Call for Book Chapters


Context

With the advent of the so-called New Media, questions about how the (technical) medium shapes communicative artefacts have increasingly been focused on, particularly in the evolving field of Media linguistics (see, e.g., Brock 2013, Dürscheid et al. 2010, Gohl & Schilling 2013, Luginbühl 2014, Schildhauer 2014, Źebrowska 2013).

Among the many concepts suggested in the course of this endeavour, the term communication form, which goes back to the late 1970s (Ermert 1979), has never lost its currency and is still in use today. It is not surprising that the concept has been subject to several attempts at redefining it as part of the analysis of phenomena emerging in new medial environments, and at clarifying its relation to and distinctness from other terms such as medium and genre (see, e.g., Dürscheid 2005). Recently, Holly (2011: 155) defined communication form more dynamically as cultural practice and is followed in doing so by several others (e.g. Meiler 2013). Increasingly, however, the boundaries between several useful concepts are becoming blurred, for instance when genres are also understood as cultural practices (or social action, in Miller’s ([1984]1994) terms).

Following Hutchby (2001), the term affordances as “functional and relational aspects which frame, while not determining, the possibilities for agentic action in relation to an object” (Hutchby 2001: 444) has additionally come into play and been conceptually related to communication form (e.g. Pentzold et al. 2013). Moreover, other terms such as format (Fritz 2013: 456-457), socio-technical format (Herring et al. 2005: 164), mediengattung (Bucher 2010) and software genre (Lomborg 2014: 18) are also used to approach the same or similar issues.

Aims and Scope of the Volume

The volume pursues the following aims:

1. We see the need to (re-)clarify the concepts in use and their relations to each other, especially communication form, genre, medium and affordance(s). We therefore invite articles with a pronounced theoretical approach to one or all of these concepts and their interrelations.

2. Another important issue lies in the field of methodology: How can communication forms, affordances etc. be adequately described? Do new communication forms call for innovative methods? How and to what extent can the particularities of new communication forms (e.g. HTML source code) be used fruitfully for text analysis?

3. While the need for clearer concepts and methodology is certainly pressing, new communication forms such as WhatsApp (Dürscheid & Frick 2014) and the communicative practices based on them call for description. Therefore, we also invite empirical studies on a range of new (and old) communication forms and communicative practices.
While the issues laid out here have been approached mainly from a (media)linguistic point of view, contributions from other fields (sociolinguistics, computational linguistics, communication sciences, media theory, social- / media history) are also very welcome.

**Dates and Guidelines:**

20 December 2014  
Potential contributors are asked to hand in an abstract of ca. 150-300 words (excl. references), which should particularly emphasise how the planned chapter is connected to the key questions of the volume. The preferred language for contributions is English.

Please send your abstracts to both Alexander Brock (alexander.brock@anglistik.uni-halle.de) and Peter Schildhauer (peter.schildhauer@uni-bielefeld.de).

31 January 2015  
Notification of acceptance

31 July 2015  
Contributors hand in their drafts of approx. 4000 words (12-15 pages, including an abstract). Details on the style sheet will be sent with the notification of acceptance.

The volume will appear in the series *Hallesche Sprach- und Textforschung* at Peter Lang Verlag.

**The Editors**

**Prof. Dr. Alexander Brock** is associate professor at the English department at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg. Besides his pronounced focus on humour research, he pursues interests in media linguistics with a particular emphasis on the migration of genres. Together with Dr. Annette Schiller, he edits the series *Hallesche Sprach- und Textforschung*.

**Dr. Peter Schildhauer** works as research assistant at Martin-Luther-University and as lecturer at Bielefeld University. During his PhD-study on the history of the genre *Personal Weblog*, he developed a strong interest in media theory and -history as well as text linguistics.

**References**


