

SPREMI

18 November, 2021 at 15-17
in HELIKON (A202), Arken

For online participation, please go to <https://aboakademi.zoom.us/j/66312703059>
(Meeting ID: 663 1270 3059)

Dr Daria Dayter

University of Tampere

How to persuade online: Changing readers' views on the Reddit/ChangeMyView



The subreddit R/CHANGEMYVIEW (CMV) is a forum where users come to post an opinion and invite others to change their view in a civilised, well-argued debate. The main persuasion capital for comments on CMV is a special validation system called *delta*. A delta is awarded to commenters who successfully achieve a 'change of view' of the original poster, and this act of persuasion is based on self-declaration by the posters themselves. Due to the delta system, CMV makes for a unique data source where argumentative threads have been pre-annotated by the participants as successful or unsuccessful, and a CMV corpus thus allows the comparative study of persuasive discourse that has persuaded, or has failed to persuade.

In this talk, I will present the results of two studies investigating persuasion on CMV, conducted using both corpus and discourse analysis methodologies. First, the formality dimension is explored in a corpus of 100 million messages, split into subcorpora based on the user-awarded marker delta, which rewards changing an original poster's view. Second, a smaller subsample of this corpus is analysed using the Biber's (1988) Overt Persuasion dimension markers. Finally, I conduct a qualitative analysis of concordance lines for *persuade* and *change PRONOUN view* to find out how the users themselves understand persuasive practices in this community.

Biber, Doug. 1988. *Variation across Speech and Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Daria Dayter is an Assistant Professor for English Linguistics at Tampere University. Before coming to Finland, Dayter held a postdoctoral position at the University of Basel, Switzerland, and spent a semester as a visiting research at the Centre for Forensic Linguistics at Aston University, Birmingham. Her research interests include corpus linguistics, conference interpreting, pragmatics of self-promotion, and digital communication – the scope reflected in her published work, e.g. the monograph *Discursive self in microblogging: Speech acts, stories and self-praise*, which appeared with John Benjamins in 2016, or *Corpus Approaches to Social Media* (co-edited with Sofia Rüdiger in 2020).