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Vienna Doctoral School of Theology
and Research on Religion VDTR



Uniwersytet
Wrocławski

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR YOUNG SCHOLARS

BEYOND
LANGUAGE

MEANING ACROSS DISCIPLINES,
PERSPECTIVES, AND WORLDS

SCHEDULE & PROGRAM

2026



26–27 JUNE 2026



UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

DIALOGUE • UNDERSTANDING • TRANSCENDENCE

KNOW HOW

Beyond Language 2026 is conceived not as a traditional conference of isolated papers but as an intensive interdisciplinary seminar grounded in dialogue, discussion, and collective reflection.

Each thematic panel follows the same rhythm:

- presentation: 15 min
- immediate short response by another participant/speaker: 1 min
- pair/group discussion: 4 min
- collective discussion after the whole panel: 20 min
- coffee break after the panel: 10 min

The aim is to create intellectual interaction between different perspectives rather than a sequence of unrelated papers.

Information about Panels:

Panel 1. This panel explores whether language reflects reality, structures reality, or constitutes the conditions under which reality becomes intelligible.

The speakers intentionally contrast:

- Wittgensteinian ordinary language philosophy,
- formal semantics and logicity,
- linguistic relativity and epistemology,
- Western and non-Western approaches to meaning.

Panel 2. This panel investigates forms of meaning that exceed literal language.

The speakers compare:

- irony and metaphor,
- spirituality and formal methodology,
- human interpretation and artificial intelligence,
- indirect meaning and computational processing.

Together, the panel asks what remains irreducibly human beyond algorithmic language.

Panel 3. This panel explores forms of communication that operate beyond direct propositional meaning. Bringing together perspectives on games, film, music, and political discourse, the speakers examine how meaning is shaped through affect, immersion, symbolism, participation, and discursive environments.

The panel compares:

- artistic and political meaning-making,
- interpretation and participation,
- symbolic and affective communication,
- media as spaces of reality construction.

Together, the panel asks whether meaning depends only on language in the strict sense, or also emerges through broader cultural and communicative forms.

Panel 4. This panel examines language as a marker of belonging, exclusion, and collective identity.

The speakers compare:

- diaspora and postcoloniality,
- linguistic identity and epistemic injustice,
- migration and representation,
- minority voices and structures of exclusion.

The central question concerns who is recognised as credible, visible, and socially legitimate.

Panel 5. This panel investigates language as a mechanism of normativity, manipulation, and political construction.

The discussion intentionally moves:

- from interpersonal language to mass political discourse,
- from ethics to propaganda,
- from speech acts to affective governance.

The panel asks how language shapes public reality and political perception.

DAY I – FRIDAY – 26 JUNE 2026

LANGUAGE, MEANING, AND TRANSCENDENCE

08:30–08:50 Registration & Morning Coffee

08:50–09:00 Vorstellungsrunde / Introduction Round

Short participant introductions: name, affiliation, one question or theme that brought them to the seminar.

09:00–09:10 Opening Remarks – Patryk Zajac – *Beyond Language: Why Meaning Exceeds Communication*

09:10–10:05 KEYNOTE – LINGUISTICS

Prof. Dr. Piotr P. Chruszczewski
(University of Wrocław)

10:05–10:30 Open Discussion

10:30–10:40 Coffee Break

PANEL I Language and Forms of Life

(1) 10:40–10:55 Abdul Rahim Afaki (University of Karachi, Pakistan) – *The Mutuality Nexus of Lingual Meanings and Form of Life*

10:55–10:56 Immediate Response

10:56–11:00 Pair/Group Discussion

(2) 11:00–11:15 Veronika Myronenko (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) – *Between Information and Affect: Telegram as a Space of Political Meaning-Making in Wartime*

11:15–11:16 Immediate Response

11:16–11:20 Pair/Group Discussion

11:20–11:40 Collective Discussion

11:40–11:50 Coffee Break

PANEL II Metaphor, Irony, and Spiritual Language

(1) 11:50–12:05 Adam Lalák (LMU München, Charles University in Prague) – *The Epistemic Function of Irony in Spiritual Language*

12:05–12:06 Immediate Response

12:06–12:10 Pair/Group Discussion

(2) 12:10–12:25 Nikita Nalivko (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) – *The Architecture of Passivity: Constructing Political Inaction through Russian State Discourse*

12:25–12:26 Immediate Response
12:26–12:30 Pair/Group Discussion

(3) 12:30–12:45 Chang Liu (Shanghai Jiao Tong University) – *A Norm-Constitutive Theory of Insult Words*

12:45–12:46 Immediate Response
12:46–12:50 Pair/Group Discussion

12:50–13:10 Collective Discussion

13:10–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–14:45 KEYNOTE – THEOLOGY

**Dr. David Bennett
(University of Oxford)**

14:45–15:00 Open Discussion

15:00–15:10 Coffee Break

PANEL III Beyond Propositional Language

(1) 15:10–15:25 Piotr Szelejewski (University of Wrocław) – *Tinkering as a Hermeneutic Practice: Player Interpretation and Game Modification in Video Games*

15:25–15:26 Immediate Response
15:26–15:30 Pair/Group Discussion

(2) 15:30–15:45 Weronika Janiec (University of Wrocław) – *Between Two Languages: Diegetic and Non-Diegetic Communication in Film*

15:45–15:46 Immediate Response
15:46–15:50 Pair/Group Discussion

(3) 15:50–16:05 Kewin Ignasiak (University of Wrocław) – *From Theseus's Ship to Strings of Symbols: The Problem of Textual Identity*

16:05–16:06 Immediate Response
16:06–16:10 Pair/Group Discussion

(4) 16:10–16:25 Miranda Kerrigan (San Francisco State University) – *Discussion of Linguistic Characteristics in Music and Means of Communication*

16:25–16:26 Immediate Response
16:26–16:30 Pair/Group Discussion

16:30–16:50 Collective Discussion & End of Day I

DAY II – SATURDAY – 27 JUNE 2026

LANGUAGE, POWER, IDENTITY, AND COMMUNITY

08:45–09:00 Morning Coffee

09:00–09:45 KEYNOTE – PHILOSOPHY

Prof. Dr. James Tartaglia (UK)
(Slovak Academy of Sciences)

09:45–10:00 Open Discussion

10:00–10:10 Coffee Break

PANEL IV Language, Identity, and Marginality

(1) 10:10–10:25 Yousef Khasho (University of Vienna) – *Arabic as a Language of Identity: Middle Eastern Christian Diaspora Churches in Württemberg-Germany*

10:25–10:26 Immediate Response

10:26–10:30 Pair/Group Discussion

(2) 10:30–10:45 Vjosa Cakiqi (University of Klagenfurt, Austria) – *Speaking from the Margins: Epistemic Injustice and the Portrayal of Ghanaian Pidgin English*

10:45–10:46 Immediate Response

10:46–10:50 Pair/Group Discussion

(3) 10:50–11:05 Ting Lei (University of Warsaw) – *Rewriting the Frontier: Transnational Solidarity and Otherness in The Ballad of Little Jo*

11:05–11:06 Immediate Response

11:06–11:10 Pair/Group Discussion

11:10–11:30 Collective Discussion

11:30–11:40 Coffee Break

PANEL V Language, Normativity, and Political Reality

(1) 11:40–11:55 Olena Pavlenko (Mariupol State University, Ukraine) – *Unmasking Ethical Narratives through Greenwashing Markers in English-Language Eco-Discourse*

11:55–11:56 Immediate Response

11:56–12:00 Pair/Group Discussion

(2) 12:00–12:15 CP Hertogh (Independent Researcher) – *Metaphor and Formal Methodologies*

12:15–12:16 Immediate Response
12:16–12:20 Pair/Group Discussion

(3) 12:20–12:35 Ilenia Amitrano (Università degli Studi di Siena) – *Being Oneself. On Self-Reference in Logicality*

12:35–12:36 Immediate Response
12:36–12:40 Pair/Group Discussion

12:40–13:00 Collective Discussion

13:00–13:10 Coffee Break

13:10–13:50 FINAL SEMINAR ROUND

***Beyond Language?
Meaning, Community, and the Future of Interpretation***

Final collective seminar discussion with all participants.

Themes include: language and transcendence, AI and meaning, identity and migration, epistemic injustice, political affect, religion and symbolic mediation, and the future of shared meaning in fragmented societies.

13:50–14:00 Patryk Zając – Closing Remarks

14:00–14:15 End of Seminar

14:30– ∞ Lunch & Informal Networking