

A Report of the Two-Day International Conference on “Literary and Language Studies in the New Millennium”

**Organized by the Department of English,
Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai**

March 09 & 10, 2023

Day 1

Inauguration

The Department of English, Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai inaugurated a Two-Day International Conference on “*Literary and Language Studies in the New Millennium*” held on March 09 & 10, 2023. The Hon’ble Member of Parliament, Dr Thamizhachi Thangapandian, delivered the keynote address emphasizing the challenges of teaching the new millennial learners in the traditional approach and advocated an instructional framework that would enable focused and participative learning, integrate immersive and blended learning with technology, and provide opportunities to skilling and up-scaling. She expressed that the traditional literary value of the classics should not be compromised but blended with new perspectives of modern writings. She stressed the importance of the use of the mother tongue for expressing native experiences. Also, she released the Conference Proceedings.

The Convenor of the Conference, Dr KS Antonysamy welcomed the participants and expounded the concept note of the conference. Rev. Dr B. Jeyaraj, SJ, Secretary, and Rev. Dr A. Thomas, SJ, Principal, Loyola College felicitated the guests and the gathering.

The international conference included well-renowned language and literature experts and resource persons, Dr Jamie Barber, Faculty University of Buffalo, New York, Dr Joseph Dorairaj, Professor, School of English & Foreign Languages Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dr Peter M Francis S.J., Professor, XLRI, Jamshedpur, Dr T. Marx, Professor & Head, Dept. of English Pondicherry University, and Rev. Dr Britto Vincent S.J., Professor, Dept. of Folklore, St. Xavier’s College, Palayamkottai who addressed the various challenges and strategies of language and literature teaching in the plenary sessions.

Professors, experts, researchers and students from various higher education institutions participated in the conference to discuss the most recent developments, challenges, and opportunities in the field of literary and language studies and deliberate on newer strategies for the proliferation of literature studies, integration of e-learning and blended learning methodologies, augmentation of research and academic writing in literary and language studies.

Plenary Sessions

The two-day conference comprised 6 plenary sessions for one and a half hours with one resource person per session.

Plenary Session I: Critiquing the Canon

Resource Person: Dr Joseph Dorairaj Professor, School of English & Foreign Languages Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed to be University

Dr Joseph Dorairaj in his talk on the topic, " Critiquing the Canon", evoked various questions on the reformation in the study of literature by extending the canon which is no more androcentric, eurocentric, or homophobic but is more inclusive of the bourgeois community. Further, he also listed down his own "Touchstone method" to group any work under the canon which includes immortality, timelessness, originality and aesthetic beauty.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session - Welcome Address: Dr Pearline, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Dr Ragamalika, Vote of Thanks: Prof. Manohar, Master of Ceremony: Dr Anita, Staff in charge: Dr Ragamalika.

Plenary Session II: Honing the craft: How Reading and Utilizing a Writing Centre Act as Whetstones to sharpen Academic Writing

Resource Person: Dr Jamie Barber, Fulbright Scholar & Faculty, University of Buffalo, New York

Dr Jamie Barber presented her thoughts on the relevance and importance of reading and writing, especially, refining the writing skills that could ameliorate the standard of education among students. She laid focus on the significance of Research, either in creative or academic writing. Also, she suggested that a writing centre needs to be established in India to promote writing skills, especially among young students and scholars.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session -
Welcome Address: Dr Christina Sagaya Mary D, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Dr Mary Vidya Porselvi, Vote of Thanks: Prof. Stephen Heldt, Master of Ceremony: Prof. Sharmila
Staff in charge: Prof Xavier Dhanam

Plenary Session III: Talk less, Say more: Connect, Convey and Convince.

Resource Person: Rev. Dr Peter M. Francis S.J, Professor, XLRI, Jamshedpur

Rev. Dr Peter M. Francis in his introductory learning activity introduced the concept of the 'rags to riches' pattern of story-telling and made the audience envision the same. He illustrated how the story matters as a powerful narrative technique to effectively present the content. He emphasized that the creative employment of stories in presentation would serve as an effective listener-centric method.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session -
Welcome Address: Prof. Julia Pradeepa, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Prof. D. Francis Xavier, Vote of Thanks: Prof. Sebastia Raj, Master of Ceremony: Dr Anton, Staff in charge: Dr Felicita

Parallel Session I: Paper presentations

The parallel paper presentations were held at 8 different venues. (No. of) professors, research scholars and PG students from various institutions presented their papers. The sessions were moderated by Rev. Dr Maria Arockia Raj (Sacred Heart College, Tirupathur), Dr Edward Felix (Christ College, Chennai) and professors from the Department of English, Loyola College, Chennai: Dr Christina, Dr Felicita, Dr Preethi, Prof. Stephen, Dr Amal, and Dr Anton.

Day 2

Recap: Prof Ferdinand Fernando and Prof. Grisha presented the recap of the sessions of Day 1.

Plenary Session IV: Orality and Literacy in Folklore Studies

Resource Persons: Rev. Dr Britto Vincent S.J Former Professor, Dept. of Folklore St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Palayamkottai

Rev. Dr Britto Vincent chronicled the history of literature starting from the oral tradition and weighed on the importance of why the scholarly world should reawaken to the oral character of the language.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session - Welcome Address: Prof Aldrin, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Prof. Amal, Vote of Thanks: Dr Vasanthi, Master of Ceremony: Prof. Dominic, Staff in charge: Prof John Jelestine

Plenary Session V: Literary Studies in New Millennium: Reinventing Theories

Resource Person: Dr T. Marx Professor & Head, Dept. of English Pondicherry University

Dr T. Max enumerated the different kinds of emerging literary theories including trauma studies, memory studies, climate studies, memory studies, etc. He illuminated the relationship between the emerging studies and the ones that existed in the beginning and the distinction between philosophical shift and linguistic shift. In his concluding remark, he divulged the importance of reinvention of literary studies that could include the variety of problems and concerns of people.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session - Welcome Address: Dr Felicita, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Dr Kannan, Vote of Thanks: Dr Sahaya Mary, Master of Ceremony: Dr Lincy Linnette, Staff in charge: Dr Felicita

Plenary Session VI: The masculinity language used in literature and spiritual books

Resource Persons: Dr Nelavala Gnana Prasuna, Gurukul College, Chennai.

Dr Nelavala Gnana Prasuna talked about the masculinity language used in literature and spiritual books. She highlighted how the language of scriptures brings man to the forefront, especially in comic and tragic genres and the hegemonic heroes present in most of the literary works. She also marked references to the Bible and Manuscripts and also pointed out Jesus Christ as the perfect example of biblical masculinity.

The faculty members of the department assisted in various responsibilities of the session - Welcome Address: Prof. Saranya, Introducing and honouring the Resource Person: Prof Ashwin, Vote of Thanks: Prof. Ranjith, Master of Ceremony: Prof. Leo, Staff in charge: Dr Xavier Dhanam

Parallel Session II: Paper Presentations

The parallel paper presentations were held at 8 different venues. (No. of) professors, research scholars and PG students from various institutions presented their papers. The presentations covered a variety of multidisciplinary subjects, including Queer theory, Religious scepticism, children's literature, cultural materialism, disability studies, qualitative analysis, memoirs etc. The sessions were moderated by Prof Manoharan, Dr Mary Vidya Porselvi, Prof Sebasti Raj, Prof. D.Francis Xavier, Dr Vasanthi, Prof. Julia Pradeepa, Dr Kannan Prasad, and Prof Ashwin.

Valedictory

The two-day international conference concluded with the valedictory and certificate distribution. Dr Arul Francis welcomed the gathering and Prof. Santhosh introduced the Chief Guest, Dr Armstrong, Head of the Department of English, University of Madras.

Dr Armstrong, in his valedictory address, appreciated the organizers of the conference for the recent and relevant themes chosen for dissemination, discussion and deliberation for the two days. He illustrated the importance of the study of 'The Blue Humanities' in the literature that connects the water bodies with human beings. Also, he highlighted the contemporary significance of expressing native experiences in regional works of literature.

Dr KS Antonysamy introduced the Chief Guest of the Valedictory Programme, Mr Prabhu Solomon, an Indian Film Director and Scriptwriter, highlighting the literary values of the cinematography of the latter. Mr Prabhu Solomon in his address stressed the importance of the representation of nativity in works of art by saying "the more we are regional, the more we are international" and also expressed that it is not enough to be educated but being human does matter.

The Head of the Department and Convenor of the Conference, Dr KS Antonysamy felicitated and thanked the participants for creating an immersive academic experience for the two days.