

Editorial

I am delighted to welcome you to our nineteenth edition of the ASOCOPI academic journal which, I hope, you will find interesting and full of good food for thought. I hope it contributes to expanding our professional knowledge and also to providing tools for practical applications in various English teaching contexts.

I am also pleased to welcome the following professors to our Editorial Advisory Board: Dr. Claudio Díaz Larenas (Universidad de Concepción, Chile), Diana Isabel Quinchía Ortiz M.A. (Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia), Dr. Irasema Mora Pablo (Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico), José Vicente Abad M.A. (Fundación Universitaria Luis Amigó, Colombia), Dr. Luz Edith Herrera Díaz (Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico), Luz Mary Quintero M.A. (Universidad Industrial de Santander, Colombia), Norbella Miranda M.A. (Universidad de San Buenaventura—Cali, Colombia), Orlando Chaves Varón M.A. (Universidad del Valle, Colombia), Dr. Ron Thomson (Brock University, Canada), Dr. Sasan Baleghizadeh (Shahid Beheshti University, Iran), Sergio Alonso Lopera Medina M.A. (Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia), Sofía Dolores Cota Grijalva, (Universidad de Sonora, Mexico), and Dr. Telma Gimenez (Universidade Estadual de Londrina, Brazil). I am sure their participation, as well as that of the reviewers who keep supporting our publication, will help us strengthen the quality of its contents.

In this edition we have gathered twelve articles authored by teachers from Colombia, India, Mexico, and the United States. As you can read in their works, they are particularly interested in sharing research reports, teaching experiences and reflections regarding various themes: technology, inclusive and intercultural education, reading, linguistic features of print materials, teaching resources, and teacher education.

The first section, *Research Reports*, contains six articles. We start with an account by Yamith José Fandiño Parra, who studied the situation of information and communication technology in four Colombian public schools. In-service English teachers were involved in the investigation and their participation allowed examination of the impact new technologies may have on their beliefs, attitudes, and competencies. Then, Mario Guerrero tells us about a pilot project conducted in the United States with the participation of students from both American and Colombian settings. Interestingly, pairs were set up with the purpose of

analyzing the use of Skype as a synchronous communication tool in regard to the attitudes of students in learning a foreign language when interacting with native speakers and engaging in conversation.

We continue with an article concerning initial teacher education, authored by Diana Zulimay Camacho Rico, Lucy Durán Becerra, Judith C. Albarracin Trujillo, Marjorie Verónica Arciniegas Vera, Magdaleidy Martínez Cáceres, and Gabriel Eduardo Cote Parra. The authors carried out a study in classrooms of five Colombian public schools where English was taught to high school students and focused on how a process of reflection can help foreign language student-teachers along their first teaching experience. Afterwards, we present a work dealing with gendered voices by Luis Leonardo Cabezas Galicia, María Fernanda Camacho Posada, and Leidy Milena Florez Fernández. They report on a case study conducted at a Colombian school in order to explore how some adolescents' gender positioning is constructed, and how gendered discourses emerge in debates taking place in the English classroom.

Next we have another article concerning the use of technology. In this case, Jairo Enrique Castañeda and Ferney Cruz Arcila inform about a study conducted at a Colombian university with the purpose of understanding teachers' views about the promotion of autonomous, collaborative, and meaningful learning through the use of virtual classrooms in the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL). Finally, the last article of this section, by Yeraldine Aldana Gutiérrez, Mauro Jordan Baquero Rodríguez, and Gustavo Adolfo Rivero Ortiz, addresses issues related to task-based learning and materials design within the context of a Colombian public school. In particular, we can learn about the way adolescent students' communication practices were explored by means of multimodal technological resources and tasks based on the connectivist learning perspective.

The second section of this edition gathers two *Reports on Pedagogical Experiences*: one of them focuses on the issue of intercultural education in a rural context and the other has to do with the teaching of foreign languages to blind and visually impaired students. First, Bertha Ramos Holguín, Jahir Aguirre Morales, and Carmen Matilde Hernández share with us how eleventh graders' rural context was integrated into the design of curricular units; they then describe the contributions these units made toward students' sense of cultural belonging and intercultural understanding. Next, Imperio Arenas González describes the project she carried out with a blind student who studied at a public university. The pedagogical experience as well as the author's reflections and conclusions make us conscious of the fact that oftentimes teachers are "handicapped" for we are not prepared for working with blind people and hence, we need to consider alternatives that will enable us to respond to their particular needs.

The last section, *Reflections and Revision of Themes*, contains four contributions. Firstly, Indian teachers Anisha Chugh and Amrita Sharma address the linguistic features of

newspaper advertisements in their country. The article is derived from an investigation that sought to study the extent to which rules or conventions of the English language are broken in print advertising. Next, we have Aurora Varona Archer's contribution. She presents an analysis of the extensive reading approach with particular reference to the benefits and challenges in the Mexican context. Her article is derived from a study that aimed at implementing extensive reading in an action research project at a public university in Mexico and gathers the perspectives from different authors around extensive reading in TEFL contexts. Following Varona Archer's contribution, Rigoberto Castillo and Natalia R. Díaz Cortés describe how a pre-service teacher and a professor in a teacher education program joined efforts to share their reflections on the process of inquiry and on the quest to find a voice when conducting and reporting their inquiry.

We close this edition with the reflections that Yolanda Samacá Bohórquez raises about the importance critical pedagogy and awareness-raising practices have in education, in general, and teacher preparation programs, in particular. Specific attention is given to how those two key issues allow pre-service and in-service teachers to re-think our pedagogical practices. Needless to say, this article shows the essential role awareness-raising practices play in the implementation of critical pedagogy in teacher education so that we can move forward towards redefining teachers' roles.

We hope the selection of papers contained in this edition contribute to the expansion of local knowledge and encourage innovations in our teaching practices. ASOCOPI also wishes to motivate more scholars to dig into those and other issues and hopes more teachers and teacher-researchers will feel motivated to submit their manuscripts for publication in the HOW journal too.

Melba Libia Cárdenas B.

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Guest Editor