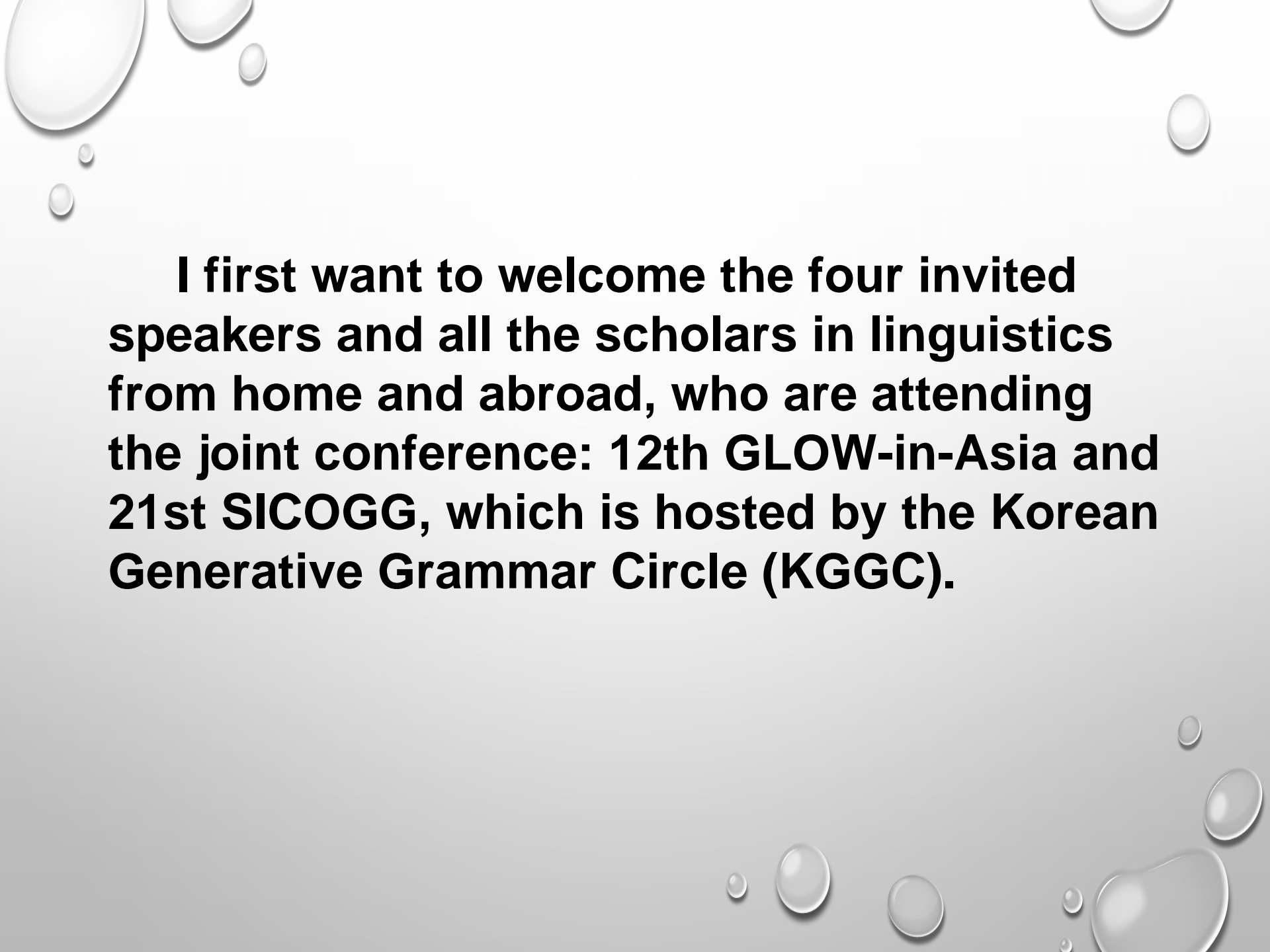


# **Welcoming Speech**




**Dr. Sung Yee Yoon,  
President of Dongguk University  
(Delivered by Vice President and  
Venerable Buddhist Monk Jong-Ho)**



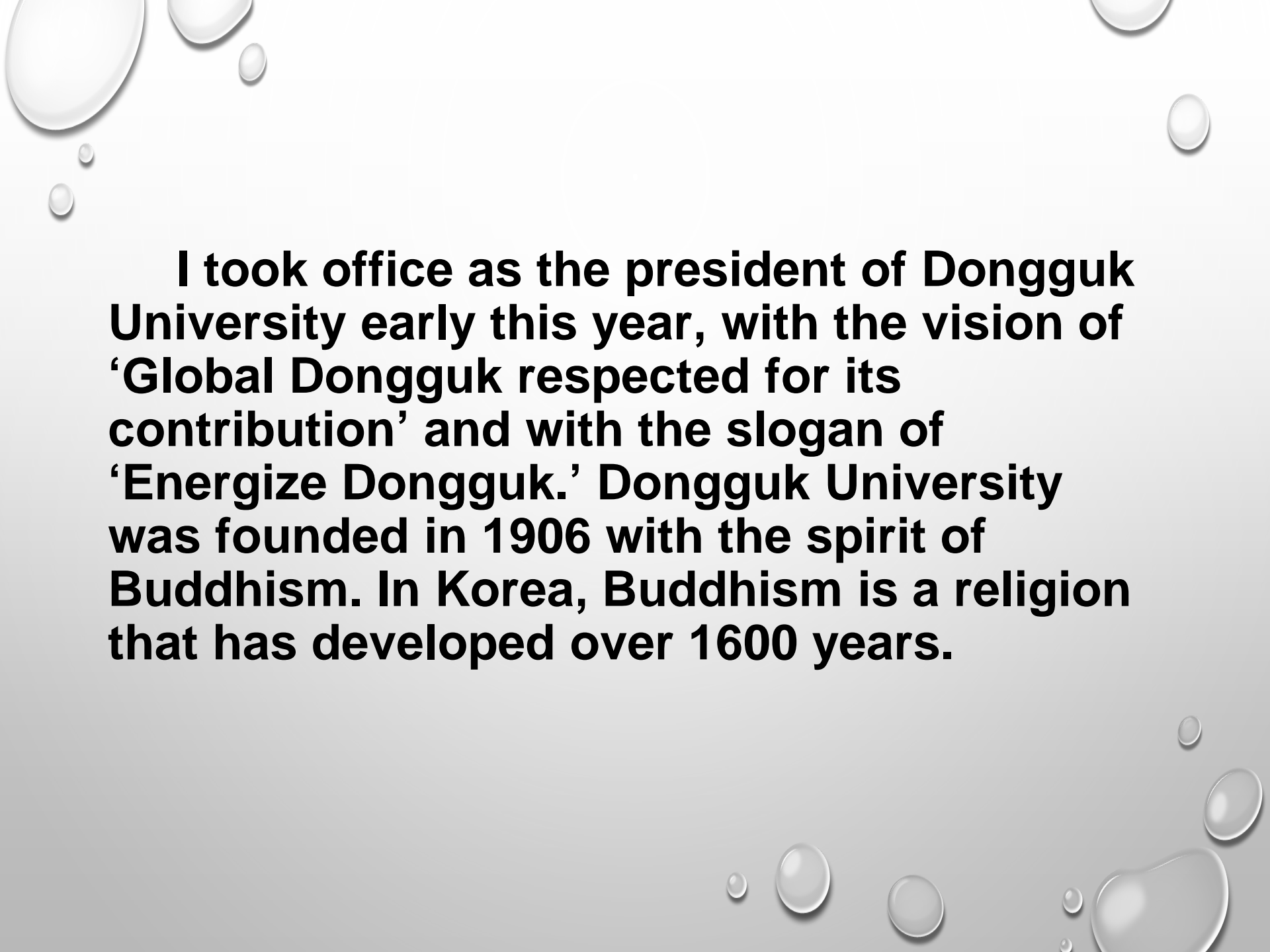
**I first want to welcome the four invited speakers and all the scholars in linguistics from home and abroad, who are attending the joint conference: 12th GLOW-in-Asia and 21st SICOGG, which is hosted by the Korean Generative Grammar Circle (KGGC).**



**I also want to express sincere gratitude to the president of the hosting KGGC Jong Kun Lee, the director Heunwoo Yoo of the supervising Research Institute for East-West Thought and Dongguk University Humanities Research Institute, and the conference organizer prof. Myung-Kwan Park, for all the concerted efforts in preparation of this joint conference.**

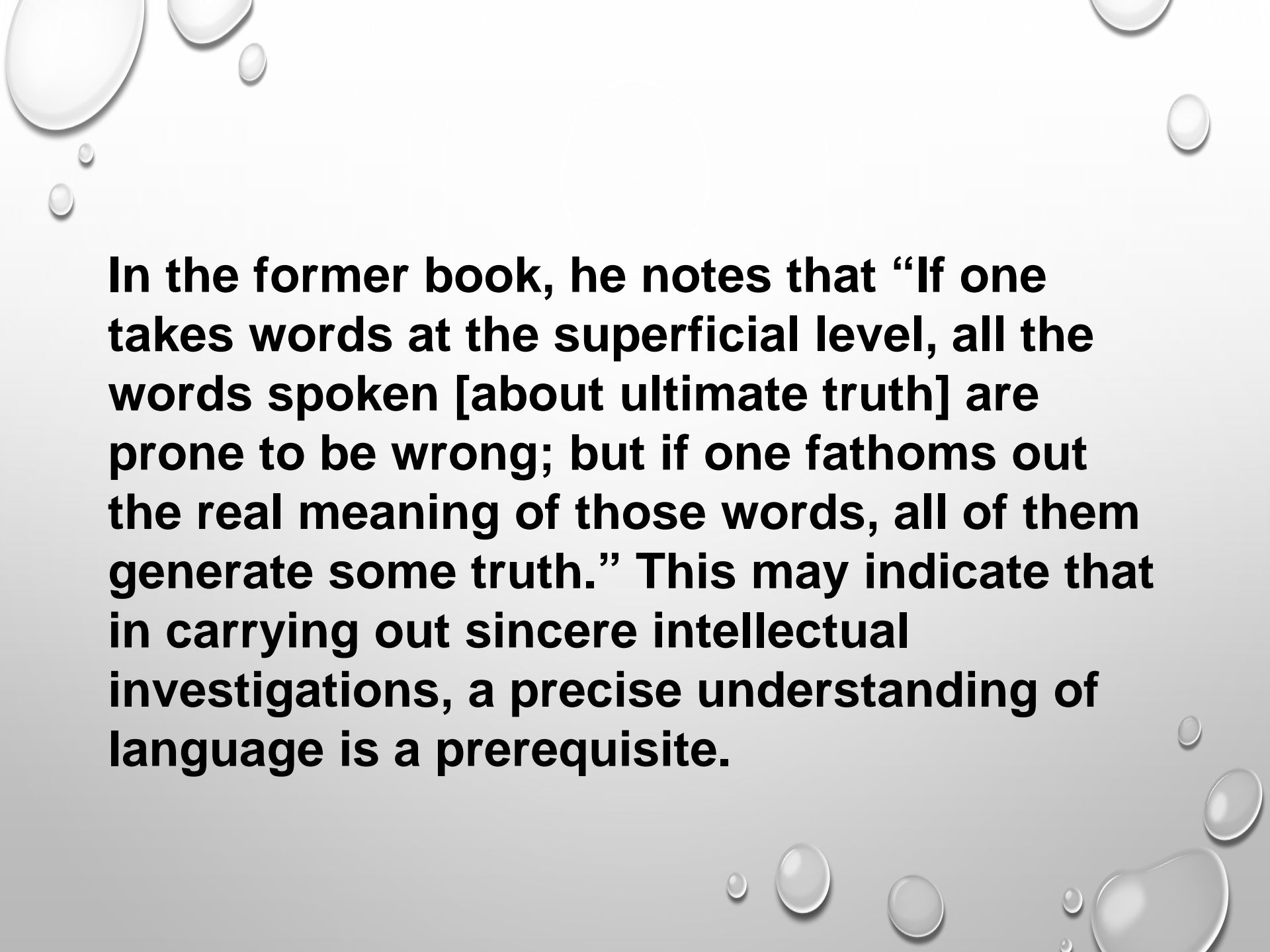


**In addition, I am really grateful to all the organizing committee members and all the participants for holding this reputed international joint conference at my university.**

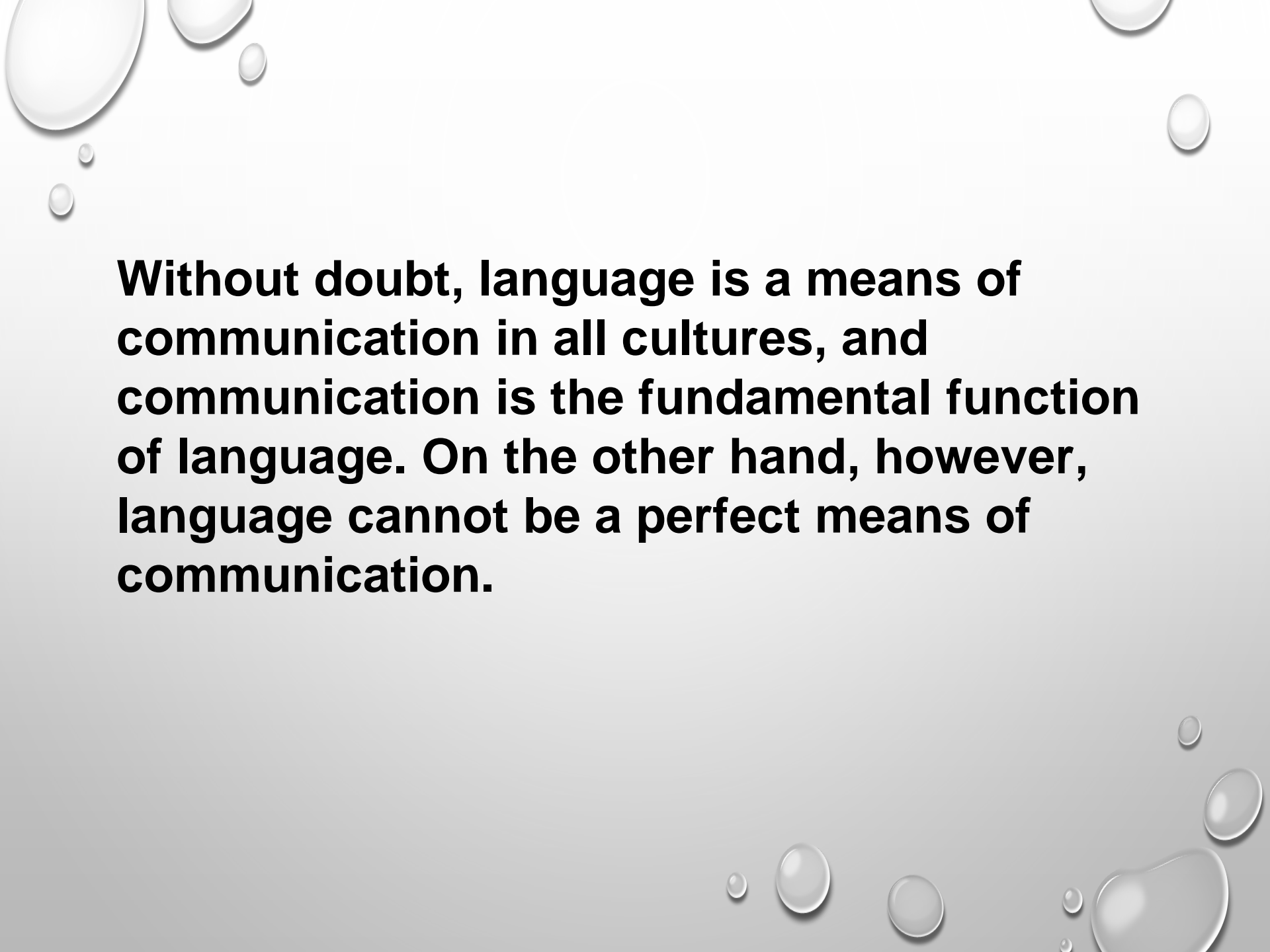


**I took office as the president of Dongguk University early this year, with the vision of ‘Global Dongguk respected for its contribution’ and with the slogan of ‘Energize Dongguk.’ Dongguk University was founded in 1906 with the spirit of Buddhism. In Korea, Buddhism is a religion that has developed over 1600 years.**

**Among the many high Buddhist priests, venerable Buddhist Master Wonhyo (617 ~ 686) of the Silla period, especially in his works *Treatise on the Ten Ways of Resolving Controversies and Commentaries* and *Notes on the 'Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna'*, presents us with important ideas about 'language.'**

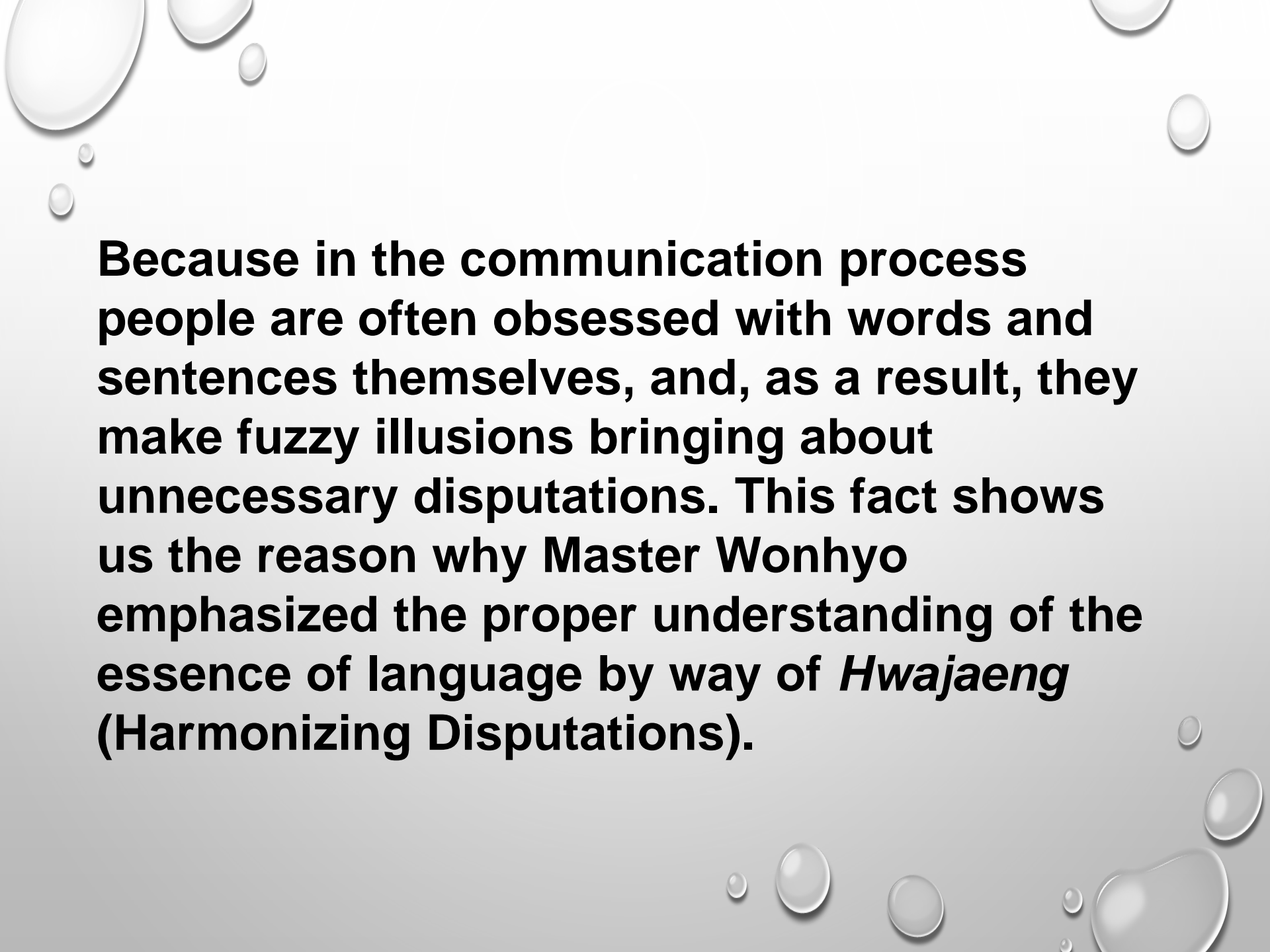


**In the former book, he notes that “If one takes words at the superficial level, all the words spoken [about ultimate truth] are prone to be wrong; but if one fathoms out the real meaning of those words, all of them generate some truth.” This may indicate that in carrying out sincere intellectual investigations, a precise understanding of language is a prerequisite.**

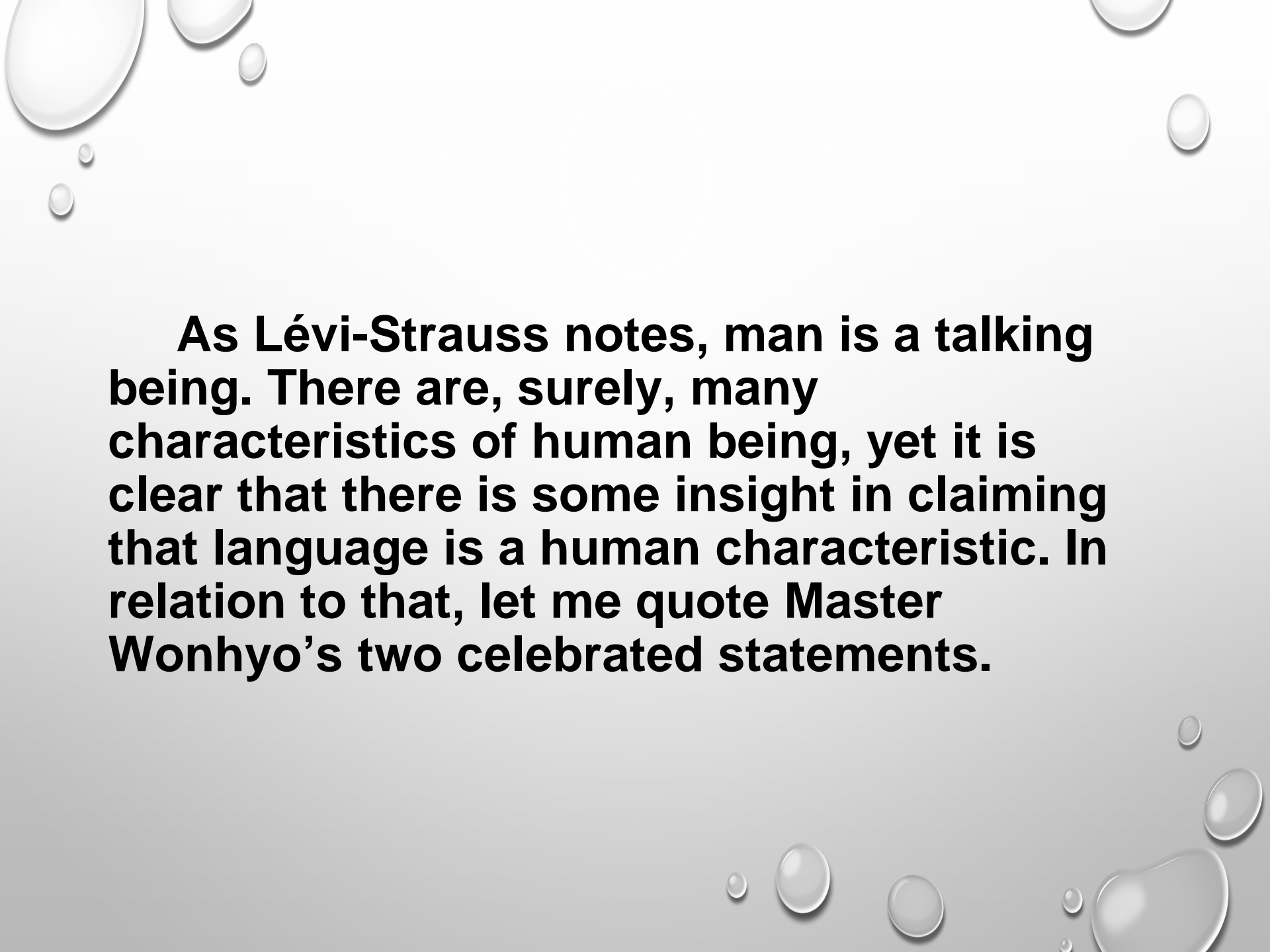


**Without doubt, language is a means of communication in all cultures, and communication is the fundamental function of language. On the other hand, however, language cannot be a perfect means of communication.**





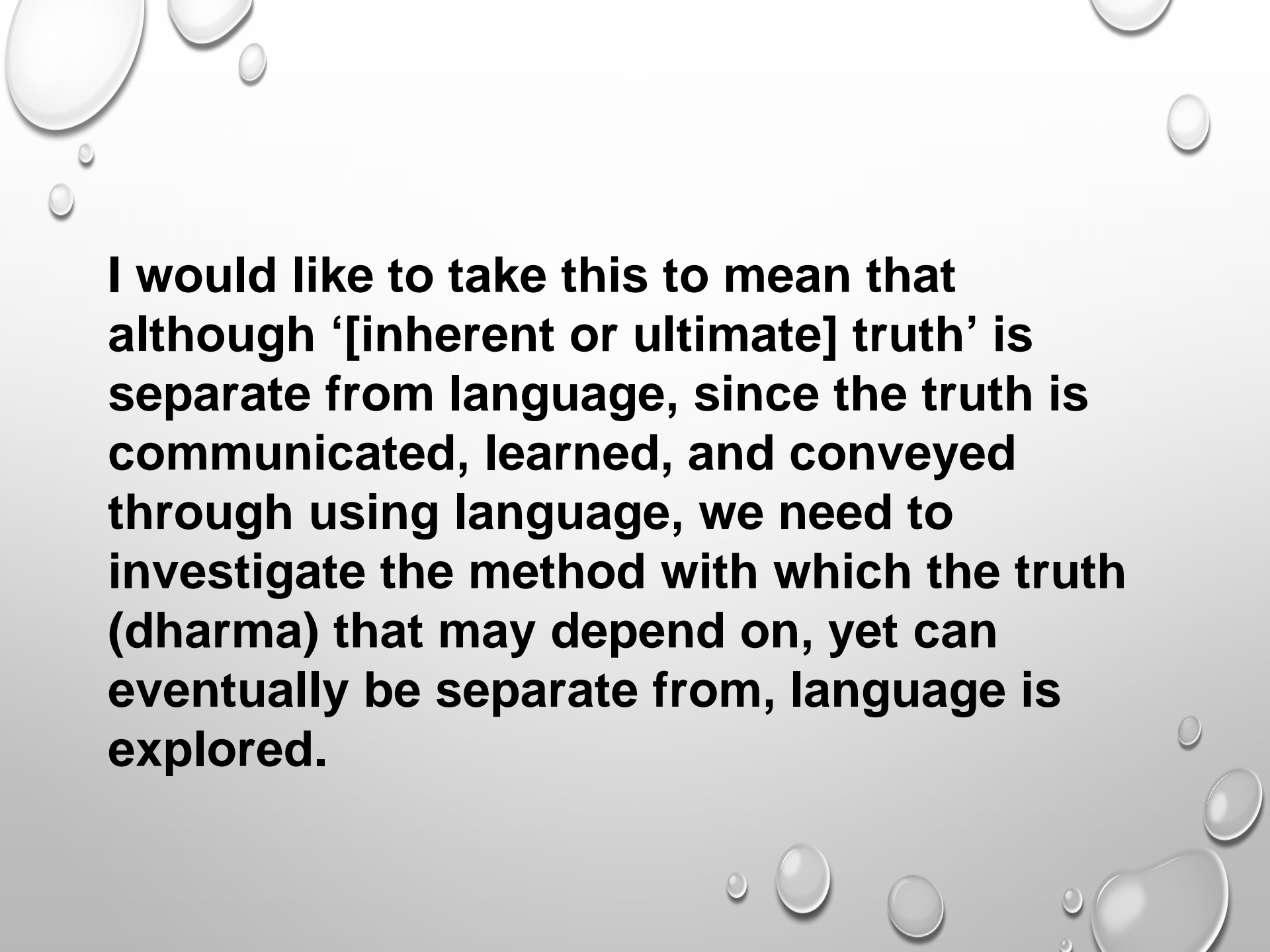
**Because in the communication process people are often obsessed with words and sentences themselves, and, as a result, they make fuzzy illusions bringing about unnecessary disputations. This fact shows us the reason why Master Wonhyo emphasized the proper understanding of the essence of language by way of *Hwajaeng* (Harmonizing Disputations).**



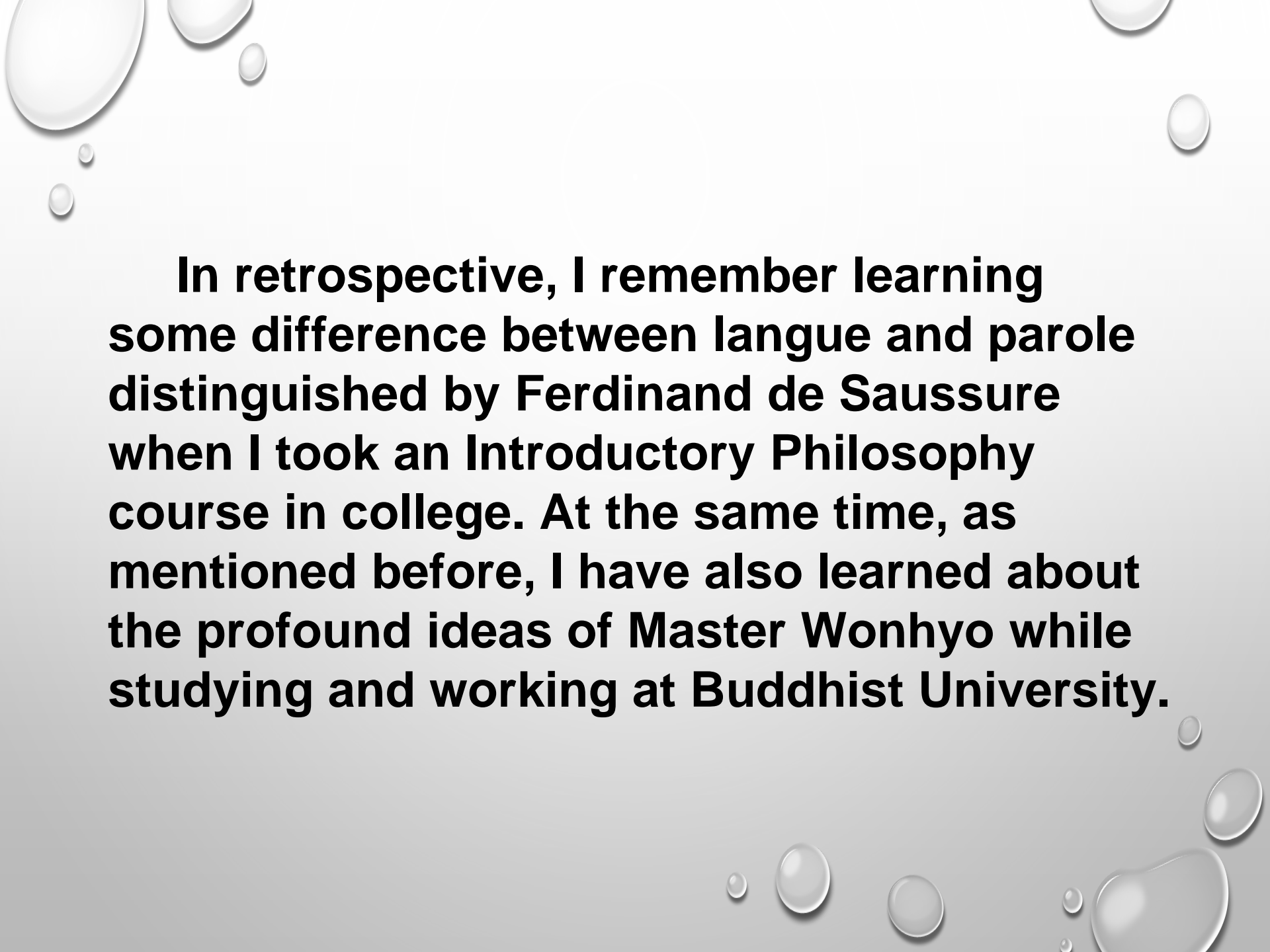
**As Lévi-Strauss notes, man is a talking being. There are, surely, many characteristics of human being, yet it is clear that there is some insight in claiming that language is a human characteristic. In relation to that, let me quote Master Wonhyo's two celebrated statements.**

**In *Treatise on the Ten Ways of Resolving Controversies*, he states that “I make use of words to communicate, in order to express the truth that is separate from words. It is like using the finger to point at the moon, which [of course] is separate from the pointing finger.”**

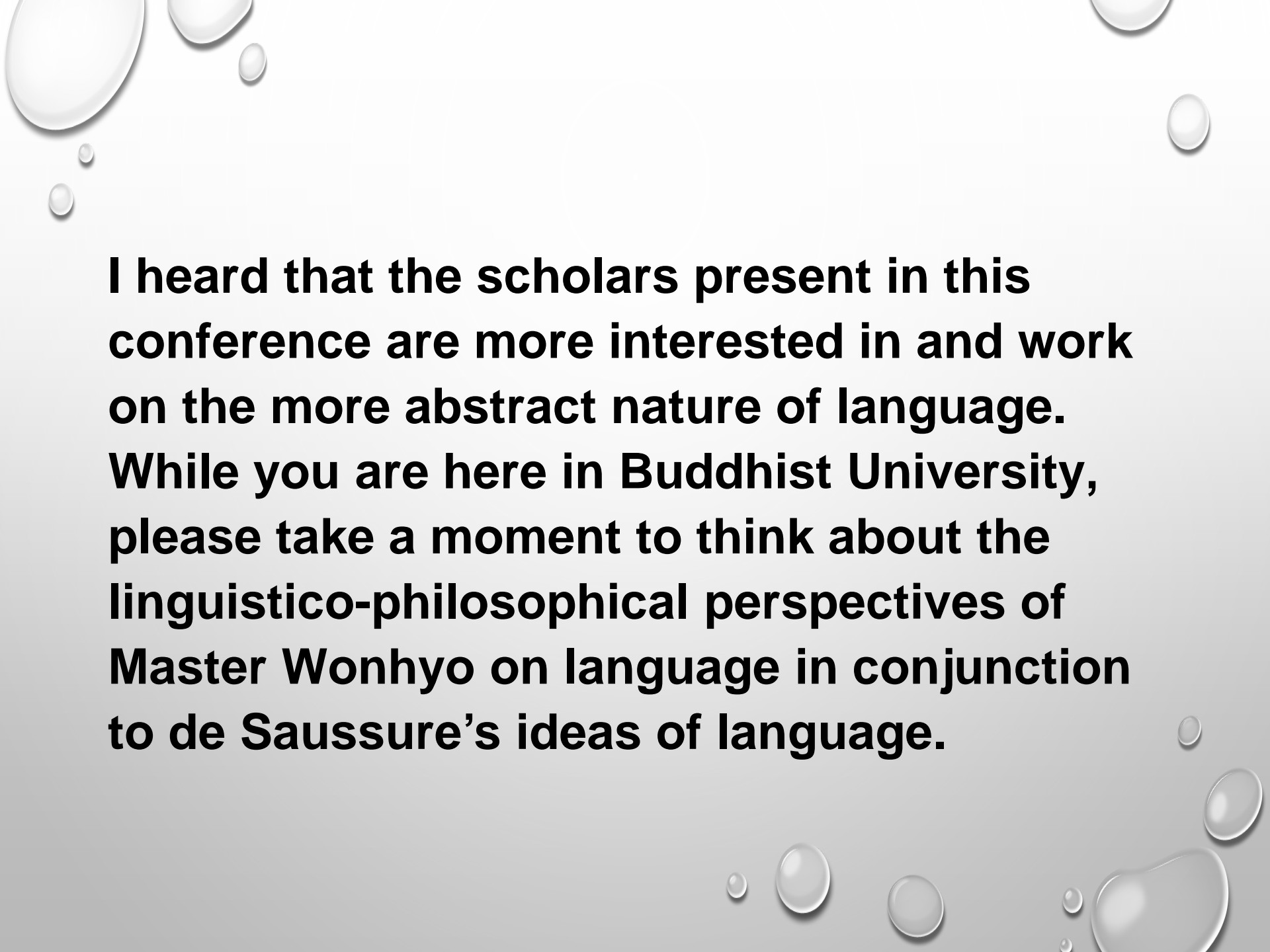
**Also in *Commentaries and Notes on the ‘Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna’*, he propounds that “Truth is neither something that is separate from language nor something that is not separate from language.**



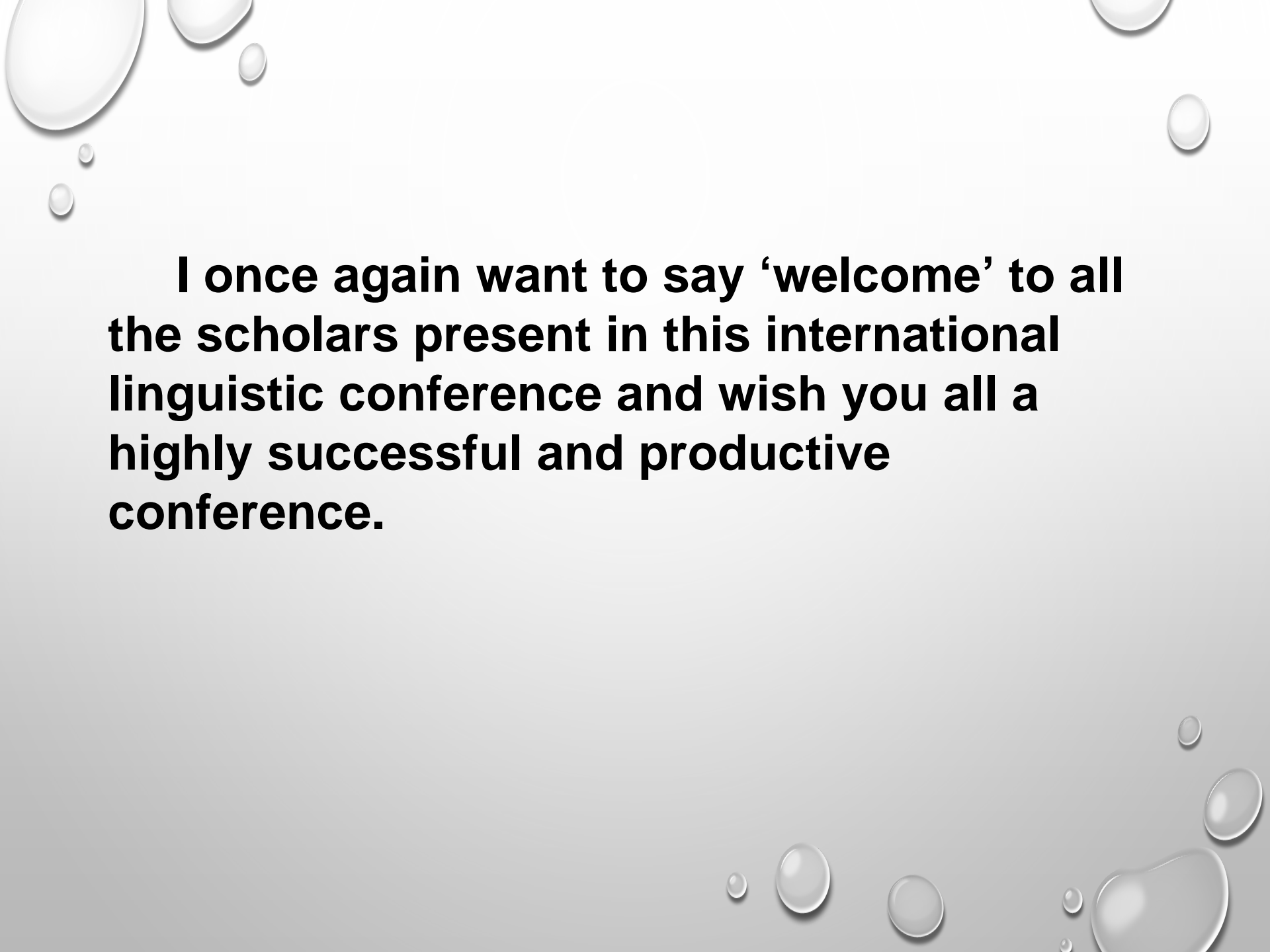
**I would like to take this to mean that although ‘[inherent or ultimate] truth’ is separate from language, since the truth is communicated, learned, and conveyed through using language, we need to investigate the method with which the truth (dharma) that may depend on, yet can eventually be separate from, language is explored.**



**In retrospective, I remember learning some difference between langue and parole distinguished by Ferdinand de Saussure when I took an Introductory Philosophy course in college. At the same time, as mentioned before, I have also learned about the profound ideas of Master Wonhyo while studying and working at Buddhist University.**



**I heard that the scholars present in this conference are more interested in and work on the more abstract nature of language. While you are here in Buddhist University, please take a moment to think about the linguistico-philosophical perspectives of Master Wonhyo on language in conjunction to de Saussure's ideas of language.**



**I once again want to say ‘welcome’ to all the scholars present in this international linguistic conference and wish you all a highly successful and productive conference.**



**Thank you.**

**Sung Yee Yoon,  
President of Dongguk University  
2019. 8. 7.**





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**Thank You**