

Working on *Working on it*

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This collection of essays showcases the PhD dissertation research conducted at the Department of English, University of Turku. The purpose of the collection is twofold. Firstly, the collection serves as a source for MA students and graduates considering postgraduate studies to gain a hands-on view of what it is like to work as a researcher; the collection offers perspectives on the options available to the prospective researcher, gives examples of challenges they may face, as well as possible solutions to these challenges, in a manner perhaps more personal and practically oriented than in most research articles. Secondly, the collection allows young scholars an opportunity to think about their work in its early stages, concentrating on issues such as terminology or methodology, areas which are often given limited attention, for example, in dissertation articles due to issues of space. All contributors to this collection are PhD researchers in the Department of English at the University of Turku, in different stages of their PhD projects. Each contributor discusses their topic in relation to, and in the context of, their PhD dissertation. The collection is representative of all major areas of research conducted in our department; essays on fields such as literature, second language acquisition, translation studies, linguistics and philology are included. However, as our aim is to offer perspectives to issues of ongoing research for other (prospective) young scholars, the essays of this collection have been grouped according to the topic under discussion, i.e., terminology, methodology, and/or theory, rather than by the field of research the scholar is engaged in.

The collection opens with a section discussing terminology, then moves on to theories and their application. The last section of the work concentrates on methodological issues. However, we must note that a consideration of each of these issues – relevant terminology, theories and methods – is of course necessary for any research. The topics overlap, and are sometimes impossible to discuss without delving into other areas, especially since our contributors are discussing ongoing research. Hence the writers may diverge to other issues relating to their work in order to explore their topic.

Part I, containing essays discussing terminological issues in the fields of linguistics, literature, and second language acquisition, opens with **Timo Savela**'s essay, "Seeing Things Unreel: From Appearance to Apparition". Savela traces the philosophical foundations of the concept of *landscape* and the term's application in researching linguistic landscapes of education, and shows how the term is often used without properly acknowledging its meaning or history. In the second essay, "The Body in Space: Towards an Embodied Framework of Spatial Theory", **Ira Hansen** discusses the challenges of defining and applying theoretical concepts that are used differently in different fields of research. Hansen discusses her process of making sense of the concepts of *space* and *place* and their application in an embodied framework in the context of contemporary US literary fiction. Next, in "The Double in Contemporary Indian American Fiction: Building a Theoretical Framework", **Nana Arjopalo** touches on the challenges of defining and applying the concept of the *double* in her research. Arjopalo discusses the difficulties of removing the concept from its traditional role as a gothic trope and reapplying it to a postcolonial framework and into the context of Indian American fiction. **Judi Rose**'s essay, "Lessons in Literacy: Defining and Redefining Complex Terminology" closes Part I with a consideration of the concept of *literacy*, specifically in connection to the language learning strategies of L3 students of English.

Part II concentrates on theories and their application in literary studies, translation studies and textual scholarship. **Petri Luomala** opens this section with his essay "Welsh Writing in English as Postcolonial Literature: Reading Niall Griffiths". In the essay, he discusses the challenges of defining Welsh literature in English as 'postcolonial'. By presenting specific themes in the fiction of the Welsh author Niall Griffiths, Luomala shows how postcolonial theory can and should be applied also outside the more traditional framework of European imperialism. **Turo Rautaoja** follows with "Going back to the Source: Exploring the Sociological Narrative Theory in Translation Studies", an essay shedding light not only on the theory in question, but the processes of evaluating and selecting appropriate theoretical and methodological framework for one's PhD dissertation. The essay outlines Rautaoja's experiences in a diachronic narrative relating to his work in assessing and challenging some of his key theoretical texts. **Aino Liira** and **Sirkku Ruokkeinen** close Part II with "Material Paratext Studies: Redefining the Concept of Text in Light of Manuscript Evidence". In the essay, they critically investigate the concepts of *text* and *paratext* through the application of the *paratextual framework* to manuscript evidence.

Part III concentrates on methodological issues in manuscript studies, second language acquisition, and translation studies. **Sara Norja** opens Part III with “The Challenges of English Alchemical Manuscript Texts as Research Material”, which depicts the methodological hurdles faced by a researcher interested in studying the under-researched and obscure field of mediaeval alchemical manuscripts. Norja presents a diachronic overview of the data selection and collection she conducted for her PhD dissertation, a scholarly edition of all seven manuscript copies of a mediaeval pseudo-Baconian treatise, *The Mirror of Alchemy*. **Gabriel Jay Rauhoff** follows with “Squad Goals: Researching Collocations in Second Language Acquisition”, an exploration into both the theory and method of his PhD dissertation, dealing with L2 learner’s collocation use. The essay reflects on the practical application of the theories related to collocation research through the description of Rauhoff’s experiences. Part III closes with **Laura Ivaska**’s “On how to Uncover the *de facto* Source Languages/Texts of (Indirect) Translations”. In her essay, Ivaska discusses why being able to pinpoint the *de facto* source texts of (indirect) translations matters and how this can be done. Her focus is thus on the methodological issues, specifically those relating to data collection in relation to her PhD dissertation research, dealing with indirect translation of prose literature from Greek to Finnish.

The essays in this collection provide not only information on the ongoing PhD research conducted in the Department of English at the University of Turku, but also give practical examples of solving theoretical and methodological issues, often with an intimate view of the the young scholar’s research process, thoughts, and struggles. Moreover, despite each scholar having a different starting point, what emerges is a shared experience of gaining confidence in one’s own scholarly method, and ultimately, growth as researchers. We hope the reader will find these essays helpful when solving similar issues in their own research.

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