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Introduction

This volume of *in esse: English Studies in Albania* collects papers from three different subject areas, which also form the three sections of this issue: *Cultural Studies*, *Language Studies*, *English Language Teaching*. Some of the papers included here were presented at conferences held at the University of Vlora “Ismail Qemali,” Albania—the 5th ASSE International Conference on British and American Studies “The “CROSS-INTER-MULTI-TRANS-” disciplinarit(ies) of English Studies” that took place on 6-8 June 2019 in Vlora, Albania and the 4th international conference on language, literary and cultural studies “Languages travel the world: challenges and perspectives in language, literary and cultural studies in the technological era” that took place on November 9th, 2019.

The first section contains one contribution by Marek Smoluk from Zielona Góra University, Poland. The author focuses on seventeenth-century English society, more precisely on how disasters and misfortunes were approached by English people from a superstitious perspective. In particular, the author draws on the world of flora and fauna and tries to illustrate how people convinced of the magical powers attached to them resorted to animals and plants for relief.

The second section contains three contributions, one by Maria Luisa Maggioni from Università Cattolica del S. Cuore – Milan, Italy, the other by Nadiya Yesypenko and Olga Soloviova from Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine, and another by Dorjana Klosi from the University of Vlora “Ismail Qemali,” Albania.

In her article, Maria Luisa Maggioni discusses the role of English as a language that surpasses cultural, national, geographical boundaries, as a unifying medium that not only serves bridging communicative contexts, but, above all, informs larger and far more complex realities owing to its varieties that come under the umbrella term of ‘Englishes’.

In their article, Nadiya Yesypenko and Olga Soloviova from Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine, look at semantic peculiarities of suffixes in Old English. Their hypothesis is that the meaning of derived nouns is conditioned by the suffixes that coined them depending on gender and the semantic meaning of bases. For this purpose, they analysed Old English non-recursive derivatives and were able to single out twenty-one semantic groups of noun-derivatives and their bases. The analysis allowed them to identify the most frequent semantic groups of bases, and tell which groups had a specific focal meaning or showed preferences in terms of gender.

In her article, Dorjana Klosi from the University of Vlora “Ismail Qemali”, Albania, looks at Albanian slang and conversational discourse as employed by young people, university students, with the aim to show how Albanian spoken language, in particular its grammatical variety, has been impacted by the borrowings from other languages, mainly those from English and Italian, but not only.

The third section has one article by Renáta Timková from Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Slovakia. The author has conducted a survey with EFL university students at her home university. The author’s departure point is that pronunciation is an underresearched area in Slovakia in that research so far carried out has mainly focused on the teaching experience rather than on the learning experience. The author considers the learners’ experience in primary and secondary education an important aspect to be taken into consideration. Moreover, the author seeks to identify problematic areas of pronunciation that need to be addressed in university pronunciation courses.

We would like to thank all our contributors for sharing their views and ideas in this volume. Special and well-deserved thanks go to our reviewers for their tireless work in selecting and reviewing the contributions for this volume.