



JOURNAL OF

APPLIED LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE STUDIES (JALDS)



Beyond Boundaries: Language, Discourse, and the Future of Scholarly Inquiry

Editorial Team

Journal of Applied Language and Discourse Studies (JALDS)

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Every scholarly journal begins with a particular sense of purpose. Some are created to strengthen an established field; others emerge because existing venues no longer seem fully adequate to the questions scholars are asking. The *Journal of Applied Language and Discourse Studies* (JALDS) belongs to the latter group. The journal was founded on the belief that many important questions about language, discourse, and communication can no longer be addressed adequately from within one discipline alone. How does language shape social life? How are identities negotiated through discourse? What happens to communication when it moves across languages, cultures, media, and technologies? Questions such as these often require us to draw on more than one intellectual tradition.

This is not simply a fashionable argument for interdisciplinarity. It reflects the way language scholarship has developed over recent decades. Linguistics now engages with social action, cultural practice, cognition, technology, and institutional life. Applied linguistics, discourse studies, translation studies, communication, corpus linguistics, literary studies, and computational approaches have all learned from one another. In applied linguistics in particular, language is increasingly studied in relation to learning, identity, multilingualism, social interaction, and institutional life (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016; Pennycook, 2010). As a result, many of the questions that concern us most do not fit neatly within a single field.

This does not mean that disciplinary expertise has become less important. On the contrary, serious scholarship still depends on strong theoretical knowledge, methodological competence, and careful research. Openness and depth should not be seen as opposites. Some of the most productive work takes place where established traditions meet, overlap, and occasionally challenge one another. JALDS seeks to provide a space for these encounters. Our aim is not merely to place different disciplines alongside one another, but to encourage genuine exchange among scholars who approach related questions from different perspectives. We hope that such



conversations will enrich existing fields and lead to new ways of thinking about language, discourse, and human experience.

Language and Discourse

The journal's title reflects this purpose. We place *language* and *discourse* at the center because together they capture two closely related dimensions of contemporary inquiry. Language is one of the fundamental objects of investigation in the humanities and social sciences. Through language, knowledge is expressed, identities are negotiated, institutions function, and cultures are transmitted. Yet language is not only a formal system; it is also a social practice. The concept of discourse draws attention to this practice—to the ways meanings are produced, contested, and changed within specific social, cultural, historical, and institutional settings. In this sense, discourse is not merely language in use but also a form of social action shaped by relations of power, ideology, and institutional practice (Fairclough, 1992, 1995; van Dijk, 1997).

This distinction has consequences for the questions scholars ask. Researchers are increasingly interested not only in how language is structured, but also in what language does. Whether they are studying literary narratives, multilingual classrooms, political rhetoric, digital communication, or translated texts, they must often consider linguistic form, communicative practice, and social meaning together. For this reason, language and discourse have become important meeting points for interdisciplinary research. Applied linguistics intersects with education; translation studies engages with cultural and technological change; corpus linguistics informs discourse analysis; literary studies draws on pragmatic and cognitive approaches; and communication studies increasingly benefits from linguistic perspectives. These connections do not mean that disciplinary boundaries are disappearing. Rather, they show that such boundaries can serve as points of contact and exchange.

Communication also increasingly takes place through combinations of linguistic, visual, aural, spatial, and embodied resources. This multimodal dimension is particularly evident in digital discourse, where meaning is shaped not only by words but also by images, video, hyperlinks, platform design, and patterns of interaction (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; van Leeuwen, 2015; Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2019). These developments have expanded the range of questions that language and discourse scholars can ask and have made dialogue among fields more important than ever.

Why This Journal?

JALDS was established with a straightforward but ambitious aim: to bring disciplinary rigour and intellectual openness together. We do not want interdisciplinarity to become an excuse for sacrificing depth. At the same time, we do not want disciplinary boundaries to prevent scholars from learning from one another. The journal therefore welcomes a range of approaches, including quantitative, qualitative, corpus-based, ethnographic, historical, interpretive, and computational methods. What matters is not the method in itself, but its suitability to the research question and the care with which it is applied. We welcome both theoretical and empirical work when it makes a meaningful contribution to an ongoing scholarly discussion.

International exchange is equally important to the journal's vision. Language and discourse are global phenomena, and scholarship is enriched when different linguistic, cultural, and intellectual contexts are brought into conversation. Language practices are shaped by mobility, migration, translation, globalization, and local forms of social life; they therefore cannot be

understood fully through a single cultural or geographical lens (Blommaert, 2010). We are especially interested in work that engages with contexts beyond the Anglophone mainstream. We hope that the journal will reflect the diversity of the field and provide space for perspectives that remain underrepresented in international academic publishing.

This Inaugural Issue

The articles in this inaugural issue offer a small but representative indication of the kind of scholarship we hope JALDS will publish. They engage with literary studies, discourse analysis, language education, and ethical and theoretical inquiry. Their questions and methods are different, but they share an interest in language and discourse as ways of understanding texts, people, relationships, and the worlds they inhabit.

The issue also appears at a time when emerging technologies are changing both communication and the study of language. Large language models, machine translation, and other computational tools have raised important questions about meaning, interpretation, authorship, bias, and accountability. They have also created new possibilities for research. Recent discussions of language technologies remind us that apparently meaningful computational output should be examined in relation to the data, assumptions, and social conditions through which it is produced (Bender et al., 2021). JALDS welcomes work that approaches these developments critically, carefully, and constructively.

Our Editorial Approach

A journal's culture is shaped less by its mission statement than by the decisions made over time by its editors, reviewers, and authors. As JALDS begins its work, we hope to develop a culture guided by several principles. First, we value meaningful contribution as well as methodological rigor. A strong method is essential, but it is not sufficient by itself. We look for research that helps us understand something more clearly—whether by offering a new perspective, questioning an established assumption, refining a concept, or opening a new direction for further study.

Second, we welcome methodological diversity while maintaining high academic standards. A qualitative study, an experiment, a corpus analysis, or a theoretical argument can each make a valuable contribution when the approach is appropriate and carefully developed. Third, we regard peer review as a rigorous but constructive process. Reviewers do more than assess manuscripts. Their comments can help authors clarify their arguments, strengthen their evidence, and see possibilities that may not have been apparent in the original submission. We are grateful to all those who contribute their time and expertise to this work.

Finally, we value scholarly exchange across disciplines, institutions, countries, and intellectual traditions. We hope JALDS will be a journal in which ideas can travel beyond their original settings and enter into new conversations.

Acknowledgements

This journal would not have been possible without the support of many people. We are grateful first to the authors who entrusted their work to a new publication. Their confidence in JALDS has provided the foundation on which the journal begins. We are equally grateful to the reviewers whose careful evaluations have helped improve the contributions in this issue. Much

of their work remains invisible to readers, but it is an essential part of responsible scholarly publishing.

We also thank the members of the Editorial Board for their expertise, encouragement, and willingness to contribute their time during the journal's formative period. We are fortunate to begin this undertaking with the support of colleagues who share our commitment to scholarship in language and discourse studies.

We gratefully acknowledge the institutional support of Arak University, which has provided the academic environment and resources necessary for establishing JALDS. A new journal is never the work of one person; it grows from many contributions, both visible and unseen.

An Invitation

Every first issue is both a beginning and a promise. The promise can be fulfilled only through the involvement of a scholarly community—to submit research, review manuscripts, read, cite, question, and debate. We invite researchers, educators, translators, discourse analysts, literary scholars, corpus linguists, and others whose work engages with language and discourse to consider JALDS as a venue for their scholarship. We are particularly interested in hearing from early-career researchers and from scholars working in contexts that remain underrepresented in mainstream international publishing.

Above all, we hope JALDS will become more than a place where articles are published. We hope it will become a community of inquiry: a place where scholars encounter unfamiliar ideas, cross intellectual boundaries without abandoning disciplinary depth, and find room for curiosity and sustained discussion. The future of language scholarship does not depend on abandoning disciplines. It depends on the quality of the conversations we create among them. These are the conversations that JALDS hopes to foster.

We invite you to join us.

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