

Editorial

“We envisage our role as building a culture of significant possibility, that is, a culture where beliefs and choices are both context-bound and transformative, and where discourses and practices are situated somewhere between dominant and ideal realities.”¹

I am delighted to present this new number of our journal. With this version we start the second decade of our publication and surely this will bring new challenges.

The quote above, taken from the work by Vieira and Alfredo Moreira, perfectly fits the philosophy and policies we have built in *PROFILE* during the time we have been working in its publication. The editorial team, our reviewers, contributors and authors have joined efforts and provided support to maintain our publication because we also envisage our role as community builders. We believe in the importance of circulating our reflections and investigations through publishing. To do so, we have engaged in collaborative endeavours and received insights from advisors and our readership.

The spread of the work we have carried out so far and the receptive attitude of our readers give us hints on how we are progressing toward building a culture of significant possibility. Even though we now have more options for getting published nationally and internationally, the chances for different voices to be considered –to be published and then read– are not always tangible. In several cases, teachers and teacher-researchers have regretted the fact that chances are scarce for non-experienced writers.

For that reason, it has been our decision to open our journal to voices that come from different academic arenas, from teachers and educators from different countries and contexts, and with different profiles and expertise. As can be read in the papers we include in this edition and in the previous ones, the works evidence beliefs and choices that are both context-bound and transformative. This means that in all the cases, authors aim at understanding and transforming particular teaching conditions. No matter if they question dominant discourses and practices or speak up for ideal realities, teacher-authors all aim at providing better opportunities for students to have access to English language learning.

The authors’ decision to submit their manuscripts and make their work public to then go through demanding evaluation processes also evidence their awareness of the contributions research, reflections and innovations can make to our field. Despite the fact

¹ Vieira, F. & Alfredo Moreira, M. (2008, p. 267). Reflective teacher education towards learner autonomy: building a culture of possibility. In M. Jiménez Raya & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Pedagogy for autonomy in language education. Theory, practice and teacher education* (pp. 266-282). Dublin: Authentik.

that those processes are time-consuming and sometimes even painful, our contributors come to grips with the peculiarities of our requirements. No doubt, these professionals clearly understand that knowledge resulting from research and innovations has real value when shared and what teachers' production mean to the academic community.

This issue includes twelve papers concerning English language teaching (ELT), language policies –this time in connection with the theme of the teacher as a researcher–, pre and in-service teacher education, teacher recognition, teachers' knowledge base and language teaching in high schools and undergraduate programmes. In keeping with the mission of *PROFILE*, the articles are derived from research, reflective practices, and innovations.

We open the first section, *Issues from Teacher Researchers*, with a paper by two public school teachers who work in Bogotá. Lorena Jaramillo Urrutia and Ana Stella Medina Gutiérrez's article is based on an action research and innovation project conducted while participating in a teacher development programme at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Starting from the assumption that it is necessary to approach environmental topics in class, the authors engaged in an interdisciplinary work intended to make high school students aware of the care and preservation of the environment. To do so, they planned and monitored the processes and products obtained along the steps of writing short descriptive texts in English. This process entailed four stages: motivation, knowledge of ecological vocabulary, production of sentences and paragraphs, and construction of short descriptive texts with the help of guidance questions and their publication in the school newspaper. Data collected through questionnaires and a collection of papers written by students allowed the teachers to document how they managed to enlighten students about the care of the environment and, at the same time, provided opportunities for them to improve their communication skills, particularly when writing in English.

Afterwards, Isobel Rainey reports on the results of a study that focused on the examination of the action research topics and topic preferences of two groups of grassroots teachers –active researchers and potential researchers. The study carried out by the author sheds light on how action research carried out by grassroots teachers has been understood by the ELT community as well as on the implications to make this research methodology more visible and inclusive. We can also find reflections upon the participation expected from stakeholders and traditional researchers in the professional development activities undertaken by schoolteachers so that all really get engaged in collaborative endeavours.

Undoubtedly, this article means a lot not only to teacher educators, teacher researchers and educational authorities, but to those of us working in the publication field. As editor, I wish to express my gratitude to the author for her support as a former member of the advisory board and for having selected our journal to conduct the study reported here.

The following articles are connected to the area of teacher education and teachers' knowledge base. First, John Jairo Viáfara shares with us an investigation around a common concern among teachers and teacher educators: How EFL (English as a Foreign Language) student teachers face the challenge of using L2 in public school classrooms located in Colombia. Notes, interviews and the student teachers' portfolios were used to explore attitudes and strategies regarding said issue. In the discussion of the findings, the author draws our attention towards the student teachers' history as learners, their teaching context and the preparation behind their decisions.

We continue with an issue concerning recognition in the lives of teachers of English as a foreign language (TEFL) in a Mexican university context. Barbara Scholes Gillings de González gives us the opportunity to learn about the findings of a qualitative research study into collective responses of teachers of English as a foreign language to an extended change process along a period of time. The complexity of educational change is evident in the participants' responses and perceptions and shows elements of the teachers' transformative understanding of their professional identities as a result of the growing recognition obtained in their context.

Next, we can find a narrative experience which concentrates on the theme of teachers' knowledge about language teaching and curriculum. Jenny Alexandra Mendieta Aguilar, who conducted a research study with a group of three teachers working at a Colombian university, informs us about the characteristics of the knowledge these teachers hold about language teaching and learning processes as well as the role this knowledge plays in the construction and evaluation of curriculum.

Claudio H. Díaz Larenas, Andrea Victoria Rodríguez Moran and Karen Jocelyn Poblete Rivera are the authors of the following article, which contains information about a comparative study carried out in Chile around the topics of teaching styles and personality types of EFL teachers in the public and private sectors. The readers will find out how a teaching style inventory and a personality type index were administered to the participants. Interestingly, the results indicate that public sector participants show a facilitator teaching style and an extrovert personality type, whereas private sector participants reveal a more authoritative teaching style and an introverted type of personality.

The next article, by Sasan Baleghizadeh and Mehdi Dadashi, comes from the Iranian context and depicts the effect of direct and indirect corrective feedback on junior high school students' spelling errors. The researchers developed their study on two classes who received different kinds of feedback during a given period of time and took into consideration written work dictated by their teacher from their textbooks. It is expected that the findings raise awareness among practitioners about the effectiveness of feedback as a means to have students overcome spelling errors.

We close this section with an article by Ana Cristina Biondo Salomão. It deals with the area of technology, particularly with language learning in teletandem in pre-

service teacher education. The study reported in this paper was conducted within the framework of a large Brazilian project (Teletandem Brazil: foreign language for all). The author describes the influences of the pedagogic strategies used by a mediator in the supervision process of a teletandem partner on her pedagogical practice. Additionally, we can learn how this kind of work can become an opportunity for reflective teacher education in initial teacher preparation.

The article included in the second section, *Issues from Novice Teacher Researchers*, also deals with the area of technology. Rosa Isabel González Moreno addresses the role of discussion boards in a university blended learning program. The use of surveys and reflection in which tutors and teachers provided information about learning experiences and their perceptions allowed the researcher to account for the characteristics discussion boards have when used in a particular context. The author also draws our attention towards the main advantages and disadvantages of the use of said tool as well as alternatives for the improvement of their use in higher education programmes.

The last section of our journal gathers three *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, which were contributed by Colombian authors. First, Isabel Cristina Cadavid Múnera, Claudia Patricia Díaz Mosquera and Diana Isabel Quinchía Ortiz concentrate on the application of a given set of conditions for learning in a professional development programme for elementary school EFL teachers. The article derives from an action research project that sought to establish the impact of a professional development proposal for elementary school English teachers. The reflections presented along the document give us the opportunity to examine Cambourne's conditions for learning from theoretical and practical perspectives. In addition, we can read about the findings along a given period of time, particularly in terms of the participant teachers' pedagogical practices and their use of the foreign language.

Subsequently, we can read about peer interaction within a social framework intended to foster the development of foreign language learning. As July Carolina Gómez Lobatón states, the pedagogical innovation carried out with undergraduate students looked for discovering new ways of interaction that could go beyond traditional or common unidirectional relationship. Peers as active agents in the construction of knowledge, new ways to arrange groups in the classroom, the importance of new dynamics of interaction among students and meaning negotiation were the main conceptual considerations borne in mind to accomplish the goals of the project.

We close this edition with a paper by Juan D. Gómez, who focuses on academic writing. The author focuses on a common concern we face when teaching English: writing compositions. In this case, we can get acquainted with struggles experienced by advanced students of English as a foreign language when working on English composition. Among the aspects the author highlights are cultural, academic, and disciplinary influences that may obfuscate students' assimilation of the conventions of written English. It is hoped that the examination of those variables and written

evidences highlighted by the author will lead us to think about the conditions needed to help students in their development of academic writing in English.

Finally, I wish to share with all of you that the number of papers submitted for evaluation purposes has increased. I am sure this is not only the result of the recognition we have been granted in different databases and indexing systems but also due to the participation of the authors, readers, potential contributors, and the members of the advisory and editorial boards, who all have expressed their interest in our work.

This time I wish to welcome Professors Paula Golombek (University of Florida, USA) and Rebeca Elena Tapia Carlín (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Mexico), who kindly accepted our invitation to be part of the advisory and editorial committees, respectively. I am sure their experience in the areas of teacher education and ELT as well as in the publication field will be of great help to us.

We are pleased to offer the present publication of Volume 13 No. 1 to the Colombian and international academic community in the hope that it shall contribute to a greater spread of the topics dealt with in this issue and to the further development of the ELT profession. As always, we look forward to publishing more research reports, reflections, and innovations.

Melba Libia Cárdenas-Beltrán
Journal Editor