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DARIA DAYTER & SOFIA RÜDIGER, *The language of pick-up artists: Online discourses of the seduction industry*. London: Routledge, 2022. Pp. 226. Hb. \$136.

Reviewed by TRAN TRUONG 

Program in Linguistics, Pennsylvania State University
442 Burrowes Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802, USA
tpt5331@psu.edu

Pick-up artists (PUAs) engage in the speed seduction of women using specific routinised techniques. Previous work has analysed this population from a feminist-theoretic and/or anthropological lens, but Daria Dayter and Sofia Rüdiger provide the first book-length treatment from a methodologically diverse linguistic perspective. They use corpus-based and discourse-analytical methods to characterise the lexicon, pragmatics, and metalinguistic ideologies of PUAs as a community of practice. They conclude that pickup artistry is a persuasive genre, but not one that is intended to persuade WOMEN. Rather, men use PUA discourses in order to persuade other MEN to pay for seduction coaching, or to persuade THEMSELVES that an encounter has gone well, by ‘setting low expectations... or invoking a training frame’ (179).

The authors introduce PUAs as one subculture of the manosphere, which includes men’s rights activists, incels, inter alia. Although the authors exclusively use web-collected data from a variety of video-sharing platforms, weblogs, and fora (chapter 1), PUAs’ use of nonconsensual videography is such that much of the data includes face-to-face conversation. The authors go on to chart the increasingly negative news coverage of PUAs, which led to the stepwise rebranding of this group from ‘pick-up artists’ to ‘seduction community’, and finally to ‘life coaches’ (chapter 2). The authors’ study of the PUA lexicon (chapter 3) draws from two novel corpora—e-PUA, a 1,090,858-word automatically collected and semantically annotated corpus of various PUA fora, and the Field Reports + Replies Corpus, a manually annotated 35,929-word corpus of thirty-five authors reflecting on their seduction attempts. On the basis of these corpora, the authors describe the pragmatics of PUA discourse (chapter 4) as high in self-praise and the foregrounding of training: ‘Every lost opportunity is a learning experience. There will be more chances and I will not repeat the same mistakes’ (94).

Special attention is paid to the ‘capture phase’, in which the PUA attempts to hold the attention of a woman he encounters in the street (chapter 5). They argue that PUAs ‘exploit the existing social contract by creating sequential, interactional, and social obligations’ (135) via such strategies as ‘attention-snapping’, in which a PUA asks questions not because he wants to know the answers, but merely because he wishes to compel the woman to remain in conversation. Two additional novel corpora are introduced in chapter 6, the PUA-Lecture Corpus and the PUA-How-To

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Corpus, which contain transcripts of talks by self-appointed PUA gurus engaged in the teaching of seduction.

Although the authors' methods are timely, and their commitment to a linguistic perspective that notices the existence of women timeless, even as of the year of publication, most of the items in the PUA lexis have fallen out of use (e.g. *daygame*, *A1-A2-A3*, *f-close*, etc.), even within communities otherwise sympathetic to PUA ideologies. Therefore, this work is at its best when it elucidates those ideologies, as well as models how to conduct research on hostile populations (i.e. PUAs) while balancing the rights of vulnerable populations (i.e. their targets).

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