

Some perspectives on rhetorical moves in Danish hate messages

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Hate messages are harassing messages sent from citizens to publicly known persons. Although these messages are nearly unavoidable for public figures, little is known about their linguistic characteristics. Based on a corpus of 49 authentic hate messages this paper characterizes their rhetorical moves and communicative purposes. Three communicative purposes are identified for hate messages: They can be used to demean or humiliate the recipient, to retaliate, and to manipulate the interlocutors' power relations to the benefit of the sender. 17 rhetorical moves are identified and the messages always contain either *Condemn character traits*, *Verbal disciplining*, *Criticize behavior in a specific situation*, or *Ill wishes*. Most of the rhetorical moves contribute to the overall communicative purposes. Besides providing an understanding of the linguistic characteristics of hate messages, the findings of the study can shed light on some social and affective mechanisms behind the phenomena.

KEYWORDS: hate messages; rhetorical move; communicative purpose; move analysis; linguistic impoliteness