

The 33rd Annual Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English (PASE) / Crossroads 5 Conference, Białystok, 4–6 June 2025

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The 33rd annual conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English (PASE), held jointly with the *Crossroads Conferences*, took place on 4–6 June 2025 at the University of Białystok. Hosted by the English Philology section at the Faculty of Philology, the event brought together scholars working across linguistics, literary and cultural studies.

The conference theme, *“Voices of the Earth: literary and linguistic perspectives in environmental humanities”*, situated the conference within the expanding field of environmental humanities. The call for papers stressed that human activity is making the planet increasingly uninhabitable, pointing to climate change, pollution, and mass extinction. It also argued that scientific perspectives alone are insufficient, calling for approaches that engage cultural narratives, ethical frameworks, and modes of representation. The conference thus aimed to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and to explore how literary, cultural, and linguistic inquiry can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of ecological crises.

The programme reflected this agenda. The papers explored environmental justice, climate trauma and migration and intersections between ecology and race, gender, and colonial histories. They also addressed representations of non-human entities in discourse. Other contributions examined ecodiscourse, ecolinguistics, ecostylistics, eco-translation, and ecological approaches to teaching and learning. The sessions demonstrated both the diversity of current research and the growing centrality of environmental concerns within English Studies.

The plenary lectures further developed these perspectives. Professor Katarzyna Więckowska (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) delivered a talk entitled *“Displacement, Violence and Toxicity: Readings in Geontopower”*. Drawing on Elizabeth Povinelli’s concept of geontopower, she examined how distinctions between life and nonlife are mobilized within late liberal frameworks and how they intersect with the legacies of colonialism. Focusing on Anglophone African

fiction, including works by Imbolo Mbue and Ben Okri, she explored how environmental degradation, displacement, and toxicity shape human and non-human futures. Drawing on thinkers such as Rob Nixon and Achille Mbembe, she showed how ecological crisis is entangled with histories of exclusion and uneven distributions of vulnerability.

The second plenary lecture was delivered by Daniela Francesca Viridis (University of Cagliari) and was entitled *"Ecostylistic Approaches to Landscapes: Between Theory and Practice"*. Drawing on recent work in ecostylistics, Viridis outlined key analytical tools from stylistics such as foregrounding, point of view, metaphor, framing, and corpus-based approaches, and demonstrated their use across environmental websites, literary prose, and media discourse. She showed how linguistic choices shape representations of nature and encode underlying ideologies, demonstrating how discourse shapes representations of the environment.

Beyond the plenary lectures and papers delivered during thematic sessions, the conference created space for sustained exchange, with discussions extending across panels. Overall, the event emphasized both the breadth of current research in English Studies and the growing importance of environmental humanities as a shared area of inquiry.

The conference concluded with a closing session in which the organizers thanked participants for their contributions and engagement. The Białystok meeting confirmed the relevance and value of interdisciplinary approaches to environmental questions and underscored the role of PASE as a forum for scholarly dialogue across linguistic and literary domains. During the General Assembly, it was announced that the 2026 annual PASE conference would be hosted by the University of Rzeszów.