

From the Editorial Desk

Teachers and teaching cannot be perceived in isolation as two separate entities since what we are as people is bound to impact what we do as professionals and vice versa. Understanding language teacher identity (LTI) therefore becomes significant in understanding teaching practice. In the past decade or two, LTI has garnered substantial research interest globally. However awareness about the construct of LTI as well as research in LTI are rather limited in the Indian context. This special issue on Language Teacher Identity has emerged from the felt need to encourage and document research in this vibrant construct that has a compelling presence in everything that happens in the language classroom—the classroom climate created, the teaching approach adopted, the assessment practices designed and a host of other things.

The articles included in this volume focus on a variety of themes in language teacher identity—identity construction, identity negotiation, identity as pedagogy, to name a few. The opening article by Kalyani Samantray explores how a set of primary teachers attempt to reconfigure their existing identities in the light of the implementation of NEP 2020. While Tabitha Chekuri investigates the complex process of identity learning of pre-service teachers as exhibited in their reflective journals, Monishita Hajra Pande provides insights into how teachers exercise their identity and agency through the continuing professional development activities they engage in. On the other hand, Sharayu Kolharkar and Pankaj Narke offer a comprehensive discussion on the identity formation and transformation of a set of teachers teaching in Cambridge and International Baccalaureate (IB) affiliated schools while they experimented with inquiry-based learning (IBL). Interesting insights on how teacher identity operates in the language classroom are provided by M. Raja Vishwanathan as he investigates identity as pedagogy. Prem Raj Kharbanda presents a refreshing perspective on LTI by examining teacher assessment identity in the wake of AI tools such as ChatGPT and finally, Kunal Shivaji Katkade places on record the conflicts and tensions between teacher personal and professional identity and how addressing these empowers teachers to be better professionals.

Furthermore, keeping in mind the diverse interests of our readers, we have a mixed bag of articles on evolving areas of research and innovative

pedagogy. Anil K. Aneja and Shilpa B.S.L. bring to the fore the dynamics of aural visuality in comics, a hitherto unexplored area in immersive experiences and Shraddha Adityavir Singh writes on Anthropocene fiction as a pedagogical tool with a special focus on the speculative utopias of Margaret Atwood. Two articles focus on representations of the marginalized in popular media, while Mona Sinha looks at mis/representations of disability in reality shows on TV in her insightful article, Kaustubh Ranjan and Kuhoo Singh discuss gendered ageism and grey divorce in a popular show on OTT. For teachers of literature, Nabanita Chakraborty offers a different perspective on teaching Shakespeare through an analysis of performative rhetoric and spatial dynamics. Hemang Ashwinkumar highlights the need for decolonization in English Language teaching and Mohammad Asad offers a case study in Saudi Arabia to highlight mechanical errors in L2 writing as a result of mother tongue influence.

The spectrum of theme-based and general articles in the volume, we hope, offers an engaging reading, and inspires further research in the field of LTI and other areas of interest to teachers of English language and literature. The highlight of the volume is the interview with Prof. Paul Gunashekar who, with over four decades of experience in teaching and materials production, throws light on a vast expanse of issues in materials development for language teaching. Book reviews and language activities, the regular features of Fortell, complement the themes discussed in the volume.

Gitanjali Chawla is a Professor in the Department of English at Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. Her research interests include popular culture, cultural studies, and innovative pedagogies.

gchawla@mac.du.ac.in

K. Padmini Shankar is a Professor in the Department of ESL Studies, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. Her research interests include teacher training and development, classroom-based research, and teacher identity and agency.

padminishankar@efluniversity.ac.in