

Introduction

Welcome to the first 2021 issue of *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*.

It's a full issue demonstrating the breadth and value of using literary forms in language teaching. In particular, a number of articles show how analysing and explaining literature from or connected to their own culture in their second language can help students to develop their expressive potential in that second language.

The feature article “A study into the benefits of autonomous reading of a novel in an advanced English as a Second Language classroom” by **Niall Walsh** reports on a study examining the impact of using a simplified version of a classic novel – *Pride and Prejudice* – on students' vocabulary, cultural awareness and personal growth: three areas where it is theorised that literature benefits language students. In particular, the results suggest gains for student personal growth and interpersonal reasoning when reflecting on the nature of love, relationships, and personality.

In the first of our three *Literature in Practice* articles, “Creating opportunities for authentic communicative exchange: Exploring haiku, tanka, and senryu in English”, **Meredith Stephens** shows how the task of explaining short-form poems written in their native language gives students genuine communicative opportunities as well as heightened awareness of the potency of poetry. These gains in turn support student composition in English as well as general engagement in literature. In “Crossing borders: Going from poetry to news before coming back”, **Mary Hillis** explains an exercise where students compare a Japanese poem translated into English and the news story which inspired it. By comparing the poetic and journalistic accounts, students are then in a position to emulate the original poet and compose poems in English based on English language news sources. In “Creative Writing in Extensive Reading Instruction”, **Cristina Tat** details a course in which student creative writing was used to improve engagement with extensive reading texts, including a better appreciation of the structure and development of story as a form. This paper is also valuable as an example of adapting instruction to the Emergency Remote Teaching conditions of the Coronavirus pandemic.

In his interview with **Jared Kubokawa** on “The state of literature and creative writing in EFL”, the author and teacher Iain Maloney reflects on his successful efforts to demonstrate the popularity of second-language creative writing to his institution, on the motivating impact of creative writing, and on which of his own works would work best for an EFL classroom. In summaries of their forum presentations at the 2020 JALT International Conference online in November, **Luke Draper** explains the use of “practical criticism” as a strategy for overcoming student reticence in peer feedback, while **Regan Tyndall** reports on how well-chosen literary texts can encourage students to challenge their ideas on prejudice and discrimination while avoiding stereotypes.

Finally, **Luke Draper**, **Mary Hillis**, and **Tara McIlroy** provide a conference report on the one-day event “Creative Writing in Language Teaching Contexts” hosted by the Literature in Language Teaching Special Interest Group in association with Tokyo JALT. In addition to the summaries of five papers presented on the use of CW in language teaching, they discuss the logistics of moving online due to the pandemic, as well as the positive opportunities for more active audience engagement provided by that move.

Finally, a reminder that the peer-reviewed *Journal of Literature in Language Teaching* accepts submissions from around the world. Submissions are accepted at any time on a rolling basis, although those looking to publish in the next edition should try to submit by the end of October 2021. (Submissions for the Autumn issue have already closed). Submission details are given on the final page of this journal and can also be found on the LiLT SIG website <http://liltsig.org>. Submissions can be sent to liltjournaleditor@gmail.com. You can also contact the LiLTSIG at liltsig@gmail.com.

Stay safe,

Cameron Smith

Editor, *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*