Krieg reine Staffage ist. Kriegsgräuel, Holocaust und Vernichtung werden hier ersatzlos tabuisiert und censiert, um den Gesetzen zu entsprechen. Es gibt jedoch auch Spiele, die sich ernsthaft mit dem Thema auseinandersetzen. Beispielsweise wird die deutsche Version der *Wolfenstein*-Saga herangezogen. Das Spiel respektiert das Tabu und repräsentiert ein kulturhistorisches Konzept, das bis heute gilt. Trotz mittlerweile angewandter Sozialadäquanzklausel (§68 Abs. 3 StGB) wird aus Angst vor Privatklagen noch immer die politische Sprache von Spielen bestimmt: Wer Hakenkreuze darstellt, kann womöglich nicht auf den Markt kommen.

In diesen beiden Spielen bzw. Spieleserien werden nicht nur visuelle Symbole wie das Hakenkreuz per Selbstzensur weggelassen, sondern auch Ersatzwörter für Personen, Institutionen und historische Ereignisse gefunden. Das satirische oder schon persiflierende *Wolfenstein* stellt sich gegen gesellschaftliche Konventionen und bricht Tabus. Aus dem Führer Adolf Hitler wird der bartlose Kanzler Adolf Heiler. Aus dem „Dritten Reich“ wird das Regime. Juden werden vollkommen ausgespart, „Neger“ hingegen wird ausgesprochen.

Diese Selbstzensur ist deswegen interessant, weil Spiele als Teil von *Public History* gesehen werden können. Über diese Form der Spielkommunikation lernen Jugendliche oftmals mehr und aufmerksamer über Nationalsozialismus und den Zweiten Weltkrieg als in Schulen oder analogen Medien – oder zumindest aufmerksamer.

Es wird qualitativ und interdisziplinär im Sinne der Game Studies analysiert und untersucht, was das bewusste Weglassen von Symbolen, Namen und auch Opfern bei der Geschichtsrepräsentation bewirkt. Hier werden auch die Beweggründe des Herstellers (Interview eines Lokalisierungsverantwortlichen) eingear-

beitet. Diese Sichtweise und die damit genauere Analyse der erfolgten Selbstzensur wird nur selten aufgegriffen.

Sprachliche Tabubrüche in der Kunst am aktuellen Beispiel der Rapper Kollegah und Farid Bang

Jöran Landschoff und Sven Bloching
(Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg und
Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache, Mannheim)

Als Farid Bang und Kollegah mit dem Album „Jung Brutal Gutaussehend 3“ vergangenes Jahr den Musikpreis *Echo* erhielten, löste dies teils starke Kritik von Kulturschaffenden und Medienvertretern aus, die schließlich sogar die Auflösung des Echos zur Folge hatte. Antisemitisch seien die Texte, Auschwitz verharmlosend. Schon bei einem kurzen Blick auf die Songtexte wird zudem offenbar, dass durch Explikation von Gewalt und Sexualität musterhaft Tabus gebrochen werden – oft auch miteinander verschrankt. Die offensichtlich stark polarisierenden Rap-Texte eignen sich daher als aktuelles Beispiel für potenzielle Funktionsweisen von Tabubrüchen in Kunst und (Sub-)Kultur und den gesamtgesellschaftlichen Umgang mit selbigen.

Es stellt sich erstens die Frage nach den Ursachen für den Erfolg des Albums, zweitens die nach der Wirkungsweise der Texte. Die hohen Verkaufszahlen lassen eine breite Rezeption jenseits der Subkultur des Battlerap vermuten. Eine linguistische Untersuchung bietet sich hier deshalb an, weil nicht praktizierte, sondern versprachlichte Gewalt und Sexualität den Untersuchungsgegenstand darstellen. Die Tabubrüche sind jedoch sowohl sprachlicher als auch nicht-sprachlicher Natur.

Beispielhafte Analysen anstößiger Textstellen sollen deren Funktionsweise offenlegen. Unsere These ist, dass kalkulierte Tabubrüche zur Generierung humoristischer Effekte bei gleichzeitiger Abgrenzung der Subkultur von einem gedachten „Mainstream“ vollzogen werden. Dabei offenbart sich das besondere Spannungsfeld zwischen Sub- und Massenkultur, das die Auswahl der herangezogenen Bilder, Schemata und Stereotype von Gewalt, Sexismus und Ausländerfeindlichkeit erklärt. Die potentiell humoristische Dimension dient als Erklärungsangebot für die Verkaufszahlen.

Zunächst skizzieren wir einen Kulturbegriff als Gesamtheit von akzeptierten Praktiken, Deutungsmustern und Perspektivierungen einer Gesellschaft und argumentieren für das humoristische Potenzial von Tabubrüchen. Es folgt oben beschriebene Analyse, wobei auch grundlegenden Theorien veranschaulicht werden. Zuletzt soll diskutiert werden, inwiefern die Tabubrüche im Rap und der Kunst allgemein modellhaft für Tabubrüche auch in anderen Gesellschaftsbereichen wie der Politik stehen können.

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Analysis of the discourse on sexuality amongst Christian women in Cameroon

Herbert Rostand Ngouo
(University of Maroua)

The current paper analyses the discourse as well as the hearers' interpretation and reaction on the topic of sexuality during a Christian women's conference in Cameroon. Sexuality is one of those taboos of society. The data used for the analysis are elicited from two talks given during two conferences in 2014 and 2016 by two speakers (speaking in Cameroonian Pidgin English and interpreted in French): one of them an unmarried male medical doctor speaking on menopause, and the other a mature women's leader speaking on harmony in couples.

The paper points out all lexical, euphemistic, and figurative constructions, as well as neutral terms used to refer to sexuality (sexual organs and sexual course). The reaction and interpretation of the listeners of those words is also analysed. The paper also conducts a contrastive quantitative study of the use of verbal taboo by the two speakers, as well as their interpreters. The results show that while sexuality had long been a taboo topic in Christian milieu, it is now discussed openly amongst African women, but there is still some mixture of uneasiness and excitement about the topic. Thus, the proliferation of expressions like metaphors and euphemisms to discuss reproductive health and sexuality attests to the fact that sexuality is still surrounded by lots of myths.

The word 'taboo' has its etymological roots in Polynesian societies and generally refers to something that is socially, culturally or religiously forbidden. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000: 1322) defines 'taboo' as: "a cultural or religious custom that does not allow people to do, use or talk about a particular thing as people find it offensive or embarrassing; and a general agreement not to do something or about something". 'Taboo words' are defined as: "words that many people consider offensive or shocking, for example because they refer to sex, the body or people's race". The many taboo words heard in society today fall into a number of categories including taboo, obscenity, profanity, blasphemy, vulgarisms, expletives and cursing. While the terms are distinctively different, they can be all gathered under the general umbrella of Taboo English.

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Deconstructivism and Language Shift

Cordula Simon
(Graz)

Deconstructivism teaches us that power lies within language, or rather that power decides what language is supposed to mean. In the last decades, calls for more humane language have been made, giving birth to movements of political correctness in the western hemisphere, making everyday conversation a subject of critique, calling for normative change in language and facing the same question everywhere: does it in fact help? This paper will shed some light on the linguistic empirical knowledge we possess on the connection between form and content going back to Saussure and following the discourse of language and power in an historical manner. It will, thus, take a hard look at the theoretical background of the dynamics of power and language, building upon a chronology of deconstructivist theorists like Derrida, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Barthes. These theories will be paralleled with the so-called linguistic turn from the beginnings to the nowadays so popular Neowhorfian approach. Finally the deconstructivist method will be contrasted with what we know about the connection between language and action following John Austin, circling back to the postmodern discursive approach: This includes the language policing of everyday conversations by individual speakers, representing the deconstructivist movement, comparing it to empirical data about language and culture, named and the unnamed, empowerment and the mechanics of language shift. This will focus on the shift of meaning and tabooing of vocabulary, dissecting what critics of political correctness call the „euphemism treadmill“, building up to the effects of political correctness we have come to experience so far. The goal is to finally answer the question of whether language policing and growing public attention on the use of language do have an egalitarian effect on reality.

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Further Information

Conference Dinner

Wednesday, October 30, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Schneider Bräuhaus München im Tal
Tal 7, 80331 Munich

With public transport:
U3 or U6 to Marienplatz and 5-minute walk toward Isartor

By foot:
20-minute walk to Marienplatz and 5-minute walk toward Isartor

Please note that the Graduate School of Language & Literature Munich
will not be able to cover the costs for the conference dinner.

Suggestions for restaurants and cafés near the university

Cafés

Dinatale
Amalienstraße 71
Italian coffee & cakes

Dompierre
Schellingstraße 10
French coffee & snacks

Lost Weekend
Schellingstraße 3
Modern café with snacks, books & music

Restaurants

Atzinger
Schellingstraße 9
Bavarian food

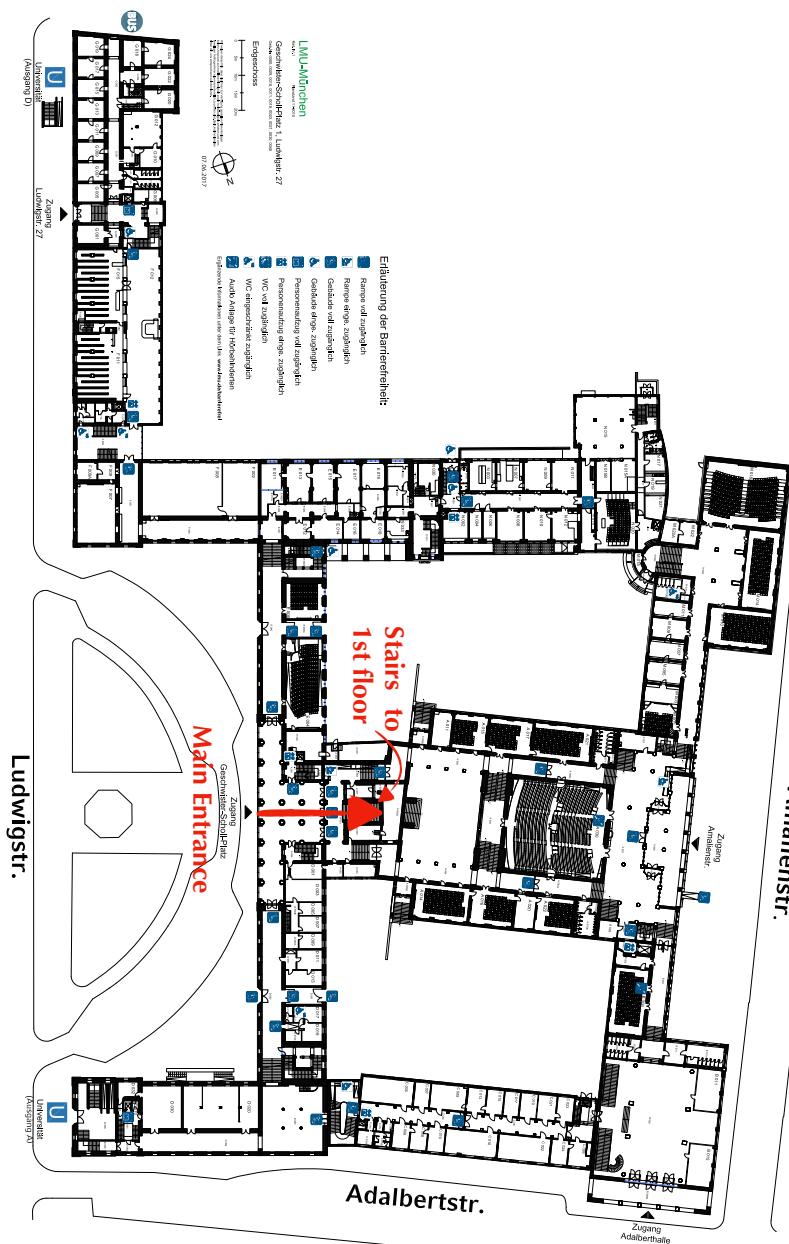
Ciao Ragazzi
Schellingstraße 27
Italian pizza & pasta

Okra
Schellingstraße 44
Oriental kebab & salads

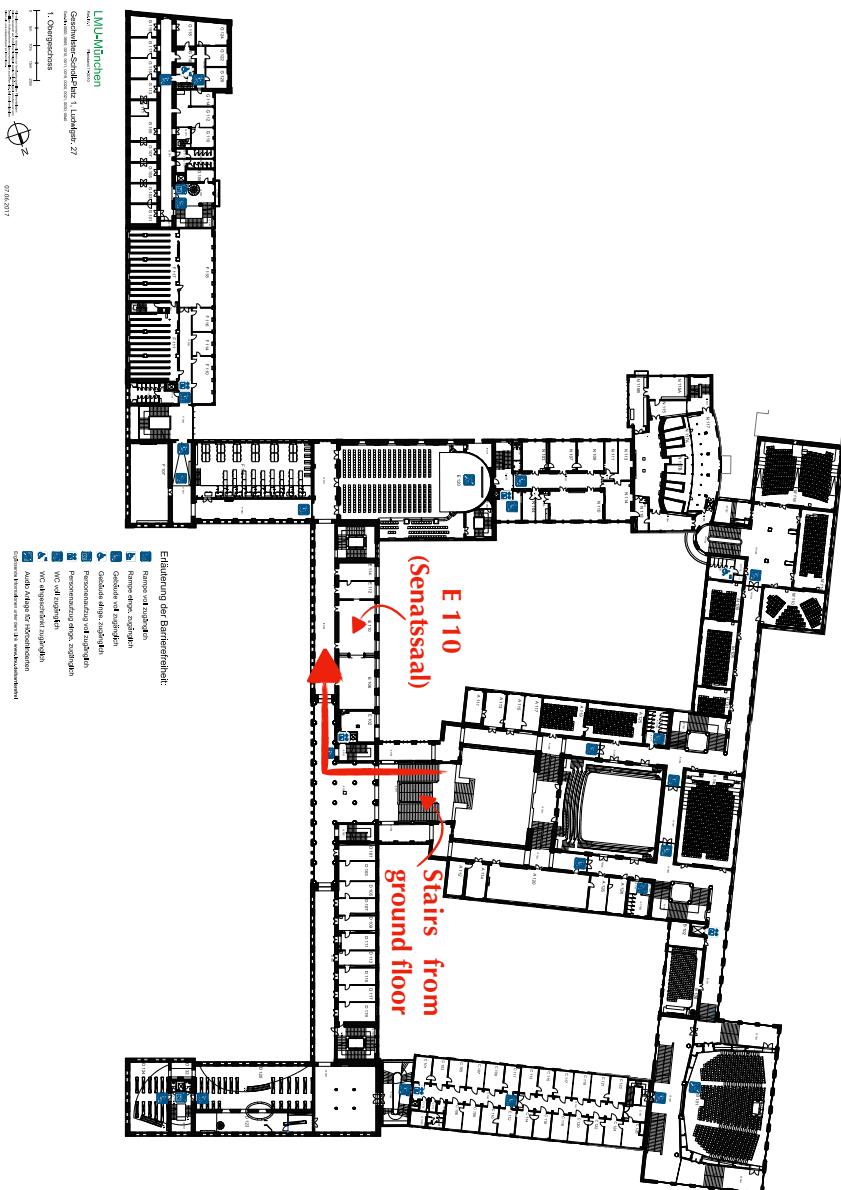
Pommes Boutique
Amalienstraße 46
Belgian fries, Burgers & Sandwiches

Der verrückte Eismacher - im Wunderland
Amalienstraße 77
,The mad ice creamer - in Wonderland'

Floor plan: Ground floor



Floor plan: 1st floor



Organization Committee 2019

Daniel Biro

Johanna Holzer

Melanie Keller

Philipp Striedl

Benjamin Weber

Patronage

Hans-Jörg Schmid

Wolfgang Schulze

