



Waterphors 2024

Call for papers

Keynote speaker: Charlotte TAYLOR (University of Sussex, UK)

"Come hell or high water", "It's water under the bridge", "The project is dead in the water"...

We are literally swimming in water metaphors in everyday conversation, even if the word *water* does not even appear linguistically in most of them: *"drown in work", "go with the flow", "jump in at the deep end"*, etc. These few examples are proof that WATER as a notional domain surfaces in language through various linguistic avatars corresponding to different types of water: *"a sea of faces", "rain on one's parade", "a cascade of problems"*, to human activities associated with water: *"swim against the tide", "ride the wave of uncertainty"*, or cultural references to water disasters: *"Will we fight over the last remaining life vests as our ship sinks into the frigid waters of this pandemic?"* (Coronavirus Corpus). These analogies usually evoke a large amount of water, but lack of water can also be a motif to express scarcity: *"feel drained", "leave someone high and dry", "We never miss the water till the well runs dry"*, etc.

The ocean of water metaphors is vast, which raises a cascade of questions: why do we use three times as many water metaphors as metaphors analogically based on other elements (earth, air, fire) (Omori, 2008)? Secondly, is it possible to map the domain WATER to decide what ultimately a water metaphor is and what it is not, considering the protean nature of the element itself, and the diversity of associations spontaneously suggested by native speakers?

Over the past decades, linguists as well as sociologists (Bauman, 2000; Bernardot, 2016) have investigated liquidity as a metaphor for behaviours observed in modern societies (see selected bibliography). However, notwithstanding the obvious overlap between liquid metaphors and water metaphors, we may wonder what other characteristics single out water metaphors as a unique type.

Beyond verbal communication, water metaphors stand out as a prolific multimodal means of expression. The press is replete with visual metaphors, such as cartoons, which freely use the graphic motif of the tidal wave to represent migrants, Brexit, climate change or even a recession preparing to flood the supposed shore of civilisation, as well as scandals literally *leaking* into the White House.

Visual representations are universal and so are water idioms, to a large extent, notwithstanding rich lexical and cultural variety (Kövecses, 2005); they seem omnipresent in all languages: "*Still waters run deep*", "*Méfiez-vous de l'eau qui dort*", "*L'acqua cheta rovina/rompe i ponti*", "*Stille Wasser sind tief*", "*Aguas mansas son profundas*", "*Stille wateren hebben diepe gronden*", and so on.

As suggested by these few examples, analogies with water rarely depict positive situations despite the vital role water plays in human and terrestrial life. The ongoing cognitive investigation into the reasons why WATER proves to be such an ambiguous *source domain* will benefit from a cross-examination of water images to be found in diverse topical environments such as ecology, economic studies, literature, psychology, politics, poetry, philosophy, psychiatry, sociology, theology, neurosciences, etc., as well as from a comparative linguistic perspective revealing similarities and differences across languages.

The list of following topics may be addressed (but not exclusively):

- ~ What do water metaphors refer to? What are the topics usually associated with water?
- ~ Is there a form of coherence between *target domains* using WATER as a *source domain*? Can we posit the existence of conceptual metaphors based on the pattern SOMETHING IS WATER?
- ~ What are the emotions regularly associated with water metaphors?
- ~ Motivation of water metaphors: what do water metaphors tell us about the way we think?
- ~ Multimodal water metaphors used to depict political and social phenomena such as immigration, the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, etc.
- ~ Water metaphors in visual arts and literature
- ~ Water metaphors across languages: comparative approaches

Here's how to submit:

Submissions should be sent to **Caroline Crépin** (caroline.crepin@univ-lyon2.fr ; ca.crepin@gmail.com) **Denis Jamet** (denis.jamet@univ-lyon3.fr) & **Bérengère Lafiandra** (berengere.lafiandra1@univ-lyon3.fr) by 15 November 2023.

The evaluation committee's decision will be notified to authors by end of January 2024.

Submissions (in French or in English) should include a title, an abstract (500 words maximum, references excluded), 5 key-words, as well as a brief introduction of the author. The theoretical framework, methodology and corpus should be clearly mentioned.

All submissions will be anonymously peer-reviewed.

Languages under scrutiny:

Contributions on all languages are welcome; however, the presentation or article will have to be submitted in English or French.

Languages of the conference: English and French

Language of the publication: English and French

Length of each presentation: 30-minute talk maximum

Publication: Presentations selected by the editorial committee after the conference may be published in an open-access, double-peer reviewed journal.

Selected bibliography

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BACHELARD, GASTON. *L'eau et les rêves : Essai sur l'imagination de la matière*, Paris : Librairie José Corti, « Le Livre de Poche », 1942.

BAUMAN, ZYGMUNT. *Liquid Modernity*, Polity Press, 2000.

BERNARDOT, MARC. "De Lesbos à Calais : S'enfoncer dans la métaphore liquide", in A. Lequette et D. Le Vergos (dir.), *Décamper, De Lampedusa à Calais*, Paris : La Découverte, 2016, pp. 36-48.

- BORRIELLO, ARTHUR. "Endiguer la vague. Les ressorts du discours anti-populiste dans le journal Le Monde (2016-2017)", *Mots. Les langages du politique*, 2022, pp. 101-123. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/mots.30080>
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- OMORI, AYAKO. "Emotion as a Huge Mass of Moving Water", *Metaphor and Symbol*, Vol. 23 (2), 2008, pp. 130-146. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926480801944277>
- ÖZDEMİR, ÖZLEM & ÖZDEMİR, EMRAH. "Whose problem is it anyway? The depiction of Syrian refugee influx in political cartoons", *Syria Studies*, Vol. 9 (1), 2017, pp. 33-63. URL: <https://ojs.st-andrews.ac.uk/index.php/syria/article/view/1480>
- PORTO M. Dolores. "Water Metaphors and Evaluation of Syrian Migration: *The Flow of Refugees in the Spanish Press*", *Metaphor and Symbol* 37:3, 2022, pp. 252-267, DOI: 10.1080/10926488.2021.1973871
- RAZAC, OLIVIER, "La gestion de la perméabilité", in Laetitia Rouvière (dir.), *L'Espace Politique* [Online], Vol. 20, 2017. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/espacepolitique.2711>
- TAYLOR, CHARLOTTE. "The affordances of metaphor for diachronic corpora & discourse analysis. Water metaphors and migration", *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, Volume 27 (4), 2022, pp. 451-479.

TAYLOR, CHARLOTTE. "Metaphors of migration over time", in *Discourse and Society*, Vol. 32 (4), 2021, pp. 1-19. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926521992156>

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Deadlines

- ~ **End of May 2023:** Call for papers
- ~ **15 November 2023:** Deadline for sending in submissions
- ~ **End of January 2024:** Evaluation Committee's decisions notified to authors
- ~ **5 April 2024:** Conference

Come onboard!