

## **Linguists in the media sphere: the role of the public media in the implementation of inclusive language policies in French-speaking Switzerland**

In recent years, the private and public media in French-speaking Switzerland, as well as in the rest of the (French-speaking) world, have been called upon to take a stand on the issues raised by the use of inclusive language. Concerned about maintaining objectivity and impartiality in the moderation of televised debates on this issue, the media are nevertheless intimately involved in the issue of inclusive language. Aware of their crucial role in the fight against gender inequalities and the circulation of stereotypes, some media have made their position in the debate public. For example, by adopting a charter, by issuing recommendations to journalists, but above all by explicitly communicating their position, the media have been led to publicly discuss the relationship that news specialists have with language and the limits of journalistic objectivity.

In this presentation, we use interactional and multimodal analysis to first give a general overview of the actors in the controversy that has arisen in the country around the adoption of inclusive language, and then we focus on the argumentative analysis of a debate broadcast on public television RTS, a few days after the company adopted a new policy for inclusive language. The debate entitled "Inclusive language, harmful or necessary" brings together a linguist and a politician (oppo) arguing against the dissemination of inclusive language, against a director and a lawyer (pro), supporting the implementation of more inclusive language in all public sectors, including schools. The analysis shows that there are at least two lines of argument that develop into two different argumentative issues. On the one hand, opponents raise the risk of increasing inequalities in schools if inclusive language were required in all public sectors, while supporters refer to psycholinguistic studies in order to construct a legal argument, namely, that the country's constitution, which guarantees equality, is at risk if inclusive language, which precisely promotes equality, is not adopted.

Our finding will lead us to reflect on the role played by experts in social debates, whether they are directly involved and interviewed, or whether their conclusions and discourses are relayed by other political or social actors. The following points will be examined: i) Science, media and politics: the circulation of linguistic knowledge in the media sphere and its impact on society; ii) Methodology and counter-expertise: how do the media play a crucial role in fostering a critical dialogue with science?

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