

2026 BAAHE conference: Human and Human-like Voices

Friday 27 November 2026, UCLouvain (Louvain-la-Neuve)

Call for papers

The Belgian Association of Anglicists in Higher Education (BAAHE) unites scholars affiliated to Belgian higher education institutions from all fields within English Studies, ranging from cultural studies over linguistics and literary studies to translation, interpreting, and ELT studies.

Voice is multifaceted. Not only is it connected with the sounds we make when we speak in one or more language varieties but also with the way we express ourselves and our opinions. Voice also encompasses agency, involvement, empowerment, authorship and creativity. Our voice makes it possible for us to be heard and acknowledged, to express our unique identity and our sense of belonging to one or more groups, to interact with others, to tell and create stories, to speak up and stand up for our rights and beliefs. We can find our voice, choose to speak with one voice, give someone a voice or keep our voice down. Our voice can also be ignored and silenced.

The 2026 edition of BAAHE proposes to explore the theme **“Human and Human-like Voices”** across the various disciplines within English studies. The theme is particularly topical at a time when machine translation and generative artificial intelligence are blurring the boundaries between human expression and machine-generated speech and discourse. The emphasis on voice also takes on special significance in our increasingly politically polarised times as it draws our attention to whose voices are heard and represented or silenced in research, the media, literary work, teaching materials and official or workplace documents for example.

The focus of contributions to the conference can be on any aspect of human, human-like and/or non-human voice(s). Suggested topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

Literature

- Non-human voices: robots, animals, plants, spirits, and others
- Singing and reciting literary works (giving voice to texts)
- Spoken-word poetry and recitation
- Authorial and character voices in prose and poetry
- Unheard or invisible voices: digressions, asides, voice-over, and others
- Vocality and voice work in drama and performances, audio books and audio drama
- Declamation, speech and rhetoric
- Voice and trauma
- Silenced voices and recovered voices

- Embodied voice and communication (e.g. health humanities, environmental humanities, migration settings)

Linguistics

- Spoken language and spoken interactions
- Sociophonetic variation
- Pronunciation, prosody, voice quality
- Agency - active vs passive voice
- Metadiscourse in written and spoken texts
- Expressions of stance
- Silences in conversation analysis
- The representation of various voices (e.g. minority groups, political groups, companies, etc.)
- L1 and L2 English voices
- Varieties of English and multilingualism
- Characterisation of human voice(s) vs GenAI voice(s)

Translation (including subtitling) and interpreting (including sign-language)

- The translator or interpreter's own voice
- Voice skills in interpreting
- The interpreter as an embodied or disembodied voice
- The voice/text or voice/sign interface
- Preserving the voice of a text in translation
- Conveying the speaker's voice in signing and subtitling
- Speech bubbles and sound effects
- GenAI's voice in translation and interpreting

English language teaching

- The teaching of spoken language and pronunciation
- Voices represented in teaching materials
- Teacher talk
- Conversation in (and beyond) the classroom
- AI-assisted task production
- AI-assisted feedback
- AI-assisted course design
- AI-generated teaching materials
- AI-assisted DDL

Please send a **500-word abstract** for a **20-minute paper** to baahe-2026@uclouvain.be by **1 September 2026**. Participation in the conference is free for BAAHE members; non-members pay a modest registration fee (lunch not included). Participants are invited to submit papers

or proposals for a special issue to English Text Construction, BAAHE's international peer-reviewed journal published with John Benjamins.

Keynote speakers

Professor Jennifer Richards, University of Cambridge

Professor Ellen Simon, Universiteit Gent

Important dates

- Call for papers published: 2 June 2026
- **Deadline for submissions: 1 September 2026**
- Notifications of acceptance: 5 October 2026
- Registration deadline for speakers: 6 November 2026
- Registration deadline for attendees: 16 November 2026
- **Conference day: 27 November 2026**

Local organising committee

Paul Arblaster (UCLouvain)

Sylvie De Cock (UCLouvain)

Florence Detienne (UCLouvain)

Thomas De Wispelare (UCLouvain)

James Hastings (UCLouvain)

Lieven Vandelanotte (UNamur)

Registration fees

Free for BAAHE members

Free for UCLouvain students

Non-BAAHE members* (regular fee): EUR 30

Non-BAAHE members* (student fee): EUR 20

*information on how to become a BAAHE member is available here:

<https://baahe4.wixsite.com/baahe/join-baahe>

Lunch

All participants can join the sandwich lunch for an extra EUR 12.

[2026 BAAHE Conference | Université catholique de Louvain](#)