

Dialogic Matters: Exploring Materiality in Language, Communication, and Culture

International Association for Dialogue Analysis (IADA) Conference

Jyväskylä, Finland

11-13 May 2026

The 2026 Conference of the International Association for Dialogue Analysis (IADA) will be held in Jyväskylä, Finland, on May 11-13, 2026, and will be hosted by the Department of Language and Communication Studies of the University of Jyväskylä. The conference will focus on the dynamic interconnections between dialogic processes and materiality in shaping societal and organizational phenomena.

Several ongoing global developments, such as the climate crisis, pandemics, growing inequalities, and the proliferation of algorithmic technologies, challenge students, researchers, scholars, and educators to rethink the relationships between humans and their material environments. These developments raise fundamental questions that go to the heart of how we understand the nature of, for example, knowledge, interaction, power, and politics. They call us to overcome disciplinary polarization and contribute to new theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches that can serve as a basis for addressing the pressing issues of our time.

Following the so-called 'material turn', a growing number of scholars in the human and social sciences recognize the deep entanglement of societal and organizational phenomena with materiality. This turn has recognized that material environments are not only about physical artifacts, but also about social and affective factors that both shape and are shaped by processes such as language, communication, and culture (Kuhn, Ashcraft & Cooren, 2017; Neville, Haddington, Heinemann & Rauniomaa, 2014; Pietikäinen, 2024; Streeck, Goodwin & LeBaron, 2011). To explore this interplay, scholars have developed and drawn upon a variety of theoretical positions, including actor-network theory (Latour, 2005), vital materialism (Bennett, 2007), agential realism (Barad, 2007), posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013), and the assemblage/agencement approach (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). What these positions have in common is that they seek to overcome traditional dichotomies such as nature/culture, mind/matter, and human/non-human.

This conference follows and seeks to enrich this general interdisciplinary trajectory. In keeping with IADA's general focus on language as dialogue, it welcomes contributions on a wide range of topics and perspectives related to language use (e.g., conversation, discourse, and social interaction) that can help us better understand the dynamic interconnections between dialogic processes and materiality in shaping various societal

and organizational phenomena. While much dialogue-related research has focused on human actors, it increasingly recognizes their mutual interconnectedness with materiality. This is evident already in Bakhtin's words, which do not reduce dialogue to a purely human concern: "I hear voices in everything and dialogic relations among them" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 169, emphasis in original). More recently, developments in domains such as multimodal conversation analysis (Mondada, 2019), digital discourse studies (Jones, 2020), and the constitutive view of communication (Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009; Cooren, 2006) have helped us to explore materiality in dialogic processes in different empirical contexts.

The conference welcomes empirical, theoretical, and methodological papers from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Potential questions papers may address include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How can we study and theorize the embodied (e.g., voice, gesture), physical, and environmental features of dialogue?
- How do dialogues with materiality transform social narratives, organizational forms, and/or personal identities?
- How do emerging technologies (e.g., algorithms, platforms) and ecological considerations challenge traditional understandings of materiality in dialogic practices?
- How do material ecologies of contemporary production and consumption shape and orient social action?
- What methodologies are needed to explore the material and affective registers of dialogic processes when they are understood as 'pre-linguistic' and 'non-representational'?
- How are societal and organizational phenomena materialized in and through material-discursive practices?
- How do spaces, places, and atmospheres constitute and are constituted by dialogical action?
- What ethical and political questions arise from the study of materiality in dialogical practices?

Submit your abstract (max. 400 words including potential references) by **17 November 2025**.

[Submit your abstract](#)

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