
”Metaphors to adapt, metaphors to resist” Figurative language in disrupted climates

Camille Biros*[†], Caroline Rossi*[‡], Pauline Bureau*¹, and Adeline Terry*[§]²

¹Institut des Langues et Cultures d’Europe, Amérique, Afrique, Asie et Australie (ILCEA4) –
Université Grenoble Alpes – ILCEA4 - Université Grenoble Alpes UFR Langues étrangères - CS 40700 -
38058 GRENOBLE CEDEX 9, France

²Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 - Faculté des Humanités, Lettres et Sociétés (Lettres et civilisations
jusqu’en 2024) (UJML3 LC) – Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3 – 1C, avenue des Frères Lumière - CS
78242 - 69372 Lyon Cedex 08, France

Résumé

Drawing our understanding of metaphors and their potential to raise awareness of climate change from cognitive linguistics (Lakoff and Johnson 2003), through interactive activities and creativity tools, this workshop aims to develop participants’ cognitive and communicative abilities to make sense of climate change through figurative language (Augé 2023). During the first part of the workshop, starting from authentic examples of metaphors used in scientific and popularization publications on climate change in English and/or French, the participants are invited to reflect upon their value as: – cognitive tools – pedagogical tools – emotional sharing tools. Participants start by classifying them according to their perceptions / feelings / understanding. Questions to consider are: - what is the communicative / pragmatic function of the metaphor? – does it carry a manipulative function? – does this metaphor reflect the scientific process described in an accurate manner? – could it be reformulated in non-figurative language and what would that change? - does this metaphor contribute to my feelings about the process described? - if participants speak several languages, how could the metaphorical expression be translated and would some aspect of its meaning-making potential be modified in the process?

The second part of the workshop invites participants to unleash their creativity through renewed uses of figurative language to describe, understand and feel climate change. After sharing and discussing artwork selected for its embodied eco-empathy features, participants choose between an intuitive image-prompted writing activity or a climate story group discussion. For the intuitive creative-writing activity we draw inspiration from El Refaie and Thatcher’s (2025) experiment and engage participants with visual prompts to imagine the embodied experience of other species. For the climate story activity we follow The Climate Story Project (<https://www.climatestoriesproject.org>) objective to share ”personal oral histories, which bring an immediacy to the sometimes abstract nature of climate change communication” by encouraging collective talks around questions like ”how does climate change

*Intervenant

[†]Auteur correspondant: camille.biros@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr

[‡]Auteur correspondant: caroline.rossi@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr

[§]Auteur correspondant: adeline.terry@univ-lyon3.fr

threaten people and places you care about?” ; ”when did you realize climate change was impacting your life and how did you feel?” ; ”what emotional responses to climate change have you experienced or seen experienced?”. An (optional) opportunity to share their own stories about climate change through the climate story network will also be given to each participant.

A discussion on the role of metaphorical thinking in these different experiments will close the workshop.

This workshop is organized in the context of the FORESEE research programme (lauréat AMI SHS, France 2030) on living with the consequences of climate change (<https://www.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/actualites/a-la-une/actualites-universite/france-2030-le-projet-foresee-porte-par-l-uga-sur-les-consequences-du-changement-climatique-laureat-de-l-appel-a-manifestation-d-interet-en-shs-1527158.kjsp>).

Modality for workshop participation : on-site

Languages : English and French (at least one of the two spoken at B2 level by each participant but the discussions may also include other languages)

Equipment : whiteboards (several if possible) and magnets

Length : 3 hours

Number of participants : 10 to 20

Mots-Clés: Cognitive Metaphor Theory, climate change terminology