



Universität  
Basel

## Research Project

### Language and interaction in online gaming communities

#### Project funded by own resources

**Project title** Language and interaction in online gaming communities

**Principal Investigator(s)** [Debray, Carolin](#) ;

**Organisation / Research unit**

Departement Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaften / English Linguistics (Locher)

**Project start** 01.09.2021

**Probable end** 30.07.2026

**Status** Active

Gaming communities have considerably grown over the years and gaming is becoming increasingly mainstream. Since early on, gamers have developed ludolects (Ensslin, 2012) which differ quite significantly from everyday English both in terms of lexis and syntax, but also in regards to pragmatics, which, given the various settings – under time pressure in-game or in a cascading chat on twitch – prompt quite different forms of language use.

Carolin is investigating these ludolects, with a focus on how they transcend (and often linguistically unite members from) different geographies, various platforms and across a variety of games. With this her research is situated in intercultural new media studies, interpersonal and intercultural pragmatics and corpus linguistics.

Using corpus linguistics, Carolin's habilitation project investigates the form and pragmatics of ludolects in the various contexts in which they are used: in in-game interactions, during public streams, community fora and in Twitch chats. As a second part of her project, Carolin investigates the interpersonal relationship formed between community members through in-game interaction and shared play. These appear as particularly interesting from an intercultural viewpoint, as the anonymity players are afforded online means that interlocutors are often unaware of certain categorical information (i.e. age, gender, ethnicity, profession etc.) which have been found to be important for inferring common ground (Enfield, 2008). The absence of these categories creates an interesting space for constructing interpersonal relations.

**Keywords** multimodal interaction, ludolects, corpus linguistics, intercultural pragmatics, intercultural new media studies

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