

Metapragmatic positioning in social media. A comparison of the German and French body discourse.

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1. Relevance

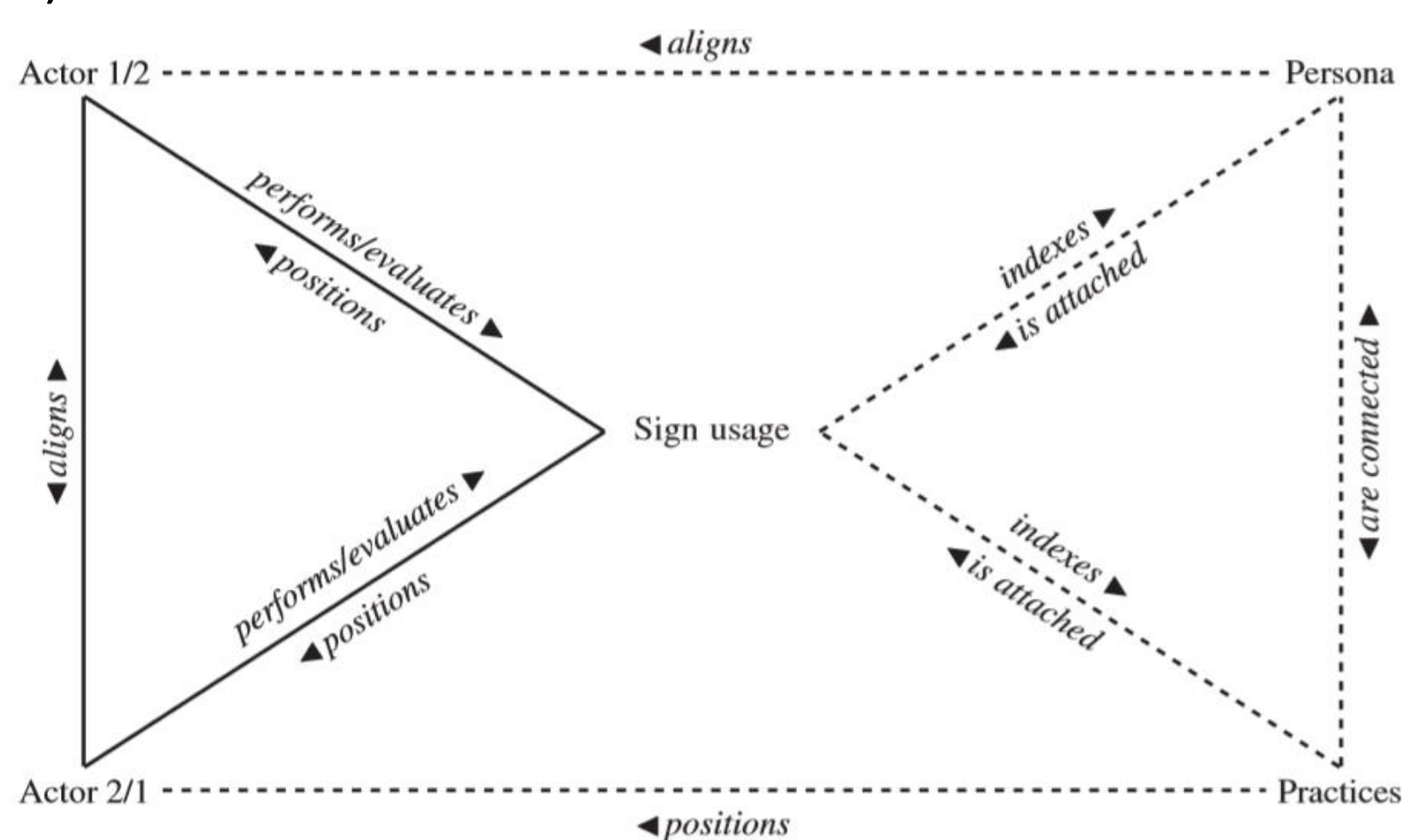
Social positioning is an essential basis for communication, negotiation and stabilisation of fundamental values and hierarchies. At the same time, it represents a means to structure and organise society and to constitute social groups, of which actors either want to be part of or from which they want to distinguish themselves (see Spitzmüller 2013: 282). Not only language, but also the body can be considered as a social and cultural symbol as well as an agent, a means and an instrument for social action (see Gugutzer et al. 2017: preface).

2. Research Question

How do actors position themselves in a French-German comparison by a certain language usage or multimodal representation mode in the body discourse (public communication in fitness communities) in social media and how are local practices of positioning linked to discursive ones?

3. Theoretical Background

Theory and model of metapragmatic positioning (see Spitzmüller 2013: 269–273):



4. Method

The model of metapragmatic positioning according to Spitzmüller 2013 is used as a starting point and will be combined with approaches of other scientific disciplines:

- agonal characteristics in the paradigm of pragma-semiotic text work
- enunciative-pragmatic tradition of discourse analysis in France
- sociology of the body
- semiotics of discourse
- contrastive discourse linguistics
- corpus linguistics

Using an abductive approach, hypothesis will be generated in a three-level spiral movement. From there, prognoses will be derived which in turn will be examined inductively. This process is repeated until an appropriate explanatory model is found (see Reisigl 2017: 25f.).

5. Corpus

The corpus of the doctoral project consists of data about the two German fitness stars Sophia Thiel and Anne Kissner as well as the two French fitness stars Sissy Mua and Justine Gallice and contains different components (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter). It is created using data from a period of one week by taking three different datasets into account:

- the account of the fitness star
- (if there is one) the account of the sport program
- relevant hashtags



The investigated period starts on 7th January 2019 and ends on 13th January 2019. Further data will be gathered in the future.

6. Challenges

Which tools are good for annotation and automatic analysis of multimodal corpora?

- ...tools for tokenization and part-of-speech-tagging for computer-mediated communication (CMC) regarding the two languages investigated (French and German)?
- ...tools for annotation and (semi-)automatic analysis of pictures and videos?

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