

Editorial

The Editorial Team is honoured to introduce the 32nd issue of TEANGA. The 15 papers brought together here reflect the breadth, depth, and evolving character of contemporary Applied Linguistics research in Ireland and beyond. While the topics of the studies are wide ranging, four thematic clusters emerge: *discourses and social realities*; *variation and language practices*; *Irish-medium education*; and *language learning contexts*. The three papers which constitute the *discourses and social realities* cluster foreground tensions between legal, scholarly and public discourses and those whose identities are framed and contested by them. The second theme *variation and language practices* consists of four papers which reveal how linguistic choices such as code-switching, translanguaging, pragmatic variation and the use of specific named languages perform crucial interpersonal and ideological work. The third theme turns to *Irish-medium education* and comprises four papers. Together they reflect ongoing questions regarding pedagogy and inclusion within immersion education. Finally, the last thematic cluster assembles four papers focusing on *language learning contexts* exploring the interplay of differential contexts and learners' active engagement in them. Collectively, these studies shed light on how language is shaped within the intimate, the institutional, and the ideological domains reminding us that linguistic phenomena do not exist in isolation: rather, they are embedded in communities, shaped by histories, enacted in classrooms, and lived through the experiences of learners and speakers.

Thematic Cluster 1: Discourses and Social Realities

This section opens with the paper by McEvoy, ‘**Pretty Words on a Page’: Disappointment in Sign Language Laws in Ireland, Finland and the UK**’. Here the author notes that although sign language recognition laws have generated excitement worldwide, their actual impact on Deaf communities is far more limited than anticipated. She reports that interviews

with Deaf people in Finland, Ireland, and the UK reveal widespread disappointment as the laws provide few concrete rights and are often seen as merely symbolic. These findings suggest a significant gap between the symbolic promise of recognition and the practical realities experienced by Deaf communities. They also highlight the need for future legislation to move beyond declarative statements and embed enforceable rights, mechanisms, and accountability structures that can meaningfully improve Deaf people's everyday lives.

Turning the focus to the contestation of identities online, Grant, C. in **'Sad Day for Ireland': The Construction and Positioning of Irish National Identity in Social Media Discourse during the Campaign to Repeal the Eighth Amendment and Introduce Abortion Legislation'** investigates the construction and positioning of Irish national identity in social media discourse during the 2018 referendum campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment and introduce abortion legislation. The study employs corpus-based qualitative methods and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore how national identity was represented, contested, and repositioned. The findings reveal two conflicting visions of Ireland: one that is future-forward and embraces modernity, and another that clings to traditional values and laments a perceived loss of morality. The study highlights the role of language in enacting social change and the ongoing struggle over national identity particularly in the context of gender and social inequality.

The final paper in this cluster is **'A Critical Discourse Analysis of Scholarly Representations of Irish-Medium Education'** by Nic Roibeaird and Engman. The authors employ qualitative research synthesis to systematically identify peer-reviewed research in order to explore how IME (Irish-Medium Education) is represented through both 'little d' discourse and 'big D' Discourse analysis in scholarly discourse. The analysis found that scholarship which included clear definitions of IME tended to fall into two categories either IME as bilingual education or as a grassroots endeavour existing within a difficult political

and educational climate. Moreover, it was found that IME is mostly ignored in scholarship on the education system in the North of Ireland. Such omissions demonstrate the relationship between colonial ideologies and trajectories of scholarly investigation, highlighting the need for further research clarifying the social and educational features of IME.

Thematic Cluster 2: Variation and Language Practices

The first paper turns its lens to language practices in the Co. Waterford Gaeltacht. In ‘**Caint na nDaoine in Action in Gaeltacht na nDéise: Code-Mixing, Code-Switching or Translanguaging?**’, Breathnach, O’ Keeffe and Ó Laoire use a corpus of bilingual interviews from Gaeltacht na nDéise to examine how code-mixing, code-switching, and translanguaging function in everyday Irish / English speech. A bottom-up corpus-linguistic analysis shows all three phenomena occurring across grammatical and discourse levels, each providing a useful lens for understanding how speakers dynamically deploy both languages. These findings underscore the fluidity with which speakers navigate their bilingual repertoires, challenging rigid categorical boundaries between the three constructs.

The second paper shifts the focus to Bogotá, Colombia. O’Donnell investigates evidence of colonial lag through the use of second person singular pronouns (SPSPs) in Colombian Spanish, a post-colonial language. The paper ‘**Evidence of Colonial Lag in Post-Colonial Languages: The Case of Colombian Spanish**’ employs a diachronic approach in which data were collected from three sources in Bogotá: historical documents from 1800 – 1900, novels published between 1999 and 2002, and in-person, face-to-face exchanges carried out in 2009. The SPSPs identified in the data were analysed using GOLVARB. The results of the study posit that formality in linguistic behaviour is evident in Colombian Spanish and is the result of colonial lag, one of three predicted outcomes in the evolution of post-colonial languages.

Moving back to the context of Ireland, in **‘Romani in Ireland: A Study of its Uses, Importance, Transmission, and Speakers’ Attitudes’**, Plachetka examines the use, transmission and importance of the Romani language amongst Roma living in Ireland. The author explores changes in language use and the transmission to the next generations who have been brought up in Ireland. The author also investigates the importance the language has amongst the Roma people and their attitudes towards it. The findings indicate that even though the use of Romani in Ireland is not perceived negatively and there is no fear of speaking the language in the presence of non-Roma members of the society, it is losing its importance in daily life and is being taken over by the use of English.

The last paper returns us to Co. Waterford, in this instance to the use of English. In **‘Waterford Older Speakers and Extended Family Corpus (WOSEFC) - A Corpus-Based Intra-Varietal Pragmatic Analysis of General Extender Usage of Extended Family Members from Waterford City, Ireland’**, Grant, S. analyses a 48,228-word corpus of sociolinguistic interviews with six older Waterford speakers, showing that extended-family interactions form a distinct type of intimate discourse characterized by frequent use of general extenders and positive-politeness strategies. He argues that speakers use hedging and other pragmatic resources to negotiate shared knowledge, manage sensitive topics, and reinforce emotional closeness and solidarity. This strategic deployment of pragmatic resources ultimately highlights how extended-family members continually co-construct and reaffirm their relational identities through subtle yet highly patterned linguistic choices.

Thematic Cluster 3: Irish-Medium Education

The first paper in the cluster sheds light on the interplay between skill and motivation with regards literacy. In **‘Scil agus Toil: An Nasc idir Scil agus Inspreagadh i Léitheoireacht na Gaeilge i Measc Daltaí Tumoideachais 9-11’** [Skill and Will: The Link between Skill and Motivation in Reading in Irish among 9–11-year-old Immersion Pupils], de Brún and Ó

Duibhir explore the links between reading skills and attitudes towards reading in Irish among 9-11 year-old pupils in Irish language immersion schools in Ireland. There were three stages to the investigation. The first stage involved a range of assessments on reading achievement as well as ascertaining the skills and strategies being utilised by pupils in their reading of Irish. The children's own views on reading were then gathered, including their opinions of themselves as readers and views on their reading materials in Irish. Finally, all results were compared to determine links between skills and motivation.

The focus of the second paper shifts to post-primary education. **Ar Thóir na hInbhuanaitheachta - Múinteoirí in Iar-bhunscoileanna Lán-Ghaeilge ag Dul i nGleic leis an Idirghabháil Thrasteangeolaíoch chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar Ról an Bhéarla sa Chleachtas [Seeking Sustainability - Irish-Medium Second Level Teachers Exploring Cross-Linguistic Mediation to Address the Role of English in the Classroom]** by Ní Chonchuir, Ó Ceallaigh and Ni Chlochasaigh, describes research which explores the ability of crosslinguistic mediation, as developed in the CEFR Companion Volume, 2020, to function as an appropriate strategy for subject teachers in Irish-medium post-primary schools to address the role of English in their practice. The research draws on Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the perspectives of 4 teachers on a training programme in designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks which was devised and implemented with the teachers. Furthermore, their attitudes towards the efficacy and applicability of the training programme to their individual classroom settings was examined.

Staying in the post-primary context, in **'Belonging in Irish-Medium Post-Primary Education for Students with Special Educational Needs'**, Nic Aindriú investigates teachers' and principals' experiences of creating an inclusive culture in Irish-medium (IM) and Gaeltacht post-primary schools. Focus groups and individual interviews were utilised to explore how an inclusive school culture can ensure access to IM and Gaeltacht education for

students with special educational needs (SEN). This study discusses the positive practices in place in schools relating to feelings of belonging, inclusion, school and class size and increased levels of student self-esteem.

Finally, retaining the focus on SEN, Sheerin, Percy and Burns present the findings of a scoping review which examines the literature related to the views of stakeholders regarding children with special educational needs in **‘The Views of Stakeholders Regarding Children with SEN in Irish-Medium and Similar Language-Immersion Programmes: A Scoping Review of the Literature’**. The themes identified in the review include language competence as a perceived obstacle, inclusion dependent on school supports, (inaccurate) professional guidance regarding bilingualism and a view of language as opportunity. Furthermore, it highlights that the voice of the child in this area has rarely been explored and that more creative research methods may be required to facilitate this.

Thematic Cluster 4: Language Learning Contexts

This section commences with an exploration of the study abroad context. In **‘Second Language Identity Development and Study Abroad: The Case of Irish University Students in Japan’**, Takishita follows the trajectory of the second language (L2) identity development of Irish university students on a study abroad (SA) programme in Japan. The author conducted narrative interviews to investigate the critical experiences that resulted in student’s L2 identity development. The findings illustrate that each returner underwent a different trajectory to enhance their L2 identity which was strongly correlated with their sense of belongingness in local communities and their personal interests and beliefs. These findings have implications for language teachers and SA coordinators, and the study recommends

further exploration into sojourners' psychological challenges and the identities of ethnic minority student.

Shifting focus to the language classroom, in **'The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Reconfiguration of Learning Spaces for English as a Foreign Language (EFL): Students, Teachers, and Stakeholders'**, Rougab, Kelly-Holmes and Mey explore how EFL students, teachers, and design stakeholders in an Irish higher education institution experienced and responded to the reconfiguration of learning spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors analysed semi-structured interviews using thematic analysis. The results reveal that the reconfiguration of learning spaces promoted deep reflection on space, pedagogy and agency. The study concludes that this reconfiguration also promoted personal agency, growth in digital literacies and pedagogical innovation and suggests a re-imagination of the role of the classroom in the post-pandemic as multi-dimensional and dynamic.

Looking specifically at the issue of agency, Leray returns us to the study abroad context. In **'Agency Effects on L2 Engagement: Study Abroad versus Stay at Home'**, the author uses the innovative approaches of keyword analysis and conceptual analysis to examine the interplay between target language (L2 English) engagement and the development of agency in Study Abroad (SA) and Stay at Home (SH) students majoring in French Business and Administration. Using a mixed-methods approach, she analyses student narratives across three points of the academic year, looking at how different forms of agency emerge and evolve. Findings indicate that agency develops differentially in the cohorts with some SH students showing gains not displayed by their SA counterparts, thereby questioning certain received ideas about the supremacy of study abroad settings.

Continuing with the study abroad context, the final paper, **'A Multidimensional Analysis of L2 Written Complexity: The Case of Sojourners'** by Köylü investigates the

developmental trajectories and the changing nature of the relationship between holistic language proficiency; and syntactic and lexical complexity in the written L2 English of advanced Catalan / Spanish bilingual sojourners. The author draws on a dynamic systems perspective and lagged cross correlation (LCCA) to explore supportive, competitive, and precursor relationships. The results confirm a high degree of variation as well as a dynamic pattern for the indices investigated indicating a competitive relationship between most syntactic and lexical measures, except for lexical sophistication. The study concludes that the participants paid attention to different dimensions of their written performance at different times during their studies abroad.

Finally, we would like to say just how much we have appreciated all the efforts made by our contributors and to express our gratitude to all the anonymous reviewers.

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