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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE STORIES

Speaker

**Professor Michaela Mahlberg**



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**10:00 AM  
(HKT)**



**ZOOM**

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> Registration: <https://bit.ly/cams20240628a>





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## Abstract

Language frames reality. The way we use language to raise awareness of the present or envisage the future affects our actions. What sustainable development means to a society is reflected in the patterns of language that occur repeatedly (Mahlberg 2007). Corpus linguistic methods support the identification of such patterns and contribute to a better understanding of the social dimension of environmental issues (cf. also Koteyko et al. 2010, Grundmann & Scott 2014), with recent corpus approaches positioning themselves explicitly as ‘ecolinguistics’ (Franklin et al. 2022, Poole et al. 2022). The strength of corpus research is the analysis of language on the basis of large data sets, i.e. evidence of real language use. Such approaches can be considered ‘retrospective’ – they look at how language has already been used. What we also need in the communication of sustainable development is an understanding of forward-looking narratives and creative approaches to tell hopeful stories. In this talk, I want to argue that corpus linguistics has something to offer to such forward-looking linguistics, too. Focusing on the example of the water crisis, I will illustrate how corpus linguistic research can contribute to the creative use of language to shape narratives and tell climate stories.

## Speaker Bio

Michaela Mahlberg is Humboldt Chair and Professor of Digital Humanities at Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg, and honorary professor at the University of Birmingham. She previously held positions at the University of Nottingham, the University of Liverpool, Liverpool Hope University College and the University of Bari in Italy. Her publications include the monograph *Corpus Stylistics and Dickens’s Fiction* (Routledge, 2013), and she has been leading the development of the CLiC web app for the study of literary language. CLiC is now used in over 100 countries world-wide. Michaela is the editor of the *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* (John Benjamins) and together with Gavin Brookes she edits the book series *Corpus and Discourse* (Bloomsbury). She is the Vice President of the international Dickens Society and she hosts the podcast “Life and Language”.