

# CILC6 – Modes of Existence in the Anthropocene

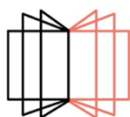
## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

University of Oslo



*Photo: Unsplash / Sophia Valkova*

March 18<sup>th</sup> – March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024



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# CILC6 – Modes of Existence in the Anthropocene

*18 – 20 March 2024*

*University of Oslo*

Across many areas, there is a growing interest in the history of crises, the ethnography of crises, the social, political, ecological, and economic theories of crises, the psychology and perception of crises, as well as an interest in how artifacts and literary texts enable sustained engagement with crises. While much contemporary work in both the humanities and the sciences have strived to understand how different ecological niches require different strategies for resilience, we see a need for considering the crises from a human interactivity and first-, second- and third person perspective.

Humans are trailblazers: we make tracks and roads, we produce artifacts such as literature and art, we build institutions and cities, and we drill mountains and manipulate the boundaries of places. While seas, mountains, weather, fauna, animals, etc. impact the shape, direction, and quality of our future living, the human species has currently a direct impact on our common future. For that reason, it is urgent to consider how human cognition – and the interactivity between human beings and the environment – can take on a sustainable form.

The aim of this conference is to explore alternative views of crises that allow for various modes of existence in a global world. By using ecological, sociocultural, anthropological, linguistic, and psychological lenses, we seek to investigate how modes of existence differ according to the ecosystems in which communities live, their different cultural practices, and the state of being and becoming experienced by situated persons.

# Conference Program

**Day 1: Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup> \* Helga Engs Hus**

09:00	Registration, coffee, & croissants (Vestibyen)	
09:30	Welcome & conference opening (Auditorium 2)	
09:45	Terence Cave “Waiting for the Apocalypse” (Auditorium 2)	
	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
10:45	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Johanne Kirkeby</b></p> <p>'It gives me a kick but it's dangerous': Online gambling among Danish youth as a reaction to and contributing factor in crises</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anna Lindhé</b></p> <p>The Realist Question: How Literature Can Meet the Challenges of the Anthropocene</p>
11:15	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Song Jiang &amp; Haidan Wang</b></p> <p>Integrating Place and Embodied Learning: Enhancing Chinese Competence through Indigenous Cultural Immersion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Niamh A. O'Dowd &amp; Ljiljana Šarić,</b></p> <p>Hope, like a slinky, springs eternal”: A comparative analysis of metaphorical conceptualisations of hope/nada in Anglophone and Croatian online discourses about climate change</p>
11:45	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Karl Jonathan Jonsson</b></p> <p>Words Alone Can Repair What Was Broken in Time and Space: Mahmoud Darwish, Mourid Barghouti and the Crisis of <i>Ghurba</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Edward Rutledge (co-author: Dr. Marni Manegre)</b></p> <p>An Ecolinguistic Approach to Content and Language Integrated Learning</p>
12:15	Lunch (Vestibyen)	
13:15	Lydia Kokkola “Reimagining Relations with the Vegetal World” (Auditorium 2)	
14:15	Coffee break	
	<b>Panel: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Panel: Auditorium 3</b>
14:45	Conceptualization of Agency in Human-AI interactions	Nature, Wilderness and Place: Dialogue between China and the West
	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
16:15	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Birgit Bundesen &amp; Rune Søchting</b></p> <p>REWRITALIZE your recovery: art workshops as co-writing imaginary resonant exoskeletons</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rikke Watson Madsen and Sune Vork Steffensen</b></p> <p>Grammar as Problem Solving</p>



16:45	<b>Break</b>
17:00-18:00	<b>Harry Heft “Relational Concepts in Psychology Highlight Environment-Person Reciprocities for the Anthropocene” (Auditorium 2) (<u>Virtual</u>)</b>

## Day 2: Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> \* Helga Engs Hus

9:15	<b>Lambros Malafouris “Modes of Human Becoming” (Auditorium 2)</b>	
	<b>Poster sessions &amp; coffee break (Vestbylen):</b>	
10:15	<p><b>Wélica Cristina Duarte de Oliveira (co-author: Barbara Cristina Gallardo)</b> Space, Perception, And Action: Affordances In The Language Classroom In Midwest Brazil.</p> <p><b>Luciana Longo (co-author: Fred Cummins).</b> Joint Speech – Human Domains of Assembly and Communion</p> <p><b>Alice Morelli.</b> Habits in (Time of) Crisis. Conceptual tools for dealing with disruptive events</p>	
	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
10:45	<p><b>Simon Høffding and Birgit Bundesen</b> Psychopathology as disturbances of agency and lived time: restructuring disordered selves in musical improvisation and creative writing groups</p>	<p><b>Chunguang Wen</b> Ecological Conceptual Metaphor and National Image Construction</p>
11:15	<p><b>Fred Cummins</b> Teaching time in the present</p>	<p><b>Ilona Howiecka-Tańska</b> Unveiling the Alchemy of Learning: Transforming Objects into Instruments</p>
11:45	<p><b>Anna Sanczyk-Cruz (co-author: Elizabeth R. Miller)</b> When Values Collide: Language Teacher Identity Tensions and Ethical Judgments</p>	<p><b>David Habets (coauthors: Julian Kiverstein, Erik Rietveld &amp; Damiaan Denys)</b> Trusted Urban Places</p>
12:15	<p><b>Andrea Hiott</b> Nestedness, trajectory, landscape: Existence as way-making</p>	<p><b>Frédéric Vallée-Tourangeau</b> Outsight: A case study of the dialogic nature of creativity</p>
12:45	<b>Lunch (Vestiblen)</b>	
	<b>Panel: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Panel: Auditorium 3</b>
13:45	<p>Creativity, Contingency and Crisis</p>	<p>Repositioning the relationship between the “I” and “language”: Three cases from unconventional environments</p>
15:15	<b>Coffee break</b>	



	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
15:45	<b>Katharina J. Rohlfing &amp; Suzana Alpsancar</b> Designing interactivity in XAI systems	<b>Wiktor Rorot</b> Intra-actions of morphogenesis. Towards an “interaction-first” approach to cognition
16:15	<b>Sune Vork Steffensen</b> On the Corporeal Organisation of Language	<b>Carlos Vara Sánchez</b> The affective consequences of non-action in human interactivity
16:45	<b>Break (Vestiblen)</b>	
17:00-18:00	<b>Steve Woolgar “The End of Cognition” (Auditorium 2)</b>	

### Day 3: Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>

9:15	<b>Geerteke van Lierop &amp; Erik Rietveld (Auditorium 2)</b> “Art in Grief: Regaining grip through art in situations of profound change”	
	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
10:15	<b>Antonio Ianniello</b> Infinity Pool: enacting monsters to face Anthropocene	<b>Johan Siebers</b> Superheroes of talk
10:45	<b>Simon Peres</b> Architecture as material-ecological modelling: a method for rethinking environmental relations in the Anthropocene	<b>Sofie Pedersen</b> Enabling spaces: moving with and beyond psycho-social-material crisis
11:15	<b>Coffee break</b>	
	<b>Panel: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Panel: Auditorium 3</b>
11:45	Rethinking relational values in the anthropocene	Literature in the Face of Crisis: Hope, Feelings and Expertise
13:15	<b>Lunch (Vestiblen)</b>	
	<b>Papers: Auditorium 2</b>	<b>Papers: Auditorium 3</b>
14:15	<b>Edward Baggs</b> The material basis of collective cognition	<b>Simon Harrison</b> Lost, impossible, and non-existent gestures?
14:45	<b>Juan Toro</b> Changing habits in the Anthropocene: the way of aesthetic experiences	<b>Kevin Rickman</b> Ontolinguistic critique of language use via ecosemiotics
15:15	<b>Coffee break</b>	
15:45	<b>Shan Gao “Nature, Wilderness, and Place: Comparative Studies between American Transcendentalism and Chinese Philosophy” (Auditorium 2)</b>	
16:45-17:15	<b>CILC VII (Auditorium 2)</b>	

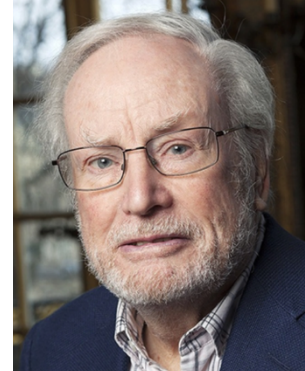


## Keynote Speakers

### Waiting for the Apocalypse

*Terence Cave*

*Oxford University, UK and University of Oslo, Norway*



Major shifts in the constitution of the human world, whether they are perceived as arising internally (as in the case of war), or externally (climate change), or somewhere in between (disease, species extinction), create disturbance at their temporal border: what one might call the anxiety of kairos. This talk will address some key features and examples of such disturbance within a broadly cognitive frame of reference. Its examples will be drawn primarily from a cluster of literary texts (those affiliated with C. P. Cavafy's 1904 poem 'Waiting for the barbarians' and J. M. Coetzee's 1980 novel bearing the same title), but it will also invoke historical crises both ancient and modern. The central thread is provided by the title: modalities of waiting (including expectation and non-fulfilment) will be explored in their cognitive, ecological, and ideological contexts, in order to ground a reflection on (a) what it means to live on the current perceived temporal border (a kairos which cannot fully be conceived as such until after it occurs, if it does), and (b) how, while waiting, 'we' (humans), in our political and social ecologies, might engage or fail to engage in appropriate action.



# Reimagining Relations with the Vegetal World

*Lydia Kokkala*

*University of Oulu, Finland*



Human survival is dependent on plants. They provide the air we breathe, the food we eat, pleasures we crave, medicines, and shelter. They also have the power to poison us or kill us by other means. When faced with this familiar-strange intelligence, human arrogance assumes that humans have the deciding power. Human-Plant Studies (HPS) questions this assumption, as do indigenous ways of understanding the living world. This presentation endeavors to open up a richer understanding of human-plant relations, using storying as a means of reimagining human relations with the vegetal world.

Children's literature, typically expresses adult desires, hopes, and concerns about the future, and so often provides fertile ground for imagining new ways of being in the world. In this presentation, I am uninterested in whether young readers of the books I discuss would be able to imagine human-plant relations in the ways I describe. I use them to tap into collective ideas about plants to (re)imagine relations with the vegetal world. Three cases are presented: 1. Losing contact 2. Becoming compost 3. Becoming native.

## Presenter bio

Lydia Kokkola works at the University of Oulu, Finland. Her research interests focus on how narrative engagement fosters thoughtful, critical thinking. She has examined this theme in relation to L2 reading, Holocaust studies, sexuality and, most recently, understanding plant intelligence. Her presentation introduces this latest project.

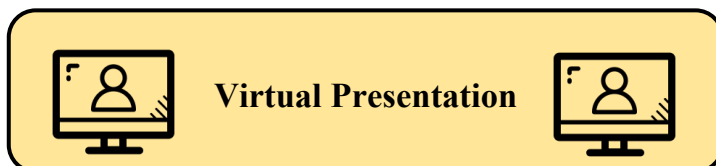
# Relational Concepts in Psychology Highlight Environment-Person Reciprocities for the Anthropocene

*Harry Heft*

*Denison University, OH, USA*



The terminology we use in psychological inquiry plays a formative role in structuring and sustaining our ways of thinking about human and ecosystem processes. In this regard, even though many of the crises we now face clearly reveal the *reciprocity* of human actions and environmental processes over time, many concepts historically employed in psychological science assume, if only implicitly, a dualistic separation of the environment and the person that undermines recognition of that reciprocity dynamic. More fruitfully, we can turn to relational concepts rooted in radical empiricism (James) and pragmatism (Dewey) that take environment-person reciprocities as a starting point. On those philosophical foundations, empirically-based conceptual advances in ecological psychology over the past half century provide entry points for developing a relational terminology that comports with thinking in terms of environment-person reciprocities. The relational concepts of affordances and behavior settings will be explored in this presentation with an emphasis on the organismic processes of niche construction and sociocultural structuration in relation to human development.



## Modes of Human Becoming

*Lambros Malafouris*

*Oxford University, UK*



"Humans become through their creative engagement with the material world. We are plastic creatures inextricably intertwined with the plasticity of things that we make. I use the term 'things' in the broadest sense of material forms, environments and technics – not in the narrow sense of static objects. Humans are creative 'thingers'. There is nothing in our genes, as there is nothing in our cultures that can explain that. Instead, we need to look at the lived space 'in-between', that is, where brain, body and culture conflate. In my talk I will try to explore the major implications of this entanglement of mind and matter for the traditional ways we understand the process of creativity and the role that it plays in human becoming".



# The End of Cognition

*Steve Woolgar*

*Oxford University, UK and Linköping University, Sweden*



The concept of 'cognition' is central to a wide literature in social science and philosophy where a key assumption conceptualises the central unit of analysis as a cognising agent. However, much work deriving from early Science and Technology Studies (STS) questions this assumption and suggest the basis for its modification. The paper describes and evaluates these developments. It examines critiques of the "received view" of science and suggests that nothing less than a full scale analytic inversion is needed adequately to confront entrenched conceptions about cognition. It surveys progressive attempts to achieve symmetry in STS. It then considers three sets of key assumptions about agency: 1. what is the agent doing?; 2. what is the nature of the agent?; and 3. why should human agents have the monopoly on human attributes?



# **Nature, Wilderness, and Place: Comparative Studies between American Transcendentalism and Chinese Philosophy**

*Shan Gao*

*Soochow University, China*



In my talk, I will focus on comparative studies between American transcendentalism and Chinese philosophy and discuss how their different philosophical interpretation of the concept of nature has tremendous influence on different senses of place. The former values wilderness as a place while the latter values cultivated lands such as gardens and agricultural land as a place. In terms of American transcendentalism, I will mainly focus on Emerson, Thoreau, and John Muir's works, especially Emerson's completed works. For Chinese philosophy, I will focus on two dominant Chinese philosophical schools: Confucianism and Daoism. In the first part of my paper, I will focus on the metaphysics of American transcendentalism and Chinese philosophy since it is a deeper philosophical reason why different types of nature are valued as places. The two metaphysical concepts I will focus on are God and Dao. I will make a comparative study of these two concepts and address their relationship with the concept of nature. I point out that God and Dao as the ultimate reality are both value-laden. They represent the combination of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. However, their interpretation of these three elements is very different. Their metaphysical interpretation of nature has tremendous influence on their understanding of material nature. Material nature is considered as reality rather than illusion as Plato understands. In the second part, I will address why American transcendentalism and Chinese philosophy both pursue spirituality in living in harmony with nature. Although they both use the concept of harmony, their interpretation of harmony differs. I will make a comparative study in the concept of life in harmony with nature between American transcendentalism and Chinese philosophy. Thirdly, I will discuss why the pursuit of spirituality in nature in American transcendentalism and Chinese philosophy cultivates different kinds of sense of place. In this part, I will give a philosophical interpretation of the concept of place. I will address the two core elements in understanding the concept of place: aesthetic appreciation and love and then I will explore why wilderness and cultivated land become the object of aesthetic appreciation and feelings of love. In the last part, I will address the sense of place and its influence on environmental conservation practices in China and America.

## Extended Paper Presentation

### Art in Grief: Regaining grip through art in situations of profound change

*Geerteke van Lierop*

*Co-founder of Art in Grief, Public Speaking Coach & Erik Rietveld*

*University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands*



How can art and the philosophy of ecological-enactive cognition jointly help us to understand how a person regains grip on their situation after a profound change or loss? Art in Grief is an art-science project that explores how visual art can help people regain a grip on their situation after profound change or loss. Art in Grief ([www.artingrief.org](http://www.artingrief.org)) is a collaboration between writer, coach and actress Geerteke van Lierop and the founders of RAAAF, Prix de Rome winning artist Ronald Rietveld, and Socrates Professor of Philosophy Erik Rietveld.

Geerteke lost her partner in 2016. In her novel *A Sea of Glass* (Van Lierop, 2018) she describes the immense grief she feels, and how she experiences a lost connection with the shared world. She discovers that encounters with art installations can pull her out of loneliness and offer a growing zest for life. *A Sea of Glass* gives a penetrating insight into what happens after loss, and what art can do in restoring and strengthening the connection to self, world and others. Art helped Geerteke to intertwine loss with life in a positive way.

Engagement with art can generate an openness to inviting affordances, action possibilities offered by the environment (Gibson 1979; Chemero 2009; Rietveld & Kiverstein 2014). From the perspective of Rietveld's philosophy of change-ability (2022), engagement with art offers a way of re-discovering the meaningful possibilities that the shared world has to offer, even after profound change or loss.

The Art in Grief project consists of a phenomenology of art in grief, filmed interviews on the significance of art in loss and profound change, an audio tour of some of the art installations by RAAAF, written and voiced by Geerteke, and a short film based on *A Sea of Glass*.

In our contribution to the conference we would like to use a selection of our film material as the starting point for a conversation with the CILC6 audience on the relation between grief, artworks in public space, and resilience.

## Papers (\*Arranged alphabetically)

### **The material basis of collective cognition**

*Edward Baggs, University of Southern Denmark*

Recently there have been a number of high profile calls from cognitive scientists to shift the focus of research within the field from a focus on individual cognition to a focus on collective cognition. These calls should be welcomed as attempts to make cognitive science more relevant to pressing societal challenges. However, there is a major potential pitfall. The danger is that researchers simply shift from one dualistic conception of cognition, based on an organism-environment dichotomy, to a different dualistic conception based on a group-environment dichotomy. Under the dualistic conception, collective problems become symbolic problems extracted from their originating context. Effective systems for collective cognition are built around their analogue components. An effective cognitive science of social systems will, therefore, be one that incorporates the material circumstances of collective problems into its theoretical principles.

### **REWRITALIZE your recovery: art workshops as co-writing imaginary resonant exoskeletons**

#### **Building a theoretical framework fit for assessment of participatory creative writing workshops for recovery from severe mental illness**

*Birgit Bundesen & Rune Søchting, Danish Center for Arts and Mental Health; Copenhagen University Hospital, Denmark*

WHO prognose mental health to be the biggest health problem in 2030. With his theory of resonance the sociologist Hartmut Rosa connects the mental health crisis with the ecological crisis, by pointing the late modernity as being driven by ideals of acceleration, optimization and growth. These socialize subjects into modes of aggression both personal, societal and ecological where a reduction in resonance results in states of burnout. He points to art as a form of resonance, where subjects can regenerate from alienation and regain a feeling of the world being accessible, speaking to me that can be operationalized as self-efficacy.

We will present the conceptual work with developing participatory creative writing workshops offered as part of psychiatric treatment for people suffering from severe mental disorders in Copenhagen. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected. The research rises methodological and epistemological questions about how to design and evaluate something as complex as the health promoting impact of participating in an art workshop led by a



professional author? We present a theoretical framework suggesting the creative writing workshop as a resonant space that function as a co-created imaginatory exoskeleton that may explain the recovery effect for people suffering from mental disorders.

## **Teaching time in the present**

*Fred Cummins, University College Dublin, Ireland*

Being an academic teacher in a well-funded university in a rich country brings challenges, if we (I) are/am not to reproduce patterns of colonial thought (but colonial thought lives in me), species exceptionalism (but "we" are, in some important sense, exceptional), and the inculcation of modes of thought incompatible with the inevitable challenges of rapid social and ecological change. To address this, I would like to present the manner in which I represent concepts in time as they arise in consideration of some core questions relevant to our self-understanding as both aspirational and natural beings. This enterprise is called, by me, cognitive science. Using a few core dates, fixed landmarks are introduced providing a frame that relativises thought, and acknowledges the constantly changing stock of concepts with which we understand our position in things. The principal landmarks are: 1600: birth of scientific modernity and the cogito; 1850: the challenge of Darwin to see ourselves within the natural order, and the death of God as a obligatory background to publicly presented theories; 1945: the death of Man after the cataclysms of the first half of the 20th Century and the atomic bomb, and the birth of a novel suite of concepts derived from cybernetics, introducing us to the information age. I have found this framing to be conducive to open-ended thinking by students, by allowing appropriate relativisation of any and all of the products of the objectifying activities of science.

## **Trusted Urban Places**

*David Habets, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands*

*(Coauthors: Julian Kiverstein, Erik Rietveld & Damiaan Denys)*

Stress is an inevitable part of city living resulting in an increased risk of developing depressive and anxiety disorders as compared to non-city dwellers (Van der Wal et al., 2021). In times that more and more people live in metropolitan environments, this might accumulate in a global urban mental health crisis.

We draw on insights from ecological psychology, explorative architecture, and psychiatry to provide an analysis of basic trust in relation to urban places. We use the term basic trust to refer



to the attitude of certainty we express when we act in skilled, often unreflective, habitual ways in the living environment. We will argue that the basic trust of people living in cities should be understood in relation to what we will call *trusted urban places*. *Trusted urban places* provide affordances for amplifying, dampening, and sustaining affective states. The basic trust of people living in cities, we will argue, depends upon people moving through and engaging with trusted urban places. In urbanism and architecture, it is barely recognized how the city affords places of affective significance that people incorporate into their bodily way of existing.

Persistent exposure to urban stressors can disturb basic trust in one's living environment, resulting in a person no longer being at home in the world. We provide examples in which people no longer incorporate trusted urban places into their daily lives, and the impact this has on their basic trust. Our aim is to understand better how the urban environment can contribute to the path from stress to anxiety and mood disorders, and how a person can regain their openness to possibilities for regulating their emotions skilfully.

## **Lost, impossible, and non-existent gestures?**

*Simon Harrison, City University of Hong Kong*

Despite the growing emphasis in applied linguistics on the meaningful situation of being with others, a close-reading of the field's key concepts like functional output, interactional competence, and multimodality reveals ways of relating phenomena that neglect aspects of lived experience. For example, how is it that studies of interactivity during assessed speaking activities online (e.g., language proficiency tests, oral presentations) are finding that gestures in the digital environment are "almost non-existent" (Bobkina et al., 2023) or "may simply not be possible" (Nakatsuhara et al., 2017)? What is meant by gesture and its criteria for loss and near nonexistence? On what understanding of meaningful bodily movement, co-presence, and interactive technologies do these conclusions depend, for whom? Some of the researchers seem quick to assert the importance of training in (their) 'effective communication skills' if we are to avert this gesture extinction and interpersonal crisis, yet in neighbouring domains of enquiry we find studies of online interactivity guided by concepts that imply a different aesthetics of gesture and social understanding. In studies of interactivity during online psychotherapy sessions, for instance, concepts of attunement, enkinesthesia, and affectivity presuppose bodies for whom 'non-existent gesture' would be a contradiction of terms, leading researchers to conclude that gesture is not lost but transforming and becoming (Lanigan, 2023; Garcia et al., 2022). The conference theme inspires thinking of these alternative conclusions as addressing different modes of existence, which I'll aim to illustrate with examples from my empirical study of online language testing.



## References

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- García, E., Di Paolo, E. A., & De Jaegher, H. (2022). Embodiment in online psychotherapy: A qualitative study. *Psychology & Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, 95(1), 191-211. <https://doi.org/10.1111/papt.12359>
- Lanigan, K. (2023). Sensing Through the Keyhole: Psychotherapists' Experience of Attunement in Online Video Therapy. A Hermeneutic Literature Review. MA Dissertation, Auckland University of Technology.
- Nakatsuhara, F. et al., (2017). Exploring the Use of Video-Conferencing Technology in the Assessment of Spoken Language: A Mixed-Methods Study, *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 14(1), 1-18.

## **Nestedness, trajectory, landscape: Existence as way-making**

*Andrea Hiott, Universität Heidelberg, Germany*

Would modelling existence as trajectories within nested landscapes improve environmental action? Recent developments in the cognitive sciences suggest it would, providing examples of how we might assess existence via nested (mental and physical) landscapes, and observe how those landscapes overlap according to agential trajectories and affordances. In the *way-making* framework, which this paper elucidates, determining *landscape* is a matter of determining statistical regularities, and agential position is a matter of alignment with those regularities via unique, spatiotemporal trajectory: Any position's trajectory within any landscape can be assessed by its unique arrangement of regularities relative to other trajectories, which necessarily overlap. Existence for any agent (i.e. a tree) consists of certain parameters within that landscape (the statistical regularities encountered *as that tree*) and is sustainable or unsustainable accordingly. At the same time, no one agent or landscape can be separated from the complex nesting of all others—each landscape, when generalized ( a tree to 'trees'), itself becomes an agent at another scale of landscape (i.e., planet earth). Within this framework, we can thus observe existence as *nested landscapes* and observe overlapping landscapes in wider and smaller scales. This fractal framework lets us shift among scales—i.e., between assessing a tree's existence to assessing vegetal existence to assessing mycelium, etc. We can also observe these trajectories relative to other agent-types and landscapes—i.e., to observe the trajectories of trees to that of biofuel companies within the landscape of human energy sources.

# **Psychopathology as disturbances of agency and lived time: restructuring disordered selves in musical improvisation and creative writing groups**

*Simon Høffding & Birgit Bundesen, University of Southern Denmark; Danish Center for Arts and Mental Health*

Leading psychiatrists have pointed to psychopathology as a desynchronization from our usual experience of time and of feeling as agents in our own life. So-called normal experience expresses a stable subjectivity that becomes visible in the ex-negativo, psychopathological exceptions such as those found in schizophrenia. A major challenge in psychiatry is that psychopathological disturbances are often ineffable, “beyond words”. Clinicians expect abnormal experiences to be linguistically shaped and ready to “harvest” in the diagnostic interview. Here, engagement with artistic expressive modalities can help shape experience in a way that makes it sharable with others. Research in participatory formats have shown recovery effects for people suffering from severe mental illness that usually defy standard medical and therapeutic approaches.

On this background we present two data sets.

The first set consists in qualitative investigations with a professional, free improvisation, saxophonist. An enactive analysis of his practice brings out that an essential condition of possibility of musical improvisation is the ability to negotiate or “oscillate” his sense of agency. This analysis ought to translate to both music therapy and psychiatry, and lead to interventions that allow psychiatric patients to engage in artistic improvisation to flex and stabilize their weakened sense of agency.

The second data-set consists in preliminary results from the research programme REWRITALIZE, where participatory creative writing groups has been offered as adjuvant treatment for people in psychiatry. We elaborate on these findings in light of theories of aesthetic experience and its relation to psychopathological states.

Finally, we discuss convergences between the practices of creative writing and free music improvisation as well as between different theory constructions (Aesthetics, Enactivism, Phenomenology, Psychoanalysis, and Psychopathology) to enlighten how artistic interventions can assist mental health work.

## **Infinity Pool: enacting monsters to face Anthropocene**

*Antonio Ianniello, University of Rome La Sapienza, Italy*

My proposal revolves around the presentation of the artistic project, Infinity Pool, and it is an attempt to enact a “philosophy without text” (Rietveld 2022) that draws not only on certain aspects of our sociomaterial environment – such as words – but also on further invitations such as images for example, or theatrical tools like masks. Through the artistic project, Infinity Pool – created i.c.w. landscape architect David Habets –, we intend to develop a practice that, centered on the figure of the monster, can allow us to grasp usually unperceived aspects of our sociomaterial environment. It is a way to investigate how to make the “climate crisis” and the invisible monsters it produces – air and water pollution, loss of biodiversity, rising temperatures, etc. – perceptible. The term “monster” comes from the Latin monstrum, which is related to the verbs monstrare (“to show”) and monere (“to warn”). The monster shows us something and, by showing what we have not seen before, warns us; in this sense, it can be linked to a very specific form of “education of attention” (Gibson 1979) in which an imaginary being is used to highlight aspects that remain unnoticed by current practices. Infinity Pool is centered on the creation of a mirror mask that will be worn in three walk-performances – as a prototype, we imagined developing these walks in three different areas around the Tiber River– and a video installation. With a video camera positioned above the mask and facing it, we imagined recording its reflections. In a second phase, these reflections, moving selfies of a landscape in flux, will be projected in a museum space. The projection will be accompanied by words spoken by the individual masks. These words will refer to the objects and the chemical components related to the water samples collected by the participants in the live performance. The materials – herbicides, toxic waste or dead fish– present in the specific locations will thus define the faces of the monstrous environments.

## **Unveiling the Alchemy of Learning: Transforming Objects into Instruments**

*Ilona Iłowiecka-Tańska, Copernicus Science Center, Poland*

Science centers serve as multifaceted educational environments, engaging visitors with exhibits aimed at unraveling natural phenomena. Exhibits, diverse in design encompassing form, size, materials, and interaction concepts (Virkkunen & Ahonen, 2004), function as intentionally crafted educational tools. They cater to various educational objectives, facilitating observations and enabling experimental learning (Van Schijndel et al., 2010; Barriault & Pearson, 2010). Within these dynamic exhibition ecosystems, processes unfold that extend beyond the immediate interaction with a specific exhibit.

This discussion focuses on instrumentalization: the process wherein individuals unveil and utilize the properties of previously unfamiliar objects during interaction. It's a misconception, rooted in Aristotelian philosophy, that artifacts exist independently of experience, possessing fixed and unchanging properties. Instead, this conversation delves into the transformative moment when objects, upon being instrumentalized, assume a purely epistemic construct within the mind.

Drawing upon the Instrumented Activity Situations model (Verillon & Rabardel, 1985, 1995) and empirical research findings, the aim is to illustrate how visitors, within inherent limitations, develop new enactive competencies through the instrumentalization of exhibits. These competencies involve synchronizing motor actions with newly acquired perceptual orientations. Interpreting this synchronization as the semiotic transformation of an object into a tool, adopting this perspective signifies that visitors' perceptions of exhibit possibilities are culturally influenced, reflecting the cultural conditioning inherent in all mental constructs. Therefore, the core query for science centers shifts from defining an exhibit solely as an object to examining the potentialities within the object perceived by its users.

## **Integrating Place and Embodied Learning: Enhancing Chinese Competence through Indigenous Cultural Immersion**

*Song Jiang & Haidan Wang, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA*

Place learning enriches comprehension of distinct environments (Smith & Sobel, 2010), while embodied learning foregrounds the body's critical function in cognitive processes (McCafferty & Stam, 2008). As the momentum for holistic and experiential education (Miller et al., 2018) grows, the fusion of these pedagogical strategies becomes essential, notably within environmental science, cultural studies, and language pedagogy. This integration not only deepens learners' understanding but also caters to diverse learning modalities (van Lier, 2004). This study probes the Mandarin Chinese learning experiences of U.S. college students in Taiwan within the context of an Atayal cultural immersion. Conducted exclusively in Chinese, the excursion leverages both place and embodied learning methodologies, offering students a unique opportunity to step into the world of the Atayal tribespeople. Through structured tours and interactive activities, participants delve into the nuances of Atayal traditions and concurrently sharpen their Chinese language skills. The research meticulously assesses three core activities: (1) the inaugural ceremony and traditional dances, (2) rites of ancestral spirit veneration, and (3) emblematic hunting practices. Comprehensive data, encompassing pre-trip student feedback, real-time video recordings, visual documentation, reflective accounts, and curated interviews, shape the analysis. The investigation discerns salient patterns in language communication and embodied interactions, measuring the linguistic role, cultural assimilation

depth, and the overall impact of the immersion activities. Conclusively, the study argues that integrating place and embodied learning within such authentic settings not only accelerates Mandarin language mastery but also nurtures deep-seated respect for Atayal's ecological principles and their harmonious relationship with the environment. These rich cultural experiences invariably augment the linguistic enrichment potential in overseas educational programs.

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### **Words Alone Can Repair What Was Broken in Time and Space: Mahmoud Darwish, Mourid Barghouti and the Crisis of *Ghurba*** *Karl Jonathan Jonsson, University of Oslo, Norway*

This paper examines the creation of poetry as a way of writing oneself back into being from negative spaces of estrangement, and as a strategy of reintegration from the liminality of exile. The two Palestinian authors Mahmoud Darwish and Mourid Barghouti both articulate a duality of exile, as a painful state which causes fragmentation of the world and self, but also as a space of quasi-absolute freedom that allows unprecedented potentiality for (re/)construction of world and self. They explain this with the Arabic term *ghurba*, an inclusive concept that spans over exile, displacement, and estrangement. The paper explains *ghurba* etymologically and shows how it can be best understood within a phenomenological framework inspired by Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Finally, Henrik Vigh's concept of chronic crisis adds to the understanding of *ghurba* as a form of permanent crisis which causes fractures in the lifeworld, but without stripping the fragmented subject of their agency. Poetry remains a way to negotiate and navigate the continual paradoxes and existential fragmentation of exile.



# 'It gives me a kick but it's dangerous': Online gambling among Danish youth as a reaction to and contributing factor in crises

Johanne Kirkeby, University of Copenhagen

Times of crises and uncertainty can lead to escapism motivated behaviour such as excessive time spent online and gambling (Jouhki et al., 2022). At the same time, excessive use of digital technology and digitalisation has a negative impact on social sustainability (Nosratabadi et al., 2023) and environmental sustainability (Widdicks et al., 2022) and thus contributes to the exacerbation of crises.

In this paper, I analyse ethnographic data gathered over half a year in Danish upper secondary-level school. I draw on several students but focus on my attention on the case of four 18-19 year old guys, who through gambling as a social and affective practice form an affinity community with each other as well as in constellations that go beyond their class and spans the rest of the school and the country. Early gambling experiences are socially and culturally mediated and takes place in social contexts, but over time, the practices and the contexts of these practices change. Through analyses of the temporally mediated narratives and practices of this group, I display an example of how excessive online gambling and other online modes of existence are both a reaction to and a contributing factor in crises.

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# The Realist Question: How Literature Can Meet the Challenges of the Anthropocene

Anna Lindhé, Østfold University College, Norway

This paper explores an aspect of realism that has been overlooked in the discussion about the possibilities and limits of realism to address the challenges posed by the Anthropocene condition (see, e.g., Ghosh, 2016; Thieme, 2023), an aspect that was addressed by an early realist writer, George Eliot. When the omniscient narrator in *Middlemarch* (1871) suddenly intervenes in the diegesis to drop the by now famous question, 'why always Dorothea', s/he invites the reader to acknowledge an ethical-formal dilemma: that the narrative's solicitation of our empathy and attention with one character (Dorothea) has come at the sacrifice or the cost of neglecting an other (in this case, Dorothea's husband, Causabon).

This paper suggests that the potential to address the challenges presented by the Anthropocene lies within the framework of this sacrificial narrative logic. Taking my point of departure in the realist question raised in *Middlemarch*<sup>1</sup> – and further explored by Henry James and Virginia Woolf (Lindhé 2016; 2021) – I propose that literature can foster an awareness that we bear a certain level of responsibility for injustices that may not be directly of our making but that are nevertheless perpetuated through our inattention to the sacrifices that we are implicated in. It is in this way that literature offers a mode of existence that may be able to transform human self-understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> George Levine suggests that "Why always Dorothea" is "the realist question, thick with ethical implications" (Levine, 2008, p. 197).





## Grammar as Problem Solving

Rikke Watson Madsen & Sune Vork Steffensen, University of Southern Denmark

The focus on grammar in second language learning has often been dismissed as a residue of individualism and cognitivism. Indeed, “knowing” a grammatical system does not yield communicative competence. However, if one takes a distributed and socio-cognitive approach and “see learning as an activity in which the social environment intertwines with the cognitive resources of the learner” (Dufva, Aro & Suni, 2014, p. 21), the activity of learning grammar can be seen as a kind of problem solving that nurtures attention to linguistic differences. In line with this argument, this paper adopts a distributed-ecological perspective on grammar as problem solving. We investigate problem solving in a grammatical context (Hollan, Hutchins & Kirsh, 2000) through a fine-grained analysis of two learners’ bodily and inter-bodily dynamics in solving a grammatical task. We use Cognitive Event Analysis (Steffensen, F. Vallée-Tourangeau & G. Vallée-Tourangeau, 2016) and focus on interactivity, problem-solving strategies, and phases in the cognitive system (Steffensen, 2013). The analysis demonstrates how a distributed cognitive system, constituted by learners and external remedies (e.g., grammar books), solves the tasks by relying on their interaction with each other and with external cognitive resources. It is further demonstrated that grammatical problem solving is less about “knowledge structures” than it is a matter of how participants administer emergent cognitive processes and different cognitive strategies, such as trial and error and divide-and-conquer. In the discussion, we will consider how teaching grammar can play a role in an extended language learning ecology (Steffensen & Kramsch, 2017).

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# **“Hope, like a slinky, springs eternal”: A comparative analysis of metaphorical conceptualisations of hope/nada in Anglophone and Croatian online discourses about climate change**

*Niamh A. O'Dowd & Ljiljana Šarić, University of Oslo, Norway*

“Hope” is the subject of much discussion and debate in the context of climate change. Do we need it to overcome the climate crisis? Is it reasonable to feel hope? Do we deserve to be hopeful? Previous linguistic and psychological research indicates the elusiveness and complexity of hope as a concept. In verbal discourse, it is frequently conceptualised metaphorically (Šarić, 2020). In psychology, the question persists of whether hope is an emotion, or whether it is better defined as a cognitive concept, or both (Ojala, 2023). In this study, we compare figurative conceptualisations of hope (nada, in Croatian) in both verbal and multimodal discourses about climate change in the Anglophone and Croatian contexts. We analyse a range of online sources such as online newspaper articles, press releases, blogs and forum discussions. Our preliminary analyses uncover a multitude of creative metaphorical expressions for hope in the Anglophone context, contrasting with the prevalence of conventional metaphorical expressions in Croatian samples. Drawing on recent research which suggests the importance of hope for managing the emotional burden of climate change, we aim to show how different conceptualisations of hope reveal different ways of a) experiencing the climate crisis and b) various strategies for coping with it. Our analysis is grounded in cognitive, embodied theories of metaphor, which emphasise its experiential or “lived” nature (Littlemore, 2019). Finally, we aim to determine the relevance of our preliminary findings across a broader spectrum of sources.

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## **Enabling spaces: moving with and beyond psycho-social-material crisis**

*Sofie Pedersen, Roskilde University, Denmark*

In Denmark, and most other western countries, our treatment of mental illness issues is highly individualized and biologized. However, this entails a rather reductionistic comprehension of the human psyche and the often-complex aspects of the human lifeworld that presents as mental illness issues. Drawing on ecological psychology and cultural-historical psychology, this talk explores the potential of moving beyond dominant dichotomies of e.g., self and other, psyche and soma, to support mental illness recovery. Recovery is a strong (political) buzzword, yet despite a vast body of research documenting the meaning of community, of material spaces etc., recovery-oriented work tends to remain an individualized – and psychologized – endeavour. Based on various research projects, including developmental projects within the field of social psychiatry, I will argue for the meaning of ‘enabling spaces’ and ‘collectividual’ approaches to support human development – and hence processes of recovery. This puts into perspective the tendency to individualize human problems which extends beyond the field of psychiatry or social work efforts and puts into question how we delineate our unit of analysis in relation to comprehending – and responding to – complex problems.

## **Architecture as material-ecological modelling: a method for rethinking environmental relations in the Anthropocene**

*Simon Peres, University of Aberdeen, UK*

In this paper, I propose that architecture can be envisaged as *modelling* the conceptual articulations by which people understand their relations to the materials that constitute their environment. Buildings do not simply signify concepts of materials, for instance, by passively presenting the 'woodiness' of wood. Rather, they accomplish what philosopher Wilfrid Sellars called *picturing*: the dynamic, ever-evolving mapping of the structure of one's environment in the process of navigating it. By offering unusual material configurations that constantly unveil new possibilities through alteration (e.g., weathering) or interaction (e.g., ambulation), architecture can make implicit conceptual structures salient to perception itself. I briefly present three modes by which such modelling can proceed. *Metonymy*, which condenses the possibilities of a material into a small, multilayered spatial arrangement. *Iteration*, which pushes a material to its limits to reveal its core characteristics. *Abstraction*, which reveals the generative principles of a material on its surface.

I then reflect on how such an approach to architecture can help anthropologists and philosophers rethink the nature of human-environment relations. Under my view, architecture is not simply

a valuable example, it is a method for conceptual elucidation. And this method, I argue, could be central to fully realising the programme laid out by recent efforts in philosophical anthropology, that which identify *responsiveness* as crucial to understanding the place of humanity in the Anthropocene.

## **Ontolinguistic critique of language use via ecosemiotics**

*Kevin Rickman, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, USA*

I have found in my environmental ethics research over the years that our use of language is, at a fundamental level, inaccurate, which is extremely detrimental to efforts in ethics, morality, and accountability. In order to highlight the inaccuracy, I have employed the semiotic works of Charles Sanders Peirce and Umberto Eco to show how the language we are using to discuss, define, delineate, and describe the ecosphere is anthropocentric and misguided. In applying the works of these thinkers, I have found that there is a commonality across the fields of environmental research, ethics, and legislation, Namely, that our beliefs about the ontological nature of our ecosphere and the language we use to describe that ontology are both inaccurate and negatively reinforce the others. The way we use language represents our beliefs about our ecosphere to others, and our interlocutors, hearing our beliefs about the ecosphere, can begin to adopt the beliefs and the language of others. In this way, false ecosphere ontologies are represented inaccurately by linguistically and semiotically inappropriate language use, and our attempts to hold moral agents accountable for their environmentally impactful actions are ineffective because of this ontolinguistic dilemma. In order to correct for this, I argue that we should perform an ontolinguistic and ecosemiotic analysis of our language use, and my presentation at CILC will explain the ontolinguistic issue, my use of ecosemiotics as a tool for critical analysis, and how this process will strengthen our environmental efforts.

## **Designing interactivity in XAI systems**

*Katharina J. Rohlfing & Suzana Alpsancar, Paderborn University, Germany*

Recent AI systems offer great potential for societies to assist humans in challenging tasks. To ensure that humans can ultimately use the technical systems for purposes they consider good (normative control on a collective or individual level), it is necessary for users to be able to adequately assess the performance and limits of AI in given contexts. One means to this end here is xAI, which is meant to explain the AIs performance to users. Current literature holds dialogue based xAI systems as promising approaches. However, [1] rightly point out that the “standard focus” is on the dialogic behavior of the AI being monologic. For example, for



explainable AI, there is a focus on what to explain, without considering the explainee [2]. More insights from the interactive perspectives are, thus, necessary to reveal the alternatives with respect to dialogue design. Rohlfig et al. [3] proposed an approach that is processual. Accordingly, xAI should negotiate with end-users the explanation's content and understanding. In addition, we propose to intertwine the interactivity with cognitive aspects. We discuss how Cognitive Forcing Functions [4] can be efficiently integrated to the explanatory dialogue design process for an adequate understanding of the machine's capabilities and functions.

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## **Intra-actions of morphogenesis. Towards an “interaction-first” approach to cognition**

*Wiktor Rorot, Human Interactivity and Language Lab, University of Warsaw*

Over the past couple of decades, there's been a rapidly growing body of work that has emphasized the importance of including interactions, social interactions among them, in our theories of cognition. Researchers have stated that "interaction co-constitutes cognition" (Dingemanse et al. 2023) in an attempt to shift how we define the phenomena of interest for cognitive science and have searched for metaphysical grounds for accepting this view on the basis of a process metaphysics (Bickhard 2009). The purpose of this talk is to take this view a step further, in the direction of an “interaction-first” approach to cognitive systems. In my talk, I want to focus on the field of basal cognition. This emerging research program tracks the fundamental processes and mechanisms of cognition into their deep past, long before the

evolution of nervous systems. Such perspective allows a radical escape from the anthropocentrism dominating cognitive science, and at the same time underscores the inherently collective nature of cognitive processes (Falandays et al. 2023). An important case study for this program comes from the work on morphogenesis. The process of development of shape of a biological system shows the importance of interaction for (minimally) cognitive phenomena. Drawing on Karen Barad's agential realism (Barad 2007) and supplementing their views with insights from Hans Jonas' phenomenology (Jonas 1966) and Mark Bickhard's interactivism (Bickhard 2009), I will attempt to show how understanding the interactions (or intra-actions) of morphogenesis is a crucial step towards a more comprehensive, naturalistic account of cognition.

## **An Ecolinguistic Approach to Content and Language Integrated Learning**

*Edward Rutledge, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain  
(Co-author: Dr. Marni Manegre)*

This paper and presentation examine the efficacy of incorporating concepts derived from the field of ecolinguistics into the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology and explores the impact of such an approach on L2 learners' cognitive and affective attitude toward Anthropogenic Climate Change (ACC). A test of this approach was conducted with third year Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (ESO) students in Tarragona, Spain to survey their beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of the topic before and after experiencing a CLIL-based teaching unit on ACC. Also under consideration was the potential of the topic to generate feelings of anxiety and fear about the future in young learners, and what bearing this may have on their attitudes toward the subject and their capacity to fully engage with the teaching materials. This concern speaks to the need for a comprehensive approach to CLIL that promotes ESL achievement while also protecting learners' mental health during adolescence, already known as a period of inner turmoil, transition, and neuroplasticity. The presentation emphasizes maintaining heightened awareness of young learners' perceptions of the preeminent environmental crisis of our time and the incorporation of strategies derived from Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to help them develop healthy coping skills when presented with challenging existential issues in the classroom. In so doing we seek to illuminate the benefits and challenges of an emotionally intelligent, ecolinguistic approach to the CLIL methodology in the L2 classroom.

**Keywords:** Content Learning Integrated with Language, ecolinguistics, Anthropogenic Climate Change, eco-anxiety, emotional intelligence, Social Emotional Learning.





## **The affective consequences of non-action in human interactivity**

*Carlos Vara Sánchez, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain*

Many researchers have focused on the relationships between actions, affectivity, and habits from an intersubjective perspective; however, many questions remain about the dynamics by which these different dynamics unfold and shape each other over time. This paper addresses the impact on future behavior of not enacting opportunities for social interaction that are experienced as desirable in a given context. More specifically, these situations are characterized as events in which an agent becomes reflectively aware of the impossibility of acting upon an affordance for social interaction that is experienced as inviting (Gibson 1979; Withaghen et al. 2012; Dings 2018), and this circumstance generates a short-term sense of unfulfillment with the potential to shape future behavior by triggering an affectively constrained reconstruction of habits (Dewey 1922; Candiotta and Dreon 2022). My goal with this transversal framework is to enrich the study of human interaction by providing an account that focuses on the consequences of inaction in our daily lives. Although we often focus on what we do, what we are prevented from doing, and what we actively refrain from doing despite our desires are also relevant and have meaningful consequences in our everyday interactions. To address this question, this approach will combine different philosophical approaches to social interaction, such as phenomenology, pragmatism, and enactivism.

**Keywords:** affectivity, habit, affordance, enactivism.

## **When Values Collide: Language Teacher Identity Tensions and Ethical Judgments**

*Anna Sanczyk-Cruz, University of Bialystok, Poland*

*(Co-author: Elizabeth R. Miller)*

This presentation examines cases of identity tensions (Canagarajah 2016) among adult ESL teachers that developed as their professional values collided with the values embedded in institutional policies and practices. Research that has examined the fundamental role of teachers' professional values to teacher identity (Kubanyiova and Crooks 2016) has demonstrated that teachers are constantly called upon to undertake ethical judgments in their teaching practice. These are often fraught judgments, requiring language teachers to make difficult decisions regarding their current work in the classroom and their future work with adult language learners (Miller, Morgan, and Medina 2017). This study was conducted over five months at a community college in the southeastern U.S. Data collection included three interviews and two classroom observations with seven adult ESL teachers and their journal

responses (N=10 total) to researcher prompts. For this presentation, we focus on two of these teachers. Our analyses are presented as narratives in the form of short biographical case studies (Barkhuizen, Benson, and Chik 2014) that synthesize teachers' verbatim comments with researcher-generated observations. The analyses highlight how institutional values of efficiency and economizing, embedded in the college's policies and practices, collided with the teachers' desire for deeper relationships with their students and colleagues. Beyond foregrounding the fundamental need for collaboration and joint reflection among language teachers (Gkonou and Miller 2021), the case studies explore the kinds of ethical judgments these teachers had to make in seeking to adhere to their professional values. These situations motivated teacher identity shifts and adaptations and, in some cases, changed teachers' commitments to adult ESL education. We end by discussing implications for teacher education and professional development programs in terms of supporting awareness of the fundamental role ethical judgments play in teacher identity and practice and the importance of institutional support for teacher collaboration.

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## Superheroes of talk

*Johan Siebers, Middlesex University, UK*

The humanities have traditionally understood themselves, as the call for paper states, as historical custodians rather than future seekers. Only very few humanities scholars and thinkers have selfconsciously adopted the future-oriented perspective. Global society, through successive planetary crises, is approaching a cultural singularity after which, as Bruce Tonn states, "there are no 'others' to be afraid of and no cultural identities could ever be possibly argued as being superior to others. Everyone belongs to humanity and has a unique set of cultural characteristics. Cultural identity is fluid, not rigid. People will not have to fight,





literally, for the right to their identities. Anticipation will be a social norm” (Tonn 2021, 192). The planetary coming-together of humanity will render anticipatory practices constitutive of the culture/nature synthesis. This situation will require a reorientation of the humanities towards the future. Humanities scholarship will be closer aligned to science, will be speculative, creative and anticipatory. It will embrace the new. We see this development reflected already today in the fact that, over the past half-century, science fiction has slowly but surely become the dominant paradigm for cultural production and imagination. The discourse of the Anthropocene appears as one manifestation of this cultural dominance: humanity, in its technological dimensions, is influencing all aspects of life on the planet, right down to geological record. New modes of understanding our interactivity among ourselves and with other beings are becoming necessary and possible because of this development: we are experiencing a shift in modes of existence of the human from exploitation and resource control to interdependence and creative anticipation. Against this backdrop, the ultra-human phenomenon of conversation, talk, acquires new, unthought horizons. For a traditional view of the humanities, talk, whether Heideggerian “Gerede”, Socratic dialogue or even Buberian I-Thou encounters, occurs against a more-or-less stable, non-talkative backdrop and conversation functions to create, sustain or critique social and existential relations and aid understanding. Apart from talk, there is also non-everyday language, as exemplified in literature, poetry and expert discourses. We can ask ourselves what the future of talk might be, under conditions of the Anthropocene. What does talk have in store for us, as human beings in relation to each other and also talking with other beings, in a world that is showing interdependence to its full extent? Can old images of speaking animals and trees, of the divine creative word, of the poetic word that founds a world, of the rhetorical magic of the kingdom of speech (Wolfe), of therapeutic conversations and of heart-to-heart talks be read through a speculative, future-oriented understanding of what might be possible in the realm of talk? Is there a utopian core to language in use, that as yet remains unconscious and unexpressed? What do the future superheroes of talk look like and what would a cosmic conversation make possible? This paper explores the ultraviolet of the conversational spectrum, of language itself.

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# On the Corporeal Organisation of Language

*Sune Vork Steffensen, University of Southern Denmark*

There is an increasing mismatch between, on the one hand, the many critiques of disembodied and dualist positions in the study of language and, on the other, the few who actually defend such positions. Likewise, while many argue against a nature-culture dualism, few claim that culture really is immaterial and disembodied. Accordingly, the question is not *whether* language and culture are material and embodied, but *how* they are material and embodied, and *what* their materiality and embodiment imply for our understanding of interactivity, language, and cognition.

This paper explores the implications of an ecological view on language, starting from the debate between Latour's view on cultures-natures (Latour, 1993) and recent Marxist theorising on the corporeal organisation of human societies (Mau, 2023; Saito, 2023). Further, it pursues a Marxist view of human corporeality as *biologically underdetermined*, which prompts us to reconsider how we conceptualise the distinction between the social and the natural. I argue that this Marxist line of reasoning adds to our understanding of the ecological constitution of language, in ways that complement interactivity-based studies (Steffensen, 2017; Trasmundi, 2020; Vallée-Tourangeau & Vallée-Tourangeau, 2017), radical embodied cognitive science (Chemero, 2009), and ecolinguistics (Steffensen & Cowley, 2021). I will illustrate these points with a few empirical examples.

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## **Changing habits in the Anthropocene: the way of aesthetic experiences**

*Juan Toro, University of Southern Denmark*

Habits make us what we are, both as individuals and as communities. Pragmatist thinkers like William James and John Dewey, as well as the enactive approach to cognition, conceive habits as the basis of a person's mental life and the guide for her actions. In the same line, both approaches reject the associationist and subpersonal account of habits and defend an organicist conception according to which habits are related to the person's embodiment and her adaptive embeddedness in a sociomaterial environment. Since habits constitute the person's mode of existence, a modification of habits involves an alteration of the person's relationship to the environment and to other people. A radical change of habits is, therefore, a rare event often derived from a crisis that makes current habits no longer adaptive. In this presentation I will focus on a different route to a change of habits: aesthetic experiences. According to Dewey, aesthetic experiences can lead to important personal transformations that modify the way in which a person inhabits their environment. I will briefly describe the notion of habit at play in pragmatism and in enactivism, and what is meant by aesthetic experience. I will then propose an explanation of how and why aesthetic experiences can be so powerful to modify the way a person inhabits the environment, and I will end with a reflection about aesthetic experiences and change of habits by a society in the Anthropocene.

## **Outsight: A case study of the dialogic nature of creativity**

*Frédéric Vallée-Tourangeau, Kingston University, UK*

The way we understand and treat creativity in psychology is currently built on a fundamental asymmetry between people and objects: People have thoughts, intentions, and the ability to act, while objects lack these qualities. This is why it seems logical to focus efforts on explaining creativity as something that comes from within the individual rather than from the things they create. However, despite this distinction, the objects that are created communicate with their creator in a way. During the process of creating something, the objects being formed by the creator take on certain characteristics and behave in certain ways. These qualities are perceived and examined, they interpellate their creator. This dynamic, in turn, results in a kind of conversation between the person working on solving a problem and the results physically produced. This back-and-forth interaction is not well accounted for in current psychological approaches to understanding creativity. This calls for a more holistic, systemic view, one that looks beyond just the individual and considers the larger system of interactions involved in



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bringing something new into existence. In essence, while the traditional view focuses on the person's thoughts and intentions as the driving force of creativity, the dialogue between the creative individual and the evolving product of their work is overlooked. This conversation challenges us to rethink how we explain the emergence of new and creative ideas.

## **Ecological Conceptual Metaphor and National Image Construction**

*Chunguang Wen, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China*

Studies on national image have always been constrained by journalism and international relations, with less in-depth analysis from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics. On this account, this paper, utilizing a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative analysis through the Metaphor Identification Procedure at Vrije University of Amsterdam (MIPVU) proposed by Steen *et al* (2010) within the white paper: 2023 China's Green Development in the New Era released by the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, takes the integration of Critical Metaphor Analysis and Framing Theory as the theoretical framework in an attempt to identifying the types and frequency of conceptual metaphors, interpreting the national images constructed by ecological conceptual metaphors and explaining the ecological values and ideology behind the conceptual metaphors. Studies reveal that: i) the white paper mainly uses five types of surface frame, they are color frame, journey frame, war frame, building frame and community frame, which activate five types of ecological conceptual metaphor: "GREENNESS IS LIFE" "GREEN DEVELOPMENT IS A JOURNEY" "ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION IS WAR" "ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION IS BUILDING" "NATURE IS A COMMUNITY" ii) ecological conceptual metaphor constructs national image by means of similarity created by the cognitive mechanism of highlighting and hiding, constructing China as a 'protector' of the ecosystem, a 'practitioner' of green development, a 'defender' of ecological protection, a 'builder' of ecological civilization, and a 'collaborator' of ecological governance. There is inherent logical connections between the five national images, which reflect the values of "respecting nature, conforming to nature, and protecting nature" in China's comprehensive construction of a socialist modernized country; iii) The national images constructed by ecological conceptual metaphors are mainly influenced by China's economy and politics, society and culture, and traditional ecological philosophy.

**Keywords:** ecological conceptual metaphor; national image; ecological discourse; values; ecological philosophy

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## Posters (\*Arranged alphabetically)

### **Joint Speech – Human Domains of Assembly and Communion**

*Luciana Longo, Independent researcher*

*(Co-author: Fred Cummins)*

We consider chanting, or joint speech, which is ubiquitous, but not evenly distributed, in human activity. Taking an observational stance motivated by embodied cognitive science, we approach this topic without assumptions of the structure of persons, social formations, culture or nature. This restrictive starting point motivates the use of a simple empirical definition of joint speech (the utterance by multiple persons of the same sounds at the same time) to allow us to induce four distinguished domains of assembly and communion among persons. These may be loosely indicated by the familiar terms of ‘ritual’, ‘sports’, ‘protest’ and ‘primary education’. We use our empirical definition to induce these domains, and then consider how they might be jointly considered. With the help of M. Serres’ quasi-object figure, we index the common purpose bringing forth assembly and communion in each domain, highlighting the different configuration of flows of affect, temporality, topological boundedness, and point of focus position. We are not aware of any social or psychological theory that would generate these four domains, and we suggest that our restricted mode of observation can guide us in identifying immanent domains of human patterning. These molar forms arising from communion among persons lie at the heart of collective formation.

### **Habits in (Time of) Crisis. Conceptual tools for dealing with disruptive events**

*Alice Morelli, Ca' Foscari University Venice, Italy*

A growing interest in human habits and their formation is registered in the contemporary philosophical scholarship.

However, philosophies of habits have only partially explored the question of the subversion of habits during a crisis, whether individual or collective. Our research group aims to elaborate a model for understanding the dynamics of habits transformation in times of crisis by means of a pluralistic and transdisciplinary approach at the crossroads between history of philosophy, history of science, philosophy of mind, anthropological knowledge, aesthetics, philosophy of language and sociolinguistics.

When do established habits fall into crisis? What are the dynamics of habit change, redefinition and redirection? These questions have also practical and ethical implications, as already envisaged by John Dewey. Indeed, Dewey treated the individual as an intermediate factor in

habitual action in so far as he remakes and redirects previously established habits by means of organic, cultural and social resources in the context of old and new environmental constraints. We intend to answer to these questions starting from the philosophical and historical analysis of habits in critical situations, relying also on the analysis of sudden and traumatic natural catastrophic events.

In particular, we will make use of some theoretical models developed within the French psychology of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, American pragmatist tradition, and contemporary philosophy of mind, for a rich characterisation of habits is presupposed as acquired and flexible normative patterns that change as a result of the interaction with natural and social environment.

## **Space, Perception, And Action: Affordances In The Language Classroom In Midwest Brazil**

*Wélica Cristina Duarte de Oliveira, University of Mato Grosso (UNEMAT), Brazil*

*(Co-author: Barbara Cristina Gallardo)*

This presentation provides an overview of a reflective study that explores the dynamic interplay between space, perception, and action within the context of language education in Mato Grosso state, in the Midwest region of Brazil. Drawing from the theoretical framework of affordances (Gibson, 1977; Norman, 1988) applied in education (Van Lier, 2000; Streeck, 2008), this research delves into the intricate relationship between the physical environment, cultural considerations, and the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in public school classrooms in Mato Grosso. The study investigates how the local EFL classroom, characterized by its unique cultural environment, can be improved for effective language learning. Particular emphasis is placed on place, space and design elements that influence teachers' and students' perception and cognitive processes during language teaching and acquisition. The role of teacher-student interactions is examined to discern their impact on affordances within the classroom setting. Furthermore, the examination presents practical applications of affordances in classrooms through more recent case studies conducted in inland Brazil. These case studies explore the challenges and opportunities that educators encounter when implementing affordance-based approaches in diverse cultural and educational contexts. Ultimately, this study underlines the significance of affordances in shaping language education and offers valuable insights into enhancing the learning experience for EFL students in Brazil, paving the way for more effective language teaching practices in similar cultural settings in South America and beyond, as it demonstrates potential for broader applicability and joins the ongoing discourse on ecological perspectives of education.

**Keywords:** place; space; perception; affordances; EFL classroom; language learning.





# Panels

## Conceptualizations of Agency in Human and Human-AI interactions

*Panel Organisers: Yanna Popova & Joanna Rączaszek-Leonardi, University of Warsaw, Poland*

This panel will address questions of various patterns of agency that comprise interactions among humans in diverse activities and situations as well as between humans and technology. Previously agency has been studied by philosophers and psychologists mainly as a manifestation of individual agency. More recently attention has been given to thinking about collective agency that arises in interactions and possesses some degree of autonomy itself. We will present a number of viewpoints that study manifestations of agency within an enactive framework, providing at the same time a context of comparison with earlier philosophical considerations of agency.

### Paper 1: Transactional Agency in Social Dancing

*Falk Heinrich, Aalborg University, Denmark*

Western sociocultural discourse primarily assigns agency to self-sustaining living entities, which, when discussing humans, also holds them responsible for their actions. This concept of agency leads to distinctions between subjects and objects, as well as between passive and active motivational states. These ontological and epistemological distinctions indicate that agential subjects engage in interactions with each other. As a corollary, aesthetic situations are often characterized as interactions between various human agents (such as in theater, dance, and social dancing) and non-human agents (as seen in interactive art, sculpture, or visual art). However, this paper argues that the concept of agential interaction hinders the recognition of another level within the aesthetic situation where the (inter)action itself gains agency. Aesthetic and poietic situations complicate the discourse on interaction by blurring the distinction between agency and "patiency" (Gell, 1998) because aesthetic reception inherently involves active, (re)creative engagement. Similarly, poietic creation transcends the creator beyond themselves, akin to what Nietzsche termed "rapture" (Rausch). The paper analyses the experience of dancing Argentine tango as a specific aesthetic form of action and expression. Social dancing is often described as a communicative interaction between two agents. Yet, dancers ultimately seek to transcend their agency, aiming for a level they frequently describe as the "four-legged beast," in other words, as trans-actional events (as defined by Dewey, 1948),



where the dancing seems to happen spontaneously. Now, the dance is dancing the dancers, creating space for aesthetic awareness of one's own movements.

## **Paper 2: Patterns of Passivity and Participation in the Experience of Reading, Acting, and Profound Grief**

*Yanna Popova, University of Warsaw, Poland*

The enactive approach to social cognition, the theory of participatory sense-making (De Jaegher and Di Paolo, 2007), argues that agents by enacting their own sense-making directly and partially constitute the sense-making of other agents. Social agency consists in jointly regulating not only one's own sense-making but its relation to the interactive order itself. Such modulations of agency, that are constitutive of interactions, have been suggested to occur in diverse social experiences such as dancing the tango (Heinrich, 2023), or reading narrative fiction (Popova and Cuffari, 2018). This presentation has two aims. First, I compare and contrast participatory sense-making with the Husserlian notion of passivity, or active/passive synthesis, understood as a form of regulating the self/other relationship. This notion has been of central importance for a phenomenological understanding of aesthetic experience whereby various scholars have emphasized just one end of the relationship: either the passive or the active quality of engagement with an aesthetic object (respectively, Dufrenne, 1973 and Ingarden, 1973). If active/passive synthesis and participatory sense-making are sufficiently similar processes, as I suggest, they are able to resolve such contradictions, accounting for both immersion or a state of flow in aesthetics, as well as the felt passivity accompanying diverse kinds of everyday interactions. Second, I substantiate some of my claims with examples from reading, types of acting, and the experience of profound grief.

## **Paper 3: Technology in the paths of sensemaking**

*Joanna Rączaszek-Leonardi, University of Warsaw, Poland*

Focus on individual cognition and conceiving cognitive processes as computation seems to result not only in simplifying the vision of a human mind by treating it as a computer but - conversely - upgrading computers to "thinking machines" (Newell and Simon, 1976), which may possess a degree of agency. The present talk attempts an analysis of the notion of agency in human-artifact hybrid systems. The notion of agency as mutual influence of systems constraining their respective degrees of freedom will be distinguished from the notion of agency dependent on first-person experience (Popova and Rączaszek-Leonardi, 2020) and second-person experience in interaction (de Jaegher, 2021). Such distinction of types of agency should

enable us to better trace the paths of participatory sense-making as paths that always link a human with another human (or a living being with another living being). Artifacts can take the role of modulators of meaning created in human interactions (Ingold, 2012) that facilitate or hinder the realization of selected values. This perspective could provide novel ways and tools for assessing the impact of technology on the interactive, relational level, and not only as enabling or disabling individual cognitive capabilities.

#### **Paper 4: Shared and individual agency in improvised dance**

*Julian Zubek, University of Warsaw, Poland*

Interpersonal interactions present a unique paradox. On one hand, they require connecting with others and a commitment to an emerging collective entity. On the other hand, they presuppose the existence of individual persons with their own agencies. To illustrate this dynamic tension, I use examples from contact improvisation – a dance form where dancers spontaneously co-create and non-verbally negotiate the ongoing dance process. Within this dance, an intriguing phenomenon termed the “third mind” arises, where dancers sense the emergence of a novel element in their dance, seemingly originating not from either individual but from their collective agency (Kimmel, Hristova, & Kussmaul, 2018). Contrary to prevalent notions, I argue that this phenomenon doesn’t require dancers to lose themselves in the dance, sacrificing their individuality. Instead, dancers can remain fully present as individual persons while staying open to the flow of the interaction. I draw upon evidence from an observational study involving interviews with contact improvisation dancers to support this hypothesis. I discuss how experienced dancers actively construct their boundaries, and even when they allow these boundaries to blur, they consciously apply specific techniques to regulate the process. This exploration offers a compelling application of the dialectic principles of participatory sense-making theory (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007), shedding light on patterns of agency in tangible, real-world interactions.



# **Nature, Wilderness and Place: Dialogue between China and the West**

*Panel Organiser: Shan Gao, Soochow University, China*

In this panel, we aim at examining how the concepts of nature are interpreted by different culture and how this interpretation has tremendous influence on the experience of different types of places. At the same time, we will explore how this experience has directly influenced the ecological practices including ecological design and environmental conservation.

## **Paper 1: The concept of wilderness in Chinese culture**

*Lianwei Zhang, Beijing Forestry University, China*

In traditional Chinese culture, the concept of wilderness appears in many classical texts. In the ancient Chinese classic "Shan Hai Jing", wilderness is described as a remote and peculiar place, which has to a certain extent shapes people's ecological imagination of wilderness. In ancient texts and literature, the Chinese expression of wilderness is made up of two Chinese characters which are 荒 and 野。 "荒" (huāng) refers to a place which is overgrown with weeds, and it is further extended to represent desolation, abandonment, emptiness, failure, indulgence, confusion, and more. "野" (yě), refers to areas which are outside of city. Therefore, the concept of wilderness refers to uncultivated agricultural fields which are overrun by weeds, implying the absence of human cultivation and intervention and presenting a state of barrenness. However, in different contexts, the wilderness has three basic meanings: first, it is contrasted with cultivated farmland, denoting land that remains uncultivated or desolate; second, it is contrasted with mountains and forests, referring to relatively open areas with abundant overgrowth of weeds; third, it is contrasted with urban areas, representing regions that are undeveloped or unpopulated, unsuitable for human habitation and survival. The ancient Chinese have very complicated feelings towards wilderness: firstly, they believed that the wilderness is full of fierce beasts, thieves, ghosts, monsters, and plagues. Therefore, they are full of fear towards wilderness. Secondly, they perceived the wilderness as a poetic dwelling place and have strong emotional attachment to it; Thirdly, they considered the wilderness a mysterious and sacred location, viewing it with reverence and worship. The ancient Chinese conception of the wilderness played a significant role in shaping traditional culture. In Confucian culture, Confucian scholars pursued a poetic life where humans coexist harmoniously with the wilderness, seeking unity between heaven and man. In Taoist culture, the wilderness was depicted as the primal state of human existence, an ideal condition for human life. In Buddhist culture, the wilderness was seen as an important place for comprehending the true meaning of Buddhism and engaging in spiritual practice. In summary, the wilderness is an important concept in traditional Chinese culture, influencing the way modern Chinese people perceive the wilderness.

## **Paper 2: Cultural Expression of Spatial Change and Survival Anxiety**

*Yuling Che, Soochow University, China*

People have been accustomed to exploring the roots of cultural changes from the perspectives of political economy, science and technology, etc. while ignoring spatial factors for a long time. In fact, spatial changes in different historical periods are also major factors causing cultural changes. Different cultural characteristics of pre-modernity, modernity and post-modernity are directly related to spatial changes. As homeland for all kinds of life forms, space is endowed with meanings and values by human beings. With the changes of culture and transformation in values, space is constantly changing to create new cultural spaces. As solidified expression of culture, the shaped spaces have caused direct impact on people's living experience and way of survival. However, in the context of global capitalization, the cultural attributes of space have been gradually disappearing, some cultural spaces have even been sacrificed. Monotonous urban spaces bring anxious survival experience and senses of oppression to people in modern society. It is therefore of great significance to the existence of modern people to protect the diversity of space when it comes with contemporary urban construction.

**Keywords:** existence, spatial diversity, culture

## **Paper 3: The Rhetoric of "Wilderness" in Ancient Chinese Culture**

*Yun Wang, Soochow University, China.*

In ancient Chinese culture, "wilderness" was a combination of "barrenness" and "outfield." "barrenness" is territory that cannot produce food, whether uncultivated, infertile, abandoned, or too far away to harvest. The phrase "outfield" refers to the peripherals of rural areas, including the wildness beyond the metropolitan bounds. When "barren" and "outfield" are combined, "wilderness" refers to a place where bodies are discarded, a place of escape, a place of peril, and death, betrayal, and punishment. When considering the specific utilization of the living environment, the term "wilderness" evokes recollections of prehistoric cave homes located beyond the confines of human habitations. Concerning its social origins, the concept of "wilderness" exemplifies the persistent personality of ancient Chinese people, characterized by stubbornness and a reluctance to yield to docile. Regarding the emotional atmosphere depicted in the poem, "Wilderness" occupies an aesthetic space between "profound antiquity" and a sense of "melancholy lamenting." Overall, despite being situated on the outskirts of old Chinese culture, the vitality of the "wilderness" has never undiminished.



## **Creativity, Contingency and Crises**

*Panel Discussant: Sarah Bro Trasmundi, University of Oslo, Norway & University of Southern Denmark*

In light of current cognitive theories, literary creativity must be conceived as a series of complex, embodied interactions between the text and the author, their resources and environments, and the wider culture in which they are embedded. This panel explores how acts of writing affect authors' experiences of, and engagements with, crises of various sorts. The three papers draw on a corpus of self-reports by authors interviewed for the *Paris Review* "Art of Fiction" series (running from the 1950s to today). Their metacognitive remarks are analysed in light of, and as shedding light on, theoretical models of cognition and creative writing. The papers are followed by a response from cognitive ethnographer Sarah Bro Trasmundi.

### **Paper 1: Contingency in Creative Writing: Lifeworlds, Reading / Writing and Storyworlds**

*Karin Kukkonen, University of Oslo, Norway*

Life is full of the contingent – things happening just so, without any apparent necessity – while literary narratives often evoke the illusion of necessity in their stories. Indeed, the highest number of codes in our corpus from *The Paris Review* are in the category "Contingency": In the interviews, writers reflect on the contingencies that led to them becoming a writer, as well as on the contingencies that led them to write a particular novel and how they came about writing it in that particular way.

In this paper, I propose to outline how these different contingencies interact with one another and how they reflect on authors' sense of agency in a potentially unstable and crisis-ridden world. The contingent does not take the same shape in literature and in life: Contingencies in the writers' biographies are often formulated as counterfactuals, while contingencies in their writing process (such as what readings inspire them) and the configuration of events in the storyworld (such as how a story turns out) tend to find expression as automated processes. The investigation will enable a more differentiated understanding of agency in creative writing, involving both material agency in the coupled system of writer, pen and paper (Bernini 2014) and epistemic agency in maintaining control over one's attention (Fabry 2018).

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## **Paper 2: “[A] story a day, [...] like an AA program” (Valenzuela 2001): The Therapeutic Potential of Creative Writing**

*Alexandra Effe, University of Oslo, Norway*

In the face of man-made as well as natural disasters, and in response to personal calamities—for example, illness, separation, or the loss of a loved one—art may seem helpless, irrelevant, superfluous, even frivolous. Yet, people have throughout the centuries turned to artistic expression in times of individual and collective crisis. This may be owing in part to a therapeutic potential inherent in acts of writing and creative expression. Such practices have been said to contribute to health and wellbeing, for example by enabling processes of sense-making, allowing us to productively work through challenging life events, and reducing stress-levels. The psychological benefits of art and writing are an important topic in the medical humanities, but there is a research gap when it comes to conceptualizations of the two core elements of *creative writing*. Neither the role that creativity plays in how creative writing unfolds its therapeutic potentials nor in fact that of the writing act have been sufficiently described. Taking its starting point in this lacuna, this paper analyzes a corpus of metacommentary from authors interviewed for the *Paris Review* Art of Fiction series for insights into how the cultural practice of creative writing can enable its agents to navigate personal and collective crises of various kinds. The data shows how human cognition is extended into the environment, and sheds light on affordances as well as constraints of specific (material) resources and working strategies.

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## **Paper 3: Chain That Muse: What Fiction Authors’ Creative Crises Suggest about the Relations between Minds and Their Environments**

*Essi Varis, University of Helsinki, Finland*

“I had about a year when I couldn’t write anything because I was so busy thinking I had to get to work on a novel” (McCulloch & Simpson 1994). “And then I remember that it was always difficult and how nearly impossible it was sometimes” (Plimpton 1958), “like walking into a labyrinth, without knowing what monster might be inside” (Atwood 2015, xxi) – but “part of the reason I like doing it is the difficulty” (Gaffney 2003).

Every author – and researcher – knows that writing can be a struggle. No wonder: it is a complex creative practice that requires tapping into numerous embodied, cognitive, cultural and social resources and environments. Consequently, any disturbances in these relations can manifest themselves as the dreaded writer’s block or other creative crises. In my presentation, I examine some prominent rhetoric and metaphoric strategies fiction writers use to describe the difficulties

in their writing processes, and speculate what this might suggest about creative writing as a “mode of existence”. The discussion leans on 4E cognitive theories, and the corpus includes Paris Review’s “The Art of Fiction” interviews, essays discussing writers’ creative processes as well as interviews I’ve conducted with four Finnish authors of speculative fiction (Varis 2022).

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## **Repositioning the relationship between the “I” and “language”: Three cases from unconventional environments**

*Panel organisers: Dongping Zheng & Kevin Rickman, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*

To address the theme of the CILC6 conference, this panel looks at crises of communication and second language acquisition. We engage with the world through the first person perspective and come to acquire things, even language, as an individual possession. However, our interactions with others are group efforts. The tension of maintaining individual and group efforts in language learning environments is the focus of our panel today. Individual acquisition of language as a tool can lead to egocentric values while a strict utilitarian valuing sacrifices the individual's goals for the group; the projects in this panel highlight the presence of this tension and how it can be positive for individual agency and the development of the community and friendship simultaneously. This is similar to a Confucian system of the five virtues and five relationships. The five Confucian virtues are those Kongzi showed were necessary for an individual to be a good citizen, family member, and person in general. The realization of these values creates the foundation for an individual to be community oriented and well-adapted to their society, and this kind of person pays specific attention to the quality of their relationships with others, their environment, and themselves. Furthermore, relationships such as these are built and strengthened through proper interactions, and the data in these three studies highlights how those interactions through artefacts, interpersonal engagement, language in use, and goal-based realization of shared values represents the importance of treating language as an ongoing project interdependent with sociocultural development.

### **Paper 1: A distributed language learning environment and tensions it creates: Interactivity on a tightrope**

*Dongping Zheng, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*

*(co-authored with Jin Dong, Michaela Nuesser and Weiyang Huang)*

This paper presents data from a project aimed at providing languaging and translanguaging experiences by engaging English and Chinese learners in a carefully designed distributed language learning environment (DLLE). The DLLE's purpose is to simulate an experience in which responsible citizens who speak different first languages coordinate and collectively help solve complex environmental degradation problems. This DLLE consists of players, non-player characters, a problem space, and resources. In this environment, learners assume different roles by selecting professions. The complex problem space is accessible through a Virtual Reality Panda Reservation Village. Players enter the village to experience the village life and gather data from conversing with citizens through written dialogues. The resources that assist players in developing their skills are distributed across websites, social media platforms, and handouts.

Our analysis and results are based on video recordings of team play, stimulated recalls and focus group interviews. The preliminary data analysis reveals multifaceted tensions such as the balance between the enjoyment of the freedom to explore the VR space and the need for more explicit guidance or between individual curiosity and group objectives. Interestingly, post-focus group interview data indicates that participants tend to favor greater clarity and direction suggesting a habitual desire for practices common in traditional language classes. This finding contracts with game gameplay where they harmoniously work and help each other in moving along with the game. We propose that these tensions may be necessary for balancing individual needs against community or larger social goals.

## **Paper 2: Ecological Language Learning in an Indigenous Hawaiian Fish Pond Environment**

*Michol Miller, Thao Le & Dongping Zheng, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*

In this talk we present an ecological model of language learning based in Hawaiian fishpond aquaculture, a uniquely advanced system of traditional fish husbandry. The fishpond project at the center of this investigation offers participating students an experiential learning environment where they can learn traditional Hawaiian cultural practices through service work. Students engage in physical activities of *mālama ‘āina* (the Hawaiian practice of ‘caring for the land that nourishes us’), including weeding, gardening and building rock walls. These activities are not purely physical, but embody spiritual and value-oriented aspects as well. An ecological view of language learning views language as a means of relating to people and the world (van Lier, 2004). Relationality is a unique aspect of the fishpond environment, as students build relationships with the land, their teacher, and each other in a way that holistically drives learning. From an ecolinguistic perspective, the physical environment provides these learners with physical, social and linguistic affordances that push them to make meaning through language, furthering their Hawaiian language development, and engages them in the process of becoming themselves as bearers of their cultural traditions and values. We discuss how students coordinate bodily action with first-order experiences through “*linguaging*,” a process of interaction with living organisms, plants, and the physical environment (Maturana, 1978), realizing Hawaiian values through embodied actions in place. We discuss the possibilities of this model for helping individuals build relationships of care and sustainability with their environments, towards greater resilience in face of the global climate crisis.

### **Paper 3: Interactivity: A *Cognitive Event Analysis* of Chinese Learners Experiencing the Atayal Culture**

*Haidan Wang & Song Jiang, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*

Interactivity is conceptualized as the flow across human agents and non-human artefacts and procedures. This perspective views human cognition as a complex and dynamic coupling among intelligent parties. Via an interactivity-based approach, researchers examine the cognitive ecology of human problem-solving through detailed analysis of identified events, demonstrating how interbodily dynamics and sociocultural constraints interplay, as well as how separate human agents orient to each other and the world (Hodges and Baron, 1992). Notably, interbodily dynamics and artefacts contribute to cognitive events through coordination or interaction (Steffensen, 2013). This study extends this discourse by understanding how learners of Chinese experience the Atayal aboriginal’s lifestyle during their cultural exploration in Taiwan. We analyzed 3-hour recordings — through Steffensen’s (2013) Cognitive Event Analysis framework — of how 26 students pounded steamed millet into mochi dough collaboratively in successive pairs, in hopes of demonstrating how biosemiotic and linguistic components can shape their experiences in an entirely foreign cultural environment, and revealing patterns of agency in human interactivity. Our analysis revealed that participants oriented to each other and demonstrated epistemic asymmetry while resourcing to the instructor’s modeled bodily actions and verbal instruction as the pounding unfolded. Moreover, participants co-constructed interbodily dynamics, and strived to achieve the joint results through real-time, self- and external-corrections of their gestures and spatial manipulation of cultural artefacts (i.e., pestle-and-mortar), therefore contributing to the cognitive event trajectory. Our study highlights how situated cultural learning emerges and is interactively accomplished during participants’ contextual coordination of human agents and cultural artefacts.



## **Rethinking relational values in the anthropocene**

*Panelists: Madeline Donald, University of British Columbia, Roope Kaaronen, University of Helsinki, Jelle Bruineberg, University of Copenhagen*

The Anthropocene signifies a geological epoch in which human activity has considerable detrimental impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems. In the optimistic scenario, humanity is transitioning to a position in which, having caused these changes, we can also navigate ways of reducing resultant harm and move forward through the “arts of living on a damaged planet.” Given the power humans have to reduce harm to land, water, and multi-being communities — ranging from the ground water-level in the Netherlands, to the risk of ecosystem-destructive wildfires in Canada, to changing the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere globally— ecological circumstances have the potential to be determined by policy-decisions. There is therefore an urgent need to make explicit the values that guide such policy decisions.

For example, the 2022 report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), emphasizes the need to not just recognize the instrumental and the intrinsic values of nature, but, following the ‘relational turn’ in environmental policy and decision-making, also relational values. Where instrumental values point to human ends and intrinsic values point natural entities as ends in-and-of themselves, relational values attempt to capture the value of non-substitutable relationships between human and natural entities. Interestingly, the report points to embodied and affordance theories as guiding theories to support this rethinking of values. The aim of this panel is therefore to explore how a common ground can be found between the relational turn in 4E cognition and the relational turn in environmental policy and decision-making.

# Literature in the Face of Crises: Hope, Feelings and Expertise

*Panel Moderator: Karin Kukkonen, University of Oslo, Norway*

## Paper 1: Expert thinking: Literature as apprenticeship

*Mats Haraldsen, University of Oslo, Norway*

There is a large body of theoretical and empirical studies of readers. However, much less has been said about the role of writers. Through the lenses of 4E cognition, I will construct a view of literary writing as an embodied and extended form of expertise. Training and background knowledge, as well as the engineering of cognitive surroundings, allow fiction writers to use their skillsets to perform impressive acts of extended cognition. Taking an extended and embodied view of language and the writing process, I will argue that literary texts provide access to expert cognition. This will allow me to suggest an understanding of literary reading as an apprenticeship taking place on many levels, consciously and sub-consciously. When reading, we are initiated into the embodied and cognitive craftsmanship of expert authors. Often, what we gain from reading cannot be assessed as new knowledge. Rather, readers improve their imaginative and creative skills by being gradually initiated to the author's craft of skillfully grasping the world. This view allows us to transcend overly critical and suspicious reading-strategies, still common in the humanities, and allow for a better grasp on how literature can show us new and creative ways of understanding the world.

*Bio:*

Mats Haraldsen is PhD fellow at the University of Oslo, writing his thesis in French Literature. Drawing on 4E cognition and cultural memory studies, his project investigates how writing about the past enable new and extended forms of remembering. He has recently published an article on extended remembering in *W or the memory of childhood* by Georges Perec, as well as an article on embodied interaction in *The Plague* by Albert Camus. In 2020, he won the University of Oslo's sustainability prize for best MA thesis.

## Paper 2: Speculative Fiction as an Instrument for Hope in the Age of "Permacrisis"

*Elise Kraatila, Tampere University, Finland*

"Permacrisis," the Collins Dictionaries Word of the Year, captures a pervasive sense of uncertainty in our current media environment: an unsettling feeling that some presently unforeseeable but inevitable disasters are waiting just around the corner. The mood of our media landscape at large and much of contemporary fiction alike is dominated by future-oriented

epistemic and existential anxieties, and speculations on what those disasters might entail. In this discursive environment of the “permacrisis” narratives, the future as a cultural imaginary (Appadurai 2013) looks like a time of “enormous upheaval” (Caracciolo 2023), a grand-scale storyworld-disruption. Accordingly, the present comes to be framed as foreshadowing for this as-yet unseen disruption.

My presentation discusses ways in which contemporary speculative fiction is viewed, against this discourse of uncertainty and crisis, as an epistemic instrument for not just “groping for” (cf. Grishakova et al. 2019) possible futures but developing the capacity of the readership to imagine a hopeful future for themselves. Futurists like Riel Miller (2018) dub such capacity “futures literacy,” or ability to “use the future” constructively in the present. I take for the starting point of my analysis the fantasy author N. K. Jemisin’s statement, “we creators are the engineers of possibility,” and ask what it entails to frame storytelling in such instrumentalizing terms – as a means for building possibilities for hope. Along with Jemisin’s own fiction, my case studies for the presentation include works by the Finnish sf author Emmi Itäranta.

*Bio:*

Elise Kraatila, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Tampere Institute for Advanced Study, Tampere University. Her current research project, “Age of Uncertainty: Speculative Narratives in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Fiction and Nonfiction” (2023–2025), aims towards a theoretical framework of speculative storytelling as a response to the atmosphere of uncertainty that characterizes the current media environment.

### **Paper 3: Literary scale and domestic affect in ecological crises**

*Laura Oulanne, University of Helsinki*

The home is an environment stereotypically characterized by safety, preservation, and intimacy, while these values have also long been shown to be unstable and dependent on point of view. The novel, on the other hand, has been interpreted as a domestic form in its content as well as its production and reception; however, it is also a form that continuously refuses to be contained by such definitions. My presentation asks, how to write and read about being at home when our home planet itself is becoming difficult to inhabit. It focuses on narratives that take on the expansive scales of ecological crises and adopt nonhuman points of view, combining these with domestic affects and relationships. I look at two novels from the less-studied margins of American postmodern literature and the early days of environmental consciousness as experienced now, Stanley Crawford’s *The Log of the SS. The Mrs. Unguentine* (1972) and Joy Williams’s *Breaking and Entering* (1988). Combining the study of ecological and literary affect with an econarratological focus on scale and perspective I ask, how these texts recontextualize the experience of being at home. I suggest that the troubled, planetary domesticity generated by their narrative forms constitutes a space for reimagining being at home in ways that can support sensemaking and sustainable agency in the present ecological crises.

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