



## **EDITORIAL**

Dear *JALDA* reader,

A new vocabulary item has been added to English dictionaries: Covid-19. For linguists, the addition of a meaningful linguistic element to any language should change the whole language as, for T. S. Eliot, a new poem changes the whole literature of a nation. But let us see how seriously the addition of the vocabulary item Covid-19 might change the English language. According to Cambridge online dictionary, Covid-19 is “an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus (= a type of virus), that usually causes fever, tiredness, and a cough, and can also cause breathing problems. Most often the disease is not serious but it can lead to severe illness in some people.” I do not think that the change brought about by the item is a radical one especially when the definition claims that most often the disease caused by the virus is not serious! (I wonder whether there is a Newspeak type conspiracy going on!) But when one turns to the “real world,” the situation turns out to be extremely serious: Not only has Covid-19 brought the whole world almost to a total stop, but it has also been the cause of many deaths all over the world. People have died, families have lost their breadwinners, doctors and nurses have been affected and died while on duty and we are still on the verge of being affected by the virus everyday if the necessary safety measures are not taken. Millions have lost their jobs and economies are on the verge of collapse. Governments are keen to see their state enemies crush under the heavy burdens by Covid-19 upon their economies and medical systems! Schools are shut down and much more other factual events can be added to these, all of which lead many to claim that in the post-Covid-19 era world peoples’ behaviours should change.

With the gap recognized between the dictionary definition of Covid-19 and what it has done to the world in reality, English Language Teaching and English Studies should be much more aware of the “real world.” There are tendencies among both linguists and applied linguists to defy the sole use of dictionaries as a source of meaning in classroom. Apart from the fact that the meanings attributed to a vocabulary item in a dictionary are limited after all, the question of language and the true representation of reality is a controversial one. There are nowadays studies in humanities and social sciences revealing that people live not in the real world but in their phenomenal worlds that are the construct of rather innumerable cultural, social and historical factors that should be taken into account in comprehensive multi-layered academic studies of human behaviour and understanding. From such a point of view, the confinement of any discipline to textual worlds, closed systems and/or virtual realms should be challenged because it could lead to restricted quixotic

understanding of reality. The history of English Language Teaching and English Studies shows that there has been a potential in the disciplines to fall within the trap of textuality and textual approaches to English Language and English Literature, which could turn them into closed systems and virtual realms. Covid-19 proved that we are not made to live in virtual worlds; we would like to shake hands with people we meet, give hugs to our loved ones and socialize in public places: stadiums, theatre houses, schools and universities. We have not found the Covid-19 vaccine yet, but we have been smart enough to contain it so that we may turn the train of life back onto its solid rails; it can no longer hold us in our isolated places. Under the confinement of Covid-19, we have not been passive or inactive. We have been looking for “rabbit holes” to sneak through them to the wonderland of the life-world, where we can come into close encounter with one another. Our Journal’s policy has been to deal with English Language Teaching and English Literature as disciplines that would bring us closer to the life-world. With Covid-19 overhead, we have found a more convincing reason to propagate applied approaches to English Language and Literature because it is more understandable how isolation and detachment can disturb humans and humanity.

Dr. Bahram Behin

Founding Editor-in-Chief

*Journal of Applied Linguistics and Applied Literature: Dynamics and Advances (JALDA)*

2 June 2020