

## **Editorial introduction**

Once upon a time *literature* was an innocent word in an innocent world. But times have changed and the *age of innocence* has given way under the overwhelming impulse of the *age of knowledge*. Under the impact of new technologies the experiences that reading, writing and text signified years ago have been radically changed and the map of literary scholarship is being constantly reconfigured: the canon has been shattered to pieces; hybridisation processes have eroded borders and clear cut distinctions; electronic literature has gained momentum and narratives of new media impact multiply. This complex scenario, which poses challenges for both teachers and scholars, oriented the choice of topic for this first special issue to provide a chance of sharing experience.

A plural spectrum of contributions which display different approaches to literary texts, varied accounts of the incorporation of literature in the EFL classroom, and reviews of recently published books constitute this number. To this AJAL first special issue have contributed teachers, trainers and researchers from different parts of Argentina.

The first contribution is authored by Lucía Quiroga. As she puts it, “[t]he purpose of this work is to present a set of sample activities as a starting point to develop the literary competence through literature and Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class. *Bridging the gap between traditional literature and new digital forms: a practical basis for EFL teachers* is rooted in the author’s teaching experience. The three appendices that complete the article provide further activities to be implemented in the classroom with learners of different ages and levels of proficiency.

The second contribution is framed as a classroom account of an experience carried out at a bilingual school in the city of Buenos Aires. In *From Rapunzel to Tangled and beyond: Multimedia practices in the language & literature classroom* Martha de Cunto and María Laura García create a didactic unit around fairy tales and the film *Tangled*. Readers will find that the authors have included useful hyperlinks to different sources and materials.

The third article is another teacher’s account: Matías Ansaldo’s. *Kamishibai in kindergarten: The magic of ancient Japanese storytelling with young learners*. In this contribution intercultural awareness through storytelling plays a central role. The author presents a didactic sequence through which young learners are taken from a role as

listeners to a role as storytellers by means of different teaching strategies which go beyond the purely linguistic.

Fourth, Enrique Basabe and Miriam Germani share the preliminary findings of a project carried out with future teachers of English from Universidad Nacional de La Pampa. In their conceptualisation and enactment of a less mainstream approach to literature teaching, they resort to critical literacy. Qualitative data were obtained through classroom observations and interviews. Through their project the authors seek “to confidently connect our classrooms not only with literature and teaching but, as our students demand from us, with meaningful learning and, above all, with things that are valuable for life.”

In *Popular culture texts: Thinking outside the book and onto the screen* María Florencia Borrello explores “multimedia publishing and the possibilities it has to offer foreign language learners in the consumption and production of popular culture texts” and presents ways through which learners can become writers. To this effect, she suggests the incorporation of a wide range of web 2.0 tools into the classroom to promote multiliteracies. According to Borrello, through the use of these resources, we can help students become engaged in global communication. In this article teachers will also find a whole range of suggestions to explore and incorporate ICT in their literature-based lessons or general practices.

David Leavitt’s *The lost language of cranes*, a novel dealing with sexual taboos is analysed in *Queer intersubjective processes in David Leavitt’s The lost language of cranes* by José Luis Garletti and Pamela Flores, from Universidad Nacional del Litoral. This contribution is solidly grounded on queer theory and its central concern is to bring “to light the cultural world of homosexuality to communicate an ideological and artistic view of societies in which LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexuals, trans) individuals permanently strive for social recognition.”

Last, this special issue includes two book reviews. The first is an extended review of *A companion to digital literary studies* edited by R. Siemens and S. Schreibman, a collection of articles published in 2013. The second book review is located between linguistics and literature as it is about stylistics. *Pedagogical stylistics: Current trends in language, literature, and ELT* was published in 2012 and is edited by M. Burke et al.

The editors would like to thank the reviewers for their thoughtful comments and the contributors for their fruitful cooperation. Readers may wish to know that the AJAL editorial team and reviewers work ad-honorem, that the salary is simply knowing that they are doing something tangible in Argentina. As it is said in Spanish: “No hay que preocuparse, solamente hay que ocuparse”.