ESBB English Scholars Beyond Borders

Foreword

Welcome to volume 9 of English Scholarship Beyond Borders. I am delighted to introduce this very diverse issue, in which we would like to emphasise our long-term commitment to diversity and authorial voice. We aim to provide a forum for authors attempting to do things differently. At the same time we wish to underline the need for publication forums for authors who do not see research as efforts as finished or completed once they are published. Many of our authors are engaged in continuous efforts to develop projects already started. This is certainly the case, in the editorial opinion piece (John Adamson and me), where we continue looking at editorial processes, something that we (in particular John) have been intensively engaged for many years. In our study, we continue to investigate review interaction between supervising editors, reviewers and authors engaged in Open Review in our own journal *English Scholarship beyond Borders*. We concluded that our initial principles of unblended review established back in the days when ESBB was founded in 2013 met with some approval, but that there continue to be important lessons to be learned about so-called 'open review', which is in itself a very diverse field and that we need to continue to learn from other disciplines.

Interestingly, in our next paper, Christian Puren, from a French cultural background, argues very convincingly for a different paradigm for academic research and publication in our field. His paper resonates strongly with the values ESBB has also put forward. His research on social action in language education is itself a continuation study, underlining the view that a finished scientific product is not well suited to our field. I see this paper, *Criticism of the Dominant Academic Standards of "Scientific Communication" in the Didactics of Languages-Cultures*, as seminal in what I believe is a very strong edition of ten papers because he presents arguments that are difficult to refute about the difficulties of applying "the dominant academic standards of scientific communication" in our field. He deliberately refers to a coined phrase 'languages-cultures' to differentiate his very original topic from topics such as 'language and culture', in an attempt to underline the inextricable link between social-cultural action and language education. In a related study,

Puren's co-researcher, Ahmet Acar, in *The implementation of projects in communicative textbooks and action-oriented textbooks* illustrates important differences between the use of projects in communicative textbooks and action-oriented textbooks in the Turkish context. In the former, they are almost an afterthought in the sense that the project is added on at the end of the communicative units as 'reuse activities'. In the latter, while they are still mini-projects, each unit is built around the project from the beginning and allows a large degree of autonomy for both individuals and project teams. These project units have the goal of training learners as social actors.

The Hong Le Vo and Mark Wyatt (Involving company representatives in helping university learners to develop sociopragmatic competence in English for job interviews) focus on the importance of socio-pragmatic competence in Vietnamese business contexts. They emphasize the advantages of involving local company representatives in helping English language teachers to prepare their students for job interviews. Their innovative research into an intervention in Vietnam is well supported by observational notes and audio-recordings. This interesting study has practical applications that should resonate beyond their Vietnamese context, as it shows in great detail how the expertise and guidance of local company representatives can support teachers and university curricula.

Also set in Vietnam, the sociolinguistic study by Tran Tin Nghi, Nguyen Tat Thang andTran Huu Phuc (Exploring Sociolinguistic Influences on Gender Differences in English Preposition Use among EFL Students: A Case Study from a Public University) the relationship between sociolinguistic factors and gender inequalities. Their mixed method research examined preposition use among genders, in particular the way societal expectations, educational history, and social standing were related to variations in prepositional use. Their study makes a contribution to the body of knowledge on the multitude of ways that cultural norms and socialization processes influence language use.

In her study, Scalar pragmatics in online academic job advertisements, Mukaddam Khaitova explores the relevance of scalar pragmatics in a contrastive study of online academic job advertisements (Khaitova & Muller, 2022b). She investigates the ways that "the dynamic and adaptive capacity of scalar pragmatics" impact meaning making. She argues that scalar pragmatics as a methodological approach to exploring discourse is both flexible, practical and well adapted to the digital age. Interestingly she also explores an important topic for ESBB, the agency of the researcher as a co-producer of knowledge, an interpreter, and a meaning maker of texts.

Benâ Gül Peker (Enjoying Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) , the Art of Excellence: Satir's Communication Styles) provides another way of looking at communication, once again illustrating the diversity we need to embrace when looking at interactive discourse. She encourages teachers who are new to the area to enjoy looking into NLP in that it opens the door to posiblitities that many of us are not, at least consciously, aware of. This is a introduction to the field which draws on the five communication styles outlined by Virginia Satir.

In *Difficulties second-language learners of English have in understanding English written texts*, Leader Hilongwa, Roderick Zimba, Lukas Matati Josua, investigate an issue that has resonance with previous ESBB studies which focus on "the difficulties second language learners of English have in understanding English written texts". Their qualitative study in the Ohangwena region in Namibia used a carefully selected sample for in-depth face-to-face unstructured focus group interviews. They found that their learners in this context were impeded by the lack of prior knowledge of the texts, and the nature of the texts themselves. Their recommendations, which include extensive reading and activating learners' background knowledge should resonate far beyond this local context.

To complete our issue, we present two literature studies. This provides me with the opportunity to emphasize that ESBB sees the study of language, literature and culture as inextricably related. ESBB has a rapidly developing creative writing section edited by Chris Weagle & Seema

Jain, which follows this section of the journal. We do not, indeed must never, assume that students (or indeed teachers) of English as an additional language cannot create their own texts. Indeed, creative authors and poets do such original things with words, which help us understand the world, and what may have become (perhaps over) familiar, very differently. After each ESBB event (with a visit to Indonesia coming soon), I have returned home challenging some of my own beliefs and values. John Baker, as a reading specialist adds a very interesting perspective. I had never really considered using epic poetry as part of a creative writing course. In *Drawing on Spenser's Epic Poetry (The Faerie Queene) for Creative Writing World Creation: O What Endlesse Worke Haue I in Hand*, John points out that some great epics of literature have been, but should not be, ruled out by default. He focuses on Spenser's Faerie Queene (FQ) in this paper, but what he proposes is eminently translatable to other works. His close reading of the text illustrates the way this particular text can help us explore "fantasy world creation with regard to language, geography, characters, and allegory".

In *Translating Epithets in Fiction: A Stylistic Study of Semantic and Pragmatic Equivalence (With special reference to "The Fool" by Raffi)*, Seda Gasparyan and Narine Minasyan provide a further aspect of world literature that ESBB would like to explore further. It also provides our first insights as a circle of scholars into Armenian culture. Their study underlines the importance (and the difficulty) of translating concepts while "preserving the function and intent realized by the author in the original text by using proper semantic parallels and ensuring pragmatic equivalence in the target language of translation". Among the many thought provoking ideas they propose is their notion (or verbal creativity strategy) of "re-metaphorization" in relation to the "historical-cultural traditions reflected in the original text". We can understand why their focus on epithets is particularly pertinent here (and very relevant to an international circle like ESBB).

ESBB has enjoyed another very interesting year, which I hope is reflected in this very varied volume.