

Literature and the Anthropocene in EFL Education

Virtual Conference, February 20-21, 2024.

Call for Papers

The Anthropocene is a contested term that refers to the present geological era, where human activities are negatively impacting the Earth's environment and systems, including its climate, land, oceans, and biodiversity. English as a foreign language (EFL) education provides valuable opportunities to introduce global and intercultural perspectives on the challenges of the Anthropocene. One way to engage EFL learners critically with the Anthropocene and make its complexity more accessible, immediate, and meaningful to them is through literary studies.

Literature has the power to challenge established ideas, inspire change, and offer fresh perspectives on real-world problems associated with the Anthropocene. By envisioning alternative futures and scenarios, literature can serve as a catalyst for positive action towards a sustainable future. It can also highlight the intergenerational dimensions of the Anthropocene and provide context and continuity between the present, past, and future. In addition, literature can help learners understand the human and non-human experience of living in the Anthropocene and explore the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to environmental problems. By analyzing and otherwise approaching literary texts, learners can develop empathy and insight into the diverse experiences of living in different parts of the world and gain a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of global systems.

The conference aims to promote multidisciplinary research collaborations. A purpose of the conference is to establish an international network focusing on how the study of literature in EFL can help readers better understand and critically approach the challenges of the Anthropocene in ways that are both significant and urgent. Keynote speakers are Roman Bartosch (University of Cologne), author of *Literature, Pedagogy and Climate Change: Text Models for a Transcultural Ecology* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), and Pieter Vermeulen (University of Leuven), author of *Literature and the Anthropocene* (Routledge, 2020).

Call for papers:

We welcome 250-300-word abstracts for 15-minute conference papers that explore the role literature has or can have in helping learners of EFL in primary, secondary, and tertiary education, including pre-service teacher education, to identify, respond to, challenge, or otherwise critically engage with the Anthropocene. Topics can include but are not limited to the following:

- climate change
- ecological anxiety
- human-animal relationships
- imaginary futures, dystopian or utopian perspectives on the future
- imaginary or real technological challenges
- indigenous perspectives
- non-human perspectives
- representations of natural spaces and landscapes
- rewilding

Paper presentations can introduce research ideas as well as present ongoing or completed research and should be given in English. Please send a 250-word abstract of your proposed paper with a brief, 50-word, biography to malin.lidström.brock@ltu.se, marie.wallin@ltu.se, christian.ludwig@ltu.se by 31 August, 2023. Post-conference plans are to publish a selection of the papers either as a collection of essays or as a special issue in a scholarly journal. For more information about the conference, please visit the conference website:

<https://www.ltu.se/research/subjects/Engelska-med-didaktisk-inriktning/Konferenser/Digital-konferens-Litteratur-under-antropocen-i-engelskamnet-1.228746?l=en>