

Language Teaching and Cambridge University Press

Christopher Brumfit Essay Prize 2018

Language Teaching announces the award of an essay prize which honours one of the founding editors of this journal.

Christopher John Brumfit (1940–2006) was Professor of Education, Head of the Research and Graduate School of Education, and Director of the Centre for Language in Education at the University of Southampton, UK. He was a former Chair of the BAAL and Vice-President of AILA.

In his obituaries of Professor Brumfit in *The Guardian* newspaper and in *Applied Linguistics*, Professor Henry Widdowson wrote that '[Chris] was both a defender and a critic of traditional values. Education imposed conventional constraints, but these had also to provide for the individual freedom of unconventional self-expression' adding that 'Rather than accept current ideas or conventional assumptions, he would submit them to scrutiny. This was the kind of non-conformist critical thinking that he encouraged his students to engage in'.

The essay prize that bears his name aims to reward evidence of such critical thinking, scrutiny of arguments for and against, and original thought.

Write a 3,000-word essay arguing for or against ONE of the following opinions:

- 1. Many countries have adopted, or are planning to adopt, education policies in which 'content' is taught in a language other than the home language of the students. For L2 English, these are often referred to as 'Content and Language Integrated Learning' (CLIL), 'English-taught Programmes', or 'English Medium Instruction' (EMI).¹ There can only be advantages in these incentives, as they will produce students better able to cope with the overwhelming need for fluent communicators in more than one language.**

OR

- 2. Large-scale, high-stakes L2 international examinations are regularly being used for a wide variety of purposes which perhaps go beyond the original remit of the examination boards developing them, including official government immigration and educational policy, selection in education and employment, job promotion, and even the enhancement of reputations of specific schools and colleges. These perceived advantages surely outweigh any potential objections to such tests as in any way detrimental to L2 teaching and learning.²**

¹ See Macaro et al. (2018). State-of-the-art Article: A systematic review of English medium instruction in higher education, *Language Teaching* 51.1.

² See Cheng et al. (2015). State-of-the-art Article: Review of washback research literature within Kane's argument-based validation framework. *Language Teaching* 48.4.

Guidance for writing

- a. There are no stipulations regarding the essay structure. However, it should include strong arguments that explore controversial viewpoints and should engage, as required, with recent, relevant scholarship. We are looking for a clear stance on the topic and a conclusion that argues strongly for or against the viewpoint expressed.
- b. While the essay should support one position, there are several perspectives on any issue and all opinions are valid if they are supported by sound reasoning and evidence. This essay is not a place to necessarily accommodate opposing viewpoints, but rather opposing viewpoints can be used to eventually support a stand for one position. Thus, it may be necessary to research opposing views to form an opinion that also helps negate those opposing arguments.
- c. In awarding the prize, the committee will also take into consideration the originality of the submitted paper and the theoretical and/or empirical contribution it makes to the discipline.

Procedure

1. The Prize will be awarded in open competition and only one entry is permitted per person. The competition is open to any individual who is an early-career scholar, defined as a registered student on a doctoral course not yet in possession of a doctoral degree, or a post-doctoral scholar within two years of the award of the doctorate at the time of submission.
2. Together with their essay file, authors must enclose a scanned letter on official notepaper from their supervisor, or from a person of similar academic standing, attesting to their status. Authors must also attest that the submission is their work, not published elsewhere and not currently submitted to any other publication. The essay must not have been submitted to this or any other essay competition in previous years. Any form of plagiarism will result in automatic disqualification. Entrants must not submit an essay which is in substance the same as one submitted in a previous year. However, an essay may be a reworked piece of the entrant's course work provided that it was originally the sole creation of the entrant.
3. Essays should clearly indicate which option has been chosen and be a maximum length of 3,000 words INCLUDING references.
4. Essays should be presented in English, in a pdf or MS Word file and follow the *Language Teaching* stylesheet available at http://assets.cambridge.org/LTA/LTA_ifc.pdf
5. The closing date for submissions is **30 November 2018**. Submissions and status letters should be sent as file attachments in an email to the Editor of *Language Teaching*, editorlanguageteaching@gmail.com. Essays should not present any author information.
6. All entries will be acknowledged. Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to provide feedback on unsuccessful entries.
7. The prize will be awarded by Cambridge University Press and *Language Teaching* on the recommendation of the referees formed from the Editorial Board of the journal. The winner will be announced on the journal website by 1 March 2019. The Board's decision is final. If no submission is judged suitable, the prize will not be awarded.

8. The Editor may also commission for publication in *Language Teaching* any entries that are highly commended by the referees.

Prize

1. The winner will receive a £500 credit to be used to purchase books available in the current Cambridge University Press (CUP) catalogue.
2. The winning essay – revised where appropriate in line with referees' comments – will be prioritised for publication in the first available issue of the journal.
3. The winner will be nominated for a one-year period as a member of the *Language Teaching* Editorial Board and designated in all outlets of the journal as the *Christopher Brumfit Award Winner* member.