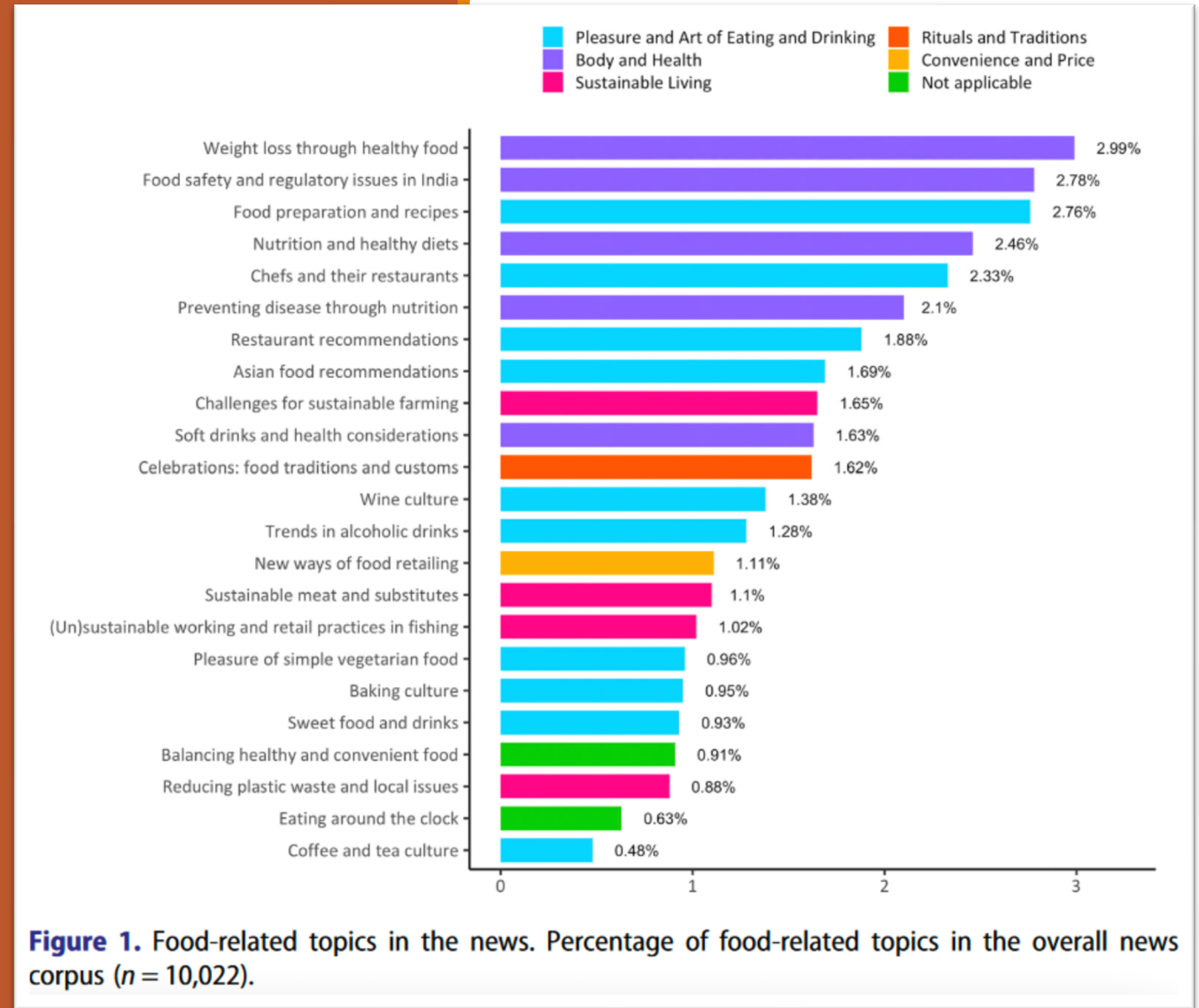


4th Conference on Food & Communication - *Food for All: Media, Communication and Food Democracy* - University of Lille, France, 10-12 September 2025.

General Context

- General framing of food:
 - Lifestyle
 - Rarely focusing on long-term food practices and sustainable living
 - Little attention to the social, political, and environmental dimensions of food (Brüggemann, Kunert & Sprengelmeyer 2024)
- Alternative media
 - Challenge dominant narratives
 - Ambivalent positioning
 - Advocacy VS « rigorous journalism »
 - Limited audience
- Specialized journalism
 - Agricultural journalism (Chupin & Mayance 2016; Castelló 2024)
 - Environmental journalism (Comby 2008–2015; Girardi et al. 2023; Prodhomme, Carlino & Mercier 2024)



Challenging the Narratives

- An alternative francophone Belgian media outlet specializing in agro-food issues
- Editorial line:
 - Engaged, critical, and oriented towards social transformation
 - While maintaining strong respect for quality and journalistic standards
- Research questions:
 - RQ1: What are the recurring narratives about food systems, sustainability, and the agro-food industry in this media outlet?
 - RQ2: Do these narratives align with the media's editorial positioning and its ambition to foster public debate?



Methodology

- Mixed-method approach:
 - Statistical textual analysis (lexicometry)
 - Qualitative discourse analysis
- Corpus:
 - 7 issues
 - 307,637 words (2023–2024)



Results

Three “lexical worlds”:

(1) (Re)thinking the agro-food model

(2) Narrating farm life

(3) Large-scale agro-food issues



Class 1: (Re)thinking the Agro-Food Model

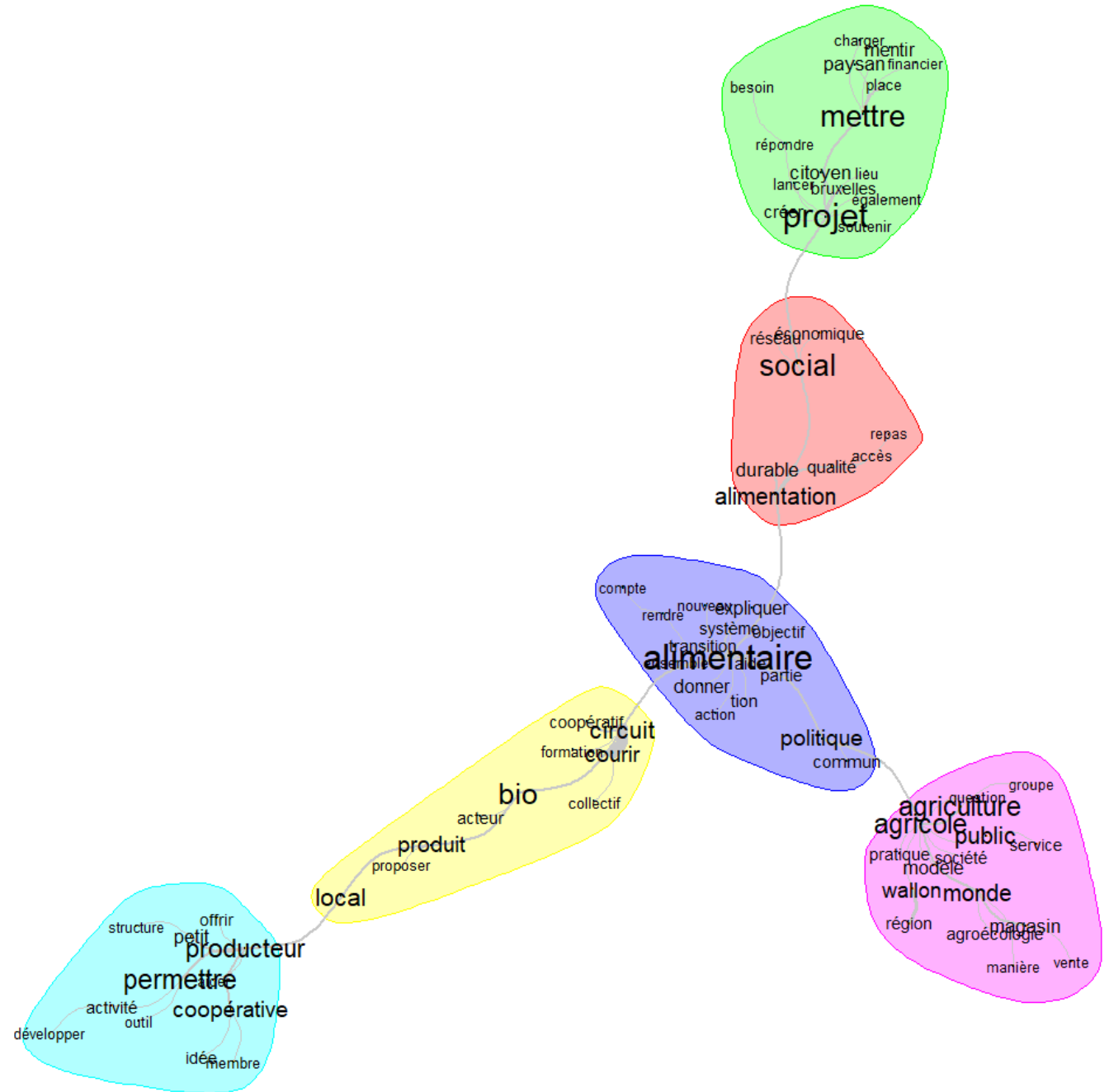
- Meso level
- Links food issues to economic & social models
- Political or action-oriented context
- Highlights sustainable food & short supply chains
- Food issue is central, branching perspectives

« Toutes vendent des produits en circuit court, essentiellement locaux mais pas que. Les coopératives diffèrent des magasins indépendants, bio ou vendant du vrac, de par leur dimension sociale et participative » (Tchak, numéro 14).



Class 1: (Re)thinking the Agro-Food Model

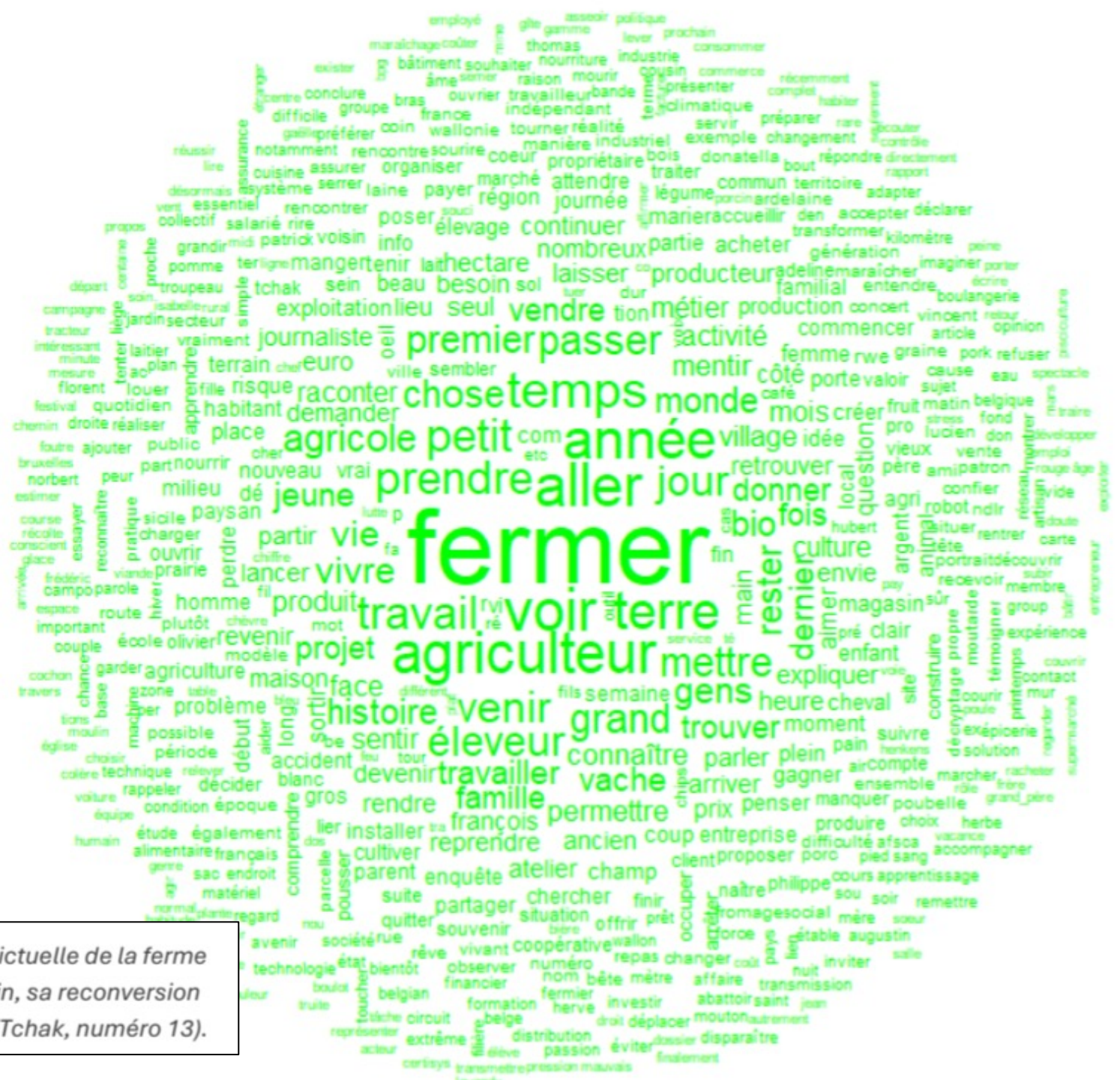
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Class 2: Narrating Farm Life

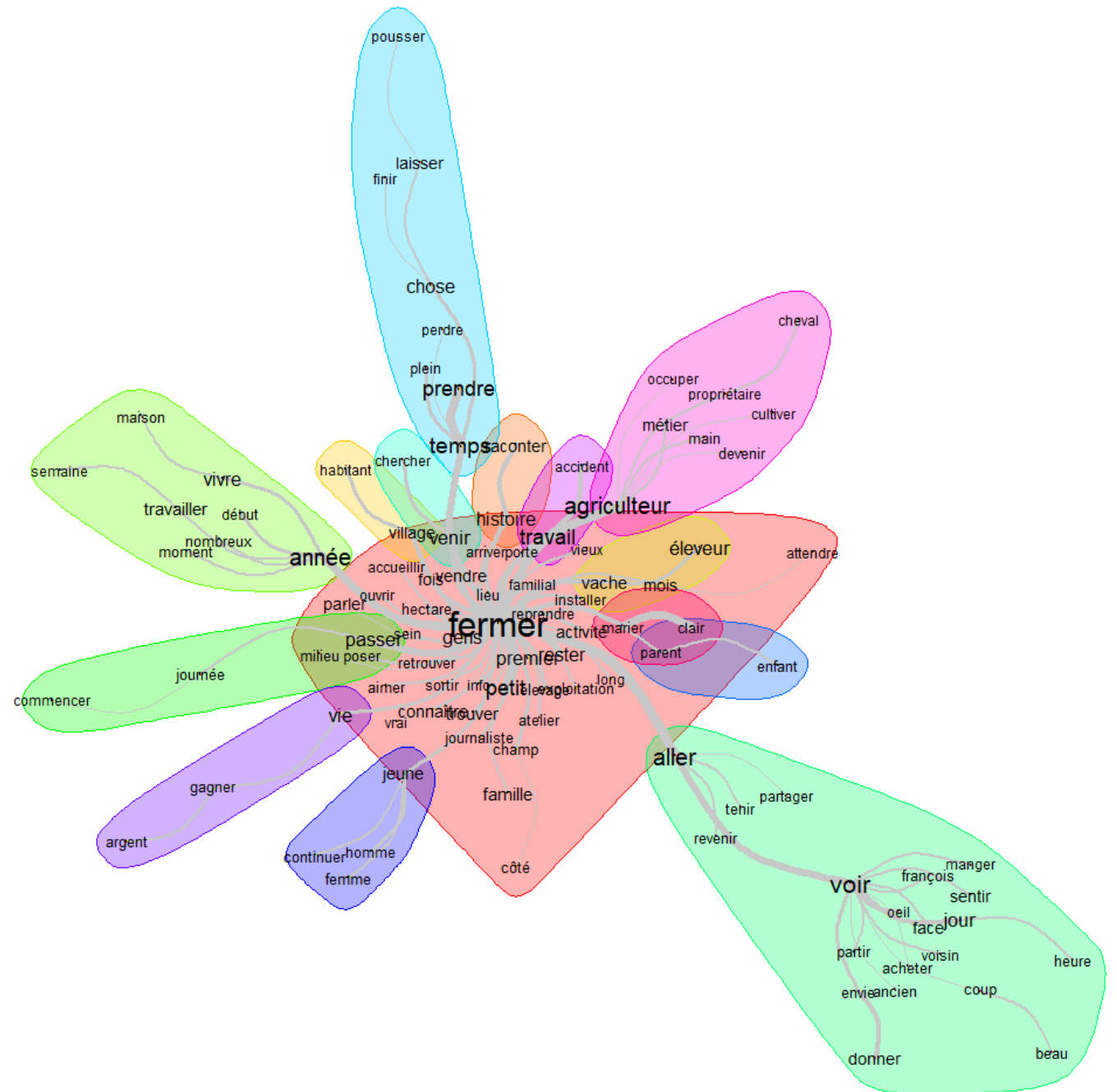
- Micro level
- Vocabulary of proximity
- Narrates life, changes, and difficulties
- Settings: villages, farms, breeders
- Central focus: the farm

« De son enfance sur les tracteurs à la transmission conflictuelle de la ferme familiale, en passant par les problèmes financiers et enfin, sa reconversion salvatrice... À travers ce portrait, il raconte son histoire » (Tchak, numéro 13).



Class 2: Narrating Farm Life

- Micro level
- Vocabulary of proximity
- Narrates life, changes, and difficulties
- Settings: villages, farms, breeders
- Central focus: the farm



Class 3: Large-Scale Agro-Food Issues

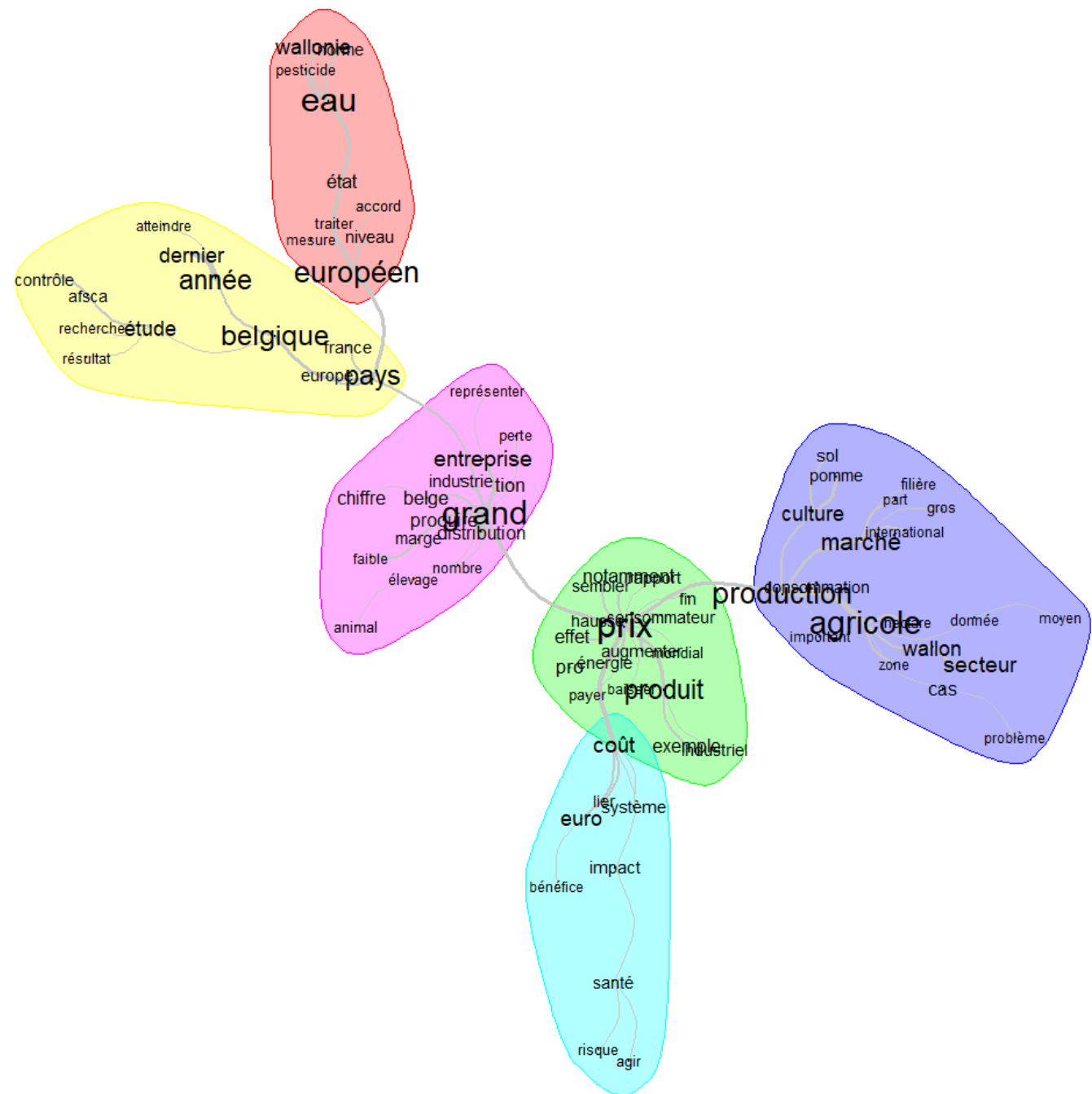
- Macro level
- Analytical approach to large-scale issues
- Regulatory & political perspectives (national & international)
- Economic focus: food & distribution
- Environmental focus: water & soil

« En 2027, la directive-cadre européenne sur l'eau imposera une « bonne qualité » générale des eaux. On en est loin » (Tchak, numéro 14).



Class 3: Large-Scale Agro-Food Issues

- Macro level
- Analytical approach to large-scale issues
- Regulatory & political perspectives (national & international)
- Economic focus: food & distribution
- Environmental focus: water & soil



Class 1: Rethinking the Agro-Food Model (meso level):

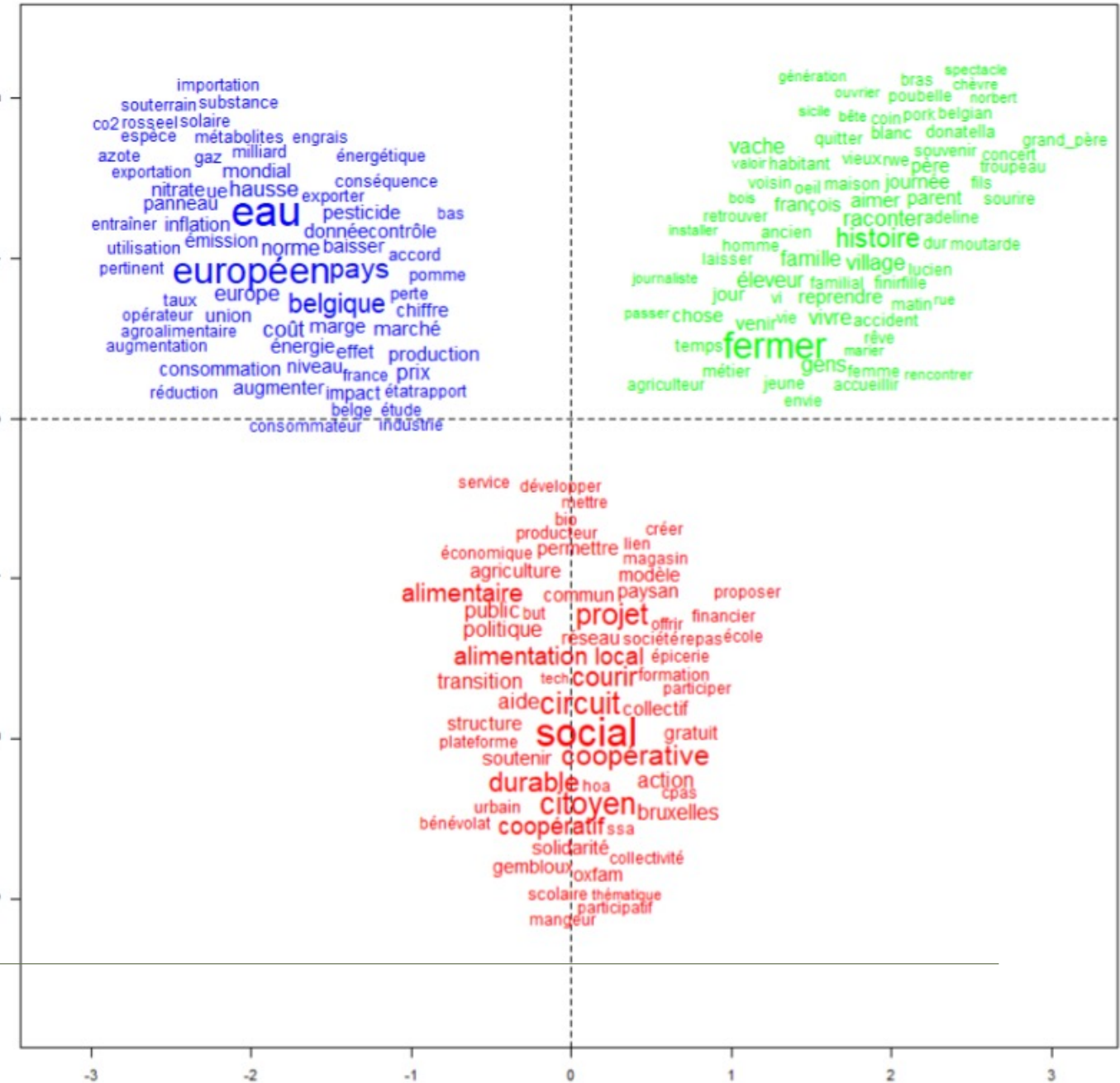
This class reflects a committed discourse on sustainable food, agroecology, and alternative economic models. The focus is on local, collective, and cooperative projects, with explicit valorization of short supply chains, citizen initiatives, and participatory structures. The dominant vocabulary (cooperative, social, project, transition, solidarity, citizen) indicates a concrete perspective of action toward economic and social alternatives to the dominant agro-industrial model.

Class 2: Narrating Farm Life (micro level):

This class corresponds to a narrative approach centered on life stories, individual or family trajectories, and direct testimonies from the local agricultural world. It emphasizes embodying agricultural issues through the lived realities of concrete actors: farmers, breeders, villagers. The focus is on proximity, both physical and emotional.

Class 3: Large-Scale Agro-Food Issues (macro level):

This class embodies a critical and systemic dimension of agricultural, food, environmental, and economic issues. It addresses problems at the national, European, or global scale, mobilizing questions of political and economic regulation (environmental standards, global markets, pollution, ecological impacts). The discourse here explicitly denounces industrial excesses, with a strong analytical and critical dimension (inflation, large-scale distribution, pesticides, pollution)



How can we reach a wider audience?

- # How can we combine journalism and develop challenging narratives that reached audience? How can narratives contribute to public

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