

## Foreword

Since its launch in 1979, *TEANGA* has had a long history of showcasing national and international research in Applied Linguistics and providing linguists in Ireland with a platform for sharing information and advancing discussion on research in the area. It is therefore a real pleasure to formally welcome *TEANGA* back on our virtual shelves, fully revived in an open-access online version, after a dormant period. We owe this to the indefatigable work of Lorna Carson, former President of IRAAL, who in 2016 brought Volume 24 to publication, thus initiating a process that led to the appointment of the current editors of *TEANGA* 25: Úna Bhreathnach, Colin Flynn, and Stephen Lucek. Under their editorship, Volume 25 represents the first stepping stone on the new *TEANGA* path, featuring the most recent research in Applied Linguistics and contributing again to this field of study in Ireland by providing a sounding board for new and established researchers alike.

The publication of Volume 25 is indeed timely, as it coincides with an exciting period for foreign and second language teaching and learning in Ireland and for applied linguists in general. The past two decades have seen considerable changes in the Irish economic, social and linguistic landscape, as Ireland has gradually become a multilingual and multicultural country. These changes have been acknowledged in government policies and are currently being reflected in the didactic provision of educational institutions and the research interests of applied linguists throughout the country. At government level, the launch of ‘Languages Connect’, the long-awaited Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education in Ireland, has finally brought to the fore the need to recognise and support the richness and potential of a multilingual Ireland and the cultural and economic value of appreciating foreign cultures and learning foreign languages.

On the international scene, just two years before, the adoption of the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development at the 2015 UN Sustainable Development summit not only urged all nations to promote prosperity while protecting the planet, but also stressed the urgency of putting into place national and international strategies that would address a range of social needs, including quality education (SDG: Sustainable Development Goal 4). Many of the UN SDGs include or imply a focus on language and a call for the recognition, acceptance and support of diversity as one of the factors that can help build an inclusive and sustainable future for people and also for the planet. This call has stimulated research and action among educational practitioners and also in the Applied Linguistics community. Indeed, the definition of Applied Linguistics given by AILA (*Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée*) describes this interdisciplinary field of linguistics as having an “explicit orientation towards practical, everyday problems related to language and communication” and details some of the areas that Applied Linguistics deals with as “language and communication related problems in and between societies such as language variation and linguistic discrimination, multilingualism, language conflict, language policy and language planning.” It is this focus on the identification, analysis and solution of the practical, everyday issues that stem from language and communication that is coming to the fore in these days of social and political change. Indeed, one of the areas of development that Daniel Perrin,

current President of AILA, envisions is “creating societal impact and, at the same time, showing that language and its investigation in the transdisciplinary field of Applied Linguistics matter.”

Just as some AILA associates, such as the Austrian VERBAL or the American AAAL, have drafted official documents to endorse or criticise governmental policies on language use, AILA has recently created a Workgroup on Endorsement Policy. This group is currently drafting a set of guidelines for the endorsement of empirically grounded and theoretically sound policies on language use, with the aim of encouraging linguists to venture into more practical and policy-engaged linguistic efforts. It is important that we, as applied linguists, strengthen the connection between linguist knowledge and action and become more aware of our role in shaping the society we live in.

IRAAL is also moving in this direction. Article 2 of our Constitution states that the overall aim of IRAAL is: “To promote the application of linguistic theories to the solution of language problems in society.” To pursue this, IRAAL will, through its work, continue to encourage and support research and development by its members and will endeavour to contribute to and influence decisions in different areas of Irish society. *TEANGA*, through the contribution of the growing community of applied linguists in Ireland and the excellent work of its editors, will be one of the principal arenas for that.

Susanna Nocchi  
President of IRAAL