



UNIVERSITÄT
LEIPZIG

Institut für Kommunikations-
und Medienwissenschaft
**Professur für Medien-
und Kommunikations-
wissenschaft**

Prof. Dr. Christian Pentzold

Universität Leipzig, Institut KMW, IPF 165141, 04081 Leipzig

Seminar Forschungsfeld Medienkultur und Medienbildung

Machines like us

Module Research Module I: Media Culture and Media Pedagogy (581)
Wednesday, 1 to 3 pm (groups A and B)
<https://meet.uni-leipzig.de/b/cp5-ur0-wfq-uxk>
(Date: 18 February 2021)

MOODLE course: <https://moodle2.uni-leipzig.de/course/view.php?id=30808>

Module: Research Module I: Media Culture and Media Pedagogy

After participating in this module, students will be able to use their knowledge acquired in the course of study so far as well as their methodological competence to a concrete research question on media culture and media education. They have the ability to formulate scientific questions, justify them and select appropriate research methods. The students can name, describe and critically classify research methods. Furthermore, they are able to develop and independently apply a survey and analysis analysis instrument suitable for the research question and to apply it independently. Furthermore, they are able to develop and substantiate arguments independently in group work and critically question the ideas of others. Furthermore, the students have the competence to carry out research projects and to critically their own approach critically and reflectively.

Aims of the seminar

In many places, newspaper headlines proclaim the rise of robots. If they are to be believed, future living and working environments such as supermarkets or nursing stations will be populated by autonomous machines that will either make life easier for people or even take it away. Behind the oft-exaggerated euphoria of media reporting lies a serious problem that goes far beyond technical concerns: How can we live together with robots? What expectations or ideas do people have of smart machines? How do they communicate with voice assistants like Siri or Alexa. What concerns do they have, for example about the security of their privacy or the role of chat bots? The seminar would

Universität Leipzig

Institut für Kommunikations- und
Medienwissenschaft

Nikolaistraße 27–29
04109 Leipzig

Telefon

+49 341 97-35 700

Fax

+49 341 97-35 794

E-Mail

christian.pentzold@uni-leipzig.de

Web

www.uni-leipzig.de

Postfach intern

165141

Kein Zugang für elektronisch
signierte sowie für verschlüsselte
elektronische Dokumente

also need to think about what political and ethical issues are raised anew or in a different form when we act with and by means of autonomous machines.

Making robots work outside of factory floors or laboratories brings contradictory tasks. On the one hand, social and communicative everyday life must be brought into the language of machines. On the other hand, the future robots are to prove themselves in concrete situations with real users. This double tension is the starting point of the seminar. According to the problem definition, the seminar will deal with topics of the existing and future coexistence of humans and intelligent machines.

The seminar is designed as a research project seminar. The aim will be to develop a theoretical foundation and, building on this, to set up concrete empirical research projects. Students acquire a critical understanding of automated communication and smart machines. Students practice transferring these conceptual foundations to individual areas of action and life and are able to develop an independent research design and test it. Furthermore, students practice teamwork, scientific work and presentation skills.

Participation

The seminar will be held online and mostly synchronously. The common BBB room is <https://meet.uni-leipzig.de/b/cp5-ur0-wfq-uxk>

Task of all seminar participants:

All participants fulfill the tasks mentioned in the respective session descriptions.

Task of the project groups: The project groups

- a) develop a research project based on the seminar contents. This includes the formulation of a research interest and corresponding questions as well as the establishment of research guiding assumptions. These considerations are documented in a short exposé (1,000 words).
- b) present the project for discussion in the seminar on the basis of the exposé.
- c) revise the exposé, incorporating feedback from the project presentation in the seminar. The completed expose addresses the following points: Research interest and research question; research guiding assumptions; empirical approach to data collection and analysis.
- d) carry out the research project on the basis of the exposé and document the analytical steps in data collection and evaluation.
- e) present their results for discussion in the seminar.
- f) prepare a project report. In addition to the points documented in the exposé, it also presents and critically discusses the results of the project.

Examination

Together with “Methoden der Medienkultur und Medienbildung” the seminar forms the Research Module I: Media Culture and Media Pedagogy. The module is completed with a portfolio. See §11 of the examination regulations BA Communication and Media Studies:

“Portfolios consist of two to three partial performances and should reflect the different topics of the courses and their implementation by the students. Examples of achievements in the portfolio include presentations, case study solutions, documentation, research concepts, evaluation and presentation of research data, exercises, papers, and protocols. The composition of the portfolio will be announced by the instructor at the beginning of the module. Services for the portfolio will be provided throughout the lecture period. The processing time for compiling the portfolio after all performances have been completed is four weeks. Further details are regulated by the guidelines for the examination performance portfolio, which are decided by the examination board of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Philosophy and are announced as usual in the faculty.”

In the seminar, the 1,000-word abstract (session: Problems, anyone?) and the project report will together constitute the exam performance.

Course

14 April 2021 **Introduction to the seminar** (synchronous, BBB room)

Conceptual basics

28 April 2021 **What is a social robot? How social can a robot be?** (synchronous, BBB room)

Turkle, S. (2010). In Good Company? On the Threshold of Robotic Companions. In: Wilks, Y. (eds): Close Engagements with Artificial Companions. Amsterdam, S. 3-10.

Gehl, R. & Bakardjieva, M. (2016). Socialbots and their friends. In: Gehl R and Bakardjieva, M. (eds), Socialbots and Their Friends: Digital Media and the Automation of Sociality. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 1–16.

5 May 2021 **How robots learned to communicate** (synchronous, BBB room)

Natale, S. (2019). If software is narrative: Joseph Weizenbaum, artificial intelligence and the biographies of ELIZA. *New Media & Society*, 21(3), 712-728.

Collins, H. (2018). *Artificial Intelligence*. Cambridge (chapters 1-4).

Task for all participants: Think – where do you already communicate with a robot? How do you experience these encounters? Please write a short abstract (max. 300 words) and upload it to MOODLE (until 3 May)

12 May 2021 **Communicating with robots** (synchronous, BBB room)

Guzman, A. & Lewis, S. (2020). Artificial intelligence and communication. *New Media & Society* 22: 70–86.

Hepp, A. (2020). Artificial Companions, Social Bots and Work Bots. *Media, Culture & Society*. Online first. DOI: 10.1177/0163443720916412

Hancock, J.T. et al. (2020). AI-Mediated Communication: Definition, Research Agenda, and Ethical Considerations. *JCMC*, 25, 89-100.

19 May 2021 **Problems, anyone?** (synchronous, BBB room)

Keller, T. & Klinger, U. (2019): Social bots in election campaigns. *Political Communication*, 36, 171-189.

Natale, S. (2020). To believe in Siri: A critical analysis of AI voice assistants. *Communication Figurations Working Paper No. 32*.

Westerlund, M. (2020). The Ethical Dimension of Public Opinion on Smart Robots. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 10(2), 25-36.

Guliano, R. (2020). Echoes of myth and magic in the language of Artificial Intelligence. *AI & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-020-00966-4>

Task for all participants: Choose one of the above articles and discuss: What are the key issues brought up in the piece, what is the core argument, what insights or provocations are offered? What further questions arise from the article? Please write an abstract (max. 1,000 words) and upload it to MOODLE (until 17 May)

Research planning

26 May 2021 **Finding a topic, group A** (synchronous, BBB room)

Group A: Think about what aspects of the seminar topic interest you most. Do background research. Form project teams. As a team, upload a first draft of the expose on MOODLE (by 24 May). Please present your ideas in the seminar.

2 June 2021 **Finding a topic, group B** (synchronous, BBB room)

Group B: Think about what aspects of the seminar topic interest you most. Do background research. Form project teams. As a team, upload a first draft of the expose on MOODLE (by 31 May). Please present your ideas in the seminar.

Project work

9 June 2021 **Setting up a project** (asynchronous, MOODLE course)

You have the opportunity to revise your project expose. It will form the basis for your empirical project. Please upload to MOODLE by 7 June. I will provide written feedback on each synopsis.

16 June 2021 **Project work and consultation I** (synchronous, BBB room)

Use the time to execute the project according to the steps outlined in the synopsis. I am available for consultation should any questions or issues arise. Please contact me if you wish to take the opportunity of the consultation.

23 June 2021 **Project work and consultation II** (synchronous, BBB room)

Use the time to execute the project according to the steps outlined in the synopsis. I am available for consultation should any questions or issues arise. Please contact me if you wish to take the opportunity of the consultation.

7 July 2021 **Project work and consultation III** (synchronous, BBB room)

Use the time to execute the project according to the steps outlined in the synopsis. I am available for consultation should any questions or issues arise. Please contact me if you wish to take the opportunity of the consultation.

Project presentation

14 July 2021 **Project presentation, group A** (synchronous, BBB room)

Group A: Please present your project as a team!

21 July 2021 **Project presentation, group B** (synchronous, BBB room)

Group B: Please present your project as a team!