

## **From the Editor's Desk**

The recently-held International Conference on English Literature marks a milestone in the history of our Special Interest Group. The Thassim Bibi Abdul Khader College for Women, Kilakarai, with which we collaborated in the conduct of the conference left no stone unturned in making it a memorable one. The fully air-conditioned make shift auditorium alone where the plenary sessions were held spoke volumes of the efforts taken by the College for holding the event at all costs on the scheduled dates. There were four plenary sessions and four Forums besides as many as 180 paper presentations. Well known personalities in the field of Higher Education in our country like Dr. Chellappan, Dr. M.S. Nagarajan, Dr. Kalpana Rau and Dr. Ghanshyam were the plenary speakers. It was a disappointment notwithstanding that Ms. Chris of the Open University, UK, who was originally scheduled to give the keynote address could not come. She didn't get the visa on time due to bureaucratic delays at New Delhi. Otherwise it was quite a successful conference. I only wish many more of our SIG had attended it.

In this issue the text of the plenary talk on 'The Legacy of New Criticism' given by Dr. M.S. Nagarajan at the Kilakarai Conference finds a place. In the subsequent issues the text of the other plenary presentations will be published.

One of the subjects that were discussed at the conference was "What makes a Literature Lesson GREAT". Many gave their views. In my opinion, what is most important is to ensure that the students really enjoy the lesson. It is the main objective of teaching literature. We should ask ourselves 'Do our students feel bored in our classes? Do they want to skip them on some excuse or there? I remember during my student days in my college long ago how we were all keen to attend our English classes. On some days we had English poetry and Shakespeare in the last hour in the morning session and even some of my friends who used to stay away from the earlier classes made it a point to attend the English class. They did so because it was a sheer delight to listen to our Professor who didn't just teach mechanically with the examination requirements in mind but made us 'experience'-- identify ourselves with the characters in the play sharing their joys and sorrows. The teacher used different strategies while teaching. He would recite/dramatize/made us search for a word/line describing something/, dwell on the beauty of sounds and sound patterns used/ make us see the appropriateness of the words used in descriptions and so on. In short he enjoyed what he taught and also made us enjoy. Every lesson he gave was really 'GREAT.--a sheer delight!

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