Influence, Manipulation, and Seduction
Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Persuasive Language

June 26-28, 2020, University of Basel

Daria Dayter (University of Basel) & Sofia Rüdiger (University of Bayreuth)

persuasion-conference@unibas.ch

How can we get someone to behave in a way that they initially did not intend? And how can we change what our interlocutor thinks about a certain issue? We use language to 'convince', 'persuade', 'cajole', or 'coax' our counterpart into a certain behavior or state of mind. These are activities we engage in constantly, usually even without conscious thought. It is words that have the power to mold and influence opinions, attitudes, and behavior. This persuasive power of language is at the center of this symposium.

Linguists have traditionally examined the workings of persuasive language in institutionalized discourses. As genres inherently characterized by persuasion, it is not surprising then that advertising and politics have enjoyed the limelight of scholarly attention here; investigations of the features of persuasive language in TV, radio, and print advertisements as well as political speeches, interviews, and press conferences abound. Persuasion has also been studied extensively in the fields of rhetoric and critical discourse analysis (CDA). The aim of this symposium is to expand the research of persuasive language to other genres and domains (like advice-giving, dating, or sales encounters) and to engage with language and persuasion from other perspectives which have opened up due to technological advances (computer-mediated communication), social changes (globalized and networked publics), and methodological progress (big data and digital humanities, sophisticated statistical and phonetic tools for data analysis).

The symposium on persuasive language brings linguists together with scholars from the fields of psychology, sociology, and media, information, cultural, and internet studies to examine persuasion from new perspectives. The contributions will be grouped into four thematic strands: persuasion online, persuasion in daily life, gender/sex and persuasion, and new approaches to persuasive language.

In addition to the four symposium strands, the event will also include a **Lightning Talk** session. Lightning Talks are short, 5-minute, presentations given in rapid succession and thus force the presenters to focus on their key points and to convey their ideas succinctly and clearly. The best lightning talk will be awarded with a certificate and a small prize.

Call for Papers

We invite the submission of abstracts for full papers (20 min presentation + 10 min Q&A) in the four above-mentioned conference strands. We also invite abstracts for the lightning talks (5 min presentation), which can be related to any aspect of persuasive language. Abstracts of 300 words, excluding references, should be submitted in pdf-format by email to **persuasion-conference@unibas.ch**. Please indicate whether you prefer your talk to be considered for a full paper or a lightning talk. The deadline for abstract submission is **December 23, 2019**.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent out before the end of January, 2020.