

Terms and Digital Discourse: Lost in a Maze of Administration. A Case Study of the Concept of Unemployment Benefits

Bouchet Marie^{1*} and Pecman Mojca²

^{1*}CREA - Centre de Recherches Anglophones (EA 370) Université Paris Nanterre, 200 avenue de la République, Nanterre, 92001, France.

²ALTAE - Approches Linguistiques Théoriques, Appliquées et Expérimentales (URP 3967), Université Paris Cité, 8 place Paul Ricoeur, Paris, 75013, France.

*Corresponding author(s). E-mail(s): marie.bouchet@parisnanterre.fr;
Contributing authors: mojca.pecman@u-paris.fr;

Abstract

Over the past two decades, administrative services have increasingly shifted online, fundamentally changing how service providers communicate with users, and how citizens engage with public services. Today, essential administrative information is published on websites, which became the main channel of communication for informing citizens about their rights and procedures. This is particularly true for welfare-related communication, where citizens must be well informed to access their entitlements. One of the consequences of this shift is that written administrative discourse has become natively digital. In this paper, we conduct a case study of the concept of “unemployment benefits” in order to uncover trends in terminology in native digital discourse. After collecting a corpus of texts from official administrative websites in France and the United Kingdom, we use corpus linguistics tools to analyse terminology. We show how diachronic variation in naming key benefit schemes, such as “unemployment benefits”, results in terminology instability, as multiple denominations coexist on the websites. Moreover, this study reveals that websites build a fragmented thread of discourse in which term variation strongly diminishes the cohesive role of terminology. Ultimately, by conducting a comparative analysis of terminology in the UK and France, we identify emerging trends in digital administrative terminology.

Keywords: Native Digital Discourse, Term Variation, Welfare, Website Terminology

1 Introduction

In the past two decades, the administration in Europe has undergone a major transition: services previously provided in-person or over the phone have increasingly been transferred online. This transformation was accompanied by a reduction in previously available options for contacting and interacting with administrative services, as demonstrated by the closing of administration phone lines and physical locations (Alasseur, 2022; Lochak, 2022; Sheldrick, 2023). European countries, such as France and the United Kingdom, have also introduced a number of new regulations which modified administrative procedures (Dencik, 2022; Mazet, 2019a). As a result, administrative services today are primarily provided online, and designed for remote communication. This shift is the result of broader digital transformation policies implemented across European countries, particularly the creation of the Government Digital Service in



the United Kingdom in 2011 and France's Digital France 2012 plan ('France numérique 2012') launched in 2008 — two of the most significant initiatives in this area.

When it comes to administrative matters such as welfare, the administration's internal services publish all information online, namely regarding different services they provide. They offer online application forms as well as tools for asynchronous communication.

Studies on discourse displayed and deployed on websites have underlined its fragmented nature due to the hierarchical and vertical structure of a website (Paveau, 2017). Digital discourse, and especially discourse published on a dynamic website, shows specific characteristics that can impact the reader's ability to concentrate and process information (Fitzsimmons, Jayes, Weal, & Drieghe, 2020; Li, Morris, Fourney, Larson, & Reinecke, 2019; Loan, 2012). Consequently, the transformation from traditional in-person communication to a remote digital administrative service, alongside recent regulations, lead to a sharp shift in the discourse dynamics between the administration and their users. This change in communication setting spawned a new type of discourse: native digital discourse.

Although this shift in discourse dynamics has consequences on all levels of society, research studies on administrative digital discourse are still rare. Previous studies have namely examined writing practices in this field (Clerc, 2022), evaluated the digital literacy needed to access websites (Mazet, 2019b), or questioned whether the new practices might hamper the user's effort to access their rights (Alasseur, 2022). Moreover, the corpus linguistics approach to analysing this specific discourse is seldom exploited.

This study aims to explore welfare-related terminology with a focus on one central concept: "unemployment benefits". We analyse term variation and usage in relation to this concept, in the discourse of two neighbouring countries: the United Kingdom and France. After setting theoretical premises and describing the context of the study, we present the corpus design and its characteristics. We show the results of the corpus analysis on term usage conducted from both a monolingual and a comparative perspective, and discuss the characteristics and implications of diachronic and denominative variation in communication. We also examine which terminological features may lead to instability, and consequently ambiguity, in digital administrative discourse on government websites.

2 Theoretical Premises

The theoretical premises of our study can be found in the field of research on term variation and digital discourse analysis. Both of these fields gave rise to an increasing number of studies in the last decade, allowing us today to benefit from consistent knowledge. In the following subsections, we present the research and theories useful for our analysis of term variation in administrative digital discourse. We also make a proposal for government and public organisation websites to be considered as a specific discourse genre.

2.1 Term Variation

2.1.1 Term Variation as a Linguistic Phenomenon

Term variation has been thoroughly defined by Freixa (2006) as a situation in which a single concept is referred to by multiple denominations. In the cases of term variation, the denominations are relatively stable and widely accepted lexicalised units. Terminological variation can be influenced by multiple factors, including communicative, sociolinguistic, discursive and cognitive aspects.

One of the main contexts in which term variation is driven by communicative factors is the popularisation of specialised knowledge, involving the transmission of specialised information to non-experts (Delavigne, 2017). Cabré Castellví (1995) states that a speaker or writer adapts terminology to the communication setting, using synonyms to ensure that the information is understood. This type of variation, where the specialist adapts the level of specialisation to the receiver's understanding, is classified as functional variation (Freixa, 2006). In the medical field, in particular, the same disease may be referred to using different term variants, depending on the interlocutor (Alarcón-Navío, López-Rodríguez, & Tercedor-Sánchez, 2016).

Social relations may also account for term variation and term opacity, as experts in certain fields sometimes use highly specialised terms to restrict access to knowledge for those outside the expert discourse

community. In this sense, highly specialised terms carry power and confer expert status on members of the discourse community (Freixa, 2006).

There are also discursive causes to term variation, which relate to the specific contexts in which specialists use terms, the nature of the texts in which they appear, and their communicative objectives. Fernández-Silva (2016) highlights that term variation may perform communicative functions within the different sections of an academic article, such as naming, explaining or particularising.

Variation can also stem from cognitive factors. Cognitive variation occurs when experts, often unknowingly, use different terms based on their point of view of a concept (Condamines & Rebeyrolle, 1997; Freixa, 2006). This type of variation provides information on the properties of a concept and its relationships with other concepts, which can help in understanding the term from a cognitive point of view. Fernández-Silva (2016) also explores the cognitive role of term variation in knowledge transfer. Term variation may be caused by a difference in point of view linked to the multidimensional nature of concepts (Bowker & Meyer, 1993). Thus, one concept may give rise to a number of terms depending on the point of view adopted by the discourse user.

Another type of term variation involves signaling a shift in a knowledge paradigm and capturing the reader's attention by deliberately destabilizing a concept through the use of varied terminology. This rhetorical strategy is examined by Pecman (2014).

Variation may also occur over time, as new terms are introduced and concepts shift (Dury, 2022; Dury & Picton, 2009). This type of term variation, also known as diachronic variation, may be studied over a long period of time (Curti-Contessoto, De Oliveira, & Almeida Barros, 2021) or a short period of time (Picton, 2011). In the case of government websites, short-time diachronic variation may occur, as pages are partially edited over time, leaving traces of previous terms and concepts while introducing new ones.

One of the most frequent types of term variants found in native digital discourse of administration is acronyms.

2.1.2 Acronyms as Typical Term Variants

Acronyms are a common way to create new terms, as noted by Percebois (2001). By making communication more efficient, space-saving, and accessible, these terms help streamline the exchange of information. The use of acronyms is due to the economy of language principle, discussed by Martinet (1969), which suggests that language changes to become more economical, reducing effort and avoiding obstacles to comprehension. Vicentini (2003) elaborates on this principle, stating that any change that requires excessive effort or impedes comprehension will be avoided. As a result, complex compound terms are often shortened and simplified to facilitate communication, sometimes through the use of acronyms, leading to the creation of new terms.

Using shortened or abbreviated terms can enhance efficiency, clarity, and consistency, while also saving space. When repeating key terms, acronyms can help facilitate communication and reduce repetition. Adopting widely accepted acronyms may also promote consistency.

However, using acronyms can also lead to ambiguity. In a study conducted in the medical field, Pakhomov, Pedersen, and Chute (2005) showed that the acronym *RA* could have up to eight different meanings, highlighting the potential for ambiguity in medical communication. Thus, acronyms can also contribute to fragmentation in communication (Barnett & Doubleday, 2020).

Although acronyms can improve communication by increasing efficiency, their use should be carefully contextualised to prevent ambiguity and maintain clear understanding.

2.2 Digital Discourse

Digital discourse is nowadays a dominant type of discourse for providing information. It is thus not surprising that, in recent years, researchers have increasingly taken an interest in digital discourse (Paveau, 2013, 2015, 2017; Simon, 2015, 2018). Some scholars have shown interest in developing new frameworks for the analysis of digital discourse (Jones, Chik, & Hafner, 2015). Others have studied social interactions and language practices through the study of computer-mediated communication (Androutsopoulos, 2011; S. Herring, 1992).

In this section, we first provide a definition of digital discourse and present the framework used for our study. Then, we introduce key characteristics we rely on for this study, which are delinearisation, hypertextuality, and platformisation.

2.2.1 Approaches to Digital Discourse

The study of digital discourse first appeared in the field of computer-mediated discourse analysis in the 1990s (S. Herring, 1992). At the time, the main focus was on devices and how they mediated discourse creation. Some specialists attempted to define online interactions with regard to existing face-to-face interactions (S.C. Herring, 1999; Topper, 1997) by focusing on new practices, language practices, and social interactions. The field investigates discourse from a micro level, looking into text, to a macro level, looking into social context.

At the beginning of the 21st century, many scholars regarded computer and online objects and activities as virtual. This perspective, which was widely accepted at the time, led to a dominant dualistic theory distinguishing between the 'real world' and the 'virtual world'. Later on, in a post-dualistic theory, online objects and activities, including online discourse, were reconsidered as having a tangible impact on the world. Administrative discourse in particular carries legal implications and gives rise to specific language practices. We study here those practices taking place online, relying on a post-dualistic theory (Paveau, 2015; Vial, 2014), as we do not make a distinction between a 'real world' and a 'virtual world'.

As digital discourse took on a more prominent role in communication, the field of study expanded, introducing new concepts and approaches to analysing digital discourse, such as native digital discourse. Native digital discourse is originally defined by Paveau (2013) and refers to discourse created online, with online tools and software, notably in multimodal spaces. These spaces can have "graphic, iconic, and pictorial elements, static and mobile elements" (Develotte & Paveau, 2017, p. 20). The writer thus creates a discourse in multimodal spaces, using the tools and the environment at hand. Hence, the study of digital discourse is not necessarily confined to texts, as it may include the elements embedded in the discourse, such as images, sounds, videos, etc. Moreover, native digital discourse displays multiple characteristics which need to be taken into account. According to Paveau (2015), these are "composition, delinearisation, augmentation, relationality, investigability and unpredictability". According to Grossmann and Rosier (2018), who have also shown the importance of renewed approaches to digital discourses, digital discourse is polysemiotic and multimodal. This implies that digital discourse integrates multiple semiotic systems (verbal, visual, auditory, and graphic) on the page. Among the main characteristics described by the authors, 'hypertextuality' and 'augmentation' are also central, as digital discourse connects to other discourses and allows for interaction and commentary. Through these approaches, we identified two features particularly relevant for studying term variation: delinearisation and hypertextuality.

2.2.2 Delinearisation and Websites

Websites are defined as a set of related web pages located under a single domain name, typically produced by a single person or organisation (Lavoie & Nielsen, 1999). A Web page is a collection of one or more Web resources, including embedded elements, intended to be displayed as a single unit and identified by a single URL (Lavoie & Nielsen, 1999).

Online discourse is not constructed in a linear way but rather in a segmented way. It is one of the main features of digital discourse in general and of websites in particular, as the different pages are accessed as individual texts. The previous page disappears once the reader clicks on the hyperlinks, producing embedded, non-linear discourse (Aarseth, 1994; Paveau, 2015). Moreover, websites are often described as having a mosaic structure, as different modules are arranged on a single page (Maingueneau, 2016). The page structure is not fixed, but adjustable depending on the reader, who can reveal or hide text as needed.

2.2.3 Hypertextual Discourse

Hypertextuality is a prominent feature of digital discourse that challenges traditional notions of linearity and has been thoroughly theorised by scholars. A web page has embedded resources, that is resources that are not directly available when you access the page. Users gain access to these resources by interacting with the page, most of the time by using hyperlinks. This unaccessed discourse can also be qualified as background discourse, creating latent reading possibilities (Grossmann & Rosier, 2018).

Hypertextuality impacts the reader's ability to process information by encouraging skimming and reducing their ability to concentrate and process non-hyperlinked texts (Fitzsimmons et al., 2020; Loan, 2012).

Landow (1992) draws from poststructuralist theory to argue that hypertext promotes non-linear reading paths, allowing readers to construct their own meaning. The readers choose their individual reading paths through a multiplicity of hyperlinked textual fragments, and thus become partly involved in the production of a text (Eisenlauer, 2013). Their individualised experience of the text creates alternative narratives, but also counters the website's hierarchical structure. Readers have more freedom and agency when exploring a website, and may have the ability to escape the hierarchical structure of a text (Douglas, 1994; Moulthrop, 1994). These scholars study hypertextual discourse as a transformative mode of communication that fosters interactivity and reader engagement in digital texts.

However, hypertextuality may also be used to constrain and manipulate a reader. The readers create a thread of discourse, known as 'user path', which may be crafted to steer them in a certain direction. A 'user path' is a marketing concept used to track how customers behave online to encourage them to make a purchase. This concept shows that hypertextuality may not always bring freedom to the user (Beauvisage, 2004).

2.2.4 Digital Discourse as a Platform

Platforms play a major role in digital discourse, as they are a main dissemination channel. Critical discourse analysis has served as a framework for studying digital platforms in a number of studies. Van Dijck, Poell, and De Waal (2018) state that platforms are increasingly part of our lives, shaping our social interactions and practices in many fields, such as the economy, culture, etc. Relying on the concept of affordance and Foucault's theories on discourse, Stanfill (2015) investigates the multimodality and functionality of digital discourse through discursive interface analysis. Her theory aims to identify norms in website design according to the website's objective. Burgess (2021) also explores the normative aspects of interfaces and platforms in a study of social media. In this sense, digital discourse is shaped by the possibilities afforded by its digital framework and, more specifically, by interfaces (Burger, 2018).

These approaches to digital discourse may resonate with O'Reilly's theory of Government as a platform, which was popularised in the 2010s. According to O'Reilly (2011, p. 14): "[g]overnment 2.0, then, is the use of technology — especially the collaborative technologies at the heart of Web 2.0 — to better solve collective problems at a city, state, national, and international level."

This theory shaped the government's digital transformation in the UK and in France, leading to the creation of programmes such as Government as a Platform (GaaP) in the UK in 2013, or the creation of centralised websites, such as service-public.fr and gov.uk. To efficiently engage with these platforms, creating and disseminating content, citizens must acquire digital literacy.

Digital literacy relies on two key components, as thoroughly defined by Pangrazio (2016). One key component is the mastery of digital tools (Jones & Hafner, 2021), while the other is understanding and processing information disseminated online (Glistler, 1997). On one hand, digital literacy may help foster community involvement online (Jenkins & Thorburn, 2003). On the other hand, the lack of digital literacy may lead to exclusion, as is the case with some users of French administrative websites (Alahyane, 2021).

To conclude, digital discourse has been studied from a variety of standpoints. For the purpose of this study, we will focus on online administrative discourse, in the frame of post-dualistic theory and as native digital discourse, as our purpose is to investigate the terminology in digital environments (Paveau, 2015).

2.3 Government Website as a Discourse Genre

To define the digital environment of online administrative discourse, we rely on the theory of discourse genre.

The website as a means of information dissemination for administrative purposes has been stabilising over the last few years. In parallel, administration services have specialised in disseminating information on websites, and internal rules and consistency in writing guidelines have emerged. Hence, we can identify government and public organisation websites as a specific discourse genre, as it is a stable means of communication linked to a social practice within a historical context (Delavigne, Picton, & Thibert, 2022).

It answers Swales' definition of a genre with "various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience" (Swales, 1990, p. 58).

By analysing terminology in government and public organisation websites, we aim to provide a comprehensive description of terminological discourse characteristics for this genre. The concept of discourse genre is interesting for us, insofar as it will enable us to conduct further research (Bouchet, 2024) by conducting a "thicker description of language use" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 26), and hence to examine and define communication conventions between the government and citizens. As we are studying the terminology of digital discourse, and especially the term variation of one concept, namely "unemployment benefits", it is essential to take into account the regularities linked with the genre to provide an accurate characterisation of the discourse.

3 Methodology

In the current section, we present the sources and the texts from web pages on government websites that we selected for corpus design, with the aim of exploring the digital administrative discourse constructed for remote online communication.

3.1 Corpus Design

The current paper focuses on welfare discourse aimed at citizens to help them understand and claim their rights. Drawing from Biber's definition of a representative corpus (Biber, 1993), we defined a clear target population: texts published by entities entrusted with a public service mission. These have been collected on government websites, but also on websites of private entities legally responsible for public services. As our aim was to analyse a specific type of discourse within this domain, we deliberately limited data collection to a single, well-defined type of webpage, consistently found across different institutions. To reflect the range of variation within this population, we first conducted a study to identify the different types of websites involved. Then, we applied a systematic sampling strategy to select a balanced set of texts, ensuring diversity in terms of publishing entities and organisations involved.

As we are conducting a comparative analysis between two equivalent discourses in two languages, British English and France's French, two comparable corpora were collected for this study following the same protocol.

Our aim is to analyse the language used in the textual ingredients of websites, with a specific focus on terminology. As discussed above, websites are built upon multimodal digital discourse (i.e. a discourse that combines text with images, videos, etc.), and the principle of interactivity. Consequently, we have selected the textual components from websites in order to be able to focus on language. We thus focused on the website's content, which was identified thanks to HTML tags embedded in the website and extracted to create the corpus. Such a corpus allows us to analyse the terminology of websites and to better understand the conceptual framework of the administrative discourse, which served as a starting point in the characterisation of the discourse.

From the selected websites, we collected content from pages related to welfare, a key setting relative to citizens' rights. Welfare relates to government programs for financial aid for citizens. The extraction of textual content on the websites was carried out independently for each website, according to the following procedure: 1) selection of pages: this selection was made using the hierarchical structure of the website and the themes defined by the website's managers, to target welfare-related pages, 2) HTML tag retrieval: pages were analysed to identify the tag indicating the main content of the page, and 3) text extraction with a tailored Java program: the extracted textual content was added to a text file. This procedure ensures a systematic extraction of the webpage content, based on external criteria as described by the organisations themselves.

3.2 Comparable English-French Welfare Digital Discourse Corpora

Sources were selected from websites published by official government bodies, the most important of which are gov.uk for the UK and service-public.fr for France. To ensure that the discourse is representative of official government discourse, we also chose to include websites published by organisations officially entrusted with public service missions. Consequently, all the texts included in our corpora come from

organisations that are part of the government, or that are independent but have been entrusted with a public service mission.

3.2.1 British English Corpus

The British corpus is composed of six websites. These sites do not cover all sources of official administrative information on welfare, but they are a representative sample of the different types of sites available: a central government website providing access to public services (gov.uk), local council websites offering information specific to local authorities (bristol.gov.uk, bpccouncil.gov.uk, and falkirk.gov.uk), of which we included three that play an important role in welfare, a website dedicated to a specific welfare program (understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk), and the website of a state-funded independent organisation providing public service advice (citizensadvice.org.uk).

3.2.2 French Corpus

The French corpus is composed of five websites. These sites are not the only ones to offer official administrative information on welfare, but they are a representative sample of the different types of sites available: a government website providing access to rights (service-public.fr), a local website (paris.fr), a website of a private organisation responsible for a public service (caf.fr), a website of a private organisation responsible for a specific type of welfare (pole-emploi.fr), and a website aimed at a specific type of user (crous.fr).

3.2.3 Comparable Corpora

We chose to conduct a contrastive analysis of two countries presenting a similar specialised discourse, with similar concepts, as is the case with “unemployment benefits”. The contrastive approach enabled us to thoroughly define the specialised discourse and its cultural components in each country. Initially, this study aimed to compare the plain language initiative taken by the British government, to highlight the different strategies employed to make the specialised information and discourse available to users. When put into perspective with the French strategies, this enabled us to provide not only a comprehensive characterisation of discourse, but also a contrastive analysis of different strategies and their impact on terminology and discourse.

In this study, comparing the terminology of the concept of “unemployment benefits” will make it possible to highlight trends in digital terminology in the field of online administrative discourse as well as broad strategies employed on websites, and also to put into perspective two political systems and two linguistic strategies, to provide a more complete picture of the two specialised discourses.

3.3 Corpus Characteristics

3.3.1 Page Content

On each of the selected websites, we have selected and extracted a specific part of the web pages labelled ‘content’, which relates to the main information on the page (see Section 3.1). All navigational information, headings and pop-ups have been removed from the page. The webpage content is the part of the page where the discourse targeted in this study can be found. In turn, the web pages labelled ‘content’ consist of three different elements, which we also took into account in our analysis of term variants and their usage: title, links, and body of text. These elements were identified thanks to the HTML tags embedded in the pages, and the typographical design of these elements.

3.3.2 Corpus Size

Table 1 shows a summary of the French and British corpora.

The corpus collected for this study is relatively small, but it is still valuable as a specialised corpus, for context-sensitive analyses. A small specialised corpus can be used to understand the main characteristics of the genre in context, and give experts tools for improving and enriching the language they use (Flowerdew, 2004). Table 1 shows that the size of the French corpus is larger than the UK corpus. This size discrepancy is due to differences in publication practices, the complexity and specificity of benefit schemes for each country, and public service organisation differences.

Table 1 Corpus characteristics: languages, setting, sources, and size

	French	UK
	- service-public.fr	- gov.uk
	- caf.fr	- understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk
	- crous-paris.fr	- bpccouncil.gov.uk
	- pole-emploi.fr	- bristol.gov.uk
	- paris.fr	- citizensadvice.org.uk
		- falkirk.gov.uk
TOTAL	791,270 words – 5 websites	411,579 words – 6 websites

The French government uses a wider range of public institutions and government agencies to publish and disseminate information. Each department or agency has its own website with specific information. Furthermore, the government pursues the policy of centralising all the information on its main website (service-public.fr), by publishing information relating to all government bodies and public services. Additionally, the French legal welfare system is more complex and encompasses a greater number of welfare schemes. This accounts for the 48% discrepancy between the corpora.

On the contrary, the UK has established an effective centralised system. Most of the information is published by the Government Digital Service (GDS), exclusively on their main websites gov.uk. Only council-specific information is published on different websites, with the contents being specific to different councils and without being duplicated on the GDS websites. The Citizens Advice Bureau’s website is an additional service providing information on welfare.

Our FR-UK digital administrative corpus has enabled us to conduct a systematic analysis of term variation, of which we present the most significant examples in the following section. Both this corpus and the analysis presented below serve as a basis for further investigations of this specific type of discourse, and for extended research on repetition and variation phenomena (Bouchet, 2024).

3.4 Corpus Exploration

The corpus was automatically annotated with part-of-speech (POS) tags using the Sketch Engine tool (Kilgarriff et al., 2014). It was then explored through grammatical and lexical patterns using Corpus Query Language (CQL). A previous qualitative study identified five core nouns, all meaning ‘benefit’, for welfare term formation in French: ‘allocation’, ‘aide’, ‘revenu’, ‘prestation’, ‘complément’ (Bouchet, 2024). In this study, we identified a principle of term formation that we crafted into a CQL as a base to systematically explore the corpus based on these five core nouns: [core noun] [preposition] [noun] or [adjective].

The same study identified four core nouns for term formation in English: *benefit*, *credit*, *allowance* and *payment*. Our previous exploration did not identify a specific lexical pattern to systematically explore the corpus. We thus explored the corpus based on this pattern: [adjective] or [noun] [core noun].

To address the limitations of the query patterns, we also manually explored the collocations of each core noun of each corpus. This enabled us to collect most welfare scheme terms formed with the core nouns. These terms were defined and sorted. In this study, we present the terms related to the concept of “unemployment benefits”.

4 Results

4.1 Unemployment in France and in the UK

France and the UK have a similar system when it comes to benefits paid to people who are temporarily out of job. When an employee works, a certain amount of money is put aside in an insurance fund. When the employee reaches unemployment, the fund is made available to them under certain conditions. In France this is called ‘Régime de l’assurance chômage’, and in the UK, the funds are paid to the National Insurance Fund.

Table 2 All terms referring to the concept of “unemployment benefits” in the UK corpus with the number of occurrences and sources.

Term variant	Occ.	Sites
<i>unemployment benefits</i>	3	gov.uk
<i>New Style Jobseeker’s Allowance</i>	3	understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk gov.uk
<i>New Style Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)</i>	3	understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk gov.uk
<i>‘new style’ JSA</i>	112	gov.uk falkirk.gov.uk
<i>new style JSA</i>	33	citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)</i>	29	gov.uk citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance</i>	55	gov.uk understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>income-based JSA</i>	148	gov.uk
<i>contribution-based JSA</i>	22	gov.uk understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk
<i>Jobseeker’s Allowance</i>	194	gov.uk
<i>Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)</i>	75	gov.uk citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>JSA</i>	588	gov.uk citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>income-related JSA</i>	3	citizensadvice.org.uk
<i>standard allowance</i>	18	understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk gov.uk
TOTAL	1,265	

4.2 “unemployment benefits” in the British Corpus

Table 2 above shows 12 terms retrieved in the British corpus: one main term, *unemployment benefits*, of which we only reported 3 occurrences, all in plural form, and 11 hyponyms and variants. These are the attested denominations for “unemployment benefits” found in corpus. Capitalization has been standardised for consistency.

The frequencies of the terms range from 3 to 588 occurrences, with the term *JSA* (the abbreviation for *Jobseeker’s Allowance*) holding the highest frequency score (Table 2).

In 2025, the main benefits for people temporarily out of work are *New Style Jobseeker’s Allowance* (6 occ.) and *standard allowance* (18 occ.), which is part of a larger scheme called *Universal Credit*. Some of the previous “unemployment benefit” schemes are still available to users, depending on their circumstances.

Jobseeker’s Allowance (194 occ.) presents different variants: *income-based JSA* (148 occ.), *contribution-based JSA* (22 occ.), *income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)* (29 occ.), *income-related JSA* (3 occ.), *New Style Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)* (3 occ.), and *New Style JSA* (33 occ.).

The term *Jobseeker’s Allowance* is the main term that refers to “unemployment benefits”. With its 269 occurrences found in the corpus, the number of occurrences of its acronym, *JSA* (588 occ.), and the total number of occurrences of all the terms formed from *Jobseeker’s Allowance*, which amounts to 1,265 occurrences, this term is the most frequently used in administrative discourse. It can be used in several contexts. Firstly, it can be used in conjunction with other schemes to refer to the different types of support available:

- (1) ‘Universal Credit, Jobseeker’s Allowance or Income Support’ (gov.uk)

It can also be found in definitions, as in the example below:

- (2) ‘Jobseeker’s allowance is the benefit paid to unemployed people who are actively looking for work.’ (gov.uk)

This term is also found in numerous repeated sentences, headings and menus, which are hyperlinked:

- (3) ‘You can apply for Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) to help you when you look for work.’ (23 occurrences) (gov.uk)

Table 3 All terms referring to the concept of “unemployment benefits” in the French corpus, with the number of occurrences and sources

Term variant	Occ.	Sites
<i>Allocation chômage</i>	562	service-public.fr caf.fr pole-emploi.fr
<i>Allocation de chômage</i>	35	caf.fr
<i>Assurance chômage</i>	77	service-public.fr pole-emploi.fr
<i>Allocation d'aide au retour à l'emploi (ARE)</i>	43	service-public.fr pole-emploi.fr
<i>Allocation de retour à l'emploi</i>	12	service-public.fr paris.fr
<i>ARE</i>	472	service-public.fr pole-emploi.fr
TOTAL	1,201	

- (4) ‘Jobseeker’s Allowance and low-income benefits’ (138 occurrences) (gov.uk)

It appears that this term is a landmark for users, as the hyperlinked terms may help the user navigate the website.

Legal discourse serves as a reference for writing online administrative discourse, as most benefit schemes are introduced through legislation. However, when crafting texts on welfare for online administrative websites, experts rewrite the texts, adding information and rephrasing legal texts, thus introducing new linguistic patterns and terms.

The acronym *JSA* is the main variant used in digital online discourse to refer to *Jobseeker’s allowance*. It is used in texts to provide clarification, details and explanations about the benefit, unlike the full form, which is more often used in menus and hyperlinks:

- (5) ‘You do not need to go to JSA interviews and appointments at the moment because of coronavirus (COVID-19).’ (gov.uk)
- (6) ‘If you don’t keep to your agreement your JSA could be stopped or reduced – this is called a sanction.’ (citizensadvice.org.uk)

The generic term *unemployment benefits* is rarely used (3 occ.). In titles and links, a phrase such as “benefits and financial support” is more likely to be used:

- (7) ‘Benefits and financial support if you’re temporarily unable to work’. (gov.uk)

Multi-word terms can create ambiguity, making it harder to access information. Using phrases instead of complex noun phrases helps make information easier to read and understand. This approach supports the goals of the Plain Language Initiative, which is summed up by the slogan: “Simpler, clearer, faster”. Such modulations can be related to unpacking of terms (Halliday, 2004), a process observed in specialised discourses often used for the purposes of reformulation (Humbley, 2016; Pecman, 2014). The use of the active voice is also mandated by the plain English guidelines, that are mandatory throughout the gov.uk website (Adler, 2012).

4.3 “unemployment benefits” in the French Corpus

The concept of “unemployment benefits” has several denominations in the French corpus. There are five terms used to refer to benefits for people who are temporarily unemployed in France. Table 3 shows the data retrieved for referring to “unemployment benefits” in the French corpus. These are the attested denominations for “unemployment benefits” found in corpus. Capitalization has been standardised for consistency.

It appears that ‘*Allocation chômage*’ and ‘*ARE*’ are the most used variants. ‘*Allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi*’ is systematically followed by the acronym ‘*ARE*’ in parentheses.

‘*Assurance chômage*’ is a term used to refer to the general concept of receiving financial help while temporarily unemployed (77 occ.). Its denomination comes from the first “unemployment benefit” scheme introduced in 1958. It can be used interchangeably with ‘*allocation chômage*’, as demonstrated in this context:

- (8) ‘Vous bénéficiez d’une allocation chômage avant votre expatriation. Vous conservez vos droits à l’assurance chômage pendant 3 ans’ (service-public.fr)

This may be discursive variation, avoiding repeating the same term for stylistic effects. However, in the context of an informative text, it may cause ambiguity and break style.

‘*Allocation chômage*’ is a term that has made its way into the general language, and other fields such as journalism and politics. It also comes from a legal denomination of the benefit. This variant can be used in different contexts. It is now mostly used as a general concept in titles, which are hyperlinks (493 occurrences out of 562 are in titles), and sometimes in texts. This allows users to find information quickly when browsing, as they are more likely to look for information on ‘*chômage*’ or ‘*allocation chômage*’ which is a term variant used in the media and general language.

For instance, ‘*allocation chômage*’ is found in the following page titles:

- (9) ‘Prime exceptionnelle et allocation chômage : quelle articulation ?’ (paris.fr)
(10) ‘Estimer le montant de ses allocations chômage’ (pole-emploi.fr)

These appear as hyperlinks on website pages, or on search engines. The texts in which ‘*allocation chômage*’ appears may also compare the benefit to other schemes or other countries, as illustrated by the following contexts:

- (11) ‘Le droit aux allocations chômage diffère selon que vous reveniez d’un pays de l’Espace économique européen (EEE), de Suisse ou d’un autre pays.’ (caf.fr)
(12) ‘Vous devez prioritairement faire valoir vos droits à l’ensemble des autres prestations sociales (allocation chômage, retraite...) auxquelles vous pouvez prétendre.’ (caf.fr)

In these cases, the term is used to refer to the general concept of “unemployment benefits”, rather than a specific scheme as defined by law. It is typically used to compare the “unemployment benefit” scheme in France with other types of benefits or with other countries.

‘*Allocation chômage*’ is also used to refer to a specific allowance known as ‘*Allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi*’ in legal terms, for instance in referring to eligibility criteria for receiving the allowance (the minimum work period for instance), as the following context demonstrates:

- (13) ‘Pour toucher des allocations chômage, vous devez avoir travaillé une période minimale de travail dite durée d’affiliation.’ (service-public.fr)

In this type of context, ‘*allocation chômage*’ can be used interchangeably with ‘*allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi*’ or its acronym ‘*ARE*’:

- (14) ‘Pour toucher l’ARE, vous devez être involontairement privé d’emploi.’ (service-public.fr)

In this case, we have three variants of the same term, with one variant (‘*allocation chômage*’), having the role of both the hyperonym and the hyponym.

‘*Allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi*’ is passed down from legal discourse and is almost always followed by the acronym ‘*ARE*’ in parentheses (41 out of 43 occ.):

- (15) ‘Refus de rechargement de l’allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi (ARE)’ (pole-emploi.fr)

‘*allocation de chômage*’ (35 occ.) is a variant of ‘*allocation chômage*’. It is only used in two repeated sentences on the caf.fr website. This may indicate that the variant has only been used by one content writer.

‘*ARE*’ is the acronym of the legal term. It is the most common way to refer to the benefit (472 occ.). It refers to the specific scheme provided by France Travail:

- (16) ‘Pour avoir droit à l’ARE, vous devez avoir travaillé au moins 6 mois (soit 130 jours ou 910 heures) dans les 24 derniers mois à la date de fin de votre contrat de travail.’ (service-public.fr)
(17) ‘Votre démission peut être légitime si vous n’avez pas épuisé tous vos droits à l’ARE lors d’une précédente inscription comme demandeur d’emploi.’ (pole-emploi.fr)

‘*Allocation de retour à l’emploi*’ is a variant derived from ‘*Allocation d’aide au retour à l’emploi*’ (12 occ.). This may have appeared as a simplified version of the term, intentionally or not. This term is always used with its acronym ‘*ARE*’ on service-public.fr.

5 Discussion

A comparative analysis of term variation and instability is imperative to ascertain the efficacy of specific terms in facilitating users' comprehension and navigation. In the following subsections, critical inquiries derived from the sections on term variation and instability are posited for consideration.

5.1 Concurrence between Generic Term and Current Legal Variant

Legal terminology can be classified into two main types: generic terms, representing general legal concepts that remain common to multiple legal systems, and institutional terms, which denote context-specific entities unique to particular legal systems. This distinction highlights the difference between generic terms and jurisdiction-dependent terms (Prieto Ramos & Cerutti, 2021).

This distinction persists in the online administrative corpus, as each concept has a general name (e.g. *unemployment benefits* in English and '*allocation chômage*' in French) which is different from the current legal term (respectively, *standard allowance*, *New Style Jobseeker's Allowance* and '*Allocation d'aide au retour à l'emploi*'). The generic term allows users and institutions to talk about the concept regardless of the current legislation. Moreover, we can notice that these general names are specialised terms but they are not specific to online administrative discourse, as they can be found in media and political discourse.

The generic terms allow users not only to talk about these concepts independently of the legislation and to compare the existing schemes to schemes from their origin countries, as stated in some webpages, but also to compare the current and former schemes. Moreover, they help preserve uniformity in term formation patterns (*unemployment/child/housing benefits*) for naming different types of benefits.

5.2 Diachronic Variation

Variation in term denomination may be due to diachronic evolution. Native digital discourse may play a central role in diachronic variation, as pages are added and amended when legislation evolves, but may not be rewritten as a whole. This results in layers of texts added at different stages, and it impacts the growth of term variants. Ultimately, this may lead to terminological instability.

In the case of administrative discourse on citizens' rights, different legal terms have appeared throughout the years due to the revision of benefit schemes. For instance, the French '*assurance chômage*', which appeared in 1958, was replaced by '*allocation chômage*' and, finally, '*allocation d'aide au retour à l'emploi*' in 2001 (Domergue, 2019). Interestingly, the previous variants were not replaced by new terms, but were added to a collection of terms used to refer to benefits for people who are temporarily out of work. '*Allocation chômage*' then became the generic term used to refer to the concept (see Section 5.1). Although this enables users to follow the evolution of terminology, this also means that multiple terms are used concurrently, which may lead to confusion. Indeed, there is only one scheme for "unemployment benefits" in the French system, but multiple denominations.

Some countries, like the UK, may choose to keep the core denomination, adding premodifiers to existing terms when new legislation is published. The term new style JSA displays such characteristics, with a premodifier 'new style' added to the term JSA for the purposes of creating a new term. The new term gives rise to the introduction of three new variants of the concept of "unemployment benefits": *New Style Jobseeker's Allowance* (6 occ.), '*new style*' JSA (112 occ.) and *new style* JSA (33 occ.). Although this signals stability, this may also lead to confusion, as the term *new style* JSA can be mistaken with the term JSA, or even used interchangeably.

Some terms can also be modified through repetition (e.g., in English, *Jobseeker's Allowance* became *income-based Jobseeker's Allowance* and *income-related Jobseeker's Allowance*), or simplified in some instances (e.g. '*Allocation d'aide au retour à l'emploi*' is also referred to as '*Allocation de retour à l'emploi*', just like *New Style Jobseeker's Allowance* is called *new style* JSA).

Native digital discourse also plays a part in diachronic variation. Multiple writers may work on pages across the websites, and may amend them at different points in time. This may create new term variants like '*Allocation de retour à l'emploi*' or '*Allocation de chômage*', which are only used in specific contexts and pages.

5.3 Denominative Variation

The diachronic evolution of terms and the use of acronyms lead to the emergence of term variation in discourse. This happens when two denominations are used as synonyms, or interchangeably. A terminological unit with several variants will be considered unstable (Pecman, 2018).

The first type of variation we observed is based on the multidimensional nature of concepts and cognitive factors (Freixa, 2006). Multidimensionality implies that the same concept can be named differently according to the point of view (Bowker & Meyer, 1993). Generic terms tend to describe the general context or situation in which the benefits should be used ('*chômage*', *unemployment*), while terms from legislation or terms introduced on websites tend to focus on the target of social help ('*Allocation d'aide au retour à l'emploi*') or a person's status or situation (*Jobseeker's allowance*).

The second type of variation observed may be linked with discursive and functional variation (Freixa, 2006), as term variation may occur depending on the communicative function of the section (Fernández-Silva, 2016). For instance, '*allocation chômage*' is more likely to occur in titles, and '*ARE*' is more likely to occur when particularising. The same applies to *Jobseeker's Allowance*, which is the form preferred for heading and menus. This may be related to intrinsic features of native digital discourse. As stated in section 2.2.3, hyperlinks can encourage skimming, making hypertext a key navigational marker for users. Consequently, terms variants used in these units must be carefully selected.

The third category is based on the economy of language principle (Martinet, 1969; Vicentini, 2003), or the "principle of least effort". It consists of reducing the multiword terms to acronyms with the sole aim of reducing the time to process multiword terms. It may lead to functional variation, as different levels of specialisation need to be conveyed throughout the websites. Users who are not familiar with the terminology may be restricted to accessing information if the unpacked term is not available.

The fourth variation type can be related to current tendencies in naming concepts in language for specific purposes (LSPs) (Mestivier-Volanschi, 2015), which consist in attaching compound premodifiers to core nouns. This type can be illustrated by the compound term *Jobseeker allowance (JSA)* (282 occ.) and its different variants each containing a compound premodifier: *income-based JSA* (148 occ.), *contribution-based JSA* (22 occ.), *income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)* (78 occ.), *income-related JSA* (3 occ.), *New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)* (6 occ.), and *New Style JSA* (33 occ.).

5.4 Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis of denominations linked with the concept of "unemployment benefits" in the French and British corpus has highlighted key similarities in how terminology evolves from a legal discourse to a specialised online administrative discourse designed to inform citizens.

Firstly, we highlighted a visible evolution of terms through the incremental amending of web pages. This gives rise to term variation, but also to different co-existing and closely related concepts in the discourse. We observed the use of acronyms to reduce multi-word terms. This creates a new set of terms that are specific to online administrative discourse. Finally, we noted the use of different denominations depending on the communicative function of the text (titles, menus, explanations, etc.). These common traits between the two discourses can help identify current trends in digital terminology creation and use.

On the other hand, the comparative analysis highlighted different political and linguistic strategies. The UK tends to retain a core term, adding modifiers to indicate new legislation. In contrast, France often creates more complex multi-word terms, which seem crafted to be reduced to acronyms. These are due in part to intrinsic linguistic differences in term formation. However, they are also a result of a deliberate practice, which may contribute to establishing a terminology specific to welfare within administrative discourse in France.

6 Conclusion

Overall, the instability in term usage in native digital administrative discourse in the United Kingdom and France comes from multiple changes in legal terminology and from simultaneous use of previous and current terms. This can be explained in part by natural linguistic phenomena that impact terminology, such as the need to adapt terms to different registers and a wide range of users, the multidimensional nature of concepts allowing for concepts to be named differently, the economy of language principle that

is responsible for reducing the complex compound terms into shorter variants, and the term formation tendencies that shape the naming of concepts in LSPs over time. In part, the instability in term usage comes from the fact that multiple writers update the same webpages. Moreover, all government websites are not edited by the same agencies.

Consequently, term variation in administrative discourse turns out to be multifactorial. In some cases, term variation may be a source of confusion and incoherence. Diachronic term variation may be confusing for users who may not be aware of previous schemes. Term variation linked to the multidimensional nature of concepts may also hinder understanding, as users may struggle to understand the different point of views expressed by the variants. Terms, if stabilised, have a strong potential to act as cohesive devices. In some cases, term variation may emphasise incoherence, which in digital discourse is overwhelmingly threatening due to the inherent complexity of the discourse compared with linear texts.

However, in some cases, term variation may actually help clarify the underlying concepts. This is the case of discursive and functional variations, which can be used to ensure information is understood by non-expert users. With the delinearisation of digital discourse, the users browse and hop from page to page, creating their own thread of discourse, which in turn makes concept understanding and conceptual mapping more complex.

Digital discourse is an interactive, dynamic, and ever-evolving multimodal discourse. At the same time, it is a mosaic and a maze, with its breadcrumb trails of navigation histories that attempt to prevent us from getting lost. It is nowadays the major medium of information. Management of term variation in digital discourse is crucial for improving access to citizens' rights. This study highlights the need for further research on digital native discourses from the scope of terminology and discourse analysis, with the aim of characterising it and providing guidelines for language use, granting better comprehension and access to information, such as research conducted by [Bouchet \(2024\)](#).

References

- Aarseth, E.J. (1994). Nonlinearity and literary theory. G. Landow (Ed.), *Hyper/Text/Theory* (Vol. 52, pp. 51–86). Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://doi.org/10.56021/9780801848377>
- Adler, M. (2012). The plain language movement. P.M. Tiersma & L.M. Solan (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Law* (1st ed., pp. 67–83). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199572120.013.0006>
- Alahyane, Y. (2021). L'accès aux droits, un parcours du combattant spatial et temporel. Le cas de personnes âgées nées en Afrique du Nord-Ouest résidant à Aubervilliers. *Annales de Géographie*, 737(1), 112–136, <https://doi.org/10.3917/ag.737.0112>
- Alarcón-Navío, E., López-Rodríguez, C.I., Tercedor-Sánchez, M. (2016). Variation dénomminative et familiarité en tant que source d'incertitude en traduction médicale. *Meta : Journal des Traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 61(1), 117–144, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1036986ar>
- Alasseur, E. (2022). Les risques de la dématérialisation : l'alerte du Défenseur des droits. *Plein Droit*, 134(3), 7–14, <https://doi.org/10.3917/pld.134.0009>
- Androutsopoulos, J. (2011). From variation to heteroglossia in the study of computer-mediated discourse. C. Thurlow & K. Mroczek (Eds.), *Digital Discourse Language in the New Media* (pp. 276–298). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199795437.003.0013>
- Barnett, A., & Doubleday, Z. (2020). Meta-research: The growth of acronyms in the scientific literature. *eLife*, 9(e60080), 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.60080>
- Beauvisage, T. (2004). Sémantique des parcours des utilisateurs sur le Web [Thèse de doctorat, Université de Paris X Nanterre]. *Texto !*, 9(4), n.p., Retrieved from http://www.revue-texto.net/Inedits/Beauvisage/Beauvisage_Parcours.html

- Bhatia, V. (2004). *Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view*. Bloomsbury Academic. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/worlds-of-written-discourse-9780826454454/>
- Biber, D. (1993). Representativeness in corpus design. *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 8(4), 243–257, <https://doi.org/10.1093/lc/8.4.243>
- Bouchet, M. (2024). *L'impact des discours numériques sur l'accès aux droits pour les citoyens : Analyse outillée et contribution à la caractérisation linguistique des discours administratifs en ligne en France et au Royaume-Uni* (Thèse de doctorat). Université Paris Cité.
- Bowker, L., & Meyer, I. (1993). Beyond 'textbook' concept systems: Handling multidimensionality in a new generation of term bank. K.-D. Schmitz (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Third International Congress on Terminology and Knowledge Engineering* (pp. 123–137). Indeks Verlag.
- Burger, M. (2018). Entre affordances et multimodalité: De nouveaux enjeux pour l'analyse des discours du digital. *Cahiers du Centre de Linguistique et des Sciences du Langage*, 55, 3–24, <https://doi.org/10.26034/la.cdclsl.2018.269>
- Burgess, J. (2021). Platform studies. S. Cunningham & D. Craig (Eds.), *Creator Culture: An Introduction to Global Social Media Entertainment* (pp. 21–38). New York University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9781479890118.003.0005>
- Cabré Castellví, M.T. (1995). On diversity and terminology. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication*, 2(1), 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.2.1.02cab>
- Clerc, I. (Ed.). (2022). *Communication écrite État-citoyens: Défis numériques, perspectives rédactologiques*. Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Condamines, A., & Rebeyrolle, J. (1997). Point de vue en langue spécialisée. *Meta*, 42(1), 174–184, <https://doi.org/10.7202/002359ar>
- Curti-Contessoto, B., De Oliveira, I., Almeida Barros, L. (2021). Changes in the concept designated by the term *mariage civil* throughout the history of French law 1791–2013. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication*, 27(1), 140–162, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.00061.cur>
- Delavigne, V. (2017). Term usage and socioterminological variation: The impact of social and local issues on the movement of terms. P. Drouin, A. Francœur, J. Humbley, & A. Picton (Eds.), *Multiple Perspectives on Terminological Variation* (pp. 31–55). John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/tlrp.18.02del>
- Delavigne, V., Picton, A., Thibert, E. (2022). Socioterminologie et terminologie textuelle: L'expertise en questions. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 138, 04012, <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202213804012>
- Dencik, L. (2022). The datafied welfare state: A perspective from the UK. A. Hepp, J. Jarke, & L. Kramp (Eds.), *New Perspectives in Critical Data Studies* (pp. 145–165). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-96180-0_7
- Develotte, C., & Paveau, M.-A. (2017). Pratiques discursives et interactionnelles en contexte numérique. Questionnements linguistiques. *Langage et Société*, 160-161(2), 199–215, <https://doi.org/10.3917/ls.160.0199>
- Domergue, J.-P. (2019). Chapitre V. 2000-2008. L'assurance chômage au service du retour à l'emploi. *Histoire de l'Assurance Chômage* (pp. 149–187). Comité d'histoire de la sécurité sociale.
- Douglas, J.Y. (1994). "How do I stop this thing?" Closure and indeterminacy in interactive narratives. G. Landow (Ed.), *Hyper/Text/Theory* (Vol. 52, pp. 159–188). Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-1994-001>

doi.org/10.56021/9780801848377

- Dury, P. (2022). Diachronic variation. In P. Faber & M.-C. L’Homme (Eds.), *Theoretical Perspectives on Terminology: Explaining Terms, Concepts and Specialized Knowledge* (pp. 421–434). John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/tlrp.23.19dur>
- Dury, P., & Picton, A. (2009). Terminologie et diachronie : vers une réconciliation théorique et méthodologique ? *Revue Française de Linguistique Appliquée*, XIV(2), 31–41, <https://doi.org/10.3917/rfla.142.0031>
- Eisenlauer, V. (2013). *A critical hypertext analysis of social media: The true colours of Facebook*. Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472541857>
- Fernández-Silva, S. (2016). The cognitive and rhetorical role of term variation and its contribution to knowledge construction in research articles. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication*, 22(1), 52–79, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.22.1.03fer>
- Fitzsimmons, G., Jayes, L.T., Weal, M.J., Drieghe, D. (2020). The impact of skim reading and navigation when reading hyperlinks on the web. *PLOS ONE*, 15(9), e0239134, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239134>
- Flowerdew, L. (2004). The argument for using English specialized corpora to understand academic and professional language. U. Connor & T.A. Upton (Eds.), *Discourse in the Professions: Perspectives from Corpus Linguistics* (pp. 11–33). John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/scl.16.02flo>
- Freixa, J. (2006). Causes of denominative variation in terminology: A typology proposal. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication*, 12(1), 51–77, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.12.1.04fre>
- Glister, P. (1997). *Digital literacy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Grossmann, F., & Rosier, L. (2018). Chapitre 2. Quelques aspects de l’évidentialité hypertextuelle : relations entre discours rapporté et discours d’arrière-plan. J. Simon (Ed.), *Le Discours Hypertextualisé : Espaces Énonciatifs Mosaiques* (pp. 41–64). Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pufc.40870>
- Halliday, M.A.K. (2004). *The Language of Science* (1st ed., Vol. 5). Continuum International Publishing.
- Herring, S. (1992). Gender and participation in computer-mediated linguistic discourse. *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America* (pp. 1–12). ERIC.
- Herring, S.C. (1999). Interactional coherence in CMC. *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Hawaii International Conference on Systems Sciences. 1999. HICSS-32. Abstracts and CD-ROM of Full Papers*. IEEE Comput. Soc. <https://doi.org/10.1109/hicss.1999.772674>
- Humbley, J. (2016). Catherine Resche (dir.), Terminologie et domaines spécialisés, Approches plurielles. *ASp*, 70, 127–132, <https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.4849>
- Jenkins, H., & Thorburn, D. (2003). Introduction: The digital revolution, the informed citizen, and the culture of democracy. H. Jenkins & D. Thorburn (Eds.), *Democracy and New Media* (pp. 1–18). The MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/2328.003.0002>
- Jones, R.H., Chik, A., & Hafner, C. (Eds.). (2015). *Discourse and digital practices: Doing discourse analysis in the digital age*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315726465>
- Jones, R.H., & Hafner, C.A. (2021). *Understanding digital literacies: A practical introduction* (2nd ed.). Taylor

- & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003177647>
- Kilgarriff, A., Baisa, V., Bušta, J., Jakubíček, M., Kovář, V., Michelfeit, J., ... Suchomel, V. (2014). The Sketch Engine: Ten years on. *Lexicography*, 1(1), 7–36, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40607-014-0009-9>
- Landow, G.P. (1992). *Hypertext : The convergence of contemporary critical theory and technology*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lavoie, B., & Nielsen, H.F. (Eds.). (1999). *Web characterization terminology & definitions sheet* [Working Draft]. Retrieved from <https://www.w3.org/1999/05/WCA-terms/01>
- Li, Q., Morris, M.R., Fourney, A., Larson, K., Reinecke, K. (2019). The impact of Web browser reader views on reading speed and user experience. *CHI '19: Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1–12). Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300754>
- Loan, F.A. (2012). Impact of the Internet surfing on reading practices and choices. *Webology*, 9(1), n.p., Retrieved from <http://www.webology.org/2012/v9n1/a94.html>
- Lochak, D. (2022). Le sans contact, nouvelle norme du service public. *Plein Droit*, 134(3), 3–6, <https://doi.org/10.3917/pld.134.0005>
- Maingueneau, D. (2016). L'éthos discursif et le défi du Web. *Itinéraires. Littérature, Textes, Cultures*, 2015(3), 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.4000/itineraires.3000>
- Martinet, A. (1969). Fonctions du langage et linguistique appliquée. *Communication & Langages*, 1(1), 9–18, <https://doi.org/10.3406/colan.1969.3705>
- Mazet, P. (2019a). Les conditionnalités implicites de l'accès aux droits à l'ère numérique. F. Sorin, P. Mazet, P. Plantard, & B. Vallauri (Eds.), *Accès aux droits sociaux et lutte contre le non recours dans un contexte de dématérialisation* (pp. 43–46). Ti Lab, Askoria. Retrieved from <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03218656/document> (Rapport d'accompagnement scientifique du projet #LABAcces)
- Mazet, P. (2019b). *Vers l'État plateforme : La dématérialisation de la relation administrative*. Retrieved from <https://laviedesidees.fr/Vers-l-Etat-plateforme>
- Mestivier-Volanschi, A. (2015). Productivity and diachronic evolution of adjectival and participial compound pre-modifiers in English for Specific Purposes. *Fachsprache*, 37(1-2), 2–23, <https://doi.org/10.24989/fs.v37i1-2.1296>
- Moulthrop, S. (1994). Rhizome and resistance: Hypertext and the dreams of a new culture. G. Landow (Ed.), *Hyper/Text/Theory* (Vol. 52, pp. 299–319). Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://doi.org/10.56021/9780801848377>
- O'Reilly, T. (2011). Government as a platform. *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization*, 6(1), 13–40, https://doi.org/10.1162/inov_a_00056
- Pakhomov, S., Pedersen, T., Chute, C.G. (2005). Abbreviation and acronym disambiguation in clinical discourse. *AMIA Annual Symposium Proceedings Archive, 2005*, 589–593, Retrieved from <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC1560669/>
- Pangrazio, L. (2016). Reconceptualising critical digital literacy. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 37(2), 163–174, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2014.942836>
- Paveau, M.-A. (2013). Genre de discours et technologie discursive: Tweet, twittécriture et twittérature. *Pratiques. Linguistique, littérature, didactique*, 157-158, 7–30, <https://doi.org/10.4000/pratiques.3533>

- Paveau, M.-A. (2015). Ce qui s'écrit dans les univers numériques: Matières technolangagières et formes technodiscursives. *Itinéraires, 2014-1*, 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.4000/itineraires.2313>
- Paveau, M.-A. (2017). *L'analyse du discours numérique. Dictionnaire des formes et des pratiques*. Hermann.
- Pecman, M. (2014). Variation as a cognitive device: How scientists construct knowledge through term formation. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication, 20*(1), 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.20.1.01pec>
- Pecman, M. (2018). *Langue et construction de connaissances: Énergie lexico-discursive et potentiel sémiotique des sciences*. L'Harmattan. Retrieved from <https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/catalogue/livre/langue-et-construction-de-connaiss-em-sens-em-es/17418>
- Percebois, J. (2001). Fonctions et vie des sigles et acronymes en contextes de langues anglaise et française de spécialité. *Meta : Journal des Traducteurs / Meta : Translators' Journal, 46*(4), 627–645, <https://doi.org/10.7202/003821ar>
- Picton, A. (2011). Picturing short-period diachronic phenomena in specialised corpora: A textual terminology description of the dynamics of knowledge in space technologies. *Terminology. International Journal of Theoretical and Applied Issues in Specialized Communication, 17*(1), 134–156, <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.17.1.08pic>
- Prieto Ramos, F., & Cerutti, G. (2021). Terminology as a source of difficulty in translating international legal discourses: An empirical cross-genre study. *International Journal of Legal Discourse, 6*(2), 155–179, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijld-2021-2052>
- Sheldrick, A. (2023). Digital exclusion and distance in the British welfare system. *Geoforum, 147*, 103883, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2023.103883>
- Simon, J. (2015). Le discours hypertextualisé : une notion essentielle pour l'analyse du web. I. Saleh et al. (Eds.), *Le numérique à l'ère de l'Internet des objets, de l'hypertexte à l'hyper-objet : actes de H2PTM'15, 14, 15 et 16 octobre 2015, CNAM, Paris* (p. 3-20). Iste Editions.
- Simon, J. (Ed.). (2018). *Le discours hypertextualisé: Espaces énonciatifs mosaïques*. Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pufc.40815>
- Stanfill, M. (2015). The interface as discourse: The production of norms through web design. *New Media & Society, 17*(7), 1059–1074, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814520873>
- Swales, J.M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Topper, A. (1997). Comparing face-to-face and electronic discourse: Issues and questions raised in a research study. *Proceedings of the American Educational Research Association* (pp. 1–7). Chicago.
- Van Dijck, J., Poell, T., De Waal, M. (2018). *The Platform Society* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190889760.001.0001>
- Vial, S. (2014). Critique du virtuel : en finir avec le dualisme numérique. *Psychologie Clinique, 37*(1), 38–51, <https://doi.org/10.1051/psyc/201437038>
- Vicentini, A. (2003). The economy principle in language. Notes and observations from early modern english grammars. *Mots, Palabras, Words, 3*, 37–57, Retrieved from <https://www.ledonline.it/mpw/allegati/mpw0303vicentini.pdf>