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THE BINDING FORCE OF ENGLISH: BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES

The English language is an indisputable and indispensable civilisational point of convergence enabling us to have unhindered planet-wide communication, and it equally, almost seamlessly facilitates the exchange of cultural and scientific reflections from other language systems. English is doubtless one of the most prolific linguistic systems employed to create some of the most beautiful literary works, treatises on culture and freedom of thought and speech. The Faculty of Philology English Department at the University of Banja Luka is dedicated to these subtle reflections and multifarious topics to which meticulous attention is duly paid throughout the academic year, both in class and through the scientific research efforts of our enterprising professors and teaching assistants. The department was founded in 1994 at the then-Faculty of Philosophy, and its growth and expansion continued at the Faculty of Philology in 2009. In light of our upcoming 30th birthday, we decided to add colour to this important milestone by authoring inspiring papers on language, literature and all things English. We dedicate this special issue to our alumni, former and retired professors, and our students-to-be.

Within the following pages, you will have the opportunity to read the papers of our esteemed colleagues from all over the globe. The topics are both diverse and comprehensive ranging from modern language, linguistics, literature, literary theory, cultural studies, translation, teaching methods to multimodal learning approaches in the humanities.

Željka Babić provides an incisive deep dive into the facets regarding the shaping of media discourse during the coronavirus pandemic. Mathias Okey Chukwu tackled the issue of identity through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis. Maja

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Žarković made a very significant morphological contribution in terms of a great paper dealing with the productivity of adjective-forming prefixes. Dijana Tica broached an extremely interesting literary topic that deals with the phenomenology of fear in the Victorian era. Jelena Šajinović Novaković and Emir Muhić brought us back to the field of semantics and pragmatics with their paper on adverbs *obviously* and *apparently*. Tatjana Dumitrašković conveniently included the great bard William Shakespeare in this special issue of the *Philologist* with her paper on rhetoric and power relations in Shakespeare's far-famed *Julius Caesar*. Milena Vidosavljević deals with the important issue of digital literacy and the use of modern technologies in teaching methods. Dejan Milinović set out an informative overview of the system of metaphors and similes based on the corpus of lexemes referring to animals. In her paper, Jasna Jurišć Roljić quite aptly connects the frequency of Latinate and Serbian prefixes.

This international group of English scholars prepared a refreshing selection of inspiring thematic domains by dint of which boundaries of the unknown are blurred, pushed back and at times altogether erased with a delicately fine line between knowledge and understanding clearly elucidated. Reading these insightful contemplations, we boldly venture into the realm of true scientific thought encompassing multifaceted areas which at their very core have one inescapable common denominator - the English language. We hope that the following texts will be an additional inspirational impulse for reflection and future academic endeavours.