

Conference Report

The 30th Annual Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English, Kraków 1-3 July 2022

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The Polish Association for the Study of English held its 30th annual conference, hosted by the Institute of English Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków on the first three days of July 2022. As it was an anniversary event, taking place on-site for the first time after two years of pandemic-induced lockdowns and rules on social distancing, the organisers asked the participants to reflect upon the theme of “Transitions.” As is the custom with PASE conferences, papers in all fields of English Studies were invited: literature, linguistics, translation, cultural studies, and EFL methodology. The suggested topics included the following: beginnings and endings; changes, alterations and transformations; thresholds, turning points and critical junctures; transitoriness and the state of in-betweenness; critical engagement with the past, reform and revolution; redefinitions of concepts and theories, paradigm shifts; the search for new ideas, approaches, and methodologies.

The conference attracted a number of distinguished scholars from Poland and abroad, as well as several junior scholars, for whom PASE conferences always provide a welcoming platform. Whereas all the main Polish universities were represented, there were also attendees from the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and the United States.

The conference was opened by Professor Władysław Witalisz, Dean of the Faculty of Philology, who welcomed the participants on behalf of the Rector and the Faculty. An opening address also was delivered by Professor Andrzej Pawelec, Head of the Institute of English Studies. Professor Jacek Fabiszak, President of the Polish Association for the Study of English, highlighted the fact that on the thirtieth anniversary of the organisation, PASE had returned to its place of origin, i.e. the Jagiellonian University. The opening ceremony was followed by the first plenary lecture, given by Professor Andreas H. Jucker from the University of Zurich, currently President of the European Society for the Study of English. In his interdisciplinary lecture “The pragmatics of emotion in fiction” Prof. Jucker argued that emotions are an integral part of the fictional

worlds around us, be it in the form of movies or television series, novels or theatre plays. From a perspective informed by the research done in pragmatics, the lecturer indicated ways in which emotions may be explored in fictional contexts.

The three other plenary lectures addressed the theme of transitions in all the fields represented at the conference. Prof. Andrzej Łyda's (University of Silesia in Katowice) lecture, titled "Emotive shifts: academia, genre, and translation," explored the rarely researched question of emotivity in academic discourse. Drawing on a corpus of examples from the genre of research article and popular science journal article, Prof. Łyda focused especially on the problem of "emotivity in translation" in academic discourse.

The second day of the conference opened with Prof. Felix Sprang's (University of Siegen) inspiring talk about entanglements of speech and silence. In his wide-ranging lecture "Literary transitions: from silence to utterance" Prof. Sprang referred to classical rhetoric and Renaissance poetics, Victorian notions of the dialectical relationship between silence and speech, and examined contemporary poetics in order to claim that literature is rooted in silence. The closing plenary lecture was delivered by Prof. Elżbieta Chrzanowska-Kluczevska of the Jagiellonian University. Transcending the boundaries of literature, art and linguistics, Prof. Chrzanowska-Kluczevska's fascinating talk "Semiotic transitions: Transmedial crossings of textual frames" presented Lotman's idea of *frame* as an important integrational category valuable for all kinds of semiotic research on a broadly conceived textuality. As the lecture included Kraków's historical monuments among its numerous references, for many conference participants (according to our reports) it proved to be a further inducement to go sight-seeing.

Nearly eighty papers were delivered during the three days of the conference. All were grouped into panels or thematic sessions. One of the most popular panels was "Beyond the Anthropocene: Post-Anthropocentric Approaches in/ to Literature, Visual Culture and Theory," coordinated by Tymon Adamczewski, Katarzyna Więckowska, and Tomasz Dobrogoszcz. The presentations concerned various aspects of posthumanist thinking and textual production in literature, visual culture and other contexts. In times of the planetary crisis, the organisers invited explorations of experimental poetics as well as post-anthropocentric theoretical positions. María del Pino Montesdeoca chaired another topical panel, devoted to the impact of Brexit on literature and culture ("Brexit: Transitions to New Literary and Cultural Perspectives").

A significant number of papers concerned rewritings, rereadings and reinterpretations. The “Adaptation as Transition/Transition as Adaptation” panel, coordinated by Jacek Fabiszak and Anna Wołosz-Sosnowska, comprised presentations which traced the transition, or change and movement, from the adapted to adapting texts in selected literature. Izabela Curyłło-Klag and Ewa Kowal, the coordinators of the panel “The Myths of Modernism / Modernism and Myths: Then and Now,” asked the participants to reflect both on the modernists’ love of myths and the myths which now surround the modernist writers themselves. The papers in this panel discussed writers and works that have engaged in rewriting of ancient scripts and/or have entered into dialogues with the modernists as pivotal figures within the literary mythos. Another panel devoted to the legacy of modernism was “Littoral Modernisms: from the Centre to Peripheries,” proposed by Ryszard Wolny. The presentations explored the phenomenon of modernism transitioning outside Europe and into alternative forms. Modern rewritings and reinterpretations were also the subject of the panel “The Robinsonade: Transits and Transitions,” hosted by Jakub Lipski and Patrick Gill. The papers in this panel investigated the castaway plot across media, periods and regions.

There were also thematic sessions focusing on literary spaces, theatre and film, Shakespearean transitions, connections between the self, the body and writing, new media, new historical fictions, transitions in African literatures, theoretical linguistics, applied linguistics as well as translation studies.

The conference venue was the new Paderevianum building, home of the Institute of English Studies, while the plenary lectures took place in the nearby building of the Faculty of Law and Administration, both located in central Kraków. We were especially pleased with the efficient air-conditioning in both venues, which saved us from the early July heatwave.

The crowning non-academic event of the conference was the dinner, sponsored by PASE in order to celebrate its anniversary. All the conference participants were invited to enjoy the atmospheric garden of the Italian-style Mięta restaurant.

Following the conference, the participants received a call to submit their contributions to the *Polish Journal of English Studies*, published by PASE. The readers of the journal are already familiar with some of the inspiring talks which were published in the 8.2/2022 issue.