

## **Viewing interdisciplinary research discourses about environmental change through corpus analysis**

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While the notion of 'discipline' itself is increasingly under threat as problem-focused research activity pushes towards greater crossing of what were once considered boundaries (Trowler, Saunders and Bamber 2012), we still hold on to this fundamental concept in the description of how knowledge and knowledge construction activities are structured. With ESP/EAP, discipline continues to be a powerful category and in the last decade and a half studies of disciplinary variation have taken centre stage. Hyland's (2000) monograph on disciplinary discourses and subsequent work on metadiscourse (e.g., Hyland 2005) have pioneered a raft of studies of how, on aggregate, the linguistic features and rhetorical organisations of texts differ from discipline to discipline.

However, EAP researchers have now begun to challenge the idea that disciplinary variation is everything. As Bethany Gray's (2015) book puts it, discipline tells only part of the story - other important factors are the research paradigms followed, the blend of approaches adopted, and the audiences that are addressed. In this talk, I will report on a two year project conducted at the University of Birmingham, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, and in collaboration with Elsevier, that explored interdisciplinary research discourse (and monodisciplinary research discourse too) through corpus analysis of eleven journals in the period 2001-2010. This project has taken a primarily data-driven approach to text clustering. Using multidimensional analysis (Biber 1988 and later) and topic modelling (Blei and Lafferty 2007) we explored possible groupings of texts on linguistic features alone. The proximity of world view and of research paradigm is seen to be a key factor, while, conversely, the recognition of distance is observed to be a feature of healthy interdisciplinary research communication.