



Circulation and Interaction of Knowledge in Applied Linguistics

Conference of the French Association for Applied Linguistics (AFLA)
26–28 May 2027 – CY Cergy Paris University

In a context marked by intensified and renewed relationships between science and society, numerous national and institutional initiatives currently emphasise the need for the production of shared forms of knowledge production. The French National Research Agency’s *Science with and for Society* (SAPS) programme illustrates this dynamic by supporting more than a hundred participatory research projects bringing together researchers, citizens, and territorial stakeholders around major social issues. Universities are playing an increasingly active role in this movement. CY Cergy Paris University, for example, has developed an ambitious science-mediation strategy: together with the CNRS, it conducts large-scale science–society dialogue initiatives within the Île-de-France region and participates in outreach formats such as the Open University, the Science Festival, and accessible media formats such as *Vu par*. The widespread partnership between academic institutions and the media outlet *The Conversation* also reflects this trend towards opening university research to the public.

More specifically within linguistics, the French Association for Applied Linguistics (AFLA) has long stressed the importance of putting linguistic knowledge at the service of societal needs, fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships with institutions and professional organisations. All these initiatives converge towards a shared objective: reinforcing the presence of scientific knowledge in the public sphere, making research more responsive to societal expectations, and renewing the forms of citizen participation. It is within this perspective that the present conference is situated, inviting reflections on and valorizations of contemporary forms of articulation between science and society.

The valorisation of scientific knowledge is closely linked to its transposition into socially meaningful contexts. Yet, scientific discourse is founded on paradigms that remain valid only until they are decisively challenged; it is intrinsically open, reflexive, and non-consensual. It draws its dynamism from this very openness, which distinguishes it fundamentally from political discourse (Jakobson, 1963, p. 209). This raises several key questions: How can complex knowledge be made accessible without being distorted? Does simplification inherently lead to inaccuracies? Does the popularisation of scientific concepts necessarily risk fossilising them or producing reductive interpretations?

These questions are especially relevant today, as digital technologies and artificial intelligence contribute to a “globalisation of the scientific field” (Darbellay, 2012), accelerating—sometimes exponentially—the circulation and production of knowledge. This *Fast Science* (ibid.), driven by heightened scientific competition and demands for excellence, compels renewed reflection on the practices of disseminating and popularising knowledge, particularly considering the increasing use of AI tools whose practical, ethical, and legal frameworks remain under construction.

More broadly, these issues surrounding the circulation, dissemination and popularisation of knowledge invite deeper reflection on the ways in which linguistics can be concretely applied, particularly in professional settings. A diversity of projects and collaborations demonstrates the applicative potential of linguistics (Vierne-Duval, Longhi & Hamza-Jamann, 2025;

Hamza-Jamann, Longhi & Vierende-Duval, forthcoming), as well as the necessity of interdisciplinarity when work becomes collaborative and oriented towards practical outcomes.

The conference therefore invites contributions around three main axes:

- (1) Circulation, dissemination and popularisation of knowledge;
- (2) Stakes and uses of applied linguistics in professional environments;
- (3) Applied linguistics and interdisciplinarity.

Theme 1: Circulation, Dissemination and Popularisation of Knowledge

This theme aims to explore how knowledge produced in applied linguistics circulates and becomes accessible beyond the academic sphere. The circulation of knowledge should not be understood as a simple top-down transfer from research to practice (Derouet, 2002). Rather, it is premised on the idea that knowledge is mobile, evolving at different speeds and through multiple channels (Darbellay, 2012).

While popularisation constitutes one mode of circulation, it should not be conflated with mediation. Popularisation involves making knowledge comprehensible to non-specialists (CNRTL, 2012), whereas mediation implies genuine dialogue and the involvement of non-specialists in the research process (Las Vergnas, 2016). In the context of open science, popularisation—understood as making knowledge accessible to all—may involve disseminating and valorising research data. This raises important questions about the possibilities, limits and modalities of popularisation in applied linguistics.

Recent years have seen the proliferation of popularisation formats, including dedicated YouTube channels (Linguisticae, NativLang, Langfocus), podcasts (*Parler comme jamais*, *The Allusionist*, *Lingthusiasm*, *Vox*), popular science books (e.g., Pinker's *The Language Instinct*; *Le français va très bien, merci* by *Les Linguistes atterrées*), radio segments (e.g., Julie Neveux on France Inter), the public-facing work of Jean Pruvost (Radio France) and Bernard Cerquiglini (*Merci Professeur!* on TV5 Monde), and wider public events such as the Science Festival.

At the same time, public opinion, journalism, and the political sphere have increasingly engaged with linguistic issues, particularly concerning gender and inclusive writing strategies. Controversies such as the 2017 textbook using the middle dot (Hatier), or the political reactions to the inclusion of the pronoun *iel* in the online *Petit Robert*, illustrate how normative discourses on language have been thrust into the public sphere—discourses often supported by the Académie française and some linguists (e.g., a 2020 op-ed in *Marianne*). Yet this is far from a unified position, raising questions about how the popularisation of linguistic research might inform and enrich public debate by shedding light on argumentative strategies and the complexity of issues that cannot be reduced to connotations of natural and grammatical gender (Violi, 1987; Manesse & Siouffi, 2019).

Possible questions include (but are not limited to):

- What roles can linguists and applied linguistics play in the circulation and popularisation of knowledge?
- How can the dissemination of linguistic knowledge shed light on civic debates and public life?

- How can applied linguistics or popularisers address language changes linked to social transformations (e.g., gender debates, social-media neologisms)?
- What contributions can corpora make to the circulation and popularisation of knowledge?
- Which methods and tools are most effective for popularisation?
- Which ethical or legal considerations must be taken into account?
- What societal impacts can new technologies (including AI) have on the production, circulation and popularisation of knowledge?
- What issues arise from the popularisation of knowledge within and outside academic settings?
- Should all knowledge be disseminated and popularised?

Theme 2: Stakes and Uses of Applied Linguistics in Professional Environments

Building on the AFLA official report (Vierne-Duval, Longhi & Hamza-Jamann, 2025; summarised in Hamza-Jamann, Longhi & Vierne-Duval, forthcoming), this theme examines the place and usefulness of applied linguistics in companies, administrations, and public or parapublic institutions, especially as professional and social environments become increasingly shaped by digitalisation and AI.

Applications include (but are not limited to):

- **Economic and industrial sectors:** internal communication, professional writing, managerial norms, technical documentation, marketing, corporate social responsibility.
- **Care, support and social services:** caregiver–patient communication, linguistic mediation, accessibility of administrative or medical documents, support for vulnerable populations.
- **Public institutions and local authorities:** communication policies, public information, simplification of administrative texts, institutional terminology, multilingualism.
- **Language technologies:** chatbot design, virtual assistants, automated writing or analysis, NLP, conversational agents, translation and post-editing systems, multilingual search engines.

Beyond mapping diverse fields and data types, this theme encourages a reflexive and critical stance on the possibilities and modalities of “application” in linguistics. It also invites contributions examining how professional contexts reshape linguistics: methods, theoretical frameworks, categories, and models may all be challenged or transformed through applied work.

Questions of data collection and observables naturally raise issues relating to corpora: ethical and methodological considerations; opportunities to renew research topics; and challenges in testing existing theoretical apparatuses.

In short, this theme aims to reinforce the integration of applied linguistics into social and professional practices, and to offer a space for critical reflection on the impacts and implications of these collaborations and transfers. Contributions may address, among others:

- Ethical, legal, deontological and social conditions for applying linguistics in professional settings, and the potential consequences for the discipline.

- The impact of operational requirements on methods, corpora, categories and tools.
- Risks associated with utilitarian uses of linguistics.
- Mutual contributions between professional contexts and linguistics.
- Constraints on corpus design, exploitation and reuse in professional contexts (confidentiality, data governance, biases, representativeness, responsibility).
- Challenges of using or reusing corpora to train machine-learning models (e.g., LLMs and chatbots).
- How practitioners and the public engage with applied linguistic knowledge, methods and tools.
- How these interactions transform linguistic, professional, digital or social practices.

Theme 3: Applied Linguistics and Interdisciplinarity

This theme seeks to examine interdisciplinarity within applied linguistics, addressing whether and how applied linguistics “lends itself” to interdisciplinary work (Lambert, 2024): Can it provide useful tools to other disciplines and respond to societal issues? Conversely, what benefits can applied linguistics draw from such collaborations?

Two perspectives are proposed: a **broad** and a **narrow** perspective.

Broad perspective

Interdisciplinarity is understood as the complementary approach of specialists from different disciplines. Contributions may examine how applied linguistics engages with fields such as computer science (Bully, 1969), the humanities, or the social sciences.

A historical perspective may highlight how disciplines (e.g., military or political sciences) turned to linguists to refine their analyses, particularly in early NLP research (Léon, 2015). Pedagogical perspectives may also be explored to outline the benefits, but also the barriers, to implementing such cross-disciplinary approaches (language teaching; linguistics–literature relations—Barthes, 1968; Bishop, 2021; linguistics–neuropsychology—Hécaen, 1972).

Synchronically, contributions may present current interdisciplinary work, identifying benefits, challenges, and emerging modes of collaboration. Possible areas include linguistics applied to history (e.g., WWI soldiers’ letters: Accoulon et al., 2021; Steuckardt et al., 2024) or linguistics–geography interactions (toponymy–topography). The integration of linguistics into the field of geography may also constitute another area of investigation, particularly regarding the relationship between toponymy and topography. Furthermore, prospective contributions addressing closer collaboration between linguists and AI specialists are highly welcome. Ultimately, what role does applied linguistics have to play in a period often described as crucial?

Narrow perspective

This perspective considers interdisciplinarity within linguistics itself, a field often conceived in compartmentalised terms. Applied linguistics, grounded in the analysis of authentic corpora, necessarily entails integrative approaches that mobilise multiple linguistic subfields to account for real-world language practices.

Public discourses about language—especially political or media-driven—tend to adopt normative conceptions of language, excluding variation. By denying language its capacity for variation and change, such discourses fail to reflect social realities. Thus, one major challenge for an integrative vision of linguistics lies in education.

Contributions may explore how open, analytical and critical pedagogical approaches can reshape students' relationship to language (Villeneuve-Lapointe et al., 2023). By promoting an analytical and distanced perspective on linguistic productions—whether they originate from literary texts, advertising discourse, or social media—such an approach would contribute to the education of rational and cosmopolitan citizens.

Possible questions include:

- Theoretical and methodological contributions between applied linguistics and other disciplines.
- How applied linguistics draws on and informs other disciplines in addressing contemporary societal issues.
- The role of applied linguistics in addressing AI-related challenges.
- Ethical issues raised by interdisciplinary collaborations.
- What epistemological observations can be made regarding interdisciplinarity as it stems from these collaborations?
- How disciplinary boundaries are negotiated and crossed within applied linguistics.
- Which subfields of linguistics are most frequently mobilised, and what lessons can be drawn from such collaborations.

Contributions offering epistemological reflections on the distinctions between pluri-, inter- and transdisciplinarity in applied linguistics are also welcome.

References

- Accoulon, D., Ribeiro Thomaz, J., & Lalanne Berdouticq, A.-M. (éds.) (2021). *Des sources pour une Plus Grande Guerre*. Éditions Codex.
- Bishop, M.-F. (2021). Quelle place pour l'étude de la langue dans l'école primaire française du milieu du XIX^e siècle au début du XXI^e ? Dans E. Bulea Bronckart & C. Garcia-Debanco (éds), *L'étude du fonctionnement de la langue dans la discipline français : quelles articulations ?* (pp. 45–63). Presses universitaires de Namur.
- Bully, P. (1969). Zipf, créateur de la linguistique statistique. *Communication et langages*, 2, 23-28.
- Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales. (2012). *Vulgarisation*. CNRTL. <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/vulgarisation>.
- Darbellay, F. (éd.) (2012). *La circulation des savoirs : interdisciplinarité, concepts nomades, analogies, métaphores* (1^{ère}éd.). Peter Lang.
- Derouet, J.-L. (2002). Du transfert à la circulation des savoirs et à la reproblématisation. De la circulation des savoirs à la constitution d'un forum hybride et de pôles de compétences. Un itinéraire de recherche. *Recherche & Formation*, 40/1, 13-25. URL : <https://doi.org/10.3406/refor.2002.1756>.
- Hamza-Jamann, A., Longhi, J. & Vierne-Duval, N. (à paraître). Dynamiques de la linguistique appliquée en France : un état des lieux à partir du livre blanc de l'afla (2005–2025). *Éla. Études de linguistique appliquée*.

- Hécaen, H. (éd.) (1972). *Neurolinguistique et neuropsychologie*, *Langages*, 25.
- Jakobson, R. (1963). *Essais de linguistique générale. 1. Les fondations du langage*. N. Ruwet (trad.). Éditions de Minuit.
- Lambert, F. (2024). Présentation : la linguistique se prête-t-elle à l'interdisciplinarité ? *Essais* [En ligne], 21. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/essais/12928>.
- Las Vergnas, O. (2016). De la médiation scientifique aux sciences dans la société : 30 ans d'ambiguïtés de l'action culturelle scientifique. Dans E. Caillet *et al.* (éds), *La médiation culturelle : cinquième roue du carrosse* (pp. 177-187). L'Harmattan.
- Léon, J. (2015). *Histoire de l'automatisation des sciences du langage*. ÉNS Éditions.
- Manesse D. & Siouffi G. (éds) (2019). *Le féminin et le masculin dans la langue. L'écriture inclusive en questions*. E.S.F. « Sciences humaines ».
- Steuckardt, A., Gomila, C., & Wionet, C. (éds) (2024). *Gens ordinaires dans la Grande Guerre*. Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme.
- Vierne-Duval, N, Longhi, J. & Hamza-Jamann, A. (2025). *Le livre blanc de l'AFLA*. URL : <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-05140582v1>.
- Villeneuve-Lapointe, M., Blaser, C., Lépine, M. & Lavoie, C. (2023). Le concept de « rapport à » en didactique du français. *Nouveaux cahiers de la recherche en éducation*, 25/2, 1-9.
- Violi, P. (1987). Les origines du genre grammatical. *Langages*, 85, 15-34.
- Barthes, R. (1968). Linguistique et littérature. *Langages*, 12, 3-8.

Submission guidelines

To submit a communication, a poster or a demonstration, authors are invited to upload an anonymized abstract (maximum **5000 characters**, including references) by september 1, 2026, via the conference website: <https://afla2027.sciencesconf.org/>.

The working languages of the conference are French and English. Submissions for communications (20 min + 10 min Q&R), demonstrations, and posters should preferably be aligned with one of the three thematic strands, or alternatively with the cross-cutting theme.

Proposals involving tool presentations or demonstrations must include, in addition to the presentation itself, a scientific contextualization of the tool.

Symposium proposals (3 hours) should include:

1. An explicit alignment with one of the three thematic strands
2. The institutional affiliations of all the contributors
3. A general title for the symposium
4. A detailed description (maximum 5000 characters)

Scientific committee

Delphine Battistelli, Université Paris Nanterre

Françoise Boch, Université Grenoble Alpes

Alex Boulton, Université de Lorraine

Alice Burrows, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle

Claudia Cagninelli, Université de Milan

Anne Condamines, CNRS

Jacques David, CY Cergy Paris Université

Marie-Laure Elalouf, CY Cergy Paris Université
Catherine Fuchs, CNRS
Nora Gattiglia, Université de Gênes
Anissa Hamza-Jamann, Université de Lorraine
Isabel Herrando, Université de Zaragoza
Denis Jamet-Coupé, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3
Hélène Ledouble, Université de Toulon
Agnès Leroux-Béal, Université Paris Nanterre
Grégory Miras, Université de Lorraine
Sylvie Plane, Sorbonne Université
Ana Yara Postigo-Fuentes, Université de Düsseldorf
Arnaud Richard, Université de Toulon
Fanny Rinck, Université Grenoble Alpes
Audrey Roig, Université Paris Cité
Denyze Toffoli, Université de Toulouse III - Paul Sabatier
Olivier Turbide, Université du Québec à Montréal
Stefano Vicari, Université de Gênes
Shona White, Université Côte d'Azur
Ana Zwitter Vitez, Université de Ljubljana

Steering committee

Christophe Coupé-Jamet, CY Cergy Paris Université - LT2D
Marine Delaborde, CY Cergy Paris Université - LT2D
Stéphanie Genre, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Julien Longhi, CY Cergy Paris Université - AGORA
Rose Moreau Raguenes, Université Gustave Eiffel - LISAA et CY Cergy Paris Université - AGORA
Tatiana Taous, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA

Organizing committee

Nacera Aifi, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Asal Bagheri, CY Cergy Paris Université - AGORA
Véronique Bourhis, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Lucile Cadet, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Lianet Cantero Torres – CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Lise Hamelin, CY Cergy Paris Université - LT2D
Émilie Kasazian, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Maira Leonard, CY Cergy Paris Université - AGORA
Hélène Manuélian, CY Cergy Paris Université - LT2D
Maël Meur, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA
Kathy Similowski, CY Cergy Paris Université - EMA