

From Beowulf to Bollywood

With the score at 99, many a batsman has been overtaken by nerves and been caught at slip or leg before, or run out. Not so *ET*, which – now one shy of its century in terms of number of issues – continues to bring a diverse fare to its readership. The concerns of the Anglo-Saxon world and its more distant Germanic heritage may not, at first sight, seem part of that fare for a journal on the language today. Ross Smith, however, shows the continuing impact of the Beowulf epic upon modern poets and translators in his informative presentation of the work of J. R. R. Tolkien and the choices he faced in rendering the spirit of Old English in a more modern idiom. The oral world of Beowulf contrasts immensely with the modern world of neon lights and visual signs that form part of Kay McCormick and Rama Kant Agnihotri's account of the linguistic landscapes of Cape Town and Delhi. Multilingual cities like these lend themselves to the ludic aspect of language, as small businesses compete to attract the attention of passers-by and keep their customers in the know. Globalisation is the theme of Dorothea Fischer-Hornung, Christiane Brosius, Marianne Hundt and Rajend Mesthrie's account of a web-based course based at three universities that focused on language, literature and culture in the Indian diaspora. The article recounts, in addition, the possibilities offered by internet platforms like

that of the University of Heidelberg's 'Moodle' in revolutionising university teaching. Roger Berry focuses on a little-studied structure of modern English, the generic second person pronoun. His account of its grammatical and stylistic uses shows that pedagogical grammars should not continue to neglect this construction. Rita Queiroz de Barros analyses a growing topic in the field of English studies, viz. the competition between British and American norms, in her study of the preferences of Portuguese students and professionals for one or the other. The expansion of English in China continues to attract research interest, with Tian Bo Li and Gillian Moreira focusing on the needs of the corporate world and the use of English in business. This theme is to be found in the next article by Ingrid Fandrych, which stresses the importance of English in multilingual Southern African settings. The first of the regular features of *ET* is the etymology column by Alex Tulloch, which concentrates on the fascinating history of travel terms internationally. Bernd Kortmann and Monika Schulz give a report of the inaugural conference of ISLE, the International Society for the Linguistics of English, held in Freiburg in October 2008. Finally, in our Post and E-mail section we have a letter from Kimberly Sanford of Chicago on discipline in the EFL classroom.

The Editors

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* generally leaves unchanged the orthography (normally British or American) and the usage of individual contributors, although the editorial style of the journal itself is that of Cambridge University Press.

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