

On our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, ESBB will be publishing 2 academic issues for the first time. ESBB exists to support authors who have their own distinctive voice. We do not publish papers in which authors attempt to disappear behind impersonal language through which they attempt to hide their own agency in their writing and research. The more we attempt to hide inevitable bias, the more biased we become. We hope (and this may sometimes be a vain hope) that scholars attend our events and publish with us, not because we are now indexed, but because they share our values and need to publish not just to enhance a CV but because they have something of value to communicate to scholars who cross international and epistemological borders.

We will also endeavour to maintain the creative legacy created by our dear friend Chris Weagle who passed away suddenly this year. Chris was the founding member of our creative section and is and will always be deeply missed by all who knew him. He was an excellent supportive teacher and colleague who always had time to help. Beneath his self-effacing modest character his many friends in ESBB came to appreciate a brilliant mind and a sensitive (award winning) poet.

ESBB does not accept the hackneyed distinction that is often drawn between theory and practice. There is no practice that does not reflect the teacher's thinking. My own thinking about practice has always benefitted from the very clear thinking of our first author.

In *Modeling in language-culture didactics: the example of combining models of different documentary logics and learner roles*, Christian Puren adds to the excellent papers he has published with us so far which all provide very clearly argued thinking behind everyday practices. Christian's insights from Europe and beyond are translatable to all contexts which attempt to promote active learning in the classroom. Here he puts forward an important argument related to the different documentary logics that can help teachers to diversify uses of L2 literacy practice in the action-oriented classroom.

In their study, *The role of visuals in understanding store names*, two very experienced applied linguists, El Sakran and Sivasubramaniam, provide an interesting study in the multicultural setting of the UAE, where Arabic is the local language but where English is a commonly used lingua franca. They analysed 180 representative retail establishment names sourced from six distinct commercial districts within the Emirate of Sharjah. The data included bilingual shop names (Arabic/English and transliterated Arabic), and they also consider the visual elements of the signs. A brief survey assessed ability to work out the commercial activities associated with the stores. Their semiotic approach provides an interesting means of 'translating' this study to other contexts where English is a common lingua franca. This very original study has broader implications as it allows us to make interesting observations about a semiotic multilingual environment.

This year I have noticed an increased interest in artificial intelligence in relation to language teaching. In *Affordances and Challenges of Integrating Artificial Intelligence into English Language Education: A Critical Analysis* Binu explores the affordances and challenges associated with this increased interest. He notes that inevitable use of AI tools has become a challenge to academic integrity, as a result of the misuse of generative chatbots such as ChatGPT. He provides a balanced argument on the need to reflect critically on the implications

of AI use. While recognizing the potential for large-scale misuse, he highlights the affordances in English language teaching, learning and research,

In *Heights of Insight for Lecturers in Teaching First-Year Students Guided Writing Skills with Readings at a South African University*, Mzukisi Howard Keep examines the development of academic literacy in first-year university students. Gaining insights through international collaboration, he critically examines first-year students' writing ability in relation to reading. He proposes collaborative project-like activities with model texts in conjunction with one or two jigsaw reading days and a guided academic reading-writing interactive process. More ambitiously, he also seeks to provide first-year lecturers and curriculum designers with suggestions for an evidence-based policy planning process for managing higher education systems.

Roy Veettil (*Deciphering representational language through stylistic analysis of poetry*) argues in favour of teaching stylistic, and in particular, pragmatic competence through literature. He argues that the aesthetic and human elements of literature are important in themselves but also help contextualize language use. Meaningful contextualization has long been recognized as a valuable support to language acquisition. Veettil supports his arguments through an interesting discussion-based case study in an Arab university.

Phan Thi Ngoc Le (*Using English as a medium of instruction for non-English-major students: Impacts and coping strategies*) writes on a topic that is very relevant in so many university contexts. In this study, the author considers the situation in a Vietnamese setting, but the discussion is relevant and eminently translatable across contexts where English is a medium of instruction. This is a reality that is not always popular, so the focus on coping strategies seems to be of particular relevance here.

Finally, Junko Noguchi (*Factors affecting successful inferencing of unfamiliar idiomatic expressions in a listening task: A case of Japanese university EFL learners*) investigates factors affecting inferencing when listening to unfamiliar multi-word idiomatic expressions. This is a topic of more general interest across contexts in EFL contexts. In her study, familiarity, listening comprehension skills, working memory, and L1 similarity appeared to be significant factors. This led her to consider whether explicit instruction (at least in her own context) might be needed alongside the common approach of inferring meaning from the developing context. Something to be considered in other contexts if supported by similar evidence.

We hope you appreciate this very diverse set of papers and that you will all find something that makes you reconsider your previous thinking.

