



THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA UNIVERSITY of IAȘI  
**8 – 9 May 2025**

CALL FOR PAPERS

**Anglicists and Americanists Today.  
Facing Ideology and Its Discontents.  
Celebrating 100 Years of English and  
American Studies in Iasi.**

Hybrid Format

**Plenary Keynote Speakers:**

Christian Mair (Germany)

Wolfgang Hochbruck (Germany)

Adrian Papahagi (Romania)

Edward Hirsch (USA)

Patty Seyburn (USA)



Our contemporary world at large has undergone dramatic shifts of paradigms in the last 80 years or so. Between 1945 and 1960, most of the new states in Asia and Africa achieved at least an autonomy if not complete independence from their European colonial rulers. This situation generated a need for political and cultural (self)identification and self-determination. Decolonisation reshaped the world. In its wake, Asian, African, and Western intellectuals reshaped the cultural paradigm: Fanon, the theorists of the so-called “Subaltern Studies”, Michel Foucault’s analysis of the relation between power and knowledge, Edward Said’s groundbreaking *Orientalism* (1978) shook the plinth and the whole scaffolding of entrenched colonial culture. In Europe, the French upheavals of 1968, with their makeshift barricades and graffiti protests, paved the path for radical movements of restless emancipation. From France, the zest for ceaseless discontent has spread and conquered both sides of the Atlantic. The advancement of technology inspired Julian Huxley, a brother of novelist Aldous Huxley, to envisage in “Transhumanism” (1957) an era of social and cultural change, a future when humanity transcends itself. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Huxley’s concept of transhumanism coexists with Posthumanism and a range of other theories and movements in what looks like a cacophony of narratives and discourses.

In *Language of Fiction* (1966), his first book of criticism, the already notorious British novelist, critic and professor of English literature David Lodge noticed a major turn in literary criticism that has continued to shape approaches to literature to the present day. In his preface to the Routledge Classics edition of the book (2002) Lodge remarked that while “in the 1960s it was still possible to write a book of literary criticism that would simultaneously satisfy qualified scholars and interest the general reader, because there was a discourse common to both,” in the ensuing decades “the language of academic criticism became more arcane and jargon-ridden, alienating the general reading public and the media that serve it.” In Lodge’s account, one of the alienating factors is the “publish or perish” principle fiercely promoted by the academia worldwide, and the other boils down to the plethora of methods and metalanguages informed by a variety of sciences, pseudo-sciences and by as many ideologies underpinning them. Some of these sciences are the linguistic theories of structuralism and post-structuralism. Lodge admits that he assimilated some of them, with some “serious reservations” about others.

In an attempt to become scientific, 20<sup>th</sup> century linguistics turned away from the traditional, philosophical inquiry into meaning and looked at structures and systemic relationships. Formalism with its mathematical descriptions of language aimed at being fed to automated machines is central to the development of artificial intelligence but also, paradoxically at first sight, to the emergence of cognitive linguistics with its interest in cerebral structures and mental processes underlying language. Separation, decomposition, atomization, seem to be mere utilitarian activities when, in reality, a



continuum seems to be out there that needs to be addressed holistically. We carve in it artificial borders by categorization and naming. In this context, how do we teach and analyze language? How do we reconcile the atomistic and the holistic?

What is the role of translation in the global context of English as a *lingua franca* in tourism, business, science, technology, and also in current interpersonal communication? In his challenging “manifesto” *Totul trebuie tradus / Everything Must Be Translated* (2015) Bogdan Ghiu contends that in our contemporary global times translation has a rather ambiguous and paradoxical status: although its omnipresence justifies the existence of DGT as an important department of the European Union, it is at the same time “invisible” (a reference to Venuti’s term). In *Literary Translation and the Idea of a Minor Romania* (2014) Sean Cotter wonders how apt the discourses of hegemony (as articulated by Deleuze and Guattari in *Kafka: pour une littérature mineure* and Venuti in *The Translator’s Invisibility*) are to account for translation and the translator’s role in smaller languages, like Romanian. To translation as a linguistic and/or socio-cultural enterprise, one may add the phenomenon of transmedia adaptation that adapts classic literature to an interactive, multi-platform experience, a process that calls for interdisciplinary approaches.

Do the shifts, turns, oppositions and clashes shed light on a crisis in academic culture or do the clashes illuminate some possible convergence? This conference aims to be a forum of ideas and debates, a reassessment of the academic values at stake in the larger field of the humanities, with a focus on literary studies, linguistics, translation and adaptation studies, cultural studies and media studies.



## We invite contributions on the following topics:

- English Studies today
- The impact of English as a *lingua franca*
- Linguistic theories: classical, modern and contemporary
- Literary Theory and Criticism
- Literary canons: re-configurations and debates
- Literary ages, trends and movements, and their aesthetics
- Translation as a linguistic and/or socio-cultural enterprise
- Transmedia and adaptation
- Convergence (of ideas, cultures, approaches)
- Discourse theory today
- TEFL theory and methodology
- Secrecy, ambiguity, vagueness, suggestive obscurity, *différance*, etc. in language, culture and literature

## Thematic panel streams:

This year, our conference will also offer the panel stream **Flowers and Flappers** dedicated to the celebration of 100 years since the publication of two key modernist novels: Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Participants who may take a particular interest in this panel stream are asked to send their proposals **both** to the conference email address **and** to the panel stream keynote speakers and organizers: [dnbadulescu@gmail.com](mailto:dnbadulescu@gmail.com); [fnastase60@yahoo.com](mailto:fnastase60@yahoo.com)



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- **Deadline** for abstract submissions: **20 February 2025**
- Notification of acceptance: **Ongoing (no later than 5 March 2025)**
- Conference presentations must be in **English** and will be allocated **20 minutes each, plus 10 minutes for discussion.**

Prospective participants are invited to submit **abstracts of 250-300 words via the [Registration Form](#).**

### Conference fee:

- Early bird (March 15th): 80 Euro / 400 RON
- Regular: 100 Euro / 500 RON
- Online participants: 50 Euro / 250 RON
- PhD students: 50 Euro / 250 RON

Payment details will be communicated to the participants upon acceptance.

Conference papers will be peer-reviewed for publication in a special issue of the *Linguaculture Journal* (Online ISSN: **2285-9403** | Print ISSN: **2067-9696**) – listed on ERIH PLUS, DOAJ, Index Copernicus etc. See the guidelines for contributors at: <https://journal.linguaculture.ro/index.php/home/instructions-authors>.

**Conference website:** <https://conference2025.linguaculture.ro/>

**Conference email address:** [english.uaic@gmail.com](mailto:english.uaic@gmail.com)

**We look forward to receiving proposals and welcoming you in Iași.**



### **Organizing Committee:**

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