

CALL FOR PAPERS (CFP)

Beyond Nature and Culture: Planetary Precarity in Literary-Cultural-Linguistic Representations



Host: Daffodil International University (DIU), Bangladesh

Date: 4–5 December 2026 (Asia/Dhaka, UTC+6)

Mode: Hybrid (Onsite + Online)

The “modern” disentanglement of the realms of subject and object, culture and nature, as Bruno Latour insightfully observes in *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993), is most evident in the former colonies of the Global South like the Bengal Delta since the entire colonial project in these locations depended on the colonizers’ privileged access to native human bodies and the non-human nature. This “metaphysic of inertness,” a term Amitav Ghosh uses to describe the worldview of colonial extractivism in *The Nutmeg’s Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis* (2021), has in particular led to the non-human world to be framed as mere brute resources without any agency and consciousness, undermining their hybrid ecologies within socio-politico-cultural networks. Consequently, the human and non-human subjectivities and identities have become alien to each other, eventually resulting in biopolitical fractures as Achille Mbembe suggests in *Critique of Black Reason* (2017): “The fierce colonial desire to divide and classify, to create hierarchies and produce difference, leaves behind wounds and scars. Worse, it created a fault line that lives on.” We find recent literary and cultural representations of this fault line in such texts as Amitav Ghosh’s *Gun Island* (2019), Numair Atif Choudhury’s *Babu Bangladesh!* (2019), Margaret Atwood’s *The Testaments* (2019) as well as James Cameron’s epic science fiction movie *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), just to cite a few examples.

Because of their violent colonial legacies, countries of the Global South as opposed to those in the Global North disproportionately experience the slow violence of modernity, as Rob Nixon suggests (2011), in a unipolar neoliberal world order, leading to the precarious existence of the human and the non-human beings. Judith Butler’s idea of precarity between these beings as well as nations of the South and North in *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (2009) and some

other recent works provides a theoretical framework that echoes Karl Marx's thoughts on alienation, reification and the metabolic rift. Butler's conceptualization of such ideas as vulnerability and grievability further gestures towards the entanglement of various ecologies – human and non-human, global and local, highlighting at the same time the frames through which literary-cultural-linguistic mediations are accomplished.

These critical thoughts have profound implications for our urgent reimaginings of the natural and cultural universes as enmeshed as they are in the webs of precarity, vulnerability and grievability. Artists, creative writers, movie directors, linguists and philosophers the world over are engaged significantly in the reframing of the non-human nature with consciousness and agency in literary-cultural as well as linguistic frames. This awareness also poses a crucial phenomenological challenge to us in language pedagogy as far as the ideas of subjects (those who act) and objects (those acted upon) are concerned, as well as how they are entangled in actions (verbs). Besides, in our use of texts in English language classrooms like Aesop's fables or mythical stories from different traditions, where the fox or the lord Ganesha talks, feels and acts, an awareness of the non-human consciousness and their Literary-Cultural-Linguistic reframing is urgently needed.

In the conference entitled "Beyond Nature and Culture: Planetary Precarity in Literary-Cultural-Linguistic Representations," we would like to invite papers on some of the following themes and beyond:

- Colonialism and biopolitical bodies
- Nature as non-agentic and brute
- Non-human agency/consciousness and the Uncanny
- Alienation, reification and the metabolic rift
- Precarity, vulnerability and grievability
- Slow violence and neoliberal modernity
- Eco-linguistics
- Post-humanism in literature and language studies
- The language of the non-human
- Linguistic frames for imagining hybrid networks
- Objects, subjects and actions in ELT pedagogy
- The awareness of the non-human in ELT classrooms
- Human-centric identities and post-human ecologies
- Language, digital technologies and the non-human nature

SDG Alignments

In SDG terms, the eco-cultural rift helps us see how historical inequality and extractive power still shape whose lives, bodies, and environments are made vulnerable, linking the conference’s concern with colonial hierarchy and ongoing dispossession to SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), especially where questions of recognition, inclusion, and justice remain structurally uneven.

The thematic emphasis of the conference on slow violence, precarity, and entangled ecologies offers a direct interpretive bridge to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and to ecosystem-focused goals such as SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land), since the Bengal Delta’s waterscapes and multispecies habitats are precisely where climate risk, ecological degradation, and uneven vulnerability converge most sharply.

Additionally, the conference aligns most explicitly with SDG 4 (Quality Education) — particularly SDG target 4.7 — by treating literary-cultural-linguistic studies as sustainability literacy, and with SDG target 13.3 by strengthening climate awareness through narrative, discourse, and classroom practice; contributors are encouraged to show how their analysis can inform teaching modules, public humanities communication, eco-humanities or other knowledge-transfer outputs. To keep this linkage precise rather than symbolic, authors may, where relevant, indicate 1–2 SDG connections (e.g., SDG 4.7, 13.3, 14.2, 15.1/15.5, 10.2, 16.7) as part of the abstract’s “relevance/impact” line, without reducing the paper’s theoretical and interpretive complexity.

Themes and Subthemes (Tracks)

Track 1 — Colonial Modernity, Biopolitics, and Precarity

- Colonial classification of bodies/nature; “nature/culture” split as governance
- Extraction, dispossession, plantation/logistics, and “resource” thinking
- Slow violence, neoliberal modernity, environmental injustice
- Precarity/vulnerability/grievability; whose lives count as “grievable”
- Biopolitical fractures, borders, policing, surveillance, displacement
- Alienation/reification; the human–earth relation as a broken social relation (metabolic rift as lived experience)

Recommended relevant texts:

- Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island* (climate migration; colonial trade legacies; biopolitical precarity)
- Numair Atif Choudhury, *Babu Bangladesh!* (postcolonial nationhood; precarious sovereignty; biopolitical imaginaries)
- Arif Anwar, *The Storm* (colonial legacies of disaster; biopolitical vulnerability; precarious lives across borders and histories)
- Indra Sinha, *Animal’s People* (toxic disaster, biopolitics of injury)
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *Petals of Blood* (postcolonial dispossession; capitalist extraction; fractured communities under neocolonial modernity)
- Ben Okri, *The Famished Road* (magical realism; precarity of marginalized lives; colonial legacies in urban ecologies)
- Sophie Mackintosh, *The Water Cure* (gendered biopolitics; isolation, policing of bodies; precarity in dystopian ecologies)
- Ken Saro-Wiwa, *Sozaboy* (resource colonialism; petrocapiatist violence; precarity of ordinary lives under militarized governance)
- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, *The Testaments* (gendered biopolitics; reproductive control; precarity under authoritarian modernity)
- James Cameron (dir.), *Avatar: The Way of Water* (colonial extraction; biopolitical regulation of bodies; precarious multispecies futures)
- Imbolo Mbue, *How Beautiful We Were* (resource colonialism; biopolitical violence; precarity of communities under petrocapiatist)

- Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (delta ecology, governance, vulnerability; excellent for Bengal Delta conversations)
- Helon Habila, *Oil on Water* (petro-extraction, violence, damaged ecologies)
- J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (post-apartheid fractures; biopolitics of race, gender, and land; vulnerability and grievability)
- Neill Blomkamp(dir.) *District 9* (biopolitical regulation of bodies; surveillance, policing, and precarity of alien/migrant lives)
- Paul Thomas Anderson (dir.) *There Will Be Blood* (resource colonialism; petrocapiatist extraction; precarity and violence)
- Film case studies that foreground extractive governance and “sacrifice zones” (documentary or fiction—authors can justify locally relevant choices)

Track 2 — More-than-Human Agency, Posthuman Ecologies, and the Uncanny

- Nature “as brute” vs nature as agentic, sensing, communicative
- Nonhuman agency/consciousness; multispecies life; kinship beyond the human
- Hybrid ecologies and networks (human/nonhuman/technology/infrastructure)
- Metabolic rift as narrative: broken relations, repair imaginaries, ethical care
- Posthumanism and environmental ethics; animacy, voice, refusal
- Water/river/ocean agencies (especially useful for delta contexts)

Recommended relevant texts:

- James Cameron (dir.), *Avatar: The Way of Water* (aquatic multispecies agency; uncanny oceanic ecologies; extractive futures)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Living Mountain* (mountain as agent; posthuman ethics; uncanny fragility of Himalayan ecologies)
- Tahmima Anam, *The Bones of Grace* (marine entanglements; uncanny life/death at sea; posthuman critique of shipbreaking and industrial extraction)
- Nnedi Okorafor, *Lagoon* (nonhuman arrival, agency, Lagos ecologies; great for posthuman entanglement)
- Richard Powers, *The Overstory* (arboreal agency; human/nonhuman networks)
- Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation* (uncanny ecology; agency beyond human comprehension)
- Margaret Atwood, *Maddaddam Trilogy*, *Handmaid's Duology* (biotech/posthuman, extinction logics)
- Hayao Miyazaki (dir.), *Princess Mononoke* (forest agency, extractive conflict, ethics)
- Bong Joon-ho (dir.), *Okja* (animal agency, industrial food systems, moral economies)

- Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (nonhuman agency through environment; uncanny ecological collapse; posthuman ethics of survival and care)
- Karen Tei Yamashita, *Through the Arc of the Rainforest* (hybrid ecologies; uncanny infrastructures; multispecies entanglements with technology and nature)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Nutmeg's Curse* (animacy of nature; colonial extraction; posthuman environmental ethics)
- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (indigenous cosmologies; nonhuman agency; repair imaginaries and kinship beyond the human)
- Ben Okri, *Astonishing the Gods* (uncanny ecologies; posthuman metaphors of invisibility and agency)
- Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (multispecies life; fungal agency; broken relations and repair imaginaries in capitalist ruins)
- Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction* (nonhuman agency in extinction narratives; uncanny planetary futures; ethical care in posthuman contexts)
- Guillermo del Toro (dir.), *The Shape of Water* (aquatic agency; uncanny kinship across species; posthuman ethics of care and refusal)
- Hayao Miyazaki (dir.), *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (hybrid ecologies; multispecies agency; uncanny posthuman ethics in toxic landscapes)
- Michaël Dudok de Wit (dir.), *The Red Turtle* (oceanic agency; uncanny kinship; posthuman repair imaginaries through nonhuman voice)
- Pippa Ehrlich & James Reed (dir.), *My Octopus Teacher* (ocean agency; multispecies kinship; ethical care and posthuman entanglement)

Track 3 —Eco-cultural Rifts, Water/Landscapes, and Environmental Justice

- How form carries ethics: voice, narration, witnessing, silence, spectacle vs accountability
- Delta imaginaries: tides, storms, mangroves, wetlands, river-life
- Climate displacement, migration, borders, “who belongs where”
- Corporate/imperial infrastructures as characters (dams, ships, pipelines, data systems)
- Archive, memory, and repair: how texts hold harm without consuming it
- Myth/fable/folklore as ecological thinking (not “primitive,” but alternative knowledge systems)

Recommended relevant texts:

- Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island* (delta imaginaries; climate displacement; borders and belonging)
- Ken Saro-Wiwa, *Sozaboy* (voice and witnessing; petro-infrastructure; environmental justice in resource conflict)

- Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (river-life; delta imaginaries; ecological precarity and cultural rifts)
- Helon Habila, *Oil on Water* (petro-extraction; damaged ecologies; witnessing violence and environmental injustice)
- Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* (climate displacement; borders and belonging; migration and precarity)
- Linda Hogan, *Mean Spirit* (Indigenous ecologies; oil extraction; witnessing and accountability)
- Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (ruined landscapes; infrastructures of extraction; repair imaginaries and multispecies justice)
- Fernando Meirelles (dir.), *The Constant Gardener* (corporate infrastructures; witnessing harm; environmental justice in pharmaceutical colonialism)
- Jennifer Baichwal (dir.), *Manufactured Landscapes* (industrial infrastructures; spectacle vs accountability; archive of ecological harm)
- Numair Atif Choudhury, *Babu Bangladesh!* (storms, wetlands, precarious ecologies; nationhood and environmental justice)
- Margaret Atwood, *The Testaments* (voice, witnessing, silence; spectacle vs accountability in biopolitical ecologies)
- James Cameron (dir.), *Avatar: The Way of Water* (aquatic landscapes; corporate/imperial infrastructures; multispecies justice)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (river-life; mangroves; human/nonhuman conflict; ideal for close reading)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Nutmeg's Curse* (colonial infrastructures; archive and repair; ecological violence)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (narration and ethics; witnessing climate precarity; cultural rifts)
- Monique Roffey, *The Mermaid of Black Conch* (sea folklore; colonial desire; more-than-human intimacy)
- Linda Hogan, *Solar Storms* (waters and land struggle; Indigenous ecology; infrastructure conflict)
- Alexis Wright, *Carpentaria* (Country as agent; extraction; mythic-real ecology; hybrid networks)
- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Testaments* (biopolitical ecologies; witnessing and accountability; precarity of belonging)
- Benh Zeitlin (dir.), *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (floodscape precarity; ethics of representation; delta imaginaries—use critically)
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Wizard of the Crow* (infrastructures as characters; imperial spectacle vs accountability; ecological justice through satire)
- Indra Sinha, *Animal's People* (toxic disaster; witnessing and silence; archive of harm and repair)
- Luc Jacquet (dir.), *Ice and the Sky* (climate witnessing; archive and repair; environmental justice through scientific testimony)
- Joshua Oppenheimer (dir.), *The Look of Silence* (voice, silence, witnessing; infrastructures of violence; ecological justice as memory work)

- Rithy Panh (dir.), *The Missing Picture* (archive and repair; witnessing harm without consuming it; ecological and cultural rifts)

Track 4 — Linguistics, ELT Pedagogy, and Sustainability Literacy

- Agency in grammar and phenomenological worldviews: subject/object/verb; transitivity and “who acts” in texts
- Ecolinguistics: stories we live by; ecological metaphors; discourses of “resources,” “development,” “waste”
- Polyphony and dialogism between the human and non-human
- Anthropomorphic and naturo-morphic imaginations
- Critical discourse analysis of climate/extraction narratives (media, policy, textbooks)
- Classroom texts that animate the non-human (fables/myths) and what that trains ethically
- Language, animation, digital technology: memes, shorts, dubbing/subtitling, AI voices, eco-narratives online
- Curriculum design: SDG-aligned learning outcomes (especially 4.7, 13.3) without moralizing

Recommended relevant texts:

- Aesop’s fables (as classroom corpus)
- Mythic stories where non-humans speak/act (e.g., Ganesha stories—use whichever tradition fits the course context)
- *The Panchatantra* and *Jataka Tales* (animal agency, ethics, social life—excellent for language classes)
- Local/regionally taught folk tales from Bengal/delta communities (teachers can curate community-authored versions)
- Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax* (simple but surprisingly useful for agency/voice and persuasion analysis in ELT)
- Short climate fiction (“cli-fi” flash) and eco-poems suitable for classroom discourse analysis (authors can select locally relevant anthologies)
- Public-facing climate texts (news headlines, NGO posters, government advisories) for grammatical/discourse analysis of agency and responsibility
- George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (ecolinguistics foundations; ecological metaphors; discourses of development and resources)
- Arran Stibbe, *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (core text for sustainability literacy; critical discourse analysis of ecological narratives)
- Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (critical discourse analysis; agency and responsibility in texts; useful for climate/extraction narratives)
- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (critical pedagogy; agency in classroom discourse; ethics of voice and witnessing)

- Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (agency in grammar and discourse; useful for analyzing climate texts and sustainability narratives)
- Mary Macken-Horarik, *Appraisal and the Language of Evaluation* (voice, stance, accountability; classroom analysis of ecological texts)
- UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives* (curriculum design; SDG-aligned outcomes; sustainability literacy in ELT)
- Local/regional proverbs and oral traditions (agency in grammar; ecological metaphors; ethical training through language)
- Children's eco-literature anthologies (short stories, poems; animating the non-human; classroom-friendly sustainability discourse)
- Chris Paine (dir.), *Who Killed the Electric Car?* (critical discourse analysis; corporate infrastructures; sustainability narratives in media)
- Davis Guggenheim (dir.), *An Inconvenient Truth* (public-facing climate discourse; persuasion and agency; sustainability literacy in classroom contexts)
- Luc Jacquet (dir.), *March of the Penguins* (animal agency; narration and voice; ecological metaphors for classroom analysis)
- Bonni Cohen & Jon Shenk (dir.), *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power* (policy discourse; witnessing and accountability; sustainability literacy)
- Jeff Orlowski (dir.), *Chasing Ice* (spectacle vs accountability; witnessing climate harm; discourse analysis of visual narratives)

Publication opportunity

Selected papers will be published in two edited volumes with Springer Nature and one volume with Star Scholars Network. The volumes are to be Scopus-indexed.

Important dates (Asia/Dhaka, UTC+6)

- Call for Papers release: April 2026
- Abstract submission deadline: 15 June 2026
- Abstract review window: 16 June – 16 July 2026
- Acceptance of abstracts: 17 July – 30 July 2026
- Full paper submission window: 1 August – 30 October 2026

Submission guidelines (Abstracts)

- Abstract length: 150-200 words.
- Include: paper title; author name(s); affiliation(s); country; email of corresponding author; track (1–4); 4–6 keywords; and mode of participation (onsite/online).
- File format: DOCX or PDF.
- Subject line (recommended): EDDIU2026_Abstract_TrackX_LeadSurname
- SDG relevance/impact line (optional): where relevant, indicate 1–2 SDG connections (e.g., SDG 4.7, 13.3, 14.2, 15.1/15.5, 10.2, 16.7).

Conference Link: <https://engconference.diu.edu.bd/>

Registration fees

Category	BDT	USD	EUR	INR
Regular Registration	5,000	50	40	4000
Early Bird Registration	3,500	35	30	3,000

Fees cover conference access, food, kit and certificate.

Currency conversions may vary depending on payment channel/exchange rate.

Approximate program structure

Day & Date (Asia/Dhaka, UTC+6)	Core Sessions
Day 1 — Thursday, 4 December 2026	Inaugural / Opening Session; Keynote Address (1); Panel Discussion (1); Parallel Sessions (paper presentations)
Day 2 — Friday, 5 December 2026	Parallel Sessions (paper presentations); Panel Discussion (2); Keynote Address (2); Closing Session

Session timings can be finalized after the number of accepted papers is confirmed.

Editorial and review workflow (for publication consideration)

1. Call for papers
2. Accepting abstracts (2 months)
3. Reviewing abstracts (15–20 days)
4. Sending abstract acceptance and call for full papers (2.5 months)
5. Sorting full papers according to tracks
6. Editorial screening (1 month) for sending for peer review / rejection

7. Starting review of full papers (1–2 months)
8. Editorial comments
9. Revision or rejection (for revision, 1 month)
10. Editorial screening of revised paper; if necessary, 2nd round of review
11. Acceptance for publication & presentation

Note: Specific presentation slots, parallel session counts, and the final publication workflow will depend on the number of accepted papers and the final editorial plan.