

# Contrastive approaches to the lexis of the Environment

One-day Conference hosted by the *Lexical and Discursive Semantics Team* at Toulon University (Babel Laboratory EA 2649)

## Call for Papers

Discourses on the Environment are generally classified as ecological discourses, which is why it is postulated that the topic can be studied both in its scientific and political dimensions. More than that, categorizing and questioning about the Environment is now commonsensical, as the media have circulated scientific and political discourses related to it. This actually justifies such discourses being treated by media as facts of society, which was already the focus of the international conference on ecological discourses held in Paris in September 2009<sup>1</sup>: “[...] *preserving the Environment has become a pervasive theme, from car advertisements to popularizing work, to economics and politics discourse, to the specialized and non-specialized press, to handbooks, to logos of every kind, not forgetting institutional texts or popular music lyrics*”.

Therefore, not only is the analysis of representations of the Environment through various discursive formations interesting, but the evolution and dissemination of scientific, political, ordinary and media discourse makes the Environment a field of choice to study categorization phenomena as well as their ideological stakes which is key in analyzing how discourse, lexis and society articulate.

Up to now, ecological discourses have been studied from different angles in linguistics, argumentation being prominent (see Myerson & Rydin 1996).

To be more precise, the state of the art shows a focus on lexical issues, the latter being always studied in relation to discourse analysis, particularly in French: e.g. the words *écologie*, *écologiste*, *vert*, *menaces*, *catastrophe*, *remèdes*, *environnement*, *développement* etc. (see the journal *Mots* 1994); formulae such as *développement durable* (*ibid.* and Krieg-Planque, to appear); event words such as *grenelle* (see Barbet 2010).

In these analyses, the diversity in the uses of terms and their semantic variation (non stabilization) is often emphasized, notably from a diachronic perspective, particularly connotation phenomena.

As a result, these terms are frequently polyphonic as they stem from various environmental discourse types (see Chetouani 1994).

The aim of this one-day conference is to deepen and expand the scope in analyzing the lexis of the Environment, following earlier work devoted to ecological discourse.

Paper proposals from the following standpoints are welcome:

- synchronic: accounting for the lexical and semantic structure of the field of Environment
- diachronic: enabling the analysis of its restructuring through the evolutions of this lexis according to genres (scientific, political, ordinary and media discourse) and to geopolitical and historical situations.

Two major fields can thus be addressed:

- linguistic/textual (syntax, co-occurrence, argumentative sequences), as well as historical and social co(n)texts
- the question of polysemy (for instance through the spreading of terms from one discourse into another), metaphors (see *pluies acides* and medical images in *Mots* 1994) and translation in constructing meaning.

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<sup>1</sup> *Les Discours écologistes*, colloque international organisé par Clara Romero, Paris Sorbonne, 26 septembre 2009.

Whatever the chosen perspective (synchronic or diachronic) and object of study, any contrastive approach to the studied phenomena will be favored, especially so if resting on corpus linguistics. Comparative treatment of textual genres, eras and language areas (particularly the French, English and Spanish-speaking ones) is encouraged.

### Select Bibliography

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**Submissions** : a two-page (max.) anonymized version of the document containing the main references, along with a version stating name, affiliation and e-mail address are to be sent in .rtf or .tex format to [emilie\[dot\]devriendt@univ-tln.fr](mailto:emilie[dot]devriendt@univ-tln.fr)

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