



Institut des sciences de la communication du CNRS



Electronic Communications in monolingual and plurilingual contexts Forms, frontiers and futures

**University of Le Havre, France
9-10 December 2010**

Call for papers

This conference is being held in the context of a research network established some years ago between two research centres in Normandy: Language Sciences at the University of Rouen and Information and Communication Sciences in Le Havre. The themes proposed for the conference go far beyond these two areas, however, and encompass many other disciplines. Electronic communications enhance and structure the daily lives of people around the world - at the end of 2008 there were 1.34 billion internet users in the world, and more than four billion mobile phones in use, according to the International Telecommunication Union.

The advent of electronic communication has revolutionised our world in a way rarely seen before; it enables us to be in two places at once, to exchange information and ideas in real time, to share major events as well as our fleeting thoughts and feelings at any given time. The potential for communication it offers is almost limitless, and has an enormous impact on our societies.

Theme 1 – established and emerging forms.

In both monolingual and plurilingual contexts, electronic communications can make use of a range of media: text, images, sound, and any combination of these. Electronic communication is also giving rise to innovative linguistic forms, new spellings, neologisms and other creative ways of writing.

This phenomenon has been studied far more from the perspective of production than that of reception. The extent to which the context of reception determines communication choices and strategies at the point of production, would therefore be an interesting question. Do these forms have the same meaning for sender and receiver? And are they the same in monolingual and plurilingual situations?

The multiplicity and pluri-semiotic nature of the media and forms in use also makes their collection, identification and description problematic. Papers on these and related issues are welcomed.

Theme 2 – fixed and moving frontiers.

IT is constantly coming up with new tools for electronic communication: social networking sites, chat rooms, discussion forums, blogs, texting etc. As these tools have transformed our societies they have pushed back, or even removed previously existing boundaries and may at the same time have created others.

We welcome papers on the whole range of issues raised by these changes to existing boundaries and the related linguistic issues. Papers may relate to examples of existing boundaries being opened up, or new ones being imposed. Electronic communication has allowed all kinds of openings, in terms of time and space, for communities and social groups, or any combination of these. Examples could include displaced or vanished borders for diasporas or isolated communities, such as those with limited mobility or hearing; the boundary between public and private life, family and work, ordinary and institutional writing styles. Papers could also focus on new borders, created through self-censorship, to avoid causing offence, or breaking the law (politeness, moderation on discussion forums, intellectual property etc), or new forms of censorship.

Theme 3 – shared or solitary futures?

In the world of virtual communities and new technologies the ways in which we communicate and learn have been redefined, as have the notions of isolation and even of time. The instantaneous nature of electronic communication introduces an immediate future, which is also reflected in the inbuilt obsolescence of ICT tools and the ephemeral nature of virtual communication. Physical isolation is no longer synonymous with social isolation, but communications can be illusionary. We could also ask what kind of reality is being built, and for whom, when the receiver is constructed virtually and the means of communication is elitist? Electronic communication also enables alternative or minority communities to emerge, to imagine their own future and create it. Paradoxically, despite the ephemeral nature of virtual communication, it is the means by which new ways of conserving heritage are being produced for future generations, and new forms of citizenship are being defined. Papers addressing these, and related issues, are also welcomed.

The themes outlined above are not exhaustive, and papers relating to other aspects of the issue are also welcomed.

All proposals must contain:

- The title of the paper,
- An abstract of 3500 characters maximum,
- Number of theme if relating to one of the above,
- Personal contact details and author's affiliation.

Proposals should be sent only by e-mail, by **15 September 2010** to :

soumission@colloquelehavre2010.org

They will be assessed by double blind peer review, by the members of the research committee. The languages of the conference will be French and English.

Important dates:

14 June: 1st call for papers

15 September 2010: deadline for receiving abstracts.

30 September 2010: response from research committee.

1 November 2010: deadline for conference registration.

Registration fees:

- 100 euros for salaried delegates. (150 after 1st november)
- 50 euros for students. (80 after 1st november)

Research committee

Mehmet-Ali AKINCI (Université Lumière Lyon 2)

Marion BLONDEL (CNRS-Paris 8)

Dora CARPENTER – LATIRI (University of Brighton)

Régine DELAMOTTE (Université de Rouen)

Eric DELAMOTTE (Université de Rouen)

Cécile DESSOUTTER (University of Bergamo)

Cynthia FLEURY (ISCC, Paris)

Béatrice GALINON-MELENEC (IUT du Havre)

Victoria GODDARD (University of London)

Pascal LARDELLIER (Université de Bourgogne)

Foued LAROSSI (Université de Rouen)

Gudrun LEDEGEN (Université de la Réunion)

Fabien LIENARD (IUT du Havre)

Dawn MARLEY (University of Surrey)

Marie-Claude PENLOUP (Université de Rouen)

Isabelle PIEROZAK (Université de Tours)

Sami ZLITNI (IUT du Havre)

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Zeineb TOUATI (IUT du Havre)
Clotilde VAISSAIRE (IUT du Havre)
Sami ZLITNI (IUT du Havre)