



Danguaging
iversity
international conference

LANGUAGING IDENTITIES IN CHANGING TIMES

Challenges and opportunities



UNIVERSITÀ
DI TORINO

14-16 December 2023

Book of Abstracts

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ISBN: 9788875902803



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Published by
COLLANE@unito

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PREFACE

Languaging Diversity is an international biennial conference of the I-Land Inter-university Research Center, an international and interdisciplinary center based at the University of Napoli L'Orientale, Italy. It welcomes scholars interested in a variety of fields such as Linguistics, Social Sciences, and the Humanities. The concepts of identity and diversity are at the core of the conference series. These are investigated cross-culturally, cross-linguistically and from interdisciplinary perspectives.

Following the seven successful events hosted by the Universities of Napoli (2013), Catania (2014), Macerata (2016), Cagliari (2017), Antwerp (2018), Teruel (2019), and Lille (2021), the eighth edition of the Languaging Diversity conference (LD2023) is organized by the University of Torino, Italy.

The present volume is a collection of extended abstracts submitted to the 8th edition of the Languaging Diversity Conference (LD2023) titled 'Languaging identities in changing times: Challenges and opportunities'. The 2023 version of the conference is jointly organised by the Department of Foreign Languages, Literature and Modern Cultures and the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society at the University of Torino, Italy.

The theme of the conference focuses on the representation and the languaging of identities against the backdrop of our rapidly changing societies. Cultures, traditions, and customs are evolving very quickly; in the same way, the interpretation of the concept of identity is undergoing a significant transformation. Languaging Diversity 2023 brings together researchers from a wide range of research disciplines and from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The contributions explore how people embrace the opportunities and overcome the challenges of current times to create a space for their identities to be acknowledged and recognized.

The book of abstracts gathers four plenary talks, four panels that include twenty presentations, seventy-two parallel presentations and six poster presentations, totaling a number of 102 talks. The abstracts discuss the conference theme in relation to gender and sexuality, ethnicity, disability, ageism, religion, ecology, medicine and science, media, politics, the law, education, and learning. The abstracts in this volume also reflect a broad range of the spectrum of theoretical and analytical approaches to study the interface between language and identity such as ethnographic, case studies, multimodal, multilingual, translational, textual and corpus-based methods.

Keywords: identity representation; identity transformation; language dynamics; Cultural dynamics; challenges and adaptation.

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“I’VE GONE VEGGIE BUT NOTHING SERIOUS” A corpus-assisted critical thematic analysis of partial veg*nism in Youtube comments

Whether it be animal rights, health, or environmental motivations, people’s tastes are becoming increasingly plant-based. However, some people only partially adopt these lifestyles with varying degrees of flexibility, as opposed to the more rigid positions like vegetarianism and veganism (henceforth veg*nism), which entail the complete exclusion of animal meat. This has led to the emergence of neologisms that classify veg*nism based on the type of meat included (e.g., lacto-ovo vegetarian) or the degree of adherence to the diet (e.g., semi-vegetarian) and sometimes the time of the day/year when veg*nism is practised (e.g. Vegan before 6:00pm), whose definitions are still in the process of being standardised in most dictionaries.

Along with the issue of clarity, the proliferation of such habits has also had ethical implications within the broader veg*n community. Indeed, despite veg*ns being “evaluated equivalently to immigrants, asexuals, and atheists, and significantly more negatively than Blacks” (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017, 6) by omnivores, veg*ns themselves discriminate against individuals who gradually or partially give up eating animal flesh without fully subscribing to the veg*n ideals for contaminating the “ingroup’s purity and morality” (Bagci et al., 2022, 1240).

Based on these premises and considering Social Media's contribution to the construction of collective identities (KhosraviNik, 2015), this paper investigates: i) the identification strategies of ‘partial’ veg*ns ii) and the concomitant disidentification strategies ‘strict’ veg*ns exercise to foster a sense of separateness (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001) in the online YouTube community through the lens of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

To this end, an initial list of 63 terms – 28 practitioners and 35 diets – based on TermCoord’s terminology list was considered. After cleaning the list in order to have neither explicit references to veg*nism nor to animal flesh, 8 terms remained: ‘demitarian’, ‘flexitarian’, ‘lessetarian’, ‘reducetarian’, ‘demitarianism’, ‘flexitarianism’, ‘lessetarianism’, and ‘reducetarianism’. These were used as queries for the search in titles and descriptions ordered by month from January 2, 2005 to November 27, 2022 in Mozdeh. The search in the corpus provided no results for ‘demitarian’, ‘demitarianism’, ‘lessetarian’, and ‘lessetarianism’; consequently, only comments on videos containing the term ‘flexitarian’, ‘flexitarianism’, ‘reducetarian’, or ‘reducetarianism’ in either the title or the description were considered in the corpus. Finally, distinct subprojects were created to exclusively contain comments featuring the same keywords used to build the corpus. At the end of the stage the corpus totalled 1,914 comments.

The methodology followed the 6 steps of reflexive Thematic Analysis as devised by Braun & Clarke (2021). Themes were elicited from the data through inductive analysis, requiring the presence of multiple instances that demonstrated a particular

pattern to be considered as a theme. At this point, a subset of themes along with accompanying excerpts from the corpus are provided to offer evidence of the identification and disidentification strategies employed by commenters from the three groups.

REDUCETARIAN(ISM): 'gradual change and sustainability', 'dietary inclusiveness' and 'realism and pragmatism'. The reducetarian diet places a strong emphasis on gradual change and sustainability, aligning with the idea that small, manageable steps can lead to “[...] lasting behavioural change”. They also create a space where people can explore reducing meat consumption without feeling judged to conform to strict dietary labels for “transitioning phases help alleviate some of that pressure”. Also, they prioritise pragmatic choices that acknowledge the real-world challenges people face in making dietary changes. Rather than striving for perfection, they aim for achievable and meaningful progress in the belief that “communicating a way of making an impact without having to be perfect is good for the planet, ourselves and the animals”.

FLEXITARIAN(ISM): 'feeling comfortable in any situation', 'plant-meat balance personalisation', and 'indulgence and ethical commitment'. Commenters emphasise the freedom of flexitarians to adjust their dietary choices based on their unique needs, preferences, and circumstances. This flexibility empowers them to navigate social situations, travel, or special occasions without feeling restricted by a rigid dietary framework and getting stressed for “[...] research[ing] specific ingredients to see if something is vegan”. Balance is another fundamental concept within the flexitarian diet, emphasising the importance of a well-rounded and diverse approach to eating. “Everyone is allowed to have a different balance” in combining plant-based foods with occasional, moderate consumption of animal products. Different degrees of ethical commitment and indulgence are also allowed. Some flexitarians may opt for sustainably sourced and ethically raised animal products; others, instead, may focus on specific health goals, or decide to eat meat on a whim because “it's not bad to indulge every once [in a] while”.

*VEG*N(ISM): 'Veg*n is the moral standard' and 'labels are misleading and dangerous'.* Several commenters assert that veganism is the only morally-consistent stance when it comes to animal rights. In a few comments, for example, veg*nism is compared to other moral principles, such as anti-racism, where it is argued that just as there is a moral imperative to reject racism completely, the same applies to speciesism. In this respect, a commenter sarcastically refers to himself as someone who is trying to be as anti-racist as possible and sarcastically defines himself as a ‘reduceracist’. The linguistic and terminological concern is also brought to the fore; strict veg*ns argue that while “some labels are absolute, and they should remain that way”, some others like ‘flexitarian’ and ‘reducetarian’ dilute the vegan message.

In conclusion, the comments provide valuable insights into the disidentification strategies of strict veg*ns, the distinguishing traits and the subtle differences between flexitarians and reducetarians. Flexitarians are flexible in their occasional consumption of animal products, while reducetarians are more intentional and systematic in their efforts to reduce their overall consumption. Strict veg*ns, instead, support a rigid interpretation of veganism, emphasising the complete avoidance of all animal products. Expanding the corpus to include comments from diverse platforms could offer further or alternative insights into the identities of strict and partial veg*ns. Additionally, future research could explore the intersections between various (dietary) lifestyles and individuals' identities, encompassing factors such as gender, age, race and socio-economic status. It is also essential to emphasise the importance of tracking linguistic innovations and standardisation to enhance

public awareness regarding emerging dietary trends and beliefs, thereby contributing to informed policymaking.

Keywords: identification and disidentification; thematic analysis; flexitarianism; reducetarianism; veg*nism.

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LANGUAGING DIVERGENT IDENTITIES IN SEPARATE JUDICIAL OPINIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS A dialogical negation perspective

Supranational courts, such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), are frequently portrayed as having a distinct institutional identity, rhetoric or voice, quintessentially represented through judgments. And yet, judicial discourse at the ECtHR is hardly monolithic, especially at the level of the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR, composed of seventeen judges. Their judgments are a product of complex negotiation among the members of the panel, aimed at reconciling differences and