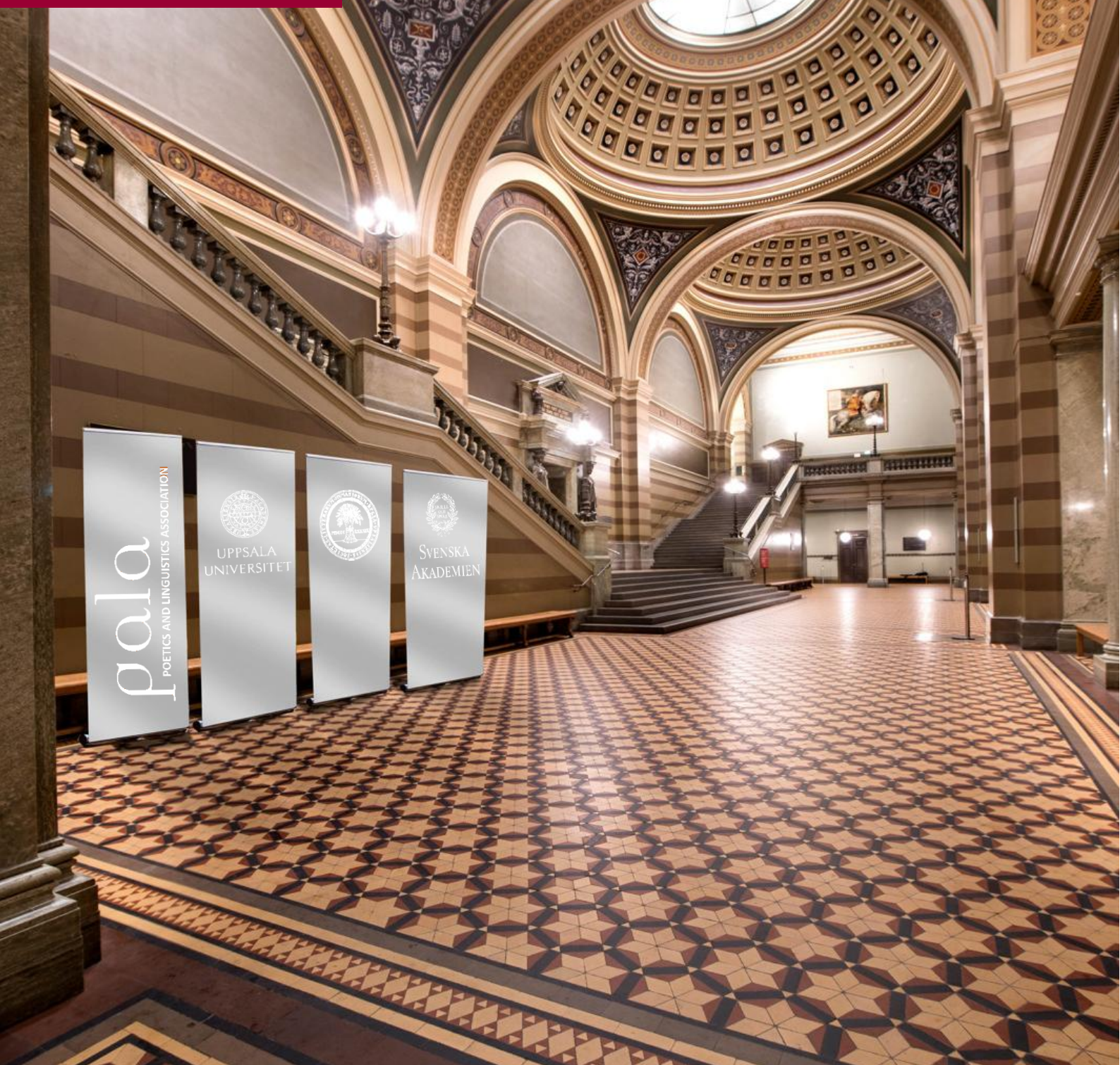




UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

PALA 2026
19-22 August



Book of Abstracts

PALA 2026

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The following publishers will be in attendance at the conference:

- ❖ Cambridge University Press (representative: Becky Taylor)
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Why are there stylistic devices anyway? Towards a stylistics of experience

Anna Chesnokova (Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Ukraine) and Willie van Peer (Ludwig Maximilian University, Germany)

Persuasive as it is, present-day stylistics nevertheless has a range of shortcomings. It offers a good account of linguistic elements that are distinctive in literary texts; yet there is sparse research which brings together linguistic description and evidence-based account of the mental effects of linguistic features (Alber and Schneider, 2025). If stylistics limits itself to such descriptions, it neglects probing the rationale behind these elements, nor does it acknowledge the role these features play in inducing experiences when reading literature.

With this critique in mind, we advocate a stylistics of experience, as able to both describe the linguistic features of texts and to explain why these features are there, laying bare the emotions involved in reading literature.

In line with the tenets of psychopoetics (van Peer and Chesnokova, 2022), we will report an experiment in which participants read Keats's 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer' and reported their reactions. The results indicate that, despite many cognitive difficulties experienced by readers, these did not diminish their emotional enjoyment of the text.

Keywords

cognitive poetics; emotional reading; literary experience; psychopoetics; stylistic devices

References

- Alber, J. and Schneider, R. (eds) (2025) *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Cognitive Studies*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- van Peer, W. and Chesnokova, A. (2022) *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.



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