Textual Negotiation of Online Identities

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Communicating via, generically speaking, computers has lately come to represent a routine, ritual and, arguably, necessary activity in the modern age on both personal and professional levels. Under the umbrella term known as computer-mediated communication, multimodal par excellence, several sociocultural acts are performed. From among them scholars have been particularly interested in the textual (text, here, in its broader meaning of language, discourse and semiotic architecture) process of negotiating individual or group identities, be they situated or permanent, on the fixed-fluid spectrum (Danet and Herring, 2007; Jenkins 2014; Turkle, 1997; Van Dijk, J. 2006, West & Zimmerman, 2008). Whether a matter of establishing and regulating interpersonal relations (Baym, 2005), or of forming communities of practice, prompted by mutual goals and interests, in turn grounded in ideological affiliations and reciprocity, the construction of identities on social network sites is a subtle, finely calibrated, liminal process.

This paradigm is congenial to a cultural sociolinguistic approach, with a focus on the manner in which users, the multiliterate actors of a participatory culture, relate to the other. The discursive membership of a medium displaying engaged sociocultural dynamics in the age of globalization, by a critical mass of people, is undeniably a phenomenon. Empirical and theoretical studies are trying to keep pace with the radical and accelerated shifts triggered by the regular use of online sites. Thus, today, the focus has become the way in which, by and large, group identities become hybrid, nebulous, fluid, tribal, particularly under the impact of integrated digital actions, inside increasingly ideologized virtual communities. Within the given context, social network sites can be scrutinized as generators of echo-chambers, affording the expression of foregrounded affiliations developed and reinforced by certain patterns of discourse. Through technology affordances, they enable individuals to explore, exercise and express their identity repertoires in a threefold capacity: online content users, consumers and creators. Consequently, it is natural that all of these aspects should lend themselves to a multidisciplinary approach that must include by necessity elements of semantics, pragmatics, semiotics and social psychology.

This issue will host papers falling under the joint or specific scientific approaches of sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, applied linguistics,

multilingual and intercultural communication, or language policies, etc. From among the textual topics and phenomena of phatic or online communication today, marked by lingua-cultural (super)diversity, multiliteracy, hyperconnectivity, we suggest the tackling of the following:

- building self- and group identity
- defining and representing the *other*
- social and political activism and echo chambers
- normativity in online communication
- online multilingualism and plurilingualism
- conviviality and phatic communication
- intercultural and multicultural aspects
- ideologies and polarization
- phatic communication vs. communion
- digital limits, constraints and affordances
- multimodal expression of emotion and affectivity
- the private-public divide
- politeness, solidarity and social distance
- online communication in pandemic times

Indicative Bibliography:

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Tannen, Deborah, Trester, Anna Marie. *Discourse 2.0. Language and New Media.* Georgetown University Press, 2008.
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Timeline:

- **1 May 2022** – proposal submission deadline (200-word abstract, 7 keywords, 5 theoretical references, 150-word author's bio-note)
- **15 May 2022** – notification about acceptance
- **1 August 2022** – submission of full papers Instructions for authors regarding formatting rules and style sheets can be found on the journal's webpage: http://studia.ubbcluj.ro/serii/philologia/pdf/Instructions_En.pdf)

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