

# Social Encounters with Artificial Others

*Linguistic, Emotional, and Cognitive Relationality in Contemporary Human–AI Interaction*

**Workshop 16.–17. April 2026**

Organisation: University of Zurich, Switzerland

Venue: ETH Zurich, Switzerland

Address: Rämistrasse 101, 8006 Zürich

Rooms: ETH Main Building (HG E22, HG E41, HG F33.1, HG F33.5)

Conference Office: ETH Main Building (HG F33.3)

Website: [https://www.ds.uzh.ch/de/tagungen/social\\_encounters\\_with\\_artificial\\_others](https://www.ds.uzh.ch/de/tagungen/social_encounters_with_artificial_others)

# Conference Theme

Over the past years, interactions between humans and artificial interlocutors have increasingly become part of everyday life. AIs such as ChatGPT, Woebot, and Replika are perceived not merely as tools, but as helpers, confidants, or even romantic partners. These encounters compel us to rethink the linguistic, social, and epistemic foundations of concepts such as "(social) interaction," and furthermore to reconsider the boundaries of subjectivity and identity.

This interdisciplinary workshop explores how language functions as a medium through which humans and machines establish, negotiate, and sustain relationships. It seeks to address how identity, intimacy, and social and emotional connection are linguistically and discursively constructed in dialogues with artificial entities – and how such exchanges transform broader understandings of being human in the age of personable AI. The workshop aims to provide a space for discussion, exchange, and collaboration across disciplinary boundaries, with a focus on understanding the linguistic and psychological mechanisms that shape human engagement with artificial interlocutors.

# Programme: Thursday, 16. April 2026

## MORNING

**9:00 – 10:00** Registration: HG F33.3 (Conference Office)

**10:00 – 11:00** Coffee break (*PolySnack*)

**11:00 – 12:00** **Conference Opening: HG E22**  
Keynote: Prof. Dr. Miriam Lind

## PARALLEL SESSIONS · 12:00 – 13:00

### Section I (German) · HG F33.1

**12:00 – 12:30**

Jeanette Landgrebe

*"ADDICTED TO VIRTUAL LOVE": A social-interactional perspective on the forming of emotional bonds and attachment with AIs*

**12:30 – 13:00**

Karsten Senkbeil et al.

*Between Anthropomorphism and Technicity: Studies on Interactions with an Embodied AI in Virtual Reality*

### Section II (German / English) · HG E22

**12:00 – 12:30**

Julia Marija Sugawara

*Constructing AI as Social Actor: Agency Framing in Japanese Workplace Discourse*

**12:30 – 13:00**

Adrian Rudershausen & Benjamin Buck

*Designing for Adoption: How Social Cues Shape the Success of Human-AI Collaboration in Organisations*

**13:00 – 14:30**

Lunch break (*PolySnack*)

# Programme: Thursday, 16. April 2026

AFTERNOON

## Section I (German) · HG F33.1

**14:30 – 15:00**

Oliver Spiess

*Interactional relevance at the heart of participancy:  
Evidence from a comparison of human- and LLM-generated  
utterances in argumentative context*

**15:00 – 15:30**

Angeliki Alvanoudi

*Indexing stance in 'initiating actions' in human-AI interaction*

**15:30 – 16:00**

Nicole Katzir & Natalia Levshina

*Signaling Confidence: Comparing Stance in Human and  
LLM outputs*

**16:00 – 16:30**

Florina Züllli

*"I Can Imagine How Difficult That Must Be for You..."  
Linguistic Constructions of Empathy and Human Identity in  
Psychotherapeutic Dialogue with Large Language Models*

## Section II (German / English) · HG F33.5

**14:30 – 15:00**

Madlen Glass & Michael Bigos

*Between Empowerment and Alienation: Narrative Encounters  
of Students with Migration Backgrounds with Generative AI –  
A Media-Anthropological Study*

**15:00 – 15:30**

Alexandra Gubina

*The Emergence of Social Relations in Learner-AI Interaction:  
A Conversation Analytic Perspective*

**15:30 – 16:00**

Marjut Johansson & Hilla-Marja Honkalammi

*Speaking with an embodied social robot: A job interview  
simulation in a foreign language interaction task*

**16:00 – 16:30**

Monowar Hossain

*Negotiating Face with Artificial Others: Pragmatic Co-  
construction in Multilingual Human-AI Encounters*

**16:30**

Reception Apéro (Uhrenhalle, ETH Main Building Floor F)

**20:00**

Conference Dinner (Dozentenfoyer, ETH Main Building,)

# Programme: Friday, 17. April 2026

MORNING

## Section I (German) · HG F33.1

**9:30 – 10:00**

Thomas Messerli

*Praised by ChatGPT: Compliments and relational work in Human-Chatbot interaction*

**10:00 – 10:30**

Daniel Knuchel & Luca Kaltenbach

*Humanizing Artificial Others: Relational Positioning and Metapragmatic Awareness in Student Writing with AI*

## Section II (German / English) · HG F33.5

**9:30 – 10:00**

Karola Pitsch & Thomas Schmidt

*Dealing with 'shifted answers'. Un-black-boxing aspects of LLM-based Chatbots*

**10:00 – 10:30**

Hiloko Kato

*NPCs as Social Artifacts: Between Technological Skepticism and Social Bonds*

**10:30 – 11:00**

Coffee break (*PolySnack*)

**11:00 – 13:00**

**Workshop «State of the art AI chatbots for research and business»**

Room: HG E41

Speaker: Adrian Rudershausen | Benjamin Buck (English)

**13:00 – 14:30**

Lunch break (*PolySnack*)

# Programme: Friday, 17. April 2026

AFTERNOON

## Section I (German) · HG F33.1

**14:30 – 15:00**

Sasha Coelho et al.

*How Expressive are We when Communicating with Robots?  
Expressive Speech Acts and Emotions in Human-Robot vs.  
Human-Human Interaction*

**15:00 – 15:30**

Simone Dinse de Salas

*Crafting Artificial Others: Adolescent Chatbot Design and  
Reflexive Negotiations of Personhood in Human-AI  
Interaction*

## Section II (German / English) · HG F33.5

**14:30 – 15:00**

Erik Lagerstedt & Christina Howes

*The Butler Effect*

**15:00 – 15:30**

Thomas Zurfluh

*Polite Fictions: Sociality in Socratic Voice-AI Dialogues*

**15:30 – 16:00**

Coffee break (*PolySnack*)

**16:30**

Guided city tour of Zurich (German or English)  
Meeting point: In front of HG E41

# Workshop: State of the Art AI Chatbots for Research and Business

FRIDAY, 17. APRIL 2026 · 11:00 – 13:00 · HG E41



This workshop explores the possibilities and challenges of designing AI systems that can convincingly emulate human roles, personalities, and behaviors and, equipped with specific knowledge and skills, participate productively in work processes.

At its core, the workshop addresses two central questions: How can human behavior patterns, personalities, and decision-making capacities be modeled in such a way that AI systems not only understand them but also integrate them meaningfully and effectively into everyday professional contexts? What new opportunities for hybrid forms of collaboration arise from this? How does work change when AI ceases to be merely a tool and becomes an active participant, a "team member"? We will explore the conceptual space between humans and machines: Which notions, structures, and semantic frameworks enable collaboration between AI and human teams? Which shared concepts, vocabulary, and codes already exist, and where does the cultural terra incognita begin that still awaits exploration?

# Workshop: State of the Art AI Chatbots — Approach & Method

FRIDAY, 17. APRIL 2026 · 11:00 – 13:00 · HG E41

The workshop combines psychological and sociocultural approaches such as the Big Five, Sinus Milieus, and narrative role profiles with persona engineering, AI architecture, and prompt design. It demonstrates how AI assistants can be designed and integrated into work processes through the interaction of these components, for instance as target group personas, knowledge mediators, or learning companions.

Finally, we will put two distinct types of AI to the test: Do they convincingly embody what they claim to represent? Do they fulfill their respective tasks? Are they useful? And perhaps most importantly, do we want to work with them?

## Big Five & Sinus Milieus

Psychological and  
sociocultural profiling  
approaches

## Persona Engineering

AI architecture and  
prompt design

## Hybrid Collaboration

AI as active team  
member in work  
processes

## Live Testing

Two distinct AI types  
evaluated in real time



## Practical Information



### Dates

16.–17. April 2026



### Venue

ETH Zurich, Switzerland  
Rämistrasse 101, 8006 Zürich



### Organisation

University of Zurich, Switzerland



### Rooms

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Conference Office: HG F33.3

# Social Programme & Cultural Events

Thursday, 16 April · 16:30

Reception Apéro  
Uhrenhalle, ETH Main Building Floor F

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Friday, 17 April · 16:30

Guided City Tour of Zurich  
German or English  
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