ESTIdia
European Society for Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Dialogue

Sharing and implementing ideas through dialogue

MRU Mykolas Romeris University

Call for Papers
ESTIDIA
European Society for Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Dialogue
7th ESTIDIA Conference

Exploring Real-life, Fictional and Virtual Dialogue: Similarities, Differences and Complementarities

12-14-June 2024
Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius, Lithuania

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[1] Image credit: GETTY (top left), ewg3D (top-right), MRU (bottom left and bottom right)

Conference Theme

Like previous ESTIDIA conferences, the forthcoming 2024 ESTIDIA conference puts dialogue and dialogic forms of communication in the spotlight, as front and centre of all forms of human communication. This time the focus is on exploring real-life, fictional and virtual dialogues in terms of similarities and differences, overlaps and complementarities, constancy and change. To understand the context-driven, situation-based and culture-specific impact of dialogic communication patterns, it is essential to examine in situ instantiations of dialogue as social interaction practice, as jointly steered activity, as philosophical or scientific method of inquiry, as rhetorical process of co-reflection, as pedagogical approach, as problem-solving tool, as mechanism of ethical and political scrutiny (Ilie 2022). Theoretical and empirical studies have explored dialogues in various forms of verbal communication: oral and written, private and public, multi-level (between two or several interlocutors, with or without an overhearing audience), synchronous and asynchronous (e.g., face-to-face vs. computer-mediated).

Laying the foundations of the ethical tradition of thought, Socrates and his follower Plato repeatedly upheld the high value of education through dialogue, which is meant to encourage critical thinking (Politis 2015). In their dialogues, they logically question the interlocutor's opinions and beliefs, while irony is used to call into question the attitude of the interlocutor (Candiotto 2017). From such a perspective, an interesting challenge would be to explore and compare the underlying layers of logical argumentation and irony of real-life dialogue with the multi-level intricacies of fictional or virtual dialogue (Bohman, 2004; Wade and Fauske, 2004). Using a cross-disciplinary approach, Rockwell (2003) already proposed a comparison of the roles of dialogue in the works of ancient philosophers, through the Renaissance, pre-modern and contemporary, to current forms of dialogue on the Internet. On the practical side, during the 20th century and early 21st century, updated frameworks of dialogue have been designed and applied, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, in psychotherapy, in legal settings, in context of conflict mediation, and in health-care settings.

Dialogue-driven French and Italian literature of the Renaissance (Tullia d'Aragona 1547; Sperone Speroni 1542) reinvigorated the dialectical virtues of the dialogic genre of classical antiquity and its rhetorical features, e.g., *in utramque partem* debate (characters voicing both sides of the argument), enhanced by probing question and answer patterns. Thereby, dialogue acquired full status as a literary genre in the so-called "age of the dialogue" (Cox 1992).

The extent to which naturally occurring dialogue is similar to, but also different from literary conversations has been researched within the field of stylistics (e.g., Hughes 2010; Short 2015; Simpson 2004; Thomas 2012). Hughes (2005) found that in the 18th century not only does the dialogue influence the novel, becoming one of its important components, but the two genres overlap considerably, enabled by the increasing exchanges of ideas in the public sphere. An influential analytical model was developed by Leech and Short (2007/1981) to account for the range of speech and thought presentation forms and their effects in novels written in English. The model was later tested and further developed by Semino and Short (2004) through a corpus-based approach. Seeking to capture the distinguishing features of drama dialogue compared to real-life dialogue, Burton (1980) outlined an innovative literary-linguistic stylistics based on discourse analysis that accounts for the utterance-by-utterance organization of dramatic texts

and the rule-governed behaviour of interlocutors in naturally occurring conversation. In a similar vein, Mandala (2007) carried out in-depth investigations into how the dialogue of four modern plays 'works' with respect to the pragmatic and discursive norms postulated for ordinary conversation.

The ubiquity and multiple reverberations of dialogue across casual, fictional or virtual encounters are reflected in the cognitive and emotional effects brought about by successive social and cultural evolutions and changes, which can be captured by appropriately contextualized transdisciplinary and multilayered approaches. Television dialogue, an example of "screen-to-face discourse" (Bubel 2006: 46), is somehow similar to other kinds of fictional and mediated dialogues in featuring different communicative layers or levels: the communication within the diegesis (interaction among on-screen characters in the fictional world), and the communication with the narrative's external audience. An insightful comparison between the dialogic configuration of a popular American television situation comedy (*Friends*) and the dialogue of naturally occurring conversation was carried out by Quaglio (2009) to find out to what extent interactions in TV dialogues capture the linguistic characteristics of natural conversation. The functions that dialogue typically fulfils in a film have been consistently analyzed by Kozloff (2000), who combined narrative theory and drama theory to identify the special relationship of verbal exchanges with moving images, soundtracks and narratives, meant to appeal to the spectator.

In spontaneous conversational dialogue, the Gricean implicature can be seen as the basis of traditional rhetorical figures such as metaphor, hyperbole and irony. When such figures are at odds with the principle of cooperation, they serve to convey changing attitudes during dialogue, including (im)polite agency, tension and conflict. Within particular frames of references, dialogue is associated or equated with conversation, but its scope is actually wider and deeper, reinforced by elements of historical and socio-cultural heritage. According to Mildorf and Thomas (2017: 4), dialogue "is also about emergence and becoming, and about refusing closure and finalisation", while Womack (2011: 6) considers that "dialogue is the discursive form of democracy".

Above all, dialogue is pursuing goals relevant to the medium in which it features, including multimodal and transmedial environments. From this perspective, AI (Artificial Intelligence) involves and is related to dialogue in a variety of ways. Video chatting is becoming an ever more common form of communication, which can explain why face-to-face conversations sometimes may seem obsolete (Turkle 2015). AI can also be used to analyze and interpret conversation data, helping, for example, to improve customer service, to detect fraud, and more. Reicherts et al. (2022) have explored Chatbots as a popular form of Conversational User Interface (CUI), widely used for customer service applications. At the same time, an experimental investigation was conducted by Someya and Iio (2022) in order to understand how philosophical dialogue with a robot differs from philosophical dialogue with a human. At the same time, the dialogue format makes it possible for ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer) to answer follow-up questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests.

While rapid progress in AI is arousing excitement as well as fear, there is increasing anxiety about AI-based dialogue, regarding the way people relate to knowledge and think about themselves. Challenges concerning AI-related dialogue are increasingly motivating us to seek new and creative ways to develop meaningful paradigms of AI-enabled human-human interactions, human-AI interactions, human-centred AI-AI interactions. Potential applications of ChatGPT were investigated by Shahriar and Hayawi (2023) in various domains, where healthcare, education, and research are highlighted. Despite promising results, there are several privacy and ethical concerns, such as some ChatGPT's responses that involve race and gender bias, as well as issues about copyright and plagiarism.

Within the broad theme of the conference, participants are invited to explore a range of questions concerning dialogue genres, dialogue practices and/or dialogue strategies, in relation to roles and goals of dialogue participants, to convergent or divergent speech acts, to common ground and shared knowledge.
The questions participants are called upon to consider, analyse and debate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- In what ways and according to which discursive and/or rhetorical dimensions do various types of dialogue vary across languages and cultures?
- To what extent are the structural and functional patterns of various types of dialogues intertwined in specific dialogic genres (e.g., media dialogue, drama dialogue, educational dialogue)?
- How can real-life, fictional and virtual dialogues be distinguished from each other in terms of linguistic design, dialogic cues, key words and/or discourse markers?
- Is television dialogue expected to sound like naturally occurring conversation, or to purposefully diverge from spontaneous talk, or both?
- What theoretical and methodological approaches are best suited for researching the interfaces of real-life, fictional, and/or virtual dialogue?
- In what ways are particular keywords and speech acts used in particular dialogic interactions to manipulate and/or reproduce otherness?
- What is the role of (social) media, films, literature, and popular culture in shaping both concepts (imaginaries) and experiences of dialogue?
- In what ways is mutual trust perceived in face-to-face interaction? How is mutual trust affected by the conditions of virtual interaction?
- How much do cross-European dialogues reveal about interaction paradigms in individual European cultures?
- How is ChatGPT going to change the way we think, communicate and interact with each other?
- To what extent have the dialogic patterns between humans and machines been foreshadowed in fictional and/or film dialogue? How do they confirm or disconfirm the predictions?
- How does knowledge (a)symmetry influence terminology preferences of different user groups in specialised communication and specialised discourse?
- What challenges does translation (as a cultural phenomenon, industry, profession) face in cross-cultural dialogue under the conditions of globalisation? How do technological developments affect translation industry and translator education? What is the future of translation as a field of practice conditioned by the rapid advancement of AI?

Keynote speakers

Cornelia Ilie, Strömstad Academy, Sweden
Manfred Kienpointner, University of Innsbruck, Austria
Michael Kranert, University of Southampton, United Kingdom
Jurga Cibulskienė, Vilnius University, Lithuania
Lora Tamošiūnienė, King Sejong Institute, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania

Methodological Workshop

Different approaches to dialogic research: analysing a multimodal and multicultural embodiment of joint action in real-life and "non-real-life" interactions. Convenor: assoc. prof. dr. Keiko Tsuchiya, Yokohama City University, Japan. For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: ktsuchiy@yokohama-cu.ac.jp.

Thematic Workshops

Thematic workshop 1

Would you laugh with us? Internet humour and mutual (dis)trust in the dialogue process (case of Ukraine in 2022-2023). Convenor: dr. Kateryna Yeremieieva, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Collaborative Research Center "Cultures of Vigilance", Germany. For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: eremeeevaea@gmail.com.

Thematic workshop 2

Shifting Gears: a prolegomenon to teaching Twenty-First Century Skills. Convenors: dr. John McKeown (the Üsküdar American Academy, Istanbul, Turkey) and Maria Ramadori Volker. For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: jmckeown@my.uaa.k12.tr.

Thematic workshop 3

Multi-foci analysis of real and fictional healthcare dialogue. Convenor: prof. Catalina Iliescu-Gheorghiu (University of Alicante). For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: iliescu@ua.es.

Thematic workshop 4

Real-life dialogues between humans and machines: the interface between discourse research in linguistics and dialogue systems research in engineering. Convenor: prof. dr. Mayumi Usami (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan), prof. dr. Ryuichiro Higashinaka (Nagoya University, Japan), and assoc. prof. dr. Hiroyuki Nishikawa (Meikai University, Japan). For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: usamima@gmail.com.

Thematic workshop 5

InTranslation 2024. For information on previous InTranslation 2022 workshop, please see the In Translation | 2022 (mruni.eu). Convenors: assoc. prof. dr. Lora Tamošiūnienė (Institute of Humanities and head of King Seijong Institute, Mykolas Romeris University), assoc. prof. Vilhelmina Vaičiūnienė (Institute of Humanities, Mykolas Romeris University), and assoc.

prof. dr. Viktorija Mažeikienė (Institute of Humanities, Mykolas Romeris University). For further information about the workshop, please contact the convenor: vmazeikiene@mruni.eu.

Abstract Submission

We invite submissions of abstracts both for individual paper presentations (20 minutes for presentation, to be followed by 10 minutes for questions) to be scheduled in parallel sessions, and for paper presentations within thematic workshops. The thematic workshop format will be determined by the workshop organisers, taking into consideration the correlation of topics/sub-topics and the number of participants.

All abstracts should include the name, institutional affiliation and email address of the author(s), the paper title, and four-five keywords. The abstract should be approximately 500 words in length.

Authors should take into consideration the following questions and integrate in their abstracts as many as possible of the elements listed below:

Is it clear how the contribution advances the current state of our knowledge?
Is the importance of the novel insights it provides clearly explained and justified?
Are the research questions and hypotheses clearly and explicitly formulated?
Does the contribution reference the appropriate scholarly literature and clearly position the study within one or more specific fields of research?
Are the data collection, analysis and presentation methods convincingly justified?
Are the empirical, methodological and theoretical contributions of prior work clearly acknowledged?

- *identify the main issue which is the focus of your research*
- *problematize the critical or challenging aspect(s) of the issue under investigation*
- *highlight the analytical focus and the purpose of your investigation*
- *describe the research questions that have guided your investigation*
- *specify the concrete data of your corpus*
- *present the method(s) and the theoretical approach(es) used to analyse your corpus*
- *provide an estimation of the expected results, and of their relevance to the field of research*

All abstracts will be peer-reviewed by the conference scientific committee according to the following criteria: originality and/or importance of topic; clarity of research question and purpose; data sources; theoretical approach; analytical focus; relevance of findings if already available. We especially encourage abstract submissions from early-career researchers, including postgraduate research students and postdoctoral researchers.

N.B: The **methodological workshops** are particularly intended for postgraduate students and early career scholars, whose participation is encouraged. Attendance at the conference methodological workshops is free, but prior booking is essential. There is, however, a limit on the number of places in the methodological workshops – a maximum of 40 people. Registration in advance is required. Please register for the workshops on the conference website.

Email abstract submissions to: estidia24@mruni.eu

Conference languages: English, Italian, French, Spanish, German

Important Dates

Deadline for workshop proposals:	01 October 2023
Workshop proposal notification:	25 October 2023
Deadline for abstract submission:	22 November 2023
Abstract review notification:	13 December 2023
Early bird registration:	20 January 2024 - 29 February 2024
Standard registration opens:	1 March 2024 - closes 31 May 2024

Registration fee

The early bird registration fee for onsite paper presenters (by 1 March 2024) is 100 EURO, for online presenters 70 EURO. The late registration fee (after 1 March 2024) is 120 EURO for onsite presenters, and 90 EURO for online presenters.

The early bird registration fee for students is 50 EURO (onsite), 30 EURO (online). The late student registration fee (after 1 March 2024) is 70 EURO (onsite), 50 EURO (online).

The early attendant registration fee is 80 EURO. The late attendant registration fee is 100 EURO.

Participation in the conference methodological workshops is free (40 places): 20 places are booked for conference attendants and the other 20 can be booked by conference participants. Registration in advance is required. Please register for the workshops on the conference website.

The conference fee includes the conference bag, refreshments/coffee breaks and a guided excursion in the Old Town of Vilnius on 13 June (Thursday, Day 2 of the conference).

As a post-conference trip – a trip to Trakai, a medievial Lithuanian capital with a castle on a lake (after the conference, for an extra fee, on 15 June, Saturday) Trakai - Wikipedia

Please check our Conference website https://estidia2024.mruni.eu/ for registration details (bank account, etc.).

Publication procedure

Accepted papers (following editorial review) can be included in the conference proceedings published in *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies and Environmental Communication* (ISSN 2285 – 3324).

Authors of high-quality papers will be given the opportunity to have their papers reviewed in view of publication in top international journals (whose profile matches the research and thematic focus of the individual papers).
Participants will have the possibility to submit individual papers to be reviewed for inclusion in a collective volume published with a high-impact international academic publisher. The publisher Mouton de Gruyter has already expressed interest for an edited collection in the Interdisciplinary Linguistics book series, based on thematically related conference papers (deriving from contributions to one or two of the thematic workshops).
A volume of proceedings (containing reviewed papers presented at the conference) will be published at MRU journal *Societal Studies* Societal Studies (mruni.eu)

Scientific Committee

Pilar Blitvich (University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA)
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Contact

Please check the Conference website https://estidia2024.mruni.eu/ periodically or send inquiries to: estidia24@mruni.eu