

FOREWORD

The Programme of Post-Graduate Studies in Literature and Linguistics (Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras e Linguística – PPGLL), from the Universidade Federal de Alagoas (Ufal), is quite happy and proud to present issue 36 of Revista *Leitura*, especially because it represents a sort of *avant première* of a newly open area of studies in PPGLL, namely, English: Literature and Language Studies (Inglês: Ensino e Literaturas). The relevance of this area for us means the opening up of chances of more students in further education in the North and Northeast of Brazil carrying out research in English (Language and Literature) due to the fact that this is the only Post-Graduate Programme in the region that has English as a specific area.

This issue presents to readers in Brazil and elsewhere the result of research works carried out by some of our staff members, from researchers from other parts of Brazil such as Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina, as well as studies from England and Italy. For us this means that we were (are) right when we opened the area of study in our Post-Graduate Programme, back in 2004.

Ildney Cavalcanti & Izabel Brandão
Head Editor & Issue Editor

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Our research interests are in both Literature and Linguistics, more specifically Applied Linguistics and Discourse Analysis, and because of this we have divided this issue into two main parts: I. Issues on Literatures in English and on Culture, and II. Issues on English as a Foreign Language Teaching. A third part is dedicated to two book reviews on both Literature and Linguistics. The articles are in both Portuguese and English, a decision we left to the contributor himself/herself.

Part I, dedicated to Issues on Literatures in English and on Culture, has seven articles organized as follows: prose, poetry and cinema. The articles on prose are on a range of themes, from ecocriticism¹ to cyberspace and the intricate relation between author/reader/ text. Terry Gifford, a scholar now retired from Leeds University, in England, himself an ecocritic, opens this part and his article is about two twentieth century novels: John Buchan's *John Macnab* (1925) and Andrew Greig's *The Return to John Macnab* (1996); both are discussed in terms of their relation to the question of the land in Scotland along the lines of ecocriticism. Gifford's reading brings to the fore a political (and problematical) discussion on what he calls "Issues of Ownership and Access to the Work of John Muir, John Buchan and Andrew Greig" in relation to the land.

Hélio Furtado, former lecturer in our Faculdade de Letras, now in Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, discusses the work of Somerset Maugham in terms of the (un)veiling of homosexuality in a novel called *The Narrow Corner*, from 1932. Here Furtado points out that the novel is to be read as "Maugham's attempt at a catharsis of his own suffering as a homosexual man [and] and attempt at a better understanding of his own sexuality".

¹ This is an emergent and necessary new approach to literary criticism which discusses the social construction of nature bringing it to our contemporary perception of literature. For further references on this area see Glotfelty and Fromm (eds.). *The Ecocriticism Reader - Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (The University of Georgia Press), 1996; see also Gaard & Murphy (eds.). *Ecofeminist Literary Criticism: Theory, Interpretation, Pedagogy* (University of Illinois Press), 1998; and Buell. *The Future of Environmental Criticism - Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Blackwell), 2005. In Brazil, I have published a few articles discussing ecocriticism in association with ecofeminism. See, for example, my *Ecofeminismo e literatura: novas fronteiras críticas*. In Brandão & Muzart (eds.). *Refazendo nós: ensaios sobre mulher e literatura* (Mulheres e Edunisc), 2003, p.461-473; see also *Re-significação e reticimento do lugar do corpo na literatura: perspectivas teóricas iniciais*. In Cavalcanti, Lima e Schneider (eds.). *Da mulher às mulheres: dialogando sobre literatura, gênero e identidades* (Edufal, 2006), 134-146.

Camilla Mello, a postgraduate student from Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro, writes about cultural studies in relation to the works of the Anglo-Indian Salman Rushdie and Jamaican Joan Riley. Both writers are seen through the lenses of the diaspora and their characters are examined through their conflicts within their ghettoised communities in the countries they adopt to live.

Ana Cecília Acioli Lima, one of our staff members and a postgraduate student from Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, reads Jeanette Winterson and her *The Powerbook*, from 2000, relating the novel to a theoretical endeavour on the part of the writer to disrupt the borders between author/reader/text in a world now centred on the cyberspace.

The articles on poetry come from two English Scholars. The first one, Chris Joyce, from Surrey University, discusses the complex poetry of a complex poet, namely T.S. Eliot. For Joyce, Eliot is “a great poet: the finest in English in the twentieth century [who] continues to speak to us and to the elusive ‘human condition’.”

Neil Roberts, from The University of Sheffield, presents a challenging reading of several contemporary poets as a choice for teaching advanced students in literature. Tony Harrison, Derek Walkott, Peter Reading, Ted Hughes and Ann Stevenson are considered as experimental poets and, for Roberts, Bahktin may be a key to read these poets in terms of poetic form, narrative and dialogism.

My own contribution to this part is turned to a criticism of the film “Whale Rider”, adapted and directed by Niki Karo from the novel *Whale Rider* by Neo-Zealand writer Iti Ihimahea. My perception of the film is a feminist one in that the journey of the hero is seen through the eyes of the female protagonist, a rejected twin baby girl who grows up to defy the Maori tradition, patriarchal and decadent.

Part II is dedicated to articles on Linguistics, more specifically Applied Linguistics and Discourse Analysis. The organization is as follows: Márcia Rosetti de O. Albuquerque, from our PPGLL, provokes our reading when she presents a much heard utterance from our Foreign Language students: “I don’t know even Portuguese, let alone English” (“Não sei nem português que dirá inglês”). Her discussion is from the perspective of Discourse Analysis and she points out that the teacher may depart from “the common sense ‘I don’t know English, let alone Portuguese’ in order to help their students to understand in a broad range their relation with their mother language and with the foreign language”.

Gisele Luz Cardoso and Josalba Ramalho Vieira, the first a postgraduate student and the second a researcher from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, discuss an experience stemming from a study carried out in a public school in Florianópolis, with adolescent students. The study used the lyrics of songs in English in order to check the students understanding of metaphor. The authors use qualitative analysis of data and come to the conclusion that using songs with students can lead them to “think and work together in a collaborative way”.

Nick Ceramella, a scholar from the University of Rome-La Sapienza (Italy), contributes to this part with an article about the English sounds “in action”. Ceramella, in a very didactic and illustrative way, presents a historical overview of accents in certain parts of the English speaking world. His hope is to “shed some light on the nature of the [English] speaking system (...) from the point of view of phonetics and phonology”.

Maria Inez Matoso da Silveira, from our Programme, has the last word in this part of *Leitura*. Her reflections about the mastering of vocabulary for students of English for Specific Purposes bring a relevant contribution to this field of study. For her, a rethinking about the dimensions of the teaching of grammar in Brazilian schools might lead to an understanding of the teaching of English as considering reading for pleasure in the same way as an instrumental ability.

The third part is a review of two books: Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990) and Roseanne Tavares (ed). *Língua, cultura e ensino* (“Language, culture and teaching”. [2006]). These reviews were written by myself and by Rita Zozzoli respectively.

As the editor of this issue I am indebted to all the contributors who have submitted their articles and patiently awaited for the publication to come out. To them my heartfelt thanks. I do hope that readers in Brazil and elsewhere can enjoy themselves as well as learn a little with our contribution to the research in English studies.

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