

# Foreword

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Journal of LTS*, a journal for the University of Nottingham's Research Priority Area (RPA), "Languages, Texts and Society". The RPA, founded in 2015 and now led by Professor Dirk Göttsche and Associate Professor Kathy Conklin, is dedicated to understanding how communication and language shape and are shaped by society in a range of ways, bringing together linguists, literary scholars, translators and practitioners. This tripartite structure of key concepts – Languages, Texts and Society – is always in flux, with each element defining and redefining the others: the aim of the *Journal of LTS* is to provide a space for research students to explore this triad of ideas and their interrelation, as well as to give junior researchers the opportunity to develop professional editorial skills in context.

The journal was born out of the inaugural postgraduate symposium, 'Making Interdisciplinarity Work', on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016. Scholars from across the UK considered the political potential of interdisciplinary and collaborative work that tackled this unstable nexus. Subjects were wide-ranging and inspiring, and included sociolinguistic analysis of educational textbooks, an exploration of writing through gendered roles

in the memoir form, the performance of identity on BBC Radio Northern Ireland's *This is Northern Ireland* (1949), and Swedish composer Ture Rangström's *språkmelodi* (speech melody).

The discussions generated through the intersection of such varied research seemed to the editors to be a clarion call for a formal space to elaborate on this work. While interdisciplinarity, collaboration and innovation are often prized in the language of academia (and academic management), postgraduate researchers regularly contend with funding and institutional structures which are still rigorously divided along disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinary and collaborative work can seem a luxury; the preserve of those with secure funding arrangements, a wide network of contacts and the freedom to experiment. At the same time, it is very often junior scholars who have most to offer in terms of innovative approaches. Fresh eyes provide new insights, and reveal new aspects of the complex interactions between languages, methodologies, and traditional disciplines. Distilling these research practices and the multi-disciplinary subject focus of the LTS RPA into cohesive journal issues is no simple task, and we expect to experiment with a range of approaches. The journal's content and archive, as it expands, will exhibit and showcase interdisciplinary methodologies. We anticipate that each issue will contain material in a range of different formats, including traditional articles, book reviews, interviews and translations of postgraduate work published in other languages under Creative Commons license. This latter form will, we hope, serve to contribute to the development of multilingual research practices and provoke dialogue between scholars working in different languages.

Issue One looks at cultural responses to, and articulations of, late 20th century history, namely creative work that complicates our relationship to received historical narratives, and the nature of the historical narrative itself. Jessica Wax-Edwards, in *Caso Colosio: Re-examining Historical Narratives*, analyses the historiographic metafiction in Carlos Bolado's *Colosio: al asesinato* (2012) as a critique of the power dynamics at work in a post-revolutionary Mexican politics characterised by corruption. Michael James, in *Trading on Strikes: Trade Unions in Steve Ely's 'Ballad of the Scabs' and Helen Mort's 'Scab'*, considers political corruption of another kind in the United Kingdom, as

he draws on contemporary poetry that restages the miners' strikes of the 1970s and 1980s in order to explore the relationship between received strike and trade union narratives and the UK's normalisation of extraordinarily restrictive trade union legislation.

The translated text for this issue first appeared as a paper presented at XXXVIII Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação at Rio de Janeiro, 4–7 September 2015. The paper, authored by Emmanuelle Dias and Felipe Borges, of the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, has been translated from Portuguese by Anneliese Hatton, University of Nottingham. With the original title *Estudos Culturais e a televisão contemporânea em discussão*, translated as *A Discussion of Cultural Studies and Contemporary Television*, the article discusses present-day television-watching habits and how these reflect, and interact with, cultural perspectives.

Finally, this issue sees three recent and seminal works reviewed. Firstly, Yaqing Xie reviews *Beyond the Masks of Modernism: Global and Transnational Perspectives*, edited by Andrew Reynolds and Bonnie Roos. Secondly, *Linguistic Ethnography: Collecting, Analysing and Presenting Data*, by Fiona and Angela Creese, is reviewed by Katie Harrison. The final review is by Nayoung Jeon, on *British Spy Fiction and End of Empire*, by Sam Goodman. This range of reviews, traversing through several of the RPA's key themes, concludes the first issue by exploring the very pertinent topic of interdisciplinarity. The books reviewed combine and correlate various fields of study: modernism with art, music and literature; linguistics with ethnography; and literature with politics and history; and demonstrate the breadth of opportunities that an interdisciplinary approach offers.

We hope you enjoy this first issue of the *Journal of Languages, Texts, and Society*, a postgraduate peer-reviewed open-access journal. Our double-blind peer review process enlists an established academic alongside a postgraduate research student. The editors are passionate about this pedagogical aspect, as well as knowledge-sharing through open access – the *Journal of LTS* looks to train the next generation of researchers while publishing the next generation of research, free of access restrictions. Please contact [pg-lts@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:pg-lts@nottingham.ac.uk) to become involved in any aspect of future issues.