



Editorial

Produced from within the Pandemic: The Power of Scholarly Publishing to Help Us Weather Adversity

MELA SARKAR, McGill University

This special issue of *J-BILD* has been a long time in the hatching. A full two years ago, in November 2019, we were busy planning LPP2020, a conference that was to have been held in late August 2020. We were, at that time, looking at the different possible sites at or near McGill University in Montreal that helpful people had found for us. Distance from campus, capacity of rooms, availability of catering—those were the immediate concerns of myself and Angelica Galante, who was to have been conference-co-chair.

But, as readers will know, in March 2020 any possibility of holding the “Multidisciplinary Approaches in Language Policy and Planning” conference in person at McGill receded into a distant and uncertain future, and was unceremoniously cut short before that summer, when public health directives, the McGill policies that devolved from them, and basic common sense dictated that we move the conference online—a major change that meant we had to cancel the 2020 edition of the conference, and take the time we needed to plan [a completely virtual conference in 2021](#) instead, co-chaired by new team Mela Sarkar and Amir Kalan with the support of dozens of volunteers from BILD and from all over the world.

Over a hundred authors of abstracts for the cancelled 2020 conference were invited to defer to August 2021, which most of them did. We also invited them to send review-ready papers based on their conference abstracts to *J-BILD*, for consideration in a special issue devoted to papers that *would* have been presented at LPP2020 if we hadn't had to cancel that year's conference altogether.

You are reading the happy result—an unexpected piece of positive fallout from what has been a very difficult period, lasting nearly two years now, not just for us here at BILD, *J-BILD* and the LPP organizing team, but in fact for all of humanity. This is the fifth issue of *J-BILD* to appear during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. It will not be the last. But we are learning how to support each other through these pandemic



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times, not least through scholarly publishing as an act of collective solidarity, in the face of challenges that might once have seemed insurmountable.

When we were able to speak to LPP2021 conference attendees about *J-BILD* at a special online session during the conference itself, Alison Crump, *J-BILD* Senior Managing Editor, and Mela Sarkar, Senior Advisor, found that the LPP2021 audience was gratifyingly interested in our open-access, online approach to scholarly publishing, and to the non-anonymized peer mentor model we espouse. We are receiving more submissions than ever, as what we take to be a direct result of our newly raised profile. The journal that started as [a gleam in the eye](#) of a few members of the BILD research community back in 2017 is coming into its own.

Of the five articles in this special issue, four were also presented as conference papers at LPP2021. We are very pleased that we were able to offer all the authors accepted to the cancelled LPP2020 conference the opportunity to be published in *J-BILD* as well as the chance to present their work at the online conference in 2021; we are delighted that so many of them took us up on both offers, to the extent that a double special issue was warranted. The story of the would-have-been LPP2020 conference papers will therefore be continued in the next issue of *J-BILD*.

This issue reflects the diversity and breadth of scholarship that we feel characterize both the LPP conference and the authors and readers of *J-BILD*. You will read about children, adolescents, and adults grappling with complex issues of belonging, identity, and language in places as diverse as Bangladesh, Japan, Mexico, Serbia, and the Korean north-eastern part of China. The next LPP-themed issue will take you to even more corners of our unpredictable and changing world, and will come your way in 2022.

Stay safe and well until then, *J-BILD* readers.

ARTICLE SUMMARIES

Research Studies

Marija Apostolovic takes us into the heart of her native Serbia in "Parlers romani et romani standard à l'école : tensions entre politique officielle et politique en classe," where we meet a classroom of children belonging to the Rom minority, and learn



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that they have a confident and outspoken sense of agency about the non-standard variety of the Romani language they speak, despite the presence in their classroom of a teacher and a curriculum reflecting a different, top-down view of this recently standardized language. We learn about the language-ideological debates current among Romani-speaking Serbian educators. Marija offers a detailed and sympathetic portrait of the classroom, the teachers and the children, in a context that is likely to be new to many of our readers.

In “‘Multi’ as a Strategic Tool for Better Transition: Plurilingualism at an Ethnic Korean High School in China,” Meilan Ehlert takes us to the Korean autonomous region of north-east China, where she spent four years working with high school students who move fluidly between Korean, Mandarin Chinese and English as part of their trajectory through adolescence in this plurilingual part of the world’s most populous nation. As a trilingual Korean-Chinese-English insider, Meilan is able to interpret the language choices of these youngsters with perceptive insight. Their voices come through clearly in this detailed research report of a painstaking longitudinal study.

A continuing collaboration among three scholars with close connections to Mexico, Dana K. Nelson, Jesahe Herrera Ruano and Jesús H. K. Zepeda Huerta, gives us “Linguistic Trajectories and FLP: Return Migrant Families in Mexico.” We delve into the histories and family language policies of three young people who have moved back and forth between Mexico and the United States over the course of a couple of decades; the relative importance of Spanish and English in their linguistic repertoires changes in correspondingly complex ways. The authors portray the dynamics of these three transnational families within the context of Mexico-US immigration and return migration with understanding and compassion, showing how important it is for researchers into family language policy to look at individuals and families close up and in carefully contextualized detail.

In the only article in this issue that was not, in the event, also presented as a paper at LPP2021, “Ideological formation process of a Japanese college student: A case study,” Mitsuyo Sakamoto and Mitsunori Takakuwa show us how one Japanese college student in Tokyo changed her attitudes over time, as she learned about intercultural issues and different varieties of English over the course of her university program. This in-depth case study makes it possible for readers to gain insight into



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the thought processes of one individual young Japanese who came a long way in her ability to see English(es) in a more nuanced, globalized context.

Critical Literature Review

Shaila Shams, in “Nation, Religion and Language Ideology: The Case of Postcolonial Bangladesh,” reviews a wide range of historical and ideological literature on the ways languages have been used and perceived in pre- and post-independence Bangladesh. From her current perspective in Vancouver, she is able to step back from her home country and inform us about current language-ideological debates, not only in Bangladesh itself but also in diasporic communities of Bangladeshis who have migrated elsewhere, especially to Canada. The situation is complex: several varieties of Bengali—including a standard literary language to which not all have access—co-exist in Bangladesh; in addition, Arabic, as the language of religion, and English, as an important language of power, both compete with Bengali in the public space, and in the hearts and on the tongues of Bangladeshis at home and abroad. Shaila navigates this terrain with ease and skill for her readers, opening a window into a fascinating sociolinguistic area that may not be as familiar to some *J-BILD* readers.