

# Five years on

With the appearance of *ET20*, this curious hybrid magazine/journal (for native and non-native academics and non-academics) is five years old. It is an anniversary we wish to celebrate, but this will be done not at the end of half a decade, but at the beginning of our next five years, in a longer-than-usual *ET21* in January 1990 (more information on p.64).

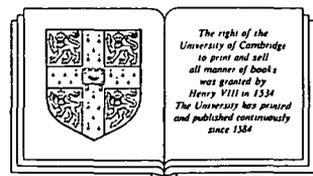
Our fifth year has in many ways been our liveliest year, in which we have covered some of the most significant issues and projects in the language. In January, Tony Fairman began his assault on the 'prescriptive' descriptive grammarians. In April, the grammarians replied, and in July and October the debate has continued strongly. In July, we began our two-part review of the *OED*, second edition, and in this issue we complete it. In addition, *ET20* contains a report on the latest revision (by Cambridge and Oxford together) of the Bible, in a tradition that dates at least from King James in 1611, if not from Wyclif and the Lollards in the 14th century. There's continuity for you.

Yet in addition to reporting such matters as these, which are as it were 'internal' to the language, in recent issues we have been powerfully drawn from the Atlantic to the Pacific – in the English-speaking world, towards Australasia, and in the English-influenced world, towards East Asia.

Creating an issue of *ET* nowadays is as much a response to what does come in as a consideration of what ought to come in. On both counts, Asia looms large, and especially the area that Europeans and North Americans have so easily and for so long called 'the Far East'. Recent events, however, have proved that whatever that East may be, it is no longer 'far', nor can it be dismissed any more as inscrutably Oriental. The articles on Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan separately and together command attention – especially concerning what Sangsup Lee says about the subversion of Korean grammar and what Torkil Christensen says really happens in Japanese English classrooms.

Tom McArthur

The editorial policy of *English Today* is to provide a focus or forum for all sorts of news and opinion from around the world. The points of view of individual writers are as a consequence their own, and do not reflect the opinion of the editorial board. In addition, wherever feasible, *ET* leaves unchanged the orthography (normally British or American) and the usage of individual contributors, although the editorial style of the magazine itself is that of Cambridge University Press.



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**Letters to the Editor:** write to Dr Tom McArthur, Editor, *English Today*, 22-23 Ventress Farm Court, Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge CB1 4HD, UK.

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