

BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES IN EDUCATION

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This book, published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in December 2013, comprises a collection of selected peer-reviewed papers from the fifth international conference – Building Cultural Bridges: Integrating Languages, Linguistics, Literature, Translation and Journalism into Education, which took place at Suleyman Demirel University in Almaty in April 2013.

Scholars from around the world, including England, Serbia, Hong Kong, Qatar to Kazakhstan – came together in their shared interest to build cultural bridges and produce diverse ways of approaching constant challenges and changes in today's world to expand horizons in language, education, linguistics, literature and intercultural communication.

Comprehensible in nature, the book focuses on the need to address diverse issues and highlight the need for comprehensive account of current major global trends and represents an initial step in the process of building new cultural bridges in education around the globe.

The emphasis in this book is on promoting an understanding of and appreciation for the rich and varied contemporary theoretical assumptions surrounding the abovementioned fields and disciplines. The papers in this book represent rigor and relevance in discussion of numerous and always varying cultural aspects in scientific discourse and lexis.

The book opens with an article written by a plenary speaker, Prof. Chris Kennedy from the University of Birmingham, UK. He argues that one effect of the spread of English as a global language is the creation of cultural hybrids, a phenomenon that can be investigated through the analysis of and reflection on various texts illustrating such hybridity.

Alan Weber's contribution details the initiatives, efforts, and challenges faced by the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) Writing Program in establishing a culture of reading and critical inquiry in the State of Qatar in the Arabian Gulf.

Brent Davis discusses the use of the concept of ideology to combine the study of British and American culture. In his opinion, understanding the British and American worldviews leads to a better understanding of the English language, English teachers and translators.

Nataša Bakić-Mirić introduces intercultural communication as a medium of cultural diplomacy. In her vivid discussion, she also focuses on how it helps people to foster mutual understanding when interacting with the culturally different others and how it reduces the incidence of misunderstanding between cultures.

Madina Ashirimbetova and Shynar Baigozha cover an enlightening topic on how Kazakhs see Americans and how stereotypes influence the judgements we often have about other people.

Aliya Aimoldina and Sholpan Zharkynbekova investigate rhetorical features in business letter writing by Kazakhstani students taking the English for Business Purposes

course as well as the current linguistic situation in Kazakhstan and a political directive on trilingual policy in Kazakhstani intercultural business communication.

Nadežda Stojković and Slađana Živković propose that today, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is not just a language of professional and technical occupations but a medium of contemporary ideology of globalization that creates our reality. In the authors' opinion, ESP can be seen as a tool that enhances skills and knowledge attained for both professional development and career advancement to comply with the needs of the global economy.

Sholpan Gumarova and Lidiya Strautman discuss the invaluable benefits of using Internet video lessons in the course "English for Physics" as one of the most successful methods of stimulating students' interest. Additionally, the paper considers the types of classroom activities based on Internet video materials.

Reza Pishgadam and Bob Adamson give a new outlook on the applied ELT and textbooks used in the classroom. They suggest that ELT textbooks should be written to enhance both intelligence and language proficiency.

Damira Akunova, Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Atikul Agmanova present interesting research on the analysis of the current state of English in the educational space of Kazakhstan. Their paper also investigates the place, role and peculiarities of the function of the English language in the higher educational system. Additionally, they highlight the use of code switching as one of the main peculiarities of bilingualism among Kazakhstani university students.

Juldyz Smagulova and David Landis critically examine current school literacy teaching practices in Kazakhstan. They draw on ethnographic observations of the classroom literacy practices in a Kazakh-medium school in Almaty. Their analysis of classroom interaction suggests that understanding of literacy as a technical skill and understanding of literacy as an educational tool (to do school) are predominant in Kazakhstani primary schools.

Davronzhon Erkinovich Gaipov and Kuralai Kuderinova investigate writing system reforms, and phonological and lexical changes that have taken place in the Kazakh language until now. The authors also focus on social and political factors of development and formation of current Kazakh writing system.

Gulnara Yeleukulova presents and discusses a piece of Kazakh oral epic developed by a warrior-poet and orator – Akhtamberdy. This rare surviving piece of oral art from the nomadic Kazakhs, as Yeleukulova points out, is invaluable because it is the story told by the people living in the years of bloody wars between the tribes. As a result, the epic legacy of the zhyraus, as well as the legacy of Akhtamberdy (one of the surviving warrior-poets), is valuable for being not only the historical narration, but also the epical generalization and synthesis of the real historical events.

Georgeta Rata analyses the Turkish loanwords that have attained different degrees of assimilation into the Romanian language analyzing the evolution of Turkish borrowings in the field of cuisine (especially names of foods and ingredients) from the point of view of their usage restrictions, word formation and semantic evolution.

Finally, Nadiia Govorun examines various sociolinguistic factors and the criteria for differentiating the dialects of Middle English as well as morphological and syntactic features of the development of the verb phrase for the most widespread North and Central-East Midland dialects.

In conclusion, the purpose of this book is to highlight that contemporary scholars look upon the issues dealt in this book through a dynamic global prism and beyond any strict set of rules, which would otherwise lead them to ignore the ever-shifting bridges in education,

language teaching, linguistics, literature and culture, and the accompanying global cultural reality in general.

Lastly, the variety and complexity of these essays offer fresh views to the topic postulated in the title of the book. Moreover, they will additionally stimulate intellectual curiosity and research, further development of new ideas within the fields of education, language, literature and cultural studies as well as build cultural bridges in education the world over, which, from the editors' point of view, is crucial to the development of mutual understanding in the modern world.